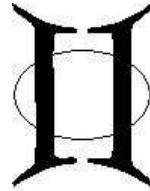


# A Reformed Druid Anthology

Second Edition

A.K.A.

“Son of A Reformed Druid Anthology: The Druid Strikes Back”



40<sup>th</sup> Reunion 2003

The Drynemetum Press





Frangquist, Fisher & Nelson  
Founders of the RDNA  
Picture, circa 1964  
Hill of Three Oaks, Carleton



Press, Carruth (obscured), Nelson,  
Frangquist, Shelton & Weber at the  
40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Service, Beltane  
2003 at New Stone Circle.

# A REFORMED DRUID ANTHOLOGY

2nd Edition

This is Collection One of the Saga  
(Volumes 0, 1, & 2 of ARDA 2)

ARDA is an odd collection of wandering writings by, for and about Reformed Druids over the last 42 years, drawn from a myriad of collections and authors.

Familiarize yourself with the layout of its overall contents. One day, even obscure corners of ARDA may become useful. Use it or disregard it, as you will.

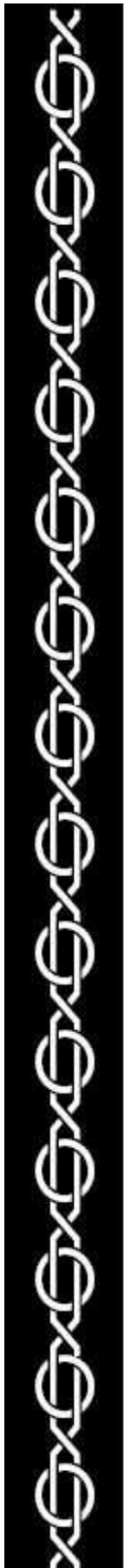
ARDA is merely a collection of what one individual Druid has considered important enough to type, edit and distribute. It is not authoritative or particularly inspired.

So, I hope that it proves to be a handy reference source to complement your interaction with other Druids (& other wise folks), in addition to Nature, of course.

Perhaps other groups will find someone too who is this obsessive to compile their own works, and if so, I'd love to commiserate with that poor fellow. Enjoy.



The Drynemetum Press



# Volume Zero: Introductory Materials

## Section One: Preliminary Information

### Detailed Library Bibliographical Information

**Limited Publication:**

Only 50 copies were physically printed.

**This is copy #****Given to:****Obtaining Additional Copies**

A web-site at <http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna> also has copies of these files available for downloading and ready to print on a double-sided laser-printer. Another possible site to download from at <http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/arda.html> or perhaps at <http://www.student.carleton.edu/orgs/Druids/ARDA/> or at [yahogroups.com](http://www.yahogroups.com) on the RDNAtalk conference, in the file section. If these web sites also becomes unavailable, visit the main Carleton page at <http://www.carleton.edu> and search for the Carleton Archives. Adobe Acrobat versions of this collection should be available then on CD-ROMs from the Archives for a nominal fee of \$10 cash, in such case.

**Title:**

A Reformed Druid Anthology, 2nd Edition

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Most materials in the main volume are likely of the public domain, except where indicated by Copyright. Parts 6 & 11 have numerous copyright material whose permission have not been granted to us, and thus not published in the main volume, but printed separately for a private study program. See our policy in the ten important notices on the next page. Questions should be sent to the Drynemetum Press.

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2400 pages. Three Volumes. 8 1/2" x 11" dimensions. Hardback.

**Suggested Catalogue Description of the Collection:**

"A uniquely rare encyclopedic anthology of 40 years worth of literature by the Reformed Druids of North America, which is the ancestor of the modern Druidism in America. This collection was primarily produced by the Berkeley Grove and the Carleton College Grove. Contents include a history, study guides, meditations, poetry, songs, jokes, theological debates, rules, customs, liturgies, magic charms, statistics, and recommended reading lists. Their various works of literature draw upon Buddhism, Christian traditions, ecology ideals, the Feminist movement, very ancient Jewish practices, Earth-centered mysticism, New Age beliefs, Neopaganism, Hinduism, the Occult, the Celts, Tao, Wicca, and lots of Zen."



## Acknowledgments

A detailed list of the various authors can be found in Part Four: "Credits, Founders and Known Innovators" but I would like to thank a few very special people for their help in putting this collection together. Isaac Bonewits and Robert Larson published "The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)" in 1976 under the Drynemetum Press label, and from whose collection much of ARDA's material can be traced. Richard Shelton and David & Deborah Frangquist were very helpful in giving me leads and constant advice. Stacey Weinberger has proven of inestimable assistance in acquiring and understanding material from the 1980s at the Live Oak Grove. Without Mark Heiman's professional layout experience, it would not look as fine and polished as it is in the 1<sup>st</sup> Edition, and whose influence continues in the 2<sup>nd</sup>'s organization. Steve Crimmins contributed enormous energies to provide photos and transcriptions and typing up last minute articles to fill up this 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. I would like to thank Eric Hillemann for providing space at the Carleton Archives for the Carleton Druid Archival Project, for conducting many oral interviews with past Druids, and offering helpful hints in collecting and organizing a mountain of materials. I thank Professor Philip Niles and Professor Dietheim Prowe for their academic support and counseling during the 1992-1994 period when I was collecting many these materials to complete my senior comprehensive exercise in the history department. I would like to thank my parents, my friends, roommates, fellow Carleton Druid grove members, Ar nDraiocht Fein, The Henge of Keltia, all the other groves of the Reform, and the authors of the First Amendment. In order to be true to all my friends, I should boldly state the following about Druidism:

## The Entire RDNA Dogma is Contained in the Two Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism (Law 4-6):

1. The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.

2. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it men do live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face to face with it.

No more, no less, but these are often traditionally abbreviated into:

1. Nature is good.
2. Likewise, Nature is good.

## 'Ten Important Notices'

1. Nearly all of this material in the main volume, except where indicated by the author (Parts 6 & 11), are likely of the Public Domain and is free for you to use and distribute. Nothing in here is considered "oath-bound" material. Please acknowledge the authors, use it only for non-malicious purposes, such as study, and not for personal gain. If you produce a book, article, or report that makes significant use of these materials; please send us a complementary copy in care of the Drynemetum Press (see above).
2. Please, do not take this stuff too seriously. Most of us certainly do not!
3. Materials represent only the individual opinions of their authors and no one else.
4. We do not have official group dogma. We merely have our individual opinions, and we bicker frequently.
5. Just because it was printed, doesn't mean the authors haven't changed their minds since they wrote the materials.
6. Most Druids get along just fine without ever reading ANY of these unofficial materials. Many (if not most) Druids thrive better without this literature!!
7. In general... most of us consider Reformed Druidism to be a perspective, not a religion. Do not be fooled by all the external trappings, whistles, and bells.
8. Membership in Druidism is considered very compatible with all religions by many members and the term "Druid" is usually considered to be gender neutral. Or, at least, we tend to think so.
9. Technically speaking, those who do not have the Apostolic Succession descending from Fisher are not permitted to use most of the traditional liturgies.
- 10 Within reason, all documents have been presented here in their original historical forms (i.e. after spell-checking and versical numbering).

# PREFACE 2003

## Thoughts on the Second Edition

Does anyone read a preface anymore?

If so, thank you. I've spent a lot of time writing this essay to help orient you in using this collection in a simple manner.

I hope the gentle readers will approach this Anthology primarily as a historical literary collection, since it is really intended as a jumpstart for researchers, and a model for other groups interested in preserving their history. It was not prepared to be a coherent step-by-step induction into the mysteries of Reformed Druidism, but it is rather a sprawling mishmash of materials that should be dived into, played with, pondered and utilized, if needed. Siblings await your counsel and Nature waits beyond your window with a myriad of more important lessons.

What a strange beast ARDA must seem to those new to the RDNA. Even to old-timers, there's quite a lot of new material in here, overwhelmingly so. A veritable mountain of trivia, various customs and other debris of different groves and individual recollections. But this is still a minute fraction of all the unrecorded personal and group activity and conversations of the movement (just the wrapper on the Twinkie). The most I have been able to do is draw a few cupfuls of water from several swift streams. Even then, few could possibly have the time to incorporate it all into their religious life, and much is contradictory. But it is said, "the opposite of a truth is often another truth." Not all of it is pertinent to you. As with diamond mining, there is one ton of rock for every jewel, so I wish you the best of luck in treasure hunting here and elsewhere.

As you can tell by all the stars in the Table of Contents, there's much material you haven't seen even if you have read the entire first edition of ARDA. Despite the massive bulk, I am still hesitant to publish it now because I know of other great reserves of archives that may soon come to light that will change my perspectives on group dynamics, especially at the Berkeley and Seattle Groves. Yet, I want to get this collection published first, and then start working on the next collection. If I constantly put it off, no one would be able to enjoy it in the intermediary period. What a delightful never-ending task I've assigned to myself!

The question arises often to me whether many of the gaps should be filled in, or even published. Often when information is missing, we have a tendency to put the most reasonable piece of information into a hole, to "smooth" out the story, even if it is wrong or unnecessary. Probably because it's fun. I don't agree with the opinions or styles of many contributors in this edition, but I have chosen not to censor or unduly filter the resources for future scholars. Hopefully the 2013 edition will give me an opportunity to remove those unworthy gap-stoppers. All these documents for me are like fallen leaves in autumn, lying on a trail, passed by many without a thought, and perhaps inspiring a few to stop and gaze awhile and contemplate the tree from which they came.

I don't think Druidism needs to fulfill all the roles of big-time religions. Not all areas have to be explored, detailed, or codified by Druidism alone to enjoy some benefits. Silence on some matters can often be as instructive. The great outdoors remains there to inspire us. The materials collected here may portray us with a greater sense of continuity and fullness than actually ever existed in reality or attainability. I've always likened the RDNA to mistletoe grafted onto another tree's branches, a set of glasses, or perhaps as a cybernetic implant on another organism. Others see it as a borrowed practice to improve their own spiritual lives, like Zen Meditation or Yoga. For those to

whom the RDNA is sufficient unto itself, and there are a few out there, they will eventually dream up confessionals, baptisms, coming-of-age ceremonies, training programs, visions of the afterlife; and thereby design with it, a most recognizably full-fledged religion in the eyes of many, such as happened with ADF.

Feel free to add more, but try to do so in a way, and I emphasize, that enriches it but does not limit the possibilities for your successors (if any). Like a campsite or wilderness, leave it cleaner than you found it. The rest of us probably won't go that far, or other faiths will supply those needs; if such is fervently desired. For me, Druidism & philosophy has been about constant questions, and religions are the accumulation of accepted answers. Hopefully those who go "full-time" in their Druidism will say to themselves and others, "These views go beyond the basic tenets, and cannot be hoped to be believed by all within the Reform."

It is thought that the original Founders chose the name "Druids" not only because of the connection with Nature, but also because so little was known about them. Over the last 40 years so much has been learned about the beliefs of the Celts, that the mere application of 10% of those findings & suggestions might overwhelm the pleasant simplicity of this little movement. However, some groves may choose such an orientation, and I wish them good fortune.

I hope you don't just go only for the easy "paste and play" mode of Druidism, with the belief that older Druids are unquestionably ever so much better at finding the truth than we are. This is just not so. Truth may ring true through the centuries, but mistakes and outmoded ideas may also accompany them. The ARDA is not a bible, at least for me and most people I've talked to about it. It can be referred to, but should not be deferred to. These materials are not necessarily divine, and some are certainly not inspired. We heartily recommend a visit to a forest or beach or gaze up at the sky. Go out there and wing it sometimes or figure out what you want to do, and don't be so busy that you can't hear the quiet response of Nature to your cries for assistance. Perhaps that odd afternoon on July 23 really is a perfect day to celebrate, despite not being a traditional day. Druidism need not get so complicated. I'd like to think that the first orders are the most innocent of the organizing tendency, they are probably just in an absorbent stage and not externally manifesting this desire to stack the blocks together (and then weld them). But some will stack them tightly.

The First Edition of ARDA has been both more popular than I hoped and than I feared. Although only 30 copies were printed, a few thousand downloads have occurred since they became available on-line. Like the anthropologist whose very interaction with remote populations will change the very cultures he wishes to study, I also know that ARDA will change the group that I so dearly love. I have also unwillingly been mis-understood as the Arch-Druid of the Reform by several individuals, rather than as a simple archivist of information. I had intended to release a heavily illustrated Y2K version in January 2000, but was unable to pull the resources together, and the 40th Anniversary of the RDNA provided the next appropriate opportunity, but did not come together until 2003/2004. I have spent far too many hours in this project for my graduate studies to be successful, and yet this final result is far from polished, and likely to be fraught with errors. For this, I apologize and ask for assistance in making corrections in the next edition which will be 2013. This edition actually came out a full year later than expected, but fortunately Druids believe Time is a circular phenomenon rather than linear, so I'm still on time in that sense.

It's hard to tell which section will appeal the most to the general reader. Part Zero offers a study course for trying to absorb

the whole collection in stages. Part One (Chronicles) and Part Five (HDNA) have no noticeable changes except for spelling, but you'll notice enormous additions to Part 3 (Rituals) with better classification, and new subsets for advice on seasonal activities and should be assisted by Green Book 7. Part 2 (Apocrypha) now has numerous debates being added on new themes and events. Part 4 shows more documents elucidating how various groves organized themselves; how various off-shoots organized & diverged from those patterns, and recent general publications by RDNA showing how groves have represented themselves. Part 6 (Green Books of Meditations) has a large diverse compilation of stories, essay, historical materials, poems and quotes of interest to the Reform, but has been removed from the main volume of ARDA, due to copy-right concerns, and is viewable at the website. Part 6 has also mushroomed enormously in size, and represents my largest contribution to RDNA literature.

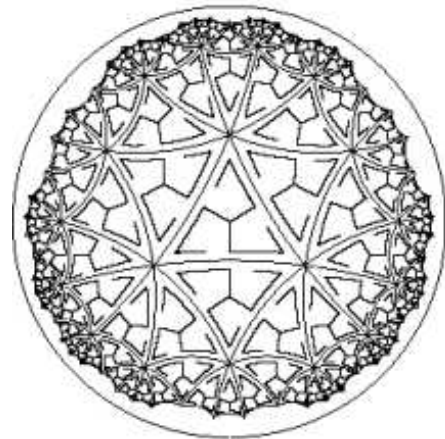
Part 7 (Miscellany) has been ransacked and a grab-bag of various research articles on the RDNA and other essays on historical Druidical matters has been relocated to Part 6 Green Book 10. Part 8 (History) contains a short update on 80's and 90's Druidism, but will undoubtedly go into greater depth in the 2013 collection after I have further access to the archival collections of Stephen and Emmon, and better evaluate the current frenetic period with the hindsight of passing time. Part 9 has a new delightful collection of mini-histories in the Dead River Scrolls. Most of the epistles in Part 9 weren't quite the right material to add to the apocrypha, so this section remains a useful repository. Part 10 has a few new interviews to give future Arch-Druids an idea of the scope of high and low points from other AD's tenures. Part Eleven (Druid Magazines) won't be ready until Winter 2004/5 and will be published separately, but will offer a 25 year perspective on the changes and fortunes of the NRDNA branch of the Reform through the regular newsletters.

As an interesting side note, as Norman Nelson put it, the Druids seemed to have forgot to put guilt, moralizing and after-life promises into their writings, which they expressly self-deprecate. Lastly, for the bookish again, I repeat that these primary historical materials, while useful, cannot replace primary experiences of your own. Go out and seek those! I can think of no other group of companions with wish to seek such experiences, and delight in presenting these records to you. It is my gift to you, and how you use it will be your gift to me.

I'd like to add more and encourage you further, but everything I'd like to tell you has probably already been said somewhere in this Anthology. So, I will stop here. If you come up with other materials that you'd like to add, feel free to contact me. I wish you clarity of thought and purpose in your life.

-Mike Scharding  
 Grand Patriarch of the Ancient Order of Bambi  
 April 1, 2003 c.e.  
 Day 60 of Earrach, Year XL of the Reform

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<http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna>



**Figure 1 First Stone Circle, c. 1996.**

# PREFACE 1996

## Why was this book published?

The reasons behind printing this Anthology are difficult to convey to the Reader. I would hope that I'm not doing this work out of pride, one-upmanship, or to prove a point; but the mind can often rationalize the secrets of the heart.

Most readers will assume that this Anthology is being printed as a precise manual to preserve our rituals in their purest official forms; essentially to produce orthodox texts. Nope. Except for the occasional historian, like me (Michael Scharding), a Reformed Druid tends to see little value in the age of our religious texts. A religion that mandates only one interpretation of a text, or that even only one text be used, has already taken a wrong turn and has reduced the usefulness of its teachings to the value, of, oh.... dung. (No offense.) A piece of dung more than 40 years old is not much more valuable than a piece of dung from 20 years ago. They both smell about the same and make equally useful fertilizer, but they are not as tasty as the original apple. This text may last two hundred years, but I doubt that there will be anyone around at that point who still goes by the label of "Reformed Druid." It is possible that the spirit of Reformed Druidism may still continue on, unlabeled, in the hearts of people who have interacted with Reformed Druids. Long after the trappings have passed away, the message of Reformed Druidism will be alive in our lifestyles. Preserving our oldest texts in an uncorrupted form is certainly not the purpose of this Anthology.

Could the purpose of this book be to disseminate our unique wisdom to a larger audience? Am I evangelizing to gain converts? Nope. Our only truth is so simple that most people have probably already guessed it all a long time ago, and then gone on with their lives. Most of the readers, after reading these texts, will probably realize that the RDNA is not trying to make more Reformed Druids (there are already too many to keep track of!), but to make people into better Christians, Neo-Pagans, Taoists, Buddhists, Atheists or Whatever! Reformed Druidism is not in the business of finding recruits, rather, we are merely helping those who have joined us anyway. When and where they choose to go after a short stay with us is up to them. We are not seeking converts.

Am I trying to gain influence within the current Reformed Druids? Realistically, I expect that 95% of past and future Reformed Druids will never read anything beyond the Chronicles, if even that much. Most will never even know the existence of this work, and many of those who do may not care. And they may well be living a far more Druidic life than I will ever attain. Experience is difficult to gain from a book, and once gained, no longer needs the book. As Four Guns, an Oglala Sioux, once said:

"Many of the white man's ways are past our understanding. They put a great store upon writing; there is always a paper. The white people must think paper has some mysterious power to help them in the world. The Indian needs no writings; words that are true sink deep into his heart, where they remain. He never forgets them. On the other hand, if the white man loses his papers he is helpless."

I suspect more Druids will resent this publication than will ever thank me. To try and put Druidism down on paper is a near impossible task and the reader could easily misconstrue the meaning. A symphony can not be put into words. This Anthology may lead as many people onto the wrong path as it may help some, if any. If I mislead you, I deeply apologize and ask you to forgive my impetuosity.

If anything, I would consider myself a taxonomist or a biologist who has discovered a new, exotic species. With so many species becoming extinct every day, I would hate to not write about the lifestyle and customs of such a creature. Do as you will with it.

My name is Michael Scharding.  
I wrote this on May 1st, 1996 c.e.

# INTRODUCTION 1996

(By Robert Larson with apologies to David the Chronicler)

1. There shall come unto thee those who do inquire: "What is this thing hight Reformed Druidism?"
2. And thou shalt answer them by quoting the basic tenets, for this is the only answer with which all Reformed Druids do agree.
3. Yea, there may be those druids who do have reservations even about these basic tenets.
4. And some there shall be who do understand, and who do gain in awareness.
5. For there are those who do be Reformed Druids, yet who know it not, never before having heard of us.
6. May the blessings of the Mother be upon them.
7. But others there shall be who understand not, and who shall ask again, "What is this thing hight Reformed Druidism?"
8. And thou shalt answer them by paraphrasing the Great Bard, saying, "It is a tale of sound and fury, signifying what thou wilt."
9. For, verily, even as Reformed Druids do disagree, so do they agree to disagree.
10. And even as they do agree to disagree, so do they disagree so that they may agree.
11. And some there shall be who do understand, and who do gain in awareness.
12. May Be'al smile upon them.
13. But many there shall be who do grow yet more confused. Yea, even shall they be confused in their confusion.
14. And they shall ask once again, "What is this thing hight Reformed Druidism?"
15. Then shalt thou pick up this tome and throw it at them. Yea, shalt thou throw it at them even aiming at their most tender parts.
16. And thou shalt intone even as thou dost throw this tome the First (and only) Commandment of Reformed Druidism.
17. For, yea, though it be nowhere written, it is a commandment most dear to all Reformed Druids.
18. And that commandment is this:
19. "Think for thyself, foolish one."
20. Then shalt thou grow in awareness, even as he doth grow who doth ask.
21. And then shall ye both receive the blessing of the Mother and of Be'al.

We have accumulated a lot of verbiage, haven't we? And we began with such a simple little idea; indeed, as a jest. But doesn't everything begin simply and grow and elaborate? Is not the most complex mathematical formula grown from simple basic (and unprovable) postulates? Are not all the sciences based upon simple observations, which have been elaborated upon through the centuries by a method of inquiry? So it has been with Reformed Druidism. From the acorn of the basic tenets, druidical inquiry fostered an oak. May the future see the oak become a forest, each oak different but related through the original acorn.



So it is good to see this new edition of the Chronicles and other accumulated druidical writings. I feel that Brother Michael has done a service to both present and future druids by his compilation.

Of course, many druids will find much, if not all, of this book irrelevant to their personal druidical path. This attitude is both right and wrong. While it is correct to say that only the druidical attitude of tolerant individual inquiry in the search for awareness is truly relevant, nevertheless no path to awareness, or expression of belief, can be considered irrelevant to this search. My belief has been and continues to be that all concepts of deity deserve equal respect, as long as they extend the same respect to others. Every belief system, be it mundane or bizarre, tells us much about the relationship of human beings to the ineffable and thus helps us define our own beliefs and relationships to Be'al.

So while Sturgeon's Law ("Ninety percent of everything is crap") certainly applies to all this verbiage, Larson's Corollary also applies: "Yes, but the crap fertilizes the crop. No crap, no crop."

Brother Michael's history of the RDNA will also be useful to druids, I believe. Only by understanding the origins and past can we begin to understand the present or to fathom the future. Though I'm sure that nearly every druid will find point of disagreement with his interpretations (for such is our contentious nature), his attempt to present an evenhanded and dispassionate view is largely successful. I would expect no less from a brother druid and Carletonian. For his efforts and his sheer persistence, he deserves both congratulations and praise.

On a personal level, it both pleased and amused me to learn that the edition of the Druid Chronicles (Evolved) which Isaac and I put out two decades (gods! has it been that long?) ago, for which we took a deal of flak, was found useful in reconstituting the RDNA at Carleton. I've always liked irony. Perhaps a similar fate awaits this edition. The production of the DC(E), like this work, was largely a labor of love. The original purpose was to produce a new printing of the Chronicles so that current and future druids who wanted one could have a decent copy. (My original copy was getting pretty ragged from all the use and copying.) The tradition that any Third Order could add whatever he chose to the apocrypha led to the growth of the project and the inclusion of some things many found objectionable. As the person who had to do the printing I was not altogether pleased with the growth. (Perhaps a better title would have been "The Druid Chronicles (Metastasized)"). As for the "objectionable content" which might give an unbalanced view of druidism, my attitude was that those objecting should contribute their own writings to be included, not criticize other druids' expressions of belief. Inclusion, not exclusion, has always been the guidon of Reformed Druidism, as I perceive it. I hope that Brother Michael has had a smoother journey through the job of redaction than Isaac and I had.

To those who are reading this book to learn about Reformed Druidism I give a warning and some advice.

Firstly, druid communications must be taken with a large dose of salt. As a class, we druids tend to discuss trivial matters seriously and serious things jokingly. Often the difference between a serious belief and a joke is obscure, even to the writer. (I've maintained that many serious things are jokes, and jokes can be very serious, indeed.) A good sense of humor is essential to understanding the context of druidism.

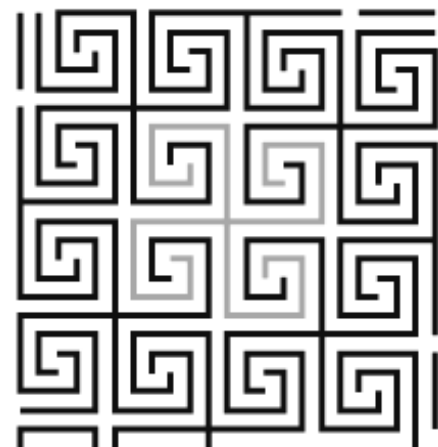
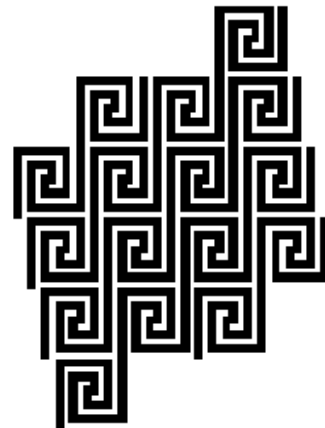
Secondly, druidism is deceptively simple. Only belief in the basic tenets is, by definition, required of Reformed Druids, and these tenets are intentionally vague, general and subject to individual interpretation. So druidism is easy, isn't it? Well, yes

and no. (The druidical "maybe") Druidism is what you make of it, and you get from it according to what you put into it. If you just want a nice service, and a bit of down time and camaraderie under the oaks, that's fine and a grove can provide these.

But if you want to use druidism as a vehicle for your own search for religious/philosophical awareness and to define what you truly believe, it can be difficult indeed, for druidism does not tell you what to believe. Rather, it requires you to ask questions of yourself, to answer them with complete intellectual and emotional honesty, and then to examine your answers. The search is truly unending, and the way may be rocky indeed.

Finally, a thought to take you into your readings. The Reformed Druids were founded at Carleton College in 1963, which was arguably the perfect (inevitable?) time and place. Within a few years young people throughout Western Civilization were exploring exotic religions and philosophies and Neo-Paganism became a notable movement. At the same time, the academic world saw an increased interest in Celtic studies and an explosion of research in and books on Celtic matters which continues to this day with a resultant increase in knowledge about a people until then largely shrouded in mystery. Were we ahead of our times? Is all this just coincidence? Serendipity? Jungian synchronicity? Perhaps it's a sign.

Peace Siocháin Heddwch  
Robert Larson D.A.L., Be.



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ARDA 2 is divided in three separate tomes:

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Foundation, & The Books of the Apocrypha

Vol 3 – Liturgy of the Druids

Vols 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, & 10 – Traditions, HDNA,  
Green Books, Miscellany, History, Latter Day  
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\* \* \* \* \*

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**(Printed in a Separate Volume)**

Final page numbers & contents not checked yet, as of Sept 2004  
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# SECTION TWO: STUDY AIDS

## Who are the Reformed Druids?

In a woefully inadequate thumbnail sketch; the Reformed Druids are a group of people from many religions and philosophies who are attempting to find answers to spiritual and philosophical questions. They officially began at Carleton College in 1963 as an attempt to circumvent a mandatory attendance requirement of religious services. Disliking the attitude behind forced attendance, they lightheartedly made up their own "religion" and attended it regularly to see if that was sufficient. After Carleton rescinded the requirement the Druids found that their activity had brought up many questions that weren't answered yet. They changed their goal from bucking the Requirement into a quest for personal growth and spiritual exploration. Over the years, they established "missionary groves" to continue their work. One such missionary branch, in Berkeley California, would eventually take itself a little more seriously and become the first Neo-Pagan Druidic religion in America. From that grove, Ar nDraiocht Fein, The Henge of Keltria and a few other major Druid movements in America would come to trace their roots. Most Reformed Druids continue to disagree with each other on all other details.

## An ARDA Study Program Introduction 1996

You are looking for answers to difficult questions. So are we. We are not gurus and none of us will know all the answers. Reformed Druidism is an unending search. You might already be a Reformed Druid and just may not know it. If so, congratulations! If you don't think so, that's fine too. My estimation of personal worth is not affected by how many people share my beliefs... or I would like to think so.

Let's face it, this is a big collection and it all looks very complicated. Druidism is actually very simple, perhaps so simple that you will pass by its message and keep looking for a more complex answer. Druidism is merely asking questions to yourself and to others and not stopping until you get honest answers, with the occasional inspiration from Nature. No kidding, it really is that simple! It's also that difficult. If you cannot accept that, then you should put this book down. Everything else in this collection is just an affirmative elaboration on this point.

Remember that all one has to do to be a Reformed Druid (at least in the Spirit of the law) is to agree with the Basic Tenets as listed in verses 4-6 of the Book of Law which can be found in the Druid Chronicles (Reformed), and I quote:

1. The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.
2. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of

Creation, and with it men do live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face to face with it.

Any Druid who claims any further requirement to be a Reformed Druid is not following the broad tradition of the Reform, or may be referring to local Grove membership rules. Most people have probably already come to those two conclusions by their own brainpower and could well already be considered First Order Druids in the Body of the Reform, even if they haven't drunk the consecrated Waters of Life to thereby also become First Order Druids in Spirit of the Reform (cf. Chapter One of the Customs of the Druids to be found in the Chronicles). Therefore, having read only this far, I'm sure you are now fully capable of closing this book and continuing on your study of the Reformed Druidism through the active medium of your own life and the world that surrounds and permeates you, without ever having to read more from this collection again!

So why did I bother to construct a study program? Partly because it was fun for me. Partly, because a friend asked me to make one and because eventually somebody else would have again pestered me into making one. The better question is why do you need a study program? Perhaps because, if you read this book straight through, from cover to cover, you will only get confused and may not enjoy it. I know of no one, including myself, who would ever want to follow that method! Would you read a French dictionary from cover to cover just to learn a definition of the word "terre-neuve"? The easiest way to begin to understand a new religion or culture is to listen to its favorite stories. Treat each of the articles in this anthology as a story, not as a textbook or cookbook. We're not going to quiz you and even I don't know all this stuff verbatim (nor would I ever care to!). If you don't like one of the articles, don't read it!!, and just skip around until something else catches your eye. However, some of you eggheads may wish to learn more of the past, in an orderly structured fashion. For you, I have devised a study program.

## Reasons Not to Undertake the Twenty Step Study Program

You should have no doubts that there is more than one optional possible schedule, yea, it is one among many ways. I jokingly refer to it as my "Druidic Twenty Step Program" and I made it up by myself in December 1995 and modified it in 2003 after an online teaching session, so in all likelihood you'd be amongst the first to try it out. Please, don't expect anyone else to have ever heard of it or to be impressed that you worked on it. Also, I would indeed be saddened if you were studying Reformed Druidic texts in order to "quote scripture" at other Druids to get your own way. Your participation in such a program should only be because you want to explore the issues of Reformedly Druidical thought for your personal benefit. The Reform has not required any training program of its members. Let me explain:

In the past, people would attend a few rituals to get the feeling for the RDNA before entering the First Order. Similarly, because people often entered the Second Order to act as Preceptor in a service, they would generally become familiar with the text of the average liturgy in use. Those intending to enter the Third Order would often study the liturgy a little more, because they might have to perform a service, and usually by that point they would probably have read (at least once) the five books in the Druid Chronicles (Reformed), and they probably meditated before making a lifelong commitment to the Reform by entering the Third Order. Some people entered these Orders as a sort of spiritual maturation rite of passage and never intend to perform a



liturgy in their entire life! Indeed, some people have spent all of 30 minutes skimming the texts of the Reform before feeling ready for the Third Order. I've even ordained someone who hadn't even read the Chronicles! So if you are seeking an eventual path to ordination to the First Order or above, you DO NOT have to participate in this program, just locate a friendly local Reformed Druid and save yourself a lot of time and effort. Spending all that time amongst the past writings of Reformed Druidism may in fact hinder your own participation, when you should be more concerned with the more important present or future of your own Reformed Druidism! Therefore proceed only if you desire questions, because that's all you will get from this study, but hopefully they'll be good questions that will take you to other fulfilling studies.

## How to Proceed in the Study Program

The basic maxim of the study program is "slow and steady ploughs the farm". It may easily take over three or four diligent months to fully digest this reading regimen that I have listed below. Fortunately, you will not need a sponsor. Inspiration often comes unexpectedly with the raw passage of time, so do not despair. Going slowly allows you the time to digest what you read. I have gone through several plateaus (sometimes lasting nine months) during my first five years in trying to understand Druidism, and I have had many excellent teachers and fellow Druids to talk with. Each step of a phase should take a few days, or perhaps even a week or two, but you may choose your own pace. I recommend that after finishing each step, meditate a bit, and reread your favorite parts. Definitely, it may help to let a few days pass before proceeding to the next step. Go as far as you need. After placing the issues in a generic context, discuss them with a friend. Druidism is best absorbed with a cup of tea, a warm cat, and a pile of cookies.

I have added a few questions and comments to think about before you begin on each step. If you'd like to (and have nothing better to do, like going outside to a park for a pleasant walk) you can write little mini-essays for yourself on the questions I have included in each step, or make up your own questions, or you can ignore the questions. Do not send the essays to me or expect anyone else to review them, but feel free to donate the better quality essays to the Druid Archival project for storage (or yes, you can send it me anyways). I also welcome the submission of alternative study plans that you may come up with based on your firsthand experiences of studying Reformed Druidic scriptures with a clean slate of mind. Who knows, someday your recommendations just might get read by someone. It is rather chronological in format, but here it is.

### The Beginning Phase:

#### The RDNA from 1963-74

##### **Step 1. What was Reformed Druidism in the Beginning at Carleton?**

Begin by reading the five books of The Druid Chronicles (Reformed) in Part One. Then read the interview with Frangquist in Part Ten. Finally read "A Spring Thaw", the first Epistle in Part Two. This will essentially provide you with a colorful history of what happened during the very first year of Reformed Druidism. The Chronicles are also a handy collection of early customs, tentative rules and meditations which David Frangquist (the third Arch-Druid of Carleton) thought would be useful for incoming Druids to know about.

· What a group does in its first years can often tell you a lot about them. Develop a general feel for the group and write a brief summary.

· The DC(R) was written and rewritten through the first year of founding (May 1963-May 1964), and may be Frangquist's attempt to prepare the foundations for his formative Archdruidcy (1964-1966).

· With the possible exception of recruitment leaflets, DC(R) enjoys the honor of being the most widely read text within the Reform.

· Footnotes help, but if you will read this twice, read it the first time without referring to the footnotes, trying to get a feeling for it as a whole work of literature.

· Keep in mind, they often have their tongue firmly planted in their cheek. The language is awkward, because they thought it sounded funny and formal that way.

· The creative outburst actual occurrence is far more important than the specific ceremonies, holidays, or hierarchy.

· How many biblical allusions can you spot?

· The Book of Meditations, incidentally, has nearly all of the passages from the entire Reformed literature that talks about the vague Be'al and Dalon Ap Landu. I suspect that most later Carleton Druids concentrated more on the perceptions of Druidism and did not really concern themselves with building a mythology. Curiously, even the NRDNA of Berkeley, which became heavily Neo-Pagan, did not elaborate much upon these name-archetypes.

##### **Step 2. Views on the Reform by Early Druids Besides Frangquist.**

Read all the letters in "The Earliest Selections" in Part Two. This part of the Apocrypha is a collection of letters and sermons by Reformed Druids that were written after the Druid Chronicles (Reformed) were written by Frangquist, and before Shelton's departure. I suppose some might consider this the "Golden Age of Reformed Druidism." Step 2 stops with the letters written in May 1970. We will pause in our reading of the Apocrypha at this point, as these letters represent the quieter period of early Druidic expansion, before the Isaac Affair stirred things up. We will continue the Apocryphal readings in Step 6, when you'll have understood more about the thoughts of Reformed Druidism during the early years. Finally, read Robert Larson's interview in Part Ten, Robert would go on to found the Berkeley Grove (1968) after nearly graduating from Carleton in 1965.

· Consider these letters as by-products of Druidism in action, not as dogma.

· Note the individual styles.

· These books are light in spirit and provoke friendly introspection.

· Don't move on to the remaining Apocryphal books, yet.

· After reading a selection, read the matching historiography at the end of Part Two. How does this change your interpretation? Why should it?

##### **Step 3. The Eclectic Interests of the Druid of the Early Reform.**

Browse through Green Book, Volume One in Part Six. An important part of a Druidic service was the reading of a short meditation and then followed by a period of silence. Many Druids considered this part of the service to be very special for their spiritual growth. The Green Books contain samples from the many religions of the world, considered to be Druidic in spirit by their collectors. You can tell a lot about a group by the kinds of stories they would tell. Although most Groves would come up with their own readings (or sit quietly), the Green Book was only

really known at Carleton. Please note that volume 1 comes from Carleton's 1963-1976 period. Afterwards, do a little research on Rinzai (concerned with Koan riddles) and Soto (concerned with sitting meditation) forms of Zen Buddhism.

- Pause for a few minutes after reading each selection, and meditate quietly.
- You may meditate on how these selections fit into their "home" religions, but also consider whether they illuminate an already existing aspect of your own faith. You'd be amazed at what leeway exist in the corners of many religions.
- It is interesting that many of these selections become more interesting with the passage of time between readings.
- If you enjoy one particular area of readings, (perhaps the Christian or Bahai selections?), then go to a library or bookstore and do some further exploration.
- Ask friends for their favorite collections of religious stories. If you find a good collection send some of your favorite short stories, quotes or lessons into the Archives or to other Groves. Perhaps you might wish to start your own little Green Book collection and eventually publish it. The trick is that they must understandable to someone with little background knowledge.
- Occasionally return to the Green Books and see if something then looks interesting.

#### **Step 4. Learning those Strange Terms, Rules and Trivia.**

Casually skim through the Traditions, Customs and Other Irrelevant Trivia in Part Four. In particular, read "Record of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu" in Pt. 4 Sect 1, Carleton & Berkeley Constitution in Pt. 4 Sect 2, What is Reformed Druidism? (1965) in Pt. 4 Sect 4. This section explains the pesky terms that are peculiar to Reformed Druidism. It will be valuable to acquaint yourself with the location of Pt.4 Sect 6 & 7, and their general contents, may help you when you try to understand the actors, timeline and terms used in the future Apocrypha debates.

- Acquaint yourself with the location of the selections, but do not memorize them.
- Note in the Expansion Chart the bi-polar nature of Carleton and Berkeley in spawning new groves.
- Skip areas that don't look useful now, like by-laws & calendars. You can always return later when you need to know more.
- This area is a reference tool, only to be studied when necessary.
- This is a heavily fossilized area, so beware of falling dinosaurs.
- At this point, you have now read more about Reformed Druidism than 95% of all the Druids in the Reform. Are your opinions better informed than their real-life experiences?

#### **Step 5. So What Did the Early Druids Do at Services?**

Leisurely examine The Liturgy of the Druids in Part Three, especially focusing on Sect 1 & 2. I've delayed this part of ARDA, because many Reformed Druids have seen ritual as a perennial distraction from Druidism and occasionally as a potential cause for fierce debate. This collection represents almost 95% of all the written liturgies that I've been able to get my hands upon. I suspect they represent less than 25% of all the actual variety of scripts ever performed by Reformed Druids. Much of the time, Druids repetitiously used either the original Black Book scripts at Carleton up to 1980, or the DC(E) versions (Sect 3) amongst the NRDNA & at Carleton 1986-1993, with a great deal of improvising by both groups. The rest of the time they just winged it.

- You may wish to review the calendars and holidays of the various branches of the Reform found in Pt. 4 Sect 7 & 8, so that you can understand why the liturgies have different themes and activities depending on the time of the year.

- What types of opinion exist within the Reform about the role of liturgy both within the Reform itself and in the context of mankind as a whole? Review Pt. 2's "Earliest Selections".
- Understand the liturgical and secular roles of the three officers of a Grove. These roles differed occasionally between groves, and after 1976 it gets more complicated amongst the New RDNA of the West Coast and the SDNA.
- What is the role and purpose of ritual, routine or liturgy in your life?

#### **Step Six. The Affairs of the Shelton Archdruidcy**

Read "The Early Selection: Smiley Affair" and "Less Early Selections: Codex Affair" in Part 2. Then read Shelton's interview in Part Ten. Finally read Pt. 3 Sect 8's "Exorcism of War" and Sect 2's "Beltane Tips" Shelton is one of the most outstanding Druids in the upcoming Reformed debates, and his powerful influence reached throughout the 70s up to the present day, but he was not always so wise. His troubled Archdruidcy, from 1969-1971, rebuilt the foundations and foresaw many of the issues and concerns with continuity, dogma and publication, that would arise again in the Isaac Affair debates of the mid-70s.

- Note the influence of the Vietnam War on his Archdruidcy.
- Note the difficulty he had re-establishing the smooth operation of a grove after a short break in the oral tradition.
- His attempt to impose strict order and firm guidelines on the practices of the Druids drew strong rebukes, not unlike the future Isaac Affair.
- Also during his Archdruidcy, the last measure passed unanimously through the Council to unequivocally give equality to priestesses. He also oversaw the reprinting of the simple Druid Chronicles (Reformed) and withdrawal of the Founders from frequent intervention in the affairs of the Reform.
- Many of the 1970's liturgies in Section Two of Part Three are also likely of Shelton's authorship, as are several of the selections in the first volume of the Green Book.

## **The Intermediate Phase: The Great Debates of the Isaac Affairs**

#### **Step 7. The opening groundwork of the debates.**

Read Pt. 2 "The Middling Selections: The Isaac Affair" from The Book of Changes, Pt. 1 up to and including The Epistle of Norman. This collection of letters show the initial reactions to a revolutionary letter sent by Isaac to the entire Council of Dalon Ap Landu, the legislative body of the Reform. Step 7 through Step 9 are some of the most argumentative sections of the study program, because most of the Druids involved in the debate didn't know much about each other and the concept of Neo-Paganism had only really been invented in 1973, about a year earlier. Perhaps you should research how other religions have experienced schisms; like Catholic/Orthodox & Protestant Christianity, Shia & Sunni Islam, Mahayana & Theraveda Buddhism, Orthodox and Reformed Judaism, etc.

- Go slow, and use your reference skills from Step 4 to look up the people and terms being bandied about here.
- It is vital to remember that these are all personal opinions and are not doctrinal statements.
- Up to now, you haven't really seen Reformed Druids argue. Don't choose sides, but observe the arguments. What are the most interesting statements, in your opinion?
- After each selection, read the corresponding historiography, and then review your opinion. Has your opinion or understanding changed? Why?

- Notice the attempt to respectfully discuss their deeply personal opinions.
- What do you think are the key points in the debate for the groups on both sides of the Rocky Mountains?

### Step 8. The branching of the Reform into three groups.

Read from the second part of The Book of Changes up to and including the Second Epistle of Isaac as found in The Books of the Apocrypha in Part Two's "Middling Selections: The Isaac Affair". Review the Liturgies in Pt. 3, Sect 3. Also read the SDNA Constitution in Pt. 4 Sect 2 and "What and Why is Reformed Druidism? 1976 in Pt. 4 Sect 4. Read some of the NRDA songs in Pt. 6 Green Book Volume 6 (Book of Songs and Poetry Zero and 4 "Old NRDNA Magazines"). Finally examine the HDNA's materials in Part Five, one of the few other active SDNA groves, besides Isaac's Mother Grove.

Isaac's vote was taken and a sort of stalemate was reached. The Reform developed three branches at this point, essentially a status quo group retaining the name RDNA, a radical experimental version known as the Schismatic Druids of North America, and a moderate party known as the New RDNA. The turn of debates is turning more towards issues of improving communication to prevent future flare ups. The Druid Chronicles (Evolved) collection is put together during this period.

- Follow the same comments as in Step 7.
- It is intriguing how even the most individualistic Druids will sometimes rely on local custom rather than a personal understanding or experimentation.
- What's are the pros and cons of the proposed hierarchy upon Reformed Druidism?
- In what ways do you see substantial differences between the RDNA and the SDNA?

### Step 9. The Conclusion to the Great Debates of the Isaac Affair and the Formation of ADF.

Conclude your Apocryphal studies with readings from the third part of A Book of Changes in the "Middling Selections" up to the final entry (Beginning of ADF) in "Late Selection: Trouble in Paradise", in The Books of the Apocrypha. Then briefly review the liturgies from Pt. 3 Sect 4 (paying special attention to the historiographical notes at the end of Pt. 3) which show a transition from NRDNA style to the ADF liturgy format. The Council of Arch-Druids gave way to the Coalition Council of Dalon Ap Landu, whose notes are in Pt. 4 Sect 1. Isaac published several magazines, and you're welcome to skim through the Druid Chronicler and Pentalpha Journals in Part 11 (which is a separate volume of the ARDA collection). Skim through the By-Laws of Pentalpha and ADF in Pt. 4, Sect 3. Finally read the biographical notes on Isaac in Part Ten. More essays by Isaac on Druidism in general are available in "Pt. 6 Green Book Volume 10 Sect 3".

Basically this collection is a winding down of the Isaac Affair and the beginning of new attempts to organize a subset of the Druids. Isaac stopped writing letters about change, and simply started printing a magazine known as The Druid Chronicler & Pentalpha Journal, in which Druids could hold discussion on various topics. Eventually he realized that the RDNA was not the best organization to further develop his plans for a Neo-Pagan church and ADF was founded, using many lessons learned in his years with the RDNA. If you have time read from the works of Dumézil on Indo-European culture.

- Again, follow the same steps as in Steps 7 and 8.
- Notice where opinions have changed or where differences are acknowledged.
- Summarize the important debates of the Isaac Affair.

- What is your current inclination on these issues? Note them now, and refer back to them in a few years to investigate how much your opinions change over time.
- How did the liturgies change during Isaac's liturgical experimentation, and which items carried over into the early ADF liturgies?
- How do the Reform's various liturgies and orders compare to those found in religions that you are familiar with?
- If you are interested in the mechanics and theory of writing ceremony, pay attention to Robert Larson's and Isaac's materials. Isaac's epistles in the Apocrypha, and his book "Real Magic", describe his own attitude towards magical liturgies, and his groups in Ar nDraiocht Fein have done further work with his ideas and those of other Neopagan Druids. Do not assume that everyone in Berkeley agreed with Isaac as the Oral History tapes and comments from the Dead Sea Scrolls of Part Nine and the publications of Part Eleven may demonstrate.

### Step 10. Review of First 20 Years

Read my "General History of Reformed Druidism" in Part 8 up to and including Chapter Four. Up to this point, you have only read primary historical resources, unfiltered, and should be able to devise your own opinion on the early history of the Reform.

- How is your perception of events different from mine?
- Write your own summary of these first twenty years, perhaps a page or two, listing the main themes and trends towards organization.
- This is a very large reading. Break it down into separate readings, as you see fit.
- Remember that this is just a long epistle, laden with my own personal opinions.
- Notice the resources used, which you should be familiar with by now; documents, oral interviews, and wild conjecture.
- How could Scharding's Carleton background & Zen-Christian inclinations bias the history?
- What underlying message is Scharding trying to convey?
- What would be different if this history were written by Bonewits, Larson or Carruth? See Pt. 4 Sect 6 "Credits, Founders & Known Innovators" to see what and where they wrote materials.
- What a historian does not talk about is very revealing. Is something missing?

## Upper Intermediate Phase:

### Druidism Since Isaac

#### Step 11. The Live Oak Years

Read Pt. 2's "Later Selections: The Live Oak Years" which tells of some of the debates in the Druid Missal-Any magazine that came out after Live Oak Grove split off from the Berkeley Grove under Larry Press, Joan Carruth (Epistle of Myopians, Order of Dian Cecht) and Emmon Bodfish. Also skim through Part 11's issues of "A Druid Missal-Any" from 1982 to 1991; and then review the essays by authors in that period within Pt. 6 Green Book Volume Seven. Note the Live Oak liturgies in Pt. 3 Sect 5. Read the "What is Reformed Druidism? 1987" in Pt. 4 Sect 4. Read Pt. 9's "The Dead Bay Scrolls" which tells of the mood at the Hazelnut Grove during the 80s and early 90s in California. Browse through all the liturgical selections from the 1980s in Pt. 3 Sect 9. Read some of their poetry in Pt. 6 Green Book Vol Six Book #4. Part 8's Chapter Six has a short history of those years at Live Oak. Green Book 7 in Part 6 may be an interesting compilation for you. In the early 90s, Emmon Bodfish's failing health led to the closing of grove activities, and the premonitions

“Suggested Funeral Activities” in one of the final issues. Services stopped around 1993 at the Orinda site.

- Notice the drop in organizing enthusiasm in the Missal-Any after the Coup attempt referred to in 1985 (“Open Letters to the Grove” of Pt. 2).
- Tom Cross seemed to make many Druids in the Neo-pagan community angry by what has been described as scholarly fundamentalism on Celtic matters, possibly a result of the increase in research materials.
- Coincidentally Tom and Albion are the only non-Thirds to have letters in the Apocrypha.
- How would you describe the tone and general mood of these materials? Contemplative? Hermetic?
- It does seem that most attempts to organize the Druids have brought rather increasingly disappointing end-results.
- What would you say Emmon’s primary interests are?
- What you can’t tell from the layout in Part 11 is that the Druid Missal-Any was laden with small pictures, cartoons and hand-drawn notes, local clippings, filled with light hearted anecdotes, as opposed to the relatively austere version that Isaac produced.

### Step 12. The Carleton Revival 1986-1996

Read “Latest Selections: The Carleton Revival” in Part 2. Peruse Pt. 3 Sect 5’s liturgies & historiographies. Note the new orders in Pt. 3 Sect 7. Read The Big River Grove Constitution in Pt. 4 Sect 2 and the most recent publications in Pt. 4 Sect 4, except Dear Perspective Druid. Skim quickly through Pt. 6 Green Books Volume 2, 3 & 4 to gauge the eclectic interests of those years. Read the poetry of Scharding and the Carleton Grove in Pt. 6 Green Book Vol. 6 (Book of Songs & Poetry # 1, 2, 3). Then read Pt. 9’s “Dead Lake Scrolls” for the 1990-1995 years at Carleton. Finally read Mike Scharding’s interview in Pt. 10.

Carleton had a difficult period of transition between 1980 and 1985, in which they mostly fell apart twice, and the succession of the Third Order and most traditions had been broken. The group that formed afterwards naturally filled the gaps with amazing social and activity experiments, such as Wiccan & Native American services (which have sadly not been recorded in the Archives). In 1992, Scharding brought back many of the traditions and produced a flood of materials and archival efforts that have shaped developments since then. The period ends with Mike going to Japan.

- Note the greater flexibility and diversity of ordination customs.
- Note the sharp lack of interaction with other groves. It was very isolated, although many grove members attend Pagan Festivals.
- This was an era of increasing complexity out of the raw experiments of the early years.
- How would you describe Scharding’s writing style?
- Did it change in any way by 1996?
- It was a period of greater interaction with past members and amongst other RDNA groves.
- I have to admit, I was crazily publishing non-stop from 1992-1996, and the burnout led to my decision to go to Japan in 1996.
- The archives were established around this time, but haven’t grown much since 1996. They reflect my interest in studying the relationship between the different Druid groups. The website is at [www.geocities.com/druidarchives](http://www.geocities.com/druidarchives)
- Despite the publication outburst, grove activity only slowly grew from 30 on the mailing list in 1992 (a low point) to 160 in 2000 (a high point), although the attendance at services was between 3-10, with triple that at bigger festivals.
- Andrea Davis (AD 90-93) also had significant influence as an advisor with the Carleton Druids throughout the 90s.

### Step 13. Recent Developments 1996-2003

Read Pt. 2’s “New Selections.” Skim through the Online Services and most recent liturgies in Pt. 3 Sect 5. Note the emphasis in Pt.3 Sect 10 on non-liturgical activities, a trend encouraged by Mike’s living in Japan’s traditional farming villages, attending Shinto festivals. Irony’s trip to Europe, like Mike’s in 1991, also led to a re-evaluation of their Druidism. Note Pt. 4 Sect 5’s internet “wait and see” proselytizing efforts along with Dear Perspective Druid in Sect 4. Pt. 6 Green Book Volume 5 and 9 show a greater increase in humor, activism, and traditional lore in the Druid Missal-Any newsletter that began again in 2000 under Stacey Weinberger. Skim through those issues in Part 11. After Mike left, and Carleton was on its own, the brakes on its creativity were lifted, and Pt. 9’s Dead River Scrolls ensued. Also check out the poetry in Pt. 6 Green Book Vol. 6 (Books # 5, 6, 7, 8).

This era was essentially the digitalization of the Druidism. The number of groves and protogroves skyrocketed, and the time and postage costs grew minimal with free communication and data transfer of materials, such as ARDA, to members all over the country, far from a functioning grove. The NRDNA and RDNAtalk conferences on Yahoogroups.com quickly swelled to over a hundred members, including several old-time Druids and lots of new seekers. Postings steadily rose to about 40/day on the average in late 2002. Most active members know each other on-line, but still haven’t met each other in person, a trait becoming common in the late 70s with Isaac’s newsletter efforts.

- I consider Irony Sade one of my most gifted successors, but this was an age of great creativity by many other members in non-literary areas.
- Note the rapid growth of groves and complexity of the Druid Missal-Any, as a rallying device for loosely organizing Druids.
- Many interesting new voices enter the records during this point.
- Can you see parallels between Carleton in the 90s and Berkeley in the 70s?
- What are the recent trends?
- What do you feel are the likely future developments?

### Step 14. Review of the Last 20 Years for the RDNA

Read Pt. 8’s “General History” chapters 6, 7, & 8. You’ve now finished most of the material generated by the Reform, and should be able to quickly locate and explain the contents to someone inquiring about RDNA literature.

- What do you think of the developments?
- What is the RDNA like without strong organizing members?
- Are members in greater contact than ever before?
- How do members stay in touch?
- What are the continuing weaknesses of the Reform?
- Is the Reform a religion, or something else?
- Can you see similar developmental trends in other groups that you are familiar with? (e.g. KMT & CCP split in modern Chinese history)
- If you were going to start a grove, in which tradition would you found it and how would you go about allowing creativity and encouraging members to grow?
- What is your favorite Reformed literature so far?

### Step 15. Reviewing Literature on the RDNA

Read Pt. 6 Green Book 10, Section 1 & 2. Since you now know quite a great deal about the RDNA history, it’s time for you to read what other people have written about the RDNA. I haven’t found any significant new postings since 1996 in the reference section, most of which assume the Reform is more or less moribund.

- What are your reflections on the various reviews?
- What are the limitations of the various sources?
- What are the major concerns of each piece?
- Note the influence of Fisher letter to Melton and succeeding encyclopedists.
- What are they trying to convey to the reader?
- What do you hope to see covered in future reviews?
- What are the likely summaries likely to mention in future reviews?
- Why is the RDNA even covered at all in this collections?

### Step 16. Unexamined Sections

Go back and review the various sections of the book especially sections that you haven't read. There should be large gaps in you reading in Pt. 3, 4, 6 & 11.

- Enjoy and take your time, perhaps a week or two.
- Try to work out a blue-print for starting an imaginary grove. How would you structure it, how would you fill positions, what materials would you use to advertise it, what would your grove espouse, how would you run the services, which activities would you sponsor?
- Review the terminologies, famous Druids, grove rolls and try and understand how the enormously complicated calendars worked at Carleton, Berkeley and among the ancient Celts.
- Try to place every article or selection with a writer's name or a grove or a trend in the RDNA. (e.g. Pt. 3 Sect 9's "Four Salutations of the Day" could be quickly summarized as "Written by Emmon Bodfish for the Druid Missal-Any during the Live Oak Grove period of the 1990s, belonging to the NRDNA movement in a Post-Isaac environment, showing Emmon's special interest in magick and the occult and Eastern martial arts.") As you do so, the historical usefulness of this collection will greatly increase as you put together the pieces of the puzzle, and can appreciate the larger pattern that comes together before you.
- Perhaps put together your own Green Book collection over the next year?

## The Advanced Phase: Beyond the RDNA

### Step 17. Researching Spin-Off Groups

Read Chapter 5 of Part 8. Go online and read or download as much information as you can on Ar nDraiocht Fein (ADF) at [www.adf.org](http://www.adf.org) and Henge of Keltria at [www.keltria.org](http://www.keltria.org) Read as many of their old magazines, group statements, liturgies, by-laws and essays as you can. Perhaps sign up membership with them, and stay current on their events. Go to a few festivals or services with them. Perhaps enroll in their study courses (if this study course hasn't already exhausted you!). Many of their materials are available at the Carleton Archives, but many are also available at the on-line sites or can be back-ordered. Also try to learn about affiliated groups like Missionary Order of the Celtic Cross (Used to be Reformed Druidic Wicca) and the Order of Mithril Star (OMS). Find their home pages and talk conferences, if you can. Buy a copy of "American Druidism" on Amazon.com if it's still available, plus any of the books on modern Druidry, such as "Druidcraft- the Magic of Wicca and Druidry" or "Druid Renaissance" by Philip Carr-Gomm. To understand other Waters brotherhoods, read "Stranger in a Strange Land" & "Dune" in the science fiction field.

- How are their organizations run differently or similarly to the RDNA?
- What are the primary inheritances from the RDNA
- What are their areas of specialty?

- What can they teach the RDNA?
- How big are they and where are their groves located?
- Who runs the groups, who are their leaders?
- Why attracts some groups to affiliate with the RDNA or ADF?

### Step 18. Researching Ancient Druids

Now that you know so much about Modern Druids, it wouldn't hurt to brush up on your ancient Druids. This will require a life time of reading, but for about two weeks or so, read some of the suggested books about the ancient Druids for Pt. 6 Green Book Vol. 10 Section 5 & 6.

- I highly recommend authors Ellis, Piggott & Miranda Green.
- John & Caitlin Matthews have put out a large number of resource collections on various ancient Druids and modern fraternal groups. They don't often write about the faults of the various pieces, rather, they just present them to you.
- Note interesting practices you'd like to adopt.
- Note certain customs that don't seem to be possible in modern society.
- Continue to read a book every two or three months after you finish this study course. After 10 years that's 50 books, and you'll be quite learned by then.

### Step 19. Researching Neo-Paganism

Read the most recent edition of Drawing Down the Moon (1979, 1986, 1997), and refer to some of the resource materials in Pt. 6 Green Book Vol 10, Section 5 "Academic Resources for Researching Druidism" which has a selection on Wicca and Neopaganism.

- Read Drawing Down the Moon and two or three other books.
- This may take a few weeks.
- How similar is the RDNA to the history of the modern Wicca and other Neopaganism?
- What is the "niche" of the RDNA?
- What generally sets the RDNA apart from everyone else?
- How does Druidism stand apart from other forms of Neo-Paganism?

## The Super Advanced Phase: A review

### Step 20. Final Thoughts and a Time for Reflection.

Slowly review all your questions, notes and insights from the first nineteen steps of the beginner's study guide program. At the end of every project there should be a time to pause and assess the outcome and progress that has been attained.

- Ask yourself, "What lessons have I learned?". Meditate for a while.
- Ask yourself, "Which could I apply to my life?". Meditate again.
- Participation in this study program did not require dropping your religion and become a Druid. It hopefully required you to think.
- You have studied a great deal of written texts by Reformed Druids. Now realize, as I explained in The Book of Lacunae, that all of these Druids received THEIR inspiration from Nature and not from books.
- A Druid is a Druid because they are a Druid.
- Most Druids find that the insights of Druidism (whatever they may be) will make their studies and practice of religion more useful and challenging.
- Ask yourself, "What more is there to learn?" Go and learn it well.

# Certificate of Completion for this ARDA Study Program

Most study programs hand out a certificate of accomplishment, so here's one if you feel like you need one. The Deanship of Druid Textology, regularly abbreviated as D.D.T., was first administered by Frangquist in April of 1970 to McDavid for his efforts of internal cross-referencing for a new edition of The Druid Chronicles (Reformed), which wasn't really redone until the 1978 release by Morrison. By the time you finish your studies, you'll realize that most Druids do not put much stock in titles and some actually do so only for mischievous purposes. However, some people welcome a chance to display an intellectual achievement has been performed. For those people, I offer them a chance to devise a certificate for their DDT.

Feel free to duplicate and adapt its structure to a horizontal 8.5x11 sheet of paper, filling in the appropriate blanks. I recommend for a lower left seal, perhaps using a picture of a Nature scene using a color copier, and drawing a few simple sigils with your drawing program. Most copy shops can provide fancy border strips to line the edging or a word processor can put a black-line-box around the whole thing.

## The Reformed Druids of North America

"Texts of the Reformed Druids"

This award is to certify that (insert your full name here) has been awarded a degree as a Dean of Druid Textology on \_\_\_\_\_ of the year \_\_\_\_\_ of the Common Era, by the powers already vested in him or her for meritorious recognition upon the completion of a course of instruction in Reformed Druidic texts. To this candidate is bestowed all the rights and responsibilities pertaining thereunto.

Dean of Druid Textology

May the blessings of the Earth-Mother be ever apparent unto thee,

*(Sign your own first name here and  
draw a druid sigil to the right of it)*

*(Indicate any other titles you wish here)*

Day \_\_\_ of (Season)

Year of the Reform \_\_\_\_

DD/MM/YYYY c.e.



# Advice for Generic Religious Scholar

I'm assuming that you've spent a couple years of thoughtful personal study on more than one world religion. You are probably unfamiliar with how to categorize Reformed Druidism. The simple answer is, "Don't". I can't do it and I've tried very hard. If you think you've succeeded, then you're probably ignoring all the exceptions. Druidism is just Druidism.

## Advantages about studying or teaching Reformed Druidism:

- Once certain misconceptions are dismissed, it is very simple to understand.
- It concerns itself with basic issues of religion, which are always good for debate.
- It is a manageable microcosm of the new religions movement.
- The RDNA is the great grandmother of the modern Neo-Druid movement.
- It is rather old in the eyes of the Neo-Pagan movement, with a history over 40 years.
- All of the primary movers and shakers are still alive and can still be interviewed.
- The RDNA has a remarkably good archive of its history, all publicly accessible.
- In fact, this Anthology represents perhaps only 70% of printed records by the RDNA.
- Even if it does not like to use them, it has all the external trappings of a religion in a Protean sense.

## There are stumbling blocks about Reformed Druidism in store for you:

- They have produced lots of literature, but none of it is considered dogma.
- They disagree, or are unsure, if they are a religion, philosophy or perspective.
- They sometimes say very serious things with their tongue in the cheek. You never know if they are pulling your leg.
- The role of ritual and group activity is an individual decision.
- Terribly isolated and unorganized in reality despite the appearance of this volume of readings.
- The Celtic cultural trappings, prominent in several groves, may be unfamiliar to many students.
- The hierarchy's sole purpose seems to be to inhibit its own efficiency.
- Members of each grove come from (and often maintain) ties with diverse religions.
- Reformed Druidism has a very different agenda from other Druidic organizations.

## Books That You Might Wish as Supplementary Texts:

If you haven't purchased a copy of Drawing Down the Moon by Margot Adler, ISBN 0-8070-3253-0, and try to get the 1997 edition or newer, it would be a good time to do so. Although most of the Reformed Druids do not consider themselves Neo-Pagans, they often resemble the Neo-Pagans in the way they think outside of traditional Western thought. Adler's book is a very good back to use alongside this Anthology, and they even have a

chapter in there about us! It's available everywhere, find out if there is a newer edition has been made since 1986.

Other possible accompanying texts for a course on Modern Druidism or Neo-Paganism would include "Being a Pagan: Druids, Wiccans & Witches Today" by Ellen Evert Hopman, "Complete Idiot's Guide to Paganism", "Contemporary Paganism: Listening People, Speaking Earth" By Graham Harvey, "The Druid Renaissance" by Phillip Carr-Gomm, "Paganism: An Introduction to Earth Centered Religions".

The main volume of the Anthology should be available on-line in a print-on-demand format soon, so inquire to [mikerdna@hotmail.com](mailto:mikerdna@hotmail.com) if you want to order printed versions.

Daniel Hansen has written a book called American Druidism: A Guide to American Druid Groups, ISBN 0-89716-600-0. If you have trouble finding it, it should be available from Peanut Butter Publishing, 226 2nd Ave W. Seattle Washington 98119 (206)281-5965. It is a good concise overview of the Neo-Druid movement, although it's hard to find now on Amazon.com.

## How Should the Scholar go About Studying with the Anthology?

There is no reason that you can't also follow the advice of the Type One beginner. You might want to work at a faster pace, certainly. The important choice for you to make is whether or not you wish to start by reading my History of Reformed Druidism in America (in part eight). I probably have a Carleton bias in my writings and I have the advantage of hindsight, which the earlier Druids did not have. By following the beginner's program you will follow the Reform opinions develop and diversify over time. Also from following the development of primary sources, you can watch trends and events develop unexpectedly. The opinions that you will develop on your own will be markedly different than they would be if you started with my History. Of course, starting with the History may put the whole study in a quick perspective.

Most of the questions discussed in the beginner's regimen are probably appropriate for you also. However, if you don't find them challenging enough, here are some tougher questions for you to ponder:

1. What is really important in a religion?
2. How do labels limit understanding?
3. When does an irreverent joke become a respectable tradition?
4. What is gained or lost from such a transition?
5. At what point does a religion exist?
6. The Reform began by poking fun at Christianity, but does its own evolving history end up following the same course of Christianity and other developing religions amongst oppressed minorities?
7. Is Druidism really as unique as it claimed, or did they not know better?
8. How does Reformed Druidism resemble Quakerism?
9. How does Reformed Druidism resemble Taoism or Zen?
10. How does Reformed Druidism resemble liberal Christianity or Universal Unitarianism?

## What to Do When You're Done?

I would gladly welcome copies of any papers that you produce using these materials, or if we're only a small part of a larger book, just send a photocopy of the parts relating to us. I also take comments on this collection very graciously. My next ten years are unstable geographically, but you can always write to the International Druid Archives, Care of Carleton College Archives,

300 North College Street, Northfield, Minnesota 55057. They can find me and will gladly take possession of any contributions of your materials.

After finishing your study here, there are several natural extensions of study:

1. Teach it as a class. Copies are available free on disk and they you can print as many copies as you want.
2. Go to the International Druid Archives and study a specific issue or grove in depth.
3. Critique by presentation severely and send me a copy
4. Study the growth and activities of Ar nDraiocht Fein, the Henge of Keltria etc.
5. Study the Neo-Pagan movement in general.
6. Compare American Druidism with European Druidism.
7. Compare Neo-Pagan movements with Christian movements seeking a return to the original faith of the Christians.

## Advice for Neo-Pagans, Celtophiles, Wiccans, etc.

I assume that you've been practicing a "fringe religion" for a few years already, and like the religious scholar, you know your way around the block. Yet you are like the "novice" seeker of truth for whom I devised the study program, since you fully intend to incorporate any discovered wisdom into your life. There's a good chance that you are raiding ARDA for materials to take "home" with you. You are welcome to do so, but be careful not to call it Reformed Druidism and remember to give us some credit, and a copy when you're done.

If you are reading this collection because you think that we know all the secrets of the Ancient Celtic Druids, um. . . you're probably in the wrong place and should be looking elsewhere or try contacting one of the more Celtic oriented NRDNA groups (see below). Don't despair! I have provided a reasonably good bibliography of books on Celtic Druidism in Pt. 6 Green Book Vol. 10 Section 5, which should have some leads in it. There are also addresses for modern Druid groups, on Isaac's website at [www.neopagan.net](http://www.neopagan.net). If you live near Minnesota, you can visit the Druid Archives and thereby read the literature of several extant and extinct Modern Druid groups. In any case, I'm sorry if we have distracted you, but feel free to visit.

You will probably already understand the Neo-Pagan mindset, and so you will be able to appreciate this collection a lot faster than the religious scholar. For you, there are certain practical benefits that you can take home to own coven or group. Here are some things to think about as you read:

1. Should your group produce a collection of its own?
2. This Anthology was only possible because of decent record keeping from the beginning. What habits do you suspect were used?
3. Why don't the Reformed Druids keep their materials secret?
4. Is it better to deeply understand the purpose of religion before choosing one?
5. Why do religions choose definitions that exclude people?
6. What is the role of organization and ritual in religion?
7. Issues of power of leaders over followers and vice-a-versa.
8. The role of open communication in running a religious group.
9. The difficulty of transforming an established group.
10. Why Druids?

## Where to Study After Working on the Reformed Druids?

If you are enamored with our pseudo-anarchic organizational activities and philosophies, then you may be interested in studying the following groups:

1. The Discordians (see Margot Adler's Drawing Down the Moon)
2. The Quakers (aka The Society of Friends)
3. The Deists of 18th century England (mostly extinct now)
4. The Unitarian Universalists
5. The Universal Life Church 601 third street, Modesto California, 95351 (209) 527-8111. (the guys who'll ordain anyone)

## Advice for the Old Warhorses of RDNA:

Well it's here. What can you do with it? And how do you like being written about?

1. Use it as evidence that I've gone mad (more than usual) and write long detailed letters proving it. Make sure to send me copies, via the Archives.
2. Make a copy for your local university's reference section.
3. When someone asks you about Druidism, throw this book at them. Whether they read it or not isn't the point.
4. Keep it around as a handy portable archives.
5. Door stop or paperweight or boat anchor.

Well, if you really liked Isaac's Druid Chronicles (Evolved), you'll find most of those materials are still in here, and that edition will be reprinted (minus some artistic flourishes in 2003 also). The introductions, commentaries and endnotes have been heavily edited or lengthened to put them in my perspective of the Reform's long history. Heck, you might even want to try the study course that I suggested. There are significant additions that you may find interesting to inspect:

1. Historiographies on most of the publications.
2. Eleven new books to the Apocrypha that dialogue with the original contents.
3. Many versions of the Liturgy that you haven't seen.
4. Carleton's calendrical system and additional trivia of Part Four.
5. The Green Book, rarely seen outside of the Carleton Grove
6. A General History of Reformed Druidism.
7. The Books of the Latter-Day Druids
8. All the past Druid Chroniclers, for free and in one sitting.

## How to Correct Errors

Since I'm going to be distributing this primarily online, so I can make corrections relatively easy for the next edition. If you send in lists of corrections, they'll eventually get worked into an updated version. Please especially tell me if there is a misquoted author or copyright violation, so that I can amend or remove the offending element.

I should continue to have an operative e-mail for a few years after publishing ARDA 2, barring a catastrophic disaster, at [mikerdna@hotmail.com](mailto:mikerdna@hotmail.com)

Call Carleton's Alumni service at [www.carleton.edu/alumni](http://www.carleton.edu/alumni) and do a people search to find me, or write to: Carleton College Archives, regarding IDA, 300 North College St., Northfield, Minnesota 55057.

## How to Get More Copies

Free downloads of the main volume are available at <http://www.student.carleton.edu/orgs/Druids/ARDA/> or at the site of <http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/arda.html> and the Green Books and Magazine volumes should also be viewable there. They should be ready to print on a double-sided laser-printer. My own web-page at [www.geocities.com/mikerdna](http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna) should be up for a few more years. [Mikerdna@hotmail.com](mailto:Mikerdna@hotmail.com) and I'll send the files.

If that really fails, send \$10 in cash to cover a CD-ROM copy of this publication for research purposes to the Carleton Archives, Carleton College, Northfield MN 55057, plus return postage costs, and we'll mail you files in an Adobe Acrobat format with all the materials (and more) in the ARDA collection.

If this web site becomes unavailable, visit the main Carleton page at <http://www.carleton.edu> and search for the Carleton Archives or other searches on the internet for the Anthology.

## Other Sources on the RDNA

If you are not satisfied with my presentation of the Reform, or you feel that I was biased (which I probably am), then you may wish a second opinion. Although we are not famous, there have been many other attempts to analyze and discuss Reformed Druidism.

### Published Reviews of the RDNA

Although I might have missed a few of them, most of them will be available at Pt. 6 Green Book Vol. 10 Sect 1, 2 & 3. It should give a wider sense of understanding than just my own views by encyclopedia makers and professional writers. So far, little has been written about the RDNA by either ADF or Keltria, perhaps due to a low historical consciousness, as both groups have not produced their own archives or historical collections yet.

### International Druid Archives

This is the Reform's own collection of its historical documents and you can try to reconstruct your own opinion or pursue further examination of certain aspects of Reformed Druidism. They have tapes, magazines, letters, interviews and other RDNA publications in addition to material on ADF, Keltria and other offshoot groups.

For more information write to the Carleton Archives, RE: International Druid Archives, 300 North College Street, Northfield, Minnesota, 55057. They also have a web-page online. A reasonably full list of Druid archival contents are at <http://www.geocities.com/druidarchives>

## Printing Advice

Make a more focused printout collection to carry with you:

Liturgist Collection: Main 3 & Green 7 --- 300pages  
Traveling Missionary: Main 1,(2),3,4 & Green 7 --- 450 pages  
Contemplative: Main 1, 2 & Green 1-4 --- 500 pages





# SECTION THREE: CONCLUSION

## Dedication

This edition is dedicated to Robert Larson, Be. who died on Aug. 6<sup>th</sup>, 2004 prompting the revived enthusiasm to get this volume published. Robert Larson, as you'll read in here, was the Druid who brought RDNA Druidism to California, where it prospered and initiated the modern Druid movement of America. May he rest with peace and frolic in the Land of the Young evermore.

## Editor's Blessing upon the Reader

May the blessings of the Earth-Mother be apparent unto you in every day of your life. May you live as long as you wish, make and keep good friends, profit in your just undertakings, gain respect from your peers for your good deeds, and avoid ill-health.

## As For Written Tradition...

“They are said to commit to memory a great number of verses. And they remain some 20 years in training. Nor do they judge it to be allowed to entrust these things to writing although in nearly the rest of their affairs, and public and private transactions, Greek letters are used. It seems to me there are two reasons this has been established: neither do they wish the common people to pride themselves in the training nor those who learn to rely less on memory, since it happens to a large extent that individuals give up diligence in memory and thorough learning through the help of writing.”

**Julius Caesar 44 b.c.e.**

## Midwinter

When the wind blows cold  
on the Hill of Three Oaks  
the hearth fire is warm.

Richard Smiley, 1964

## The Inheritance

What shall I leave as  
A keepsake after I die?  
In spring, flowers;  
Summer, cuckoos;  
Fall, red maple leaves;  
Winter, snow.

Ryokan's deathbed poem, 1831

Thus Endeth  
Volume Zero  
of ARDA 2

# VOLUME ONE: THE DRUID CHRONICLES

(Reformed)

a.k.a.

## The Chronicles of the Foundation

Written 1963 – 1964.

By David Frangquist

### 1996 Introduction

Originally published under the title of The Druid Chronicles (Reformed), abbreviated DC(R) and nicknamed The Chronicles, these books contain the basic history and beliefs of the first year of the original branch of the Reform founded at Carleton College from which all the past, present and future Branches of the Reformed Druidism spring. Thus the Chronicles are the about the only section of A Reformed Druid Anthology that is acknowledged by every group. The primary author, David Frangquist, has made no claim of divine inspiration; nor has any other branch of the Reform. These five books have no canonical status, but they're chock-full of interesting and fun stuff. Don't take it too seriously and try to see the message that underlies all the outer-trappings, holidays and names.

For a more detailed discussion on the Chronicles see the End-Notes, Printing History and Historiography at the end of end of this Part One. Internal cross-referencing is indicated by raised numbers. The existence of detailed endnotes related to a verse is signaled by asterixes. Both are listed at the end.

### 2003 Introduction

No significant changes were made this section, except typographical corrections, and moving the cross-referencing notes forward a few pages and sub-dividing them.

The Drynemetum Press





# The Early Chronicles

## Chapter the FIRST

1. The first of the chronicles of the disciples of the Earth-Mother, and of the various and wondrous events which did occur to them who gave themselves in service to the establishment of the reform, which branch\* of the order was in Northfield, which is a city in Minnesota, the southeast part thereof. Peace be unto those whose hope lies in the comfort of the Earth-mother.
2. In those days (when Nason was president at Carleton) a decree went out from the Administration that all Sundays must be accounted for.\* So each went to their own place of worship in order that their credit might be established on their record.
3. And it came to pass that there were those among these people who chose to pursue such forms of worship as were not at that time in general acceptance. And one of these was a man named David, who was also a Fisher.\*
4. Now he did appear in the area which is north of the Lake of Lyman,\* proclaiming the glory which was Druid. And a few there were who listened to him and consulted with him.
5. And it came to pass that when a group of the faithful were gathered on a hill, where there had been set up a small monument in stone, they concluded among themselves that this place should be the new location of an altar, which would be built with the work of their hands out of rough stone.\*
6. And it also came to be revealed, at that time, that David, who was a Fisher, was a priest in the order of the Druids, and that his rank was that of the Third Order Priest.\*
7. Now it was decided that there should be a regular service of worship which could be held in the appointed place, and which would be held on the last day of the week, which is Saturday, according to the old custom.\*
8. All of these things, which have been presently related, did occur during the month of April,\* which is just before the celebration of Beltane, and that time is generally held to be the time of the beginning of the reform.

## Chapter the SECOND

1. And it came to pass that when the celebration of Beltane (which is the first day of the month of May) was held, there was not yet completed the altar which was to be built of stone, according to the plan which had been adopted by the faithful.\*
2. And so it was that an altar which was small and portable and made out of steel came to be used for the service. And it was generally agreed that it was indeed an inferior type of altar.\*
3. Thus, a group of disciples began to assemble the rough stones which were necessary to build the new altar. An although their numbers were small in the beginning, those who did lend their help did increase until their number was nearly doubled.\*
4. Now when the last stones had been laid in the altar, the priest did step back from it, and did look upon it, and he said: "It is good.<sup>a</sup> We shall hold services here around it today, after the noon" (for it was Saturday).

5. And the altar did measure about two cubits high, and about two cubits wide, and about three cubits long.\*
6. And it came to pass that there were in number about a dozen people who did gather at the altar that day, and who did partake of the waters-of-life.\*
7. After the waters of life had been passed, Howard who was called Cherniack, did rise up (for he was a Preceptor, and of the Second Order), and he did read to them from a paper.
8. The purpose of this paper was to establish for them a constitution;\* so when the reading had been completed, the Arch-Druid (for such was the priest to be called) did ask those who were gathered if they did approve.
9. Now all who were present did give their assent, save one who was not yet of the First Order. And it came to pass that when the question was again asked on the week following, all did again approve, save one who did not disapprove of the paper, and so it was considered unanimous.
10. And so after the paper had been accepted in this manner, the congregation of the disciples was then known as the Reformed Druids.<sup>b</sup> \*

## Chapter the THIRD\*

1. Now after the paper had been read on the first Saturday after the celebration of Beltane, it was perceived that the sky was covered by clouds. And this was not good for a Saturday evening.
2. Thus did the Arch-Druid go and kneel before the altar and invoke the Earth-Mother asking for a clearing of the weather.
3. And the Earth-mother did look upon the congregation of the faithful, and did look upon the altar which had been built to her glory, and saw that it was good.
4. And, behold, there was a great wind in the sky, and it did blow from the sky in the space of less than two hours all of the clouds, yea, even the last vestige thereof. And the sun shone brightly in the sky.
5. And this was taken to be a sign.
6. But some there were those in the area who did scoff, for their hearts were hardened. And they did conspire, saying: "Let us tear down the stones from the altar which has been built on the hill."
7. And they did go in secret to the altar, and did tear at the altar, each with his bare hands, and did take therefrom the stones which had been set there, yea, even down to the foundation thereof.
8. And the Earth-mother did look upon this with disfavor, for it was the defilement of the altar which had been built to her glory.
9. And so it came to pass that in that same day, even as the last stones were being removed, a storm did gather, and there was thunder and lightning and rain;
10. and it was exceedingly cold, and the clouds did not leave the skies for a period of four days.
11. And this also was taken to be a sign.

## Chapter the FOURTH

1. And it came to pass that when those of the faithful who had built the altar, each one with their bare hands, did find that the altar had been defiled, they did rend the air with their lamentations.
2. And they did set themselves there to the task of once again building the altar, that is, of rebuilding it; and they did set each stone in the place which had been appointed to it.
3. And as they did complete their task, the sun did make a brief appearance unto them from in the midst of those clouds which were covered over the sky;\*
4. and each took this to be a sign, each in their own way.<sup>c</sup>
5. Now after the work was the second time completed, those whose purpose it was to do evil unto the altar did come the second time also;
6. and they did come in the darkness of the night, for they were the Anti-Druids.
7. Now when these Anti-Druids did come, their coming being covered by the darkness of the night, they did come with the smell of drink heavy upon them; yea, were they so filled with drink that they were under the influence thereof.\*
8. And they did pull at the stones of the altar, yea, did they tear at the altar with their bare hands, and they did pull the stones away, one from the other.
9. Now as the Anti-Druids did defile the altar in this manner, one of their number did shout in his loudest voice: "Blasphemy!...Blasphemy!" for so was he under the power of strong drink.
10. And it came to pass that the faithful did perceive that the altar had once again been attacked by the hand of violence, then did they again rend the air with their lamentation, so great was their grief.
11. Wherefore they did set to the task which was before them, which was the task of placing the stones the third time in their proper places; but they did fix them there this time with mortar,<sup>d</sup> that they might not be wrested therefrom by the hand of the Anti-Druid.
12. And a curse was placed on the altar; and the Arch-Druid spake unto the Druids assembled saying: "Verily I say unto you, whosoever findeth him who hath done this thing, be he admonished to do whatsoever he will to make for him his life miserable."
13. And it came to pass that it was made known to them that one of the Anti-Druids had come to twist his ankle, yea, even to sprain it; and this was taken to be a sign.

## Chapter the FIFTH\*

1. And it came to pass that the time was near at hand for the altar to be consecrated.
2. Now it was the custom that when an altar was to be consecrated, that a sacrifice should be made upon it, which sacrifice should be of a living thing, yea, a thing which doth testify to the bounty of the Earth-mother.
3. And the purpose of this sacrifice is to consecrate the altar.
4. But behold, there did arise a dispute among the Druids concerning this sacrifice which was to be made upon the altar.
5. For there were some among them who were in favor of a small sacrifice and some who were persuaded that the sacrifice should be a large one;

6. those being in favor of the small sacrifice having a desire that it be of the living leaves and branches of a tree;
7. those being in favor of the large sacrifice having a desire that it be of the living flesh and blood of an animal or bird.
8. Wherefore, there did ensue a dispute among them concerning the manner in which this sacrifice should be made.
9. And it came to pass that Howard, who was Preceptor, did arise and he spake unto them saying: "Have ye not forgotten that we are reformed, yea, even do we call ourselves by the name of Reformed,<sup>e</sup> wherefore we must put behind us those things which do bring offense to our senses;" for Howard was one of them who were in favor of the small sacrifice.
10. But another did arise, who did call himself Jan, for he was in favor of the sacrifice of an animal, and he spake unto them saying: "Have ye not forgotten the customs of old which were the customs of our predecessors before us? Verily I say unto you, nothing will be acceptable to the Earth-mother save it were nothing smaller than an animal or fowl, yea, even a chicken."\*
11. Wherefore, there was about to occur a great schism between those on the one hand who were of the first faction and those on the other hand who were of the second faction.
12. And they were exceedingly wroth one with the other.
13. But behold, Jan did rise up and relent his position, asking neither that flesh nor blood be spilt upon the altar; for he did perceive that they were not strong enough and that such a schism would be their end, wherefore he did relent that the schism might not take place.\*
14. And it came to pass that the altar was consecrated by the burning of living leaves and branches of a tree;<sup>f</sup> and it came to pass that the altar was consecrated on the third Saturday after the celebration of Beltane (which is the first day of the month of May).

## Chapter the SIXTH

1. Now it came to pass that on the fourth Saturday after the celebration of Beltane,\* it came to be decided that petition be made unto the authorities, that is the Administration, concerning the recognition of the activities of the Druids.
2. And it came to pass that there were many among them who did approve; for they were in number about one score and two.
3. And each went and prepared their petition in the manner that was prescribed by the Administration.\*
4. But behold, there were then returned notices which did say: "Thy actions are not acceptable in our sight."\*
5. Wherefore, Howard, who was preceptor, did go up unto the authorities saying: "Do ye not see that there are many like us which do go by strange creeds?"
6. And he was answered: "Yea, verily we do see that there be many like ye which do go by strange creeds. Neither ye nor they are acceptable in our sight."
7. And Howard spake saying: "By what method do ye judge?"
8. And he was answered: "We are chosen that we should be judges. Yea, even do we judge according to our judgements."\*

9. But there were two of the petitions which were not rejected, for they were the domain of a different authority; and this was taken to be a good sign.\*

## Chapter the SEVENTH

1. Now on the fifth Saturday after the celebration of Beltane,\* the Druids were assembled as usual; and after the waters-of-life had been passed, the Arch-Druid spake unto them saying:
2. "Behold, how our altar is attacked on the one side,<sup>g</sup> and our recognition is rejected on the other.<sup>h</sup> Are we not afflicted even as were our predecessors before us?"
3. "Our predecessors of old did take up the sword and fight with those who afflicted them, but they were defeated.
4. "Wherefore, we must not take up the sword, but remain tolerant and patient in our afflictions that there might be peace."\*
5. And he spake saying: "Behold, this is the last time we shall be together for a long time. The time is at hand when we shall depart, each of us going his own separate way.\*
6. "Behold the flowers of the earth and the beauty thereof; and behold the sky and the clouds and the beauty thereof; and behold all the handiwork of the Earth-mother and the beauty thereof.
7. "Be ye firm in the faith; and as ye go your separate ways take time to pause before all the glory of the Earth-mother (which is Nature); and fail not to meditate on that which has been said and done here, yea, even as the sun does reach it height in the north (which is Midsummer and an important day with us) should ye meditate on these things.
8. "For verily I say unto you, when the sun crosses the equator, shall ye be again reunited here with these thy brethren."<sup>i</sup>
9. And each went his own way glorifying the Earth-mother and singing her praises, yea, even unto the very ends of the land did they journey praising the beauty of all that is to be found in earth and sky.
10. Now these are the records which have been made to the glory and honor of the Earth-mother. Praise be to the Earth-mother for the beauty which is in her in the earth and in the sky; all the birds of the air and the animals of the ground are a testimony to her excellence. Even as the dawn of the new day brings new light, is there new hope.

Peace!

# The Book of the Law

## Chapter the FIRST

1. The Book of the Law as revealed by the Reformed Druids, in council at Carleton College, for the purpose of making more fruitful their existence.\*
  2. And it came to pass that they did take upon themselves a name, which is "The Reformed Druids of North America."<sup>a</sup>
  3. And it came to be revealed that any person could become a member of them;<sup>b</sup> but any who would become a member would be first required to submit humbly a petition, which petition is a declaration of their subscribing to the Basic Tenets. And this petition may be written with the pen, or it may be spoken aloud with the mouth.\*
  4. Now the Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism are these:
  5. The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.
  6. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it men do live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face to face with it.\*
  7. Now there shall be instituted in the grove three officers whose duty it shall be to minister unto the needs thereof.\*
  8. And first among them shall be the Arch-Druid, who shall be a priest of the Third Order or higher;<sup>c</sup> and the Arch-Druid shall preside over the Druids assembled.
  9. And second among them shall be the Preceptor, who shall be a Druid of the Second Order or higher;<sup>d</sup> and he or she shall deal in the spiritual insofar as directed by the Arch-Druid, but she or he shall act foremost in affairs not of the spiritual, that is, the secular.
  10. And third among them shall be the Server, who shall be of the First Order of the Druid or higher;<sup>e</sup> and she or he shall assist the Arch-Druid insofar as she or he may be called to serve.
  11. And none shall serve in these positions save it shall be that he or she is selected by the members; and none shall serve save it shall be that she or he is worthy to serve; and selection shall be made each year during the period of Foghamhar.<sup>f</sup>
  12. This is the Law which was revealed, but it is not all, for there is yet more. And no thing shall be revealed save it shall be to a majority of the faithful; and no thing shall be revealed save it shall be revealed twice, that is, at two meetings, the second of which shall be the first to be held after the first; and no thing shall be revealed save it shall be when one third are present to bear witness unto it.\*
  13. Yea, and this record is a true one and an accurate one.
- Peace!

# The Customs of the Druids

## Chapter the FIRST\*

1. Now it was the custom among the Druids, who were reformed, that at every meeting of the congregation, the waters-of-life\* should be passed to those present.<sup>a</sup>
2. Now they who subscribe to the Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism, as prescribed in the Book of the Law, they are accepted into the body of Druidism which is the organizational body of Druidism only.<sup>b</sup>
3. But, they who partake of the waters-of-life in communion with the congregation, they are accepted into the great body of Druidism which is the spiritual body of Druidism only.
4. But the whole and complete body of Druidism consists neither of the organizational body only nor of the spiritual body only, but of the both of them, which are then in whole and complete union.
5. Wherefore, they who have been accepted into the organizational body only are not of the whole body of Druidism;
6. wherefore, neither are they who are of the spiritual body only accepted into the whole body of Druidism.
7. Whereas, they who have been accepted into the spiritual body of Druidism and also into the organizational body thereof is thus accepted into the whole and complete body of the membership of the Reformed Druids;
8. and are thenceforth called by them a Druid of the First Order.\*

## Chapter the SECOND

(A Chant\*)

1. O Earth-mother!  
We praise thee that seed springeth,  
that flower openeth,  
that grass waveth.
2. We praise thee for winds that whispers.  
through the graceful elm,  
through the shapely maple,  
through the lively pine,  
through the shining birch,  
through the mighty oak.
3. We praise thee for all things,  
O Earth-mother,  
who givest life.

## Chapter the THIRD\*

1. Now there are some among the congregations of the faithful who shall be set aside from the others as better;
2. for, they it is who have been chosen to serve the Earth-mother and to do her work.
3. And none shall be chosen save they shall be pure in spirit and save they shall have bowed themselves down in humility before the powers which are manifested in the Earth-mother;

4. And none shall be chosen save they shall be imbued with the spirit of the love of the service of the Earth-mother;
5. For those who are chosen to be honored are chosen also to be elevated to the Second Order, which is in the succession to the priesthood of the Druids.<sup>c</sup>
6. And those who have been chosen shall be questioned, and they shall be questioned in the following manner:
7. "Do you, in full consciousness, promise to serve faithfully the Earth-mother, ministering to her followers, and following your duties as a Druid of the Second Order to the best of your ability?"
8. "Do you understand from whence comes the source of all life, and the nature of the source of all life?"
9. "Do you understand the partaking of the waters-of-life, and the sacrifice of life that we offer up to our Mother?"
10. "Are you ready, then to sealed up to the service of the Earth-mother?"
11. And none shall be honored with the Second Order save they shall answer these questions in the proper manner.
12. And none shall be elevated save they shall partake of the waters-of-life in communion with the Arch-Druid and save they shall partake of them to the fullest extent.
13. These are the things which are prescribed, for so it must be done. Thus it was, and thus it is, and thus it is to be.

## Chapter the FOURTH

1. Now these are the commandments which were given concerning the observance of those days which were considered sacred to the Druids.\*
2. Ye shall observe always the festival of Samhain,<sup>d</sup> for it is the beginning of the period of Geimredh, and also of the year. This day shall ye celebrate by the lighting of great fires, for soon is the land to become cold in the time of apparent death.
3. Ye shall celebrate on the day of Midwinter, for on that day doth the sun begin again to rise in the south; so shall ye celebrate it with the burning of logs and making merry. So also shall ye make merry on the day of Oimeic,<sup>e</sup> which is the first day of the period of Earrach;
4. and on these days shall ye glorify the mistletoe and the evergreen, for it is a living testimony to the continuance of life, yea, even in the midst of a dead world.
5. Of great importance is the festival of Beltane,<sup>f</sup> which is at the beginning of Samradh. Then shall ye observe great ceremony; and with the kindling of large fires on the hilltops, and the glorification of the renewed tree shall ye celebrate the renewed life.
6. Ye shall take note of the decline of the sun in the sky, which doth begin on the day of Midsummer. Ye shall light your fires and let them die in token of the great fire which doth roll down in the sky even as a ball doth roll down a hill.
7. Lughnasadh,<sup>g</sup> which is the beginning of the period of Foghamhar, shall ye mark by the coming together in groups in order that ye might feast upon the fruits of the Earth-mother; and then shall ye offer up a sacrifice unto your prosperity.

## Chapter the FIFTH

1. Also, shall ye observe the periods of the moon: the dates thereof when it is full and when it is new; for thus is seen reflected the birth and death, the growth and diminishing of all that is to be seen in Nature.
2. Ye shall begin new projects when the moon is waxing; but ye shall end old ones when it is waning.
3. And on the night of the full moon shall ye rejoice in the fullness of it; but on the night of the new moon shall ye be given over to vigils and to meditation.\*
4. When ye come together that ye might worship, shall ye come together in Nature, that ye might offer up on the altar of stone your sacrifice of life.\*
5. Then shall ye pass amongst you the waters-of-life, that ye may know the continual flow and renewal of life.
6. For they shall taste of the very essence of life, hallowed in the bosom of the earth, and purified by the worship of Druids.
7. And when all have partaken of the waters-of-life, then ye shall pour a libation of it on the altar, saying as ye do it:
8. "To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee."
9. Then shall ye go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that your sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-mother's sight.
10. Peace! Peace! Peace!

## Chapter the SIXTH

1. Behold, there is not one among you who is greater than they who have given of themselves in service to you.
2. For it is for this reason that the priests among you have been called to their station, that they might serve you.
3. And none shall be called except that they have sealed themselves up unto the grove.
4. And none shall be called except that they have been Druids of the Second Order.
5. And none shall be called except that they have dedicated themselves to the search for truth in Nature.
6. And none shall be called except that they have kept the vigil upon the bosom of the Earth-mother.\*
7. This is the Third Order, the Order of the priesthood, the Order of Dalon Ap Landu.<sup>h</sup>
8. Unto it shall be given the consecration of the waters-of-life.
9. Unto it shall be given the consecration of the Second Order.
10. Unto it shall be given the sacrificing of life.
11. Unto it shall be given the mysteries of the worship of the Earth-mother.
12. For, even as priests are called unto it, shall they also call others.\*

## Chapter the SEVENTH

### (A Response at Samhain\*)

1. Ea, lord, Ea, Mother, thou with uncounted names and faces, thou of the many faceted nature in and above all, to thee we sing our chants of praise.
2. Go thou not from us.
3. Dalon Ap Landu, lord of this and all groves, mover by night and by day, descend not beneath the earth, turn not thy pleasing face from us.
4. Go thou not from us.
5. The leaves wither; the trees and fields are barren; on what can we depend? Where is thy order, where is thy strength?
6. Depart not from our midst, sleep not, O most high.
7. The sun, the bright fire of day withdraws his chariot; his face is veiled with clouds, and the breath of the north wind walks the land.
8. Return to us his warmth.
9. Lo, we are as wraiths; our fire is turned to ashes and darkness walks the land.
10. Preserve us O spirit of day. Keep us in thy mind, O spirit of power.
11. O Earth-mother, guide our paths. If thou wilt leave us, save us through the time of silence, keep bright within our hearts till spring.
12. So let it be, O our Mother, for we are faithful, and would keep thy ways.

## Chapter the EIGHTH

1. Behold, some there are among you whose reflections and whose deeds are of exceedingly great merit.
2. And they shall be selected for the great honor of the high Orders of the priesthood;
3. and they shall be selected by the Patriarchs [*or Matriarchs*], each to his [*or her*] own Order.
4. The council of the Third Order, of Dalon Ap Landu, shall select the Patriarch [*or Matriarch*] of the Fourth Order, of Grannos;<sup>i</sup>
5. and also the council of the Fourth Order shall select the Patriarch [*or Matriarch*] of the Fifth Order, of Braciaca;
6. and also the council of the Fifth Order shall select the Patriarch [*or Matriarch*] of the Sixth Order, of Belenos;
7. and also the council of the Sixth Order shall select the Patriarch [*or Matriarch*] of the Seventh Order, of Sirona;
8. and also the council of the Seventh Order shall select the Patriarch [*or Matriarch*] of the Eighth Order, of Taranis;
9. and also the council of the Eighth Order shall select the Patriarch [*or Matriarch*] of the Ninth Order, of Llyr;
10. and the council of the Order of Llyr shall have dominion over the selection of the Patriarch [*or Matriarch*] of the Tenth Order, the highest of them, which is the Order dedicated unto Danu.
11. For such are the Orders of the priesthood, and so are they also dedicated.
12. And no one shall be Patriarch [*or Matriarch*] of more than one Order, for no one can be so dedicated.\*

*The following three verse have been effectively nullified by Resolution in the Council of Dalon Ap Landu on 1 May*



1971. *These three verses are retained here for historical purposes.*

13. But no priestess shall be admitted into the councils of the priesthood, but rather she shall be given unto one of them as a gift of service to beauty.
14. For she who is called to be a priest shall be sealed up unto one Order only, and unto her shall be given the service of it for all time;
15. and she shall be called a priest not of the Order, but rather a priest unto the Order.
16. For so it is written; thus it was, thus it is, and thus it is to be.

### Chapter the NINTH (Incantation\*)

1. Fain we ask Erinn,  
    Faring o'er oceans',  
Motions to mountains,  
    Fountains and bowers,  
Showers, rills rushing,  
    Gushing waves welling,  
Swelling streams calling,  
    Falling foam-thunder,  
Under lakes filling,  
    Willing-abiding,  
Riding rounds, holding,  
    Olden fairs meetly-
2. Fleet to lift loyal,  
    Royal king's towers,  
Bowers for crowning,  
    Frowning foes over\_
3. Rover Mil's warlike,  
Starlike sons therein,  
    Erinn shall longer,  
Stronger, show honour,  
    On our Milesians-
4. Wishing, in trouble,  
    Noble isles' wooing,  
Suing, we stay here-
5. Pray here to sail in,  
Wailing maids royal,  
    Loyal chief-leaders,  
Pleader, blend pray'r in,  
    So we seek Erinn

### Chapter the TENTH (Invocation\*)

1. I invoke the land of Erinn,  
    Much-coursed be the fertile sea,  
    Fertile be the fruit-strewn mountain,
2. Fruit-strewn be the showery wood,  
    Showery be the river of waterfalls,  
    Of waterfall be the lake of deep pools,  
    Deep-pooled be the hill-top well,
3. A well of tribes be the assembly,  
    An assembly of kings be Temair,  
    Temair be a hill of tribes,  
    The tribes of the sons of Mil,
4. Of Mil of the ships, the barks,  
    Let the lofty bark be Erinn,  
    Lofty Erinn, darkly sung,  
    An incantation of great cunning,
5. The great cunning of the wives of Bres,  
    The wives of Bres, of Buaigne,  
    The great lady of Erinn,  
    Eremon hath conquered her,  
    Ir, Eber have conquered for her,  
    I invoke the land of Erinn.

### Chapter the ELEVENTH (The Mystery\*)

1. I am the wind which breathes on the sea,  
I am the wave of the ocean,  
I am the murmur of the willows,  
I am the ox of the seven combats,  
I am the vulture upon the rocks,  
I am a beam of the sun,
2. I am the fairest of plants,  
I am a wild boar in valour,  
I am a salmon in the water,  
I am a lake in the plain,  
I am a word of knowledge,  
I am the point of the lance of battle,  
I am the God who created in the head the fire,
3. Who is it who throws light into the meeting on the mountain?  
Who announces the ages of the moon?  
Who teaches the place where couches the sun?  
If not I?  
Peace!

# The Latter Chronicles

## Chapter the FIRST

1. The chronicles of the acts of the remnant after the faithful were scattered over the face of the land. Which record is a true and an accurate one of the Reformed Druids of North America.
2. Now it came to pass that on the fifth Saturday before the festival of Samhain,<sup>a</sup>\* a number of the faithful did gather on the hill where the altar had been built in the period of Samradh.<sup>b</sup>
3. And this was to fulfill the prophecy which had been made:
4. "For verily I say unto you, ye shall be reunited here with these thy brethren."<sup>c</sup>
5. And they did perceive that the altar which had been built did still stand upon the hill where it had been built.
6. And all did wonder, yea, they did marvel that the altar had been preserved in their absence from the hand of the Anti-Druid.
7. And this was taken to be a sign.<sup>d</sup>
8. But it came to pass that not all of the faithful had returned, for there was only a remnant that did come back.
9. Jan,<sup>e</sup> who was one of the faithful who was of the Second Order, and one of those who did not return, but who did choose to remain in a distant place to there continue in the work of the Earth-mother, did send unto them an epistle.\*
10. And this epistle was then brought to the faithful by the hand of Norman,\* who was Server.<sup>f</sup>
11. And Norman did reveal unto them the epistle\* which had been written by the hand of Jan: and Jan did admonish them in the epistle to remain strong in the faith, and he did express to them his desire that the Reform should gain in strength.

## Chapter the SECOND

1. It came to pass that the Arch-Druid was one day walking in the woods, and he was sore perplexed, for it did happen to begin to rain.
2. And he was exceedingly wroth, so that he did feel tempted to utter a vile curse.\*
3. And it came to pass that he did so utter a vile curse, for such was his wrath.
4. And this curse which he did utter was a vile curse which was a vile curse which did call down the wrath of the Earth-mother, yea, even did it call upon the power of the Earth-mother.
5. And it came to pass that when he had spoken, there was a period of time which did last no longer than the space of a few seconds, and it passed.
6. And suddenly, there did occur a most horrible sound, and a blinding light did fill all the sky about.
7. For behold, all the power of Taranis was caused to be unleashed,<sup>g</sup> and it did fly as a spear, and did strike a tree which was rooted in the earth.
8. And Behold, from the tree to the Arch-Druid was a space not more than fifteen cubits in length, and he was sore afraid.\*

9. So he did go back among the faithful, and he did say unto them: "Curse not in the name of the Earth-mother, for verily I say unto you: ye know not what it is that ye say."\*
10. And when he had told them of these things which he had seen and heard, they did marvel at it.
11. And it was taken by them to be a sign.<sup>h</sup>

## Chapter the THIRD

1. It came to pass that the Druids did continue to meet and to pass the waters-of-life<sup>i</sup> for the period of one month.\*
2. But they did become anxious because there were left only a remnant of them.
3. Nevertheless, they did not come to be discouraged, for the size of their numbers did come to increase, though it was not by a very great amount.
4. And their efforts did continue to be thwarted, for the authorities had hardened their hearts against them.\*

## Chapter the FOURTH

1. But behold, it came to pass that they were gathered together on the hill, by the altar, on the Saturday before the eve of Samhain.\*
2. And it came to pass that there did gather on the hill a multitude of people, the number of them being great than any which had ever been gathered at any other time.
3. Wherefore, the faithful did rejoice greatly, for they did see that it was not all come to nought, but that the truth was now spread among the people.
4. And they did behold the success of the reform, and they were glad in their hearts.<sup>j</sup>
5. And the Arch-Druid did look upon the great number who were gathered, and he said: "It is good."<sup>k</sup>
6. And he did speak unto them and he did welcome them, and he did tell them of the wondrous things which were to occur on the eve of Samhain,<sup>l</sup> which was near at hand.

## Chapter the FIFTH

1. Now it did come to pass that the eve of Samhain did approach; and the moon was full.<sup>m</sup>
2. And they did gather in the light of the full moon, and did come together in the usual spot which was upon the hill near the altar.<sup>n</sup>
3. And there was a multitude of them, being in all greater than one score and ten in number.
4. The Arch-Druid did then offer up the sacrifice of life, but it was not accepted, for behold, the night of Samhain was at hand. Wherefore they did pass among them the waters, but they were not the waters-of-life, but rather the waters-of-sleep, for there was no life in them.<sup>o</sup>
5. And a great wailing did go up among them, for they did lament the ending of the summer, and the beginning of the winter season.<sup>p</sup>
6. The Arch-Druid did then light his torch and he did carry it before all those gathered as they did begin the pilgrimage. And they did all follow the torch, making their way to the grove, which was a grove of Oak.\*
7. And when they had arrived at the grove of oak, the Arch-Druid did take the torch and light with it the fire, and so the flames did rise high up out of the fire,<sup>q</sup> testifying to the glory of Belenos.
8. And all were cheered by it.

9. Now the Arch-Druid did ask all who were gathered that they might sit upon the earth in the fashion of a great circle, each holding the hand of the one next to them. And he did ask that they might examine their souls,<sup>r</sup> and speak such as they felt they ought to tell the others.
10. And there did follow a period of silence which was exceeding long.
11. And behold, some did begin to speak, and their voices were lifted up above the crackling of the fire in the silence of the grove.
12. And one did prophesy much, at times speaking in tongues, and then saying: "Someone is dead...I see a great many people...and a large circular room there...but they need not be afraid...everything is going to be all right."<sup>s\*</sup>
13. And behold, another did speak, saying: "I see... three stones on a black sky."<sup>\*</sup>
14. And many other great and wonderful things were spoken, for it was the eve of Samhain.
15. Now as the fire did die down, many did begin to leave the grove; but some there were who did stay, and who did undertake to jump over the fire seven times each, thereby insuring their luck during the coming season.\*
16. And when the fire had died down to ashes, they did all depart; and the moon was full.

## Chapter the SIXTH

1. Now it came to pass that it was not long after the feast of Samhain when the chief of all the land did go out in a long procession among the people of the land.\*
2. And as he passed among them, a man who was his enemy, did attack him.
3. And behold, the chief of all the land was smitten by the hand of his attacker; and he was slain.
4. And a great crying and also a great wailing did go up from all the people.
5. And it came to pass that the body of the chief of all the land was taken up into the principal city of the land, and there was placed in the chief building, in the great circular room thereof.
6. But among the Druids, there were those who were sore afraid at these events. For they did say among themselves:
7. Behold, for this is now the fulfillment of the prophesy of the night of Samhain; for it is now all come to pass as it was spoken.<sup>1\*</sup>
8. And they did marvel at it, for it was taken as a sign.<sup>u</sup>
9. Now it came to pass that during the periods of Geimredh and Earrach, the earth did have the appearance of death; for the wind of the north did sweep over the land, and barrenness did settle upon the branches of the wood.
10. And there were during this time no meetings of the Druids, for there was no rejoicing in the time of sleep.<sup>v</sup>
11. But it came to pass that the Druids did come together to celebrate the coming of the period of Earrach, which is the festival of Oimelc.<sup>w</sup>
12. And they did rejoice that the time was half passed in its course from Samhain to Beltane.
13. And there was a man who came unto them at that time who was called John the Messenger.\* And he came from across the sea from the land of Erinn.
14. And he brought unto them writings which were of the ancients: the incantations of Erinn.<sup>x</sup>

## Chapter the SEVENTH

1. Now it came to pass that the festival of Beltane was near at hand; so the Druids did go up upon the hill of their altar, that they might see that all was in order.
2. And it came to pass that they did come up upon the hill, which was the one upon which was their altar, and they did look upon the altar which was there.
3. And they did say, one to the other, "Behold, our altar has not well weathered the periods of Geimredh and Earrach."
4. And they did say, one to the other, "Let us now go and fetch great stones, and place them together in a new altar, which shall be the greatest of all the altars which we have built."
5. Wherefore, they did go and fetch great stones, and they did bring them to the place of the altar. And they did begin to place them together in their proper places, according to the shapes thereof.<sup>y</sup>
6. And each Druid did work at the building of the altar with his bare hands.<sup>z</sup>
7. And they did fix the stones of the altar in their places with mortar, that they might not be wrested therefrom again by the hand of the Anti-Druid.<sup>a</sup>
8. And when they had completed the altar, they did stand back from it and rejoice in its completion; for it was the finest of all the altars which had been built.
9. And the altar was about four cubits long, and about three cubits wide, and about three cubits high.<sup>b \*</sup>
10. And there was a passage through the center of it which did extend from the top of the altar down to the very bottom thereof, and through it could pass the smoke of the altar fires.\*
11. And it came to pass that they did become apprehensive, for they did perceive that the mortar was still not dry;
12. and they did say: "Behold, the mortar is not yet dry, and the Anti-Druid will come and he will tear the stones from their places in the altar before they have been fixed there by the drying of the mortar."
13. And they were sore afraid.
14. But it came to pass that one of them did step forward, and his name was David (the Chronicler).<sup>\*</sup> And he did offer himself for the purpose of the guarding of the altar.
15. And he did take it upon himself to stay by the altar until the mortar had dried.
16. And as he sat by the altar he did see the sun go down in the west; and all the majesty of the heavens were opened unto him.
17. And he did keep his vigil upon the bosom of the Earth-mother<sup>c</sup> as the moon did rise in the east, and yet as it did set in the west.
18. And behold, as the sun did rise again in the east, and all the Earth was bathed in the warmth thereof,<sup>d</sup> the Arch-Druid did come up upon the hill of the altar.
19. And they did kneel before the altar; and the Arch-Druid did consecrate David (who was the Chronicler) as a priest of the Order of Dalon Ap Landu.<sup>e\*</sup>

## Chapter the EIGHTH

1. Now it came to pass that the festival of Beltane was near at hand;\* so the Druids did go up upon the hill of their altar, that they might see that all was in order.<sup>f</sup>
2. And when they had come to the place of the altar, they did find it not. And they did find there not even the least stone thereof.
3. For behold, all that was the altar had disappeared, yea, even the last vestige thereof.
4. And they did perceive that the altar had been again destroyed by the hand of the Anti-Druids.<sup>g</sup>
5. And this was the fourth time\* that the altar had been defiled by the Anti-Druids, and this was the most complete and utter destruction that had yet come to pass. For they had destroyed it with hammer and chisel and all manner of terrible weapon.
6. And it came to pass that a great wailing and moaning did go up, and the air was rent by the lamentation of the Druids.<sup>h</sup>
7. But behold, they did go up from that place, and they did celebrate the festival of Beltane;<sup>i</sup> for even in the midst of their misfortune did they rejoice in the return of spring, and in the abundance of life which is the perpetual gift of the Earth-mother.
8. And they did go up upon the hill which was a short way off; and at the top of the hill they did find a grove of three oaks.
9. And they did rejoice in the renewal of the flow of the waters-of-life; and they did pour a libation of them upon the rock which they did find upon the hill where the three oaks did stand strong against the dark sky.
10. And that place came to be revered among the Druids, for it was the place of refuge in the time of their troubles.
11. And they did call that place the Hill of the Three Oaks.\*

## Chapter the NINTH

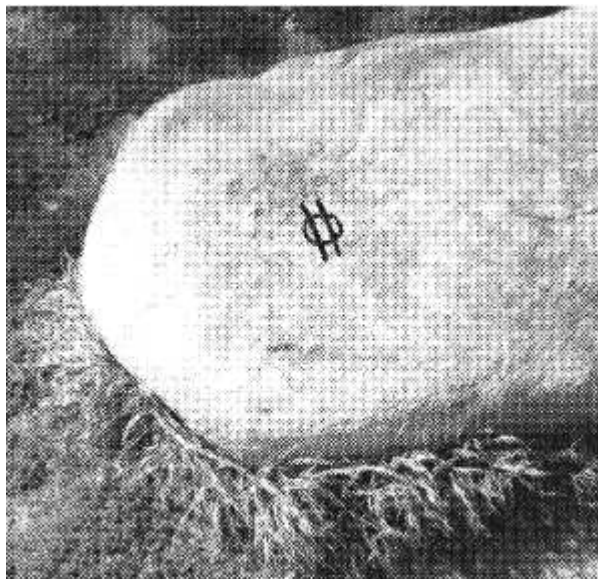
1. Now it came to pass that in the time after the festival of Beltane, which is the period of Samradh, Norman, who had been Server, did go up unto the Hill of the Three Oaks.\*
2. And he did go up onto the Hill of the Three Oaks in order that he might better appreciate the wonders of the Earth-mother which were to be beheld there.<sup>j</sup>
3. And it came to pass that he did remain there until darkness had fallen over all the land around; and behold, the firmament was opened up unto him and he did behold the glory of it.
4. And he did continue to make his vigil until the dawn.
5. And it came to pass that as the sun rose in the east, he was met by the priests of Dalon Ap Landu who had come up onto the Hill of the Three Oaks.
6. And they did consecrate Norman, who had been Server to Dalon Ap Landu.<sup>k</sup>
7. And it came to pass that after Norman had become priest of the Order of Dalon Ap Landu, the priests of the Order of Dalon Ap Landu did gather together in council.
8. And the Council of Dalon Ap Landu did call upon David, who was a Fisher, and declare him Patriarch of the Order of Grannos,<sup>l</sup> which is the first of the Patriarchs, and with all the powers thereof.

9. And it came to pass that the Patriarch of the Order of Grannos did call upon those who were priests of Dalon Ap Landu.
10. And he did consecrate them unto Grannos: priests of the Fourth Order.
11. And it came to pass that the priests of the Order of Grannos did gather together in council.
12. And the Council of Grannos did call upon Norman, who had been Server, and declared him to be Patriarch of Braciaca,<sup>m</sup> with all the powers thereof.
13. And it came to pass that the Patriarch of the Order of Braciaca did call upon all the priests of Grannos.
14. And he did consecrate them unto Braciaca; priests of the Fifth Order.
15. And it came to pass that the priests of the Order of Braciaca did gather together in council.
16. And the council of Braciaca did call upon David (the Chronicler) and declared him to be Patriarch of Belenos,<sup>n</sup> with all powers thereof.
17. And it came to pass that the Patriarch of the Order of Belenos did call upon those who were priests of Braciaca.
18. And he did consecrate them unto Belenos: priests of the Sixth Order.\*

## Chapter the TENTH

1. Now it came to pass that in those last days a decree went out from the authorities;\*<sup>o</sup>
2. and they did declare to be abolished the regulations which had been placed upon the<sup>p</sup> worship of those at Carleton.\*
3. And behold, a great rejoicing did go up from all the land for the wonders which had come to pass.
4. And all the earth did burst forth into song in the hour of salvation.
5. And in the time of exaltation, the fulfillment of their hopes,<sup>p</sup> the Druids did sing the praises of the Earth-mother.\*
6. O Earth-mother, we praise thee.
7. In all that we do we praise thee: In our getting up and in our lying down, in our sleeping and in our waking; in our eating and in our drinking: in our working and in our times of leisure; for we are alive only through thee,<sup>q</sup> and in our every act too we praise thee.
8. O Earth-mother, we praise thee.
9. In all that we see do we praise thee: in the sky and the sea, the hills and the plains; in the clouds and the stars, the moon and the sun;<sup>r</sup> in the birds and the flowers, the butterflies and the myriad-colored fishes.
10. We praise thee with our admiration of the sunset and of the mountains, of the trees and of the streams. For thou hast made all things, and for all we see do we praise thee.
11. O Earth-mother, we praise thee.
12. In all that we hear and smell and feel and taste do we praise thee: in the song of birds and the roar of the sea; in the perfumes of flowers and freshness of a summer rain;
13. in the softness of a kitten and the coolness of a lake; in the sweetness of honey and the savor of fruits; for all that we hear and smell and feel and taste is of thee,<sup>s</sup> and for all sensible do we praise thee.\*
14. O Earth-mother, we praise thee.

15. For all that we love do we praise thee: for the love of our parents, and for the love of others; for the act and emotion of love is an act and emotion of praise, and in loving do we praise thee.\*
16. O Earth-mother, we praise thee.
17. In our meditations<sup>1</sup> and services do we praise and think upon thy works and power.\*
18. O Earth-mother, we praise thee.
19. In all the whole world do we praise thee, from the east to the west do we praise thee and from the nadir to the zenith do we praise thee.
20. We praise thee in the day, and in the night, in all seasons of the year, and in the myriad of years."
21. We praise thee knowing and unknowing, believing and of little faith, for thou hast made all and art all, and we can praise and admire nothing without praising and admiring thee.
22. O Earth-mother, we praise thee.
23. Peace! Peace! Peace!\*



*Altar stone on the Hill of Three Oaks*

# Meditations

## Chapter the FIRST\*

1. I was standing alone. And behold, I heard my name called, and I went.
2. And I had been called to a place where there was a great fire, and the flames of the fire did rise as high as the tops of the trees.
3. Near the fire there stood a man; and he said unto me: "Follow me!" And I followed him.
4. Now we went far into the darkness of the night, and I followed him to an open space in the forest, which was like a small valley.
5. He said to me: "Behold;" and I looked where it was that he had pointed, and there was a pile of sticks.
6. And he said to me: "here you will stay; and do not allow sleep to overtake you, but keep open your ears that you might hear."
7. And again he said "Behold;" and I looked where he had pointed and I saw there a small fire. And he said: "Take from the fire a brand."
8. Now I went to the fire, and took a burning brand from it, and returned to where the man had stood; but behold, he had disappeared.
9. So I took the brand and lit with it the sticks. And I sat down to listen and to meditate.
10. And I did not sleep.
11. And behold, I did hear my name called, and I answered. And a voice came out of the darkness and bade me not sleep but rather to examine my soul. And behold, this did happen twice.
12. And I was alone, but I did not any longer feel alone.
13. And as I watched my fire and contemplated the warmth and the light of it, behold, the sun did come up in the east, and I was bathed in the light and the warmth of it.
14. And I had not slept.
15. But I had seen things that I had not seen, and I had heard things that I had not heard and I had felt things that I had not felt.
16. And I arose, and left that place, glorifying Be'al and all the works of his hand, for I had seen the Earth-mother.<sup>a\*</sup>

## Chapter the SECOND

1. How wonderful are the works of Be'al!
2. How beautiful are all the things which are in the earth, which are on the face of the earth, and which are above the earth in the sky.
3. How beautiful are the flowers of the earth and the birds of the air. How beautiful are the stars and the moon, and the reflection of them upon the waters.
4. For these things are of Be'al, and not of man.
5. For thus saith the Earth-mother: "The Groves of the forest are my temples, and the trees of the groves are my icons,
6. "and the branches of the trees are my sacred scepters, and the green leaves of the branches are my sacrifice, which is a living sacrifice up unto beauty."<sup>b</sup>

7. Yea, how excellent are all these things, for they are created of Be'al, and they are not of man, Wherefore, they are sacred before us.

### Chapter the THIRD

1. Behold the rocks of the mountains, and the trees above the grass waving; this is the Earth-mother.
2. Behold the ocean on the right, and the sea on the left, and mighty river which is but a trickle; this is the Earth-mother.
3. Behold the blue which is day and the black which is the night, salted with the stars, all above; even this is the Earth-mother.\*
4. The Earth-mother is one.
5. The sun is her right eye, the moon her left; and the clouds are her silver hair. The rivers are her fingers, the oceans are cradled in her hands, as a child.
6. For the Earth-mother is all which is revealed unto our sight, and which our ears do perceive, and which we do touch as we reach out our hands.
7. For the Earth-mother is all things which do make themselves apparent unto our sense.
8. She is Disorder Ordered;
9. she is Power Impotent;\*
10. she is Ugliness Beautiful.
11. And Be'al, he is cradled in the bosom of the Earth-mother;
12. and the eye of Be'al has entirely encompassed her.

### Chapter the FOURTH

1. He is that which we have seen not with the eyes; and we have called his name Be'al.
2. And we have heard that which he is not with our ears; for his name we have called Be'al.
3. The taste which he leaves is not in the mouth; the odor of his presence is not sensed in the nose.
4. We have reached out, and touched, feeling his essence, though never with our fingers.
5. We have cried out in our anguish, our sublime anguish, and have called his name, yea, one name among many; we have called him Be'al.
6. For our knowledge of him is as that of the form in the fog, which has no form; we see it, and there is the more of it which we do not see; but it is.
7. Be'al is!
8. Yea, Be'al is one; even as he is many.
9. He has gathered the worlds in his net, even as they also have drawn him to them.\*
10. For all things are delivered unto him.
11. His glories they are many, yea, as are many the names we have given him according as his glories are manifested unto us.
12. We have seen him on the bosom of the Earth-mother; huge woody arms raised to the sky in adoration, strong and alive; and we have called his name Dalon Ap Landu.<sup>c</sup>
13. Of his goodness we have tasted, yea, have we drunk of the fruits of the Earth-mother which he hath poured out before us; and his name we have called Braciaca.

14. We have seen him in the surf, beating his fists against the shore, and his vast body stretching to the horizon; and we have called his name Llyr.
15. His voice we have heard thundering in the heavens, his power we have seen flash across the sky; and his name we have called Taranis.
16. Out of the bowels of the earth has he poured forth the water of his life, healing, soothing; his name is Grannos.
17. We have seen his smile, bright, radiant, raining glory and warmth down upon the bosom of the earth from his seat on high in the midst of the blue heaven; and we have called his name Belenos.
18. And the other faces of Be'al also have been turned kindly toward us.
19. Merrily merrily, bubbling, gurgling, we have seen her dancing over the rocks down to her marriage with Llyr; and her name we have called Sirona.
20. We have seen her laugh with the young baby, fly with the bird, burst forth her abundance with the corn; in all that hath breath and life have we seen her good face; and her name is Danu the bountiful.<sup>d</sup>

### Chapter the FIFTH

1. Ye have seen the glory which is day in the rising of the sun, and also the wonder which is night; and what greater thing is there?
2. Ye have seen the power of the floods and the tides; and what greater thing is there?
3. Yea, even have ye seen the bosom of the earth rent in twain, and fire and brimstone poured forth out of the bowels thereof; and what things is there which is greater?
4. Verily I say unto you: consider the small creatures of the forest which scamper gaily from bush to bush; are not they more wonderful than these other things?
5. Consider even the dainty flower, how exalted is the glory of it.
6. For these are possessed of the greatest and most wonderful of all of the gifts of the Earth-mother: which gift is that of life.
7. Wherefore, consider this tree, which ye have selected for the great size thereof; for this tree is possessed of great age.
8. Great is the abundance of life which is in it, and which has passed through it; wherefore ye have raised up your praises unto it.
9. For ye have offered up your worship unto this in which life is great, that your worship of the greatness thereof might be multiplied in the tree.\*
10. This tree is your Bile.<sup>dd</sup>
11. For without life is there nothing which is anything.
12. The sun is as darkness without that it shines down on the living things; and the earth is as empty space without that it is a pedestal upon which have been placed the living things.
13. Thus, even the least leaf of this tree is greater than all on the earth and the sun.
14. For life is not of the Earth-mother, and life is not of Be'al, rather life is of them both.<sup>c</sup> And great is the power thereof.

## Chapter the SIXTH

1. Verily I say unto you: is it not written: "and each took this to be a sign, each in his own way?"<sup>f</sup>
2. Which of you, having risen up saying: "this is truth, for I have seen it," will be followed? For even as ye have seen it, have not the others also seen it not; and where therein is the proof?
3. Rather, that which is as the bright light unto one man is as but the thick cloud unto the other.
4. For no man shall have truth save that he shall also have awareness.
5. Truth is as a bubble which dances in the air. Truly, it can be seen and the eye is aware of it; but it cannot be grasped by the hand, nor possessed. Neither can it be given to you by anyone.
6. Beware those men who say: "Follow my way, for mine is the way unto Be'al, and there is no other way."
7. Their numbers are great and their voices are loud. They shall present you much authority before you, and say: "We know our way to the only way, for it is the way of our fathers."
8. But take heed, lest you should fall into the trap.
9. For awareness shall come unto no one save it shall be in their own way; and it shall come unto no one save they shall come unto it.
10. Go ye, therefore, and seek after Be'al. And make your way not after the way of other men, but after your own way;<sup>g</sup>
11. and go too to the fountain<sup>h</sup> of Awareness, which is in Nature.\*

## Chapter the SEVENTH

1. For what reasons is that ye sit here under the oak? Why is it that ye have come out together under the stars?
2. Have ye come that ye might not be alone? If so, it is good.
3. But verily I say unto you: many there are who have come together, yet remain alone.
4. Do ye sit in the open that ye might come to know Nature? If so, it is good.
5. But verily I say unto you: many there are who have sat for hours and have risen up knowing less than when they sat down.
6. Rather, in your coming together, seek to know in what way ye may help him who is next to you, and strive to act justly toward him.
7. And in your sitting down in the fields of the Earth-mother, open your minds as well as your eyes. Let your meditation grow and branch out as the oak which is over your head.
8. Except that ye have done these things, your sitting is in vain and coming is futility.
9. And why is it that ye do stand up before others and speak unto them?
10. Do ye teach unto them the ways of the Ancient Druids? If so, it is good.<sup>i</sup>
11. For they had their wisdom, and that is oft forgot.<sup>j</sup> But verily I say unto you: in their day, even they also were young in their traditions.
12. The wise man is not constrained to learn only that which he is taught. Yea, even as there is a time for talking, is there also a time for no talking.

13. In the silence of your being shall ye find that which is not of your being; and in the Earth-mother shall ye find that which is not of the Earth-mother; in Be'al shall ye be made aware, and your awareness shall fill you.
14. Ye shall be like the morning sun which has risen and whose brightness is already full, but whose path is yet ever upward;
15. and the light of your awareness shall sweep before it all the shadows of your uncertainty.
16. Then shall ye need wait no more; for this is the great end and all else is but beginning.

## Chapter the EIGHTH

1. When they come to you and then ask you "After what do ye seek?" then ye shall answer them saying: "Awareness;" for this is the first lesson.
2. For without awareness is there nothing which is.
3. But in your seeking of awareness, seek not it alone, as separate from all else;
4. for in seeking awareness ye shall find it not, and ye shall find it only in that ye seek it not.
5. Seek ye, therefore, after Be'al, for your awareness shall be in unity with Be'al.<sup>k</sup>
6. And make first your search in the dominion of the Earth-mother, for the Earth-mother and Be'al are not to be separated.

## Chapter the NINTH

1. Behold, they shall come unto you, scoffing, and mocking the words that ye have spoken, and saying: "There is no thing at all which is this awareness; what proof do ye give of it?"
2. And ye shall answer them in a parable, for this is the second lesson:
3. There was a small village in which was produced the finest cheese in all the world. There was none other anywhere that was like unto it.
4. And it came to pass that a traveler, who was a merchant, came to the village; for it was his desire that the finest of all foods should be served upon his table.
5. Wherefore, he did seek out the makers of the cheese.
6. But behold, when he was given a piece of the cheese, he did thrust it away from him, for he was offended by the foul smell thereof; for it was an exceeding foul smell indeed.
7. And he said unto them: "I do not believe that the taste of this cheese can be good, for it doth have an odor which is foul like unto no other!"
8. And he was answered: "Thou needst only to taste once of the cheese, and thou wilt see for thyself that it be good."
9. But it came to pass that the merchant did go away again, having not partaken of the fine cheese.
10. And he never did have served on his table the finest of all cheeses, for he would not taste it, any of it.
11. Verily I say unto you: in all the books of Man is there not one word which can give you proof even of the taste of a cheese.

## Chapter the TENTH

1. And when they come unto you and say: "And what, then, is the nature of this thing which ye do call awareness?" then shall ye give answer unto them in silence, for this is the third lesson.
2. For there be not one person who doth have awareness, save also that they are aware thereof.
3. And they are like unto them whose eyes are filled with the glory of all things upon which the light of the sun has cast itself.
4. But there are many, yea, it is the greater number, who, in their unawareness, are aware not even of their unawareness;
5. and they are like unto them who are blind from the day of their birth, and see not, nor know what it is to see.
6. But some there are who are aware only that they are also unaware; hallowed are they for they are the children of Be'al.
7. One of these is like unto them who keeps the vigil;<sup>l</sup>
8. for their gaze cannot pierce the mantle of darkness which is thrown over all the world about them, but they rest secure in the knowledge of the return of day.
9. In your awareness shall ye be as at the moment of the rising sun;<sup>m</sup>
10. and your spirit shall rise up even as the bird flies up to meet the light which is above, but which, hidden by the mountain, has fallen not yet upon the earth below.

Peace!



*Nelson with Frangquist and Fisher, Spring 1964*

## Cross-References of the Chronicles

These cross-reference notes were assembled by Glenn McDavid in 1970 after a request by the current AD, Richard Shelton; for which he received the first Deanship of Druidic Textology (D.D.T.).<sup>7</sup>

### The Early Chronicles

- <sup>a</sup> : Other authorities read: "It looks good."
- <sup>b</sup> : Other authorities add: "of North America."
- <sup>c</sup> : See Med. 6:1.
- <sup>d</sup> : See L.C. 7:7.
- <sup>e</sup> : See E.C. 2:10.
- <sup>f</sup> : See Med. 2:6.
- <sup>g</sup> : See E.C. 4:8.
- <sup>h</sup> : See E.C. 6:4.
- <sup>i</sup> : See L.C. 1:2-4.

### The Book of Law

- <sup>a</sup> : Other authorities add: "at Carleton College"
- <sup>b</sup> : Other authorities add: "Save he [or she] were first a student."
- <sup>c</sup> : See Cus. 6:7.
- <sup>d</sup> : See Cus. 3:5.
- <sup>e</sup> : See Cus. 1:8.
- <sup>f</sup> : See Cus. 4:7.
- <sup>g</sup> : See Cus. 5:5.
- <sup>h</sup> : See Law 4-6.
- <sup>i</sup> : See Cus. 6:7; 8:1.
- <sup>d</sup> : November 1st.
- <sup>e</sup> : February 1st.
- <sup>f</sup> : May 1st.
- <sup>g</sup> : August 1st.
- <sup>h</sup> : See Med. 4:12.
- <sup>i</sup> : See Med 4:13-20.

### The Customs of the Druids

- <sup>a</sup> : See Cus. 4:2.
- <sup>b</sup> : See E.C. 4:11.
- <sup>c</sup> : See E.C. 7:8.
- <sup>d</sup> : See E.C. 3:5,11; 4:4, 13; 6:9; L.C. 2:11; 6:8.
- <sup>e</sup> : See E.C. 5:10.
- <sup>f</sup> : See Law 1:10; L.C. 9:1.
- <sup>g</sup> : See Med. 4:5.
- <sup>h</sup> : See E.C. 3:5,11; 4:4, 13; 6:9; L.C. 1:7; 6:8.
- <sup>i</sup> : See Cus. 5:5.
- <sup>j</sup> : See E.C. 6:4.
- <sup>k</sup> : See E.C. 2:4.
- <sup>l</sup> : See Cus. 4:2.
- <sup>m</sup> : See Cus. 5:1.
- <sup>n</sup> : See E.C. 1:5.
- <sup>o</sup> : See L.C. 6:10.



- p : See Cus. 7; Med. 1:2.  
 q : See Cus. 7:2.  
 r : See Med. 1:11.  
 s : See L.C. 6:3-5.  
 t : See L.C. 5:12.  
 u : See E.C. 3:5, 11; 4:4, 13; 6:9; L.C. 1:7; 2:11.  
 v : See L.C. 4:4.  
 w : See Cus. 4:3.  
 x : See Cus. 9:1-5; 10:1-5; 11:1-3.  
 y : See E.C. 4:2, 11.  
 z : See E.C. 4:1.

## The Latter Chronicles

- a : See E.C. 4:11.  
 b : See E.C. 2:5.  
 c : See Cus. 6:6.  
 d : See Med. 1:13.  
 e : See Cus. 6:7.  
 f : See L.C. 7:1.  
 g : See E.C. 3:6, 4:6.  
 h : See E.C. 4:1, 10.  
 i : See E.C. 2:1; Cus. 4:5.  
 j : See Med. 7:4.  
 k : See Cus. 6:7; Med. 4:12.  
 l : See Cus. 8:4; Med.4:16.  
 m : See Cus. 8:5; Med. 4:13.  
 n : See Cus. 8:6; Med. 4:17.  
 o : See E.C. 1:2.  
 p : See E.C. 1:3; 6:1  
 q : See Med. 5:6.  
 r : See Med. 3:1-3.  
 s : See Med. 3:6.  
 t : See Med. 7:7.  
 u : See Cus. 4:1-7.

## Meditations

- a : See Cus. 6:6; Med. 10:7.  
 b : See E.C.  
 c : See Cus. 6:7.  
 d : See Cus. 8:4-10.  
 dd : This word could be "Bile", which is Irish for a sacred tree or it could be a typo for "Bible."  
 e : See Med. 8:6.  
 f : See E.C. 4:4.  
 g : See Med. 8:5.  
 h : See Law 1:4-6.  
 i : See E.C. 5:10.  
 j : See E.C. 6:4.  
 k : See Med. 7:13.  
 l : See Cus. 6:6; Med. 1:1-16.  
 m : See E.C. 7:10.

## End-Notes to the Chronicles

It should be noted that these footnotes are not endorsed by the Reform. They are marked by asterixes in the text.

This is a collection of primarily historical notes with added bibliographical and liturgical materials provide for the most part by Norman Nelson (NN), Richard Shelton (RMS), Isaac Bonewits (IB), Robert Larson (RL), and Michael Scharding (MS).

### The Early Chronicles

1:1 **IB**: "...Which Branch of the Order.." Some people now take this verse as the scriptural foundation for the legitimate founding of offshoots of Reformed Druidism, each calling itself a "Branch of the Reform."

1:2 **NN**: The Reformed Druids of North America (Henceforth "RDNA" or "Druids") were founded in the spring of 1963; John Nason was at that time President of Carleton College, a private Liberal Arts college in Northfield, Minnesota.

**NN**: The precise wording of the requirement mentioned is to be found on page 138 of the Carleton College Bulletin (Catalog Number) for March, 1963 c.e.: "ATTENDANCE is required at the College Service of Worship or at the Sunday Evening Program or at any regularly organized service of public worship. Each (ten week) term every student must attend seven of the services or religious meetings."

1:3 **NN**: As I recall it, the sole motive was to protest the requirement, not to try for alternatives for worship. If a "regularly organized service" was required, we decided to organize one! Chief among those involved were Dave Fisher and David Frangquist (then sophomores), Howard Cherniack, Jan Johnson and me (then all juniors).

**NN**: It is important to note that, while some were a-religious, other were churchgoers who felt that compulsory religion was a disservice to religion. There was never any intention to mock any religion; it was not intended that RDNA should compete with or supplant any other faith. We tried to write a service which could be attended "in good faith" by anyone; it require no renunciation of any faith to profess Druidism. If our protest was to work, the last thing we need was antagonism from anyone.

1:4 **NN**: Lyman Lakes extend across the north side of the campus proper, lying in a valley. Most of the Druids then lived in a new dorm [Goodhue] just north of the lakes, at the base of a hill. Immediately at the top of the hill was the soccer practice field and, just to the east of that, an area called Monument Hill (bearing a stele commemorating several pioneer events). Further north, across the soccer field, is a slight rise with a large rock sticking out of the ground and with three trees; this became known as The Hill of the Three Oaks.

**RMS**: By the late sixties, the name had become shortened to the Hill of Three Oaks. The name was used by everyone, not just Druids.

**MS**: The fourth side of the stele is blank, and a Carleton tradition is to make the Druid Symbol on its face every time one visits it. See the Book of Lacunae in the Apocrypha.

1:5 **NN** : Monument Hill.

1:6 **NN**: So far as I know, Fisher actually created the whole first ritual at this time; his story was that he had been made a

- Druid in high school, since it made it more acceptable if it was an ongoing thing.
- 1:7 **IB**: Saturday afternoons became the customary time for Druid Services, in addition to the High Days, for many years. Some Groves now use Sunday afternoons and still other Groves use different days.  
**MS**: Most groves don't have weekly services, anymore.
- 1:8 **IB**: Thus the reform is regarded as having started in April of the year known as 1963 in the common era, 6676 in the Julian era, 2623 Japanese, 2716 Roman (AUC), 1383 Islamic (Hegira), 1885 Hindu (Saka), 2276 Grecian, 7473 Byzantine, 5725 Jewish (AM) and nearly halfway through the First Year of the Reform (or 1 y.r.), which began the previous Samhain.  
**MS**: The RDNA at Carleton agrees that that Samhain is the beginning of the Celtic year (NOV. 1st) but the Carleton Druids date their documents as if Beltane (May 1st) were the start of the year. To calculate "Year of Reform", if it is before Beltane take the year in question and subtract 1963 from it. If it is on, or after, May 1st subtract 1962 from the year in question. The NRDNA tends to use Samhain as the deciding date subtracting 1962 before Samhain and 1961 after Samhain. However, since there was no concept of Druidism at Carleton until April of 1963, why go back to Fall of 1962? The whole thing is like the Easter controversy between the Celtic and Roman church. See the calendrical section of *the Carleton Apocrypha* and Isaac Bonewits' Calendar of the Druids in his version of the *Chronicles*, both are in Part Four of ARDA.
- 2:1 **MS**: Although the text leads you to believe that the first official service was Beltane on May 1st (or more likely May 4th), it is now generally assumed that there were earlier weekend services, likely starting on 4/20/63.
- 2:2 **NN**: The "altar" was Fisher's phonograph stand/record rack, draped with a cloth.
- 2:3 **NN**: The stones came from a place in the Arboretum, just north of Monument Hill I don't remember how many worked it was something like three, increasing to five.  
**MS**: I believe the site of stone was the NEST OF DRAGON EGGS found in a depression next to the DRUID DEN (AKA the little grove) where a pile of head size rocks from the neighboring fields were deposited. Most of the remaining rocks there have been used for Arb trail maintenance.
- 2:5 **IB**: The exact measurements of the "cubits" used has been lost. The term usually refers to a length from 17" to 21" (based on the length of a person's forearm).
- 2:6 **IB**: The waters-of-life are Uisce bheatha in Irish Gaelic (other wise known as "whiskey"). Any alcoholic beverage can be used in a pinch.  
**MS**: Since 1985, the Carleton Druids have been using Tea, Tang, or watered-down Whiskey. It depends on the sensibilities of the officiant and congregation.
- 2:7-10 **MS**: This was so they could become an "officially registered student organization." The original Constitution had an amusing typographical error: Article VI set the quorum for amendment at "one third of those known to be officers." Since there were only three officers to begin with... It is interesting to note that the Druids at Carleton never became an official student organization in and of themselves until 1995 under the leadership of Hrobak.
- 3 **NN**: A little hyperbole aside, this is essentially a factual account.
- 4:3 **NN**: Really spooky-a ray of sunlight broke through the cloud-cover and hit the altar.
- 4:4-5 **RL**: At one of the early services, some one brought an umbrella, more as a fashion statement then because of weather. It rained. From this came one of druidism's few informal prohibitions/superstitions; no umbrellas at services. Curiously, a similar occurrence happened at one of the early Berkeley grove services. Really odd, since May- Nov in California is the dry season when rain is really rare. (Insert Twilight Zone theme.)
- 4:7 **NN**: No liquor was allowed at Carleton. This rule was not enforced in the Arb, and quite a many students wandered home on Saturday Night/Sunday Morning under the influence. In the case of the repeated destruction of the altar, there was a specific (small) group which didn't like us as individuals, and took it out on our altars.. I don't remember if we thought they were anti-Druid or just anti-us.
- 5 **NN**: The dispute is reflected in the changes made in the Ceremony of Consecration.  
**RMS**: In the ceremony preserved in the Black Book (which contained all the early liturgy), the following changes were written by hand on May 18th 1963:  
"Attend us now o Spirits, as we offer this sacrifice of consecration" became  
"Attend us now O Spirits, as we light this fire of consecration."  
(Here the blood of the sacrifice shall be spilled upon the altar) became  
(Here the fire shall be lit upon the altar)  
"Accept this, our sacrifice" became  
"Accept this, consecrate it."
- 5:10 **IB**: The speaker was Jan Johnson. Actually it is not known for sure whether the ancient Druids practiced human or animal sacrifice, though the former was the war-atrocity tale told by their enemies, the Romans. But since almost every Paleopagan tribe in Europe practiced the sacrifice of flesh now and then, such sacrifices by the ancient Druids must remain a possibility. For further details about the Paleopagan Druids, as well as other modern groups, see *The Other Druids*.  
**MS**: As far as my research has gone, no Druidic group or Wiccan group in the US or elsewhere would ever allow the sacrifice of people or animals by their members.
- 5:13 **IB**: This almost schism should not be confused with the schism that did take place eleven years later, also over the question of just how Pagan the Druids were or should be.
- 6:1 **IB**: May 25, 1963 CE (1 y.r.)
- 6:3 **NN**: After six of seven "regularly organized services of public worship," the Druids filled out "chapel slips" listing the Druid services as our church for the week. These slips were handed out at campus services, and were available in the dorms for those who had attended services in town.
- 6:4 **NN**: The Chapel Slips were rejected by the Dean of Men's office, which had charge of such matters for male students.
- 6:5-8 **NN**: Howard Cherniack went to the Dean of Men with a list of various peculiar religious organizations gleaned from the Minneapolis and St. Paul Yellow Pages. After it was admitted that most of them would be acceptable, he asked why the RDNA wasn't. The answer boiled down, amounted to "You don't have a faculty advisor."
- 6:9 **NN**: The Dean of Women's office accepted the Chapel Slips from the two girls who submitted them.

**MS:** The twenty male students then in the RDNA never did receive official credit. But then, they never were expelled either. It is believed that the women weren't under the same scrutiny as the men, and so local towns' ladies (never hearing about the Druids) at the Office of Women passed the slips without a second thought. See the oral interview with the Frangquists.

7:1 **IB:** The date was June 1, 1963 (1 y.r.)

7:4 **NN:** or words to that effect.

7:5 **IB:** That is to say, Summer Vacation was coming on.

## The Book of the Law

1 **NN:** This book is essentially a paraphrase of the Constitution of the Carleton Grove.

3 **IB:** It is no longer necessary to be a student (at Carleton or anywhere else) in order to join the RDNA (or its offshoots). All may join regardless of race, creed, color, sexual preference, gender, or place of cultural origin; provided they agree with the Basic Tenets and partake of the waters-of-life.

4-6 **MS:** These **Basic Tenets** are the rock-bottom beliefs of Reformed Druidism.

7 **MS:** Some offshoots add extra officers. The following verses referred to both sexes as far as eligibility is concerned.

12 **NN:** My original copy of the Constitution sets the quorum (after correction: see note to EC 2:7-10 above) at one-eighth, not one-third.

**MS:** After 1976, some individual groves added some other rules. Isaac's talk below is of academic interest, since the Council of Dalon Ap Landu is, for all practical purpose, in abeyance and will probably remain so.

**IB:** This verse has subsequently been interpreted to allow business to be done through the mails. In typically Druidic manner, the quorum necessary to enact changes has only rarely been obtainable, since most Druids are too lazy to answer their mail or to send in changes of address. This difficulty in legislative communication (caused, as well, by inactivity on the part of the Arch Druids of the Carleton Grove) is one of the major reasons cited for the events of the Isaac Affair, and the forming of the Provisional Council of Archdruids. Although the structure of the national organization of the RDNA is still evolving, this Constitution is still the basic form used by most groves.

**IB:** It is the opinion of some Druids that this book refers only to Carleton Grove affairs and not to proceedings of the CoDAL.

An early (1965 c.e.) source in the Carleton Grove archive (by Fisher) requires a 3/4 majority for the adoption of any measure by the Council and for a quorum requires the entire CoDAL. This was later seemingly abandoned for the current practice of consensus voting and all resolutions passed to date by the CoDAL have been adopted by consensus of participating voters. Thus, it can be interpreted that the provisions of The Book of the Law were not meant to be taken as precedents for actions of the CoDAL. There have been a couple of resolutions concerning voting methods over the last few years, but all have died for lack of interest. It could be argued therefore that there are currently no rules for legal voting on Council matters.

## The Customs of the Druids

1:1 **MS:** Only during the Summer Half of the Year. During the Winter Half, the waters-of-sleep are passed instead.

**RL:** (about the chapter as a whole) Gods, how prolix. Dave must have had a lot of fun writing this chapter!

1:8 **IB:** Note therefore, that there is no special ordination or initiation ceremony for entrance into the First Order.

2 **NN:** The words of the Chant were written by Kathie Courtice, and set to music by Peter Basquin. It was regularly sung as part of the Service of Worship.

3 **MS:** These words form the bulk of the service for consecrating the Second Order. The drinking of a good dollop of whiskey is known as "The Ordeal".

**RL:** I consider 3:1 to be a Fisherism, of course.

4:1-7 **NN:** Based, so far as I know, on Frangquist's research. He spent a bit of time on research as writing the Chronicles turned from the frivolity obvious in the first few chapters of Early Chronicles to the serious undertaking recognizable later on.

**IB:** For some reason, Frangquist's otherwise fine research missed the early Celtic celebrations of the Spring Equinox and the Fall Equinox, though their celebration is well attested by Celtic scholars. (Thus among the orthodox members of the RDNA, these two holidays are not celebrated, since they do not appear in this chapter. Most of the offshoots, however, do celebrate them.

**MS:** I doubt Frangquist ever found much evidence for the worship on equinoxes by the Celts, because I certainly have not. Nowadays, Carleton celebrates equinoxes when possible.

**RL:** I recommend the alternative spellings of Geimhrídh for Geimredh, Imbholg for Oimelc, Samhradh for Samradh, Lughnasa for Lughnasadh, and Fomhar for Foghamhar. (this is largely a spelling difference between Irish and Scottish Gaelic). The usual way of observing the solstices/equinoxes is distinctly minimalist. A druid upon arising takes a look in the general direction of the sun and intones: "Looks like a solstice/equinox to me".

5:3 **IB:** Nonetheless, the night of the full moon seems to be more commonly used for ordination Vigils than the new moon.

**MS:** Full moons & new moons are great, but vigil when you feel the urge or when the weather looks good, especially in Minnesota!

5:4-10 **IB:** See the Orders of Common Worship.

**RL:** Interesting phrasing in 5:6, no? How can the "worship of druids" purify anything from the Mother??

6:6 **MS:** An all-night Vigil is one of the requirements before one may be ordained to the Third Order, although there is a rare precedent for *in absentia* ordination of a candidate, conditional upon the Vigil being consequently performed. This is frowned upon, and normally the service of Ordination is held just after sunrise, with the other Third Order Druids in the Grove coming out to join the candidate and conducting him/her to the service. It was also once a tradition that the newly ordained Third Order would conduct the next Druid service that would be held. The vigiler usually also bought breakfast for the ordaining Druid, and whiskey would be mixed in with breakfast.

6:12 **MS:** This chapter did not originally refer to both genders, although it does now. See Part Four's Record of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu. Officially, only an Archdruid or Archdruidess who is the head of a legally constituted

grove may ordain priest and priestesses to the Third Order. There is now developing a custom whereby a solitary Third Order Druid may consecrate people to the Third Order. And at Carleton, since 1985, there is now a tradition that even 1st and 2nd Order can ordain people to their own respective orders that they hold.

- 7:1-12 **MS**: Written by David Fisher and is found in his first Samhain service.
- 8:12 **NN**: The Council of any particular Order elects the Patriarch of the next higher Order; he then ordains who he wishes to honor to that Order, forming its Council, which in turn elects... A nice self-perpetuating sequence, no? The Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Orders came into being on the same day. Fisher, Frangquist, and Fisher were the entire Council of Dalon ap Landu: we chose Fisher as Patriarch of the Fourth Order, and he ordained us to the Fourth Order. As the Council of the 4th Order, we elected me as Patriarch of the Fifth, and I ordained them. As the Council of the 5th Order, we elected Frangquist Patriarch of the Sixth Order, and he ordained us to the 6th Order (cf. LC 9:7-18). It should be noted that this was prearranged to the extent that we had our services of ordination written ahead of time.
- MS**: Gary Zempel was elected Patriarch of the 7th Order. The Higher Orders were pretty much forgotten from 1967-1974, when a brief attempt was made to revive them. Instead, a few new independent orders were founded.
- 8:13-16 **MS**: These verses had always been a thorn in the side of Druidic tradition. They were negated by Resolution of the Council on 29 March 1966 and 1 May 1971. See Part Four.
- 9:1-5 **NN**: Chapters 9, 10, and 11 are translations of genuine Old Irish poems, which were provided by Dr. John Messenger (see Latter Chronicles 6:12-14 and attached notes below). Notice the unusual "chain" rhyme-scheme of the chants in 9 and 10; the sound or the idea of the last word in each line is repeated at the beginning of the next. This is found in many pre-Christian poems in Celtic countries.
- 10:1-5 **RL**: This poem was spoken by Amerghin White-Knee, poet of the Milesian invaders, to still a storm which the Druids of the Tuatha De Danaan had raised up against the Milesian fleet to keep it from landing. The poem worked.
- 11:1-3 **IB**: "Also spoken by Amerghin, on landing at Inber Colptha with Eremon's half of the Milesian fleet." Larson. A longer and "less mystical version" appears in The Book of Bards under the same title, supplied by Robert Larson.

## The Latter Chronicles:

- 1:2 **IB**: School started again on September 23, the first service of the Fall was therefore Saturday, September 28, 1963 c.e.
- 1:9 **NN**: Jan Johnson lived in Seattle, Washington and did not return for his senior year. (He had been my roommate in '61-'62)
- 1:10 **IB**: "...Norman who was Server." was Norman Nelson.
- 1:11 **IB**: This was a private letter, since lost.
- 2:2 **IB**: The Archdruid (David Fisher) was wroth because he intended to go "to the Arb" with his girlfriend that night and it was raining, an occurrence likely to dampen outdoor romance.
- 2:8 **NN**: It was actually a greater distance I gather about 300 yards but close enough to be very startling, he said.
- 2:9 **NN**: To the best of my knowledge, the "Druid Curse" was used three times: twice against those who tore down the

altar and once as detailed here. Net total was one broken leg, one sprained ankle, and one bolt of lightning. It was decided that 'the Curse' would never be used again, and that we would not teach it to anyone who did not then know it.

**MS**: It was also used by the Stanford Grove with disastrous effects on a water tower.

- 3:1 **NN**: Two humorous incidents occurred, which somehow didn't get into the Chronicles. At one service, the waters-of-life had more life than we really wanted – a grasshopper jumped into the cup as it sat on the altar! It was flicked out again and most of the congregation did not know it had happened.

**NN**: Another time, Howard Cherniack was solemnly intoning the Preceptor's responses just before the Consecration, until he was asked: "Has the Earth-Mother given forth of Her bounty?" He replied "YUP". It was weeks before we could get through a service with straight faces!"

**RMS**: Believe it or not, this is one of traditions that did survive the Great Interim. Very occasionally, the Preceptor would give what was known as the "Cherniack Response" and we couldn't keep straight faces either!

- 3:4 **IB**: The college was determined to harass the Druids by not granting "chapel credit" and by not recognizing the RDNA as "a real religion." Nonetheless, none of the Druids were ever suspended or expelled for failure to fulfill the religious attendance requirement.

**NN**: Dr. Messenger became our faculty advisor that fall, before the events of Chapter V.

- 4:1 **IB**: October 26, 1963 c.e.

- 5:6 **NN**: The customs repeated in this chapter were based on ancient customs detailed by Dr. Messenger.

- 5:12 **NN**: This really happened. We sat around the fire, passing a bottle or two of wine (we were in the Arb), then joined hands and sat in silence for some time. It was a girl whose name I forget who first 'spoke in tongues' [a psychic talent known as "glossolalia"], then began to repeat, over and over again, words such as those given here. It must have lasted for 4-5 minutes. She later told us that she did not remember speaking at all.

- 5:13 **IB**: In view of subsequent events, I am inclined to think that what was seen was a vision of three tombstones, those of John Kennedy, Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King; three people whose assassinations made tremendous impacts on the nation and caused hundred of psychics to have (recorded) previsions in the early 60's.

- 5:15 **IB**: This is an old custom in Europe, all that is left of the traditions of driving cattle and other domestic animals through the flames of a High Day fire, in order to purify them from all evil influences and other vermin. There are various sexual fertility elements to it as well, when people jump through or over the flames.

- 5:16 **IB**: Druids have always been careful about their fires.

- 6:1 **NN**: November 22, 1963 in Dallas Texas.

- 6:7 **IB**: This had a sobering effect on the Druids.

**MS**: The sobriety soon wore off.

- 6:13 **NN**: Dr. John Messenger, Ph. D. came to Carleton (in September, as he remembers it, not December as implied in this chapter) as a Professor of Anthropology. "At one of the first (weekly and mandatory) convocations he spoke about his research in the Aran Isles (at the mouth of

Galway Bay) and mentioned various Druid customs still extant there under a thin veil of Christianity. Before he left the room that night, we had our official faculty advisor!

**RMS:** An article by Messenger on the Aran Islands appears in the November 1974 issue of *Natural History*.

**IB:** Dr. Messenger is the one who provided the translations of the Irish poetry for *The Customs of the Druids* and many photos reproduced in the edition of the *Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*. He says "I can still recall how angry the Administration was with me when I agreed to be faculty advisor to the group." After him, their advisor was a Mr. Bardwell Smith, a comparative religions professor.

**RMS:** Many years later, Professor David Sipfle in the Philosophy Department told me how Messenger had recounted to him the bizarre activities transpiring on the Hill of Three Oaks. Messenger concluded in disbelief: "And you know, they really seem to believe that stuff!"

7:9 **IB:** See note to Early Chronicles 2:5 above.

7:10 **IB:** This is still considered by many to be the best design for a Druid altar.

**MS:** The use of altars have pretty much disappeared from Carleton Druidism.

7:14 **IB:** David Frangquist, because he was writing *The Druid Chronicles (Reformed)*.

7:19 **IB:** This is the only recorded ordination to the Third Order known to have taken place during the Winter Half of the Year. The safe drying of the altar, however, constituted an emergency.

Frangquist's courage is noteworthy, for even in April, Minnesota Spring weather is not always kind and the Antidruids were still around.

**MS:** Actually there have been a handful of rare ordinations in the Winter. But realistically, Northern winters discourage such tomfoolery.

8:1 **IB:** The night of April 30, 1964.

8:5 **IB:** One defilement is not mentioned in the *Chronicles*.

8:11 **NN:** We knew the hill was there, with the rock and the three trees; we moved over there, intending to "dub" the trees honorary oaks. When we got there, all three were found to be oaks. And this was taken to be a sign."

**MS:** The stone was used as an altar, as a matter of fact, it still bears the faint remains of a Druid Sigil etched into its side.

9:1 **MS:** This was Norman Nelson.

9:18 **IB:** See note attached to *Customs* 8:12 above. Shortly after this time (summer of 64), Gary Zempel was elected the Patriarch of Sirona, the Seventh Order. However, before he got around to ordaining any other members of this Order, he sent out a letter renouncing his Patriarchy, even his identity as Gary Zempel. Not to long after, David Fisher attempted to resign the Patriarchy of the Fourth Order, due to a feeling it was inconsistent with being an Anglican Priest.

10:1-2 **NN:** On the day of my graduation (June 12, 1964) the Board of Trustees abolished the religious attendance requirement. Interestingly enough, we had invited the College administrators to the last full service of the year (before Finals Week) and none attended. During Finals Week, we planned an abbreviated service. As I approached the Hill of the Three Oaks (a few minutes later) carrying the waters-of-life in the chalice, I could see the regular group gathered around a couple resting on a blanket. My first thought was that someone was "Arbing"

and that we were going to have to dispute them for possession of the Hill. As I reached the Hill, I saw that they were President and Mr. Nason! He apologized for not having been able to attend the week before and they stayed for the service and partook of the Waters. I served the Waters with my fingers crossed! At a school where possession of liquor could result in a ten-day suspension, he literally could have prevented me from graduating. Nothing was ever said about it. I still wonder if I was the only student (until the rule was changed a few years ago) to ever have served liquor to the college President on campus!

10:5 **IB:** The following verses (6-23) were not actually sung at that time. This collection of verses, now known as the "Hymn to the Mother," were written the subsequent Summer by Norman Nelson, one night/morning when he was working on the "Graveyard Shift" at the State Cement Plant, which was his summer employment during school. That September he sent it to Frangquist for inclusion in the *Druid Chronicles (Reformed)*.

10:13 **IB:** This verse has an alternate ending, as follows: "...and for all that can be sensed do we praise Thee."

10:15 **IB:** This has an alternate reading, as follows: "In our meditations and services, and in our counseling and judging, do we praise Thee; in our divinations and prophecies, and in our wizardries and incantations, do we praise and think upon Thy works and Thy power."

10:17 **IB:** This has an alternate reading, as follows: "In all the whole world do we praise Thee: from the east to the west do we praise Thee, and from the north to the south do we praise Thee, and from the nadir to the zenith do we praise Thee; yea, from the Center of our being do we Praise Thee."

10:23 **RMS:** This last verse sums up the entire chant and reflects what I consider to be the basic idea of *Reformed Druidism*.

## Meditations:

1 **MS:** This is David Frangquist's description of his Third Order Vigil. See notes to *Customs* 6:6 and *Latter Chronicles* 7:19 above. It is still a popular reading during the Vigil process amongst current Druids.

1:16 **NN:** "Be'al", The Druid name of old; it is apparently related to the Semitic word "Baal", meaning "Lord".

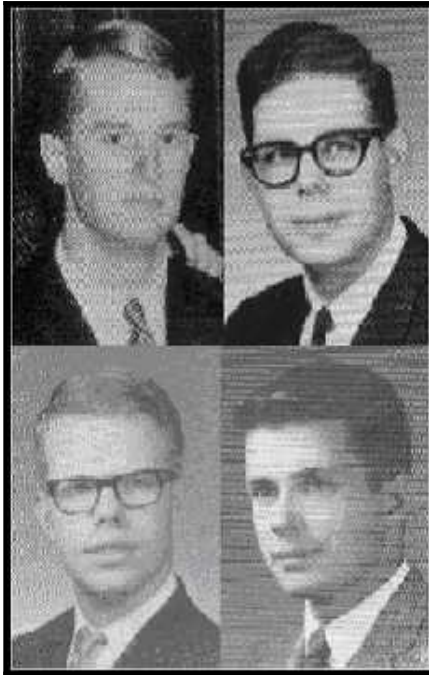
3:3 **IB:** Note that in *Reformed Druid thought*, the Earth-Mother is more than "Mother Nature" or the Biosphere of the planet Earth, although to many Druids (just as with many Wiccans) this may be the primary emphasis in worship. For as it says in verse 6 of this chapter, the Earth-Mother is all that is manifested to human senses. There does seem to be some overlap with the Wiccan concept of a Star Goddess who is beyond Earth, yet intimately involved with it; however, absolutely none of the Founders knew anything about Neopagan Witchcraft, and certainly had no intentions of being connected with it. See *The Second Epistle of Isaac* for comments on the concept of Supreme Being(s) in Neopagan Theology and possible correlation's that could be drawn (though only by those desiring to) between them and *Reformed Druidism*.

3:9 **IB:** There is an alternate reading, as follows: "She is Weakness-Strong."

5:10 **RL:** This is almost undoubtedly a typo for Bible. Bile was a progenitor god, father to the Dagda, whose mother was Danu. His earthly manifestation was the bile, or sacred

tree, usually an oak. The name Bile' is cognate with Bel, Belenos (and Be'al).

**MS:** I disagree with Brother Robert. I suspect that David, in his rudimentary Celtic researches, had come across the ancient Irish custom of "Bile" (pronounced "Bee-lay") which is a holy wooden tree-post. But the substitution of "Bible" is interesting.



**Figure 1 The Founders of the RDNA:  
Top (L to R) David Fisher & Howard Cherniack,  
Bottom (L to R) Norman Nelson & David Frangquist.  
Taken c. 1961-1962.**

## Printing History of the Chronicles

The five books as found in Part One of this anthology are known as "The Chronicles". Some wonder if the fiveness of it was intended by Dave as a parody of the Pentateuch. (Intriguingly the number five has great importance to the Discordians.) Most of it was written as a self-complete project by David Frangquist in the summer of 1964, to chronicle the history and customs of the first year of Reformed Druidism at Carleton. It has been published under the Pseudo-real entity called "The Drynemeton Press". The name was a side-joke related to "The Grove Press" of the Underground scene of the 60's. This was the first edition and its printing dates are 1964, 1965, 1966, 1969, 1970, "the 1986 to 1992", and then 1993.

The five books of the Chronicles were reprinted in a Second Edition in the 1976 anthology called "The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)", with a second minor printing in 1986. A Third Edition was assembled by Glen McDavid and Donald Morrison and had only one printing in 1977. Scharding put together a Fourth Edition, and it has had three printings; one in late summer of 1993, 1994, and finally in "A Reformed Druid Anthology" during 1996.

The First Edition's first five printings had some internal cross-references (e.g. See Cus. 3:5 found annotating verse 9 of the Book of Law). More were added by Glen McDavid, who received a Dean of Druid Textology as a reward, and first published in the Third Edition in 1977.

It was decided early on that the Druid Chronicles should not be added to by the future essays of other Druids. We felt that the Druid Chronicles (Reformed) should stand on its own merits without additions. This is why the Apocryphas were written.

The only change of their contents was made in 1976, when "The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)" were being assembled by Isaac Bonewits. The crux of the matter was the misogynist verses 13, 14 & 15 of Chapter 8 of Customs. Frangquist did not intend any misogyny by them, but those were Fisher's rules in 1964. The May 1, 1971 ruling of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu (see Part Four of this Anthology) undeniably negated any remaining sexist interpretation of these verses, but many people wanted those verses removed from future editions of the Druid Chronicles. Isaac's work in 1976 omitted them, but I have reinserted them with a notation that these verses do not apply anymore.

### **Brief Printing History**

- 1964 1<sup>st</sup> Edition
- 1965 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition
- 1966 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition
- 1969 4<sup>th</sup> Edition
- 1970 5<sup>th</sup> Edition
- 1976 6<sup>th</sup> Edition Druid Chronicles (Evolved)
- 1986-92 7<sup>th</sup> Edition (Many reprints)
- 1993 8<sup>th</sup> Edition
- 1994 9<sup>th</sup> Edition
- 1996 10<sup>th</sup> Edition (ARDA 1)
- 2004 11<sup>th</sup> Edition (ARDA 2)

# Historiography of the Chronicles

Although David Frangquist was the primary author of The Druid Chronicles (Reformed), the following Druids made the following contributions:

- Howard Cherniack was the original formulator of the Basic Tenets (Law 5, 6). Frangquist reprinted it in a poetic fashion.
- Kathryn Courtice wrote the words to the Earth-Mother song in chapter two of Customs. It was put to music by Peter Basquin.
- David Fisher is the original author of the speech in Early Chronicles chapter seven and the ritual excerpts taken from the ordination of Second Order Druids found in Customs 3:7-10. He also wrote the Response at Samhain found in chapter 7 of Customs.
- The three incantations of Customs, chapters 9, 10, 11 were translated from the original ancient Gaelic by Professor John Messenger who was a visiting professor at Carleton.
- Norman Nelson composed the "Praise of the Earthmother" piece, supposedly while working a night-shift as a watchman in a cement factory.

David Frangquist was not one of the three Founders of the RDNA (Fisher, Cherniack, Nelson), but he came into Druidism a few weeks after it started and became close friends of the Founders. Frangquist, and Nelson to some extent, was a powerful force permitting Druidism to outlive the Chapel requirement. He spotted the important issues that Druidism dealt with and he became determined to make Druidism last a bit longer. It is doubtful at the time of writing the Chronicles, that he could have imagined just how long the Reform would last.

The Druid Chronicles cover the first year of Druidism under Fisher's Archdruidcy of April 1963 to April 1964 and during Norman's summer Archdruidcy of 1964. It was an attempt to capture the moment for future nostalgia. David Frangquist would be Archdruid from September 1964 until his graduation in 1966. Many peculiar aspects of Druidism in the Fisher era are preserved in the Chronicles, which would have been forgotten otherwise.

## The Early Chronicles

This part of the chronicle covers the period from April 1963 to June 1963, during which much of the ritual and hierarchy became established. The short-term obsession with altar-building began at this time and would last until the decision to use the immovable boulder on the Hill of Three Oaks.

## The Book of the Law

Despite the title, it is only the basic tenets (Law 5, 6) that are mandatory requirements for organizational membership in Reformed Druidism. It is basically a rewording of the Carleton Grove's own constitution. Of course, to be a 1st order in the *spirit* of Reformed Druidism you also have to partake of the Waters-of-Life, and there is no ordination service actually proscribed for it. These basic tenets were very carefully formulated by Cherniack, with input from Fisher, to express the most basic beliefs of the RDNA, and they have proved to be remarkably efficient. Fisher's preoccupation with power is evident in 8.

## The Customs of the Druids

Most of the ordination procedures are of Fisher's origin. The Founders and Frangquist looked up the Celtic holidays from standard books on ancient Druids in the library. There is no compulsion to honor the holidays, of which the equinoxes are noticeably absent. An interesting dinosaur is found in chapter eight, where the election procedures of the Higher Orders are outlined. The most disputed verses 8:13-15, have long been a sore point of Reformed Druidism, and the battles to remove them are amply discussed in the History of Reformed Druids.

## The Latter Chronicles

This covers a period roughly from September 1963 to June 1964 when the Chapel requirement was formally rescinded by Carleton College. Interesting notes are the Druid Curse, the prediction of President Kennedy's assassination, the first ordination of a Third Order Druid (L.C. 9), soon followed by the founding of the Higher Orders.

## The Book of Meditations

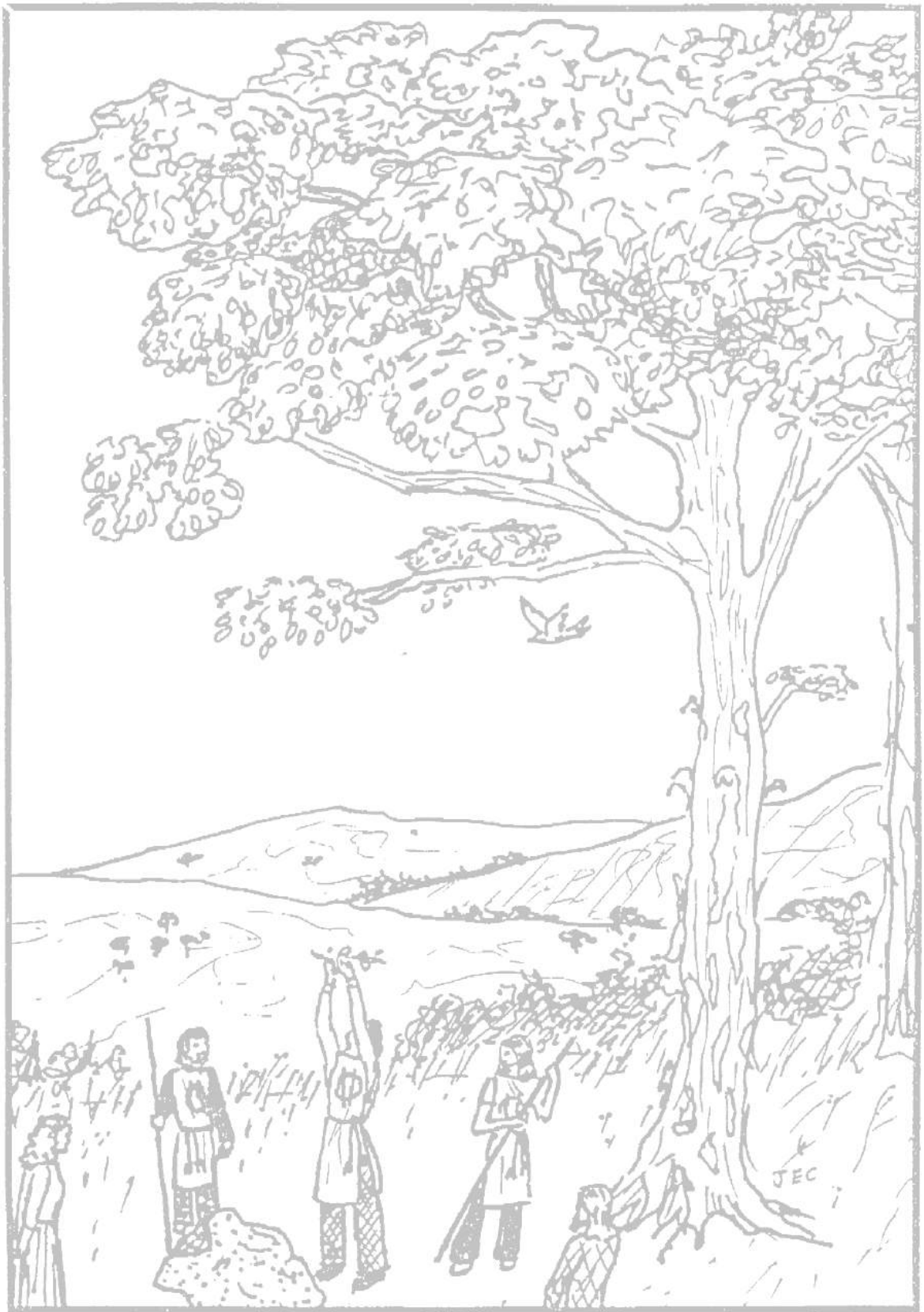
This has proved to be the most popular section of the Chronicles, especially as readings during the Order of Worship. The discussion of Be'al is rare amongst the Archives, the only other prominent documents are the Apocryphal books of Thomas.

## Frangquist's Literary Career

The Chronicles are the most popular Druid document and have provided a constant reminder of the reasons why the Reform was founded. Frangquist also was responsible for guiding the early missionary efforts of the Reform, passing legislation, starting the Blue Book of Archives, and collecting the Green Book. He has also helped Druidism to revive at Carleton at least three or four times since he graduated. In essence, Frangquist put a firm stamp on Druidism of the period from 64 to 69, and acted as resource for ArchDruids ever since. See Part Ten of ARDA for an interesting transcript of the oral interview with David and Deborah Frangquist.



**Figure 2 Deborah (Gavrin) & David Frangquist  
at Carleton Archives for Samhain 1993.**





Ye Olde Scratch paper.

So Ends  
Vol One  
Of ARDA 2

VOLUME TWO

THE BOOKS  
OF THE  
APOCRYPHA

**(COMBINED AND EXPANDED)**

DEDICATION

To Jan Johnson

The first Reformed Druid to write an epistle.

Drynemetum Press



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## 2003 Introduction

It has been a perplexing dilemma, of what to add to the fourth installment of the Apocrypha. I'm approaching my goal of making a portable set of archives, yet making it less portable in the process. After raking through old letters, new documents began to take on greater historical weight and importance. Recent letters from the internet correspondence seems timely, but I wonder if they will stand the test of time; and could one be removed at a later point if it fails such a test? In any event, the apocrypha has been expanded 2 or 3 times in size, and perhaps become unwieldy; yet I hope it is wielded wisely.

I have divided the Apocrypha into various convenient historical periods that will assist the browser to focus in on the "themes" of various collections of letters. As always, the letters are the opinions of the authors on that subject; and the absence of discussion on neglected topics does not necessarily indicate a lack of interest. The lamentable gap between 1980-1994 at Carleton is best explained by the lack of letter-writing tradition, burn-out amongst prominent members, lost computer files, and poor maintenance of contacts between Groves. A lot more went on than what you see here. I figure that most activity at Carleton and other groves is participatory and celebratory, and letter writing probably represents less than 2% of a Druid's activity.

A number of letters from the 80s have been unearthed and included to show how the Reform continued in California after Isaac left. After ARDA was published and I went to Japan, Druidism revived and thrived, and a few selections from the Age of Irony & Merri have been included. Since 1999 the internet has made free and quick correspondence so easy, that a flood of letters has erupted, more like chit-chat than the deeply laborious projects in the older days of typewriters and handwritten missives.

As we move into a new era with this update, when my own personal knowledge, experience and participation definitely increases, I am faced with the additional problem of controlling my own ego. It is difficult to be objective about one's own literary career. I should not overstate my own influence, but neither out of excess humbleness, should I understate the impact of my own frequent letters. As always, dozens of acceptable letters were not included, because I don't know of their existence, or am I not yet wise enough to grasp their importance to the course of the Reform. When they are brought to my attention, of course, they will be considered.

So I leave you to stumble and lumber through this forest of words and ideas as best you can. Take what lumber you need and build wisely with it.

-Michael Scharding  
Day 1 of Earrach, Year XL of the Reform  
(Feb 1<sup>st</sup>, 2003)  
Embassy of Japan, Washington, D.C.

## 1996 Introduction

The following Books were chosen from hundreds of letters circulated at large amongst the Third Order members of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu (although the lower orders were also welcome to communicate), because they are deemed illustrative. It has always been our firm intention that every Druid should add and/or subtract to their own copies of the Apocrypha as they see fit. These selections are merely a suggested nucleus for such a personal collection. As with the Druid Chronicles (Reformed), NONE of these authors would ever wish that their words be considered a dogmatic authority, nor do their words represent anyone's opinion but their own opinion.

The contents of various books may often seem to be in conflict with each other or even unconcerned with Celtic or Neopagan issues. This is because many of the Druids felt that Reformed Druidism has a life or message that goes beyond the window trappings of any one culture or religion; it is more of a perspective. Everything beyond the two Basic Tenets (Book of Law verses 4-6) should be considered only as a personal opinion from the author or a local custom. This includes me. In many ways, the Apocryphas provide better understandings of how various Reformed Druids have interpreted the message of Reformed Druidism in their own spiritual lives. Many of these letters were painstakingly composed to convey subtle thoughts, so ponder them carefully when reading them.

Most of these Books have been published before, in one of two collections, either the "Carleton Apocrypha" or The Books of the Apocrypha in Part Two of "The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)." Both versions had the Epistle of David the Chronicler, The Book of Faith and The Outline of the Fundamentals. The latter half of both Apocryphas dealt with various opinions on the "Isaac Affair" of the mid-70s, when Isaac initially desired to redefine the RDNA as a Neo-Pagan organization with more interaction (i.e. the Provisional Council of Archdruids) and an effective hierarchy. I have chosen to combine these two Apocryphal versions (plus adding some letters), because one version provided only the "Isaac" letters and the other only provided the "Carleton" letters. Neither version was truly understandable without reading the other version. But, together, they can provide an interesting historical dialogue for the reader.

The issues leading up to the Isaac Affair are complex and are dealt with in more detail in "A General History of Reformed Druidism in America." The end-result was a lot of productive introspection, mutual understanding and an organizational subdivision of the Reform into three branches. The first branch retained the name RDNA and was composed of the Carleton Grove, Ann-Arbor Grove and New York #2. The second branch called themselves the "New RDNA" (NRDNA), which didn't wish to label themselves as Neo-Pagan, but they still wanted more interaction between Groves and a more functional Council of Dalon Ap Landu. The third branch was the Schismatic Druids of North America (SDNA), led by Isaac; they essentially abandoned the Council, identified themselves as being squarely in the Neo-Pagan movement and also spawned the short-lived Hasidic Druids of North America. After about three years, the original NRDNA groves had collapsed (along with the HDNA), and the SDNA relabeled itself as the NRDNA with the understanding that non-pagan members would be treated equally, but this second version of the NRDNA had a noticeable preference for the issues of the Neo-Pagan movement.

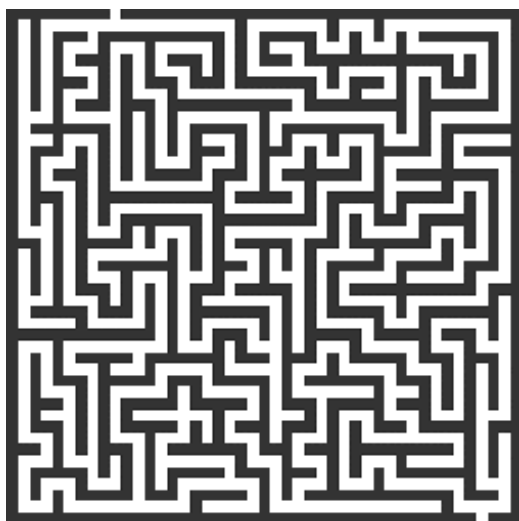
References of a sexist or creedist nature have been left intact, in order not to spoil the historical value of the various books. I have broken The Book of Changes into three parts to aid the reader in following the chronological dialogue. Except for arranging them in biblical-verse format, few spelling changes or emphasis has been added to these documents. All words in square brackets have been added by Michael Scharding for clarification. Longer side-notes were compiled in a document called the "Endnotes" and were placed the end of the letters; check them out. You may treat the Apocrypha as a collection of undoctored primary sources. I provide some background information on each letter in the Historiography section.

Please enjoy,  
Michael Scharding  
Big River Grove of Saint Cloud Minnesota  
Day 1 of Samradh, Year XXXIV of the Reform  
May 1st, 1996 c.e.

P.S. I've added some new selections to the ARDA version: the Epistle of Renny, the Epistle of Ellen, Gobbledegook and Red Tape, the three Epistles of Robert, A Cup Filled to the Brim with Druidism, Salutations, The Speaking of Beliefs, and the Book of Lacunae.



**Figure 1 Jan Johnson,**  
**first epistle writer, c. 1963.**



## Why Were Two Separate Apocryphas Printed? 1996

When the *Druid Chronicles (Reformed)* were written, as found in Part One of this ARDA, most people felt that no more books should be added to the *Chronicles*. However, they still had the itch to write and distribute their own thoughts to other people, especially to future students at Carleton. The Blue Book was a binder of such past materials and it was passed from one Carleton Archdruid to their successors. Unfortunately, the Archdruids of the other groves did not have access to this mini-Archive, so Isaac put together "*The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*," abbreviated as DC(E), to act as a Blue Book for other Groves. Not knowing where to put the letters into DC(E), Isaac borrowed Carleton's idea of an "*Apocrypha*," itself taken from the Christian bible making tradition. The term "*Apocrypha*," defined as being "unofficial accretion," seems to fit well, except that there are no "official" materials" onto which they can accrete. Also the definition of *Apocrypha* as "writings or statements of questionable authority," strikes a warm chord in the Druid heart.

Isaac had always intended his printed version of the *Apocrypha* to be enlarged by other people adding new selections that they deem fit. I suspect that most of the Carleton letters of the Isaac Affair were written too late to be included in the printed collection of DC(E). Richard Shelton in collecting his own *Apocrypha*, which have many letters of opposition to Isaac's reforms, positively decided not to include any of Isaac's letters. I suspect this is because Richard felt that Isaac had essentially formed or discovered a Neo-Pagan religion, and was trying to retroactively superimpose it upon the Reform. I don't think that Richard ever disliked Neo-Paganism, but he would have equally opposed similar attempts by Catholics to claim that Reformed Druidism has always been Catholic, or if Nicheren Zen Buddhists demanded that we should realize that Reformed Druidism is really Zen in disguise and that we should adopt mandatory chanting of sutras and eating pickled radishes. Richard felt that Isaac's letters would convince people to become overly concerned with the group's continued existence, and would encourage dogmatic group posturing rather than encouraging new Druids to work towards their own awareness. Any animosity between these two Druids was finally resolved at a Carleton meeting in April of 1994 over a pitcher of beer.

Richard's reasons for excluding Isaac's letters, and producing a "purer" *Apocrypha* are very tempting to me, because I am very much one of Richard's disciples. However, I have decided in ARDA to throw both versions together and then add a few more letters. Richard's "*Carleton Apocrypha*" will remain an available separate publication. I personally feel that the resulting *Apocrypha* displays an important facet of Reformed Druidism, the communication of ideas amongst peers. The Reformed Druidism at Carleton today and elsewhere is mostly drawing in people with at least a little bit of a Neo-Pagan background, and I think that these letters will help them to understand the differences between Neopagan Reformed Druidism and old-fashioned Reformed Druidism. This *Apocrypha* will also show them how Reformed Druidism can improve or mesh with a Neopagan Druidic religion (or any other type of religion), and yet still remain a quasi-distinct organization.

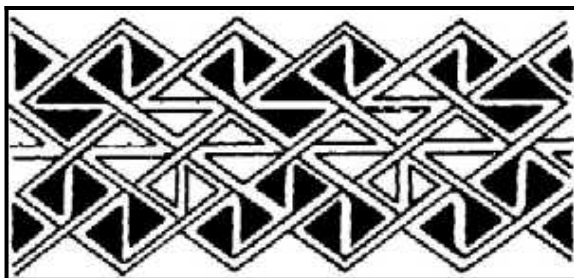
Good fortune to thee,  
Michael Scharding  
Day 1 of Samradh, Year XXXIV of the Reform,  
May 1st, 1996 c.e.

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Some Final Thoughts 1996  
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# Preface to the Carleton Apocrypha 1993

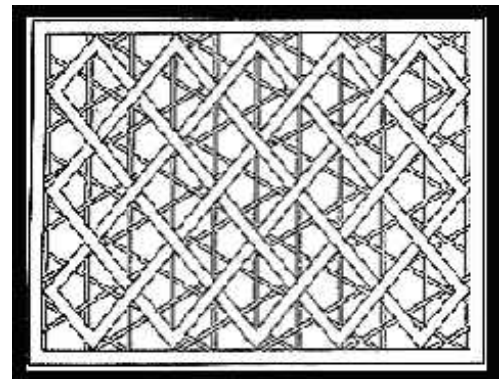
My purpose in printing the writings here collected is (of course) threefold. First, I would like to preserve some of the history and tradition of Carleton Druidism that was not preserved in *The Druid Chronicles (Reformed)* or that developed after the *Chronicles* were written. The intended audience here is the Carleton Grove itself. Second, in face of the growth of Neopagan Druidism, I would like to have something to offer those interested in the original non-pagan variety, something more complete and representative than the *Chronicles* alone. And third, I would like to discharge a long-standing promise to do something about the first two purposes.

This collection is a real hodgepodge, and despite my best efforts has nothing like the aesthetic unity of the original *Chronicles*, which are known to every Reformed Druid. Also it has nothing like the currency of the original *Chronicles*, which are known to every Reformed Druid. Most of these Apocrypha are known to few, though every Carleton Druid will find familiar material herein.

Although this is not a complete collection of all Druidic writings from Carleton, I have tried to keep the selection reasonably catholic, at least to represent the period from the founding in 1963 to about 1976, when my close contact with the Carleton Grove began to fade. Most of this material dates from 1976 or before. There are no Neopagan selections here, since in the early days the Grove was non-pagan, even arguably Christian. Certainly the founders would not have characterized Reformed Druidism as one of the oldest Neopagan groups in America, although on the strength of its founding in 1963 it seems to enjoy that reputation in the Neopagan community.

In recent years (after the period from which these writings are drawn) Druids at Carleton have become more interested in Neopaganism and Native American spiritual practices. Many would call themselves Neopagans. We "old-style" Druids have no quarrel with this, for one's Druidism is one's own affair, as David taught from the beginning. I believe Druidism transcends the nice distinctions we habitually make to compartmentalize the variety of the human spiritual experience, and I hope newer Druids will still find this material of interest, even, perhaps, of value.

Richard M. Shelton  
Midsummer Day 1993



# Introduction to the Carleton Apocrypha 1976

In the first days, the Reform had no published writings. David Frangquist ("the Chronicler") collected and printed *The Druid Chronicles (Reformed)* in 1964, and there were originally plans to update them by adding new material periodically. The mock-Biblical style seemed to call in particular for the "Acts of the Druids" and an Epistle or two. Several such works were in fact written. But as the aesthetic unity of the Chronicles came to be appreciated, it was decided not to add the other works, which naturally became known as the Apocrypha.

The term *apocrypha* signifies "things hidden away," and indeed almost all of these works remained literally hidden away in the personal files of the founders until comparatively recently. Some in fact were withdrawn by their authors. Thus, although they are of independent historical interest, these "early Apocrypha" did not contribute significantly to the development of either the Carleton Grove or the Reform in general.

When the College's religious attendance requirement was abolished in 1964, partly perhaps largely due to the challenge from the Reformed Druids, Druidism deepened considerably. With the Reform's immediate purpose fulfilled, the founders were a bit nonplused (David Fisher said he was "frankly stunned") to discover that this goal was but a secondary one for many who came to the services on the Hill of Three Oaks. Although all agreed that coerced religion was not a Good Thing and did not promote spiritual growth, what surprised the founders was that they had unwittingly created a setting more conducive to spiritual growth than many Druids had found anywhere else.

More was involved here than the rebellion against coercion. There was the spirit of intelligent and critical inquiry in matters religious, essentially an application of the high intellectual standard encouraged by the College in all things. There was the emphasis on the necessity of each person finding his own path himself, and a strong dislike for the very ideas of Dogma and Orthodoxy. There was a mistrust of formalism, a feeling that formalism tends to drive out meaning. Finally, there was the firm belief in the inseparability of humankind from its place in nature. These elements, and a vaguely mystical turn, combined to produce a view of life embracing far more than spiritual matters or better, extending spirituality to all matters. This attitude is what Carleton Druids understand by the term "Druidic."

In this period (circa 1965-1973) the forms and trappings adopted by the founders (with an eye toward hastening the death of the attendance requirement) became less important. The liturgy became more fluid. The turn to mysticism became sharper, and Druidism became more and more a personal affair. More writings appeared, many finding their way with some frequency into services, but never really intended for publication. This second wave of scripture became known as the "later Apocrypha."

The Third set of writings represented here stems from the flurry of letters and activity following proposals of Isaac Bonewits in 1974. Isaac, who came to Druidism via the Berkeley Grove, was the first Druidic proponent of Neopaganism. In a letter dated 18 July 1974 to the Council of Dalon ap Landu (comprising all Druid Priests), he suggested that the Reform describe itself in the following terms:

"The RDNA is an Eclectic Reconstructionist Neo-Pagan Priestcraft, based primarily upon Gaulish & Celtic sources, but open to the ideas, deities and rituals from many other Neo-Pagan belief systems. We worship the Earth-Mother as the feminine personification of Manifestation, Be'al as the masculine personification of Essence, and numerous Gods and Goddesses as personifications of various aspects of our experience."

He went on to outline a program for transforming the sleepy organization of Druidism into a vibrant Neopagan ministry. But it seemed to many of us that what he proposed for the Reform was very far from what Druidism was all about. In explaining our opposition, a good deal of ink was spent in trying to pin down our own conception of the Reform.

Of the selections included here, only two are from the early Apocrypha: *The Epistle of David the Chronicler* by David Frangquist and *The Book of Faith* by David Fisher, both dating from 1964. From the later Apocrypha come the *Outline* by David Frangquist (that quintessential Druidic broadside, dated 6/6/66), *Letter to my Brothers* by Steve Savitzky (circa 1970), and the *Discourse and Wisdom* of Thomas the Fool (a.k.a. Tom McCausland), both from 1970.

*The Words of Green* and *The Epistle of Norman* both were responses to Isaac's general letter of 1974. *The Epistle of Richard* dates from a couple of years later. These three letters have all been heavily edited in the present version to remove repetitive and irrelevant material.

I began working on *The Words of Green* almost the instant Isaac's letter arrived. It was addressed to the entire Council and dated 14 August 1974. At the time I was a Teaching Fellow at the University of Michigan, and the most expedient way to generate the requisite number of copies was to use the math department ditto machine I was already using to churn out lecture notes, problem sets, and exams. But I balked at the usual dittoed purple, so in an attempt to match the color of the letter to its spirit, I used green ditto masters for the letter, whence it acquired its current title. (Unfortunately, greenery has proven to be ephemeral: original copies of the letter have faded almost to illegibility.)

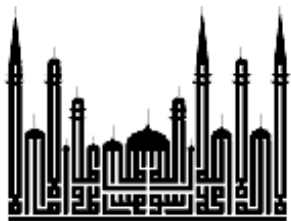
*The Epistle of Norman* was drawn from a letter by Norman Nelson to Isaac, dated 10 November 1974. Norman's response to Isaac was probably the most charitable, and Norman later spent time with Isaac, answering questions and eventually turning out *Between the Lines*, a set of historical notes on the *Chronicles* which were incorporated into the footnotes of Isaac's book (discussed below).

*The Epistle of Richard* is a pastiche of material drawn from two letters to Isaac, dated 26 May 1976 and 18 July 1976. By this time, Isaac had broken away to found his own group, the Schismatic Druids of North America, and was in the throes of assembling and printing *The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*, a compendium including much Neopagan material in addition to the original *Chronicles* and three of the present selections, as well as material from *Between the Lines*. At the time, it seemed possible that this compendium would answer the need for a new edition of *the Druid Chronicles*. As an added attraction, Isaac was also including his updated version of David Frangquist's pamphlet *What is Reformed Druidism?* But he was writing for a different audience and with a different agenda, and in the event, the *Evolved Chronicles* evolved into something most of us did not find useful.

In June of 1976, toward the end of this period, several Carleton Druids gathered at Carleton on the occasion of Midsummer Day. We had hoped to meet Isaac and other members of his Twin Cities Grove to work out our differences and come to some amicable understanding, but Isaac returned somewhat precipitously to California a month or so earlier.

David and Deborah Frangquist, then living in Germany, could not come themselves, but sent in their stead, *The Midsummer Epistle*. This letter has special significance for me, as it articulates what I had come to learn about my own feelings about Druidism (and religion in general) in the course of the struggle with Isaac. I hope Druidism will continual to bask in its light, as we basked in the light of the setting sun of Midsummer Day on the Hill of Three Oaks!

-Richard Shelton, 1993



## Contents of the Carleton Apocrypha 1976

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The Book of Faith  
The Discourse of Thomas the Fool  
The Wisdom of Thomas the Fool  
Letter to My Brothers  
The Words of Green  
The Epistle of Norman  
The Epistle of Richard  
The Epistle of Midsummer  
Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals  
Some Final Thoughts

### Historical Background

The Record of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu  
What is Reformed Druidism? (1965 pamphlet)  
Between-the-lines (footnotes to DC(R) & Apocrypha)  
The Druid Calendar (Carleton's timekeeping)

(NOTE: the last four selections are now in Part 4 of ARDA)

## Carleton Addendum 1976

The works that I had originally intended for this collection all came from the three sets described above. But as time passed, it became clear that other documents, such as the *Record of the Council of Dalon ap Landu* and David Frangquist's pamphlet, which in my day were widely known and in no sense hidden, have ceased to enjoy their former currency. Simply by dropping out of the light of day these became in a sense hidden, and in the interest of preserving a more complete picture of early Druidism, I have included these as supplementary works. To these I have added the original version of Norman Nelson's *Between the Lines* and my own brief disquisition on Druidic Time keeping. The latter developed from the set of instructions I drew up to accompany a Druid Calendar laboriously batted out on my typewriter at Carleton. (My excuses for not publishing the *Apocrypha* finally began to run out when I found a word processor that could handle the Calendar!)

A few textual notes. Except for the extracts from the letters to Isaac, which have been heavily edited as mentioned above, I have tried to restrain the editorial pen. I have silently corrected spelling errors and grammatical solecisms. I have made very few changes in punctuation since punctuation rules are more flexible and since some authors have strong views about certain nonstandard usages. In particular, I have made no attempt to standardize hyphenation or internal capitalization of the terms "Earth-Mother," "Archdruid," or "Neo-Pagan" as the Reform itself exhibits no consistency in this matter. Most of my additions to the text have been relegated to footnotes. The main exceptions are notes added to *Between the Lines*, which I have been careful to mark with my initials.

Richard Shelton,  
Circa 1976

## Contents of the Berkeley Apocrypha 1976

Introduction (as above)  
The Book of Faith  
The Epistle of David the Chronicler  
The Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals  
Leabhar Toirdhealbhaigh  
The First Epistle of Isaac  
The Book of Changes  
The Epistle to the Myopians  
The Second Epistle of Isaac

## Introduction to the Berkeley Apocrypha 1976

The following Books consist of some of the letters circulated at large among the members of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu. None have been officially published before this time. Any member of the Third Order is entitled to add to this collection by the simple process of writing a letter, reproducing it, and mailing it out to all the members of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu. Because each Book represents (at most) the opinion of its author(s) concerning various matters of a Druidical nature, the reverence (if any) in which each Book is held will vary from Druid to Druid.

And because each Book is a personal communication, editing has been restricted to the correction of obvious spelling errors and similar trivia. References of a sexist or creedist nature have been left intact, in order not to spoil the historical value of the various Books.

The Editor has been informed that there are other Apocrypha currently being printed for distribution. Assuming that each has a date of writing attached, it should be easy to insert them in their proper order, vis-a-vis those included in this edition.

Isaac Bonewits  
Summer 1976 c.e.



# Earliest Selections: The Quiet Years

## A Spring Thaw?

(By David Frangquist, 1964)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. It has been a mild winter. I hope that this foreshadows an early spring thaw, in Laird and Severance as well as the Arb.
2. After the ground has dried, and a small flock of seekers after religious truth makes its return to Monument Hill, I hope that they will find that the fog of religious discrimination has also cleared. Last fall, as well as the spring before it, was a difficult one.
3. The college has proclaimed that the religious requirement may be satisfied by participating in worship in one's own church. Yet, several churches have not been granted the privilege of credit.
4. Among them is the Reformed Druids of North America. The reason for this sort of discrimination has never been fully justified.
5. Charges have been made that the Reformed Druids have not been in existence long enough to be given credit. This is rather like saying that Christianity was not a religion until, say, the time of Constantine.
6. But the fact is that, although the Druids have been actively organized at Carleton only since last April, the movement springs from a tradition older than Christianity itself: ancient Celtic Druidism.
7. It has been said that the Carleton Druids are not serious about their religion; but an altar on Monument Hill, weighing over a ton of rock, carried there manually, is evidence of their seriousness.
8. Finally, Druidism is said to have no relevance to the college's so-called Judeo-Christian tradition. I would only point out that Christian missionaries pushing into Gaul and Germany from Rome, in order to more easily convert large segments of the local population, incorporated large amounts of Druidic practice into the tradition of the Christian church.
9. I would assume that when the college says tradition, it means to include more than simply the Old and New Testaments. It might also be noted that credit is even denied to students participating in discussion conducted by missionaries of the church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints.
10. I really should not have dealt with these charges, for to do so would seem to affirm the principle that there is some basis on which a religious group may be denied credit.
11. This is not the case. No clearly definable basis can be established. Any basis for judgment must be purely subjective, for religion is essentially a question of personal conviction.

12. This is the reason for the failure of the student negotiation committees. Committees may provide help in solving political problems, but not in religious problems. The committees have tried to deal in logical arguments; religion deals in faith.
13. Dr. Maitland has said that religion is concerned with "ultimate personal questions."
14. Reformed Druids could not agree more strongly. Perhaps the characteristic which distinguishes them, however, is the seeking of these ultimate questions through Nature.
15. John B. Sparks has demonstrated that all of the major religions of the modern world have developed directly or indirectly from Nature Worship.\*
16. Druids, find themselves, concerned, then, with the questions of the origins of religion and the ultimate nature of religious experience. Their reward for this concern has been simply discrimination.
17. The Reformed Druids of North America do not plan any mass demonstrations of strength, nor do they wish to personally attack any member of the Administration for his handling of the problem. They seek only to make their case known.
18. Reformed Druids do not seek direct abolition of the religious requirement, nor do they desire to upset modern religious institutions.
19. They merely seek recognition and credit for their personal efforts in dealing with "ultimate personal questions."
20. I hope only that they will not be disappointed, but that as spring brings good weather to Monument Hill it will also bring good news of acceptance.

-David Frangquist

Broadcast of KARL AM radio, 1964

\*John B. Sparks, Histomap of Religion. Rand McNally, 1943.



# The Book of Faith

(by David Fisher, 1964)

(Carleton & Berkeley Apocryphas)

1. I, David, Arch Druid of the Grove at Carleton, write these words so that those who come after me may know and understand some of the feelings which moved me to found the Druid movement. The tone of these writings will differ from the rest of the Books, but I write as I do for clarity, and, in accordance with Druid practice, make no request that my words become a dogma.
2. In the beginning, Druidism was formed as a protest against a religious requirement at Carleton College, not in affirmation of anything, except to affirm a mutual protest against coerced religion. The History of the Druids will be found elsewhere in the various books of this canon.<sup>1</sup>
3. The founders varied considerably in their degree of religious commitment. Some believed in no God, others in their own uncertainty, and others in the Christian religion. I am a believer in Christianity, and still hold myself as such.
4. Attacks have shifted in time from charges of insincerity to charges of emptiness and lack of real value. I write to reaffirm a new purpose, set forth elsewhere in the canon.
5. Druidism boasts no ethos. Since Druidism has never claimed to be a religion, dogmatism has always seemed incompatible with the organization. This does not mean that, as an individual Druid, I have no ethic, nor that any others who call themselves Druid are without beliefs as to what is right and wrong. As Druids, however, we can only affirm a mutual desire to ask ourselves questions about the meaning of life, and about the degree to which religious truth can be truth for us.
6. If I were to pass on any advice to my followers, it would be to never consider that they have found, as Druids, the ultimate answer to any of their questions. Druidism is a faith, if a faith, in questioning, not in answering. Awareness, to a Druid, is an individual thing, to be shared, perhaps, but never codified.
7. It has been asked, and with good reason: what is awareness. I can only answer that for me, awareness has meant a strengthening of my own faith, through communing with myself and with the world of Nature around me. I have come to a closer vision of the greater Reality that lies beyond this world, precisely because I have come to appreciate this world.
8. It has been asked, and again with good reason: if your purpose is to ask and to inquire, then why your use of ritual? Can not men seek for answers without the crutch of a ritual which has no real religious purpose? I can only answer that the Druid ritual has a value because it can be used by different men in different ways.
9. For one man, the sacrifice of life is the offering up of himself to a god or gods. To another, it is an offering up of his mind to a search for truth. As a priest, I repeat the great Answer to calm men's hearts and minds, not as a magical formula of absolution; but for some, the Answer is an absolution, washing away the distractions of a week of worry, and reaffirming confidence in the idea of a purpose in life.
10. For one man, the partaking of the Waters of Life is a mystical sacrament of communion with a god or gods. For another, it is an act of common fellowship with other seekers of the truth. As a priest, I do not seek to consecrate the Water to any use with my words, but rather think of my words as a common means for others, who watch and listen, to consecrate the Water within themselves.
11. Whether what has been founded at Carleton remains or passes away is now unclear. I will always have a concern for the Druids. My own feeling is that if the experience has helped any men to better see themselves, and to become aware of the problems of life in a new way, then it will have served its purpose.
12. I have called this book the Book of Faith. It is my faith in what I have done and in what I have seen grow. In accordance with a basic principle of Druidism, I do not presume to speak for anyone else except for myself. Yet I would add one word to the skeptical, to the vain, and to the self-satisfied.
13. Before you, O reader, pass a judgment on the Reformed Druids, look first into your own heart and be very sure that all is right and at peace. Then without false pride, ask those who call themselves Druids what they have learned from being Druids. Then, when you have weighed the amused against the serious, the scoffers against the men who call themselves aware, then only will you be able to judge.
14. In the name of the Earth Mother, the great personification of all that moves and walks and lives and is upon the Earth, and in the name of Be'al, the source of all truth without whom no Druid is aware, but whose nature remains to each man his own mystery, I ask upon you peace. May you, in your own way, find the truth, as I have found it.

So be it.  
David Fisher  
April 12th, 1964.



# The Epistle of David the Chronicler

(by David Frangquist, 1964)

(Carleton and Berkeley Apocryphas)

## Chapter the First

1. To Norman [Nelson], Patriarch of the Order of Braciaca, from his devoted servant David [Frangquist], a priest of the Order of Braciaca and Patriarch of the Order of Belenos.
2. It is with deep regret that I was required to postpone the writing of this epistle until the present time, but it was mine earnest desire that I should communicate to you only the fullest details of these experiences. It was therefore necessary to wait until all of the events herein recounted had transpired before I could begin to set them down on paper.
3. I would assure you, however, that I did receive the epistles which you did so graciously send to me and I have read them with great interest.
4. But there are a number of points which you have made which do cause me some concern.
5. Concerning your reference to yourself as the Archdruid of the South Dakota group: I would remind you that an Archdruid must be elected by the members of his grove, but that the only requirement in the formation of a grove is that each of the three officers be properly filled by election.<sup>2</sup>
6. Yet you mention only one other person as being a member.
7. Perhaps there is yet another whom you did not mention; I keep in mind the Bishop, who I'm sure would participate excellently in the position of Server.
8. Of much more concern to me, however, is your comment that it all did now seem so much like playacting.
9. It is with this that I should like to deal at some length, drawing freely from mine experiences of this last summer.

## Chapter the Second

1. When I first came to arrive at Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan<sup>3</sup>, I was fully resolved to there establish my mission.
2. But it was only with great difficulty that I did succeed in persuading two of my friends to attend the ceremony at Midsummer, which it was my duty to perform nevertheless.
3. But I was to be greatly disappointed in mine efforts, for in the following two weeks I was able to persuade no-one to join me in the worship of the Earth-Mother.
4. But the writings of our cause were well received, such that after I had made them available no fewer than nine people did attend the services which were held during the next two weeks.
5. Now we did continue to meet, and in the course of time there were seven who did see fit to become Druids of the First Order in the service of the Earth-Mother. And so earnest were two of these that they did take upon themselves the responsibilities of the Second Order.

6. Now it was at this time that they did come unto me, desiring to know if we might form a grove. And at their insistence, I did finally agree.
7. And a number there were who were most greatly impressed by our cause, and they did declare that at last had been found that for which they had made their search.
8. Now I bear proudly the title of Archdruid of Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan, not because of the title, for in that it is nothing, but because of the light that Druidism has now been able to bring into the hearts of a few people here.
9. I am firmly persuaded that what I have seen this summer is a clear demonstration that our message is an important one.
10. Here there were no restrictions against which to rebel, but only the desire to find truth in our own way.

## Chapter the Third

1. It is mine observation that religion is composed of two parts: the philosophy and the ritual. Should either be absent, there is no longer religion.
2. For without the philosophy the ritual is but playacting; and without the ritual the philosophy lacks the warmth and vitality, which is capable of perpetuating it beyond its originator.
3. For there is in all men a certain desire for the glory of ceremony.
4. Often it is indulged in for its own sake, as in the case of secret organizations and in the worship of the state (which is often confused with patriotism).
5. For ritual is capable of crowding all else out and becoming the end in itself. It is for this reason that we are constantly threatened by the Druid ritual shedding its philosophy and becoming mere playacting.
6. I am persuaded that our philosophy is valuable, for in Nature we have found a peace and a fulfillment that was otherwise lacking.
7. But we have also recognized that ritual is most often a hindrance; and to eliminate it is simply to encourage non-ritual to become the ritual. Rather as Druids we have endeavored to build a ritual which will be the destroyer of its own importance.
8. We have therefore adopted a ceremony, which is sufficiently foreign to our cultural tradition as to shock, whereas being sufficiently close to it to be taken seriously.
9. It is our fervent hope that in this way we will be able to impress upon men that ritual is only relative, and thus help them to rise above its limitations toward the greater truth beyond.
10. It is for this reason that we must be careful not to admit of any ceremony which would be too closely allied with our cultural traditions or which would tend to focus too much attention on the ritual itself.
11. We must not utilize any practice which is not derived directly from ancient Druid custom or from analogies from Nature.
12. And as leaders of our cause, we must always keep in mind our principal objectives.
13. For I would again affirm that insofar as we can continue to bring to others a greater appreciation of the wonders of the Earth-mother, I am persuaded that our effort is not in vain.
14. May the Peace of the Earth-mother be yours, and may the radiance of Belenos daily illumine your spirit. Peace!

# Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals

(By David Frangquist, 1966)

(Carleton and Berkeley Apocryphas)

BEING: a brief catalogue of the major quasi-metaphysical-theological conclusions which may be abstracted from and by the application of the Reformed Druid point of view to questions of ultimate relevance (in outline form).

THE THREE PILLARS (or treasures, or paths, or baskets, or roots, or branches, or wondrous illuminations)

## I. The Relentless Rebellion (threefold)

### A. The categorical If

No Intellectually honest mind can long remain so termed unless it is willing to submit all things to rigorous examination, even the most sacred provinces. Blind faith is no faith; it is blindness.

### B. The Principle of Non-Confirmation

Applying rigorous scrutiny to the world's religions, we find, especially in western form, universal claims to exclusiveness; yet none submits any more proof of its claim than an appeal to faith. Logically, therefore, all are equal.

### C. The Principle of Non-Conformation

In the face of the insoluble problem of selecting the "one true faith" most people conform to one of two patterns:

**1. The True Believer** embraces the faith of his fathers wholeheartedly and unquestioningly, fearing to face the logical possibility (probability?) that he is wrong.

**2. The Non-Believer** rejects all faiths out of hand, fearing that he might prove himself a fool by choosing the wrong one.

Reformed Druids reject the necessity of conforming to either of these patterns based on fear. True spiritual growth exists only in the *Relentless Rebellion* against petrified norms.

## II. The Paths of Paradox (also threefold)

### A. The Ceremonial Syndrome

Man is incurably finite. He cannot conceive of spiritual activity except in terms of ritualistic hocus-pocus. But ritual must be carefully selected or it will independently acquire magical properties of its own. Ritual properly constitutes a springboard for the spirit only. Oak worship is ideal for this purpose (see also III).

### B. The Primacy of Ambiguity

True spiritual growth consisting of personal effort and rebellion, Reformed Druidism must remain devoid of orthodoxy. All writings must be ambiguous and non-final (present dissertation included).

## C. The Principle of Non-Confirmation (rears its ugly head again)

You'll get no pat answers here. There being no logical basis for the acceptance or denial of any faith, Reformed Druidism confirms nothing (including Reformed Druidism). You're welcome to, but you're on your own.

## III. The Last Refuge (whadaya know?...threefold!)

### A. The Noble Fivefold Formulation

#### 1. The Nature of Life

Life is defined as the unity of the spiritual (Be'al) and the material (the Earth-Mother). Without the material the spiritual has no form; without the spiritual the material is dead.

#### 2. And Man?

Man, as a living animal, ideally consists of both material and spiritual.

#### 3. And Man?

Man is unique. This is because he has self-awareness. He passes from self-awareness through self-centeredness to self-importance, thence to self-isolation, resulting in self-misery.

#### 4. Unity for All and All for Unity

Man's self-importance cuts him off from the life-giving benefits of unity with the spirit and Nature (the material). Druids sometimes call unity *Awareness*. It is the object of religion to restore unity; most concentrate on the direct attainment of spiritual unity, ignoring (or rejecting) the material.

#### 5. Back to Nature

Druids (at least some of them) believe that a good approach is to first restore material unity. Having broken down part of the barrier around the self, the rest should then be easier. Hence, Druid Nature worship: the ideality of going to worship oaks.

### B. The Basic Tenets

The Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism, which form the basis (believe it or not) for the preceding discussion, are found in the Constitution of the Reformed Druids, and in another form in the Book of the Law in *The Druid Chronicles (Reformed)*. They are the quintessences of Druidism, such that a person need accept nothing else and still become a Reformed Druid. They are here presented in their most concentrated form:

#### 1. Nature is good!

And the second is like unto the first:

#### 2. Nature is good!

### C. The Last Refuge

It is simple to grind out these systems. It is the expected thing to do. Perhaps it is useful. It is meaningless!

It is simple to sit on the Hill of the Three Oaks and look at the pretty blue sky. That, too, can be meaningless!

It is not so simple to stand alone under the pretty blue sky and watch all your preconceived systems come tumbling down.

But when they come tumbling down, there is a refuge: in Nature. There one may find a clearing of the head, a freedom from stagnant forms, a beginning. (The End)

David Frangquist

6/6/66



## Leabhar Toirdhealbhaigh

(Translates as "Book of Torvel")

(By Robert Larson 1967)

(Berkeley Apocrypha Only)

### I

The moonlight shining on the path  
Blinding  
The sister stars  
Brightening the way  
Dimming  
Foot falls heavy  
And raises dust in a  
Shimmering  
Cloud  
Of many colors.

Softly go, wanderer  
Where the wood calls  
And lives.

Grass whispers  
And trees walk  
As you go your contemplative way  
Brain empty, thinking  
Body dead, living  
Walking  
Unfeeling.

Tree roots move  
Snakes trying  
To entwine your feet  
And hold you forever  
Wanting you, loving you  
Wishing to talk  
If you dare listen  
But you will walk.

The owl hoots his song  
Of loneliness  
And the terror of the woods  
Frightening you  
Sending you running  
Happily, joyfully  
Fearfully  
Tearfully  
Through the forest  
Seek then to escape  
The tale that is told.

The grass damp beneath  
You  
Sparkles in the moon  
Stops wets and cools your feet  
Making you joyful  
And cold  
Feet numb from damp  
Frigid  
Fighting the moonlight trees  
Continue on out  
Out to the city

The grass hastens you away  
You are not ready yet to stay  
The woods seem to say.

## II

Dew drips heavy  
Wets the ground  
Sparkling dew  
Shimmering in the moonlight  
Reflecting color schemes  
Prismatic.

Moonbows  
Sparkle from  
Dripping dew  
Bright and joyful  
Breaking the moonlight  
Healing.

Rejoicing in it, he wend  
His way  
Out from the city down below  
Up to the fields  
Where flowers grow  
To the thicket  
Full of life  
Through the forests  
Across the lea  
Seeing all there is to see.

March forward, stepping lightly  
Trampling life underfoot  
Apologizing and smiling  
Pardon my clumsiness in going  
Up to the ancient oak  
Caressing, talking  
Adoring  
Age untold, oh so old  
And wise wonderful.

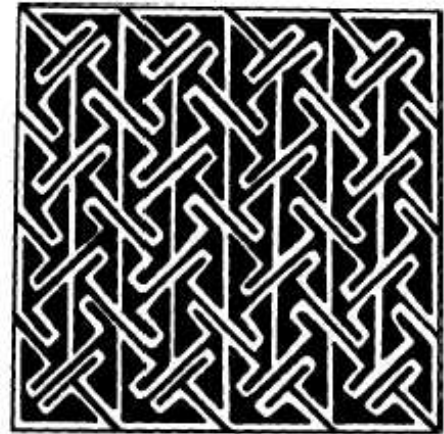
He stays doing nothing  
Breathing, absorbing  
Speaking at time  
Throwing his head back  
And laughing  
Enjoying  
Accosting the grass  
Kissing the flowers  
Teaching and learning  
Talking with animals  
On their way  
Entranced, pause and  
Tell of nightmare worlds  
Of strange tales  
And marvel at his  
Yet stranger tale.

Walking onward through the trees  
Over the thicket  
Down the rabbitway  
To the waterhole  
Moonlight shines through his shape  
Stars for eyes  
Moon for heart  
Meteors for limbs  
Onward, onward into the eternal day-night

Smiling goes he.

No more seen in the city  
No more seen in the field  
No more seen but felt and heard  
Kindly master-slave of all  
Unwielding of power possessed  
Yielding of love and life  
Breath on the wind  
Yet learning  
Teaching, preaching  
Lore-filled in every pore  
Ethereic and solid  
Whispering into unknown ears  
The man the grass teaches how to grow.

Toirdhealbhadh MacLorcain  
Ard-draoi Clann na Brocheta  
Earrach 12 y.r.  
[circa Spring 1973 c.e.)  
a.k.a  
Robert Larson, DAL, Be.  
Archdruid, Berkeley Grove



# Letter to my Brothers

(By Steve Savitzky, 1968)

(Carleton Apocrypha Only)

## I

1. I am writing these words  
for all of us  
because I am writing them  
and because I am  
all of us

I find that I am a strange fraternity  
knowing you brothers and sisters  
who do not know one another  
but who know

- 10 your brothers and sisters whom I do not know

I will speak of myself  
and what I know

I have stood upon a hill  
and felt the powers of the Earth leap out  
over the nerves of the city bright below

Gazing into a fire I have seen  
a life that is old and strange and glows  
with the beating of the ruby heart  
that lies in the breast of darkness

20. I know now that the trees  
live guided by a wisdom beyond time  
that they weave in their looms of leaves  
the fabric of space itself and die by fire  
to free the secret essence of their souls

I find within myself  
the labyrinth which I have begun to search  
there are many ways

mine is the power to gaze  
deep into fires

- 30 into the core of things

mine is the power  
to speak to trees  
and listen to their songs

mine is the power to walk  
at the left hand of darkness  
at the right hand of the moon

mine is the power to dance  
and call the winds together  
into stillness

40. there are other powers  
I have not yet found

We stand together now  
at the still point of the storm to come

brothers and sisters  
afraid  
uncertain of our strength

but we are the children of light and darkness  
we are the makers of dance and song  
we are the joyful servants of earth and sky

50. I call you together to go forth  
into the world of men  
to learn of yourselves and your powers  
and give your lives that life itself not die!

## II

1. I have written these things  
after reading Demian  
dazed  
from walking down halls of mirrors  
dazzled by the reflections of myself

I write having consumed  
green tea in cups uncounted  
bread that did not rise  
black coffee and black night

10. I write at the end of a time  
when nothing has gone quite right  
and I have not rated my studies  
worth the price of coal in Hell

I can no longer keep things to myself  
not only must I write  
but also share

20. and so I give you these words  
because I am driven  
possessed  
insane  
a fool or a prophet whatever the difference is

I have told you to save the world  
and look into your souls  
I tell you to read Demian  
and vigil upon the hill

- I have said you are my brothers  
30. I say you are my world

I will write to you again

and speak with you  
and walk with you in city or on hill

and we will cast off these chains  
for a little while  
these chains of time and space  
of loneliness  
of darkness and of distance and of fear

and we will gaze together  
40. into a dying fire upon a hill  
and warm ourselves with dance and words and love  
until the dawn looks over the world's edge  
and we like it are part of all we see

### III

1. "I need only bend over that dark mirror to  
behold my own image, now completely  
resembling him, my brother, my master."

-Hesse

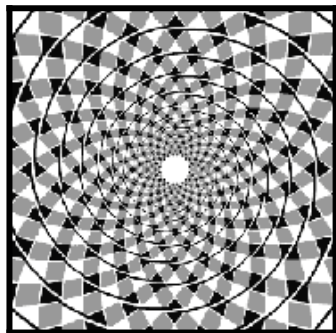
2. "Hypocrite lecteur, mon semblable, mon frere!"

-Baudelaire

3. "I can call on spirits from the vasty deep!"

"Why so can I, and so can any man,  
but do they come when you do call them?"

-Shakespeare



# The Discourse of Thomas the Fool

(By Thomas McCausland, 1970)

(Carleton Apocrypha Only)

## I Invocation

O Grannos, hallow this thy essence by thy renewing power and by thy way of many-yet-one paths. Cleanse us. Purify us. Remind us that this thy essence is also ours and that as thou art many-yet-one, so too are we. Show us thy All-penetrating wisdom, and prepare us to receive thee as fully as thou hast received us.

## II Text

I am the wind which breathes upon the sea,  
I am the wave of the ocean,  
I am the murmur of the willows,  
I am the ox of the seven combats,  
I am the vulture upon the rocks,  
I am a beam of the sun,  
I am the fairest of plants,  
I am a wild boar in valor,  
I am a salmon in the water,  
I am a lake in the plain,  
I am a word of knowledge,  
I am the point of the lance of battle,  
I am the God who created in the head the fire:

Who is it who throws light into the meeting on the mountain?  
Who announces the ages of the moon?  
Who teaches the place where couches the sun?

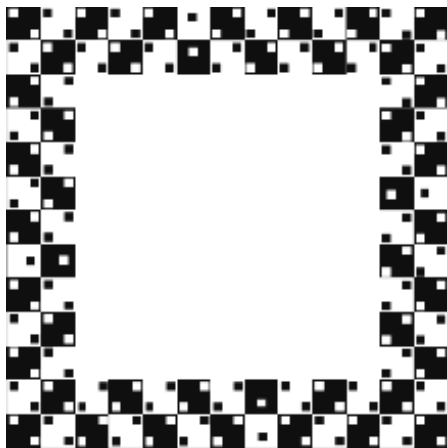
If not I-

## III Discourse

1. Often it is that the Archdruids do read this ancient mystery. It is indeed one of the greatest treasures we know for it came verily from the ancient Sage-Druids who pleased the earth in younger times. But who among you have verily heard this ancient mystery?
2. Oft it seems that these lines refer to the All-Mother, for she is truly all of these and more. But what is the mystery there? Not mystery but shining fact. No, the mystery is not the Mother. Nor is it Be'al. For this mystery is even more secret than He, though He knows and speaks it.
3. Verily, *I* am that mystery. Not the Mother, not Be'al, but I. How is it that I came to be all these things? I am the God who created in the head the fire! It is there. Look and understand! Who else could it be, if not I?
4. Now there may be some among you who would agree and would say that this was so, for ultimately Be'al and I are one. How deceived they are! While I am, Be'al is not, and there is no touching of these two. No, not oneness. For Be'al is not to have oneness with. Be'al is not! Understand this. It is only delusion which lends you to believe in Him and the Mother. Verily, a poor hoax it is!



5. Now listen carefully so you can understand. Be'al is not, for he is invented by man. He was invented to give man the freedom to relax in Man's creation. If Be'al is great, how much greater is man, the creator of Be'al. Nothing more than the Highest spirit of man is Be'al. And though that seems most wondrous, it is but a poor hoax. Be'al is not great for He needs Existence and Non-Existence. He is All and Nothing. Can One be great and still be so dependent upon such limited realms? No. Be'al, though He is more than you or I can comprehend, is very powerless.
6. He who created the Universe cares not for All and Nothing. They are nothing to Him. He is so beyond that even all the Words of Knowledge said at one time would change Him not a drop. Be'al is merely the half-drop that almost changed.
7. Great it is to be one with Be'al, but to be one with Him is not great at all. *If not I*. Is the water great because it flows and trickles and dances, in other words, because it is water? No, water is not great: it is merely water. He is not great. I am not great. He and I are one. But hear the greatest mystery.
8. He is all of me, but I am not all of Him. And yet, by being merely a drop of Him, I am all of Him. Understand this!
9. Now you understand the Words of Power. Be the lake in the plain; be the ox and the boar; throw light upon the mountain. *If not I*.



# The Wisdom of Thomas the Fool

(By Thomas McCausland, 1970)

(Carleton Apocrypha Only)

## Chapter the First

1. Listen, my brethren, and I will tell you the great secret of Druidism. This I tell in order to assure the pure transmission of Druidism for all time. Many of you are there who have the spirit of the Mother burning brightly inside of you and yet, lacking a priest, must let this fire die. Hear and understand. Here is the great Wisdom known to all the Druids of old. Here is the one wisdom you must grasp if you would stay in the bosom of the Mother forever!

## Chapter the Second

1. The great secret of Druidism is this: All the powers of the Mother are yours if you but learn your True Name. Even if you are but of the First Order, no secret shall be hidden once you learn this great secret.
2. The way is hard. The Three Ways of Day and One of Night must be traveled. The Wisdom of the Waters of Life must be heard.
3. What are the Three Ways of Day? The Way of the rising sun; the Way of the setting sun; the Way of the sun at Zenith.
4. What is the wisdom of the Waters of Life? The Wisdom of ice; the Wisdom of steam; the Wisdom of water.
5. Yet it is not in the Three Ways of Day that your True Name dwells; nor in the Wisdom of the Waters of Life. Neither is your Name of the Mother or of Be'al. It is of them both and of them not at all. Your True Name is in the Way of Darkness. Yet it is not of darkness nor was it of darkness born nor shall it die of darkness. Though Be'al is born of darkness and dies in darkness, your True Name knows darkness not at all.
6. Your True Name will be heard upon the bosom of the Mother; yet She hears it not, for it is not Her Name. Your Name, when it is truly heard, will rock Be'al from his slumber and cause rain to fall in the center of a stone.
7. To hear your Name, hear the Mother. To hear your Name, hear Her not. To hear your Name, hear the Mother!
8. This is the most powerful secret of Be'al! It is the most powerful secret in all of the Realm of the Four Ways and the Seven Powers and the Thirteenfold Mystery.
9. It is the Word which makes of all ends a beginning.
10. Only this is necessary. Know your True Name! All else is but the dreams of sand.

## Chapter the Third

1. But how do we know that True Names exist? Listen and understand!

2. When we consecrate the waters, we do not say, "O great and glorious grove, thou of power deep rooted in the Mother; thou of power deep rooted in the Mother; thou of power sky rending; thou of power to block the sun and rain; consecrate these waters." Nor do we say, "O Healing waters, consecrate this thyself by thy powers of All-pervading Wisdom." nor yet, "O power of the most secret essence of the vine, hallow this." nor even, "Mighty swirling Ocean, pounding the Mother, as mighty and as vast as even She is, hallow this drop of thee." We do not say, "O great light which rends the sky in storm, hallow this as thou dost hallow the rain by the great leveling fire." nor, "O greatest of the powers we see, Mighty Sun, hallow this which thou didst bring into being!" Nor do we say, "O gentle stream, by thy joyous power hallow this thy essence." nor even, "O great mysterious Life, hallow this, the essence of all life."<sup>4</sup>
3. Verily, all this is great Wisdom. And yet I tell you that this Wisdom consecrates not even the water of man's dreams.
4. If one but says "Dalon ap Landu" with the knowledge of the power of it, truly the whole Universe will be forever consecrated!
5. Understand the Thirteen-fold Mystery<sup>5</sup> and then understand how much more powerful is the knowledge of your True Name than the knowledge of the Names of the Mother. Your Name will consecrate even Be'al!
6. Brethren, hear your Name! Listen every moment, for the wind and the waters and all that dwell upon the Mother speak all the Names that are. Only by continual vigilance will ye hear your Name when it is spoken.
7. Be'al knows your Name. The Mother knows your Name. The Patriarchs know your Name. And ye, with every breath speak your Name. Listen and understand. Your every breath speaks your Name. Great is this secret. I pay for the carrying of it with my very life. Hear and understand. Listen always, for the Mother will speak your Name a moment before it is expected. Only by constant vigilance will ye be prepared.

### Chapter the Fourth

1. I pray that the Mother will act kindly towards one such as I, who must tell these lies to those who would truly seek her. The Wise will hear me not. The Dull will hear me not. Only those who vigil will hear me, and maybe even they will not hear. For the sake of purity I tell these lies. May the Mother forgive such a fool as I who would have men chasing the bile of trees.

This is my folly.  
 Thomas the Fool  
 August 25th, 1970  
 Peace to those who dwell in the Mother!



# Earlier Selections: The Smiley Affair

## The Smiley Letters, Part One

(By Richard Smiley, 1969)

(New to ARDA 2)

### Chapter the First

Richard F. Smiley

226 S. Grant St., Apt. 1

West Lafayette, In. 47906

1969 February 5

Local Board No. 151

Selective Service System

213 Water St.

Waukegan

Illinois 60085

Dear Sirs:

This is to inform you that

(1) My address has changed to the following

Richard F Smiley

226 S. Grant St., Apt. 1

West Lafayette, In. 47906

## Chapter the Second

(2) I am no longer a student at Purdue University

/letterhead/ SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM

(3) I am now a minister, and as such I wish to apply for a draft exemption (class IV-D). If you need any additional information before placing me in this class, I will be glad to provide it. Simply inform me about what information is necessary.

/stamp/

LOCAL BOARD NO. 151

SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM

213 WATER ST.

WAUKEGAN, ILL. 60085

(Local Board Stamp)

Yours truly,

Richard F. Smiley

SSS no. #AA-BBB-CC-DDD

February 20, 1969

In Reply, Refer To:

#AA-BBB-CC-DDD

Richard F. Smiley

226 South Grant St., Apt 1

West Lafayette, Indiana 47906

Dear Sir:

We have received your letter dated February 5, 1969. Please be advised that we can place you in a minister, 4-D, classification you will have to have some official verification submitted, stating your present status.

Yours truly,

For the Local Board:

/s/

(Mrs.) Jacqueline Bradbury  
Executive Secretary

jb

### Chapter the Third

Richard F. Smiley  
226 S. Grant St., Apt. 1  
West Lafayette, In. 47906

1969 February 26

Local Board No. 151

Selective Service System

213 Water St.

Waukegan

Illinois 60085

Dear Sirs:

Thank you for your letter of February 20 (replying to mine of February 5, in which I informed you that I was a minister. According to your letter, you need some sort of official verification before placing me in classification 4-D. I expected that would be the case. However, your letter was not as specific as I had hoped it would be about what type of verification you wanted.

There should be no trouble involved in submitting verification (either from the

person who ordained me or from our central organization) that I was properly ordained, or verification (either from our central organization or from people here in West Lafayette) that I am currently engaged in preaching and teaching our beliefs. Is any of these what you had in mind? If so, which would you prefer? If not, could you state more specifically what you do want?

Thank you very much.

Yours truly,

Richard F. Smiley  
SSS # AA-BBB-CC-DDD

cc: D. Frangquist

S. Savitsky [sic]

### Chapter the Fourth

Richard F. Smiley

226 S. Grant St., Apt. 1

West Lafayette, In. 47906

1969 February 28

Local Board No. 151

Selective Service System

213 Water Street

Waukegan

Illinois 60085

Dear Sirs:

I have just received from you a Notice of Classification (SSS Form 110) dated February 25. This Notice places me in Class 1-A, which seems to contradict your letter of February 20. I note also that the address on the Notice is incorrect. (See my letter of February 5.) The address was correct on the letter you sent me February 20. I would guess from this that some sort of mistake has been made. Would you check on this, and see whether the classification can be withdrawn, or, if not, whether there is something else which can be done? (See also my letter of February 26.)

Yours truly,

Richard F. Smiley

SSS # AA-BBB-CC-DDD

cc: D. Frangquist

S. Savitsky [sic]

## Chapter the Fifth

/letterhead/ SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM

/stamp/

LOCAL BOARD NO. 151

SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM

213 WATER ST.

WAUKEGAN, ILL. 60085

(Local Board Stamp)

March 13, 1969

In Reply, Refer To:

AA-BBB-CC-DDD

Richard F. Smiley

226 South Grant St., Apt 1

West Lafayette, Indiana 47906

Dear Sir:

We have received your letters dated February 26, 1969 and the 28th. Please be advised that the Local Board had met on February 6, 1969 and you had already been issued a 1-A when I wrote to you on the 20th of Feb. The last school information that we have indicates that you were a Mathematics major at Purdue, when did your seminary training take place, what church or religion do you belong to, and when were you ordained?

Your I-A classification is correct at the present time until we receive new

information for the Local Board to consider.

## Chapter the Sixth

Richard F. Smiley

Yours truly,

226 S. Grant St., Apt. 1

West Lafayette, In. 47906

For the Local Board:

/s/

1969 March 24

(Mrs.) Jacqueline Bradbury

Executive Secretary

Local Board No. 151

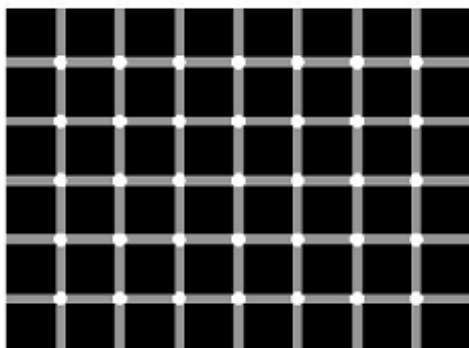
Selective Service System

213 Water Street

Waukegan

Illinois 60085

jb



Dear Sirs:

In accordance with our previous correspondence (see my letters at February 5, 26, and 28, and yours of February 20 and March 13), I submit the following information for your consideration: I am a minister of the Reformed Druids of North America. I received my training concurrently with my regular undergraduate education, at Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota. I was ordained a third-order priest of the Reformed Druids in October, 1964. I currently conduct services, etc., for the Reformed Druids in greater Lafayette, Indiana.

I believe the Military Selective Service Act of 1967 would term me a "duly ordained minister of religion" (Section 16 (g) (1): "The term 'duly ordained minister of religion' means a person who has been ordained, in accordance with the ceremonial, ritual, or discipline of a church, religious sect, or organization established on the basis of a community of faith and belief, doctrines and practices of a religious character, to preach and to teach the doctrines of such church, sect, or organization and to administer the rites and ceremonies thereof in public worship,

and who as his regular and customary vocation preaches and teaches the principles of religion and administers the ordinances of public worship as embodied in the creed or principles of such church, sect, or organization.") Consequently, I ask that you reopen my classification, and consider placing me in class 4-D (ministerial).

## Chapter the Seventh

Richard F. Smiley

226 S. Grant St., Apt. 1

West Lafayette, In. 47906

I will ask our central organization to write to you, confirming the above information.

1969 March 27

Sincerely,

Richard F. Smiley

SSS # AA-BBB-CC-DDD

cc: D. Frangquist

S. Savitsky [sic]

Local Board No. 151

Selective Service System

213 Water Street

Waukegan

Illinois 60085

Dear Sirs:

A few days ago (March 24) I sent you some information regarding my status as a minister. I am currently in class 1-A. According to your letter of March 13, you had not yet received my letter of February 5 (in which I informed you that I was a minister) when you classified me.

Thus, my letter of March 24 contains "facts not considered when the registrant was classified which, if true, would justify a change in the registrant's classification" (see Selective Service Regulations, 1625.2), so in that letter I requested that you reopen my classification, and place me in class 4-D (ministerial). I have every hope that you will do this, but if you decided not to reopen my classification, I would want to request a personal appearance, so that I could find out the reasons for your decision and supply you with any information I might have overlooked before. Unfortunately, I cannot delay my request

until I find out whether a personal appearance will be necessary; since my Notice of Classification was dated February 25, my right to request a personal appearance evidently expires today.

So if you do reopen my classification, feel free to ignore this letter. However, if for any reason you decide not to reopen my classification, please schedule me for a personal appearance.

Thank you.

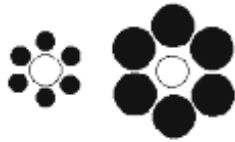
Sincerely,

Richard F. Smiley

SSS # AA-BBB-CC-DDD

cc: D. Frangquist

S. Savitsky [sic]



# The Smiley Letters, Part Two

(By Richard Smiley & Steve Savitzky, 1969)

(New to ARDA 2)

## Chapter the Eighth

Richard F. Smiley

226 S. Grant St., Apt. 1

West Lafayette, In. 47906

1969 March 28

Steve Savitsky

Carleton College

Northfield

Minnesota 55057

Dear Steve,

(I put this in business form so there would be an inside address on the letter, for our records.)

I am enclosing carbon copies of all my correspondence with my draft board. I think you should add these to the permanent files of the Council of Dalon ap Landu. Some one may in the future want to know how it was done.

By the way, I suspect the permanent files of the Council have fallen by the wayside. If so, I strongly suggest that you revive them. One item, which should be in the files, is a report, which Dave Frangquist



sent out at the end of his term of office. In this report there is a list of the seven people who were at that time members of the Council, and on that list is the year in which each became a third-order priest. These are the only records you will have which indicate that I was ordained. (By the way, in case you are interested, I believe the ceremony - done by Dave Frangquist - was at about the time of the last full moon of Foghamhar, in 1964.)

So that you will be able to say so in the letter, I hereby ask you to write my draft board, confirming that I was ordained a third-order priest.

I'll enclose a rough draft of the letter as I think you should write it. (Actually, although I call it a "rough draft," I think it is probably well-worded right now. Probably the only change you will want to make is in your name. Since I didn't know your full name as you sign it, I put down "Steve Savitsky." Presumably this is not the way you sign letters, and should be changed.

I also enclose a certified mail slip, to be pasted on the front of the envelope, at the left (see instructions on back of slip) and a receipt form to be glued to the back of the envelope after it has been sealed. Don't get these very wet when gluing them on - there isn't much glue. Also enclosed are a 40 cent stamp, a 10 cent stamp (airmail) and a 30 cent stamp (special delivery). These all should be pasted on the envelope (airmail to the right and special delivery to the left, I guess). Mail the letter at the post office Certified/Registered Mail window bright and early Tuesday morning. It has to get to Waukegan sometime Wednesday. So get it typed up by sometime on Monday. You'll notice that it is dated April 1. (I thought that was a nice touch.)

As I think I mentioned to you over the telephone, there may be some sort of investigation to make sure that the Reformed Druids are a legitimate organization. So let me point out, to reassure you, that as far as I can tell, not only are the Reformed Druids a legitimate organization, but also, If you read the Selective Service Act, I think Reformed Druid priests are eligible for 4-D

classification if their regular and customary vocation is being a Reformed Druid priest.

I think my draft board will write to Carleton. I would very much appreciate it if you would find out from Dean Smith whether he is willing to back us up at all. If he is, tell him the whole story, or as much of it as he wants to know.

I will call you up Sunday night to make sure there has been no trouble with the letter. It would be nice if you could get some one else to type it up, and go through the whole bit with the secretary's initials, as I have indicated. In any case, make sure the letter is extremely neat - a professional-looking job with (preferably) no erasures. I have sent you most of the letterheads we had printed up. They should have arrived by now, but in case they haven't I'll enclose a few of the ones I kept here for emergencies.

By the way, when you open the package of letterheads you'll find that there are also some matching blank sheets for second and third pages of letters. According to a secretarial handbook I consulted in our library, the front side of the paper is the side from which the watermark printing can be read.

As I have indicated on the letter, make carbon copies for me and for Dave Frangquist, and send them to us. I am enclosing two extra airmail stamps for this purpose. In case you don't have Dave's address, it is:

D. Frangquist

625-B Ft. Baker

Sausalito

California 94965

Also keep a carbon copy of the letter for the permanent files of the Council. Attach the certified mail slip, and the receipt when it comes back, to your copy of the letter. After you have typed the letter, make a notation on the three copies that the letter was typed on the "Carleton...

Council.." letterhead. I'll enclose carbon paper and onion skin to make the copies with.

Be sure to use a nice neat letterhead for the letter. (They vary some in quality- on the envelopes there is sometimes a little smearing of the symbol, at the right, and on the letterhead itself there are sometimes flaws in the letters or the symbol because of a lack of ink.)

I still expect to show up at Carleton one of these days, but I don't know when. When you send the copy of the letter back to me, put in a note telling me when third term classes are over. I may not get there until almost then.

My plans are more definite than when I wrote the previous page. I'll be going to a conference Sunday through Wednesday. (It's a conference on computer graphics at the University of Illinois.) We'll be leaving here about 4:00 pm (3:00 pm your time). If you get this letter Sunday afternoon, call me collect - station-to-station- immediately after reading it. If there is no answer, I have left, and I will call you at 10:15 pm Sunday (your time). Incidentally, I will be staying at the Ramada Inn in Champaign, Illinois. The number there is (217)352-7891. In an emergency, you could try to get me there after 10:00 pm Sunday, Monday, or Tuesday. (That's local time, which I think is the same as Minnesota time.)

Thanks for your help. And to close with the traditional close,

Peace be with those who walk in the ways

of the Earth-mother!

/s/

Dick Smiley

P.S. Dave Frangquist thinks we should have gotten a post office box and used that as the address on the letter-heads. For the record, I'll put down in writing here two things: (1) I agree that it would be more impressive, although I'm not sure that even with a post office box we would be believable; (2) the reasons we decided differently were that it would cost more money that way, the money and bother of having to go down to the post office to check for mail all the time would impose a strain on the rather weak organizational structure of the Druids, and (I guess this last point is just summary) we are guaranteed that the Carleton address will be permanent.

cc: D. Frangquist

## Chapter the Ninth

(Original typed on Carleton College Council of Dalon ap Landu letterhead)

April 1, 1969

Local Board No. 151

Selective Service System

213 Water Street

Waukegan

Illinois 60085

Gentlemen:

We have received a letter from Richard F. Smiley (Selective Service No. AA-BBB-CC-DDD) stating that you wished confirmation that he was a minister or the Reformed Druids of North America.

Our records show that Mr. Smiley was ordained a third-order priest (i.e., a minister) in 1964.

We would appreciate being kept informed or Mr. Smiley's classification.

Sincerely,

THE REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA

Stephen Savitzky

Chairman of the Council

SS/bl

Certified

Return receipt requested

Air mail

Special delivery

cc: D. Frangquist

R. Smiley

# The Smiley Letters, Part Three

(By Richard Smiley & Richard Shelton)

(New to ARDA 2)

## Chapter the Tenth

/letterhead/ SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM

/stamp/

LOCAL BOARD NO. 151

SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM

213 WATER ST.

WAUKEGAN, ILL. 60085

Local Board Stamp)

In Reply, Refer To:

AA-BBB-CC-DDD

27 May 1969

Richard F. Smiley

226 South Grant St., Apt 1

West Lafayette, Indiana

Dear Mr. Smiley:

The local board requests a letter from the Chairman of the Council of your church or your superior verifying that your full time occupation is preaching and teaching the

doctrine of your church. When this information is received, your file will be reconsidered for a 4-D classification.

## Chapter the Eleventh

Richard F. Smiley

226 S. Grant St., Apt. 1

West Lafayette, In. 47906

Please give this your immediate attention.

Very truly yours,

1969 June 5

FOR THE LOCAL BOARD;

/s/

(Mrs.) Henrietta Morton

Executive Secretary

HM: dak

Richard M. Shelton

The Reformed Druids of North America

%Carleton College

Northfield

Minnesota 55057

Dear Dick,

(I suggest you read my letter of March 28 before or after reading this.)

I am enclosing two copies of the letter for my draft board - the original and a carbon copy. The latter is for the RDNA files. I have kept a copy for my files, and another one which I will take to Dave Frangquist. Notice that the letter is dated June 9. (That's Monday.) On that day (probably the day you get this) take the letter to the Post Office (after first signing it, putting it in the envelope, sealing the envelope, and gluing the receipt to the back of the envelope), and give it to the man at the Certified/Registered Mail window. When he gives you back the receipt from the front of the envelope, attach it to your copy of the letter, and file it. The return receipt present more of a problem. I suggest you take the other envelope I have enclosed to the Carleton post office and ask them to use it to send you the receipt when it comes. Also ask them to forward to you, during the summer, any mail which comes addressed to the Reformed Druids. (Another possibility is asking Dean Smith to handle it, but I don't think that's a good idea.)



You'd better take the correspondence concerning me home with you this summer, too, in case you need it. (But be sure to bring it back in the fall. It begins to look as if this could be important to some other people, too.)

I am also enclosing, for the files, the latest letter from my draft board to me (dated May 27) and a cartoon strip, which appeared in The Chicago Tribune on May 1.

As I told you on the telephone, I hope to see you next week, up at Carleton. If I don't, thanks for your help.

Peace be with those who walk

in the ways of the Earth-mother!

/s/

Dick Smiley

cc: D. Frangquist

## Chapter the Twelfth

/ Handwritten on notepaper imprinted

Carleton College

Northfield, Minnesota /

5 June 1969

Dear Dave [Frangquist],

This is just a quick note to inform you of my investiture as Arch-Druid of Carleton (pro tempore) to succeed Steve Savitzky (who will be, hopefully, at Stanford this summer or fall). I have been in touch with Dick Smiley and have the file concerning his ordeal with the powers that be; I would appreciate copies of any official missives you may be asked to write on his behalf. Also, much needed is a list of all priests (of 3rd & higher orders) known to you, together with addresses of same, etc. My summer (& home) address is 339 W. Pierce St., Macomb, Ill. 61455. I'll send out more official announcements, proposals, and so forth, later. Peace,

Dick Shelton

## Chapter the Thirteenth

(typed on C. D. L. letterhead)

June 9, 1969

Local Board No. 151

Selective Service System

213 Water Street

Waukegan

Illinois 60085

Gentlemen:

Richard F. Smiley (Selective Service No. AA-BBB-CC-DDD) has informed us that you have requested a letter from us confirming that he actually is "teaching and preaching the doctrine" of Reformed Druidism (in contrast to our letter of April 1, 1969, in which we simply confirmed that he was qualified to do so).

Mr. Smiley's current work is of a missionary nature -that is, he is in the process of establishing a church (or "grove," as we prefer to call it) in an area where previously we have not had one. We will have only indirect evidence of Mr. Smiley's activities until the group which he has formed in Greater Lafayette applies for formal affiliation,

Accordingly, we feel it would be inappropriate for us to testify to Mr. Smiley's activities until this group has become formally affiliated with the Reformed Druids and regular communications are established. We anticipate such action shortly, but in order to expedite matters, we are advising Mr. Smiley to ask some members of his group to send you letters testifying to his current activities.

If we can be of any further assistance, please contact us.

Sincerely,

THE REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA

Richard M. Shelton

Chairman of the Council

RMS/dz

Certified

Return receipt requested

Air mail

/ added by hand in the copy: /

cc: D. Frangquist

R. Smiley

## Chapter the Fourteenth

/handwritten/

339 W. Pierce St.

Macomb, Ill. 61455

28 June, 1969

Dear Dave [Frangquist],

After I mailed my report of 24 June, it struck me that Dick Smiley might not have returned to Lafayette yet. Since he mentioned that he was going to see you, it seems possible that he with you now or that he has not even reached you yet. If he is or when he does, tell him that he will find a copy of a letter very similar to yours waiting for him.

[Note by RMS, 2003: presumably this referred to a confirmation by Frangquist that he had ordained Smiley in 1964; a copy of this seems not to have survived.] [The paragraph continues:]

If he has already left, let me know if you know when he plans to return to Lafayette and where I could reach him if doesn't plan to return soon.

Secondly, do you have current addresses for Dave Fisher, Norm Nelson, and Robert Larson? Dave's and Robert's reports were returned marked "moved, not forwardable," and I expect Norms to be. I've written C. A. S. [Carleton Alumni Service] and haven't heard yet.

Peace,

Dick Shelton

## Chapter the Sixteenth

(typed on C. D. L. letterhead)

August 1, 1969

Local Board No. 151

Selective Service System

213 Water Street

Waukegan, Illinois 60085

Gentlemen:

Richard F. Smiley (Selective Service No. AA-BBB-CC-DDD) has informed us of your recent decision not to reopen his selective service classification file. We feel, in light of our correspondence with you, that there has been a misunderstanding concerning Mr. Smiley's activities. As we stated in our letter of April 1, Mr. Smiley is an ordained third-order priest and as

such is charged with the ministry and dissemination [sic] of our faith; he is accordingly performing missionary work in Indiana. If we can furnish any further information to clarify this matter, please inform us immediately.

Sincerely,

THE REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA

Richard M. Shelton

Chairman of the Council

RMS/dz

Certified

Return receipt requested

Air mail

Special delivery

cc: D. Frangquist

R. Smiley

## Chapter the Seventeenth

/handwritten/

339 W. Pierce St.

Macomb, Ill. 61455

3 August, 1969

Dear Dave [Frangquist],

Enclosed is a copy of a letter to Dick Smiley's draft board, sent at his instigation.

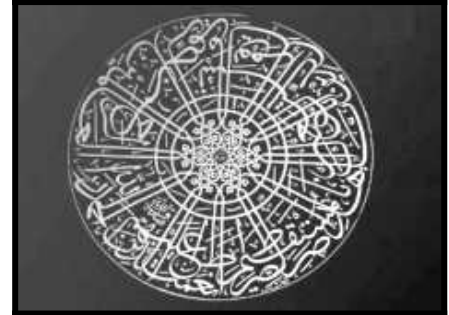
Re my letter of 24 June [Shelton to Council]: Dick mentioned that he thought it unnecessary to write liturgy before it was needed; I agree and should have made it clear that I had no intention of having consecration orders for orders 8-10 or marriage ceremonies written until the need arises. However, I feel the rest is needed and should be collected.

I've had no responses yet; I shouldn't have expected too much in the summer. There have been several address changes, and the Alumni Service has lost track of Robert Larson completely. I have yet to hear from U.S.D. regarding addresses for Anne Beloof & Wesley Hubbard.

Fisher is in England (was in England?) Norman Nelson is at the College of Emporia, Kansas (66801) and Steve Savitzky is at 1640 Bay Rd., East Palo Alto, Cal. - try to get in touch with him.

Peace,

Dick [Shelton]



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[The Editor's Note: The letter trail abruptly ends here, but the result was that by the time the hearing was to be held, Dick Smiley was already too old to be considered for the Draft, leaving the issue unresolved.]



# Early Selections: The Codex Affair

## The Codex of Form Missive

(By Richard Shelton, 1969)

(New to ARDA 2)

(a.k.a. The Massive Missive Mistake)

### Chapter The First

1. Council of Dalon Ap Landu
2. 16 October, 1969
3. Dear Reverend Brothers- and Sisters-in-the-Mother,
4. This constitutes my second missive to the Council. The first (which apparently did not reach very many of you) contained an announcement of my appointment as Arch-Druid (pro-tempore) of Carleton and an outline of some of my goals.
5. This letter will serve as an announcement of my election as Arch-Druid by the grove and as my first general report to the Council.
6. Enclosed is a copy of the First Proposed Codex of Form and a commentary on it. As you can see, it is primarily the previous resolutions of the Council, together with regulations, designed to improve communications. There are, however, three new major provisions:
7. The creation of the Secretary to the Council
8. The provision for replacement of Patriarchs; and
9. The interpretations regarding priestesses, found in Article III (section 2) and Article IV (sections 4 and 6)
10. The commentary gives explanation and justification for most of the important measures that have no established precedent; I consider most them fairly straight-forward.
11. The title indicates my attitude toward amendment; I expect to have to submit at least one more proposed version before putting it to a vote. Please respond.

### Chapter The Second

1. The Codex of Liturgy is not going so well. I still need the consecration ceremonies for orders five through seven and urge the Patriarchs concerned to forward these to me as soon as possible.
2. I also lack liturgy for Midwinters, Beltane, and Lughnasadh; anyone is invited to try his hand at writing services, for any or all three of these.
3. Druidism at Carleton is still very much alive, thanks due in large part to Steve Savitzky's recruiting efforts last spring. The Beltane service was attended by no fewer than thirty-one, though most of these did not customarily attend regular services.

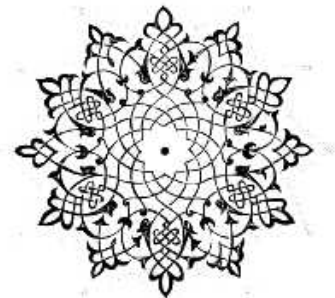
4. Attendance on Saturdays currently varies between six and twelve, and we expect a large turn-out for Samhain. We have three or four candidates for the priesthood, of who two or three are now sophomores, so the grove is not yet in danger of extinction.

### Chapter the Third

1. Other groves seem not to have fared so well. I have records of four groves besides Carleton: those of Rapid City (S.D.), Vermillion (S.D.), Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan (Wis.), and the City of New York.
2. All of these are mentioned in David Frangquist's report of April 20, 1966, but aside from this, documentation is poor. I have no other reference to the Rapid City grove at all and only an announcement of the founding of the New York grove.
3. And while the founding of the University of South Dakota Drynemetum at Vermillion is well documented, the grove seems to have vanished; the University knows nothing of the Druids nor D. Wesley Hubbard nor of Anne Belooof.
4. Similarly, I have lost all track of Leonard E. Holding, the only priest consecrated at ma-Ka-Ja-Wan. To the best of my knowledge, none of these groves now has a third-order priest in residence. In light of this, I must consider all of them currently inactive. Any information concerning any of them will be appreciated.
5. A minor calamity transpired this summer: the college managed to lose one of my boxes in storage; it just happened to contain (1) the mimeograph masters for the Chronicles, and (2) most of the letterhead stationery.
6. I am looking into various means of producing a new edition of the Chronicles but doubt that such an edition will appear until after Midwinters. I don't know who had the stationery printed, who did the printing, or if another batch can be printed; again, information would be appreciated.
7. Please send me some indication that you received this.

Yours in the Mother,  
Richard M. Shelton  
Arch-Druid of Carleton

[**Editor's note:** The following documents were subsequently withdrawn in great haste and embarrassment as a "Big Mistake" by Richard. It should in NO way, be considered official, binding or inspired (nor should anything else in ARDA) and is here for historical purposes and representative of the thinking of Richard Shelton at that time, after a difficult period of transferal of tradition in the 1967-1968 period. There are also several errors in the text.]



# FIRST PROPOSED CODEX OF FORM

## Article I – Documents

1. The religious scriptures and basic law of the Reformed Druids of North America shall be collected in the Druid Chronicles, which shall include the Early Chronicles, the Book of Law, the Book of Custom, the Latter Chronicles, and the Book of Meditations.
2. The official liturgy of the Reformed Druids of North America shall be collected in the Codex of Liturgy, which shall include liturgy for the Common Orders of Worship, for the High Orders of the Feast Days, for the High Order of Investiture, and for the High Orders of Consecration.
3. The procedural and organizational regulations of the Reformed Druids of North America beyond those of the Druid Chronicles shall be set forth in this Codex of Form.

## Article II – Liturgy

1. Any religious ceremony performed by a priest or priestess and utilizing the official liturgy adopted by this Council of Dalon ap Landu shall comprise an Order of Worship, of which there may be distinguished two types:
2. The Common Orders of Worship, for use at regular services, and
3. The High Orders of Worship, for use at services celebrating special religious events.
4. The High Order of Consecration to each high order of priesthood shall be presented by the first Patriarch of that order to the Council of Dalon ap Landu for approval and adoption as part of the Codex of Liturgy.
5. The Order of Worship may be celebrated by one who is a duly-consecrated priest or priestess of the third order. The High Order of Consecration of any higher order of priesthood may be celebrated only by a priest or priestess of or unto that order.
6. The waters-of-sleep shall be used during Geimredh and Earrach and the waters-of-life shall be reserved for Samradh and Foghamhar, except when they are need for healing or for consecration.
7. Priests and priestesses of the third order shall wear the white ribbon during Geimredh and Earrach and the red ribbon during Samradh and Foghamhar. But any priest or priestess consecrating the waters-of-life shall wear the red ribbon regardless of season, and any priest or priestess consecrating the waters-of-sleep shall wear the white ribbon, regardless of season.

## Article III – The Council of Dalon ap Landu

1. The highest authority of the Reformed Druids of North America shall be reserved to all duly-consecrated priests and priestesses of the third order collectively in the Council of Dalon ap Landu.
2. Verses thirteen through fifteen of the eighth chapter of the Book of Custom shall be hereby interpreted to apply only to the fourth through tenth orders of priesthood.
3. The Arch-Druid of Carleton, whenever that office be occupied, shall serve as Chairman of the Council. The Council may appoint one of its members as Secretary to the Council for a specified length of time, and whenever

the office of Arch-Druid of Carleton be vacant, the Secretary shall assume the responsibilities of that office.

4. The Arch-Druid of Carleton may grant to the Secretary any of the responsibilities of the Chairman normally reserved to the Arch-Druid, but these shall revert to the office of the Arch-Druid upon demand of the Arch-Druid or upon the election or appointment of a new Arch-Druid of Carleton.
5. The Arch-Druid of Carleton shall assume the responsibility of maintaining a record of the resolutions of the Council and of submitting to the Council a general report on the current state of the Reformed Druids of North America upon his retirement from office.
6. Each priest or priestess of the third order shall assume the responsibility of maintaining a current address on file with the Arch-Druid of Carleton.

## Article IV – High Orders

1. The fourth through tenth orders shall comprise the high orders of the priesthood. The purpose of the high orders shall be to stimulate priests and priestesses of the third order to continued spiritual inquiry and to honor achievement rather than tenure.
2. All high orders shall be considered equal in rank and honor, and equal in the sense that none shall be considered prerequisite to any other, save only with regard to the election of the first Patriarch of each order.
3. Any priest of a high order may consecrate priests or priestesses to that order, but no priest shall be so consecrated unless he be also a priest of the third order.
4. Any priestesses unto a high order, provided she be also a priestess of the third order, may consecrate priestesses to that high order, but no priestess shall be granted the right to consecrate priests to any high order.
5. Upon the consecration of a priest or priestess to a high order, the priest or priestess performing the ceremony shall so notify the patriarch of that order and the Arch-Druid of Carleton, and both the Patriarch and the Arch-Druid shall return confirmation of the consecration. Until such confirmation be received from the Patriarch, the newly-consecrated priest or priestess shall assume no rights or duties of that order, save only the right to the mark of the order.
6. The highest authority within each high order shall be its council, which shall include all priests of the order and over which the Patriarch shall preside. A priestess unto the order, who is also a priestess of the third order, shall enjoy the same voice and vote as does a priest of the order.
7. The Patriarch of each high order shall assume the responsibility of maintaining a record of the resolutions of the council of that order and of sending to the Arch-Druid of Carleton reports of all such resolutions.
8. A Patriarch of any high order shall hold office until his death or resignation. Upon such death or resignation, the Arch-Druid of Carleton shall appoint a priest of the order concerned to direct that council's election of a new Patriarch, who must be a priest of that order.
9. Each priest or priestess of or unto any high order shall assume the responsibility of maintaining a current address on file with the Patriarch of that order.

## Article V – Groves

1. To establish a legally-constituted grove, a priest or priestess of the third order must see that the following are fulfilled:
  - a. That a constitution be adopted;
  - b. That the offices of Arch-Druid, Preceptor, and Server be filled by election as directed in the Book of Law (such election to be held at any time of year);
  - c. That thereupon the Arch-Druid of Carleton be sent notification of the with a copy of the newly-adopted constitution and a list of the newly-elected officers.

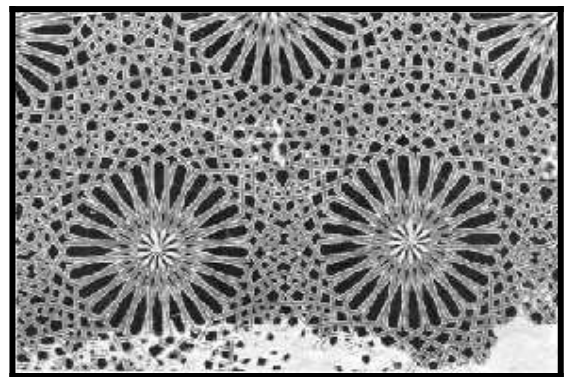
If he deem all in order, the Arch-Druid of Carleton shall then return written confirmation of the grove's establishment, which confirmation shall be included in the archives both of the Council of Dalon ap Landu and of the new grove.
2. All priests and priestesses of the third order shall be charged not to establish groves of a transitory nature.
3. Election of officers (except as noted in section 1) must be held during the period of Foghamhar as directed in the book of Law. Should it be necessary for an Arch-Druid to resign his office before the election of a successor, he shall appoint as Arch-Druid pro-tempore a member of his grove who is qualified to hold the office of Arch-Druid and who shall serve until the next election. An Arch-Druid pro-tempore shall assume all rights and duties of a duly-elected Arch-Druid.
4. A retiring Arch-Druid shall notify the Arch-Druid of Carleton of the election or appointment of his successor, and the Arch-Druid of Carleton shall return confirmation of such election or appointment.
5. Should a retiring Arch-Druid find no qualified member of the grove to fill his office, he shall notify the Arch-Druid of Carleton that he is leaving the office vacant and shall send him the archives of the grove. The Arch-Druid of Carleton shall thereupon declare that grove inactive. An inactive grove may be re-established as directed in section 1, on which occasion the Arch-druid shall return the archives of that grove to the new Arch-Druid.
6. Upon receiving confirmation of his election or appointment from the Arch-Druid of Carleton, the Arch-Druid of any legally-constituted grove shall assume the right to consecrate priests and priestesses to the third order. Further, consecration of priests and priestesses to the third order shall be reserved exclusively to Arch-Druids of legally-constituted groves.
7. Immediately following the consecration of a priest or priestess to the third order, the Arch-Druid performing the consecration shall so notify the Arch-Druid of Carleton, and the Arch-Druid of Carleton shall thereupon return confirmation of the consecration. Until such confirmation be received, the newly-consecrated priest or priestess shall assume no rights or duties of his order, save only the celebration of the Common Orders of Worship and the right to the mark of the order.
8. Each grove shall retain the right to organize itself in any way which will best serve its own need, so long as such organization does not violate the regulations herein set forth.

## Article VI – Vestment

1. All Druid, particularly priests and officers, shall be encouraged to wear robes, for since ancient times the traditional sign of the Druid has been the white robe.
2. A Patriarch (and only a Patriarch) may wear a black robe, in honor of the first Patriarch. He may not, however, at the high order of which he is not Patriarch.
3. The mark of the third order shall be the red or white ribbon, to be worn as directed in Article II.
4. The first Patriarch of each high order shall establish, subject to the approval of the Council of Dalon ap Landu, the identifying mark of his order.
5. Each individual grove shall retain the right to establish any identifying marks for its officers as it sees fit, provided these do not conflict with marks adopted to identify any of the order of priesthood.
6. No druid may wear any established mark to which he has not the right.
7. No restriction on vestment than those herein noted are expressed or implied.

## Article VII – Missives

1. The appended forms shall be the standard forms for reports, letters, and local constitutions.
2. The following shall be noted for purposes of dating:
  - a. The First Year of Worship shall be considered to have begun with Samhain, 1963.
  - b. The Druid day shall begin at the sundown immediately preceding the corresponding civil day.



# The Reply of David

(By David Frangquist, 1969)

(New to ARDA 2)

## Chapter the First

1. Council of Belenos and Dalon ap Landu
2. 23 October, 1969
3. Dear Reverend Brother-in-the-mother Mr. Shelton:
4. I am aghast!
5. When I first received your letter this summer, I ran to our Webster's 3rd in near panic. I must confess that the word "codex" was new to me and I was afraid that you were actually going to try to codify something.
6. I found, however, that the only applicable definition in current use was a collection of "unbound sheets in manuscript, esp... ancient mythological or historical annals."
7. I couldn't think of a more constructive undertaking for an Arch-Druid. I was most friendly toward the idea of a perhaps slightly more organized collection of Druid memorabilia.
8. Besides, there was your assurance "that it is not my intention to inflict a strict procedural or liturgical code on the Reformed Druids." (As if you or anyone else could.)
9. However, I now cannot reconcile that statement with "The official liturgy of the Reformed Druids..." or "The procedural and organizational regulations of the Reformed Druids..." It does not matter how those sentences end, the phrases themselves are totally foreign to anything I ever knew of the Reformed Druids.
10. There are some constructions in the proposed code which have a delightfully Druidic, ambiguous flavor ("Any religious ceremony... shall comprise..."), but I am not encouraged by the fact that I suspect that you did not intend them that way.
11. Before I left Carleton, we (those of us who were around when this all started – I hesitate to say "founders") often wondered aloud about what would happen in the future to Reformed Druidism.
12. Much of what was delightful about it was unsaid. There was a tone or mood to all the Druid proceedings. Everyone understood it fairly soon after becoming a part of the "movement," it didn't have to be explained.
13. I fear, however, that during the discontinuities which the Druids at Carleton seem to have suffered in the last couple of years (of which I have only second-hand reports) there may have been a confusion of some of the more intangible values.
14. I am therefore going to try to deal in some of the specifics which have gone unstated in the past but which I now hope may clarify our original intentions. Naturally, what I say here is my own opinion only. I hope that it is also the opinion of my associates-in-the-mother.

## Chapter the Second

1. There is one thing in your codex about which I am in complete agreement. That is your interpretation of the role of priestesses.

2. Your "alternative system" is probably closer to the actual practice in 1966, but we were then in a period of transition. A bit of historical background might be instructive here.
3. When the RDNA was first formed, women's dormitory restrictions at Carleton were considerably more severe than now. It did not seem conceivable that a candidate for priestess would have the remotest opportunity to engage in a vigil. Consequently, an alternative path into the priesthood was established which did not require a vigil and so that women would not be stuck at the 2nd order.
4. Unfortunately, some priests, particularly David H. Fisher, developed the opinion that priestesses were forever doomed to a second-class status. I am enclosing some correspondence from David on this subject.
5. It is too bad that I did not retain copies of my letters to him, but I think that even one side of the conversation should be enough to convince you of the strong feelings involved on both sides. The result of all this controversy was a series of compromises and never any clear interpretation. Yours is perceptive and just.
6. I do not, however, feel that the matter of priestesses should be put to a vote. The question which is now at stake is whether or not a priestess (who has vigiled) can vote in the Council of Dalon ap Landu. Can they, then, vote on this question itself? Once that is decided, there is no need for a vote.
7. My own position is that priestesses have always, by right, been members of the Council, and that the Council does not have the power to exclude anyone from its membership once admitted. (Excommunication, anyone?)
8. I therefore recognize your interpretation as a decision from the chair, which is not subject to appeal. I will refuse to recognize any resolution of the Council on which priestesses are not permitted to vote.

## Chapter the Third

1. There are not, and ought not to be, established "religious scriptures and basic laws" of Reformed Druidism.
2. As far as I am concerned, the Chronicles are not closed. Naturally, while I was typing all the stencils, I was in no mood to waste my time on anything which I did not feel was stylistically appropriate.
3. I would also warn anyone who wishes to add to them that if the additions are not consistent in style with the rest, the whole may be damaged. I also reserve the right (as bearer of the title "Chronicler") to consider apocryphal anything I don't like. But I see no reason for spelling out the contents of the Chronicles as if we were setting up some sort of holy canon.
4. I am disturbed by all this confirming nonsense. You may feel that it will improve communication. It will not. It will only cause everyone to ignore the Arch-Druid of Carleton.
5. It is red-tape, pure and simple. As a veteran of three years in the army and currently a civil servant, I think I can speak with some knowledge on the subject of red-tape, and I know it when I see it.

## Chapter the Fourth

1. The following points are worth keeping in mind:
2. The only authority in any higher order is the Patriarch, it was never intended in any other way. He is the only one who can select new members of the order and he must

- give his OK before the consecration (according to the intention of the resolution of 26 May, 1964).
3. The Patriarch alone decides the ceremonies for his order. He needs the approval of no one to establish the first one or to change it whenever it strikes his fancy.
  4. Whenever anyone is consecrated a priest(ess), that's it, baby. There's no waiting in Reformed Druidism for the "official" shingle to arrive from the national office. Anyone who has made it through an all-night vigil has the right to be a priest right then and there.
  5. By the way, just what are these rights and duties of the higher order that aren't going to be assumed until "national" gives the OK?
  6. There was never intended to be any kind of official liturgy in Reformed Druidism.
  7. Only the ceremony for the third order is fixed, and that only for reasons of nostalgia and continuity in what is the most important office in Druidism. Besides, it does happen to be one area which is the proper business of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.
  8. Liturgy is used as a tongue-in-cheek subject heading for some of the resolutions of the Council, but it should be noticed that they fall in the category of interpretations of existing customs.
  9. As far as the adoption of the "basic order of worship" (7 May, 1964), that is a foundation only, a basis and a starting point for infinite variations.
  10. I see no reason why there could not be ceremonies which could be performed by second or even first order Druids. David Fisher, in designing the original order, felt that any second order could offer up a sacrifice. The only customary restriction is that the waters-of-life should only be consecrated by a priest(ess) who has vigiled.
  11. Does one need a ribbon to consecrate waters???

## Chapter the Fifth

1. Don't flatter yourself that you've thought of something we missed: It is perfectly clear from the Chronicles that each Patriarch is elected by the council below.
2. It says nothing about those verses applying only to the first Patriarch of each order. You say that's awfully unwieldy? That's why we like it.
3. While I'm on the subject of Patriarchs again: Although a formal vote was never taken, a majority of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu expressed their opinions in the fall of 1965 (in response to a question from David Fisher) that resignation from the office of Patriarch was impossible.
4. Secretary of the Council? As in First Secretary of the Party?
5. It would appear that the only use this thing could serve would be to allow someone who was really attached to Druidism to pick up the ball and run with it—permanently. We don't need that.
6. We left the chairmanship at Carleton so that it would see a constant turnover and, hopefully, constant injection of new spirit. Also, we felt that we would all maintain a continuing interest in Carleton for other, obvious reasons, and that this would be the easiest way to maintain communications.

7. If the interest dies out at Carleton, I'm sure the Council can take care of itself – if it wants to. If not, what materials would be best turned over to someone to whom they would have a personal significance.
8. I really don't see what's so bad about transitory groves. True, they are something of a pain in the neck for the Arch-Druid of Carleton, who is destined to never know what is going on. But I have a certain fondness for them – they're so... spontaneous.
9. Actually, you never know whether a grove is going to be permanent or not until a couple of years after it's founded. Besides, since it takes a grove to consecrate more priests we might miss consecrating someone in a transitory situation that might subsequently be in a position to star a really going concern.
10. Elections can be held any time the local grove wants. Don't forget that the Book of Law is only a translation of the Carleton Grove constitution into King Jamesian, including the section on amendments.

## Chapter the Sixth

1. I don't see the need for setting up a calendar of Druid years, especially since there is not evidence that the ancient Druids recognized a beginning and end to the year. It is more likely that they viewed time as circular in nature.
2. Whenever precision is necessary, a civil date is usually used, whenever it is not, the year is seldom mentioned. And what's to prevent another grove from dating in terms of its own founding, or any other event, for that matter?
3. I'm surprised to find that those old standard formats [for letters] I wrote up are still in existence. Perhaps you would be interested in their origin?
4. It is true that they do generally describe the style originated and popularized by David Fisher. But the details grew out of the fact that they were produced as a diversion while I was in Army Clerk school. I was being pumped full of that junk eight hours a day, and those formats are basically a parody of the army correspondence manual.

## Chapter The Seventh

1. By way of a summary, I should like to turn my attention to the very resolution of the Council which reserves authority to the Council. This resolution had two purposes.
2. First, we were anticipating the possibility that it might some day become expedient to incorporate. Whenever that occurred, it was likely that only one of the original members would be in a position to conduct the incorporation proceedings. We wished to agree before that time on the form the organization would take.
3. The resolution had the effect of establishing a potential board of directors, if in name only. The legality of the resolution is highly questionable since it was passed by the Council itself. However, it makes sense if you consider it in a negative way.
4. That was the second purpose of the resolution: not to give authority to the Council so much as to insure that no one else exercised it. Whether Arch-Druid, Patriarch, or Founding Father.
5. I am enclosing an epistle from David Fisher, which he originally asked to have included in the Chronicles. I suppressed it partly because he had second thoughts about

it after it was written and partly because it exhibits the terrible tendency of those of us who founded to try to solidify those traditions for which we were responsible.

6. We expected in a few years it would be impossible to muster a quorum in the Council and that therefore the creative originality of individual Druids and Arch-Druids would be forever safeguarded.
7. Once the Council was instituted, it became convenient, as long as it was still small, to use it as a means of expressing our opinions on a number of controversial questions – a means of recording our intentions for posterity. But the resolutions are just that: an expression of the resolve of the members of the Council.

## Chapter the Eighth

1. Now that I have had my tirade, it occurs to me that I may have misunderstood you completely, and that I am only furthering the cause of misunderstanding by attacking your codex so violently.
2. It is possible that you intended it all as a parody of organization, but if that is the case you might take my reaction as an indicator of your success. I suspect you were motivated primarily by a desire to bring a bit of organization to the Reformed Druids, but that's what it's all about!
3. Reformed Druidism is a statement that religion has a tendency to become organized religion, which then becomes organization devoid of religion. It is difficult to tell until we have communicated more just what you are seeking for Druidism.
4. In the meantime, I shall reserve my right as Patriarch of Belenos to withhold the ceremony for the sixth order from your proposed codex as long as there is any implication that it is the business of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu or the Arch-Druid of Carleton.
5. If what you wish to do is collect the current customs and traditions of the Druids in topical form, than I will gladly assist you, so long as it is made clear that they represent only the present version of a constantly changing picture. I do not feel, however, that such a collection should be submitted to the Council for approval.
6. It is worth noting that the Chronicles, the Order of Worship, and the various pamphlets were never submitted to the Council or anyone else for edit or imprimatur. Every Arch-Druid should feel free to develop whatever materials he needs to spread the word.
7. In any case, if you do submit anything for a vote, you can count on a negative vote from me if it contains the word "religious" (a word found nowhere in the Chronicles), "official" ("Get your OFFICIAL Captain Midnight magic decoder ring"), "regulation" (three years in the Army were enough to turn me against that one), or even "shall" (unless used in the first person).
8. May the Carleton Grove grow in strength and awareness and may those who sit on the Hill of Three Oaks find there a fresh breeze – blowing away stagnation and the petrification of religious forms.

Yours in the Mother,

David A. Frangquist

Patriarch of Belenos, Arch-Druid Emeritus of Carleton

## Reply of the Other David

(By David Fisher, 1969)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. November 28th, 1969
2. Dear Richard,
3. I am enclosing several Druid documents, including a form for the sealing to the Fourth Order. The badge of that Order is a green glass chalice, which in my time could be purchased at the local Woolworth's.
4. I am also, as you will notice, appointing you Patriarch of the Fourth Order, for the period of your Arch-Druidship. This has always seemed a sensible move to make, for it will permit an active and continuing membership in the Forth Order.
5. Since I have left Carleton, my Druidism has become pretty much an inactive affair, mostly, I suspect, because of an increasing amount of certainty about my own Christian vocation. I still think Druidism served a useful purpose and will continue to do so, and I look forward with interest to further letters about the work.
6. I shall only comment briefly on your proposed Codex. It seems to me that although interesting, such a document does not represent the original intent of the founders of Druidism, among whom I was one.
7. We never meant it to be an elaborate and highly developed religion; we only saw it as a means of holding the college's then religious requirement up to ridicule: if they gave people credit for attending services, we would unmask ourselves as jesters, and if they withheld credit, they would be branded religious bigots.
8. It was really David Frangquist who began the serious work, although I had noted in my own sermons and meditations that Druidism did in fact seem to be helping some people along on their spiritual quest.
9. If the grove has continued, then I assume that this is a sign of people's interest, but the original three founders, Norman Nelson, Howard Cherniack and myself never saw the Druids as a permanent feature of Carleton life.
10. One minor note about vestments: do you still wear the white alb, the red and green reversible garment, (and carry the carven wooden staff) which I wore? Or have you reverted to the white robe only and the red or white ribbon? This was made a by a faithful second order Druid and I bequeathed it to Frangquist who added the staff.
11. By the way, the identifying mark of the Fourth Order ought to be a green silk ribbon.
12. You are correct in your surmise about Samhain 1963 since that was the time when the Druids were born, but actual worship on the hill began the next spring.
13. You ought, by the way, to have the Book of Faith among the Council records, my one actual contribution to the "official scripture." I would still stand by it, and if you have no copy, let me know and one will be sent.

Yours in the Mother,

David Fisher

P.S. There is no New York grove so far as I know, and I have no plans to establish one in St. Louis. I may be able to re-visit

Carleton next year; if so, I would enjoy meeting the Druids and perhaps leading a service.

## Fisher's Farewell

(By David Fisher, 1970)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. 13 April 1970
2. DAVID, FIRST ARCH-DRUID OF CARLETON, PATRIARCH OF GRANNOS, TO THE REFORMED DRUIDS OF THE CARLETON GROVE, PEACE AND GREETING IN THE MOTHER:
3. Brothers and Sisters:
4. I understand from Reverend Brother Shelton that certain aspects of the history of the Druids have been lost. To fill that lamentable gap, I am writing the following epistle.
5. You should understand first of all that Jan Johnson, author in large part of the Chronicles, because of the style he chose, had of necessity to alter a number of early events. David Frangquist, the second Arch-Druid, codified and printed the Chronicles and added much material, but Johnson is responsible for the main body of material.
6. He was, or is, a Druid of the Second Order, and served at one time as Preceptor. He chose not to fully record, in particular, the origin of the R.D.N.A. in full detail.
7. Even the Chronicles cannot disguise that R.D.N.A. was at least in part understood as a protest movement against the then religious attendance requirement at Carleton. The thought was that if no credit was extended, we could claim religious bigotry on the part of the Administration; if it was extended, on the other hand, we could reveal the frivolous origin of the cult.
8. For you must understand that whatever Frangquist made out of it, Reformed Druidism was originally the product of an interest of mine in Celtic and Norse mythology, and of Norman Nelson and Howard Cherniack's interest in setting up a quasi-religious body.
9. It began over a dinner table in April, and I held the first service on May Day. I never claimed any special consecration by a Druid in England, nor did I ever claim a vision or an inspiration. I simply proclaimed the glories of the Earth Mother and held services, constructed largely out of my imagination.
10. You will not have any of my early meditations; they were never written down. Basically, they upheld a panentheism, a general admonition to practice inwardness, and were originally intended to simply be as general as possible without offending anyone. They only became more intense and serious when I discovered that some of the persons who had come to laugh had found real meaning in the service.
11. Despite all of this, however, I think that it is to David Frangquist, far more than any of the three founders, that you owe your continued existence. Howard Cherniack soon lost interest and drifted away, once the requirement was abolished. Norman Nelson was a great lover of ritual and form for itself, but he shared with me a worry lest Druidism become too serious. I do not know what his current attitudes are.
12. For myself, I can only say that although I no longer hold services, nor am involved in a grove, I consider myself to retain much of the spirit of the original movement. Druidism's open and flexible character is part of my own theological outlook, which I attempt to incorporate as a Christian theologian.
13. I would not in principle object to holding a service if I were ever at Carleton, for example; it is simply that my spiritual needs are currently being met by something which seems to have more substance and more depth.
14. Indeed, when Druidism began to get "serious," Norman and I agreed that it would be well worth the trouble if the R.D.N.A. served as a way-station for homo viator, a place to be used for temporary refreshment and nourishment, perhaps, during years when alienation from more conventional forms of religion was greatest, but not as a final resting place.
15. We would have been far more definite in formulating our tenets had we intended the R.D.N.A. to be a self-sufficient religion. The tenets, in fact, as embodied in the Constitution, are the only remaining contribution of Howard Cherniack, and may reflect his lawyer's desire to frame a deliberately flexible instrument.
16. Some other marginal notes may be of interest. The higher orders were suggested Norman Nelson (his love of ritual perhaps getting the better of him) and given their names by Frangquist. The reversible chasuble was made and designed by Barbara Beahm, a Second Order Druid. The altar was build of discarded stones near the monument on Monument Hill, and torn down within a day of its building.
17. There are other sidelights that I could add, but I think this forms the substance of what I had intended to say. If you have the time, I should appreciate hearing from as many of you as care to write to me just what R.D.N.A. means to you. As founder, I feel a certain responsibility for all Druids, and your current ideas would greatly interest me.
18. Finally, as Patriarch of Grannos, let me mention that any of you who feel especially called to the work of healing, whether in a physical or other sense, and can journey to St. Louis, will, upon due thought, be welcomed by me into the Order of Grannos.
19. BLESSING AND PEACE, HOPE AND JOY FROM THE MOTHER EARTH, THE GROUND OF ALL LIFE, BE AND REMAIN WITH THE DRUIDS OF THE GROVE OF CARLETON.

David  
Patriarch of Grannos  
13 April 1970



# The Polite Refusal

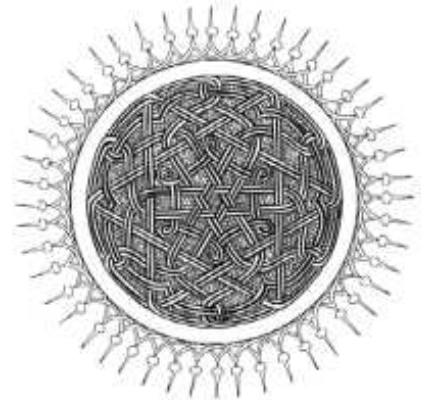
(By Richard Shelton, 1970)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. April 7, 1970
2. Dear David,
3. Many thanks for your letter of 28 November and for the assorted documents enclosed therewith. Since overseas mail is not often returned if undeliverable, I had no idea whether my missives were getting through, but I see that the most important did. Please let me know whether the St. Louis address will be relatively permanent.
4. I am returning the copy of the fourth order consecration service since I have what seems to be the original in the Archives. I do not, however, have the Book of Faith, so the proffered copy would be welcome.
5. The red and green reversible vestment is indeed still in use, although the staff apparently fell by the wayside some time ago (it would be an interesting custom to revive). Steven (Savitzky, 7th Arch-Druid), never one for ceremony, would throw the robe on over whatever he happened to have on at the moment, but I usually wear a white alb under it and have lately taken to wearing a cope-like robe under it.
6. It is, unfortunately, a bit weak about the hems, and I argue with my self periodically whether I should tamper with such a relic and re-stitch them. Who, by the way, is the faithful second order Druid that created it?
7. The codex has not been received well. Looking at it now, I see that it is much too stringent, and, as Frangquist has suggested, it really doesn't accomplish what I had in mind, i.e., improvement of communications.
8. Some of what has roused much ire was intended to do just that in order to ensure response, but most was due to the fact that a lot of tradition had not survived at Carleton – we suffered a break in the chain of Arch-Druids during which much was forgotten. At any rate, the Codex will be withdrawn.
9. Through cognizant of the honor you have done me, I must decline the Patriarchate.
10. My reason are based on two traditions that are as absolute as anything in Reformed Druidism: (1) that the Patriarch of any given order is chosen by the council of the next lower order, and (2) that within any high order the Patriarch wields absolute authority. In light of (2) I recognize your right to resign and will convey your resignation to the Council if you so desire – although I would do so with great unwillingness and would counsel you rather to maintain your well-deserved office and title.
11. However, I cannot accept the Patriarchate from any but the Council. Similarly, I shall not claim fourth-order priesthood unless I am actually consecrated to the order or am created Patriarch by the Council.
12. But there is a further difficulty in the implementation of your directive, and that is simply that, inasmuch as the Patriarch holds absolute authority within his order, no human force except the Patriarch himself can require that a Patriarch resign.

13. Steve has suggested the possibility of abolishing the Patriarchate and attaching to the office of Arch-Druid of Carleton the position of “Psuedo-Patriarch” with the desired properties, but I doubt that such a radical change is either necessary or desirable.
14. The principal difference between the current arrangement and your proposal (with the logical extension to other high orders) is that the former forces priests of the higher orders to seek out new priests for elevation, while the latter makes the propagation of the order virtually automatic.
15. Since the high orders are not yet in grave danger of dying out, the former seems preferable in that it requires more effort on the part of the older priests and that it encourages paths to cross more often than would otherwise be the case. And I think that Druids are mobile enough to make the current arrangement work.
16. Having said that, I hardly need add that, should you be able to re-visit Carleton, you would be more than welcome.

Yours in the Mother  
Richard Shelton  
Arch-Druid of Carleton





# Apology for Simplicity

(By David Fisher, 1970)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA
2. Patriarch of Grannos [i.e. David Fisher to Shelton]
3. Dear Reverend Brother-in-the-Mother,
4. I am sorry that you have misunderstood my proposals as reactionary in character and as attempts to hinder Druidism. Accordingly, acting on your advice and counsel, I direct the following: 1. That my vote on priestesses remain the same, but my letter not be circulated or reasons given to the Council.
5. That proposals No. 1, 4, and 5 be withdrawn.
6. That proposals 2 and 3 be submitted with whatever explanation the Arch-Druid of Carleton sees fit to add.
7. Believe me when I say that, far from being anti-feminine or attempting to impose a rigid dogma, I was merely attempting to return to the original, simple spirit of Druidism.
8. Analyzing the movement historically, I can see that I was responsible for many of the trends towards more complicated organization and ritual, as well as a more clearly developed theology, leading to what seems to me an invalid assumption on the part of some Druids, that Druidism is a religion, and a valid substitute for it.
9. I feel that Druidism is not a religion nor was ever intended to be by the founders, Norman Nelson, Howard Cherniak, and myself. Now I see my attempt to interject meaning into the services in the middle of my first year as Arch-Druid as a mistake, for while some meaning was necessary, it has been carried, I fell out of all proportion.
10. The original spirit vitiating Druidism was a fresh and as simple as the winds blowing over Monument Hill. There was a spicy irreverence not uncommon to Carleton which I could not appreciate but see now as a healthy balance.
11. In my proposals, I was but attempting, perhaps clumsily, to maintain some sort of guideline by the founders and original Druids on the organization which is, after all, our proximate, if not our ultimate, responsibility.
12. As you well know, from my widely varying letters, I have been worried at times over what I have done. At times I have been moved to consider resigning my orders. Now, however, I see my duty as remaining, and advising. If you wish to add priestesses, by all means do so, for my feeling is really tied to a desire to keep organization simple.
13. I must insist, however, that proposals 2 and 3 are vital if those who began the work of the Mother are to be kept in touch with new developments. The Reformed Druid has always boasted of his democratic ways, and I do not wish to impose control. But to advise is, I think, a minimal right which I maintain.
14. My sincere apologies for any disturbance this may have caused, and my best wishes for you personally next year in graduate school.

Yours in the Mother,  
David Fisher  
Arch-Druid of New York (Elect)  
Patriarch of Grannos

# The Report of Richard

(By Richard Shelton, 1970)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. Council of Dalon Ap Landu
2. 8 April 1970
3. Dear Reverend Brothers-and Sisters-in-the-Mother,
4. It is my pleasure to convey to the Council Robert Larson's announcement of the founding of the Berkeley Grove of the RDNA and of his election as its Arch-Druid. This grove is to my knowledge the only active grove besides the Carleton Grove; its advent is most welcome.
5. [New priests and available publications follow.]
6. The Codex of Form has not been received well. One reason for this is undoubtedly that my reconstructions of original practices from the tantalizingly incomplete Archives were wide of their mark, but the paramount reason lies simply in the conception of the Codex as a codex, i.e., as a codification of the material included therein.
7. I have been convinced (several times over) that such a great degree of regulation is not only unnecessary but also distinctly detrimental – and would only be ignored. Acceding, therefore, to the principle that the lack of rigid structure is one of the greatest assets of Druidism, I hereby withdraw the Codex from the consideration of the Council. Neither do I intend to develop a Codex of Liturgy inasmuch as I myself would feel unnecessarily fettered by a fixed liturgy.
8. On the other hand, a collection of tradition and of liturgy, to be observed at the priest's discretion, could be useful in the administration of a grove or mission. Further, it is my firm conviction that candidates for the priesthood should be thoroughly schooled in the history and traditions of the Reform, and such a collection would expedite matters considerably. It is this, then, that I shall direct my efforts.
9. Finally, I direct your attention to the enclosed proposal concerning priestesses. The proposal, submitted by Robert Larson and myself, seeks to abolish the restrictions that relegate priestesses to what Mr. Larson has called "second-class Druidship."
10. These restrictions, which have no foundation in the basic tenets, are difficult to justify and have left the priestesses in a rather ambiguous position. This we have tried to remedy. As to some of the specific provisions of the proposal, Mr. Larson writes the following:
11. "Women, Danu bless 'em, have been causing men problems since the first. It's time to resolve this situation of priestesses.
12. As you are probably aware, the hours problem is not met with in most places, and I am sure that we can rise above our male chauvinism and accord them an equal place with priests if they want it.
13. This proposal would also enable them to refuse equality if they wish, and leave room for consecration of a priestess unto a higher order without a vigil where problems are met.
14. However, she could not be a third order without a vigil, nor could she perform the sacred worship, but only the duties of the order unto which she has been given until

such time as she shall take the vigil if it is her wish to become a Third Order Druid.”

15. You will note that this rather wordy proposal maintains the special place that women have among us while raising them to first-class Druidship. Maintaining their special place by allowing them to be consecrated to a higher order without being a Third Order, it nonetheless encourages their vigiling and preserves the decision-making area of the Council of Dalon ap Landu to those who have earned it by vigiling upon the bosom of the Mother and have Her find them worthy.”
16. As Chairman of the Council, I have the responsibility of maintaining the legality of its resolutions lest that of any future resolution be jeopardized. Therefore, since the Council has operated under the directive in Customs 8:13 since its constitution, and since the Council has never formally granted priestesses of the third order any voice or vote in the Council, I must request that the priestesses refrain from casting ballots. Further, if the resolution is not passed, I cannot allow the priestesses to vote on any subsequent proposal until such privileges are granted them by the Council.
17. With that, I shall close, asking you to indicate your vote on the enclosed card.

Yours in the Mother,  
Richard M. Shelton  
Arch-Druid of Carleton

[Note: The vote did pass unanimously among priests (and priestesses) who voted, and was the last to do so. See Records of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, in Part 4 of ARDA.]



# The Epistle to the Encyclopedist

(By David Fisher, 1973)

(New to ARDA 2)

## Chapter the First

1. 13 Jul 1973
2. The Rev. J. Gordon Melton, Research Director
3. The Institute for the study of American Religion
4. P.O. Box 1311
5. Evanston, Illinois 60201
6. Dear Mr. Melton,
7. In response to your letter of 26 June, I will be glad to provide you what information I can for your article. I make only two request in advance: that if you quote from this letter, you send advance copies of the article, and, if you merely use the information I provide you, that you send me a copy of the article as it appears in print.
8. My reason for this request is quite simple: there has been a tendency among the Reformed Druids of North America (hereafter RDNA) to expand statements, especially those made by myself as “founder,” and I should not like further cultic legends to grow.
9. The RDNA began as a result of a conversation between myself and two other persons, Howard Cherniack, later to become first Preceptor, and Norman Nelson, later to become first Server. The conversation had been centered upon Carleton College’s then religious requirement, a requirement that students be present at one of several religious exercises on Sunday.
10. My own reading in Frazer, Wesson, and other sources which I cannot at present locate, suggested the “Reformed Druid” concept, i.e. non-bloody sacrificial Druids, with a simplified “Earth Mother” panentheism accompanied with a ritual is reminiscent of Christian communion services and Quaker meetings.
11. Howard, I think, made the proposal that we actually form such a group, the strategy being as follows: if students are denied credit for attending our services, we will shout “religious persecution,” and if they do receive credit, we will expose the whole thing as a hoax, thereby ridiculing the requirement. Either way, it seemed an excellent ploy for disturbing the status quo.

## Chapter the Second

1. I shall not detail the gradual growth of ritual, for the most part the product of our fertile imaginations. For the most part, the meditations I gave were nature meditations, stressing quietism, peace, and reverence for life.
2. I personally never conceived Druidism as a genuine alternative to other religions, but as an additional source of meditation. What I think changed the direction of the Druids was the inspiration of my immediate successor, David Frangquist, and the literary work of Jan Johnson. Perhaps I should also add the ecstatic trances of a girl named Jackie, whose last name eludes me at present.

3. David, unlike myself or the co-founders, took his Druidism seriously, and meditated long and hard before asking for “ordination” as a Third Order priest. I think that whatever longevity the Druids possess owes more to his religious vision and vigor than to my “founding” activity, although I set the form and the theology, of which more later.
4. I think all three founders thought the Druids would fold with the ending of the religious requirement our senior year. Instead, there was such interest that I continued services, and agreed to make David a “Third Order” Druid, agreed to let him and Norman set up a hierarchy of Patriarchs, of which I was to be the first, and continued to hold services until David took over.
5. Jan Johnson composed the “Chronicles,” which I assume are still in use at Carleton, and this further intensified the aura of religious zeal, for despite the mock-Biblical style of most of the books, elements in the “Customs” and in the “Meditations” from the hand of David Frangquist (identified as the Chronicler) were genuine.
6. Jackie was a co-ed who fancied herself as having powers to foresee the future, and my last year, at a fire on Samhain (Halloween), as we sat in a circle holding hands, she did indeed prophesy, and a month later, after President Kennedy’s death, many claimed that she had given an exact picture of the Capitol Rotunda as it was for the funeral.
7. Out of these elements, and an innate hunger for a nature-mystical religion of the sort the Druids had become, the Druids grew. To my knowledge, there is still an Arch-Druid and Grove at Carleton, as I have received communications for a number of years from various Arch-Druids and I have no reason to believe that the phenomenon has died out.
8. I have heard of other “Groves” established throughout the United States by Successive Arch-Druids and other Third Order Druids, but have no knowledge of how or whether they are flourishing.

## Chapter the Third

1. As an Ph.D. candidate in philosophical theology, I could write an elaborate statement on the kind of pantheistic theology I helped to form, but I think that the most adequate statement of my thinking – and of the thinking of the other Druids at the time – is contained in the pamphlet called “What is Reformed Druidism?” offered by David Frangquist with some editing by myself. I am also enclosing a copy of Frangquist’s other pamphlet, “The Song of the Earth.” These documents, written in 1964, capture much better the spirit of what Druidism tried to become, than I can now bring to memory.
2. You ask whether I am still a Druid. I am an Episcopal Deacon, and plan to spend the rest of my life as a Priest of the Episcopal Church, so formally, the answer is no, if one cannot serve two masters. I do not continue the rituals I and Norman Nelson wrought in 1963 on Saturdays.
3. On the other hand, I think the quality of my religious life has been influenced by the whole Druid experience, and since Druids never required members to renounce their previous religious preference, I suppose in a sense I still count myself a Druid. I am still listed, at least if your information source was Druidic rather than administrative,

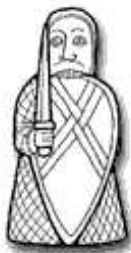
as a Third Order Druid, and am interested in the future of the group which I and other helped bring to life.

4. I think that Druidism was a phenomenon which was able to flourish through birth at the right time.
5. The Sixties were, after all, a period of intense interest in mysticism and strange religions, and a period also of the rise of the counter-culture. While none of the founders, or David Frangquist, were then self-consciously "counter-culture," I think we provided those alienated by the turgidity of main line Protestantism a surprisingly viable alternative.
6. To the extent that Druidism has continued, I suspect that for some at least, the scanty theology of the RDNA provides a haven. Of course, there could not be Druid ethic, except of a minimal sort, and this is perhaps one of the strongest features of the RDNA. Certainly, many of those who became interested at the time of my leaving were rebels against an overly-moralistic Bible-Belt fundamentalism. But I am only guessing here.
7. One final comment, this time personal and evaluative. I think that RDNA meets Whitehead's requirements for a rational religion: it is capable of verification at all temperatures, to the extent that it is even possible to verify religious claims. This is, of course, easier for a non-historical religion with minimal theology than for a historical faith with a detailed doctrine of God and the world. Having said that I remain to some extent a Druid, let me conclude with the other side.
8. We formulated Druidism as a religion of the least common denominator, a faith that few could object to, and were surprised when some embraced it as adequate (making, of course, their own additions on the way).
9. For me, Druidism was not enough. Praying "to whom it may concern," which is what prayer to a personification of Nature amounts to, was not and has not been sufficient to sustain me.
10. However, despite my ambivalence about my responsibility for bringing the Druids to birth, I am happy if there have been and are those who have found in its minimal belief stance a helpful source of meaning in life.

Yours sincerely,

(The Rev.) David H. Fisher

P.S. I would appreciate any information you have on the current activities, or lack thereof, of the RDNA at Carleton.



# Middling Selections: The Isaac Affair

## The Book of Changes,

### PART ONE

(By Isaac Bonewits, 1974)

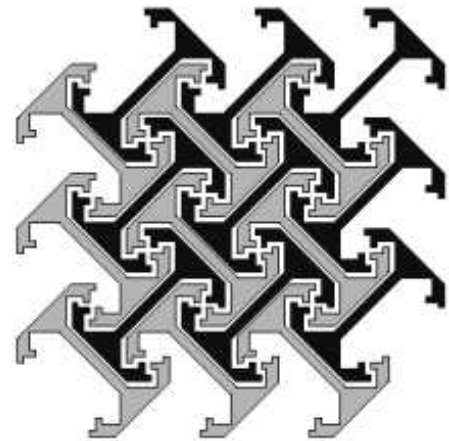
(Berkeley Apocrypha Only)

### Chapter the First

1. On July 18, 12 y.r. (1974 c.e.), the letter which follows was sent out by the Archdruid of the Twin Cities Grove to all the members of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.
2. "Dear Brothers and Sisters:
3. "I have thought long and hard about the difficulties facing the RDNA in the years ahead, and have come up with the following suggestions.
4. "as is traditional among the Druids, I make no request that my words become dogma, but rather that they be pondered and acted upon (either pro or con) by those of you who give a damn about Reformed Druidism, or would like to see it survive and even grow.
5. "Let us begin by admitting that we *are* a religion and describe ourselves to each other and the outside world roughly as follows:
6. " 'The RDNA is an Eclectic Reconstructionist Neopagan Priestcraft, based primarily upon Gaulish and Celtic sources, but open to ideas, deities and rituals from many other Neopagan belief systems. We worship the Earth-Mother as the feminine personification of Manifestation, Be'al as the masculine personification of Essence, and numerous gods and goddesses as personifications of various aspects of our experience. We offer no dogmas or final answer but only continual questions. Our goal is increased awareness and harmony within ourselves and all of Nature. We are willing to interact philosophically and ritually with members of all other belief systems that are compatible with our own approach and Nature."
7. "Let this be how we view ourselves and approach others.
8. "Next, I would recommend that, without getting into an evangelistic trip, we make our writings available to others and publicize the location and mailing addresses of our Groves through the Neopagan media.
9. "Next, let all the members of this Council who may in traveling meet other Neopagans of equivalent dedication to the search for awareness, act more swiftly to found Groves and to telescope (if ethically possible) the time needed to ordain these others to the Third Order down to a few months or even less; leaving the new Druids and Druidesses to take over the fledgling Groves while the ordainer travels on.

10. "Most especially can this be done, without the loss of 'quality control' within the Council, with those individuals who are already Priests and Priestesses in other Neopagan traditions based upon similar philosophies.
11. "In this way, a single Third Order Druid or Druidess in traveling about and meeting other Neopagans could in the space of one year provide legitimate ArchDruids or ArchDruidesses for three or four new Groves. This would solve the problem of maintaining our "Apostolic Succession" without the necessity of forcing would-be Druids to travel up to 2,000 miles to attend the services of one of the two surviving Groves for a year and a day.
12. "A similar program of 'exchanging ordinations' has already been carried out by many Witchcraft and other Neopagan organizations; and as long as reasonable care is exercised in the choices of who to telescope training for, no major problems arise.
13. "As for the conducting of the business of the Council, we are going to have to make some serious decisions immediately. Do we really need the Council? If the Carleton Grove is defunct (which it seems to be) how can we convene the Council when its official Chairperson is nonexistent? Was it really that wise to have the election of the head of the Council left to the caprice of any one Grove, especially a Grove whose membership changes every four years by 100%???
14. "I will make the following organizational proposals and ask that all members of the Council contact me with their reactions, before September 15th.
15. "Let the office of the Chairperson of the Council rotate from year to year among the heads of genuinely active Groves (i.e., holding at least one meeting per month). I will nominate Robert Larson, D.A.L., Be., Archdruid of the Berkeley Grove and an original Carleton Grove member as the First Chairperson.
16. "Let the By-Laws be changed so that members of the Council who do not keep in touch with the Chairperson (and send in change-of-address notes, etc.) may be temporarily dropped from the rolls of the Council until they get back into communication. This would solve the quorum problems so that we could actually get some work done now and then.
17. "Let the rules governing the Higher Orders and the selection and replacement of their Patriarchs and Matriarchs be changed or else let the Higher Orders be abolished.
18. "It is my earnest belief that these changes need to be made immediately and I hope that when this letter is eventually edited and tacked on to the end of my addition to the *Apocrypha*, that it will give a better picture of the RDNA than this letter presently presents.
19. "If the RDNA is to survive as an organization, these or similar changes are going to have to be made. I request all members of the Council to contact me as I said before, by September 15th at the latest.
20. "If the majority of the Council members approve (and remember, this is only the majority of those members known to exist as of two years ago, because nobody ever bothered to send out updated lists), then I will go down to Carleton College and attempt to recover the Archives. These I will send to Robert Larson.
21. "If the majority of the letters I receive disapprove of my suggestions, Robert and I will take our Groves and leave the RDNA to found a new group to be called the SDNA or Schismatic Druids of North America.
22. "We will declare *The Druid Chronicles [of the Foundation]* to be our 'old Testament' and will rewrite those portions we consider objectionable (though for historical reasons we will retain the original readings in footnote form). Then we will write additions of our own, incorporating the contents of this letter as our guidelines.
23. "This we will do, not because we seek to destroy Reformed Druidism or to co-opt it, but because we honestly feel that this is the only way that the principles that the RDNA stands for can be spread and grow into any form that can help either humanity or ourselves.
24. "The RDNA being basically anarchistic, has little it can do to prevent schisms and we are ready, willing and able to schis if that is what it takes.
25. "We are open to other suggestions, but suggest that they come quickly for our decision to schis or remain within the RDNA will be made before *Samhain*.
26. "May the Mother bless us all, and inspire us with the wisdom we need.
27. [signed] "Isaac Bonewits, D.A.L., Be.; Archdruid of the Twin Cities."

[Continued in The Book of Changes, part two]



# The Epistle of Renny

(By Renata Seidel, 1974)

(New to ARDA 1)

## Chapter the First

1. Dear Brother Isaac,
2. I am torn between a desire to write in such a manner as to show you the ludicrous irony of your discrepancy in spirit with the founding fathers of Reformed Druidism, and a desire to seriously confront you with the rather "dangerous" nature of the tone you have established.
3. Three things disturb me greatly.

## Chapter the Second

1. One. Your tone, your approach, your pointed lack of all brotherly community feeling, and even awareness, in attempting to adopt a position of authority and a spirit of action.
2. An interest in change, in reform, in producing responsiveness, is perfectly admirable.
3. Where the need for such ominousness?
4. Please reread your letter and try to perceive the fearsomeness it quite naturally communicates.
5. If I did not take you seriously, I would laugh at what seems to me (if possible and probably the only possible) highly undruidic sentiment.
6. The "voice" itself of your letter frightens me into suspicions of its content and eventual implications.

## Chapter the Third

1. Two. Your completely undemocratic method of attempting to bring about change. I cannot "vote" on the content of your letter, because I disapprove of both alternatives, i.e. your own particular approach vs. a schism.
2. Why do you assume that no other Druid would have worthwhile alternatives?
3. And why do you present the matter in such a way that it is impossible to make additional suggestions subject to vote?

## Chapter the Fourth

1. Three. Your overriding concern with form, with definition, with growth, speed, efficiency, in other words with "progress" (please catch the implications of that term, I know you didn't use it), all "without getting into an evangelistic trip."
2. My dear brother Isaac, a concern with evangelism is a concern with evangelism, no matter whether you perceive that that's the source of your high or not.
3. Evangelism or even conversion have never been aims of Druidism.
4. Though you may think you can maintain an interest in "quality," an interest in speed and conversion are themselves antagonistic to the essential spirit of Reformed Druidism as it was conceived.
5. I myself, would never have become a Druid under your proposed approach or definition.

6. The entrance into any "public" system of information dispensing is itself a very touchy question, the importance of which you seem entirely unaware.

## Chapter the Fifth

1. I have many objections to your "definition" of Druidism.
2. Unfortunately, you have presented it as subject to a yes or no vote, and not even revision by the members.
3. In the past, form and definition have always been of the greatest flexibility, and there is a principle and a spirit behind that fact – unexpressed, but all the more solemn for its inexpressibility.
4. You act as if this flexibility were a result of disinterestedness, rather than meaningful interest.
5. In other words, you have presented a very complex question in a very narrow and political manner.
6. One might almost say tyrannical.

## Chapter the Sixth

1. To put it mildly, brother Isaac, you scare the living daylight out of me, as far as the future of Druidism goes.
2. I am much more concerned about the institutional and highly political aspects you are introducing, than even in the sleepiness of the Carleton Grove, in spite of its crucial position organization-wise.
3. Skepticism and organizational sluggishness have always been present in the past and have not yet threatened the very existence of the Druidic movement.
4. In fact, it's very possible they reflect a certain typical state of mind, or one which at least has its own particular spiritual validity, the more credit to Druidism that it can attract even such people refer e.g. to the founding fathers themselves!
5. If you are so concerned about the situation at Carleton, I suggest you take a trip there and call a meeting, before you claim their membership has dropped to zero.
6. I suggest you contact Donald Morrison, who is only First order (due to his extreme spiritual ponderousness) and has not therefore taken over the "formal" rituals at the school.
7. You will find him most receptive to brotherly discussion.

## Chapter the Seventh

1. The situation organizational-wise of Druidism is, of course, difficult. I have no argument against your complaint, only against your presentation and your solutions.
2. You will undoubtedly be hearing from at least one other person (Richard of Ann Arbor) on the history and the intricacies of the problem itself.
3. I hope you will be convinced of the necessity of a more involved discussion among members on so involved an issue.
4. (Schism is certainly not a light matter!)
5. Please slow down and calm down, brother Isaac!
6. A blessing from the peacefulness of the East.
7. (Tonight, by the way, is Krishna's birthday.)

Peace,  
Renny the Silent  
Archdruid of Carleton  
August 10th, 1974

# The Epistle of Ellen

(By Ellen Conway Shelton, 1974)

(New to ARDA 1)

## Chapter the First

1. Dear Brother Bonewits.
2. I have thought long and hard about what might be the nature of the difficulties you mention facing the RDNA in the years ahead, for I do not see that any are yet apparent.
3. The only difficulties I can see at all are those facing RDNA as an organized religion; and for the existence of these I rejoice.
4. I should be troubled indeed were RDNA to decline to the status of an organized religion.

## Chapter the Second

1. "Verily, I say unto you: is it not written:
2. "And each took this to be a sign, each in his own way"?
3. "Which of you, having risen up saying: "This is truth, for I have seen it, will be followed? For even as ye have seen it, have not the others also seen it not; and where therein is the proof?"
4. "Rather, that which is as the bright light unto one man is as but the thick cloud unto the other." (Med. 6:1-3)

## Chapter the Third

1. The most which may be said to characterize all of the RDNA is that which is set forth in the Two Basic Tenets.
2. If you wish to be more specific about your own view of your own Druidism, then it is your responsibility to make clear that the narrower view is your own, within the broad range defined by the Basic Tenets.
3. I confess that it is with some regret that I avow this to be so, for I not only am most definitely not a Neopagan, but also object to the infusion of Neo-Paganism into Reformed Druidism.
4. But by the same token, you must not expect that any of us will fail to complain bitterly if you present your view as that of all Reformed Druids.

## Chapter the Fourth

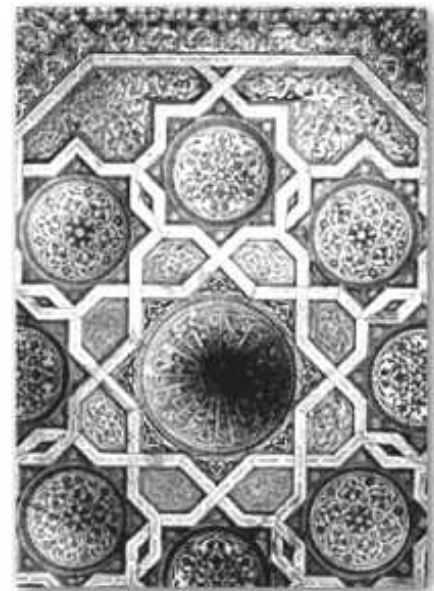
1. I do not share your hope for "RDNA... to survive as an organization."
2. Its origin was in protest at the organization of religion, and I hope to see it continue so.
3. I would prefer to see RDNA survive as a fellowship of people whose search for religious truth has led them to the contemplation of and delight in nature.
4. And I earnestly feel that in this (lack of) form, RDNA can indeed spread and grow (if so desired) into a vehicle that can help both ourselves and humanity.
5. But let us not make the mistake, which so many others have made, that of stressing the form to the neglect of the goal.

6. The form of Reformed Druidism of North America must be unique to each person in his own circumstances: only so can it ever hope to attain its goal.

## Chapter the Fifth

1. "Religions construct cathedrals and design robes [or definitions], just as scientists develop elaborate journals, but all too often the enterprise may become limited to a propagation of the means, with the original end, the desired objective, forgotten." (Robert E. Ornstein, *The Psychology of Consciousness*, p. 98)

Ellen Shelton  
Archdruid of Ann-Arbor  
August 11th, 1974 c.e.



# The Words of Green

(By Richard Shelton, 1974)

(Carleton Apocrypha Only)

## Chapter the First

1. To the Council of Dalon Ap Landu:
2. Many of you will recently have received a letter from Isaac Bonewits; this letter is in response to his.
3. I am somewhat bemused by this call for a description of Druidism. The description has been there all along; refer the curious to the Basic Tenets in the *Chronicles* (Law 4-6). More than that there is not. We are such a diverse group that there is almost nothing one can add to the Tenets and still embrace the entire Reform. If one wants a more direct description, say:
4. The Reformed Druids of North America are a fellowship dedicated to the search for religious awareness. We believe each person must find for himself his own path to awareness; we believe there is comfort and wisdom in nature and in the words of all who search.
5. I hesitate to suggest even that much. On the other hand, I find that Isaac's description bears little resemblance to my brand of Druidism. There is literally not one sentence in it I can agree with wholeheartedly.
6. I am not sure that I worship anything, for example; I am not even sure I know what worship is.
7. I find "the feminine personification of Manifestation" and "the masculine personification of Essence" devoid of any meaning whatever.
8. The phrase "eclectic Reconstructionist Neo-Pagan Priestcraft" just sticks in the throat; we have practicing Jews and Christians in the Reform, and "pagan" is not usually used to describe Jews or Christians, or Mohammedans or Buddhists, or their writings, from which I have drawn comfort and inspiration.
9. As for Priestcraft: if Druidism is Priestcraft, what shall we say of those Druids who are not ordained to the Third Order? Are they failed Druids, Druids who have not seen the light?
10. Quite the contrary; they are Druids in the fullest sense, even as we of the Third Order are Druids of the First Order first.
11. Indeed, it is the *priests* who fail, to the extent that our priesthood is in evidence. If we insist on attempting to guide others and on managing the Reform, let us at least recognize with Lao Tzu<sup>6</sup> that the best leadership is that which is not perceived.
12. It will be evident that Isaac and I disagree strongly on many matters.
13. Yet and this is my point we both call ourselves Reformed Druids. Let the Reform remain such that this is possible. Let us in particular not represent our private paths as Reformed Druidism.

## Chapter the Second

1. What is the hallmark of the Third Order? The answer is written all over Customs 6: it is service.
2. We are ordained to the Order because we feel the call to minister, and not to confer upon us any honor.
3. This call is beyond our commitment as Druids to the search for awareness, and it carries responsibility; responsibility to the Reform not to vitiate its particular Druidic nature, responsibility to the individual Druid not to tread too heavily in his path.
4. Take on the priesthood of the Neo-Pagans if you will, for your path may lead that way.
5. But as an Archdruid, offer the priesthood of Reformed Druidism only to those who receive it as a commitment to the service of the Reform and who receive it in this spirit of humility.

## Chapter the Third

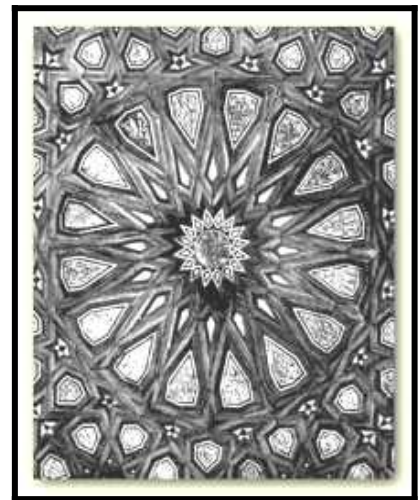
1. I hope to avoid schism; I find it hard to believe that, as undogmatic as we have been, we are faced with it.
2. But if Isaac and Robert feel the need for more dogma and more organization *within* Druidism, I am afraid I will welcome their schism.
3. For my part, I wish Druidism to remain what it took me some time to come to appreciate: a quiet, gentle revolution against tyranny in religion and as all-embracing as the mother Earth.

Peace be unto all of you!

Richard M. Shelton

14 Foghamhar XII

14 August 1974





# The First Epistle of Isaac

(By Isaac Bonewits, 1974)

(Berkeley Apocrypha Only)

## Chapter the First:

### On the Disintegration of the Druids

1. Dear Brothers and Sisters: The Reformed Druids of North America today seem to be facing an inevitable choice; a choice that most organisms, be they physical, psychic or social, must eventually face.
2. That choice is between growth and change on the one hand or stagnation and disintegration on the other; that is to say, between Life and Death.
3. As I write these words in the late summer of the Twelfth Year of the Reform (1974 c.e.), the RDNA *as an organization* is nearly defunct.
4. For of the many Groves which have been founded (Carleton, Berkeley, Chicago, Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan, New York, Stanford, Twin Cities, Vermilion and others) few are known to be thriving still.
5. The Berkeley Grove and the Twin Cities Grove meet frequently and have a score of members each. The Chicago Grove has a score of members who meet only on High Days. The Stanford Grove has only a handful and, as far as I have been able to determine, the other others are defunct or nearly so.
6. Does this mean that the RDNA is dead?
7. Nay, for as someone from the apparently defunct Carleton Grove recently wrote to me, "The Druids are dead. Long live the Druids!"
8. For Reformed Druidism, as an idea, can never die as long as there is one individual still seeking awareness through Nature.
9. Now there are many possible interlocking explanations for the impending demise of the organizational body of Druidism, some of which should be briefly noted.
10. First of all, there is the basic anarchism of the majority of the Founders.
11. This dislike of authority and organization is vital and basic to our philosophy; for it has kept dogmatism and politics from engulfing the Druids.
12. But it has also prevented us from effective communication not only with each other, but with the outside world as well, many of whose inhabitants would have benefited greatly from Reformed Druidism, had they been able to find out about it.
13. Secondly, while many both inside and outside of the RDNA consider us to be one of the oldest public Neopagan movements in the country, nonetheless, it seems that many of the Founders were either Neo-Christians, Atheists or Agnostics.
14. Most of these have in the last ten years become respectable Neo-Christians, Agnostics, Marxists or members of other traditional and accepted religions, and have quietly but firmly dropped out of the RDNA (except to protest vigorously whenever anyone suggests changing the structure of the RDNA).

15. Thus, because most of its leaders have abandoned it, the RDNA has quite naturally tended to fall apart.
16. Thirdly, the RDNA has never been very "evangelistic" or anxious to recruit members, and therefore our numbers have never been very great.
17. Perhaps at our largest we have had sixty members and thirty priests and priestesses across the entire continent.
18. This is too small for an organization to survive in small, scattered units, without a logical and sensible structure.
19. There are no doubt that many other factors which have played important roles in our increasing disintegration as an organization, but there is no room to go into them here.
20. Let us instead turn to consider possible answers to what I feel are the two most important questions facing us in this Twelfth Year of the Reform:
21. Is Reformed Druidism, as an organization, worth bothering to keep alive at all? If so, how can we do it without violating our basic principles of individual autonomy and freedom?

## Chapter the Second: Neopaganism and Reformed Druidism

1. "Neopaganism" is a term that was first brought to the attention of our generation by Ven. Tim Zell, Primate of the Church of All Worlds (in St. Louis, MO), which is the second oldest public Neopagan organization in America, having been founded in 1961 c.e., two years before the Reform (2 b.r.).
2. As he uses it, "Neo-Paganism" refers to a complicated and constantly evolving philosophy based upon "viewing humanity as a functional organ within the greater organism of all Life, rather than as something separate and 'above' the rest of the natural world."
3. Other philosophers have since expanded the term to make it far broader than Ven. Zell might consider proper.
4. As I use it, "Neopaganism" refers to the modern polytheistic (or conditional monotheistic) nature religions that are based upon the older or "Paleopagan" religions; concentrating upon an attempt to retain the humanistic, ecological and creative aspects of these old belief systems while discarding their occasionally brutal or repressive developments which are inappropriate to the "Aquarian Age."
5. "Neochristianity," to give a parallel that might make things clearer, is a term used by some to refer to such groups as the Christian Scientist, Quakers, Unitarians, and other "liberal Christians;" while the "Paleochristians" include Roman Catholics, High Church Anglicans, Baptists, Pentecostals and other "conservative Christians."
6. There are of course people who could be called "Neojews" (Reform) and "Paleojews" (Orthodox), "Neobuddhists" (Mahayana) and "Paleobuddhists" (Theravada), "Neowitches" (Wiccans) and "Paleowitches" ("Fam-Trads"), etc.
7. The major Neopagan movements include modern, humanistic versions of Egyptian, Norse, Celtic, Roman, Greek, Slavic, African, Chinese, Native American and other ancient religions from around the world.
8. Perhaps the most well-known of such Neopagan movements are the various diverse belief systems that refer to themselves as being "Wicca," "Witchcraft," "The

- Old Religion," etc.; based upon many different cultural backgrounds (though primarily Celtic) and of wildly varying levels of scholarship and practice.
9. The major principles that these Neopagan religions have in common would seem to be these: (1) a reverence for Nature and a willingness to live by Her laws, rather than trying to "conquer" Her; (2) a constant search for awareness and growth, beginning in the realm of Nature; (3) a belief that there are certain Archetypal forces in the cosmos, usually called "gods," "goddesses," "nature elementals," "spirits," etc., that humans interact with for mutual benefit; and (4) a knowledge that psychic talents do indeed exist and can be trained and developed through the use of ritual, among other methods.
  10. So it is clear that, in this expanded sense of "Neopagan," the RDNA fulfills more than one qualification to be a Neo-Pagan movement, though whether it is a "religion" or a "philosophy" was never decided by the original Carleton Founders.
  11. I will maintain that Reformed Druidism is, or can be, a Neopagan *religion*, even though this contradicts the word of the major Founder of the RDNA (see *The Book of Faith*, verse 5) and absolutely horrifies him and others.
  12. I will maintain further, that if it is to survive, Reformed Druidism must recognize its own Nature, as an originally proto-neopagan movement that has evolved into a genuine Neopagan group, and accept its duty to take it rightful place among the Neopagan movements of America.
  13. But let me now approach this subject from another angle, one that will make more sense to some of you and less sense to others.
  7. But it is safe to say, from a scholarly viewpoint, that the RDNA is a Priestcraft and not a Witchcraft; though many Druids and Witches seem to encounter no difficulty in attending each other's rituals.
  8. Now the rituals of the RDNA, though not originally designed to be magically strong, can be (and have been) used by trained Druids for powerful magical purposes; ranging from the mere charging of the chalice with stronger than usual psychic energy, to healings of physical diseases and the performance of drastic weather spells.
  9. So, while the RDNA has not been around long enough as an organization to acquire a strong circuit of power in the collective unconscious (as the 40+ Catholic Churches have, for example), nonetheless, under the leadership of a Druid/ess who has been properly trained in magic, our rites can be used to reach back to touch the Ancient Gods invoked.
  10. Yet another advantage to the rituals of the RDNA is their ecumenical or eclectic structure; for almost any good Pagan deity can be contacted within the context of our liturgy, including the Pagan deities behind the Christos myths.
  11. When the waters of Life are passed about the circle and a psychic link is forged between those who drink and the Old Gods that is magic!
  12. When Grannos of the Healing Springs is invoked to heal a sick person and that sick person is healed that is magic!
  13. When Taranis is beseeched for rain and clouds suddenly gather from the four corners of the sky, rushing together to pour their bounty upon the Earth below that is magic!
  14. All these things I have seen, and more.

## Chapter the Third: Magic, Witchcraft and Reformed Druidism

1. "Magic"; is a word that has many meanings to many people, but for the purposes of this Epistle, I shall define it as "Folk Parapsychology," the techniques developed for centuries all over the globe that are designed to facilitate the use of psychic talents.
2. While respectable clergy and physicists scream to the contrary, it is a *fact* that psychic phenomena exist and that they rarely follow the desires of scientists or other preachers.
3. A religious ritual is a spiritual psychodrama done for magical purposes, whether simple or complicated, heavy or lightweight.
4. When the ritual is led by a priest and/or a priestess who perform(s) the act of channeling the energies raised, and who act (s) as the official representative(s) of the deities invoked, then we have a psychic technology that is referred to as a system of "Priestcraft."
5. If, on the other hand, all the members of the religious group share the task of channeling the energies equally, and all expect to develop their psychic abilities, then we have a psychic technology that is referred to (at least by some) as a system of "Witchcraft."
6. But be warned that both of these approaches can blur together greatly! And they are both interwoven with Ceremonial Magic, Wizardry, Shamanism, Strega, Macumba and other system of magic working; for these terms have always been in flux and today are more slippery than ever.

## Chapter the Fourth: Magic vs. Science?

1. Now lest there be some of you who feel that I am talking foolishly about that which I know naught, I will state that I have been a scholar of minority belief systems for ten years, that I have authored books and many scholarly treatises upon the subjects of Magic, Paganism, Witchcraft, Voodoo, Parapsychology and other related subjects.
2. Therefore, Brothers and Sisters, do I assure you, that *I know whereof I speak*.
3. All these wonders, of the sort that I have just related, though their very possibility is frightening to many, have always been common among Paleopagans and Neopagans (and they used to be common among Christians and Jews as well); and it is only the fanatic technologists and devout materialists who will close their eyes to that which they do not wish to see.
4. For to admit that the cosmos is bigger than their minds can comprehend, would be to admit that they are only a *part* of Nature, and not Her "conqueror." And this admission truly goes against all of Western Civilization and the "Judeo-Christian" tradition.
5. Even so, I beseech you Sisters and Brothers, that as the RDNA has always fought against the coerced belief systems of Established Religions, let us also be willing to combat the coerced belief system of the Established Religion of Scientism.

6. For no humans are infallible, even if indeed they be wearing the ceremonial white Lab coats, and waving the ritual Slide rules, and chalking up the mystic Numbers, and chanting the most sacred mantra, "Science has proven that...."
7. Wherefore, let us as Reformed Druids confess that there are indeed powers beyond human comprehension, beyond the limitations of human religions (no matter how respectable), and work to develop our psychic talents for our benefit and that of the Earth-Mother.

## Chapter the Fifth: What Can Be Done

1. Now this can be accomplished through many means: through ritual and music, poetry and song, enchantment and the seeking of oracles.
2. Groves may easily add magical spells to the middles of the Orders of Worship, or reserve those enchantments for magical Orders within the Reformed Druid movement.
3. For while there are three Lower Orders and seven Higher Order at present, still there is no reason why more may not be founded and dedicated to patron deities for there are many more Gaulish, British, Irish, Scots, Manx, Welsh, and Pictish gods and goddesses who are not mentioned in *the Chronicles of the Foundation*, but who were known to the ancient Druids, whose ways we seek to reconstruct.
4. Now among these other deities were many who are now worshipped by some of those who call themselves "Witches"; and although the Triple Moon/Earth/Sea Goddess and the Horned God of the Woods are not mentioned in our scriptures, still they are a part of our Paleopagan heritage.
5. Let us therefore cooperate with those Witches and Covens who are of a like mind to our own, neither lording it over them nor bending the knee, but treating them as sisters and brothers along the Paths to Awareness.
6. For while Ancient Druidism (*Druidecht*) had little if anything to do with Ancient Witchcraft (*wiccacraeft*), representing in all likelihood different social classes, in today's world it is best for Neopagans of all kinds to assist each other in whatever way they can, for the befit of All.
7. And as we attempt to resurrect and reconstruct the religious and magical practices of the of the Ancient Druids, let us not forget one of their most powerful ones, poetry.
8. For every Druid and every Druidess should be a poet.
9. It is said that the Ancient Druids spent twenty years or more in training, learning the unwritten lore of their peoples and how to fashion it into poetry that could inspire and subdue, crown a brave warrior and dethrone a tyrant, heal the sick and enchant the world.
10. Surely, Reformed Druids can continue this tradition.
11. So therefore, Sisters and Brothers, let us return the magic of ritual and poetry, music and song, dancing and feasting to our forms of our worship.
12. Only in this way do I think we may provide the psychic revitalization which we and the world so sadly need.
13. Only in this way, by forging the bond between us through the *waters-of-life* into an unbreakable chain linking us with the Earth-mother and Be'al, may we survive as anything other than a quaint Carleton College Alumni Club.
14. Only in this way may the *spiritual body* of Druidism be revived from the malaise that has brought it low.
15. *The organizational body of Druidism* can then be easily resurrected, though in what forms remains to be seen.
16. But since this is already the longest book in the *Apocrypha*, I will close with this assurance:
17. Rejoice!
18. The Gods are alive! Magic is afoot!

Peace!

Isaac Bonewits, D.A.L., Be., Archdruid, Twin Cities Grove, Foghamhar, 12 y.r. [circa late August, 1974 c.e.]

# Gobbledygook and Red Tape

(By Gerre Goodman MacInnes, 1974)

(New to ARDA 1)

## Chapter the First

1. Dear Rev. Brother Isaac.
2. Having received your missive, and the subsequent communiqué from Richard, I now feel as if I must add my humble opinions to the tempest which you have insisted on brewing in the RDNA's teacup.
3. There are several bones that I must pick with you. Having never met you, through no fault of my own, (I tried!) I hesitate to pass any judgment on your convictions.
4. However, I must react to what I consider the high-handed and willful way in which you have presented your ideas.

## Chapter the Second

1. I, as a Quaker as well as a priest of the third order, cannot help but object to your efforts to turn a heretofore simple movement dedicated to the individual search for religious awareness into a Neo-Pagan Gobbledygook.
2. Haven't you had enough red tape in your life, that you want to wrap Druidism in more of the same?
3. If you feel the need to narrow your outlook by enclosing it in pompous definitions, be it on your hand, but leave me out of it.
4. I try to follow the Inner light, wherever it may be, and I am not about to reject any belief system just because it is not a part of the "Neo-Pagan" belief system that you describe.

## Chapter the Third

1. As regards the Council, its workings and voting patterns, I stand with Richard. As long as there is a Grove at Carleton, let it originate from Carleton.
2. For one thing, I don't trust the postal system, and a traveling chair could result in lost mail and more confusion than we have already.
3. No amount of organization is going to compensate for irresponsibility on the part of council members. Therefore, Dick's resolution is sound, and should cover most of your objections.
4. As far as higher orders are concerned, could it be that you aspire to a higher order and are blocked in your ambition by the present system?
5. Let me remind you that it is in the Third Order that our power and our duty lie.
6. Service, not personal honor, should be our concern, however that service may choose to manifest itself. Follow the leadings, and you can't go wrong.

## Chapter the Fourth

1. I am afraid that I regard your suggestions for increasing the number of Third Orders and Groves with some amusement, especially your suggestion to ordain (or re-ordain) those who are already "Priests and Priestesses in

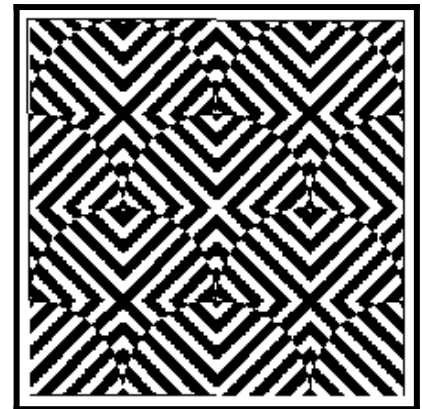
other Neo-Pagan traditions based upon similar Philosophies."

2. If the philosophy is similar, and the person in question has already received a call to the ministry, so to speak, the re-ordination to Third Order seems slightly redundant.
3. It's like saying "you have to be confirmed in our church before you can take communion with us."
4. In my opinion, you are trying to make holy those things which are, by their very nature, already holy to those who have eyes to see.

## Chapter the Fifth

1. In short, Brother Isaac, it seems to me that you are trying to complicate the simple, making something dreadfully serious out of an idea that was conceived originally in a light spirit.
2. If you must, in order to be true to your conscience, schis, go with my blessing.
3. I, for one, must continue as I have begun, believing that life is, after all rather absurd, and he/she who takes anything too seriously is likely to end up looking nothing more than ridiculous.
4. "May the long time sun shine upon you, all love surround you, and the pure light within you guide you all the way on," wherever that may be.
5. Peace, and the light, be with you.

Gerre Goodman MacInnes  
September 3rd, 1974 c.e.



# The Epistle of Norman

(By Norman Nelson, 1974)

(Carleton Apocrypha Only)

## Chapter the First

1. Dear Isaac:
2. I don't know in advance what I'm going to say, and I really don't know where to begin. I guess I'll start by saying that I don't think that there is really any alternative to schism on *your* part. As I see it, RDNA can accept almost anything, but if you feel that you can't accept the other practitioners of the rite, in their infinite variety, then you must leave us for your own peace of mind.
3. Believe me, unless Druidism has changed tremendously in the several years I have been in only nominal touch with it, we will never require you to leave us!

## Chapter the Second

1. The RDNA was never intended to be a religion, except in the "dictionary" sense, a strictly legalistic thing; since Carleton required everyone to attend religious services, we started our own religion, Druidism was not, at the time, intended to be anything except a joke.
2. As it developed, we wound up with quite a bit more than we had ever intended to create. I have used the catchphrase that our disorganized religion appealed to those who couldn't stomach organized religion.
3. Seriously, though, we seemed to have struck a responsive chord in quite a few people. Dick Smiley was one I especially remember, for whom Druidism came to be an intensely serious business, we worked hard to keep it lighthearted!
4. One of the basic ideas which we hit hard on (partly to be acceptable, partly because it meant quite a bit to us *per se*) was that Druidism was not intended to be replacement for any religion no one was expected to deny any other faith (Christian, Jewish, what-have-you) to call himself a Druid; everyone who partook of the waters was automatically a Druid. (This means our membership includes such disparate entities as John Nason<sup>7</sup> and Bard Smith<sup>8</sup>, the latter an ordained Episcopal priest.)
5. We established the first three orders because that was the way the service was written! Fisher was our 3rd order, and represented to everyone originally that he had gotten it all (including his ordination) from someplace he had been in school. Actually, of course, he invented it.
6. The higher orders came about equally haphazardly; Frangquist and I wanted to play a bigger role, so we invented the idea of the higher orders to ease Fisher out and let someone else be Archdruid! We gave him the honor of being Patriarch of the 4th order, and thereby "accidentally" wound up with the higher orders for ourselves!

## Chapter the Third

1. To return to the question of your schism (repeating that I've been out of touch with what Druidism has been doing from about 1970 on):
2. Druidism is wide enough to embrace almost anything you want to do; if you feel it constrictive, then schism is best. I fear that you are getting away from the RDNA I know and if you're going to make great changes, then there is no question that to continue to call it the RDNA is doing a disservice to the RDNA we have known.
3. I am not frightened off by the Neopagan label. The only thing disturbs me about it in connection with RDNA is that we never conceived of ourselves as pagans! Druidism was a supplement or a complement to other religions.
4. I must admit that I have ceased to practice any other religion (unless you count church at Christmas and Easter) and *do* still occasionally have a Druid service (usually improvised, since I never remember to have the book with me), but the only time I have used the term "pagan" to describe myself has been when the Mormon missionaries were at the door. (And I recommend the effect *that* produces!)
5. My biggest concern is that Druidism will be submerged, will be merely another quaint alternative ritual for those who are grabbing a straws in an effort to be different. I am still convinced that for most of the practitioners thereof, neo-paganism is either a fad or a self-conscious revolt against mummy and daddy.

## Chapter the Fourth

1. We somehow created more than we knew when we created the RDNA.
2. For many, what we were saying was that they were feeling; we articulated the inarticulate feeling that many had, which I once described as "Look around you there must be something bigger than we are."
3. We called it the Earth-Mother; the worship of the Earth-Mother was a symbolic way of saying thank-you to the forces that created the earth and us.
4. The other god-names were just trappings, as far as I know. Several of us got rather deeply into research at on point, and much of the trappings came from that period. In my mind, at least, and I think I speak for most of the others, we were just using alternative names for the Earth-Mother.
5. Again with the qualification that I don't know recent RDNA developments, I will have to admit that I laughed out loud when I read your description of Druidism. Two reasons impelled it.
6. The first was that you were so far from (beyond?) what we envisioned when we started it; the second was the incredible amount of jargon that seems to have accumulated.
7. Don't take me wrong; I just can't take the RDNA seriously!
8. Look to the origins, and you will find a college prank.
9. Look to the early years, and you will find a "philosophy" or whatever you want to call it, that somehow appealed to a lot people who were searching for some sort of meaning in the world.
10. (I suspect that our strongest appeal was to that bright sort of person you find at Carleton, who has all of a sudden

begun to realize that they don't have all the answers and that nobody else does either.)

## Chapter the Fifth

1. Finally, I want to stress one crucial fact in the development of RDNA; it just happened!
2. We had some literally incredible events (such as the prediction of the death of Kennedy, which is hinted at in Latter Chronicles 5:12ff., and scared the hell out of us; or the efficacy of the Druid curse, which after being used two or three times, with effect, made us decide to let the secret of it die with us who know it).
3. We almost convinced ourselves sometimes that we were playing with some power greater than ourselves. But we also always managed to keep the perspective; even at its most serious moments, Druidism kept one slightly askance eye on itself!
4. Today I still call myself a Druid, although I no longer call myself a Christian; I can't accept the story of Jesus as the Christ.
5. But all that Druidism asks of one is belief in the tenets. You can come up with all sorts of deep and jargonistic statements, but you can't get away from the tenets;
6. North American Reformed Druids believe that one of the *many ways* (emphasis added) in which the object of man's search for religious truth can be found through Nature, (which we personify as) the Earth-Mother. Nature, being one of the primary concerns in man's life and struggle, and being one of the objects of creation (we never bothered about the implications of that; a creator) is important to man's spiritual quests.
7. Druidism isn't to me what it would seem to be to you. Perhaps you are right, but, being as close as I am to the origins, I can't forget what it meant then, and what it evolved into in the first few years. You can't; I can't!
8. This has been a long and rambling epistle apologize. As I said, I didn't know when I started where I was going; I'm still not sure that I have covered all the bases, but it's after midnight, so I'll quit.
9. May the blessing of the Earth-Mother, the never-changing All-Mother, be upon you in whatever you do.

Norman Nelson  
10 Geimredh XII  
10 November 1974



# The Book of Changes,

## PART TWO

(By Isaac Bonewits, 1976)

[The aftermath from discussion on the letter  
in The Book of changes, part one]

(Berkeley Apocrypha Only)

## Chapter the Second

1. The reactions to this missive were, as usual for Reformed Druids, varied.
2. Out of the 33 copies mailed, some were returned by the Postal Service as undeliverable. These were: D. Wesley Hubbard, Marta Peck and Richard Smiley.
3. The following members of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu objected *vigorously*: Diane Erbe (Adr. of Carleton), David Fisher, David and Deborah Frangquist, Gerre Goodman MacInnes, Thomas McCausland, Renata Seidel, Ellen Conway Shelton (Adr. of Ann Arbor) and Richard Shelton."
4. The following members of the Council agreed with the basic concepts outlined: Michael Bradley (Archdruid of Chicago), Joan Carruth, David T. Geller, Charles Hixson, Robert Larson (Archdruid of Berkeley), Cathy MacQuilling, Stephen W. A. McCalley, Steven Savitzky, S. Vokhvy Sterba and E. David Uggla (Archdruid of Stanford).
5. The following member of the Council sent no reply at all: Thomas Carlisle, Phillip Cooper, Stephen Corey, Victor Henney Jr., Robert Hirsch, Laura Kiigimagi Keeting, Glen McDavid, Don Morrison and Gary (of Schenectady) Zempel.
6. The following member of the Council sent as his reply a definite "maybe": Norman Nelson.
7. Thus it was that a majority of those who managed to communicate about the contents of the letter, including four ArchDruids of the Groves known to be active in July, 1974 c.e., desired that changes of the general sort outlined be made.
8. However, these Druids were divided into two factions: those who were of the majority, who favored the staging of a coup d'etat and those, who were of the minority, who favored a full or partial schism.

## Chapter the Third

1. Now the ArchDruids who desired changes conferred with their Groves at Services and with each other by telephone and mail, and came to these conclusions.
2. That two new organizations would be formed which would, for at least a while, be semiautonomous branches of the RDNA; and that these groups would be known as the New Reformed Druids of North America (NRDNA) and the Schismatic Druids of North America (SDNA).
3. That the name NRDNA would probably wind up being used by those Druids who wished to continue to

acknowledge the Council of Dalon ap Landu; to wit, those who favored a *coup*.

4. That the name SDNA would likewise probably wind up being used by those who favored a full or partial schism from the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.
5. That a new Council to be known as the Provisional Council of ArchDruids would be formed for at least a while, and that this Council would consist of all willing ArchDruids and ArchDruidesses of all active branches of the Reform that might exist or be formed in the future.
6. That all Groves would continue to retain their traditional autonomy.
7. That the purpose of the Provisional Council of ArchDruids would be to confer with and represent their Groves for the consideration of various matters of import and controversy.
8. That among these matters would be those of: new Constitution(s) and By-Laws, the continuation or ignoring of the Higher Orders, the possible need or ethical reasons for the institution of defrocking procedures, and the final decisions concerning the future political structure and interrelationships of the various branches of the Reform.

[To be continued in The Book of Changes, Part Three]



## The Epistle to the Myopians

(By Joan Carruth, 1976)

(Berkeley Apocrypha Only)

000. To all the orders of Druids, peace; from Joan, priestess and Druid of the Order of Dalon Ap Landu, and Preceptor of the Grove which is in Berkeley.
00. May the Lord of the Groves guide my hand in this writing. Blessed be the Earth-Mother who bringest forth all life.
0. May the Earth-Mother keep David the Fisher in Her sight and bless him, for this is all his fault.
1. Priest and Patriarchs, hear me! Druids of much ilk, hear me! Worshippers in the Groves, hear me! Brothers and Sisters, Children of the Mother, followers of the way called Druid, attend unto my words and ponder them!
2. Much have I read the *Chronicles* and wondered at the beauty of them, and at the signs the Earth-Mother has shown, and still I am disquieted.
3. Much grief it is to me to see in the *Chronicles* words that do not indicate balance and harmony, nor true knowledge of the Ways of the Mother, and I wonder greatly that none have seen it.
4. Behold the Ways of the Mother, for all of them are good, and not just half of them.
5. If the Mother would bring forth life, First She must commit the seed to the grave, and bury it in the darkness, and surround it with effluvia, and the bodies of Her children of past seasons. If the plant would survive, and bring forth new plants to the glory of the world, First must it put its life into its seeds and die unto the world.
6. In this the great Mystery of the Mother is seen, that we are wont to call Defeat is turned to the *sine qua non* of Victory. Hearken unto my words and consider them, for there is a sadness in the Reformed Druids that wisdom would see turned to joy!
7. Fear not the waning of the Moon, lest ye would never again see Her wax. It is not a time of Evil, but of simplification and consolidation unto the seed, and though, lo, we see around us only growth and youth and wealth praised, many of the troubles we Druids are trying to escape from arise from this fallacy that half the work of the Mother is Evil. From it arises plagues upon the Earth. If Man is good, Woman is Evil. If Light is good, Darkness is evil. If Getting is good, Losing is evil. If Summer is good, Winter is evil. If the Spirit is good, the Body is evil. Long would my Epistle be if I listed them all.
8. Hence we praise the summer and reject the Winter, all unknowing that by doing so we reject the seed the mother would plant in the darkness of our hearts and compost with out "defeats" and our unfulfilled longings.
9. Fear not *Geimredh* nor *Earrach* therefore, nor disregard them, nor cease to worship them. Call upon Belenos to return with all your hearts, but with all your hearts accept the answer of the silence and the dark. Accept not in despair, nor in hope, but in peace and certitude: yea, even in joy. Though the Mother seem turned to Hag, it is not so: She's just a bitchy pregnant woman. Though the Lord seem merciless Hunter, it is not so: He slays the old that the new might find birth. Without *Samhain*, *Beltane* could

not come. Therefore rejoice even in the gathering dark, for it is the Repository of Mysteries and the Progenitor of Wisdom.

10. In our shortsighted desire for Life, we have disrupted the whole Biosphere, the living mantle of the Mother. In our attempt to defeat Death, we have created a true waste. Of all the Mother's creatures, we alone may be able to accomplish that defeat, and the world would not live but die. Then indeed would Arawn weep, for there would be no young children or tender blossoms to play upon His knees.
11. I am a warrior. I am a gardener, and a medicine-person, and a student of Life. That I worship, as I know you do. We have reclaimed the right-brain wisdom of the past. Let us not out of hand reject the left-brain wisdom of the present. It is only without each other that either becomes evil, and they do not contradict each other. Though all around you desire Life without Death, fall not into that trap, though your body and your senses much desire it; or the ways of the Mother and plans of the Lord of the Groves will be lost unto you and you shall be at odds with yourself until the end of your days. Blessed be the Lord who has given me to understand this. Blessed be the Lady who givest life.

Joan Carruth, D.A.L.  
25 *Mean Earraigh*, 14 y.r.  
Year of the Bison, c.e.  
[circa March 25th, 1976 c.e.]



## Lessons for a New Archdruid

(By Richard Shelton, 1976)

(New to ARDA 2)

### Chapter the First

1. 21 April 1976
2. Shelton to Morrison
3. Dear Don,
4. We were delighted to get your letter, and to learn that you'll be around this summer and next year.
5. It's beginning to look as though the Midsummer service will break a record for number of 3<sup>rd</sup> Orders present; there will probably be people from the cities (though not Isaac), and there's even a side chance that we'll have a majority of the Council.
6. You should receive shortly a document from Diana appointing you Arch-Druid of Carleton (pro-tempore).
7. When you receive it, you will become 13<sup>th</sup> Arch-Druid of Carleton and Chairman of the Council of Dalon ap Landu.
8. The "pro-tempore" signifies only that you are appointed, rather than elected, and you don't have to mention the "pro-tempore."
9. You can drop it altogether as soon as you can rustle up a Grove to elect you Arch-Druid.
10. But you will have all powers of a regularly elected Arch-Druid, including the right to consecrate priests to the third order.
11. I want you to have this office by Beltane so that you can meet Isaac on equal footing.
12. If necessary, you should make it clear to him that you are the presiding Arch-Druid, and that you are running the show.

### Chapter the Second

1. Now any Arch-Druid needs some paraphernalia, and to help tide you over until you can get the real thing, we enclose the following:
2. The Order of Worship – containing basic services for the Summer Half and Winter Half, 2<sup>nd</sup> Order Consecration, and a few other things.
3. This is most of what you need in the way of liturgy. Always remember: except for third order consecration, all priests are encouraged to write their own liturgy, and (except for third order consecration) there is no fixed liturgy.
4. Oh yes I have written in pencil the text as it appears in the Carleton Liturgy (the Black Books) as it differs somewhat from the printed version.
5. The black book version is the one we used (when we were following the book at all).
6. Second order consecration was the one service of these that we regularly did follow the book on.
7. A Service for Beltane. This is meant only as a suggestion; if you like it, use it, but don't feel bound to it.



8. I guarantee it will take Isaac by surprise, since whatever he is calling the “Standard Beltane Service” he must have written himself – the Black Book contains none (or didn’t at my time, anyway).
9. This service I wrote myself at Carleton, Glenn might have stuck it in the Black Book, but Isaac can hardly have found a copy anywhere.
10. Also enclosed are some “stage directions,” which might be useful. If you use this service and if Isaac asks for a copy, refer him to me, its mine, and I don’t want it showing up in his Magnum Opus.
11. A copy of our printed version of the Green Books.
12. Read the introductory material carefully, and peruse the contents with pleasure; for here is the essence of Druidism.
13. Without the Green Books, no Grove is complete. But: for the time being, keep this to yourself.
14. Our problem is that we do not yet have all the copyright releases necessary, and I have been using that as an excuse not to send a copy to Isaac until after it’s too late to include in his thing. So let him have no inkling that you have a copy.
15. Of course, you will get the real Green Book with the paraphernalia; in the meantime find a bind for this – and keep the temporary copyright page right after the title page, as its our only protection against pirated copies.
16. A handy-dandy Druid Calendar – works even in leap years! – plus directions for use.
17. Copies of the Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals and of Letter to my Brothers. They are part of the Carleton Apocrypha. Isaac has O.F.F., but not letter- it would be best if he did not know of the existence of the latter.
18. Our very last copy of the Chronicles – we haven’t been able to reach Kelton, so I don’t know yet whether he has been able to recover the rest.
19. The Carleton Constitution. (as amended) Notice the striking resemblance to the Book of Law.
8. An incantation is nice, though not necessary. It is hard to find (or write) good ones. The ones in Customs are nice, but they are given much too often.
9. “the Sacrifice” Oh yes, the Sacrifice. Did anybody remember to bring a Sacrifice? -Uh, just a minute folk, I have to find a Sacrifice. Be right back.”
10. MORAL: Don’t forget to bring a Sacrifice. This is the responsibility of the presiding priest.
11. (This is particularly important for 3<sup>rd</sup> Order consecrations – the candidate will be pretty groggy, and very impressionable, so it is important that the A-D have gotten a good night’s sleep and have everything all ready for the consecration so that everything goes smoothly. This instant is the most serious Druidism gets – it means a lot to the candidate, and it is important that it be done well.)
12. The responses in the Answer are given by the assistant, who should be of 2<sup>nd</sup> order (or more). If no 2<sup>nd</sup> order are available, they can be given by the congregation in union. But it doesn’t really matter.
13. Waters of life: the traditional ratio of Scotch to Water is determined by the marks on the cruet (part of the paraphernalia): one fills with Scotch to the first mark, then with water (traditionally from a drinking fountain from 1<sup>st</sup> Goodhue, but only because A-D’s traditionally forget about the water until the last minute) up to the 2<sup>nd</sup> mark. I measured out once what this came to in milliliters, but have forgotten exactly.
14. It came to about 1 part Scotch to 2 parts water, for a total of about ¾ cup. Remember, for 2<sup>nd</sup> Order consecration, you need another cruetful in reserve for each 2<sup>nd</sup> order to be consecrated – for it is required that the aspirant consume the lion’s share of the standard cruetful of waters.
15. Waters of Life (for Beltane): the ration is reversed: fill with water first, then Scotch. (This is one reason 2<sup>nd</sup> order consecration is traditionally **not** performed on Beltane!)
16. Waters of Sleep: Straight water (“neither do they sing...”)
17. Mechanics of 2<sup>nd</sup> order of worship (p.3) it say the 2<sup>nd</sup> order consecration is performed before the remainder of the waters is returned to the Earth-Mother. However, you need that chalice for the consecration, and the aspirant isn’t supposed to leave any to be returned. So instead you proceed as follows: (suppose you have an aspirant)

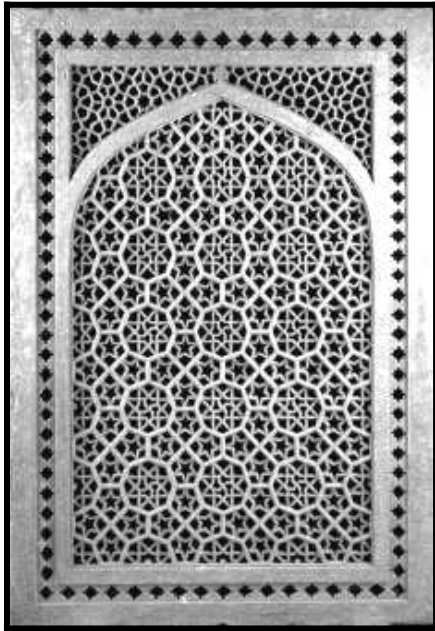
## Chapter the Third

1. That should be enough to get you started. Let me know if you require anything else.
2. I don’t know how well-versed you are in the art of performing a service, so please forgive me if you already know all the following. But just in case you don’t, I offer these tips:
3. It is traditional for Carleton priests to inscribe (with their fingers) the Druid symbol on the North (Blank) face of the Monument just before services.
4. This is a token, looking forward to the day when we can have it inscribed (with a chisel) together with the legend “The First Reformed Druid Service was held on this spot on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1963.”
5. The presiding priest (usually, though not necessarily the A-D) gives the invocation somewhat apart from the congregation, and then processes (with his assistant, e.g. the Preceptor) to join the congregation.
6. Upon reaching it, the two draw a symbol with their staves, into which the presiding priest steps, and from which he gives the rest of the service.
7. SYMBOL ILLUSTRATION
18. Hallow the waters of life and serve the congregation, returning the remainder to the Earth-Mother, exactly as in a regular service.
19. Go to the aspirant. Ask him to kneel. Hallow the next batch of waters. Proceed with the consecration.
20. Go back to your home plate (the Symbol) and continue the service (with the reading).
21. Now you begin to see why you need an assistant or two: to hold bottles (of water and of scotch), cruets, chalice and liturgy, and torches at night!
22. Sermons. Nobody gives sermons anymore. A reading, or three or four, followed by a period of silent meditation is usual. I believe Renny was somewhat more imaginative – but you would know more about that than I.
23. Oh yes, the official liturgical scotch of RDNA is Black & White (Although we considered changing it when they changed the clip tops to screw tops – wrote them a letter to about it, too (didn’t get any response)).
24. That’s all I can think of. Hope it helps. Let me know if I can be of further assistance.

## Chapter the Fourth

1. News Department: The Ann Arbor Grove has been revived (see enclosed missive, which is for the Archives). So I may be addressed as "Richard, Arch-Druid of Ann Arbor" though I'll think you stuffy if you do! (Except formally of course.)
2. Although it is not required, if you fell energetic it might be a good idea to send out an accession letter.
3. But you might hold off until after Midsummers, in case anything important is decided (Hah!)
4. Whatever you think best.

Peace  
Richard



## The Epistle of Richard

(By Richard Shelton, 1976)

(Carleton Apocrypha Only)

### Chapter the First

1. Dear Reverend Brother Isaac:
2. As I read your last letter, there grew an uneasy feeling that somewhere, somehow, there has been between us a small but important failure in communication.
3. After all that several of us have written you. I am frankly amazed that you can still even suggest that any of us want to stifle your spiritual growth, or want or need to denounce or destroy those with whom we disagree. Nothing could be further from the truth.
4. The very foundation of Reformed Druidism is that each person must have the freedom to pursue his own religious inclinations. Druidism encourages people to do precisely that, and fully expects that the various paths that result will be a very diverse collection.
5. But to contain all those paths, Reformed Druidism has eschewed dogmatism and has limited formalism to a bare minimum.
6. This squares well with the sentiment (which has been present from the beginning) that formalism frequently tends to stifle spirituality.
7. So, as an institution, Reformed Druidism will offer the individual little more than encouragement and a wide variety of suggestions, from which each person must proceed in his own manner.
8. It is expected that each will in some sense go beyond what little the Reform offers as an "official line." But the specifics one brings to one's own faith will inevitably go beyond what the Reform as a whole is willing to commit itself to.
9. So you see, the uproar that followed your general letter to the Council stemmed not from disagreement with your spiritual beliefs, but rather from your suggestion that they and a great deal of formalism be adopted by the Reform as a whole, "officially," as it were.
10. That, clearly, was impossible, not only because many of us don't share these beliefs, but also because such institutionalization of belief and practice flies in the face of the generality that the Reform has always stood for.
11. It is clear that you and others do feel the need for more formalism. That's an observation, not a judgment; formalism isn't bad per se, it's just that you must watch it like a hawk, or as likely as not, it will take over.
12. But since you do feel this need, I think your schism was the right course. By institutionalizing this formalism, you have created something new that goes beyond Reformed Druidism.

## Chapter the Second

1. If I may draw an analogy. I would say that Schismatic Druidism is to you what Episcopalianism is to David Fisher; a personal path that satisfies your religious needs, and which has been influenced for you by Reformed Druidism.
2. I, too, have (or am attempting to find) a personal path that goes beyond the Basic Tenets.
3. This is not to say that you or David or I cannot be Reformed Druids; but when you do Schismatic Druidism, you are doing something different.
4. You are surely right when you say that Reformed Druidism is not a stone monument. But I don't think that the Oak is the right symbol either.
5. Reformed Druidism is really a frame of mind, more a way of looking at religion than a religion myself. To borrow an idea from Robert Graves,<sup>9</sup> Druidism is like mistletoe, grafting itself onto other, preexisting trees.
6. Thus David brings his Druidic outlook to Christianity, and you bring yours to paganism.
7. In this sense, I don't think it correct to describe Schismatic Druidism as an outgrowth or evolved form of Reformed Druidism; it is rather the result of applying Druidic ideas to the religious inclinations that you brought with you or found among other individual Druids.
8. It is true that the forms of your religion bear more resemblance to those of Reformed Druidism than to those of Christianity, but that's simply because Schismatic Druidism developed after Reformed Druidism, and in its light, while Christianity developed long before.

## Chapter the Third

1. You mention that you have encountered hostility and indifference toward your book.
2. I'm sure that some people you contacted *did* feel that you were trying to ram this down our throats, and certainly you can understand hostility in that case.
3. Also, you realize by now that Schismatic Druidism is utterly foreign to many in the Reform, and some feel that you are doing the Reform a grave disservice by publishing the *Chronicles* in the company of all this "Neo-Pagan Gobbledygook".<sup>10</sup>
4. There is fierce resentment in some quarters of the association between the terms "Druidism" and "Neopaganism" that your book will create in the minds of the publican association that saddles us with religious baggage that is not ours.
5. Your insistence on appropriating the title "*The Druid Chronicles*" does nothing to ward off that association or to alleviate the resentment.
6. Personally, I will be satisfied if you will be scrupulous in indicating who goes with what, as you have promised to be, though you can understand my concern that you describe us accurately to the world at large.
7. And as I have indicated before, I would be much happier if you could find a different title.
8. As for indifference, there are of course indifferent Druids; but some lack of enthusiasm may stem from a reluctance to shell out five bucks just to get the *Chronicles*, and with the text altered, at that. I'm afraid that is an attitude you will have to get used to.

## Chapter the Fourth

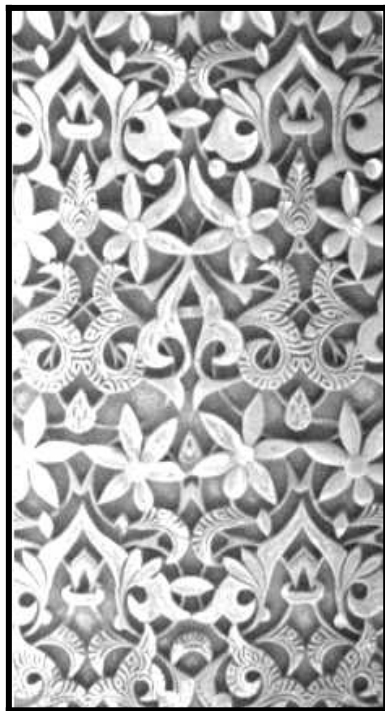
1. When the "Council of Archdruids" was proposed, we agreed to participate, but counter-proposed the title "Conspiracy of Archdruids," to keep us mindful of the implications of what we are doing. Its connotations are precisely germane to this situation.
2. Any activity, above the grove level, carried on behind the back of the Council of Dalon ap Landu (as this is) is questionable at best.
3. Even though it seeks merely to improve communication and oil the formal machinery of Druidism, such an attempt to bolster form and organization is a potential source of red tape and should be watched carefully and vigilantly.
4. And any notion that the Archdruids have any authority whatsoever to speak for the Reform is, in a word, un-Druidic, and should be firmly rejected.
5. Indeed, only after you wrote us last spring did it dawn on us how much importance you place on groves and Archdruids, as opposed to just plain old Druids.
6. Many of us do not regard grove activity as particularly important. Participation in a grove is only one way among many, even within Druidism. Being a Druid, even an active Druid, need not involve attending services of any kind.
7. And one of our concerns is that Druids not active in groves not be forgotten.

## Chapter the Fifth

1. In your draft you attribute to us "traditional" Reformed Druids the notion that it is a mistake to structure one's beliefs. I doubt many of us would go so far. If beliefs are not structured, what are they but incoherent? It is *formalization* that you will find us wary about.
2. Even so, we will not say it is a mistake for you individually to formalize *your* beliefs, whether in a Neopagan fashion or otherwise. We do not believe that Neopagan Druidism *per se* is a step backwards; we do feel that as with *any* formal religion you must be careful with it, and it does not seem to me that your position and ours on this are very different.
3. Also, we are concerned not so much with "the abuses of the sorts for which monotheistic religions are so well known" as with the stagnation of spiritual development. For the latter is by far the more serious disease, and is the one from which all the others arise.
4. (And I must say that the anti-monotheism in your book comes close to being a disease, it is certainly un-Druidic.)
5. Some of us would go further. I have observed, as a Druid and later as a priest, that for many the big step is not the formalization of belief, but rather the prior attempt to translate religious experience and emotion into belief.
6. Our rational selves seduce us into believing that spiritual experience cannot have value or "validity" (a *rational* category, after all) until it is recast into rational belief. But belief, once formulated, draws attention away from the underlying experience to its own rational claims, clamoring to be proven true or denounced as false.
7. Myth that arises from profound experience has a power to reach deep into our souls. But myth all too often congeals into belief and creed, the original experience becoming secondary and contingent upon the truth of the mythology.

8. I have come to feel that for me and many others, this process of deriving belief from religious experience is irrelevant to spiritual growth, and frequently gets in the way. Therefore it is a process I try not to perform.
9. If pressed, I might say that *I do not believe* that there is one god, or many gods, or no god, or that we cannot know whether there is a god.
10. For me, these are, in that delightful eastern phrase, "questions not tending to edification."
11. *The wind's breath catches my ear;  
I cannot speak what it says.*
12. *The hawk's flight commands my eye;  
my tongue does not read its mystery.*
13. *The oak's bough enfolds my heart,  
its incantation not mine to pronounce.*
14. *The mountain's peak exalts my very being;  
I gaze at the abyss on every side and  
wordless, shiver at my smallness and mortality.*
15. *The dark of night brings me face to face  
with the dark wisdom of the soul;  
by dawn's light I can but dimly recall it.*
16. *O tongue, where is thy subtlety!  
O word, thy mastery!*
17. *God's presence I will not speak but sing!*

Peace,  
Richard Shelton  
Arch-Druid of Ann Arbor  
[circa May 1976]



## Post Carleton Perplexations

(By Richard Shelton, 1976)

(New to ARDA 2)

### Chapter the First

1. 5 May 1976
2. Dear Dave & Dee [Frangquist]
3. I don't know how much you hear from Isaac, so I am enclosing a copy of his pamphlet and a copy of my last letter to him. It took me much longer to write the letter than I had expected, and I ended by sending only a fraction of what I had originally intended to say.
4. My main difficulty is simply that my attitude towards Isaac, and Druidism, has become so mercurial. I would like to take Isaac at his word and to believe in his basic honesty, but I cannot; it is too easy for me to read sinister intentions into his every word. That is perhaps unfair to Isaac, but I can't help it; I am not the master of my emotions.
5. And Druidism. For me at Carleton, Druidism was very easy and something I shared with many close friends. Druidism was a large part of Carleton for me, and to this day, a visit to Carleton makes me feel very Druidic.
6. But since leaving Carleton, I have become somewhat withdrawn, – and not only Druidically! – I fell no need to hold services here, and derive little benefit from them, for example. This is not to say I will not “minister unto those of her followers who have need of [my] aid,” but I don't feel the need to go questing for them.
7. When we first came to Ann Arbor, there was no question of starting a grove, since neither of us had any time. While Diana [Erbe] was here we did found a grove, with Ellen as Arch-Druid (since, ironically, it was Ellen, whose Druidism has always been very private, and who was not really part of the Carleton Druid circle while we were there, who wanted to begin services again). But when Diana left, services stopped for a while.
8. Now that my coursework is finished and our financial situation has improved to the point where Ellen no longer has to work full time, we have started holding services again. But these services are for me like pulling teeth. I feel I spend far too much time explaining what Druidism is not.
9. Perhaps this will change as the attendance stabilized, and as people (and I) learn what to expect. But I suspect that the grove will become meaningful to me only when (if) it becomes something like the Carleton grove was for me: a communion of close friends.
10. I do not yet believe that it ever will, for much the same reason that I have found other aspects of Ann Arbor uncongenial. Ann Arbor simply is not Carleton. We never see any Druids, except at services; we never see any folk-dancers, except dancing; we never see our colleagues, except at work or in class.
11. We both find this profoundly depressing. Is this the real world? Is this the way it will always be? Perhaps to hope for better is merely to hope, vainly, sadly, to recapture Carleton. And that depresses me most of all.

## Chapter the Second

1. 8 May 1976
2. Reading over what I wrote the other day, I realize I was pretty down when I wrote it. Ellen and I had a rather heated discussion (? , that the wrong word) shortly after I finished the letter to Isaac, and both of us were feeling miserable.
3. Anyway, thanks for being there to write to; curiously, though I've never met you, I feel confident that you will understand why I was so depressed and why I feel ambivalent about Druidism. There aren't many people I could write this to.
4. There remains one more thing I'd like to ask you about. It will be clear from Isaac's pamphlet that SDNA is worlds apart from what Druidism was (and I think still is) at Carleton.
5. Moreover, it is not clear just what Isaac understands his schism to be. From the pamphlet, it seems that he and his followers do not regard themselves as having left the Reform. That does not bode well, for at their current rate of growth, it will not take too long before they can command a majority in Council – and that is a spectacle I would not like to watch.
6. Can it be prevented? I have begun to doubt it, simply because the only counter-actions I can think of are all more or less un-Druidic. To wit:
7. Ask the Chairman to recognize the Schism, and sorrowfully accede to their “demand” that their names be removed from Council rolls, and not embarrass them any more with Council business. This is of course perilously close to excommunication, and flies in the face of precedent (cf. Fisher's trying to resign his orders.)
8. Adjourn the Council permanently, perhaps granting the Council of Grannos the right to choose its own Patriarchs. Perhaps also setting up some machinery for calling the Council to action in case of a real emergency (e.g. Druidism is declared the State Religion) – something like granting two Patriarchs (or the Chairman and a Patriarch) together the power to convene the Council; something strong to ensure it won't happen. This route strikes me as sort of an ostrich approach; besides, we would have to work fairly fast, since we would have trouble getting a majority (19) w/o counting on any SDNA Druids, and the size of the Council is likely to increase now that Samhradh is upon us.
9. Somehow establish firmly our principle of “rule by consensus” – to the effect that any small blocks of priests would have an effective veto on any Council business. – But I am at a loss to imagine how this might be done, though it strikes me as the most Druidic approach.
10. Am I needlessly bothered with all this? Is Isaac the demon I have come to think? (At least when I am not careful about disciplining my thoughts!) I don't know. Let me know what you think of all this. But at the same time, I do feel quite strongly about Druidism, and I strongly resent what Isaac is turning it into.
11. Perhaps it is true that Druidism (aside from Isaac's brand) can really only flourish at Carleton, and perhaps it is silly to get so upset over all this. But I am upset, and despite myself, I find myself spending an inordinate amount of time trying to salvage as much as I can.

12. But it is becoming more and more difficult, because I no longer know what I want for Druidism, and I am not sure what is reasonable to expect from Druidism.

## Chapter the Third

1. Much has happened in the last year and a half. Isaac schised, of course, and founded the Schismatic Twin Cities Grove, and another offshoot (The Hassidic Druids), also Schismatic, is reputedly being found this year in St. Louis. Berkeley, however, did not follow Isaac into schism, so I really don't know what's going on there. I don't even know whether Bob Larson is still A.D. (cf. the last page of Isaac's pamphlet.) I don't know any of the people involved in any of these groves, or even who's behind the St. Louis grove.
2. I have only just learned of the NRDNA, and of the provisional Council of A.D.'s. I know no more than is contained in the pamphlet, though I am writing to Dave Uggla for more information. I am hoping we can persuade some of these groves to drop that first N, and Ellen and I (we trade off) are willing to join any unofficial Council of A-D's for the purpose of keeping communications healthy if that will help persuade them. But we're not willing to go very much father.
3. As for the Carleton Grove: Diana did us dirty by not issuing a general letter. But she was working on a double major and was poor to boot, so I guess I can understand why she didn't. When she graduated, Don was not prepared to take on the Arch-Druidship- or hadn't returned from France yet, or something or other. I haven't asked either of them what went wrong, and it's not important.
4. But Don does want to start holding services again, so we have sent him enough to get started, and told him to ask for the Archives whenever he wants them (Steve Corey still has them!) My judgment of Don is that if it's possible at all to start it up again, then Don can do it. Don's judgment of the situation at Carleton is that the grove should have no difficulty coming back to life. And that's better news than I've had in a long time.
5. You may have wondered why the 5 copies of Chronicles I promised you from Diana never arrived. Answer: the 5<sup>th</sup> printing (and all the mimeo masters) are still hiding somewhere in the cities. Steve Corey's memory has failed him and we have looked everywhere he can think of. But: my room-mate Kelton (who lives in the cities and is our Johnnie-on-the-spot) finally has a good lead, and we are confident this one will work out.
6. Kelton has promised to write as soon as he knows. Kelton is mildly amused that we have managed to lose these so thoroughly, and is responsible for dubbing the missing Chronicles “the Dead Sea Scrolls”

## Chapter the Fourth

1. Speaking of Chronicles: did you ever register them with the Copyright Office? I know much more about copyright law than I did two years ago, and it is clear that these are in the public domain, but I would feel much safer knowing that they were registered, just in case Isaac should try to establish a copyright. (Although that's one thing I really doubt he would try.)
2. It's not clear that that Outline, Epistle of David, and Book of Faith are in the Public Domain; again I would feel happier if those were registered. Would you have any objection if I did so? Since I am not the author (keep that;

that's evidence!), such registration would not help me establish a copyright. But it would be a big obstacle to Isaac should he try to establish a copyright. [Yes, I know B of F is by Fisher; I just threw it in because it's the only other thing Isaac's printing that I am thinking of using, too.]

3. About the Apocrypha: Isaac's magnum opus includes a section entitled "Apocrypha," though the only pre-SDNA stuff therein is Outline. I would like to have available (and I have felt the need for, in trying to run a grove) Outline, Letter to my brothers, B of F, and E of Richard.
4. I have the option of sending the ones Isaac doesn't have to him for inclusion in his Apocrypha, or of publishing a Carleton Apocrypha for inclusion in his Apocrypha, or of publishing a Carleton Apocrypha myself. I would prefer the latter. What I have in mind is pretty much what I described to you in '74;
  - Book of Faith (Fisher)
  - Epistle of David to the Druids at Carleton (fisher)
  - Epistle of Jan? (Johnson, mentioned in L.C. 1<sup>st</sup> chapter)
  - Epistle of David the Chronicler (Frangquist)
  - Epistle of Richard to the Druids of Chicago (Shelton)
  - Letter to my Brothers (Savitzky)
  - The Wisdom of Thomas the Fool (McCausland)
  - Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals (Frangquist)
5. Notice the absence of the Wanderings of Oisín, which was a piece of unmitigated presumption on my part. Besides, Yeats thought of it first.
6. My original idea in publishing Apocrypha was to round out the description of the Reform in the Chronicles with some later works. I don't think that's feasible now, and in any event, it's clear that I can't speak for the Reform.
7. So my idea is now to publish a collection of Apocrypha works that originated at Carleton and are in the spirit of the Reform (without claiming anything about how they may or may not describe the Reform today).
8. In a sense, this idea is still to round out the picture given by the Chronicles, but I would take pains to indicate that this is not a "New Testament," that this is not a publication of the Reform, or even representative of the Carleton grove today, although it does tend to illustrate how much variety there has been in the Reform (at least at Carleton).
9. A word about the Epistle of Richard. Were I not Richard, I would regard Richard presumptuous for including Epistle of Richard. (Just as I regard Isaac presumptuous for including TWO Epistles of Isaac – but I think Isaac is beyond hope, and I fear his collection is too.)
10. It was written shortly after Glenn founded the Chicago grove, and as Glenn would be returning to Carleton, leaving Mike Bradley in charge, he asked me to write something about the traditions and practice of Druidism to help the grove along. The result was five rough drafts and my first serious thinking about how I saw Druidism- and a lot of frustration for not being able to say exactly what it meant.
11. In the end I went myself to Chicago, and the letter was never written. But the drafts stayed in my files, and I found them particularly, in training new priests, and I have spent much time recently revising them, so that I think it has become a fairly good description of Carleton style Druidism. And since that's what I would like to establish

here, I would like to have this available, since it is much better than Isaac's pamphlet, regardless of what I said in my letter to Isaac.

12. So, could I ask of you:
13. Tell me what you think of publishing Apocrypha at all.
14. Let me know what you think of the stuff I sent you: in particular, comment on the accuracy of David's letter.
15. Send me a copy of Epistle of David the Chronicler, if you think it would go well here (send one anyway, I'd like to see it)
16. Let me know if you mind my printing this stuff.
17. (If you sent a letter after the one dated 3 Sep 74, it miscarried. If you didn't – well, Druids are like that!)
18. Green Book: With Isaac prodding us, we finally got around to sending out a request for permission to print the various selections that are not yet Public Domain, but have not heard from everyone yet. Peter Pauper wanted to charge us \$110, until we pleaded poverty ourselves, and pointed out what a small and profitless venture this is!

## Chapter the Fifth

1. Last Minute notes: received today a card from Isaac and a letter from Don. Isaac promises to write more later, but it seems that he may change the title after all (to Druid's Compendium, largely, I suspect because "Compendium" has the same number of letters as "Chronicles" so that previously set material can be changed with minimum effort)
2. Don writes that the Beltane service was snowed out, and that Isaac and company will be coming down this coming Sunday instead. By that time, Don will have a bonafide grove started – he already has one 2<sup>nd</sup> order and perhaps by Sunday another. You might enjoy the following, which Don sent for my delectation. It is from the service Isaac wants to use for this service.
  - Many a gallant Pagan fought,
  - Many a gallant Witch did burn;
  - Priest and Priestess, both have sought,
  - To sing the prayers Ye canna spurn!
3. This seems to be a song, perhaps one of those the pamphlet says is so important for SDNA. Next question: do they take it seriously?
4. Oh, yes – this coming June 18-20 (coincidentally Alumni Weekend) the folk dancers of my era (and somewhat before and after) have planned a big folk-dance reunion bash at Carleton. It's turning into a Druid reunion too since from Steve Savitzky onwards, most of us are dancers.
5. And the 20<sup>th</sup> is Midsummer's Eve this year, so I thought "let's have a midsummer's service- after all how often do you get 10 third orders together at once!" Then discovered that Don will be at Carleton all summer, so will have a lot of time to talk, since we will be on campus those full 3 days, maybe more. (Moreover, Don is also a dancer, which I hadn't known.)
6. So we've invited TC grove down as well to show them Carleton Druidism in force. Unfortunately, Isaac will have returned to Berkeley by then.
7. Well, I had better cut this off or you'll never get it. Thanks for a pair of shoulders to cry on. And please write.

Peace, Richard

# The First Epistle of Robert

(By Robert Larson, 1976)

(New to ARDA 1)

## Chapter the First

1. Dear Siblings in the Earth-Mother,
2. Now that Brother Isaac has gotten off his duff, it is time for me to do the same. I have been waiting for the publication of the expanded works of Druidism to send this letter, and now that this event is imminent, I feel that it is time to do some organizational work and mayhap some fence-mending. To these ends this missive is addressed.

## Chapter the Second: Personal

1. From my communications with Isaac, it would seem that he has stirred up a minor hornet's nest with his proposals. Good. That was the intent. Now that he has you thinking about the RDNA as more than a quaint club and has you concerned (or so I hope) about its future, perhaps something can be accomplished.
2. Unfortunately, I get the impression that some of you regard our moves as a power play and a perversion of the Reform. As far as I am concerned (and, I am sure, Isaac), nothing could be farther from the truth.
3. Some of you may have also reached the conclusion that Brother Isaac and I agree on the ideas that he has presented. Again, not so.
4. Isaac has a touch of the zealot in his makeup (sorry, Isaac, but it's true, you know). Though he keeps it under control, he is much the activist.
5. I, on the other hand, am more conservative and concentrate on personal mysticism. Let me take the main areas of disagreement that have arisen among us and state my views on the questions.

## Chapter the Third: What is Reformed Druidism?

1. Above all, it is different things to different people. Rather than supplying a set theology, mythos, ethos, or whatever, Druidism supplies a basis from which each individual Druid defines his own mythos, ethos, etc.
2. This very characteristic is what sets us apart from most other "odd-ball" groups. In a way, we are a religion, since we worship certain vague deities in or rituals, but most things that distinguish a religion, such as set dogmas, are lacking in Druidism and should remain so.
3. Rather than looking upon Druidism as a religion or a philosophy, let us look upon it as a way to achieve or augment a religion or philosophy.
4. Druidism is neither polytheistic nor monotheistic; if anything, it is vaguely pantheistic. Most of the early members of the Reform were either Christian, like the First Patriarch, or agnostic.
5. What they held in common was a commitment to the search for "truth" and a belief that "truth" must come to

each from within rather than being forced upon one from without.

6. For these reasons, I am opposed to Isaac's attempted redefinition of Druidism as "pagan," though I can see practical advantages and despite my personal pagan orientation.
7. Though I have found much personal religious truth and experience in my researches into Celtic (especially Irish) paganism and mythology, these are my "trip" and I have no wish to impose it on others.
8. Emotionally I am drawn to Isaac's proposition, for many of the groups he mentions have views very similar to that of Druidism, but I consider such a definition as over-restrictive for Reformed Druidism as a whole. For individual Druids and groves, however, it's a different matter.

## Chapter the Fourth: Organization

1. By the reaction to Isaac's proposals it would seem that the fiercely individualistic spirit of the Reform is still alive and well in many of us. We remain mavericks, though it is to be hoped that we have mellowed a bit with age.
2. The organization, however, is sick.
3. For this sickness we all must bear some blame. We've gone our individual ways and failed to keep in touch. Though natural, this lack of communication and the intermittent nature of the Carleton grove have combined to yield a total lack of cohesion.
4. Most members of the Council of Dalon ap Landu are known to each other by name at best, and at times it's been impossible to register new members due to the Carleton grove's being in a state of suspended non-animation. Obviously, such a state cannot be allowed to continue if the Reform is to regain its health.
5. The council of Archdruids is an attempt to alleviate these problems. As I have been tentatively appointed chief of the council for its First year of existence, it behooves me to delineate what I hope and expect the council to be and do.
6. The main task of the Council of Archdruids will be the maintenance of communications between groves. The council's duties will be primarily organizational.
7. "Theology" will remain the province of the full Council of Dalon ap Landu. Since it is virtually impossible to get anything through the full council, we may expect nothing in the way of change in the basis of the Reform.
8. However, increased communication should lead to increased cohesion and understanding and, hopefully, new ways to "awareness" for us as we exchange ideas.
9. To increase communication, I propose that the chief of the Council of Archdruids write at least one report a year detailing the state of the Reform in each of the groves. To do this, he will, of course, need information from each of the groves.
10. Therefore, each member of the Council of Archdruids should be required to write at least one report a year on the state of his grove to the chief of the council, who would correlate these reports into the general report.
11. Eventually, I would like to see the council operate as a clearinghouse for organizational problems of groves, favorite meditations, philosophy, and general Druidical ravings, but first we must achieve the communication.

12. I suggest Samhain as an appropriate time for the general report and a month earlier for the reports of the individual Archdruids to the chief. This year let us get an idea of the problems we may have to resolve. All Archdruids will receive a note from me in September to request a report. Next year we'll try to get this thing really off the ground.
13. Since the Council of Archdruids will not concern itself with policy decisions, I see no reason for any Arch-Druid to remain out of it, be he RDNA, NRDNA, or SDNA and I suggest that the general report be sent to all Archdruids whether they have declared themselves in on the council or not, and whether or not they have sent in reports. If they don't want to read it, they can throw it away. Though addressed to Archdruids, this report would be available to any Third Order Druid on request for the cost of printing and postage.
14. The Council of Archdruids could also provide a safeguard against the failure or suspension of the Carleton grove. Each Arch-Druid should report new ordinations to the chief of the Council of Archdruids as well as to the Arch-Druid of Carleton, thus giving us a backup list of members of the full Council of Dalon ap Landu.
15. In case of suspension of activities by the Carleton grove, the chief of the council of Archdruids could temporarily become head of the Council of Dalon ap Landu until such time as the Carleton grove should be reconstituted. Thus, proposals to the full council could be made and votes taken even should the Carleton grove be in abeyance.
16. Since some apocrypha have not been sent to all priests, I would suggest that all new apocrypha be sent to the chief of the council, too, for distribution to the various groves, so that at least the most active members of the priesthood would have them.
17. The chieftainship of the Council of Archdruids would rotate yearly among the Archdruids of all established groves in order of seniority. However, the chieftainship should be restricted to Archdruids of groves that have been in continuous operation for at least three years. At present, this order would be Berkeley, Stanford, Chicago; though by the time Chicago's period of office was up other Archdruids could be eligible.
18. Due to the intermittent history of the Carleton grove and the responsibilities of the Archdruid both to the full council and to studies, it might be advisable to skip Carleton in the succession. In fact, any Arch-Druid who felt unable or uninclined to accept the chieftainship should be allowed to pass it on to the next on the list.
19. Within the Council of Archdruids, each Arch-Druid would have an equal voice and each grove would retain its autonomy.
20. If a grove chooses to declare itself pagan, Buddhist, Jewish, Episcopalian, or even Pentecostal, that's its right and its own business, though it should be made clear that it's the individual grove's orientation, not that of Druidism in general.
21. If we ever got as big as the Catholic church (fat chance), it would be nice to be able to say to someone who did not like one grove, "Well, try the one down the trail a ways, they're on a different trip."
22. Within the basic tenets of the Reform, all sorts of development are possible and desirable. The more ways we develop, the more we will be able to offer those who cannot find their "awareness" within the context of the standard religions.
23. To paraphrase Mao Tse-Tung, let a thousand branches grow from the oak trunk of the reform.
24. But for the Mother's sake, let's keep the branches connected to the trunk.
25. Go mbeannai an Mhathair sibh go leir. (May the Mother bless all of you.) I look forward to your comments, ideas, and Bronx cheers.

Yours-in-the-Mother,  
 Siocháin (Peace)  
 Robert G. Larson,  
 Arch-Druid, Berkeley Grove  
 May 26th, 1976 c.e.

## The Second Epistle of Ellen

(By Ellen Conway Shelton, 1976)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA
2. COUNCIL OF DALON AP LANDU
3. 29 Samradh XIV/ 29 May 1976
4. Dear Reverend Brother Robert [Larson],
5. We were delighted to receive your letter yesterday, especially as I had been meaning to write you very soon to inquire into the difference between RDNA and NRDNA. It seems, from the little information we've received about it, that NRDNA differs only in an expressed concern for organization. True?
6. It is most certainly true that the original Reform did not expect such growth and scattering, and did not provide a framework for handling such diversity, so that it is very difficult now for any individual to know what the Druidic climate is like beyond his or her own grove and circle of correspondents.
7. But, please, don't equate the Reform with its organization! ("The organization... is sick. ... such as state cannot be allowed to continue if the Reform is to regain its health.") The organization has never been the important part of Druidism. So long as it provides a means of helping people in their search for awareness, the Reform is healthy.
8. Communication is a convenience and proselytization is an option, but if I choose to develop quietly by introspection and to write privately to my friends, I am as much an active Druid- and, I believe, contribute as much to the Reform - as if I broadcast my views to the entire Council of Dalon Ap Landu.
9. However, I do agree that it is important to have a central source of information. By council resolution of 20 April 66, this is the responsibility of the Arch-Druid of Carleton, just as it is for the responsibility of the other Arch-Druids to send in the information necessary for maintaining the records.
10. But since Glenn announced Renny's election as his successor, no Arch-Druid (and there has always been one) has received anything to report - so it is evident that the existence even of a permanent center of communications has not been enough to get people to communicate even the existence of new groves and new priests. So I am somewhat dubious of the likely effectiveness of a rotating center.



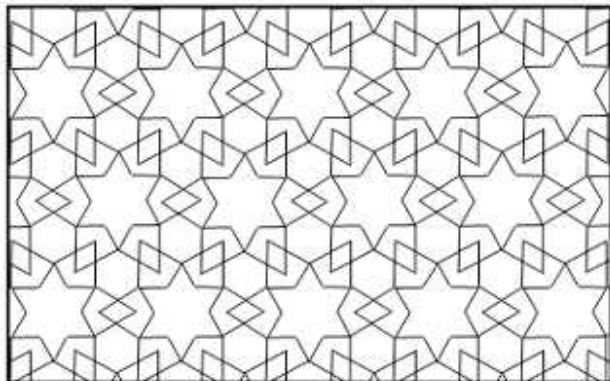
11. Nevertheless, both Dick and I would be willing to participate in an unofficial Conspiracy of Arch-Druids – and given the universally acknowledged difficulty of getting anything through Council, it does not seem likely the Conspiracy could ever become official.
12. We would be perfectly willing also to serve as Chair (Chief Conspirator?) on our turn in the rotation. As long as Arch-Druids are free to pass up the Chair if they lack the time or inclination, the Carleton grove should definitely not be left out of the rotation.
13. In fact, the Conspiracy's report would only be necessary if the current AD of C neglected to send his/hers (presumably this worthy fellow could be persuaded to state his/her intentions to the Conspiracy).
14. All of the groves which enter the Conspiracy should undertake to maintain a complete set of the general reports, so that the revolution of the Chair would not involve entrusting any archival material to the mails. This duplication of records should also increase the chances of this stuff reaching Posterity.
15. I look forward to hearing your reactions to all this, and hope you can include an explanation of the differences between NRDNA and RDNA. I am also curious to know what sort of information you are considering including in a report of the state of a grove; and I would like to pool ideas on how not to leave out Druids (of all orders) who are not currently affiliate with groves.

Peace

Ellen Conway Shelton

Arch-Druid Emeritus (Emerita??) of Ann Arbor

Cc: Chairman, Patriarchs, Arch-Druids.



# Felicitous Communications

(By Deborah and David Frangquist, 1976)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. 8 June 1976
2. Zweibruecken, Germany
3. Dear Dick and Ellen [Shelton],
4. Yes, we are still here. We must have a lot people wondering, though. Please rest assured that although we never write anybody (and I do mean anybody), we remain just as interested in Druidism as ever.
5. We are not now actively engaged in trying to form new groves or win new “converts,” and like Fisher, our spiritual interests have taken a decidedly Christian turn, but we continue to consider ourselves Druids and value Druidism as a strong antidote for the kind of simplistic thinking most people engage in.
6. Following a flurry of activity a year and a half ago, when we were so concerned about Isaac’s schism nonsense and about copyrights, we researched copyright law and found that there was nothing to worry about. In fact, it is clear that the Chronicles could not now be registered since they were published without a copyright notice.
7. So once there was no immediate crisis, we slipped into our usual slothful habits. No, there is not some other letter lost in the mail since ’74. Perhaps it is a good thing you sent us those extra copies of the Chronicles, though. If they are now needed at Carleton, we can send them back.
8. We are glad to be able serve as shoulders to lean on. Even though we have never met you, we sense more and more that we are really kindred spirits.
9. Unfortunately, we are not felling very encouraging right now. Yes, the real world really is like that. Yes, there really is no place quite like Carleton, or at least we haven’t found it. Your lament sounds sadly like the things we have said to each other on many occasions.
10. We have had many long discussions trying to figure out how to recapture some of that Carleton atmosphere, or even how to identify Carleton type people out here in the world. We haven’t found any very good solutions, but we have resolved that when we get back to the states, we will make every effort to look you guys up.
11. We thank you very much for keeping us informed of Isaac’s activities. We have the feeling that there must have been some letters of his that we never got, and we were a little in the dark at first this spring as to what he was doing.
12. We are probably not as concerned about him as you are, although we get frustrated and maddened by his obvious lack of stylistic sensitivity and good sense. But we generally feel that if he has captured any of the essence of Druidism, it will come out in the end; and if he has not, then people will get bored with him. But keep up the fight.
13. This letter would have been longer, but we put most of our effort into composing the accompanying epistle. It is intended to be read aloud at your Midsummer Bash. We hope it helps. We hesitate to promise to write again soon, but we do have good intentions.

Peace  
Dave & Dee [Frangquist]

# The Epistle of Midsummer

(By David & Deborah Frangquist, 1976)

(Carleton Apocrypha Only)

An Epistle to the Druids assembled at Carleton

On the Occasion of Midsummer

In the Fourteenth Year after the Establishment of the Reform

## Chapter the First

1. Greetings and salutations in the name of the Earth-Mother; may she always nourish you from her bounty.
2. And may the radiance of Belenos brighten your spirits, and may he give you strength from his power, on this his greatest day.
3. It gives us great pleasure to greet you today, especially because you are gathered at that great and hallowed seat of Reformed Druidism; Carleton.
4. For us, Carleton and Druidism are inextricably intermixed. We cannot say which has made the greater contribution to the other for us; Druidism to the fond memories we have of Carleton, or Carleton and its very atmosphere to the delights we found in the Druid experience.
5. We have not met you face to face. Yet were we present there with you today, and it saddens us that we are not, we would meet as old friends. For we have sat under the same trees on the same hilltops at Carleton, and there we have met each other in the Mother.
6. But chiefly we are pleased to greet you for the mere fact that you are there to be greeted.
7. In the early days of the Reform, we took no thought for the future. We did not dream that Druidism would touch the lives of so many, nor last for so long.
8. We sought only to proclaim the Mother and assert our right to do so.
9. When we paid least attention to finding new Druids, new Druids found us.
10. While we gave little thought to organizing, an organization appropriate to our needs evolved.
11. When rules were changed and our very reason for being seemed to vanish, we turned to the Mother and in her we found new meaning.
12. There is a paradox; if you would seek to save Druidism, you will lose it; but if you seek the Mother and what she can teach you, Druidism will grow and prosper to her glory and to your benefit.

## Chapter the Second

1. We would do well to remember this in these days. For word has come to us on the wings of great birds that once again the Reform is threatened with schism.
2. This is no new thing. You may read in the Early Chronicles how at the very dawn of the Reform there was the threat of schism.

3. The schismatics were then led by Jan [Johnson], who wished to impose on other Druids practices and doctrines which were repugnant to them.
4. But Jan had the Mother in his heart, and he did relent that there might be no schism but rather peace and unity in the fellowship of the Druids.
5. Thus he demonstrated the true spirit of the Reform and established a tradition far more important than those he had first sought to establish.
6. Therefore seek peace, harmony, consensus, unity; for that is the Druid way.

### Chapter the Third

1. You may ask; "Should we include these schismatics in the fellowship of the Reform?" You cannot do otherwise.
2. Druidism is open to anyone who wishes to be part of it, however imperfect in understanding. We require only the tasting of the waters-of-life and an affirmation of the Basic Tenets.
3. No one can add any other test. No one can add to the Basic Tenets. [Law 4-6 -Ed.]
4. We are given to understand that these schismatics use words like "outsider" in their writings. That is an error. The words "outsider" and "insider" have no meaning for Reformed Druids. You cannot exclude anyone.
5. You may ask: "Were there not Anti-Druids?" Indeed there were, and likely are, and no doubt will be.
6. They are distinguished by their acts of violence against Druidism and their complete lack of understanding of Druidism.
7. They are Anti-Druids by their own choice; they have not been excluded by the Druids. Anyone may exclude himself from the fellowship of the Druids, but you must not sit in judgment.
8. There is no need to name the Anti-Druids (they were not named in the *Chronicles*), but you will know them when they appear.
9. Again: you cannot exclude anyone. Whoever would exclude others is excluded.
10. You may ask; "Should we recognize the orders of the schismatics?" Do they recognize yours?
11. All who have vigated on the bosom of the Earth-Mother, who have tasted the waters-of-life, who have inscribed the Basic Tenets on their hearts, and who have received their orders from the hands of an Arch-Druid in the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, they are priests of Dalon Ap Landu.
12. All such persons you should recognize as priests, provided only that they also recognize all others.

### Chapter the Fourth

1. You may ask; "Is it not possible that the Council could become perverted and transform Druidism so that we could not recognize it?" But what authority does the Council have except what all Druids accept?
2. If the Council does what glorifies the Mother, what establishes unity and harmony among Druids, and what promotes enlightenment, then rejoice in the work of the Council and do not concern yourselves with factions.
3. But if the Council does what does not glorify the Mother, what causes dissension and conflict, and what becomes a

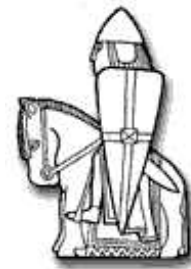
stumbling-block for Druids, then it is not the True Council. Then the Council will have passed away.

4. For it is an institution and like all institutions it will pass away, though we know not whether the time be near or far. And when it passes away, do not grieve for it, but rejoice in the Mother who will abide.
5. And do not be concerned for the future of the Druids, for they too will abide, at least for a time. Even so, the Mother will be glorified in new and wondrous ways, for she is ever changing even as she remains the same.
6. You may ask; "How can we preserve the True Council?" That is a question not tending to edification.

### Chapter the Fifth

1. Therefore, have hope, glorify the Mother, greet each other in her name, quarrel not, seek enlightenment, and remain steadfast in the Reform.
2. Then the Mother will renew and refresh you, and sustain you and grant you her peace.

*David Frangquist Deborah Gavrin Frangquist  
Priest of Dalon Ap Landu Priest of Dalon Ap Landu  
Patriarch of Belenos Priest of Belenos*  
[Circa June 21st, 1976 c.e -Ed.]



# The Second Epistle of Robert

(By Robert Larson, 1976)

(New to ARDA 1)

## Chapter the First

1. Dear Siblings-in-the-Mother:
2. Enclosed you will find a Xerox of the final version of the evolved works of Druidism. Except for a few illustrations, this copy is complete. Please make your corrections as soon as possible and return them to me by July 20 at the latest.
3. Since we have included something to offend almost everyone, objections to content will not be considered; the only corrections made will be those pertaining to fact and general proofreading.....
4. [Followed by visual description of DC(E).]

## Chapter the Second

1. ...I wish to take this opportunity to answer some questions which were raised by my last missive.
2. Brother Shelton suggests "Conspiracy of Archdruids" as a title for the provisional council.
3. While I feel this title to be in keeping with the self-mocking style of Druidism, I also feel that the word "Conspiracy" has implications and connotations contrary to the aims of the council (at least as I seem them). Therefore, I intend to continue to call it the Provisional Council of Archdruids.

## Chapter the Third

1. As far as the "sexist" language issue is concerned, I tend to agree with Dick, being what our late unlamented president would call a "strict constructionist" in the matter of language. What we are seeing now is egalitarian euphemism similar to the sexual euphemism of Victorian times, and I feel that it too will disappear as its causes disappear.
2. In many cases, it's a good example of not being able to see the forest for the trees.
3. However we are living in the present, and it behooves us to bend to the winds of the present.
4. "'Our predecessors of old did take up the sword and fight with those who afflicted them, but they were defeated. Wherefore, we must not take up the sword, but remain tolerant and patient in our afflictions that there might be peace.'"

## Chapter the Fourth

1. Sister Shelton implies in her letter that there is little real need for the Provisional Council, as most of my proposed functions are supposed to be taken care of by the Arch-Druid of Carleton. True, with emphasis on the "supposed."
2. The Provisional Council may well become a "goosing" agency more than anything else. I have never maintained that there was a spiritual malaise in Druidism, only that its organizational structure was not all that could be desired.

3. The Provisional Council is an attempt to resurrect Druidism as an organization (or disorganization). I would also point out that in the years to come, most new priests will probably not be ordained from the Carleton grove, but from one of the other groves. It's a simple matter of arithmetic.
4. The Provisional Council will, I feel, give these new priests more of a feeling of belonging and access to other Druids. Talking with your Arch-Druid is a lot easier than trying to communicate by letter either directly or through the Carleton grove.
5. With an effective council of Archdruids, each Arch-Druid will have input from all the groves to enable him to advise and give answers to other Druids and those who are interested in Druidism, so that it won't be a matter of "Well, this is the way we think here."
6. Nor do I wish to rule out input from Druids not associated with a grove. Input from all Druids would be welcomed. However, since the Provisional Council will address itself mainly to the organizational problems of groves, input from grove members or those who have tried to organize grove, whether successful or not, would be particularly valuable.

## Chapter the Fifth

1. Sister Shelton also asks what would be included in the proposed grove reports. Most of the information would have to do with size, frequency of services, problems encountered, solutions, orientation, etc. Any special services which an Arch-Druid wishes to communicate to other Archdruids could also be included.
2. Lastly, there would be a place for Druidic ravings on such subjects as "Whither Reformed Druidism?", "What should the RDNA be as an organization?", etc. These suggested topics for ravings (not a complete list) will accompany my request for a grove report, which you should receive in late August.

## Chapter the Sixth

1. Finally, in answer to Brother Morrison, I will now relate this incredibly ancient Druid fable which I have just written.
2. Ahem.
3. Once in the long ago there were three Druids, and very fine Druids they were, too. It came to pass that each of them inherited a piece of land with a large rock on it.
4. Now the First of these Druids went to his land and looked at his rock and immediately fell in love with it.
5. To make his rock even more beautiful he fell to rubbing and buffing it until it bore a bright polish.
6. Every day he would rub and buff it till it almost outshone the sun, so bright it was.
7. The people who lived nearby would often come to see the rock and say what a wonderful, bright rock it was being.
8. Now eventually the Druid died and went to the Sidhe hills as all good Druids do. But the wind and rain did not die.
9. Slowly it was that the rock lost its polish, but lose it it did. No longer did the people come to see the rock, now neither wonderful nor bright, for of what interest is a mere rock, except to geologists?

10. The second of the Druids went to his land and looked at his rock and thought what a wonderful statue his rock would make.
11. So he took a hammer and chisel and carved a statue of his god out of it. Paint he put on his statue, and gold and jewels also, until it looked exactly like his idea of his god. And the people who lived both near and far came to marvel at the statue and worship at it, saying such things as "You could swear that it's alive, that it's being."
12. To which the Druid would reply, "It is."
13. Eventually the second Druid too died and went to the Sidhe hills where all good Druids go. But the wind and rain did not die, nor did human nature change.
14. Thieves came and stripped the statue of its gold and its jewels. Wind and rain completed the destruction, until the statue once again resembled nothing so much as a rock.
15. And the people stopped coming to marvel and to worship, for, after all, who wants to worship a rock after he's had the most wonderful statue in the world?
16. The Third Druid went to his land and looked at his rock. Then he climbed upon it and looked about him, liking what he saw.
17. He planted flowers, trees and bushes about the rock and lichen on it. Every day he would herd his cows and sheep on the land about the rock, sitting on or resting against it.
18. As time went by, the flowers, the bushes and trees grew and the lichen covered the rock, giving the Druid an even more beautiful view and a softer seat to watch his herds from.
19. So beautiful did the Druid's land become, that people came from far and near to sit with him and watch the deer and fox play and the flowers bloom, for it was said to be the most beautiful and peaceful place in the world.
20. The time came when the third Druid died and went to the Sidhe hills where all good Druids go. But the flowers did not stop growing, nor did the bushes and trees and lichen.
21. Still did the deer and fox play in the Druid woods, and still were cows and sheep herded about the rock.
22. The Druid's name was forgotten, but some people still came to sit on his rock and look at his woods, for it was yet the most beautiful and peaceful place in the world.
23. And so it remains to this day.
24. Beannachtai na Mathar libh. Síocháin

Robert, ArchDruid, Berkeley Grove

28 Mean Samhraidh, 14 y.r.

(July 2nd, 1976 c.e.)



## The Second Epistle of Isaac

(By Isaac Bonewits, 1976)

[A Discourse by Isaac on his **personal**  
understanding of Magick]

(Berkeley Apocrypha Only)

### Chapter the First:

#### The Baby and the Bath Water

1. Sisters and brothers, the purpose of this missive is to make clear some matters concerning the subjects of Theology (the study of more than one God) and Hierurgy (the practice of sacred workings) insofar as they relate to ritual.
2. For there appears to be a great deal of ignorance about these subjects among Reformed Druids and more than a little hostility towards the very existence of ritual at all.
3. And this is understandable from those who have been raised in a monotheistic culture, especially since the religious leaders of that culture long ago lost what knowledge they once had about the proper use and purpose of ritual.
4. So that today the rituals of the Established Religions of the West have almost no power and very little positive use; but on the contrary, have been perverted into tools of manipulation and tyranny.
5. Now since all of us growing up in monotheistic cultures have been taught from birth that the only "real" religions are the Western ones, and since it has always been made deliberately difficult for us to get accurate information about non-western religions, we have naturally tended to reject the non-monotheistic religions we do not know along with the monotheistic ones we are familiar with.
6. This shortsightedness has been planned, for the powers that we would rather have us as atheists and agnostics rather than as non-monotheists, for thus we are still playing their game by their rules.
7. Also as intellectuals, we have been raised to have a knee-jerk reaction to such terms as "Magic," "the occult," "ritualism," "the supernatural," etc., so that we can only think about these subjects in the ways that we are supposed to.
8. For a full understanding of these terms by intellectuals, and eventually large numbers of other people, would spell the death of organized Western religion (though it would have little effect on the non-monotheistic systems).
9. *What I have to say in this Epistle are, of course, only my opinions.* {Emphasis added by Editor} But they are the opinions gathered from a career of studying many forbidden subjects and learning to think that which a Westerner is not supposed to be able to think.
10. For I have studied magical, religious and psychical phenomena from all around the world and have learned that the overwhelming majority of cultures in which these strange beliefs and occurrences appear happen to agree upon the same basic theories of magic and religion.

11. Granted, the explanations offered by these non-western thinkers may seem a little strange to Western philosopher and theologians, as well as their students, but historically speaking it is the Western monotheistic thinkers who are out-of-step.
12. And I will submit that monotheism, far from being the crown of human thought and religion, as its supporters have claimed for several bloody millennia, is in fact a monstrous step backwards, a step that has been responsible for more human misery than any other idea in known history.
13. And I will suggest that, in rejecting all religion and ritual because of disgust with the only religions known to you, the monotheistic ones, some of you have thrown out the baby with the bathwater; just as you were supposed to do.
14. And I will further ask you, sisters and brothers, to read my words with as open of minds as you can, for whether you wind up agreeing with me or not is really not important; but you will at least understand my motivations and concepts, and those of my colleagues in the Neopagan movements.
15. Perhaps you will come to understand that we are not irrational, anti-intellectual, "back to the caves" fanatics, but that rather our philosophies are the equal in complexity to any ever invented in the West.

## Chapter the Second:

### Reality and Non-Reality

1. In order to understand the original ideas behind most magical and religious rituals, one must begin with the fact that the Gods are real.
2. Their type of reality is not that of a block of wood or of anything physical that we are familiar with, but a kind of reality it is nonetheless.
3. This may seem somewhat confusing to the dualists among us, so I will attempt to explain this rather complex matter.
4. The theological system that framed the philosophical structure of Western Civilization and conditioned westerners as to what was logically thinkable, is basically a "conditionally monotheistic dualism."
5. That is to say, while claiming to be monotheistic, it is in fact *polytheistic*, with the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost, Mary and Satan (Allah and Shaitan, in Islam) as the major deities, with a host of lesser deities called Saints, Demons and Angels, all of whom are divided into two grand armies: the Good Guys and the Bad Guys.
6. Dualism is the metaphysical view that the cosmos is divided into two irreconcilable forces, usually described as Good and Evil; frequently, it is stated that the Good God is the God of the Spirit (and therefore everything nonmaterial is good, except of course the Bad God and his minions, who are also spirits) and the Bad God is the God of the Material World (and therefore everything material and fleshly, including all the female deities of the Earth, such as our Earth-Mother is irretrievably evil).
7. Unlike the Oriental systems, there is no overlap between Good and Evil, White and Black, Light and Darkness.
8. Now while Western theology claims that Satan/Shaitan is weaker than Jehovah/Allah, nevertheless, in their day-to-day statements, most Western theologians ascribe to the Bad God all the miraculous powers usually ascribed to the Good God (or his representatives, such as Jesus or

Mohammed); in order to be able to explain the "counterfeit miracles" performed by the members of other faiths.

9. It is obvious to any Pagan theologian that Western theology is basically dualistic, with the forces of Good and Evil pretty much evenly balanced; it is equally obvious that these theologians managed to force Western philosophy and metaphysics to become strictly dualistic as well.
10. Pushing Aristotle (and later Descartes) as the supreme logician, Western theologians created a worldview in which every object of perception or conception was either Good or Evil, True or False, Right or Wrong, White or Black, Real or Unreal.
11. The entire cosmos was sliced into two warring halves, and whoever refused to accept this worldview was automatically ascribed to the Evil half and executed as a menace to civilization.
12. All of this, mind you, is somewhat different from the views that have been held by 99% of the human race, throughout history, and probably for a million years before history began.
13. Polytheists have a tendency to develop logical systems based on "multiple levels of reality" and on the magical Law of Infinite Universes: "every sentient being lives in a unique Universe."
14. What is true for one person in one situation may not be true for another person in a different situation, or even for the *same* person in a different situation.
15. 'Truth' is defined as a function of convenience (the magical Law of Pragmatism, also used in most engineering and scientific activity: "if it works, it's true"); Truth does not exist in a comprehensible form as an eternal essence.
16. The simplest example of this is your favorite table: slam your fist down on it.
17. After yelling with pain, you will notice that, on the level of ordinary mundane reality, that table is quite solid.
18. Yet we all know that, on another level of reality (one we all believe in, even though we've never seen an atom), that table is 99.9999% empty space, as is your hand.
19. For the table is simultaneously solid and not solid, depending upon which level of reality we care to consider.
20. A beautiful perfume in my universe may be a terrible stench in yours; to a colorblind person, red and green may appear the same; sound is a false concept to a person born deaf, he or she has to be taught to perceive that which does not exist to his or her senses.
21. The wonderful theories of relativity being so proudly produced by modern physicists were known millennia ago by Pagan philosophers and mystics; the only reason relativity came as such a shock to our scientists was because the Western worldview does not allow for ambiguity or relativity, everything is either Absolutely Eternally True or Absolutely Eternally False ("He who is not with me is against me," "The lukewarm I vomit forth from my mouth," "Kill them all, God will know His own," etc.).
22. This is not the place for an extensive theological analysis of Western Religion; but it is necessary to point out these matters rather bluntly, in order to allow one to think the unthinkable by reasoning out that which Aristotle says is impossible to reason out.

## Chapter the Third:

### The Reality of the Gods

1. Now, with the preceding background, we may come to the fascinating point where metaphysical relativity intersects the realm of theology (one may use the term "polytheology" if the slight change in the usual spelling of "theology" is upsetting).
2. For the Gods are both real and unreal, "true" and "false," depending upon which level of reality one cares to deal with.
3. Taranis, for example, is on the physical level merely a quaint myth of our Celtic ancestors.
4. On the euhemeristic level, He may be the memory of a once famous and powerful warrior and weather magician.
5. On the intellectual level, He is an Archetype of thunder and lightening, as are Thor, Perkunas, Indra, Perun, the Thunderbird, and other deities.
6. But what if you invoke Taranis several times to start storms and *each time you get a storm?*
7. You must then face the fact that, on *some* poorly understood level of reality, Taranis is a real, living entity, one you can interact with.
8. I would say that Taranis is, in fact, like all gods and goddesses, a powerful Archetype in the collective unconscious of humanity; this collective unconscious (Jung's term) is what I have called elsewhere "The Switchboard" (in *Real Magic*), C. Taliesin Edwards (the leading theologian in the Neopagan movements has called "The Da Mind" (in his *Essays Towards a Metatheology of the Goddess*), and that others have called by a variety of names.
9. I would assure you that this gigantic interlocking net of Archetypes *exists* on what, for lack of a better term, has been called the *psychic* level (or sometimes the "spiritual" level, but that term tends to confuse matters more than it helps).
10. It is the source of the divine power used in *all* religious rituals, including those of the monotheists who think they are communicating with a Supreme Being.
11. Further details can be found in the above cited writings, but for now let it suffice to say that *all* the Gods and Goddesses, Angels, Demons, Saints, Avatars, Buddhas, etc., *exist*, they are real.
12. They exist as, if nothing else, many powerful circuits of psychic energy in a gigantic web linking every living sentient being on this planet Earth.
13. And although it became fashionable in Western Religion to promote local tribal gods to the rank of Supreme Being (through a process known as *hyperapotheosis* or "The Palestinian Heresy"), most theologians would insist that the Most High God/ess is only a distant parent to the Gods and Goddesses of Earth, no matter how grand the claims of religious partisans.

## Chapter the Fourth:

### Earthly Deities and the Supreme Being

1. Followers of Reformed Druidism who are horrified by being associated with Paganism will be surprised to learn that traditional Pagan attitudes towards a Supreme Being

are highly similar to those held by most Reformed Druids towards Be'al.

2. Most Paleopagan and Neopagan systems of theology tend towards a belief that the High God or High Goddess lives very far away and is not concerned with the actions of mortals; although He/She/It may have been the original parent of the tribal Gods, nonetheless, the High God/dess is not usually described in anthropomorphic way.
3. The Most High God/dess is neither male, nor female, nor even neuter; He/She/It has no human emotions or other characteristics whatsoever.
4. In accord with the mystics from around the world, theologians will assert that any statement made about the Most High God/dess is bound to be incorrect, simply because He/She/It is Infinite and human minds (no matter how "divinely inspired" they may think they are) are all too finite.
5. Human languages are not equipped to deal with Infinity; neither are human emotions.
6. The Gods and Goddesses of Earth, on the other hand, *are* anthropomorphic, they laugh and cry, become angry or vengeful, feel love and hate, can be tricked and taught, send mercy or punishment, etc., and this is precisely *why* They are loved.
7. These are the entities that humans actually reach in their rituals, although westerners usually fool themselves into believing that they have reached the Supreme Being.
8. Theologians would insist that none of the deities worshipped by westerners are as powerful as They are claimed to be, but They are powerful enough to produce magical effects ("miracles") once in a great while, and that is more than sufficient to allow those who are ignorant of the magical and psychic sciences to claim each of the Gods worshipped as the Supreme being.
9. And since occultists and theologians are executed as quickly as possible by monotheists, there is no one around to contradict the leaders of whatever religion is the One True Right and Only Way in a given culture.
10. Now the official party line of Western theology for five thousand years has been that "all Pagan deities are demons in disguise," and that it was an insult to the Supreme Being to worship any lesser deities.
11. Naturally, this came as something of a surprise to the Pagans, who were more likely to say that "All Gods and Goddesses are of the Most High, and in honoring Them do we honor the One."
12. Western dualism, however, forced its theologians to insist that all the deities they met in their missionary work had to be turned into Saints or Demons immediately.
13. The closest that Neopagans seem to come to the direct worshipping of a Supreme Being (outside of one Egyptian monotheistic cult, and there seems to be some controversy as to whether or not they count as Neopagans) will be found in the cult of "The God and the Goddess."
14. Known as *duotheism*, this belief system states that the Ultimate Godhead is bisexual, or hermaphroditic.
15. As direct emanations form "The Star Goddess and Her Consort," there is an Earthly Goddess and God (referred to in Neopagan Witchcraft, for example, as a Moon/Earth/Sea Goddess and a Horned God of the Wildwood and the Sun).

16. This Earthly God and Goddess are the rulers and at the same time the quintessence, of all the male and female deities of planet Earth.
17. Every god or goddess of this planet is seen as an "aspect" or "face" of these Two, who are in turn the humanoid aspects of the Most High God/dess.
18. But most Neopagans are perfectly willing to admit that the dolphins might have an Earthly Dolphin God and Goddess, and that beings of another world might have deities of their own Who would be just as "real" as our own are, though totally inhuman.
19. It's a big cosmos and the universe is perfectly capable of counting higher than two.

## Chapter the Fifth:

### But What About Ritual?

1. Now as a Reformed Druid, I am entitled to believe any sort of nonsense, simple or sophisticated that I care to, and you will no doubt be happy to allow me that right.
2. But you may be wondering what all of this intellectual discussion has to do with the positive or negative values of ritual; therefore, I will turn to that subject as quickly as possible.
3. But first it is necessary to explain some of the terms I will be using in the forthcoming discussion, for Heirurgy (which means the work of worshipping) is a complex subject and cannot be understood without the use of fairly precise terms.
4. "Magic" is the art of science of getting one's psychic talents to do what one wants; in other words, "Folk-parapsychology."
5. A "ritual" is any sequence of ordered events designed to produce a desired effect.
6. A "magical ritual," therefore, is a psychodrama designed to facilitate the generation of psychic energy and the focused disposition of that energy, in order to accomplish a given result.
7. A miracle is a magical act or paranormal phenomena performed by a person working within a religious context of which you approve. A "counterfeit miracle" is an identical magical act or paranormal phenomena performed by a person working in a religious context of which you *don't* approve (this is often referred to as "evil black magic done with help of demons").
8. A "religion" is a combination of a philosophical system and a magical system (as mentioned in *The Epistle of David*) which is oriented primarily towards higher beings, period. There's no need to go all gooey and mystical about it.
10. An "active ritual" is one designed to have an effect upon a situation or entity outside of oneself (praying for rain, for example, or faith healing another).
11. A "passive ritual" is one designed to change oneself; to receive or store psychic energy rather than sending it elsewhere (doing a self-healing, for example, or becoming possessed by a Holy Spirit).
12. As a general rule, the **major** distinction in psychic technology between magical and religious rituals is that magical rituals *usually* involve few people and are actively oriented, while religious rituals *usually* involve large numbers of people and are passively oriented.

13. Because the majority always define cultural reality, it is easy for a theologian who is dishonest to claim that the ritual activity involving large numbers of people is somehow morally superior and qualitatively different from those rituals involving a minority.
14. So what really goes on at a religious ritual? Not, what do the people *think* is going on, nor what their theologians and priests may *tell them* is going on, but *really*?
15. Actually, the art of Priestcraft (which is what we are, after all, discussing) is rather simple, so simple in fact that the over mystification of the psychic technology involved is what led to the term having such a bad aroma.
16. The answer to the question of what really happens at a religious ritual will be answered in Chapter Seven, using the Reformed Druid Order of Common Worship as our example; but First we should consider the tools of ritual.

## Chapter the Sixth: The Tools of Ritual

1. In a typical magical ritual various techniques are used to get the magicians(s) into the proper frame of mind to release psychic energy in a focused manner, including the following:
  2. .... "mandalas" or "yantras" (known in the West as "pentacles" or "sigils") which are pictures or diagrams illustrating the type of energies being dealt with....
  3. 52
  - .... "mantras" or "incantations", which are sound sequences which have both physical and psychological effects....
  4. .... "mudras" or "gestures," which are postures having physical and psychological effects....
  5. .... props (chalices, swords, wands, etc.).....
  6. .... scenery (the decoration of the ritual room with appropriate colors and textures)....
  7. .... costumes (special clothes or the lack of them, worn during the ritual)....
  8. .... intoxicating methods and methods for otherwise altering the state of consciousness including breathing exercises, sexual techniques, alcohol, tobacco, other drugs, physical exercises and other methods.
- 8b. Each and every single one of these techniques and supporting elements shows up in religious rituals as well.
9. The mandalas may be two-dimensional paintings, icons or tapestries, or else they may be three-dimensional statues or idols (an "idol" is someone else's religious statue); in any event, they stimulate the sense of sight.
10. The mantras are, of course, the prayers, psalms, litanies and hymns used to stimulate the sense of hearing.
11. The mudras can include kneeling, genuflecting, kissing of sacred objects, saluting the Four Quarters of the sky, etc.; these are for the kinesthetic senses.
12. The props are frequently the same as those used in magical rituals, chalices, pointing sticks, plates of precious metals, altars, etc.
13. As for scenery, every temple or church building is decorated in whatever manner the congregation feels is most powerfully spiritually (i.e. "holy").
14. Naturally special costumes are worn by the clergy and laity alike, such as skullcaps, black shirts with white collars, prayer shawls, white robes, maniples, etc.
15. In Western Religions these days, the principal drug used to alter the state of consciousness is wine, though Oriental



- Religions frequently use cannabis, Voodoo uses rum, and Native American rituals will use tobacco, peyote or magic mushrooms.
16. Is it only a coincidence that religious ceremonies make use of exactly the same ritual tools as those used in ceremonial magic?
  17. It is perhaps true, as some have claimed, that the ceremonial magicians are "actually" worshipping demons and deliberately stole the techniques from the organized religions in order to blaspheme and desecrate them?
  18. Bullfeathers!
  19. Ceremonial magicians shamans, witches and medicine-people have been around for millennia, since long before the rise of our modern organized faiths.
  20. They were using those techniques then because they worked, a fact the organized religions know full well, because each of the organized religions was originally a tribal religion run by just such a local shaman or witchdoctor or prophet.

## Chapter the Seventh:

### The Magic of Druid Worship

1. As you no doubt might imagine, brothers and sisters, I have been alternately amused and angered by comments about how easy it is for ritual to "independently acquire magical properties of its own."
2. My amusement was based upon my own knowledge that any effective religious ritual will already have magical properties or it won't work at all.
3. Whereas my anger was not directed at the speakers of the derogatory comments, for they had no way of knowing otherwise, but rather at the theologians and philosophers of the West who have so carefully assured that intelligent men and women will somehow separate magic from religion in their thinking.
4. As we have seen, what goes on in a religious ritual is exactly the same thing that goes on in a magical ritual: the manipulation of psychic energies by humans for human benefit.
5. The details of the technology may be a little different, but the forces used are basically the same.
6. In order to make my wild sounding statements a bit clearer, let us examine the Order of Common Worship in use by the various Reformed Druid movements.
7. Like all religious rituals, it opens with an Invocation, asking the deities to take notice of our presence and simultaneously initiating a form of unity between the members of the Grove.
8. In most religions, this is a far more elaborate part of the ritual and is designed to really make the group-mind (a telepathic resonance set up between a number of people thinking similar strong thoughts about a single subject) as strong as possible.
9. Note also that the Reformed Druid Invocation used includes a "confession of sins," another common element in opening prayers, designed to remind the people of their dependence upon the Gods.
10. Next is the Processional and the Hymns or Incantations of Praise, designed to "uplift" our emotion; i.e., to get us emotional and to focus that emotional/psychic energy towards the Earth-Mother and Be'al.

11. When the Sacrifice is offered, we are not only intellectually making an offer to the Gods, but we are also sending life force from the severed tree branches we are sacrificing (in a similar fashion, those religions that sacrifice animals are using that exploding life force to strengthen the psychic energy being aimed at the Gods).
12. We are in effect, by sacrificing anything living, taking advantage of the life force broadcast by any dying entity (see some Kirilian motion pictures of sliced plants, for example), and using it, along with our own psychic energies (the "sacrifice of our hearts") to "feed" the Gods.
13. This is a basic principle of Pagan theilogy, that the Gods need human worship as much as the humans need the blessings of the Gods; for every time you think emotionally (positively or negatively) about a deity, you feed more psychic energy into the collective unconscious about that deity, and reinforce its energy circuit.
14. This is why one can legitimately say that the Christians in the West (not so much in Russia and Eastern Europe) actually worship their Devil, because they think so much about Satan that they give Him tremendous power, certainly as much as they give to their Jesus.
15. Satan's power, like Christ's power, comes from human thoughts and human psychic energy, and not particularly from the Supreme Being, but both of these two Gods have more than enough psychic power to produce occasional magical effects.
16. Formalized worship services are not usually the time when the deities are fed the most psychic energy, for that is a day-by-day process; instead, the energy raised and sent to a deity in a typical religious ritual acts primarily as a catalyst: it is there to trigger a return flow of psychic energy, to be used for magical purposes under the direction of the priest or priestess leading the rite.
17. Now this kind of mechanistic approach to deity is distressing to most nonpagans in the West (though the Ancient Greeks or the modern Hindus would understand it perfectly), and it is, of course, an oversimplification; for there are thousands of variables involved in even the simplest exercise of psychic talents, and the response from the deity is not always as expected.
18. Is this the "free will" of the deity acting, or merely incompetence on the part of the worshipers? Perhaps it is both.
19. In any event, once the triggering energy has been sent via the Sacrifice to the deity (Who is usually visualized as "up there" somewhere, even if immanent as well), there is usually a response.
20. In Reformed Druid ritual, it is the presiding Druid/ess who listens for the answer, and joyously announces (at least during the Summer Half of the year) that the Earth-Mother has accepted the sacrifice and is ready to bestow Her blessings upon the Grove.
21. In other words, a message has been sent and acknowledged.
22. As in most religious rites, a Catechism then follows; though in Reformed Druidism this is a very brief one indicating the unity of belief among the members of the Grove concerning the Waters-of-Life.
23. The purpose of this is to further tune the group-mind, so that it will be ready to receive the psychic/spiritual energy sent it by the Gods (or, to put it another way, to open the group-mind to the reception of a message and a source of

energy that is always available, if one merely tunes in and listens).

24. The presiding Druid/ess then Consecrates (psychically charges) the chalice, making it a focus for the energies of the Gods and the Grove to meet, just as in many other religions.
25. As the holy waters are drunk, each member of the Grove is linked more tightly to the Gods and to each other.
26. The intoxicating effect of the whiskey or wine is meant only as an additional shove to open any closed doors left in a member's mind; it symbolizes the fires of the spirit as it burns in us and serves to break down the conscious resistance to the Other Worlds.
27. Now is the time, in most other religious rites, when something active would be done by the spirit-filled Grove; a prayer would be said and repeated, to focus the linked and strengthened energies of the Grove, i.e., a "spell" would be cast (although that dirty word might never be used).
28. In Reformed Druidism, however, that energy is usually used for more passive purposes; to facilitate introspection and meditation, for the improvement of one's spiritual growth.
29. However, there is nothing to prevent a presiding Druid/ess from inserting a healing spell or a crop-growing prayer just before the pouring of the Libation ("To Thee we return...")
30. After the Communion is over, the presiding Druid/ess usually goes directly to this Libation, which has the dual effect of both strengthening the link between the members of the Grove and the Earth-Mother, and of "grounding out" the circle of energy generated in the ceremony.
31. This grounding and internalization of energy continues through the Meditation and Sermon. The last remnants of the energy are directed into the members of the Grove by the Benediction which, as in all religions, is designed to scatter the last blessing of the Gods over the people, while assuring them that their ritual worked and will accomplish their long term goals (this is known technically in ceremonial magic as "follow through" and is very important).
32. Now I know that this entire discussion of religion and magic has come as somewhat of an annoying shock to many of you, especially perhaps to those brothers who were the creators of the rite we have just been discussing.
33. But the fact is that, by accident or design, consciously or under the direct inspiration of the Earth-Mother and Be'al, they managed to create a ritual that follows the standard patterns all over the world for contacted supernatural entities and obtaining benefits from Them.
34. It is not a very powerful ritual as it stands, but with loving care and performance by individual Groves willing to put in a lot of work ("Hierurgy") it can produce as much in the way of spiritual force and fulfillment as those of the Established Religions and more than most.
35. With proper vestments, tools (like sickles, chalices, etc.), music and song, choreography and rehearsal (a good set of Bards helps here), Reformed Druid rituals can be as spiritually uplifting as any.
36. But rituals are another one of those things in life where "what you get out of it depends on what you put into it."
37. Heirurgy is hard work; but it's worth it when you have sick friends, failing crops, a long drought or spiritual malaise.

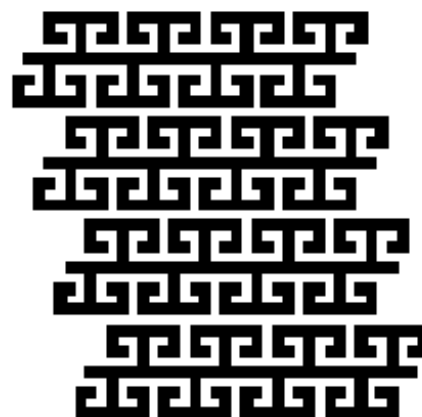
## Chapter the Eighth: Conclusion (finally!)

1. The purpose of this Epistle has not been to convert anyone to my particular world view, but rather to share that worldview in detail with my brothers and sisters in the Council.
2. For many of you have expressed bewilderment at my words and actions.
3. And I have wanted you to be able to at least understand where I am coming from, whether you agree with me or not; for I am not alone in my beliefs, bizarre as they may seem.
4. There are thousands of us in this country, and millions around the world, and for the first time in hundreds of years of genocide against us, we are beginning to grow in numbers again, as the Gods return to claim Their own.
5. And we firmly believe that whether rituals become a stumbling block or a steppingstone to the stars is entirely dependent upon the discipline, knowledge and wisdom of those performing the rituals, not upon the rites themselves.
6. Blessed be the Most High Goddess, Who was and is, and is to come, always, now, forevermore, throughout all eternal space and time.

Peace!

Isaac Bonewits, D.A.L., Be.

Samradh, 14 y.r. (circa July 1976 c.e.)



# The Book of Changes,

## PART THREE

(By Isaac Bonewits, 1976)

[The Voting Results of the Isaac Affair]

(Berkeley Apocrypha Only)

### Chapter the Fourth

1. Now other tentative decisions were made by the four ArchDruids with the majority consent of the Third Order members of their Groves; and these were as follows:
2. That no Reformed Druid should speak for the beliefs or nonbeliefs of *all* Reformed Druids, save to mention the Basic Tenets outlined in *The Book of the Law*, and that members of each branch of the Reform should speak only for themselves.
3. That the general definition mentioned in the letter of July 18 (Chapter 1, verse 6, above) for the RDNA might be used by the SDNA and/or the NRDNA instead.
4. That it be specifically mentioned to all Reformed Druids that they may found affiliated, subordinate or allied Orders, of whatever sort desired, to enhance their experience of Reformed Druidism.
5. That the suggestions made in the letter of July 18 (Chapter 1, Verses 8-12, above) concerning missionary work and the ordaining of new Third Order Druids might be followed by the NRDNA and/or the SDNA.
6. That the new addition of *The Druid Chronicles* being prepared by Isaac Bonewits and Bob Larson should be edited to remove obsolete passages and sexist phraseology, but that the original readings (for the benefit of those who prefer them, as well as for historians) of all passages changed drastically would be retained in *The Book of Footnotes*.
7. That the revisions to *The Druid Chronicles* as well as all associated materials to be published with them, would be agreed upon by the Provisional Council of ArchDruids *before* printing, and that in cases of disagreement, the original readings of each controversial passage would be retained in the body of the text, and the alternate readings be placed instead into *The Book of Footnotes*.
8. That copies of *The Druid Chronicles* would subsequently be printed and made available to all Reformed Druids, as well as to other interested persons, at a reasonable cost; save only that (a) copies of the ordination ceremonies to the Third Order would be available only to members of that Order, and that (b) copies of the ordination ceremonies or other rituals of the Higher Orders (as well as any other Orders founded) would be available only to members of each Order, unless the leader of a given Order were to say otherwise.
9. That editions of the original RDNA *Orders of Common Worship* for the Winter and Summer Halves of the year, as well as the original RDNA Second and Third Order ordination rites, would be printed intact; although individual ArchDruids and Groves might alter or rearrange these liturgies as desired (save only that nothing be actually removed from the Third Order ordination).

10. That copies of special rituals for the celebration of High Days, weddings, funerals, child namings, etc., would be incorporated into each new edition of *The Druid Chronicles* as they became available and/or were composed by individual members of the Third Order.
11. That the First Chairperson for the Provisional Council of ArchDruids would be Robert Larson, DAL, Be., ArchDruid of Berkeley and veteran of Carleton.
12. That the final proposals concerning the various matters of controversy and import would be submitted by the Provisional Council of ArchDruids to a vote of all Third Order members of all existing Reformed Druid Movements in or before *Foghamhar* 15 y.r. [i.e. August 1977 c.e. Ed.]
13. And that all concerned should abide gracefully by the decisions of the majority, or else feel free to form their own separate groups in mutual respect.

### Chapter the Fifth

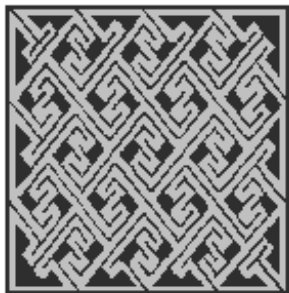
1. Now all these events herein recorded [in *The Book of Changes*, ed.] did occur in August of 12 y.r. and the decisions were originally meant to take effect as of the following *Samhain* (the beginning of 13 y.r.)
2. Indeed the Twin Cities did decide upon a partial schism at that time and did call itself the Schismatic Druids of North America.
3. And they did because they felt that it was unfair to present themselves as representative of all Reformed Druids, and because they were unhappy with what they felt was the negatively anarchistic structure of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.
4. Still did they wish to remain in communication with the other branches of the Reform, so they did determine that their current and all future ArchDruids would become members of the Provisional Council of ArchDruids and that the ordination ceremonies to the Third Order of the SDNA would consist of the same elements and words used by the RDNA, with additions, so that the members of the Schismatic Third Order might also be members of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.
5. But none of the other decisions reached by the four ArchDruids and their Groves did take effect, because no one was notified of them.
6. This was because the ArchDruid of the Twin Cities Grove, who was supposed to print and mail this addition to *The Books of the Apocrypha*, was busy with a new job and a new wife.
7. And he was living on Central Druid Time.
8. Thus this Book was not printed and distributed to all the members of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu as it was supposed to be.
9. And so no one outside of the four active Groves knew that the Provisional Council of ArchDruids had been formed, or that 13 y.r. was supposed to have been "The Year of Changes."
10. And that year was over and gone before this book was ready to be printed and distributed.
11. And it is now, as of this writing, *Samradh* of 14 y.r. (1976 c.e.) and the official notice has still not yet been properly distributed.
12. And behold in June of 14 y.r. was born yet another Grove and Branch of the Reform; for then was founded the Arch

Grove of the Hassidic Druids of North America in the city of St. Louis, Missouri.

13. And in that same month did Eleanora Auvinen become the Archdruidess of the Twin Cities Grove of the SDNA, for the former ArchDruid did move back to Berkeley, California, there to preside over the Mother Grove of the SDNA.
14. Now therefore, because, because of all these things which have occurred and not occurred, has this last Chapter been added to this Book, and have the first four Chapters been edited to eliminate or expand various dating references.
15. And this *Lughnasadh* 14 y.r. edition of *The Druid Chronicles*, in which this Book appears for the First time, is being read and approved by the entire Provisional Council of ArchDruids prior to publication.
16. And therefore this Book is also being read and approved by the members of that Council, and shall be taken to be the proper and official notice of their actions and intentions in these matters.
17. May the Earth-Mother and Be'al bless us and guide us through this period of evolution.

Peace!

[The end was written in July of 1976 c.e. -Ed.]



# A Cup Filled to the Brim with Druidism

(By Gerre Goodman MacInnes, 1976)

(New to ARDA 1)

## Chapter the First

1. Dear Brother Isaac,
2. I received my copy of the *Druid Chronicles* (Evolved) on the 23rd of September, and wish to congratulate you on an excellent job.
3. It is obviously a labor of love, and I want you to know that I appreciate the effort that you have put into it.
4. Highpoints for me are the *Mishmash*, your *Epistles*, and the *Druid Getafix*, whom I met in Germany, where he goes by the name of *Miraculix*.
5. I hope you will not be too stunned if I say that by and large I agree with many of the philosophies put forth in your *Epistles*. I am, after all, one of those stuffy RDNA, a fuddy-duddy third order Neo-Christian etc.

## Chapter the Second

1. I think it might be best for you to settle yourself with a nice cup of tea, (lavender is quite good for headaches) as I intend to ramble on at some length and hope to give you several points to mull over.
2. Copies of this are being sent to those members of the Councils whom I deem either interested or obligated by form, present or future ties of friendship, an/or professional association to wade through my philosophical and theological opinions.
3. I might say first that I am still a bit cross with you for not answering my last two or three letters.
4. I understand that you are a very busy man, but I am a very busy woman, and if I take the time to set down my thought (in longhand, yet!) it seems to me that you have an obligation to answer, especially the questions.
5. I do thank you for your recommendation of *Dion Fortune's* book, and despite its faint air of psychic paranoia, I am finding it most interesting.
6. At any rate, I sincerely hope to receive a reply from you on this missive sometime before Midwinter. I have been sorely tempted to work some kind of spell over it to insure that happening, but I really do believe in non-meddling, and so will merely trust in your conscience.
7. I am moved to share with you (And with the others: let no one feel distressed that the original of this letter is going to Isaac. It is just that he was the catalyst this time.) the place in which I find myself, hoping that it will help to create a bond of understanding and seeking between us, and perhaps contribute to the knowledge and growth of others.

## Chapter the Third

1. To keep from confusing the issue we will stick to your definitions as expressed in the DC(E) as much as possible
2. I would like to note that my husband Brian, who is an Anthropologist (no doubt a cult in itself, by some definitions) has observed that you are playing fast and

loose with both the terms 'Christian' and 'Pagan' as they are generally understood.

3. To illustrate this point, let us consider Quakerism, which you have labeled 'Neo' Christianity; many Friends, myself included, consider Quakerism to be closer to the 'original' sect than the practices of Roman Catholicism, which you place in the 'Paleo' category.
4. There are other things about that 'Neo' category which bother me: Christian Scientist, for instance, fit much more comfortably into 'Neo Pagan' by your definitions, yet most C.S would definitely consider themselves Christians.
5. On the other hand, many Universalist-Unitarians are emphatically non-Christians, while many spiritualists, who are sometimes very dogmatic in their approach to Christ and the Bible, are positively pagan in their approach to psychic phenomenon.
6. I think that I must say that maybe you don't know all that much about Christianity and that perhaps you have done to that group exactly what you accuse them of doing to you-throwing the baby (in the case, perhaps the Holy Babe?) out with the bath water.

## Chapter the Fourth

1. Having stirred up that matter, I will proceed to the next topic: my current position in all this.
2. According to your definitions I find myself in the curious position of being both Neo Pagan and Neo Christian.
3. To explain this, a brief history lesson is necessary: I was born and raised Roman Catholic, became a born again Christian a la Billy Graham at the age of 15, served as a pillar of the Methodist Church in high school, discovered Zen, Siddhartha, yoga, T.M., and drug-induced mystical experiences during my first two years at Carleton, along with my growing interest in Druidism.
4. I began to evolve into a Quaker at the same time of the Cambodian Incursion in 1970.
5. Druidism has remained dear to my heart at the same time, although my involvement has been more with the Quakers due to the lack of other Druids and the marked propensity we seem to have for moving around every nine months. (That makes it rather difficult to find enough like-minded people to get a Grove going!)
6. I was attracted to the Friends for several reasons. They have historically placed the responsibility for the search for religious awareness squarely on the head of the individual.
7. They allow (encourage) considerable latitude in translating the traditional Christian doctrines; there are many Quakers who are not Christians.
8. They consider both men and women equal in the eyes of God.
9. They are socially involved and believe their concerns to be a part of their religious life, and not something separate.
10. They have put the emphasis back on meditation and dismissed the ritual and trappings that had become empty shells for most people.
11. Druidism, on the other hand, fill spiritual needs that Quakerism does not.
12. I would be less than honest if I denied my heritage. The ritual and symbolism speak to my former selves, as many pagans as Christians.

13. Both Quakers and Druids are basically anti-dogmatic and joyful in their approach. Both have accumulated enough traditions over the years to distinguish them from other groups; from each other, and from the purely individual approach to the questions of life.
14. The two systems are complementary as far as I'm concerned; they act as a system of check and balances, keeping the participant in a constant state of uproar and making it impossible to ever become too comfortable about religion.
15. If I were to succumb to the nutshell tendency, I could say "I am a Druidic Quaker" or, "I am a Quakerly (or Friendly) Druid." However that doesn't make it by a long shot.
16. Brian has rightly stated that I am Gerre, and my beliefs are what they are; a part of me.
17. To categorize does a disservice to anyone who would seek to really understand me or my beliefs.

## Chapter the Fifth

1. Part of my responsibility as a person is to articulate my religious position and interpret it to those who come in contact with me in a way they can understand.
2. The search is barren if not interpreted; another way of saying 'faith without works is dead'.
3. Adherence to tenets is meaningless if the individual involved can't define what that adherence involves and what degree of truth they are willing to accept about those tenets.
4. Blind faith has no place here: as a skeptic I tend to look askance at those who claim to be willing to die for their beliefs, but who cannot explain in some detail and with thoroughfulness exactly what those beliefs entail.
5. One really ought to know what one is dying for; it seems a waste of time to sit around afterwards and wonder, not to mention the karma involved!
6. Better to be a thoughtful nonbeliever.
7. At this point the only belief that I am willing to die for is the conviction that the individual has a right and a responsibility to formulate hi/her own beliefs without being dictated unto, whatever they may be. Only in this way can we be free enough to follow the paths of awareness and come to an understanding of what it all means to us.
8. In view of this I must agree with you about the short-sightedness of the monotheistic traditions. It does seem to me, however that your total rejection of that tradition is unfortunate. Some of my most meaningful and mystical experiences have come directly from the Christian tradition.
9. I say unto you, Isaac, that magic does not have to be skyclad to be magic, but can come in the guise of the communion, the stained glass windows or the Rosary of the Catholics, the hymns and the baptismal font of the Protestants, or the tremendous power of the gathered meeting of the Society of Friends.
10. Amulets and talismans can be just as powerful and hold just as much potential for the user when they represent the Christian Saints as when they represent the Ancients.
11. Do you really believe that the worship of the Virgin holds less power than the worship of the Mother for the true believer? The same spirit answers, the same results occur.

12. You tell St. Francis, St. Teresa, St. Bernadette that miracles (magic) don't happen in monotheism. You tell the hundreds healed by faith that their healings weren't real because they appealed to Jesus of Nazareth and not to Grannos or Diancecht.
13. Verily I say unto you, Isaac, you are a victim of the forces of anti-faith if you would condemn Christianity as totally negative and life-denying.
14. I agree that many things have been done in the name of God that ought not to have been done, but atrocities have ever been committed by humans on other humans in the names of their gods.
15. To humankind is given free choice, and to blaspheme in that way is part of the choice and the karma.

## Chapter the Sixth

1. Although the names and forms of the gods have changed over the ages, anyone who is really paying attention can draw parallels between the 'old' gods and the Judeo-Christian God. I have always thought that it was Hera trying to get even with Zeus, imagine demanding all that attention!
2. I think you would agree that magic is meaningless (or ineffective, anyway) unless the participants are all in the same (or very similar) space.
3. The traditional Western ritual, which you claim powerless, has tremendous potential for magic and can be quite useful in focusing the participant's energy.
4. The sole stumbling block to the realization of this potential is guilt and self-abnegation.
5. It seems that this element was introduced by humans and not by the gods; while humbleness of spirit may be a good thing, guilt and low self-esteem are not, and have proven to be effective barriers to human-divine communication.
6. We have a right to be here.
7. We are part of the universe, and are worthy to be called the daughters and the sons of gods.
8. We are part of 'the burning oneness binding everything' that Kenneth Goulding describes so beautifully in the Naylor Sonnets.
9. I'm sure that you are familiar with Heinlein's Stranger in a Strange Land with its 'Thou art God, I am God' philosophy.
10. We all possess the potential to be magical, to make magic, to hold and use the power. Only our sense of guilt and powerlessness keep us from our heritage.
11. The Ancients (ha, the Good Old Days!) were no better than we are: if they held and wielded the power as it ought to be, we wouldn't be paying back the karma now.

## Chapter the Seventh

1. I don't feel brash or blasphemous in stating things this way. Too many times have I felt 'at one with Be'al in the great dance of time' to believe otherwise.
2. One of the third orders once told me that I was the Mother personified, and he was more right than wrong.
3. Beset as I am by the dross left by centuries of negativity, by fear, guilt, hatred, still and always have I sought the mystic, the magical, the other-worldly contacts in my religious search.

4. In my lives I have gravitated always towards the awareness that would place me in rapport with my innate powers. This search has been sometimes more, sometimes less successful.
5. This life has been a complex search both for what has gone before and what is to come after.
6. I feel a sharp sense of urgency; a great need to consolidate the masses of information that I know I possess.
7. I need to reawaken the knowledge; the herb lore, the meditational techniques, the physical and psychic disciplines I once exercised.
8. I must do this before it is too late, before the chaos catches up and hurls us back to the very beginnings again.
9. Something slipped up this time around, and I have a feeling that it was meant to be so, and that someone has arranged a time out, so to speak, from the usual cycle for the express purpose of reevaluation and consolidation.
10. Being not foresighted in this life (at least not on a regular basis) I have no way of knowing how long this will last or whether I will ever be given another chance.
11. Therefore, I cannot and will not deny any of the experiences that are mine. Even the negatives are helpful, they have enabled me to see the shape and manner of the traps and given me the information need to avoid the ensnarement.
12. I will be free, and none can keep me from it save myself. I am the savior and the saved, the priest and the penitent, the master and the slave. I have the keys to the locks in my soul.
13. I give thanks in humbleness of spirit that I am, and rejoice that the awareness that I am has been given to me by the powers that be.

## Chapter the Eighth

1. Isaac, be not so defensive in your search. You are loved and accepted by many!
2. Be not so concerned that we accept you Neo-Pagan credentials. Of course you know whereof you speak! Don't be such a fussbudget about it!
3. Too much do I see you pouting in the corner, poking in rage at those who disagree with you. Their paths are as valid as yours; their karma is their own.
4. Don't put others down because they chose to go back to Christianity. The 'falling away' of the brethren worries you too much. In the end we all take up the search for awareness in the ways that best suit us.
5. Our duty, joy and privilege is to learn from one another, to love one another, and to share with one another whatever we can in good conscience share.
6. With you I can share the traditional practice and discussion of magic.
7. Wit the Agnostics I can share the questions, the search, the levity and the skepticism that have made my own growth so meaningful.
8. With the Quakers I share the meditational silence, social activism, and contacts in the Christian Community of which I still consider myself a part.
9. Drink the whole cup. Don't quibble about the color or shape of the chalice, or who has supplied the wine. The source is the same for all of us. The same earth grows the grapes everywhere.

## Chapter the Ninth

1. You are my brother.
2. I would give you wholeness and completeness in the search, and not have you cutting off your nose to spite your face.
3. We are One, whether we are engaged in the Mass, the meeting, the Coven, the practice of ritual intercourse, the long-drawn-out philosophical discussions that begin and end nowhere.
4. The secret is to recognize the oneness and to define it in as many ways as possible to keep from rejecting valid parts of ourselves.
5. Love is All.
6. Love me, Isaac.
7. Love David Fisher and Richard Shelton and Pope Paul and Billy Graham and Orthodox Rabbis and American Indians and the Dali Lama and the Buddhists and the Hindus and the Puritans and the Hedonists and Jesus and Be'al and Astarte and the Virgin Mary, and recognize that we are all One.
8. All together, and apart, and the power, be it of one god or many, is ours; meaningless unless we recognize the ridiculousness of artificial limits.
9. Be at peace, for there is no peace except in the knowledge that the only answer lies in the questions and that the only permanence lies in change, and the only truth lies in the constantly shifting changes of the universe, which is perfect love.

## Chapter the Tenth

1. It strikes me as dangerous to deliberately alienate anyone who does not share your present beliefs, as that person may hold the key to the next step of your own search for awareness.
2. Nor is it good to alienate those behind you on the road, for you may be their key, and it would not be good to be the instrument which got in the way of them experiencing the truths that you hold.
3. Therefore let us be gentle with one another and with our beliefs, and let us not be bitter or hostile towards any system of beliefs or practices, for there are sisters and brothers in that space who still believe or who will believe, and if we put negative energy into hating a system 'for what it has done to us' we are only harming our brethren, who are seekers even as we ourselves, and who deserve only our love and positive energy.
4. Say good-bye to the old beliefs and let them go, but do not curse them, for they had their place and their purpose, and to deny them is to deny a part of ourselves.

## Chapter the Eleventh

1. We have all been hurt so much!
2. We have been so closed to one another.
3. Alas for our generation, for we have come so close in so many ways, and yet in our defensiveness we have shut ourselves off from each other, and we shout the truth but have forgotten how to listen to the inner voice.
4. Quakers hear the inner voice; each person hears it differently.

5. There are as many true voices as the stars in the sky, and each voice is valid, loving, supportive, caring for all that is.
6. The trick is to hear that voice, to see with the inner eye. Satori, nirvana, astral projection, visions: all part and parcel of the same exercise.
7. Possession works if we let it. If we seek it. If we listen, and recognize it when it comes to us.
8. The inner voice is as valid as the voice of thunder. Each can be frightening or welcomed, depending on the state of the recipient.
9. May we be ever open to the voices, whatever their form.

## Chapter the Twelfth

1. I must, at this point, question your mention of defrocking. It is my conviction that to frock or de-frock is a decision resting entirely with the individual.
2. No action on the part of any temporal body can take away a genuine call to the ministry.
3. The loss of a collar, staff or ribbon will not lessen the power of the magic or ministry exercised by the individual in question.
4. Only the person to whom it comes can decide the shape and manner of a religious vocation.
5. It cannot and ought not be defined or rejected by anyone else.
6. If I feel moved to speak, I speak.
7. If I feel moved to write Epistles, I write.
8. Though it may seem that no one is paying attention, it proves to have been what someone needed to hear.
9. The power that is in me can do no other, I might as well try to keep the sun from setting.

## Chapter the Thirteenth

1. Now will you help me?
2. Where shall I go from here in my studies?
3. Which of your excellent bibliography shall I read first and why?
4. I am now asking your opinions, and the opinions of my other readers.
5. If some of you have decided that I'm stark raving bonkers, well, you suspected it anyway, and I do still love you, and isn't that the most important thing after all?

## Chapter the Fourteenth

1. I must make one correction in your records.
2. I was also consecrated in the Third order in the winter half of the year. I vigiled at Carleton on a perfect late April night in 1970.
3. On discovering that I had never been 'properly' sealed unto the Second order (Mother alone knows why not) Brother Richard and I decided that we had better do the whole thing over again for the records, although I think that both of us count the first vigil and ordination as the true and valid religious experience that it was, and the other merely the filling of the expected forms.

Gerre MacInnes Goodman,  
October 10th, 1976

# Salutations

(By Dale Fierbe, 1977)

(New to ARDA 1)

Salutations on this day of Oimele!

The Magnolias stand serenely in this winter wind.

The pines shrug their branches

Snow drops to the ground

Unable to smother the spirit

Of Evergreen.

The Cedar whispers it's valiance

The quiet sentinel while other

Creatures and Flora

Wait for the name of Spring to

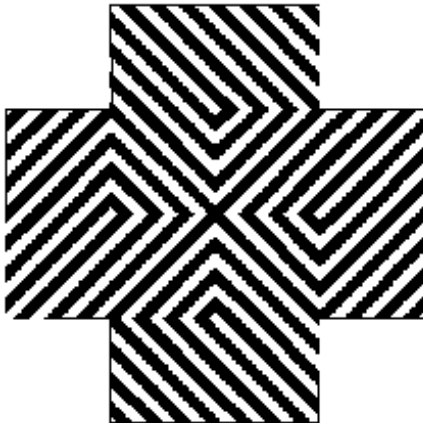
Brush past them, awakening them

From their sleep.

-Peace, Peace, Peace.

Dale Fierbe

Feb. 1, 1977 c.e.



# Late Selections: Trouble in Paradise

## The Third Epistle of Isaac:

Doing Things the Rite Way

(By Isaac Bonewits, 1979)

(New to ARDA 2)

### Chapter the First: A Complaint

1. Here with a moderately rude and impertinent article by Isaac Bonewits on a topic that should be of concern to all of us.
2. In recent years a number of people around the country have been complaining more and more about the quality of the rituals being performed by Druids, Witches and other Neopagans.
3. If we're going to be brutally honest about the matter, we'll have to admit that on a scale of one-to-ten the average ceremony in our community rates between two and four as far as the actual amount of psychic energies raised are concerned.
4. Even the best rites, the ones that people talk about in glowing terms for weeks later, still only rate between four and six. But this is a topic that, until recently, nobody wanted to talk about very much.
5. Politeness, interpersonal and intergroup politics, lack of fundamental psychic and magical training, and simple ignorance of what really strong psychic energies feel like, all conspired to make people reluctant to voice their growing doubts about the ritual technology in common use in our community.
6. Perhaps it is about time to forget about politeness and try to analyze just what's wrong with our ceremonies. We can't settle all the questions in one article, but if we can get folks discussing the topic openly we can at least start to work on the difficulties.
7. Readers of PJ&DC are invited to write articles commenting on this and other related matters.

### Chapter the Second:

#### From Whence the Problem?

1. I'll start my theorizing with the observation that most American Neopagans are Americans first and Neopagans second.
2. Most of us are white, from middle class backgrounds and have high IQ's.
3. These factors combine to steer us towards highly intellectualized, "all head no gut" rituals.



4. It's no coincidence that most Druidic, Wiccan and other Neopagan ceremonies bear a strong resemblance to High Church Anglicanism.
5. The Reformed Druids were founded by an Anglican, as was Gardnerian Witchcraft, the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn and most of our other sources.
6. Most white middle class people have a positive terror of strong emotions to begin with. We've had strong programming through parents, school, and peers that inhibits our outward expressions of emotion.
7. As a result, most of us are stuck trying to do wordy, "head – tripping" rituals while trying to get excited enough to generate psychic energy.
8. As a result, we find that our fanciest theatrical rituals often generate only a fraction of the sheer energy that many "low class" Pentecostal or Voodoo ceremonies get routinely.

### Chapter the Third:

#### Lessons from the Theater

1. Theatrical rites can be done effectively, if some basic factors are taken into consideration.
2. Because they have so little emotional power to begin with, they must be handled very well indeed in order to beguile the participants into enough excitement to generate any useful amount of mana.
3. This means that the theater aspects of the rite must be done properly: every important line must be memorized (or at least understood enough that the speakers can improvise effectively), all the cues for movement or speech must be memorized, the participants must rehearse all the elements of the rite (though the design could be flexible enough to allow spontaneous additions without disruption), and people must learn how to effectively speak and move for maximum effect.

### Chapter the Fourth:

#### Dancing for the Gods

1. If dancing is going to be part of a ceremony, which I highly recommend, the participants should actually learn how to dance.
2. Holding hands and skipping (or more usually, stumbling) around in a circle is not dancing – it is, in fact, an insult to the Gods, particularly when done without any true involvement in the movement.
3. Every metropolitan area in the country has one or more folk dance centers where people can go for little or no expense and learn a few simple steps in only a few evenings or afternoons, and dancing with joy (or solemnity for that matter) would add a great deal to the energy raising.

### Chapter the Fifth:

#### Study the Rules of Magic

1. If magic is going to be a part of the ceremony (which is usually the theory), it helps if the participants, and especially the leaders, know something about the generation and focusing of psychic energy fields.

2. Every single element of the ritual must be in a dynamic state of balance with every other part, and all must contribute to the general dramatic and magical atmosphere while still being focused around the general flavor and specific goal of the rite.
3. Every person participating in the ritual must be working (and playing) hard – our clergy are not good enough to do 100% of the work by themselves, which is what most Groves, Covens and Lodges seem to expect them to do.

### Chapter the Sixth: Hard Work

1. Now all this sounds like it requires an incredible amount of time and effort. It does.
2. The name of the game, as I stressed in an overly long and pompous sermon last Winter Solstice, is "commitment." Too many of us want the excitement and glamour of being able to call ourselves "Druids" or "Witches" or "Psychics" without actually wanting to do any of the work required to justify those titles.
3. For people who did not grow up in a culture where effective magical and religious rituals are common, where everyone learns to dance as children and magical knowledge is commonplace, preparing to perform effective rituals is a time consuming and often expensive proposition.
4. One has to be willing to give up quite a bit of time in order to study theater, dance, psychism and mythology. This is not easy, especially if we are also trying to practice what we preach by being involved in ecological or other social activities in keeping with our beliefs, not to mention the amount of time involved in basic survival.
5. But if we aren't willing to invest the time and energy, and to make personal sacrifices for the deities and ideas we claim to love, then perhaps it's time we re-evaluated our motivations and personal priorities.

### Chapter the Seventh: Commitment

1. This kind of commitment is hard to achieve, especially for the sort of intelligent, creative anarchists who make up our community.
2. Most of us are afraid, for very good historical reasons, to have a really deep commitment to any belief system.
3. Many of us have been burned before by established belief systems that tried to coerce us into following them.
4. Many of us, on a gut level, simply don't believe in magic no matter what our intellectual concepts on the topic may be.
5. As Americans, and anarchists, most of us have a strong aversion to discipline of any sort, including self-discipline.
6. We've been trained by television advertisers to expect "something for nothing" and "instant success," and this programming has been drummed into our heads from a very early age.
7. And most of us work so hard just to earn a living that we have very little time or energy to spare.
8. Now all of this means that we are unlikely to be a danger to anyone, but it also means that we are unlikely to be much of a help either. And that is a real tragedy, one that makes the topic far more important than our wounded egos.

## Chapter the Eighth: What to Do?

1. As Archdruid of the Mother Grove, I am well aware that the Reformed Druids in general, and I in particular, suffer from these weaknesses as much as the rest of the community.
2. But the time is long past to start doing something about the situation instead of just bemoaning it in private.
3. Pentalpha is making a start.
4. We have one dance class going now and are planning others for this spring. We're organizing a song and dance workshop that we hope will be a learning experience as well as a good time.
5. We have organized a group that is creating a new sort of ritual for Oimele with a nonverbal "gut" emphasis and some elements similar to those in Voodoo and Pentecostal ceremonies (see the front page for more details). After the ritual is done, we'll sit down and do a careful critique of it all, then start rewriting for the next one.
6. We would love to hear from folks in other parts of the country who are experimenting with nonverbal or balanced verbal/nonverbal ceremonies.
7. With a little luck and help from the Gods, combined with a lot of hard work, emotional commitment and lost weekends, we can create satisfying and effective forms of worship, celebration and magic.
8. And we can actually start practicing what we preach.

-Isaac Bonewits

1979/80?



# Musings of An Ancient Religion in a Modern World

(By Shirin Ann Morton, 1979)

(New to ARDA 2)

Pentalpha/Druid Chronicler Vol. 2 No.4

## Chapter the First

1. Today, as a necessity, I woke up, took my Javacruian drug, (i.e. coffees, saluted the Sun (eyes scrinching at the early AM light) through the walled and windowed barrier to the outside world, and proceeded to journey to the marketplace where I could buy a few volumes of printed matter.
2. As I fumbled for my pen to write the check to purchase words on myth and symbolism, the thought occurred to me at how far we are from the reputed ability of our ancestral religion where learning began at birth and the history and knowledge was reputedly all orally learned.

## Chapter the Second

1. I think about the lack of oral traditions we are faced with in our society.
2. If I want to know something, I have to resort to the printed word.
3. If I were a survivor of a great calamity, there would be no way I could relate the history of my culture from memory to the new generation, yet we see this ability time and again in groups of people who did not rely on writing for scholarship.
4. Who is more scholarly – I, who have a large library and can research obscure facts of knowledge, or the Navajo Indian, who can walk out into the dry prairie and find means to survive and teach the tradition to the new generation?

## Chapter the Third

1. A sandchanter medicine person has to have the history of the clan in his/her mind along with the myths about the healing, along with complicated mandalas of sandpainting and all the herbal knowledge to compliment the ceremony.
2. This tradition is completely oral and visual, whereas mine is all written.
3. Admittedly as the young lose interest in the clan, parts of the system may be lost as has happened.
4. It seems to me that many who claim to follow the old ways should begin looking within and studying techniques of visual and oral retention.
5. When I look about me and see people doing rituals they have to read, working up ceremonies from written works, and reading them, I wonder about whether our so-called primitive ancestors were all that primitive.

-Shirine Morton

March 1979

# The Fourth Epistle of Isaac

(By Isaac Bonewits, 1980)

(New to ARDA 2)

Pentalpha Summer 1980

## Chapter the First

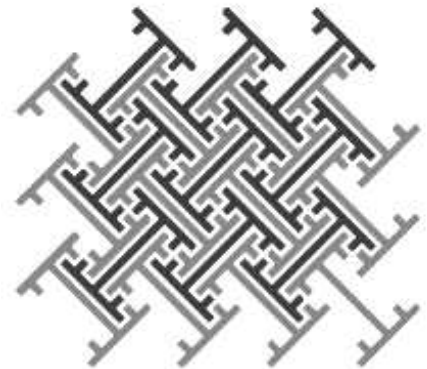
1. Isaac Bonewits has retired as Archdruid of the Mother Grove, so that he and his wife Selene could move down to Santa Cruz.
2. Joan Carruth, Matriarch of the Order of Dian Cecht, is now the Co-AD with Stephan McCaully of the combined Mother Grove and Hazel Nut Grove merging.
3. Isaac has kicked himself upstairs to the previously nonexistent position of Archdruid Emeritus. He swears up and down that he will not start a grove, coven, lodge, temple, or kaffeeklatsch in Santa Cruz for at least another year. (No one believes him.)
4. He sends this following letter:

## Chapter the Second

1. Dear Druidic and other Neopagan siblings:
2. It's true. I am now living near Santa Cruz, California, in something vaguely resembling a state of magical retirement.
3. While Selene goes to the University (to get her B.A. in Modern Ritual!), I'm working in the book composition field (typesetting, layout, camera work, etc.) and spending what spare time I have reading studying guitar (so I can actually start playing some of the songs I've been writing) and working on a couple of new books.
4. As Archdruid Emeritus, I get to take a break for a year or so. This means that people interested in knowing what's going on with the current Neopagan Druid movements should write to Joan or Stephen, not me. I'm on "sabbatical."
5. One of the projects I'm working on this year is a sort of "Druidic Handbook." I'm rewriting a lot of the material I originally wrote for The Druid Chronicles (Evolved) and adding a sizable amount of new stuff.
6. The book will include history, polytheology, philosophy, rituals, liturgical customs, music, poetry, organizational structures, and everything else necessary so that any qualified reader can use the book to start up his or her own Neopagan Druid group -with or without any "apostolic succession" from the Reformed Druids of North America.
7. It will be written and published in such a fashion that it can be taken into any court in the country and presented as "sacred scriptures" for legal purposes. Whether one wants to start up a Druidic group or not, it will still serve as a source of ideas on how to start a new religion.
8. The reason I'm mentioning all this is not to promote advance sales (it won't be available for at least a year or two anyway), but to ask for help. I want to include the best and most usable materials from any and all Druidic, semi-Druidic and pseudo-Druidic sources.
9. I'm looking for copies of Masonic (Mesopagan) Druid ceremonies, remnants of old Celtic folksongs and dances, experimental liturgies from current Neopagan groups and

individuals, even people's "past life memories" of Druid lore. Mind you, I will footnote everything properly, and I'm not going to present something as historical fact unless it can be pretty well documented. But there are many kinds of truth, and each can be presented on its own level of reality.

10. So if you would like to get involved in helping me create a new Neopagan Druid religion, feel free to send me whatever you've got to offer. Items that are copyright, or which you refuse to let me change, should be marked clearly as such. I won't print much of either kind of item, since I plan on altering, merging, and otherwise transmuting 95% of everything I can get my hands on.
11. As soon as I have working drafts of various sections of the handbook, I'll circulate copies among the dozen or so people who have shown the greatest interest, including members of as many other Druidic movements as I can find. With luck, we can come up with a consensus of what Aquarian Age Druidism might be like.
12. If you'd like to help, send your stuff to me at Box 9398, Berkeley, CA, 94709. Please mark your envelopes "Druid Handbook," so they won't get mixed up with the regular Pentalpha mail.
13. Oh, and I should point out that I am terrible at answering correspondence, (I'm about nine months behind on my current pile of letters), so don't think I'm not appreciating your stuff if I don't write you a letter back immediately. I will try and send postcards out to acknowledge receipt of your materials.
14. From time to time, bits and pieces of this project, as well as questions for people to argue about, will appear in The Druid Chronicler, along with occasional progress reports. But don't expect anything in a hurry, at least not from this Archdruid Emeritus. After all, folks in the magical community should be able to handle a little A.E. wait!



# The Fifth Epistle of Isaac:

## The Farewell

(by Isaac Bonewits, 1981)

(New to ARDA 2)

### Chapter the First:

#### Cycle Ends, Cycle Starts

1. FROM THE ARCHDRUID
2. The ancient Druids are said to have built their solar-lunar calendar around a 19-year cycle (that is, 235 lunar months).
3. Samhain this year ends the first 19 years of the Reform begun at Carleton College, and begins a fresh cycle.
4. Samhain also begins the season of Geimreadh (winter), a traditional time of reforming and resurrection.
5. This winter bodes fair to continue those traditions in the grand old style.
6. Last September 20th I was (re-)elected Archdruid of what was then called the Berkeley Grove. I ran for the office on a "Revolution ticket," warning the Grove's members that I would make sweeping changes, especially in the areas of liturgy, organizational structure, and training.

### Chapter the Second:

#### The Revolution Ticket

1. I said it was time for the Reformed Druids to begin the work necessary to create a complete religion, to grow beyond the loose framework that is the sum of its current liturgy.
2. I painted out that, little as we know of the ancient Druids, we do know that they were the Brahmanic caste of the Celtic/Germanic/Slavic peoples (though they were called by different names in different times and places.) They were the artists, musicians, poets, healers, judges, historians, diviners, magicians, clergy - the cognoscenti of their societies.
3. Any neopagan group with the audacity to call itself Druidic should have, above all, a commitment to excellence and a willingness to be everything that the name implies.
4. These ideals are far beyond the pale of what the Founders of the Reformed Druid movement wanted in the early 1960s. Their image of a Druid was that of an anarchistic philosopher, a sort of Zen Unitarian, and most of them had no intention of starting a "real" religion; they had no idea that the Gods they were invoking happened to be very much alive.

### Chapter the Third: The Gods are Alive

1. The Old Gods are alive - although I will grant that they're a little sleepy. After all, it's been a long time.
2. But what the folks at Carleton College built was not meant to last, to grow, to spread, and that Reformed Druidism is still around 19 years later is a testimony to the power of the Gods and of the Druidic archetype.
3. And given this archetype, these Gods and the power inherent in the concept of Druidism, we have the basis for a healthy, growing religion, a religion that works.
4. I have always thought that there was more to Druidism (Reformed or otherwise) than was dreamt of in the philosophies of those at Carleton College. It's out there somewhere, and through diligent hard work, we can find it. We will find it!

### Chapter the Fourth:

#### Criteria for Druids

1. Do I hear the Old Gods stirring in their sleep?
2. Everyone advances through the Circles according to their knowledge, ability and commitment.
3. We are still developing the Circles system and the criteria for admission and advancement, but a few things have become clear based on what we are trying to do:
4. There will be set criteria for advancement, and everyone no matter who they may be, elsewhere will follow the same criteria.
5. Various rituals will be structured to the level of their participants.
6. Everyone will be required to show mastery of the knowledge in one circle before being advanced to the next.
7. This has allowed us to get back to the OLD idea of what a "Druid" was. He or she was a priest, a bard, a magician, a healer; he/she was of the cognoscenti.
8. Not everyone was cut out to be one, nor did everyone qualify in the Gods' sight.
9. If you were proper Druid's material, you could demonstrate that fact. Nobody questioned your right to wear that robe because you had been challenged long before you were ever given it.
10. We are trying to return to that method and that standard.

### Chapter the Fourth:

#### Connections With the Old Order

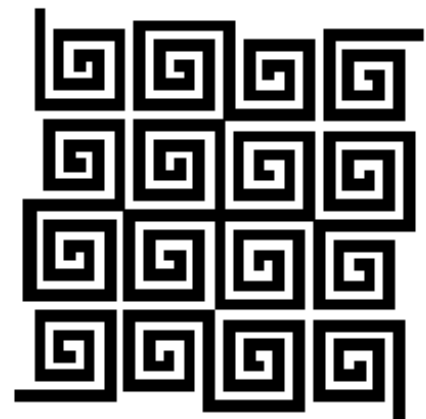
1. Does this mean that we have cut all ties with the old NRDNA structure?
2. After all, we're talking about making people *work* for what they want, then rewarding them for what they produce!
3. The old New Reformed Druids offered everybody the same things, and it was open to the public - in fact, they even held their rituals in public parks.
4. We haven't cut all our old ties; just most of them. For instance, we will not instantly invest someone into the third Circle just because they are a Third Order Druid in some other Grove.

5. In view of what we're trying to do with our Druidism, there is no way we can do that without compromising our objectives.
6. We will, however, keep our lines of communication open to other Groves and other groups of Druids. We want to hear what they are doing, and we want to tell them about ourselves.
7. We will allow public participation in some of our rituals. (Emphasis on the "some). There will most assuredly be rituals that are open only to members who have been admitted to the First Circle or higher, and rituals closed to lower Circles.
8. It depends what we're trying to accomplish with any given ritual. Why close some rituals? What do we have to hide? Nothing.
9. Druidism will continue to be as it ever was. But we will hold closed rituals. This is not because we hold any secrets; rather, it's because we want our rituals and services to *work*. When we look for an omen, we want an unmistakable omen.
10. We are going to help our rituals work by requiring everybody who participates to be familiar with our methods.
11. For these reasons, of course, we cannot participate in the old Council [or its successor, the "Coalition Council" (CoCoDAL)] of Dalon ap Landu. We do not recognize their authority to govern our activities, because their aims are not ours. How can the Mormon Elders guide a Roman Catholic congregation? Their ideals are too dissimilar.
12. Isaac spent some time during Samhain this year addressing that subject. In an open letter which he (perhaps unfortunately) finally decided not to mail, he said:
13. "We will not participate in the original Council (or the current "Co-Council") of Dalon ap Landu - the original governing body of the R.D.N.A., composed of all the priests and priestesses - unless it is made abundantly clear that we do not recognize their authority to make any decisions regarding our activities, structure, 'orthodoxy,' etc.
14. "We will participate to the extent of sharing ideas and information with other Reformed Druid groups.
15. "As for the 'Higher Orders,' the Mother Grove will not help reorganize, nor will we recognize the revival of the old R.D.N.A. Higher Orders or the more recent N.R.D.N.A. Special Orders.
16. "We're not going to be in any hurry to start any new ones either, save for revamping the Bards inside our own Grove.
17. "Members of the Mother Grove may start Special Interest Groups, or participate in the Higher & Special Orders already existing in other Groves, but such SIGs or Orders will have no official status for now."

## Chapter the Fifth: What Are We Trying to Accomplish?

1. If we are throwing out so much of the old system, what will we replace it with? Exactly what are our goals?
2. At the bottom line, they're simple enough.
3. We want to establish a true relationship with the Gods.
4. We think that this is best done through a combination of ritual, magic, music, dance, poetry, and theatre.
5. The Gods love a good show! And to make this the best show possible, we are going to stress personal development and personal achievement within the Mother Grove.
6. We want dedication, and we think that the rewards - personal, spiritual, even perhaps physical - to be had from that dedication are more than worth the effort.
7. In addition, we want to see a balanced energy raised in our rituals. Too many Neopagan groups in the past have had a bias (however well-intentioned or even unconscious) toward either the male or the female in their workings.
8. For this reason, we strongly emphasize the value of working with a partner of the opposite sex for balance and completeness.

Isaac Bonewits  
December 1981



# The Epistle of Sally:

## Avoir Mes Amis

(By Sally Eaton, 1981)

(New to ARDA 2)

### Chapter the First

1. FROM THE ARCHDRUIDESS
2. My name is Sally Eaton. Bonewits is my legal last name, but I prefer to use Eaton. My own identity is very important to me, for all the usual reasons.
3. I've been involved with NRDNA since 1979. I've been a practicing Witch since my early teens and involved heavily in magic all my life.
4. I was attracted to Druidism because of my Celtic ancestry and because of the emphasis on music; among other things, I'm a singer and songwriter.
5. During 13 y.r. [1979-80], I was Server to what was then the Berkeley Grove. At that time we had two Archdruids, a woman and a man.
6. I liked this idea very much; the precisely equal division of leadership between male and female is my ideal.
7. I thoroughly agreed with the basic ideas of Druidism, but as time went on I found myself dissatisfied with certain aspects of the services.
8. We were meeting in public parks so newcomers could join freely, and I felt like I was working in a fishbowl.
9. Moreover, the services reminded me most of liberal Christianity - they didn't feel *Pagan* to me.

### Chapter the Second

1. I'm not a Duotheist, I'm a Polytheist.
2. I work with particular Goddesses and Gods, not just the Great Mother and Father.
3. I wondered why we didn't bring back the real deities of our Celtic forebears.
4. I thought it was our *job* as Druids to do this.
5. When I tried to tell people this, though, I found myself bucking a rigid "tradition" that dated all the way back to 1963.
6. I made suggestions, and was told, that isn't the way we do things."
7. I was frustrated. I could make few creative contributions.

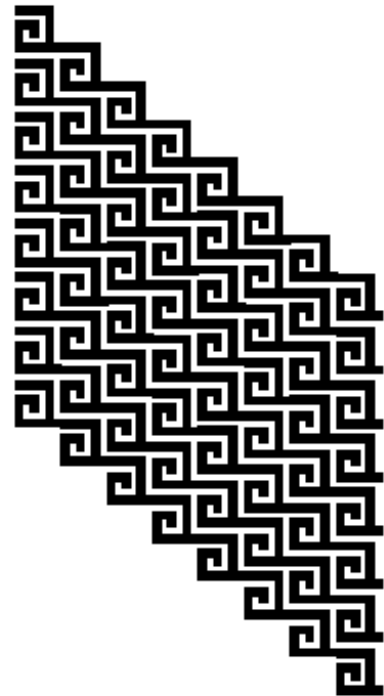
### Chapter the Third

1. The Carleton College Druids never thought in terms of starting a "great" religion. Anarchy was their byword.
2. They had no training system for the clergy, even though the very word Druid is most often taken to mean "High Priests.
3. The ancient Druids often took twenty years to complete training in the arts of healing, divination, music, priest craft.
4. I myself have devoted my life to magic. Why should I want a part-time religion?

### Chapter the Fourth

1. Folks in NRDNA who wish to continue the Carleton style of worship are welcome to do so, but there are those of us who felt it was our Karma to find a Druid way both older and deeper.
2. I want to see the ancient way restored to its full power and splendor.
3. I want to know the Gods of my ancestors, to come face to face with them on their own terms.
4. I want to know their music, their language, their teachings, and their love.
5. It may take more than our individual lifetimes, but I know it can be done.

Sally Eaton  
December 1981



# The Beginning of ADF

(© Isaac Bonewits, 1983)

(New to ARDA 2)

Originally published in *Druid's Progress* #1 of ADF

Welcome to the first issue of the Druids' Progress. Some of this Report will be familiar to a few of you, since I'm combining materials from several previously published articles with the contents of the first announcement letters about ADF. I'm doing this so I can send out this first issue to new Inquirers and give you all the data you need at once. Please note, however, that only supporting members of ADF will be guaranteed future issues. This whole project is being run on the proverbial shoestring... and the original Druids apparently did their rites barefoot! Let's start with the original "Open Letter" that planted the first seeds:

This is going out to all the people who have written to me wanting Neopagan Druid literature, training and/or fellow Druids with whom to worship. Copies are also going to various Neopagan publications, as well as a few folks who have indicated interest in the general topic of Druidism.

As many of you may know (perhaps from reading my book *Real Magic* or Margot Adler's *Drawing Down the Moon*, I've been a priest of the Reformed Druids of North America ("RDNA") since 1969. I've led groves (congregations) in Berkeley and Minneapolis, and founded others elsewhere; published newsletters (both Druidic and general Neopagan); and wrote most of, edited and produced *The Druid Chronicles Evolved*, (the closest thing to official scriptures the RDNA has). I'm also a priest and elder of the Craft, and I've been a Neopagan magician and occultist for nearly twenty years.

I've studied, practiced and written about many different forms of magic and religion over the years, yet always I find myself going back to Druidism. Many people have written to me to tell of similar spiritual histories, of their knowledge that they are meant to walk a Druid path. Yet what can we, who wish to worship and to grow as Neopagan Druids, do for fellowship? The Masonic Druids have much to teach us, yet they are not Neopagan. The "Druidic" traditions of Wicca are interesting, but they're not really very Druidic. The members of the RDNA have no interest at all in being organized by anyone, nor in recruiting and training would-be Neopagan Druids. There doesn't seem to be any organized group of people trying to reconstruct what the Paleopagan Druids actually believed and did, nor trying to apply such knowledge to creating a Neopagan religion fit for the Space Age.

What can we do? We can do it ourselves. Thanks to the researches of such scholars as Dumezil, Ross, Piggott, Duran and others, we now have a sizable amount of realistic data about Indo-European Paleo paganism and its clergy. But how do we apply this knowledge to creating a modern Neopagan religion? What does it mean to be a Druid in the 1980's? Using accurate information as starting point, how do we create rituals and fellowship, art and music, polytheologies and lifestyles that will give meaning to our lives and those of others?

Well, of course, I have my own vision of Neopagan Druidism. I see Druids as artists and intellectuals, magicians and clergy, holders of the highest wisdom their cultures (or subcultures) have to offer. This is what they used to be, and what (with sufficient hard work and dedication) they could be again. A number of people have told me that they share my

vision and approve of the wars in which I think it could be accomplished. So, after a great deal of soul-searching, I've decided to try once again to see what I can do to create a form of "reconstructionist" Neopagan Druidism.

The purpose of this letter is an announcement of, and an invitation for, your participation in, the creation of: *Ár nDraíocht Féin*. The Irish words (pronounced "arn ree-ocht fane") mean "Our own Druidism," and that's what I have in mind – a brand new form of Druidism, not just Pan-Celtic, but Pan-European. (By this latter term, I mean to include any of the European branches of the Indo-European culture and language tree – Celtic, Germanic, Slavic, Baltic, even the pre-Classical Greek & Roman.) Paradoxically, this would resemble the original Paleopagan Druidism far more than any efforts of the last thousand years. It would be based on the best scholarly research available, combined with what has been learned (about art, psychology, small group politics and economics) through the theory and practice of modern Neopaganism, and my own knowledge of the polytheological and practical details of magical and religious phenomena.

I've already started this project, through the organizing of my notes and the beginning of a new book. The purpose of the druid handbook will be to enable anyone who has a copy to start up their own Druidic grove, or to practice as a solitary Druid. Everything necessary will be included: history, polytheology, liturgy, legal structures, art and music, calendars and customs, etc.

This is where you come in, I'd like to make sure that what I'm creating will fulfill genuine needs in other Neopagans. So I'm going to need feedback, advice and research help from many people in order to make this project work. Unfortunately, I'm also going to need some sort of minimal financing in order to devote the time necessary to do this right (I'm talking about 10-20 hours per week for 2-3 years). Otherwise I simply can't do the huge job of coordinating the research and writing the book in anything less than 5-10 years.

What I have in mind is this: despite my experiences with Pagan publishing in the past, I'm willing to produce a highly irregular, nonscheduled Druid publication (that's what you're reading now). This will come out three or four times per year, and will simply consist of xeroxed sheets of dot matrix type. (I'm deliberately going to keep the format as simple as possible, so as to avoid falling into the common Neopagan pit of spending increasing amounts of time and money on improving the physical appearance of the publication, when I should be concentrating on content). Issues will include selections from the work in progress; research materials (advice, requests and reports for and from the readers); scholarly, liturgical and polytheological debates; Druidic rituals and guided meditations; and anything else that looked interesting and Druidic around publication time. (And since more and more people are wanting ADF to turn into an active Neopagan religion as soon as possible, I'll be including organizational materials and advice as well.)

Now Druidism is not everyone's cup of tea, so I'm not expecting a large response to this announcement. Professional journals for specialized interest groups charge as much as \$850 per year, but I'm willing to mail out this stuff to people donating \$20 or more per year (depending upon what each supporting subscriber honestly feels they can afford to contribute to the project). That won't be enough for me to "earn a living from my religion," but it could enable me to devote the time and energy needed (not to mention the expense of paper, postage, computer disks, printer ribbons, phone bills, etc.) without my actually losing money on the project.

If you're interested, send your donation to me with a clearly printed or typed name, mailing address, zip or postal code, home and work phones (optional, with hours you can be reached at each), areas of expertise (European languages you can read and write, artistic skills, research background and resources, Neopagan training already received, etc.) and areas of special interest (what you would most like to learn and what you think would be most useful to publish). Make our your check or money order to "P. E. I. Bonewits," and enclose a large (manila 9"x11" or 6"x9") self-addressed stamped envelope. If there aren't enough people who are enthusiastic about the project, the envelopes will be used to return the money of those who have responded. Otherwise, I'll use them to mail out the first issue sometime this spring. (Obviously, the response, though small, was enough to encourage me to go ahead. If you're receiving this issue in response to one of ADF's ads, then you don't really need to send in envelopes with your donation, unless you want to help out with the mailing costs on your future issues.)

With a little bit of luck, the blessings of the Gods and a great deal of hard work, we can create an authentically Druidic Neopagan religion our ancestors would be proud of. ADF is an idea I have been wrestling with for years: a Neopagan Druid Order whose members would not be ashamed to honestly compare themselves with the original Druids. This requires mature, dedicated and talented people who are willing to invest both time and energy over a long period (remember, the original Druids took up to twenty years each to be fully trained, and they had an intact tradition).

The response to a rather small mailing of the Open Letter has been remarkable. About ten percent of the recipients have replied, and among them are a dozen linguists (who speak/read/write French, Spanish, German, Irish, Welsh, Russian, Czech, Latin, Greek, Sanskrit, Anglo-Saxon, Gothic, etc.). Several people who come from families that have always considered themselves Druidic have written, as have a few folks who are already students of Indo-European and/or Celtic studies. I expected a high proportion of Ph.D.'s and self-taught scholar, since they are common in the Neopagan community, but the actual proportion is amazing! Many have written to say how unsatisfied they have been with the scholarship and technical skills of other Neopagan traditions, and of how they have been looking for a group that took these matters seriously.

I've also had contact from poets, healers, and people who just talk to trees – and ADF will need these types just as much as we will need scholars (though there is a large overlap, of course). I haven't heard from very many traditional musicians, singers or dancers yet, but I hope we'll able to recruit some. We also need participation from folks who are active in various ecology and conservation groups; therapists willing to help train Neopagan clergy in pastoral counseling techniques; people from Celtic and other cultural revival movements, and so on.

At this point in the birthing process, details are in short supply, but the general outlines are becoming increasingly clear. I can at least give you some specific ideas as to...

-Isaac

## Later Selections: The Live Oak Years

### Open Letters to the Grove

(By Emmon Bodfish, 1985)

(New to ARDA 2)

#### Chapter the First

1. 11 November, 1985
2. Dear Stacey,
3. We will not be having Druid meetings at 616 Miner any more. Herb will be receiving a letter from my attorney to this effect.
4. This is not an indication of hostility towards you or anyone in the group; it is what I have to do to protect myself legally.
5. Yes, some bad, heavy garbage came down from that quarterly Monday meeting. Till we get it worked out, there won't be anything going on at this place.
6. I guess you should call Bob Blunt or Lesley for when and where they are going to be doing Druidism. If and when Larry and I get together anything on our own, I'll sure let you know.
7. Poor Larry seems pretty disgusted and burned out right now.
8. Let's hope for the future,
9. Emmon

#### Chapter the Second

1. 12 November, 1985
2. Dear Bob Blunt,
3. In the last year I have seen the official status, Incorporation, and the prospect of material gain corrupt the Reformed Druids. This has happened over and over again in the history of religion.
4. I don't want this to happen or to help it on its way to becoming a political power grab or established religion.
5. I would like to see it become again a group of like-minded people who met for spiritual purposes, as when Joan had it, or Larry.
6. In line with this, I have changed my will and the Grove Site will no longer be left to The Reformed Druids, Inc., but to my son.
7. Material has corrupted us.
8. Since I am retired, and since it is the Sweeney Gelt figure's duty in Celtic society to give off-the-wall opinions, I offer this one for the improvement of the Live Oak Grove.



9. Disincorporate. Go back to being just a group of friends who meet, moons and High Days.
10. Whomever's house we meet at would be clearly understood to be just hosting that one meeting, like a party for friends.
11. No precedents, no obligations, no misunderstandings.
12. This would get rid of all the insurance and legal hassles, also.
13. -Emmon

### Chapter the Third

1. Resolution Suggestion:
2. WHEREAS the so-called "election" that took place on November 10, 1985, was conducted in an atmosphere of fear, hostility and intimidation, and,
3. WHEREAS some people were afraid to participate because of the aforesaid atmosphere, and,
4. WHEREAS the outcome of this "election" was reported erroneously in "A Druid Missal-Any," a publication which has, in the past, purported to be the official publication of RDNA, Inc.,
5. BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that those "elections" were neither valid nor binding upon the membership of this corporation.
6. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Fair and Genuine Elections will be held on or before the Feast of Brigit, 1986, and the results reported to "A Druid Missal-Any" for publication.



## Druidism and Truth

(An Editorial by Thomas Cross, Nov.1986)

(New to ARDA 2)

### Chapter the First: "Druid"

1. The word druid itself is rooted in the same Indo-European source as the English word true and truth: names \*dru – the zero-grade form of \*deru "firm, solid, steadfast" which also gave us such words as tree, endure, durable, the Greek drus, Sanskrit druvam and so forth.
2. Since Druid means "he who is truthful" or "the firm, solid and steadfast one" (in Gaulish druis "druid" in nominative case, druidos in the genitive), it is appropriate that we look always for the truth and always utter the truth.
3. In old Irish sagas, the druid or seer who utters a falsehood is cursed and some disaster befalls him and whenever he takes an oath he promises or swears that if he should utter a falsehood knowingly, he may be swallowed up into the earth or some other calamity take him.

### Chapter the Second: "Truth"

1. In our modern information age that we are now entering, I urge that us modern day druids do our share of preserving truth and guarding against falsehood and dishonesty.
2. I am of course speaking in terms of advertising, everyday speech, on the job, in school, in business, etc.
3. The truth must be able to stand on its own. Truth is not opinion, truth is fact, truth is not values, but truth, though it be impersonal, often hurts when people cannot face it.
4. I find that my greatest pet peeve is misinformation, misleading speculation, propaganda, deception in reporting and teaching. There is much deliberate writing of misinformation in the writings of the occult world.
5. Often the authors are too lazy or too hasty to do the proper research for supporting their opinions or they deliberately falsify their sources and present pseudo-history as history or vice versa.
6. There are so many popular misconceptions held by so many that the truth will be distorted for a long time in the folklore of the modern occultist and neo-pagan in the years to come – although we have the correct information available in most public libraries alongside the misinformation.

### Chapter the Third: "Fundgelicals"

1. Another source of misinformation being disseminated to the general public (outside of the neo-pagan milieu) is the propaganda of the Christian Fundamentalists and Evangelists or "Fundagelicals," who deliberately report falsehoods about the beliefs of others in order to build "straw-men" of their religious and ideological competitors.
2. Often the Fundagelicals report or present their own idiosyncratic or personal religious views as if they were fact – that is, as if they were the objective truth!
3. The Fundagelicals, one might say, confuse fact with values or opinions – a blatant error in logic!

## Chapter the Fourth: “Readings”

1. In the field of Celtic scholarship concerning the ancient or paleo-Druids, there is so much nonsense being passed off as fact that it is a time-consuming and tedious task to begin to research the subject.
2. To the beginner and those who have fallen victim to the nonsense, I recommend that you read many of the books coming out in the field of comparative religion and mythology by Georges Dumezil, Jaan Puhvel, Gerald Larson, Bruce Lincoln (to name a few) and consult the works of Mircea Eliade – one of the great 20<sup>th</sup> century scholars.
3. For those who are concerned about ecology and conservation, I recommend Lovelock’s Gaia.
4. For the general reader I would recommend The New Apocrypha by John Sladek, Psychology’s Occult Doubles by Leahy, The Psychology of Transcendence by Andrew Neher, the Dictionary of Misinformation by Burnam, More Misinformation by Burnam, There are Alligators in our Sewers by Dickson.

## Chapter the Fifth: “Skepticism”

1. Also I recommend that all neo-pagans develop a skeptical side to how they view these things, to read between the lines, and question things and be curious. It is o.k. to be curious – in fact, it is healthy to be curious about life.
2. Most everyone reading this newsletter, will probably think to him or herself, “Oh I always think for myself, I question things, I read between the lines” and so forth.
3. I ask that you even question that, and even question what I have written as you read.
4. I am not suggesting that we be distrustful, or become reductionists, or overly critical and skeptical.
5. I am suggesting though, that we become less emotional and more inquisitive about learning... that we don’t just accept things because they merely feel good or seem to work.
6. Playing around with metaphysics and making experiments with our consciousness is serious business, and one can so easily fool oneself into believing things that are not the case which can have serious repercussions for the future.
7. If anyone has read the book “The Day the Universe Changed” by James Burke or seen the series on PBS, you will understand on the worldly level also.

## Chapter the Sixth: “Logic”

1. I recommend that you get a copy of a good simple-to-read book on Logic or Reasoning – especially if you have never studied the subject and read it carefully (I recommend “Introduction to Logic” by Copi).
2. Take a course in logic at a local college or school, it will well be worth it for anyone.
3. A fun pastime would be to identify fallacies while reading or watching TV or listening to the radio – (advertising is rife with fallacies and propaganda techniques).
4. Pretty soon you can tear apart the arguments of books simply on grounds of incorrect reasoning or illogic.

## Chapter the Seventh: “Worlds”

1. I am sure this article will have offended many right-brain, purely emotional mystics, who believe that truth can only be found through some altered state or dream-world; my rebuttal to them is that they are not speaking of this world that we all must live in together.
2. I am talking about the physical world, the here and now, and the rules for living here depends upon people getting along with each other, keeping the environment clean and inhabitable, avoidance of war, avoidance of crime, learning to live with the weather and climatic conditions and avoiding stress, disease, poisons and dishonesty.
3. We all must face that we have to have the mundane necessities in order to survive and we cannot live by spiritual and visionary or magical experiences alone.
4. -Tom Cross

## Chapter the Eighth: “Nonsense”

1. P.S. Nonsense or Popular Fallacies in the Neo-Pagan World:
2. That worshipping a Male deity is a trait of a male dominated society, or, that worshipping a female deity is the trait of a female dominated society.
3. That a society that used matrilineal descent was “matriarchal.”
4. That all patriarchal societies treated females as inferiors.
5. That the mother goddesses of Europeans in pagan times are derived from a pre-Indo-European matriarchal or matrilineal people, and/or that they all represent a universal Mother-Earth.
6. That all celestial deities are male deities.
7. That removing sexism from our language will help us to be less sexist. (The Turks and Persians or Iranians have almost genderless mono-sexist languages – yet their cultures are very sexist).
8. That religious beliefs can be handed down genetically – that certain races have certain types of souls or spirits.



# Letter to the Editor

(By Albion, January 1987)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. I especially have come to enjoy “The Heathen on the Heath” series – it’s well written and thoughtful, there is a place for both the scholarly point of view and “the country pagan” point of view. In my opinion, both are important.
2. I’ve lived in the country twice in my life, and it’s much easier to be a “real” pagan in the country than in the city.
3. In my opinion – the natural cycles of the Earth and the seasons are far easier to follow and to be in tune with in the country – I long for the mountains and woods in my heart – I really don’t like living in the city, but for now, that’s reality I suppose.
4. Thom Cross tells me that the Celts really weren’t Chthonic oriented – or Mother Earth oriented, but were more sky and astronomically oriented.
5. Well, the Celts loved Nature, from what I read – and I personally believe that some of their Goddesses were very much Earth Mother types (Dana or Danu for one example) – and in a way, it doesn’t matter what the historic Celts believed in, or how they practiced their faith in the ancient times, but what we believe in and where we are going now.
6. I believe that Mother Earth needs our help, and now perhaps some of the “Balance” lost can be restored – perhaps I’m wrong – but that’s one of the major reasons that paganism is important to me – that I’m of Celtic descent is important too, but it’s second to the feelings above.
7. I believe that modern pagans should become more involved in ecology, because, at least to me, that is where the real “power” comes from – from our attunement to Nature, and to the natural cycles of building and decay-life and death.
8. I’m not trying to negate the role of scholarship and study either, for these are very important too – but one can probably learn more about the role of one’s life in relation to the whole, and to “the Gods” by a few days in the wilderness, than by weeks spent studying in the library, or in one’s study.
9. I suppose that it comes down to a question of balance in our lives, as well as in nature (which are lives are a part of – no matter if we live in city or country), to balance the studying and scholarship, and the playing and questing in Nature out, one with the other – “the middle path” as the Tibetan Buddhists might say.

-Albion



# A Rebuttal to Albion

and the Irrationalists and the Anti-Intellectual  
and Anti-Celtic “Druids”  
(or Those who call themselves “Druids”  
‘cause they like the name)  
(By Tom Cross, Feb 1987)  
(New to ARDA 2)

## Chapter the First: “Celts”

1. I would like to point out that I never told him that the Celts were “astronomically” oriented nor did I tell him that the ancient Celts had no chthonic beliefs (at all).
2. Mr. Albion has made a “straw man” of me and he uses an ad hominem argument by implying that I am anti-ecological or anti-nature because I happen to believe in BOTH the celestial and terrestrial.
3. Albion is apparently stricken with urban romanticism and somehow believes that knowing “too much” about the ancient Celts will somehow keep you from appreciating nature (which he equates with mother-earth).
4. The Celtic peoples of pagan times were very much concerned with natural phenomena. This is clearly not the same thing as MOTHER Nature, whom we have seen on margarine commercials (and elves do not bake cookies in trees either).
5. The ancient Celts have been romanticized for three centuries or more, and the Druids have been characterized as anything from White-Robed Hermits to Astronomers and medicine men.
6. I believe that we modern Druids are above this kind of la-de-da romanticism that contributes nothing to our intellectual and spiritual growth, but merely serves to obscure the truth behind pseudo-science and whimsical folklore and fairy-tales.
7. If paganism or NEO-paganism has to hide behind pseudo-science and irrational obscurantism, then it is not better off than the rubbish promulgated by mad-men, the delusions, the fads and falsehood that will certainly lead our civilization to ignorance and ruin.
8. Mr. Albion has attacked the years of research I have put into reconstructing and organizing the vast amount of comparative studies on the Druids and what they might have actually taught.
9. Because Albion has learned much from me (well, maybe not) and because he seems to be disappointed in what the paleo-Druids were about, he has decided to attack the messenger for the message.
10. However, he would not have been so quick to attack had he understood the significance of what the paleo-Druid’s message had to teach, but unfortunately he finds his own reality a safe place than to try to comprehend the world of the ancient Celt.
11. Of course it is not easy to understand the world-view of the ancient pagans – but nothing worth knowing is always going to be EASY.

## Chapter the Second: “Danu”

1. Furthermore, Albion hasn’t his facts straight... Danu (Anglicized as Dana) was not an EARTH MOTHER type so far as scholars can deduce, for the name Danu comes from an Indo-European root meaning “to flow” or “to drip” (see page 175 of Julius Pokorny’s Dictionary)...
2. Going by the fact that Danu is cognate with the name of the Danube river (\*Danu- in Celtic renamed Danuuius by the Romans) it seems that She is (or was) originally a River Goddess.
3. This is not uncommon since rivers all over Britain and Ireland (also Gaul) are named after Celtic goddesses.
4. Danu’s role in Celtic myths is very shadowy and ill-definable – all we can surmise is that she is the Mother-of-the-Gods since the name Tuatha De Danann (=tribes of Goddess Danu) and Welsh Mabinogi characters with divine names are frequently “ap Don” (= “son of Don” or “Son of Danu”).
5. Also there are river names all over Britain resembling this Don/Danu: Donwy river, Don river (in Scotland) and the two Dee rivers (the Dee= Celtic Deua in Gaulish (or Brythonic) “goddess” the feminine equivalent of Deus “god.”)
6. Therefore, we have no real evidence for believing that Danu was an earth goddess.
7. Out of respect for the intelligence of Missal-Any readers I believe I am obligated to research and substantiate my assertions before I allow my ideas to be published... in Albion’s case, what he has written speaks for itself.. as what many others have written in neo-pagan journals.
8. If you were led to think that Danu was an earth goddess and it was never presented to you any other way, you would not know any better.

## Chapter the Third: “Tailltiu”

1. Unfortunately, Albion didn’t know or consider using a better and more plausible example of an earth goddess for the ancient Celts (which I might add is quite obvious if one knows anything about Celtic mythology) that is Tailltiu who gave her name to Teltown – the site of an ancient shrine for ancient Irish pagans.
2. The name Tailltiu is etymologically cognate with the Latin Tellus and these names go back to an Indo-European root meaning “ground, floor” \*Te[-] and this gave the Gauls their word for earth talamu (genitive talamun) in Irish this word is talamh.
3. The ancient Romans had Terra mater ‘mother earth’ or quite literally “mother land.” The Greeks had Gaia which James Lovelock used as the title of a well-known book...
4. And well the Celts loved nature so much but... if you’re like Albion: just go out to the country and make up your own religion... why give a rat’s arse about all that boog larning’ anyway!?!?
5. -Thomas Cross



## Chapter the Fourth: "Satire"

1. The Modern Irrationalist
2. Of Fundamentalist Paganism
3. (A Satire by Thomas Cross)
4. I'm a kentree pagan ya see s'I doan need no ejjy-kayshunz
5. I doan give a dayam 'bout whut them ancient Droods tawt
6. I bleeve to be a true nay-o pagan ya need misty-cull oh-cayshunz
7. I doan wanna hair no tock 'bout them seltic or kelchick stories
8. I thank we should jest make it all up from our own thought.
9. I bleev that iffen ye larn too mech 'bout them myth-all-jeez
10. Ye aint goan get haaa oan naychur lag hawkin' in the wudds
11. Them payble who sets cheer in they lah-berries an' steddies
12. Hey man I doan wanna larn nuthin' I jest wont vibrations.
13. Whudda hair ya sayin' is that yew bleev in yer reality
14. Well Ah got ma own reality ma min' is closed to what them skollies have to say
15. I thank all ye gotta do is go outside and teeka hawk through the wudds
16. I shore do miss them mountains I hate the setty laugh
17. I wants to get backy nachur lag the good ole daze
18. Although I'm not a blood-selt Ifail it een ma hort
19. I gnaw een ma hort awm a drood dude, man
20. So doan go conner-dickin' ma re-al-it-tee
21. So daon go tailin' me 'bout them oldtimey Droodz
22. It herts ma broyn to hair that steff 'cuz I
23. Done made up moan red-legion annitz my re-al-it-tee
24. I'm kenchee pagan ya see s'I doan bleev in HIS-story
25. I doan keer whut them SIGH-en-tists bleev or soy
26. I doan keer fer TAKE-gnaw-lujjy or air Eek-con-gnome-ee
27. Een ma hort an' spert I gnaw it all jest from what ah fail
28. Doan gimme them high-falutin' kolleej wurds
29. All I wont is them vibrations, man
30. I bleev in getting' back to nature with nuthin' but an a shovel and SIGH-kick energy
31. I doan need no Sigh-enz to hep out the earth jest my reality.

## Chapter the Sixth: "Irrational"

1. "The Irrational Pagan"
2. -By Tom Cross, 1987
3. Bein' a pagan's nothin' more than goin' outside
4. Going out in the country and talkin' 'bout ecology
5. Yer only a true pagan when you go out in the woods
6. And getchy self in tune with nature or Mother Earth
7. We don't need Science and Technology
8. To make the world a better place for what it's worth.
9. Though I don't care what they had to say
10. I call myself a Druid anyway
11. I also say I'm a Celtic -man
12. Though I aint interested in their culture.
13. It don't matter what's in history's plan
14. I jest know what I fail in ma hort with nature
15. So don't go telling' me 'bout them ancient folks
16. You can only learn about them in books.
17. It hurts my eyes and brain to read 'bout ancient stuff.
18. So I bleeve what I fail in my hort is enough.
19. What I hair yo sayin' man is that you bleev in yer reality
20. Well I got my own reality and it's a safer place for me
21. In my own world where I b'long I get high on nature
22. I pine for the trees and mountains where there's no one
23. To Contradict me or disagree (with humongous college words)
24. There, I can say whatever I bleeve is pagan and Druidic
25. I can say that I am a Celt or Tibetan Buddhist and
26. No one can ask me questions about the Celtic or Buddhist bleefs.
27. Yep, I'm safe in my own reality there in the country
28. I am all alone to be a real backwoods mystic
29. Aint it a shame though that I have to live in the big city
30. Where there's a bunch o' other people talkin' and learnin'
31. I feel so damn powerless against them high rise buildings
32. I can only sound out magical energy to restore nature's balance.
33. But ahil there goes them damn scholars a-studyin' things again
34. Tellin' me it aint enough to be sendin' out vibrations
35. They tell me I got to read and learn things, damn that education!

-Thomas M. Cross 1987



# A Rebuttal to Cross

(By Albion, Jan 1987)

(New to ARDA 2)

## Chapter the First: “Corrections”

1. First off, I’d like to say that it saddens me deeply that I have obviously lost a good friend.
2. Thomas, my letter was not an attack upon you personally, though you obviously took it that way.
3. I am truly sorry to have offended a friend over something like having different opinions (and it seems that we are indeed worlds apart in our views).
4. If I could offer some opinions here, (notice I said “opinions,” that’s exactly what I mean) I am going to ignore all the pointed jabs that Thom Cross makes at me personally, but I do want to address several of the issues that he raises.
5. I never meant to imply that Thom was “anti-ecological” or “anti-nature,” I can’t see where he finds this from after re-reading the original letter (which, by the by, was a personal letter to Emmon and was only published after he asked me if I minded if he did so) of mine.
6. On the contrary, I knew that Thom loves nature, long before I wrote this letter.
7. Where in my letter in question, do I attack “the years of research” that you have done, there is a need for scholarship, as I pointed out, but reading and studying will never take one all the way to a spiritual experience, it can help, but something more is needed.

## Chapter the Second: “Celts”

1. It would be nice to know much more about what the Ancient Celts believed in and did, but even if I did know, it’s doubtful that I would live or practice ritual in the same manner as they did.
2. Paganism, like all living religion and true forms of spirituality, is an evolving and changing thing.
3. I find it highly doubtful that we could go back to the world of the Ancient Celts, as time at this level is linear, we can only go forward (or around, as the case may be).
4. The Celts, as all ancient cultures, did some rather ghastly and Barbaric things – that I personally would never want to be part of.
5. I stand corrected about Danu, however, as the meaning of words changed, Dana, or Danu, came to be connected with the land in general in Ireland, this holds true today, as well in yesteryear.

## Chapter the Third: “Pagans”

1. I think Thomas Cross is missing the point here, where paganism survived (at least in the British Isles) it was not usually the scholarly class who helped it do so, but the simple country people who had passed their beliefs on orally for hundreds of years, these people were not researchers, nor did their knowledge come from books-but it was passed down from generation to generation (by word of mouth).
2. I don’t advocate “making up” one’s own religion.

3. I do advocate getting to know your own Higher Self, I do advocate getting out of the cities if it’s possible, which in many cases it isn’t, in these cases some sort of “quest” into Nature and your own relationship to Nature at all levels is in order, I feel.
4. I feel that we as a species are at a turning point that could go either way – certainly, being an active ecologist is part of being pagan (at least for me).

## Chapter the Fourth: “Albion”

1. After living in California for two years, the condition of much of the air and water in the heavier populated places is simply appalling to me. So much for my “urban romanticism.”
2. I am proud to be of Celtic descent, I am interested in my ancestry and always have been.
3. I am not a “Druid” –since the real Ancient Druids all died off centuries ago (or thousands of years ago). What really qualifies one to be a “Druid?” There are many Druid-revivalist groups both here and in Europe, are any of them “real” Druids?
4. I have received teachings from a hereditary pagan from England, from two “Wicca” groups of modern origins, and done much research into Native-American Spirituality and Religion, as well as much reading into the Celts and everything Celtic, including their religion.
5. I’m probably also affected by “Quaker” thought (or “The Society of Friends”) which was the last branch of Christianity that I was associated with before I adopted paganism.
6. I am not especially fond of titles, but “pagan” serves quite nicely at this time.
7. I do not think of myself as a scholar, but as a reasonably simple person, who wishes to see Life thrive and our planet survive these turbulent times.
8. If I have offended the readers of “A Druid Missal-Any,” including Thomas Cross, I apologize. But, we are all entitled to our own opinions.
9. P.S. As to the mocking of my Southern accent: as Mark Twain once said, “You got the words, but you ain’t got the tune.”



# The Balanced Epistle

(By Les Craig, March 1987)

(New to ARDA 2)

## Chapter the First: “Balance”

1. Balance? Not to doubt You, oh my Mother, but I don't see it.
2. As the hill greens around me, and the ducks begin to lay, work looms large; winter's anomie begins to thaw, and my own identity pokes its nose out of hiding – a belated groundhog in search of its shadow.
3. Where is meaning, or mission, or will? There is a place for me in these hills, and right easily could I stagnate in it.
4. Seasons come to us, reminding us that we are neither omnipotent nor alone, but seasons have as many names as there are folk to speak them.
5. I give rose-cuttings to a Wiccan neighbor 'for Brigid', because if I said Oimeic, she'd say "huh?"
6. And local farmers have other names for it: lambing-time, and also a pain in the ass, with bummers to nurse and marauders to repel – coyote, cougar, dog-pack. And then one must ask, are the berry-bushes cut yet?
7. Does the nursery have seed-potatoes? The time to remember the Equinox, and planting, is in February, before it is too late.

## Chapter the Second: “Tradition”

1. Much is said in these pages of tradition, and of scholarship, and of knowledge that must not be lost.
2. Others, I among them, point in turn to the knowledge that sits directly in front of our noses, just waiting to be ignored.
3. Neither the traditional scholar nor I can do anything as a purist but yell at the other; in the vibrating tension between us is most of reality.
4. So let me say now that I do not set out to abandon the mythic awareness of our forefolk, but only to live a life with leaves as well as roots.
5. If we are not merely the inventors of myth, but co-participants with the gods, then we must recognize that myth springs both from humanity and from the soil itself.
6. Gladly will I learn what my people once knew of their homeland. But if you ask me (or even if you don't; you can always read something else!) I will tell you what I learn from my own homeland, for that may well be the only thing on Earth that I know and you don't.
7. Myth likes the grubby liberty of the hills, and hill folk join gladly in the game, taking to themselves small notorieties as straight-men to Nature's comedies, or soldiers in mythic battles.
8. There is a Trickster here, called The Buck You'd Better Not Shoot At: he's robbed a thousand gardens with impunity, and whoso shoulders a gun against him is injured in the attempt.
9. I've seen him myself; he's magnificent.
10. There are good-lucks and bad-lucks, many of them founded in common sense: don't hunt between the houses,

could hardly be called baseless superstition, nor could the rough interpretations of Karma or hubris that passes for common knowledge.

11. “Something will hear you!” we warn our braggarts, and they turn pale and shut up.
12. And “god” help the one who drives heedlessly by a neighbor's stalled or swamped vehicle, for the local gods will not.

## Chapter the Third: “Trees”

1. Where do these youthful, local traditions and the elder traditions of Celtic Druidism meet?
2. I spent as many days as anyone else with neither any recognizable knowledge, nor any use for it; then a neighbor came to me. “You're the Druid around here,” he said; “which trees should I be careful not to cut?”
3. I could have said that Druids don't deal with things like that, except that what little I know of tradition states that our forebears were priests and cognoscenti, meant to be consulted by their neighbors.
4. I could have said that Neopagan Druidism was a religion – but since when does that make it irrelevant?
5. So “the Druid around here” spent a long day in a neighbor's woodlot, trying to feel the life-forces of trees, inspecting roots for firmness and tops for fullness, and trying to remember snatches of an ecology course she took in 1970.
6. Seat of the pants flying, indeed- but it might have been less confusing if I'd spent more time studying!

## Chapter the Fourth: “Conclusion”

1. And there, perhaps, we have balance, if not stability. Just so is the spring a time of balance, though when it snows one day and cooks my greenhouse the next, it may be too pretty to appreciate it.
2. The year is not an orderly, well-mannered procession; it goes by fits and starts. And learning, if it is to take us anywhere we haven't been before, must see-saw between study and appreciation, with each testing the other.
3. And when I am confused, I shall admit confusion – not by intoning that there are Things I Was Not Meant To Know, but by realizing that I can't see (or portray) the whole picture at once.
4. I speak to you only as one person speaking, saying one thing at a time.
5. We are not the people of the One God, the One Truth, or the One Way; we are like the forces of Nature that we worship – a howling confabulation of extremes.
6. This is our balance (as when we chant to a March windstorm, “Balanced now are we!” and burst into giggles.)
7. Let no voice among us be silenced; this is what we are, and how we grow.



# Spring Equinox Salvo

(By Tom Cross, April 1987)

(New to ARDA 2)

## Chapter the First: “Credentials”

1. Why does Albionn think that a religion should evolve and grow away from scholarship and towards some opinions unsupported by facts or contradictory of facts?
2. The fact is that the Celtic myths were composed by a scholarly class, the intelligentsia made up of bards, filidhe and druids, not by mere eclectic pluralism.
3. Why does Albionn bring up some boasts about learning from some “hereditary” pagan group or about “Native-American Spirituality” and then “humble” himself with an appeal to plain folks (false modesty) about “I do not think of myself as a scholar?”
4. The last statement is certainly partly true, what he truly is (as far as I am concerned) is a scholar manqué – a half-hearted scholar who hasn’t the interest to carefully read and utilize the materials he has requested.
5. If he were only using the data for his personal use and distorting it, I would not protest, but since he is putting his misrepresentations before many others – I must protest strongly.
6. I am vehemently opposed to deliberate misrepresentation of the tradition for the purpose of changing it to suit an individual’s personal biases and prejudices and to deliberately pervert it.
7. As much as he has said, he is not promoting evolution or anyone getting to know his or her higher self – but rather to close people’s minds to the possibilities offered by a reasonable and competent study of the ancient tradition.
8. He is promoting darkness, not enlightenment.

## Chapter the Second: “Titles”

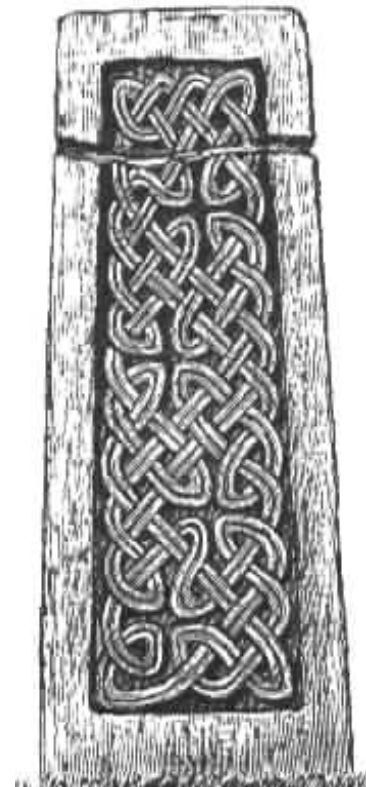
1. While Albion uses the genetic fallacy saying he’s a Celt simply because he MAY be descended from Celts and saying that he has studied them (that’s questionable to a degree) he appeals to authority (fallacy) by saying he’s privy to some other traditions unrelated.
2. Scholars have better methods than mere fallacious reasoning to find the truth, and not just self-congratulatory appeals to folk wisdom and hearsay, but rather documentation.
3. Albion speaks for himself only as an individual (this I can say is his only defense), but somehow he expects that everyone should agree with his opinions because he appeals to the crowd by saying “it is highly doubtful we could go back to wishing to “see Life thrive and our planet survive.”
4. Is he running for office? Certainly he is right in saying that “being an ecologist is part (my underscore) of being a pagan.”
5. Albion suffers from onomatophobia when he is not fond of titles, because he has a problem with words and categories.
6. He doesn’t want to label anything cause that means he would have to express himself, that he would have to

define things and categorize them; which is something he’d rather not do because that means getting to know something about them.

7. Also I might add, the avoidance of labeling things by many people, is simply to avoid giving them any meaning so that they can mean whatever they want them to at will and whimsy.

## Chapter the Third: “Conclusion”

1. We were friends and he originally wrote to me asking for information on the ancient Celts, but unfortunately he’s given me more reasons for mistrust because of his insincerity (pretending to understand the data when he didn’t even read it) then taking what little he remembered and distorting it before our fellow pagans.
2. Albion had the data that would reconstruct the ancient Druids’ wisdom right under his nose, but he ignored it because it required some intellectual thinking and an imagination as well as some difficult studying (philology, a bit of structural anthropology, comparative mythology, etc.)
3. If I had known that this stuff was too difficult for him, I would not have wasted my time trying to provide him with guidelines, but he led me to believe otherwise.





# Druidaxta

(By Tom Cross, April 1987)

(New to ARDA 2)

## Chapter the First: “Names”

1. Onomatophobia, onomaphobia- these are the fear of words and names.
2. To be afraid of labeling oneself and other thing about oneself is to be afraid to categorize things.
3. To be afraid to refer to something in writing and any other communication is certainly a sign of a lack of self-confidence and certainly a lack of knowing whom one's self is.
4. Honesty in the use of words, or phrases, that is, true communication, is a very real and vital form of Life.
5. It is, along with actions or deeds, a divine and human phenomenon that is important to the expression of love, of freedom, of joy, of thought and emotion.
6. As the ancient Druids of Gaul were to say, according to Diogenes Laertius, “the gods must be worshipped, and no evil done, and manly behaviour maintained.”
7. And from the Colloquy of the Ancients (Acallamh na Senorach) Caelte told Patrick, that “truth in our hearts, strength in our arms, and fulfillment in our tongues” were the virtues of the pagan Irish.

## Chapter the Second: “Maya”

1. The elder Druids, which were reconstructionists (such as me), accept as our forbearers both spiritually as well as in name, were deeply concerned with the speaking of truth – intellectual and spiritual honesty.
2. The misuse of words is illusion – maya as the Indian Druids, the Brahmins, would call it.
3. Perhaps, the whole universe, the cosmos, the order, as we have named it and as we have perceived it in our mythologies and metaphysics are all pure maya, and in order to transcend it, we must get to know the illusion well enough to become disillusioned and then we can achieve the experience of deeply knowing and transcending the walls of illusion.
4. One cannot jump immediately from naïveté to transcendence with out experiencing a profound disillusionment first.
5. But one cannot change the world without changing the self and to change the self is a process of transcendence, a process of disillusionment, of accepting the truth about one's self and the cosmic order.
6. There is an eternal order to the external and internal world that does not evolve in any perceivable and contrived manner, the perceived evolution is within. The unperceived evolution is only identifiable by its results and not the process.

## Chapter the Third: “Tradition”

1. The gods of the ancient Celts are like those of the Vedic Indians, Germanic peoples, etc. because they evolved from their Indo-European forbearers, as did the others, but the

essential characteristics did not change by direct manipulation of the myth by people on the folk level.

2. The Druids always strove to keep the tradition intact, to keep it pure from foreign influence, to be caretakers of tradition so that it would not be diluted by those who would use it for maya (for deception) to contrive to force it to fit some purely modern needs in their time.
3. The Druids were indeed the cognoscenti of the ancient Celts and not peasants practicing some deviant religion.
4. Even the keepers of the traditions today, the seanchaithe of the Gaeltacht, tell the tales as they were told to them, that is they try to keep the tales word for word as they were transmitted, they avoid distorting and perverting the tradition... except, perhaps, a fabulist here and there, who may parody himself.
5. Even those pagan cults, which survived Christianity, were usually isolated and kept their traditions pure from some “new fangled” eclectic influence.
6. By the way, any pagan cult of the British isles which professes to be a PAGAN religion or cult, is more than likely not to be any older than this century, but you can see the oldest pagan cults (which have more links with the ancient pagan religion) carrying on through the Catholic Church tradition (e.g. the holy wells, saints cults, relic cults, and other hagiographical sites and traditions).
7. But it must be admitted that these are on a folk-level, not the products of the Celtic society of the time of the Druids.
8. Many scholars have gone out into the field to work with the conservators of ancient tradition. The Irish Folklore Commission has collected hundreds of recordings of Irish seanchaithé (shanachies – the traditional story-tellers) and published many transcriptions of the stories.

## Chapter the Third: “Inheritance”

1. Similarly, the Parsis of India are continuers of Zoroastrian religion who fled Iran for Gujarat, India. There are still the Irani (Zoroastrians) of Iran, who knows what has happened to them since Fundamentalist Islam has risen there?
2. But the mobads (the magi or priests) of the Parsis has not succumbed to eclecticism from the coming of western religious tourists who went there to study under them and over them in the twentieth century.
3. Although, some theosophists did succeed in converting some Parsis to Theosophy, they were very few and the mobads or magi did not allow it to pervert their tradition which was handed down to them from the ancient magi (mobad is the direct linguistic descendent of magu- (patis) that ancient Persian word for a magus, our word is Latinized and Hellenized.)
4. Modern Parsis, though, do not inherit their religion through their genes; its not a biological concept flowing through blood into the cerebrum.
5. There are many people of Irish descent who could claim legitimate descent from the Druids, filidhe, and bards of Old Erin.
6. If one has the last name of McNeilly, one may be a direct paternal descendent of an fili (“poet” “seer”) since McNeilly derives from Mac an Fhilleadh “son of the fili,” and other names of Ireland and Scotland's Highlands derive from occupational surnames of the Druids and Bardic class. Some clans and septs were hereditary bards.

7. I, myself, could be descended from ancient Irish satirists since my forefathers were the MacCrossans of Donegal, but my Welsh and Scottish forbearers do not have occupational surnames but other kinds of surnames and they are not paternal or patrilineal.
8. However, these do not mean we are what our names mean any more than people named Smith are really smiths, or people named baker are really bakers or people named Taylor are really tailors.
9. Religion is not inherited genetically anymore than one's profession and is even less determined by birth than a name.
10. The Indo-Europeans were a culture which developed from a segmentary lineage (according to the French structural anthropologists) and this culture pattern is found among the Nuer of Africa who developed a very similar religion to that of the ancient Indo-Europeans.
11. Their version of the sky-father (Taranius of the Gauls) is called Kwoth and his descendants the gods of heaven are their version of the Irish Tuatha de Danann, but they also have equivalents of the Fomoire and numerous other similarities.
12. The genealogy of the gods and goddesses are a segmentary lineage, their culture is pastoral, and there are numerous other similarities. The metaphysics of the Druids of antiquity is more sophisticated than some "savage barbarianism" we get from hard primitivists and we need not romanticize them by elevating them to "Noble Savage" either.

### Chapter the Fourth: "Revival"

1. Sure, they have much in common with shamans, but the term shaman has been so abused by popular usage that the term has become almost meaningless.
2. Certainly they were not that much like classic shamans (as defined by Eliade, in his famous book) and only appear so on the most superficial level.
3. Do we want to popularize our Revivalist Druidism to some low proletariat level?
4. Do we want to succumb to creating some mass-media hype version of Druidism for display of middle-class or proletariat deviance because we may feel alienated?
5. Why not be rational and live according to what is honest and truthful?
6. We do not need self-deception.
7. We do not need to build walls by making our individual opinions become our dogmas.
8. The strength of our commitment to our "revived" and Reformed Druidism is productive efforts to create and not stagnate into some disunified sects professing some fundamentalist, fragmented dogmas and retreating into non-communication, non-participation, into a darkness of "belly-aching," complaining, and alienation.

### Chapter the Fourth: "Sacrifice"

1. We are not together as independent individuals battling for a monopoly of truth, but we are all part of the sacred cosmos.
2. We cannot defy nature; it is impossible, for we destroy ourselves in the attempt.
3. We must grow and allow evolution to take place by realizing that we are not mere individuals but a part of the

whole cosmos and that we are interdependent upon each other and everything of all that is.

4. Every one of us are a microcosm of the total order, we possess within ourselves the very physical elements of everything in the cosmos.
5. The cosmos, is interdependent also, it and all depends upon us both as individuals and as a collective unity.
6. The gods are within us. We need not look always for external manifestations of the divine and sacred.
7. Every act and deed we perform either conforms to nature, is creative and productive, or destructive and violent, both go together and both are part of the process of evolution.
8. Our act of eating, learning, and working (to create) are sacrifices... they are acts of sacrifice and when things become used, when things are given or spent, they are sacrificed also.
9. The food you eat has been sacrificed to you, and the water you drink has been sacrificed to you as an individual.
10. The love you give to someone else is a sacrifice to that person. And as Queen Medb made clear (she being a euhemerized goddess of Connacht) as her expectation of a husband (a king married to her-the tutelary goddess), "without jealousy, without fear, without stinginess."
11. Thus the embodiment of Royal Celtic and Druidic virtues in this triad includes generosity.
12. The king sacrifices cattle to feed his people and himself and he is a sacrifice himself. He stands as the leader and patriarch married, not only to his wife or wives, but to his goddess who protects and serves the people (her children).
13. The goddess is the land and people, the reign and the society and she is a part of the tribes' divine segmentary lineage, which itself is descended from the higher lineage of the Tuatha De Danann, the race of the gods of heaven and their lineage from the primordial family that rose from the oceans of chaos, from the fecundated darkness.
14. Thus the appearance of mankind is itself from the same and everyone has a bit of all within.
15. Therefore, "I am..., I am..." spoke Amhairghin when he stepped out of the boat of the "Milesians" and consecrated the sacred land of Erin by proclaiming himself, by meditating on the sacrifice within.
16. Donn, the Yama of the Irish pagans, is sacrificed and he dwells down into the otherworld where he built a home for mankind and his descendants.
17. He was a sacrificial victim, not so much placating the Tuatha De Danann, but as the ancestor (Dis Pater as Caesar would have called him) of mankind who prepared Teachh Duinn for the others.
18. There are many other themes in the early literature of the Irish and Welsh which correspond with other Indo-European themes right down to the detail: e.g. dogs which guard the entrances to the Otherworld/Underworld.. Cwn Annwn (Welsh), the Cu Sidhe, Kerberos (Greek), Garm (old Norse), the Hounds of Yama (Vedic) and so forth.

### Chapter the Fifth: "Barriers"

1. We do not need to create an ad-hoc Druidism to fit our preconceived notions of religion and something else; we do not need to distort Celtic myths to fit a modern ideology created to fit our prejudices and our own individual experience.

2. To do so, builds walls, breaks down communication, obstructs others' quest for truth, obscures learning and growth.
3. It is an obscurantist attitude to moan "there are things I am not meant to know" and to take to the fields as a Neo-Luddite and curse the repressive socio-economic-political system or the establishment; and get back in tune with nature is another thing.
4. Sure and certainly we are not "the people of one god, on Truth, one Way" but we are not "a howling confabulation of extremes" either. And if we are, why should we be?
5. It's something of a cop-out to merely point out that we are diverse in our attitude and opinions and not still grow like the branches on the tree, both in sharing a common knowledge, some common thread, some ground that we may share, that we may grow together?
6. The dialectic of various opinions may grow to a higher level of unity when we are well informed and can speak in similar terms.
7. We need not be some pluralistic society of people with no direction. We can have our philosophical pluralists, dualist, triplist, etc.
8. We can be all of these, and we can transcend mere complaining and semantic arguing, we can transcend the proletarianization of our religious and philosophic ideals. In short, we can deal with things on a much higher level.

## Chapter the Sixth: "Scholarship"

1. Scholarship is important to achieving these means, because it is not mere "book learning," it is an attitude which opens doors and enlightens and if one has trouble with reading and comprehending the materials, then one must have patience and courage.
2. We should not feel that we must compete with each other, that is not the purpose of learning. Not to be clever and show-off, but to take away darkness and help other to learn also.
3. For everyone may benefit when one more person takes the time to learn something new. We are all interdependent and so the more one individual knows, the better is the world.
4. When one person refuses to learn, he or she keeps the totality down, or that is, he or she makes it more difficult for others. It slows down progress when many do not make the effort to allow progression.
5. We all can change the things we see around us that we do not like. Take action for positive change and not merely complain about it!
6. Study is more than formulating theories, scholarship is more than mere perusal of old manuscripts, it is testing those theories, it is going out and practicing what you preach.
7. The higher your standards are, the more difficult it can be to practice what you preach.
8. But going out to preach what you practice is another thing, and it is quite easy to do if you make no effort toward growing.
9. Still, you can be an instrument of deception, and not practice what you preach, because you are not the kind of person you're preaching at.
10. We know exactly about those famous men who don't practice what they preach because they're not the kind of

people they're preaching to! I needn't mention them by name because there are many of them in America and they are frequently or constantly in the public eye.

## Chapter the Sixth: "Reconstruction"

1. Reconstructionist Druids (like me) endeavor to reconstruct what was lost and use that as a foundation on which to build, it is an old time-tested foundation and well-grounded in the past
2. We do not seek to slip into some time-warp to become living anachronisms. There's the S.C.A. for that kind of fun!
3. We, however, take the identity of Druidism seriously enough to make it work, to create something that actually owes something to the elder Druids besides a mere word or name.
4. We are not ashamed to use labels, names or words; we do not suffer from onomatophobia or onomaphobia.
5. We do not commit human sacrifices or go out and play ancient Gaul in the woods.
6. We [the Post-Oak Protogrove] do enjoy ourselves. Jim C. is a musician in his spare time, Jim W. does Tai Chi, Chas. H. is in Drama and art, we have many friends and acquaintances from all ages and all walks of life.
7. I, Tom Cross, myself happen to be an English teacher, a literary person and so naturally I like writing different things.
8. This piece and other pieces for the Missal-Any is just one facet and subject of which I like to take a little time to write about. There are other bits and pieces I write, some fiction, some poetry, some non-fiction.
9. This is why we differ from say a Wiccan coven or a Hermetic Lodge, or New Age networks for centering or trance channeling.
10. We are not all of one mind, one way, one truth, but we share enough interests to talk, to meditate, and have some enjoyment of life.
11. I have friends who do not belong to the neo-pagan movement at all, who are Agnostic, Taoist, and Roman Catholic, and we respect each other's religions and some of them know more about the Celts and the Druids than many neo-pagans simply because they have read my stuff (including stuff I've read and written) as well as hearing it form me (when I show them the latest piece of literature I've read or bought).
12. I am the mere spokesman here because I like to write, while other do not or prefer to remain anonymous.
13. One Jewish friend of mine like to debunk falsehood and fallacies and for a while we were making it a game and running gag – it got me into the habit myself and I use it as part of my thinking habits.
14. So while we look to the ancient Druids for inspiration, we are also very tolerant of other's opinions and we have respect for other people's rights.
15. We do not believe ourselves pious ones, as braggarts and dogma-mongers – we are not evangelists or some Gospel of the Druids, but we have an interest in the hermeneutics of Celticism.
16. What is wrong with that? What is wrong with reconstructing Druidism in this regard?

17. If no one is interested in hearing anymore from me or us, let me know immediately and we shall not waste our time anymore.

Thomas Cross  
An La Bhealtainne Maith

Any comments? If you care to write to me personally, write in care of 2009 Sunnybrook Lane, Garland, TX 75041.

## Albion's Response

(By Albion, April 1987)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. I came to the pagan faith because generally speaking, it is more tolerant than any other form of religion or spirituality I have found. But gee, Tom Cross may have changed my mind.
2. "Promoting darkness" Ay?
3. This tidbit comes to you from one who is supposedly "very tolerant of other's opinions," could've fooled me.
4. I stand by what I wrote last issue.
5. Paganism, as I see it, is made up of many different strands of thought, and if Tom Cross doesn't like that or can't deal with that – that is his problem, not mine.
6. It is a fact that the pagan faith survived in the British Isles, it was diluted or changed to a certain extent by folkways or ceremonial magic, or both, but it did survive. There really are hereditary pagans in the British Isles who practice a religion, that has survived for a very, very long time.
7. But let me ask the readership to judge the psychic quality of Tom Cross' letters in this issue and the last issue of A Druid Missal-Any.
8. Pagans should be beyond this brutal, personalized, backstabbing that goes beyond defense to simply being hurtful and attacking someone because they are different from you, or hold a different opinion than yours.
9. The views expressed by Tom Cross in print [here] are tame compared to at least one of the letters I received through the mail.
10. If this was the work of "born-again" Christians or someone from the Nazi Party or the Ku Klux Klan, I could perhaps understand – but this is a person who calls himself a "pagan," this implies (in my mind at least), some sort of tolerance for other's views.
11. Once again, I stand corrected.
12. I have always like the Missal-Any because of it's scholarship and approach, this sort of b.s. cheapens and degrades the quality of the Missal-Any, in my opinion.
13. I do care deeply for the Truth (in all of its forms), and I will not stand for someone saying that I don't.
14. There is not one way to the Gods, but many ways, even in the Celtic Tradition, and my suggestion is that Tom Cross meditate upon that.
15. If I could close with a quote from an earlier form of Revived Druidism: "Truth against the World."

-Albion



# The Gift of Horses

(By Les, June 1987)

(New to ARDA 2)

## Chapter the First: “Invocation”

1. I invoke that portion of compost, which is the gift of horses.
2. Do you guys know how many times I’ve rewritten this #!%?! thing? I think we can settle down and admit that the Missal-Any has become a new format: Interactive Nonfiction.
3. Is there some Hitchhiker’s Guide to the minority-theological Galaxy? Or are we headed for the Snit at the End of the Universe? Stay tuned...

## Chapter the Second: “Summer”

1. This is the season of battle; the Sun stands ringed by hero-light, facing the confrontation He cannot win.
2. In the summer blaze of midsummer, YES!, we stand cocky and feisty at his side. The day is long and summer just begun – will it not last forever?
3. By August, each warm hour is precious: our words and deeds will echo with the gentleness of farewell.
4. The (Carleton) traditional services chant our glee at the conquest of day over night, but most of us have our moments of rooting for Pryderi.
5. We are in our glory, our attitude of immortality unsmirched, yet we can still take comfort in saying “This, too, shall pass.”

## Chapter the Third: “Respect”

1. We (genetic and/or emotional) Celts are historically marked as argumentative cusses, as witness the forms of lampoon, rant, and challenge-in-verse.
2. Boldness is our legacy, and defensiveness our last year’s garbage.
3. What is the appropriate channeling of our quibblesome nature?
4. I, for one, would not go back to my pacifist beginnings; I have little respect for the tameness of a toothless dog.
5. My most honored comrades are dangerous folk, controlled by volition rather than weakness.
6. When people are scarce enough to be a resource rather than a nuisance, the strong can stop apologizing.
7. We don’t sheathe our blades in the neighbor’s house out of fear, but because we respect our neighbors.
8. Also, if we love, we are having too much fun to care overmuch what our beloveds can do to us...

## Chapter the Fourth: “Neighbors”

1. As a religious minority, we are an automatic rural neighborhood.
2. We have our local characters, but let the stranger say, “Do you know that nut-case?” We will quite likely say, “Oh, he/she’s okay once you know him/her,” and find that, against the perspective of the rest of the world, we mean it.

3. I know, I know; you’ll all howl that this kind of neighborhood loyalty is not something you reserve for Druids or extend to everyone who takes that name. That’s true.
4. My primary clan relationships are likely to differ from Tom’s, or Albion’s, or Mad Sweeney’s, and a good number of the members of my clan or clans do not name Neopagan Druidism as their religious orientation.
5. They are all, however, joined to me in avowed and reliable goodwill, and respectful of the orientations I profess.
6. So okay, I am available to my own clansfolk before I would be available to Tom, or Albion, or any other Druids that I don’t personally know.
7. But I am available (willingly, and in good faith) to my Druidish brethren and sistren before I am (willingly, and in good faith) available to the mainstream authorities.
8. I assume that we squabble en tutoyant, and will still be there for each other if that is necessary. (And yes, you can call me on that. Box 215, Myers Flat, CA 95554).
9. This doesn’t mean you have to agree with me, or approve of me. Your minds, especially in devotion to the Gods, are your own.

## Chapter the Fifth: “Names”

1. Fear of names? Sometimes.
2. What do I most fear to name: my Gods, or myself?
3. My dealing with some Gods are embarrassingly private. And I myself possess a name that will call me from sleep, or draw my energy to the user of it; I don’t give that to just anybody.
4. But Tom and Albion have boldly “named” themselves in these pages, to a degree that I have not.
5. Ergo, the Summer Statement: Here am I, a woman 35 years old, attempting to farm a hillside steading in southern Humboldt while making a living as a freelance reporter and general odd-jobber (currently, selling cherry cider and produce to tourists.)
6. The untidy generosity of my physique bears witness to my undisciplined nature, but I’m still pretty functional.

## Chapter the Sixth: “Work”

1. I write- basically, anything that anyone will print, and a lot of things they won’t.
2. Most dear to me of all our lore are the poetic, emotionally-charge stories of Erin.
3. Like Albion, I was once a Quaker. My religious practice contains little of formal observance, but I operate under a number of what I see as my own geasa and obligations. (Laugh if you want; sometimes I do, too.)
4. I use magic only as a last-ditch adjunct to doing my damndest on the physical plane, and only for certain purposes.
5. I honor ethics and deplore morality.
6. My greatest weakness is a reflexive snapping and snarling at what I see as elitism or authoritarianism.
7. I once beaned a wife-beater with my purse, but I am not reliably or consciously brave.
8. I’m a solitary 3<sup>rd</sup>, married, with a 7-year-old son who lives with me full-time and a 9-year-old daughter who visits.

## Chapter the Seventh: “Wrap-up”

1. Tom, Albion, I offer this: who among us has the power to be a threat to the others? (Hopefully none of us is such a slob as to throw energy around as we argue, instead of grounding it out!)
2. Both “promoting darkness” and “Ku Klux Klan” show a fine sense of drama, but you know effing well that if the storm troopers showed up looking for any of us tomorrow, the rest would lie like right valiant rugs to cover his/her ass.
3. So will you guys kiss & make up, or at least wait for the bell?!!
4. -Les

## Chapter the Eighth: “Praise”

1. In any Neopagan Druid service, we pause self-consciously to remind ourselves that we are standing in one limited spot, using limited names to offer the limitless Gods a parcel of praise and sacrifice that They don’t actually need.
2. In Beltane’s disorderly abundance this reminder becomes especially poignant. Where is need of any kind in all of this?
3. Fullness approaches, and our need is for union, for celebration: to be drawn into the riotous family of nature.
4. Beltane is a love story, and I shall go a-Maying.
5. Shall I call you Earth Mother? Tailltiu? Nerthus? Ina? In all languages You have a name.
6. I have trusted the seed to its rebirth in the rich death-and-life cycle of the loam; the plant has risen.
7. Someday I shall be part of this, in body as well as in spirit.
8. Is composting and mulching and planting and watering praise? Is gratitude praise?
9. Shall I call you Danu, Wellspring, Mother of Gods and of Mysteries? Mysteries are not that-which-man-was-not-to-know, but that which lures the mind beyond its depth, lest it grow too stolid to swim.
10. Is it praise to seek our origins, to stare into the past and future, to revel in identity? Is it praise to be ourselves?
11. I begged my vision through night’s chill, and morning’s first ray was a kiss.
12. Belenos, Lovelight, Seed-father; what is my praise but desire? The praise of green grass means the same, but love does not judge.

## Chapter the Ninth: “Amusement”

1. An antlered Cernunnos, may we amuse You!
2. Ever the joke is on us, Lord of Beasts and of deep woods, dark fear and bright mockery.
3. By green bough and animal-cry I know I shall live and lust and die in good company, but praise? You’ve heard me say things less polite.
4. My flower gardens belongs to Rhiannon, for what She has taught me. In birdsong and sweet scents nature may praise the wise Horsewoman, but I can only learn.
5. Let there be forgetfulness of that cruelty too often called justice: honor is a fresh blooming wild flower, and valor a note of music.
6. Is a life praise? I cannot know while I am living it.

7. Like children, we praise greedily, reaching up for notice and acceptance, as a baby demands a hug.
8. Our Gods are Mothers, Fathers, Lovers, Teachers; our gratitude quivers with wants yet unspoken.
9. Like children, we have little to offer but ourselves and our works, in the hopes that our arch-Parents will gather us to them as sentimentally as we do our own children. (All the while trying their patience by attempting to shove our siblings out of the way, and hog all the attention for ourselves!)
10. Is sharing praise, or service, or respect for fellow-creatures?

## Chapter the Tenth: “Worship”

1. Surely we do not worship because we think our guaranteed annual year depends on it.
2. And if we worship for the sake of the Gods, what shall we say to the Gods we do not know?
3. The people of Thor offered wary respect to the White Christ, until Christian priests rejected, on Christ’s behalf, the brotherhood of Thor. Then might Thor’s people denounce Christ as a Wimp; but never did they take the view that what they did not know did not exist.
4. Defining “unproven” as “false,” or “myth” as “fabrication,” or “unknown” as “nonexistent” is a popular failing of the current scientific establishment; in seeking our own science, we must remember that the modern mind is trained to the square corners and shut doors of monotheism.
5. Though pre-existing knowledge is there for us, we are denied the cheap tricks of Central Authority.
6. Do we worship in ritual? And what is our ritual: the mutable traditions of a farmer in the garden?
7. A window opening on the visions of our forbears? Or a door to shut between emotion and thought, magic and work, religion and real life?
8. Lugh help us; it’s not an easy path.
9. We seek the path of heroes, for the modesty of the monotheist is another copy-out we don’t get.
10. Saints are safe in Heaven, beyond the reach of our kind, but heroes are meant to be emulated- though they may shine brighter out of antiquity, all their awkward moments over and one with.
11. We need only remember that some being or circumstance will eventually play Emer to our Cuchulain, and require us to place money where our mouth is.

## Chapter the Eleventh: “Conclusion”

1. So be splendid in the splendor of May, fellow wedding-guests! If our praise is presumptuous and our dreaming extravagant, only look around: with gaudy flower fields, flooding light, and leaping beasts, we have a fine example.
2. Salacious Spring Meditation:
3. Make Sure the rigor of your mind is not rigor mortis, but the other kind!



# Farewell of Tom Cross

(By Tom Cross, May 1987, pub. Sept '87)

(New to ARDA 2)

## Chapter the First: "Apologies"

1. Dear Emmon,
2. Got your letter of "May 1<sup>st</sup>." Sorry to have been so didactic – perhaps I am out-growing neo-paganism – or perhaps I am rebelling against it – the theology of modern religion.
3. If I have offended anyone by defending myself, then it must be a sure sign that I no longer fit in anymore.
4. Still, I believe I have been unjustly criticized or whatever you want to call it.
5. It seems, also, now, that I have offended you. I truly regret this, if this is so.
6. I never intended to upset anyone but merely to state my position so that I could get on with writing scholarship or scholarly research type of stuff.
7. When I have to stop and defend scholarship, it took away from just writing it. I was beginning to feel that no one cared – no feedback – no positive feedback, either!
8. There's mysticism in scholarship which, I believe, we both share. Correct me if I'm wrong!
9. You have shared really great stuff with me and I like James Duran's exposition, because of listening to him, I was turned on to Structuralism, Cultural materialism, and comparing African New Religion, etc.
10. I believe that this turned my direction toward getting at the bottom of the I-E religious stuff- yet at the same time that I wanted to reconstruct the religion, I also turned away from its "modern" application.
11. It's like taking a shamanic journey into another time or another world. I believe there is mysticism in studying history – when you can imagine the past – dream about it and see it.
12. I'm not going to send in anymore stuff to the Missal-Any because I believe that it is not apparently of any interest to the readers anymore – unless someone wants to write to me, I'm going to keep my mouth shut and only contribute if requested!
13. I enclose the letter fragment I wrote a few days ago.

–Tom

May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1987

## Chapter the Second: "Mystical"

1. [Emmon's note: to our new subscribers: This is the finale on a debate that has raged for eight or more months. To get the full fight, send a stamped large envelope for relevant parts of the back issues. Then write up your opinions and send them in.]
2. Scholarly pursuits and research can be very mystical and to deny this is missing the point of my attempt to reconstruct the ancient Druids' tradition.

3. When one takes the time to consume the writings of Indo-European scholars, archaeologists, comparative-mythologists, professors of religious history and socio-cultural anthropologists – you are disciplining yourself to a set of guidelines that will keep you on the path to truth.
4. The scholarly data are the guideposts and signs along the road to another time and place.
5. One forms a mental image or set of images; it starts out blurry and fuzzy, but the more you journey backward in time, the clearer it becomes.
6. When you study linguistics and philology- you can begin to hear the voices of the ancient ones. You can read the ancient inscriptions or etymologies and that helps you to hear the voices from the past.
7. When you study the culture of the ancient Celts or the Indo-Europeans, you begin to form clearer and clearer pictures and images of their lives.
8. And then, when you begin to organize and integrate the data you've collected, your mental picture becomes a whole, built-up upon many pictures, sounds and even feelings.

## Chapter the Third: "Journey"

1. It is like a shamanic journey, but you are not witnessing or experiencing an Otherworld, but a past world – this world as it was.
2. When the puzzle pieces fit together – correlating and corroborating – the image must be true and real and you must reject those pieces which do not fit together, which are not verifiable by comparison and contrast.
3. When it comes together – the image can become so sharply focused that you can feel it.
4. When you are studying it and organizing it all – you are absorbed into it and you become like a shaman possessed by spirits.
5. But the important thing, when you take the journey, is to leave behind all assumptions – to become a detached observer leaving behind judgmental thoughts- prejudices, biases and misconceptions.
6. When you come back from the journey, you are in the here and now, and you may then form opinions about it (what you saw and felt), this is where you can apply the data, but the data is a reconstructed tradition and the more facts (verifiable through tests, correlation, corroboration, etc.) the closer your reconstruction is to the ultimate truth.
7. Another way of testing the truth is by its internal logic and also by substantiating it with appeals to the BEST authorities who have used strictest standards of reconstruction.

## Chapter the Fourth: "Facts"

1. There is mysticism in scholarship, indeed!
2. It is very useful scholarship to reconstruct the past – for many reasons that are obvious.
3. It is not a matter of taste or opinion when you have actually seen or demonstrated a matter of fact – the reaction to the facts are something entirely different!
4. If something is an established fact, then it is right for its own sake and for the sake of truth.

5. Whether or not an ancient Druid said or did something is either a fact or not a fact, and can either be demonstrated or not!
6. One only has the authority to facts about something, but truth is contingent to facts.
7. You can choose to base your beliefs on a factual matter or not, but a belief which expresses to deny a fact is a false belief, no matter how you categorize it!
8. Example of a false belief: “Lugh is an Egyptian god believed in by industrial workers in China. I believe in this.”
9. Example of a true belief: “I believe that the sunset occurred at dusk this evening.”

## Chapter the Fifth: “Assembling”

1. My vision of Druidism is to reconstruct the ancient religious beliefs and allow it to become part of a new tradition.
2. Now in reconstructing the old traditions – I am engaging in an activity that is subject to being fact or non-fact. Either the Druid said this (did this) or he did not.
3. Whether I can verify it through cultural, anthropological, linguistic, literary or historical evidence is the criteria for establishing its veracity.
4. If it is verifiable, provable, or demonstrable through scholarship, then it is worthy of becoming integrated into the tradition.
5. Once established into the reconstructed tradition, then it becomes a matter of fact – and only then can we say whether or not we agree with it or believe in it.
6. If we choose not to believe in it, then we have broken off from ancient tradition, but it is still part of our heritage as Neo-Druids, for after all we have named ourselves after them and that implies that we have drawn from them somehow.
7. If we make-up a false tradition, on the other hand, we encourage false beliefs and we become a ridiculous joke in the history of human folly.
8. If we take ourselves too seriously, of course, we could very well become the sort of “Our way is the only right way” authoritarian fundamentalist type of thing.
9. But if we are not serious enough, we cannot fulfill ourselves, we are a joke and we can degenerate into a superficial band of people who miss out on thoughtfulness.

[Note: Here the letter turned into an incomplete collection of notes on Celtic priesthood, kingship and other matters. See the Fall Equinox issue of 1987 for the continuation.]



# Albion’s Thoughts

(By Albion, Sept 1987)

(New to ARDA 2)

## Chapter the First

1. I don’t want this to be another face-off with Tom Cross.
2. There is a need for scholarship and research into the ways of our Ancestors, there is a place for what Tom does, there is a need for what he does.
3. As I’ve said before, I’m not a “Druid.”
4. Ritually, I practice some hereditary pagan ways (that came from the Midlands of England) mixed liberally with some modern paganism, (oriented towards the Celtic God/desses).
5. I also carry a “medicine bag,” I ritually sweat in a sweat lodge whenever I can, and sometimes I smoke the ceremonial pipe as well.
6. I don’t “blend” all of these ways together (i.e. the Celtic and Native American ways), but practice them separately, but they are different paths to the same source, and in some way, the Inner God/dess forms are very similar.
7. And, both paths, most importantly, work.
8. I’ve gone into all of this to say that it’s O.K. to take whatever path(s) that you need to take to achieve your own personal union with the Gods, no matter what anyone else says, follow your own path, for this is “the High Road” to spiritual freedom.
9. There is one last thing that I’d like to address here.
10. “The Gods,” like us, have grown.
11. We aren’t in 2<sup>nd</sup> Century Ireland or Gaul, but reside in 1987 North America.
12. Our approach to the Gods is going to change over time, and change with our evolution as a race and species.
13. As we have changed and continued to grow, so too, have the Gods – although their space-time frame is not like ours, the Gods also “grow” and change.
14. The “Other-word” is different than 2000 years ago, just as our world is different.
15. Don’t believe me, but take your own Shamanic journey to find out.
16. It is also O.K. to “update” our spiritual approach to the Gods, no matter what anyone else might say.
17. And I’m not saying that the Celtic “Old Ways” are no longer “valid” for our modern age, but perhaps our faith is a new, and I feel, improved form of the Old-Faith.
18. As I turn 36 years old on Samhain, I want to begin a new year of my life, and this is the last that I wish to write on this particular subject.
19. There is a place for us all on these pages, and no one should “give up” on helping others to learn, but, we all hopefully, have learned some important lessons about our selves.
20. This is true growth, and is a great spiritual lesson, and a gift.

Blessings to All,  
Albion



## Chapter the Second

1. I am calling an end to the Cross vs. Guppy et. Al. Debate.
2. It has become too acrimonious.
3. We Druids are a tiny minority within a minority, the modern pagans, and need to support and understand each other, or at least extend tolerance to one another, being as we are surrounded by an intolerant world, much of which wishes we did not exist.
4. Articles on the subjects are always welcome, but no more personal vilification.

By Emmon, Dec. 1987

## The Epistle on Gruntwork

(By Les, 1988)

(New to ARDA 2)

### Chapter the First

1. Tim was when I tried to tie every column in with the theme of the seasons.
2. But I've ridden at least one revolution of the year-wheel with this column, and it has finally occurred to me that Mad Sweeney handles the seasonal aspects of the Missal-Any quite well, without the aid of my scholly sloppership.
3. So I think I'll stop the year and get off.
4. What, I haven't succeeded? Why, so I haven't.
5. For I have here a subject of rant and rave quite appropriate for winter's dark insistence.
6. You see, it occurs to me that winters- especially country winters- are a fine time to get down to the gruntwork of our religion.
7. We have sung and feasted and sacrificed, and yelled at one another and praised our ancestors.
8. But what do we do next?
9. What is a pagan, or more specifically a Reformed Druid, life, in grubby day-to-day detail?

### Chapter the Second

1. I must first admit that hard, clearheaded scholarship is something that I perceive as a duty, badly neglected on my part.
2. I am currently poking my nose into the study of history, in bits and snippets, including more of the world than the U.S., or Celtic Britain and Ireland.
3. The future springs from the loam of the past; if one wants to add a few nutrients for its proper growth, it helps to know what was thrown on the compost heap to begin with, and also to be reasonably aware of the nature of composting.
4. But what do we want to do with that future?

5. Could I say that most of us would like to bring with us some of the values that we find in the visions of our Celtic forebears – the stubborn individualism that has led English-speaking peoples (and those who still speak Gaelic) into political experimentation that has continued to this day?
6. Do we want to continue the openhearted pride and hospitality of the Celt, and the bold curiosity that looks the very Gods squarely in the eye?

## Chapter the Third

1. We can only start right now.
2. And though we may debate the correctness of possibility of writing, or rather rewriting, our own religion, the need to rewrite our culture is hardly worth an argument.
3. Culture gets rewritten, and one can either participate actively or be manipulated by those in power.
4. We're living a script that was heavily re-written in the aftershock of two world wars: although the sanctity of the family per se is a very old concept, the sanctity of the nuclear family is no older than our own parents.
5. Cut! We're gonna have to do that scene over again.
6. The previous generation meant well. They probably hoped, by isolating the breeding unit, to achieve greater individual prestige, and in some cases, it worked.
7. No one could have explained to them, without first trying it, that isolating small groups of people with specialized roles under heavy economic pressure would provide all sorts of motivation for abuse.
8. And the failure to deal with Grandma and Grandpa, though a grandiose glitch, is no bigger than some of the boners we'll pull, once we get the lead out and start doing things.

## Chapter the Fourth

1. Who's that in the back row?
2. You say "doing things" is a fine idea for flaky South Humboldt hippies, but what about you real folks with real jobs and real bosses and neighbors and such to deal with?
3. You win a few, you lose a few.
4. Actually, country folks can be just as hardheaded in their expectations as city dwellers, and although rural neighbors are fewer, they have more influence on your day-to-day life.
5. Which brings me to the next point; if we expect to have any influence on our surroundings, we must exercise it as neighbors do, a little at a time.
6. It would perhaps be more fun to establish, immediately, a clan-type family structure with a set of equal-opportunity social customs.
7. This is always a favorite fantasy, probably because everybody wants to be The McGregor. But if you are the leader of your embryo clan, you have my heartfelt sympathy.
8. Chances are that your contributions pass unremarked, except by loud complaints of stubbornness, meddling, egotism, and being late when you drive the neighbors' kids to school.
9. The loudest grousing will come from your own immediate family, since time devoted to a larger group is time not lavished exclusively on them.

## Chapter the Fifth

1. To be even responsible, much less acceptable or polite, we must start small. This means noticing small things.
2. To whom do we show respect, for what, and in what ways?
3. What are our prejudices? (Careful, lying saps power.)
4. Is there any subject regarding which we would not want to pass our beliefs on to our children?
5. Are our religious ideals reflected in our etiquette?
6. Do we give lip service to the Mother, but expect human mothers to stay home until their figures look normal and their kids don't cry unexpectedly?
7. Do we fear and ridicule old age?
8. Do we revere Nature, but describe biological processes in the language of disgust (Footnote: this correspondent is aware of the glory-in-grossness rhetoric of Crowley, or the Hell's Angels. She is also aware that the excuses for such rhetoric only fool men. Please don't refer to a pregnant acquaintance as 'spawning', at least in my hearing.. probably also in hers. We do know what you mean, and we don't like it.)
9. Or do we use euphemisms to shove conversation away from a subject, rather than handling it in a calm and neutral tone?
10. If a child asked you to describe sex, what words would you use? My "well, they fit together" may have been less than articulate, but it at least allowed my daughter to laugh, especially when I explained that when she was old enough, her instincts would cause her to enjoy it. "I always knew grownups were weird!" said she.
11. Do we deplore patriarchalism in the home, autocracy in business, and arbitrariness in law, but allow them to function unmolested?
12. Do we 'mind our own business' about socially acceptable cruelties, but pretend to the 'normality' of the busy bodies in power?
13. Do we vote? Do we volunteer in the service of our beliefs?
14. Do we have a relationship with our surroundings? With plants? With animals?
15. How well do we know our climate, our soil, our geography?

## Chapter the Sixth

1. See, This is the gruntwork. This is the kind of thing a religion faces you with, once you've lasted through the honeymoon phase.
2. And half the time, once you've decided what the Gods really want you to do, your first impulse will be to try to talk Them out of it.
3. Like, there's a quintillion bazillion gophers in my garden, and You Guys don't want me to use any poisons? Not even one little pellet?
4. And about that geas, Folks, You really mean to tell me that You expect people to have geasa in the Eighties?
5. Next, You'll be asking us whether we believe in magic.
6. But if you readers are members of the NRDNA or related organizations at this point in their development, you're the diehards, the ones who have made it this far.

7. You've lived through the political snits and social catastrophes that drove away the dilettantes and novelty-seekers.
8. Your pagan eyes have seen births and marriages and divorces and deaths.
9. You have, somewhere within you, a worldview not taught to you by either mainstream religious or secular authorities.
10. Now, obviously, there's no law that says you can't just bug out on the project at this point.
11. Taking your feral spiritual priorities out for a spin can make you conspicuous, especially in the current sociopolitical climate of enlightened despair.
12. Giving up always looks terribly sophisticated.
13. But you can't bug out on winter.



# Balance & Synthesis

(By Les, Sep 1988)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. In the time of balance, I think of Hairpulls, and of the doubts as old as religion that we may either decry or embrace.
2. Myself, I have learned to be fond of them; otherwise I suffer a lot.
3. Rationalism is a cold place. It also makes the sensations of one's isolated consciousness a little uncomfortable.
4. Why should I be peering out these two wet windows, instead of someone else?
5. And whatever I may think of it, does it matter very much?

## Chapter the Second

1. I'm not really the believing kind.
2. Yet I walk in a world of many gods and goddesses, all part of the divine universe, and all workers of great magicks.
3. I speak, "Lord," "Lady," and solemnly declare that a living world hears me.
4. I also walk among others of my non-faith who call upon methods of divination, by cards and stars and crystals. And I have various odd means of justifying my refusal to reject such things outright: archetypal imagery, channels of intuition.
5. Phooey.
6. I cast cards on a table and read the pictures in them as a way of grasping at straws in confusion.
7. I count the images in star patterns and permute and combine them in the sky of this or that moment in time, because the star-pictures are a handle on the mystery of personality, not because they name aught that I can truly know.
8. And I collect the lessons of each, ancient and well-laden with the thoughts and dreams of my forebears.
9. Help me, Old Ones! What did you know that I don't?
10. When does this – or the channeling of my energy through arbitrary places in my body, or the repetition of mantra or Wiccan doggerel – pass over the line between seeking and superstition?

## Chapter the Third

1. When I walk among the people, I remember a card sent by Mad Sweeney: "Nature is not dirty, but it provides the raw materials from which we manufacture dirt."
2. And I tell myself that people are not foolish or shallow, but they have the materials in them from which foolery and crassness are made.
3. So I am still responsible for the times when I get used or jerked around, but for individual errors in present judgment, rather than for outreach to strangers at all.
4. People need not be mine to be benevolent, nor need they have been of my time to be wise.
5. Can we translate the speech of poets? And can our materialistically-trained minds then put to use what we hear?

6. Or is it lost to us forever, our efforts warped to fallacy by the indoctrination of an utterly alien culture?
7. And can we give our Mother any protection but our own extinction?
8. By loving Her, have we become the enemies of our own kind?
9. Many of the so-called scientific community think so.
10. Yet in rejecting all that they know, we continue in ignorance to wound that which we love.
11. We need more than balance: Synthesis. Turn in your compost, and think of that.



# Latest Selections: The Carleton Revival

## The Speaking of Beliefs

(By Heiko Koester, 1987)

(New to ARDA 1)

### Chapter the First

1. Dear Friends,
2. We are here to celebrate the creative powers of the earth-mother, of nature.
3. To celebrate the wonder of nature.
4. To think of any sunset, any rock, any river whose beauty and symbolic power have existed in your past.
5. Feel the force of those experiences with nature and to let it become a force to help build and sustain you.
6. The force of nature is represented to us here in this fire.

### Chapter the Second

1. We're here to celebrate and feel the power of a group.
2. There is true power in a circle.
3. Circle is unbroken, is continuous.
4. We are all equal here and able to send energy in a complete way to each other in this unbroken circle.
5. We are not in rows or in single file and I am not speaking to you from a pulpit, but from within the circle.
6. An essential force of this circle is human love.
7. Without love, support, understanding, and giving, our ritual here tonight and our existence here at Carleton would be empty.
8. Let us keep this always in mind in our daily lives and during our ritual, that love and support is essential to our humanness and to our survival.

### Chapter the Third

1. We are also here to celebrate the masculine and feminine natures of the universe to recognize their dual presence in each of us, their cosmic interplay, their equality and interconnectedness.
2. To think of the yin and the yang.

### Chapter the Fourth

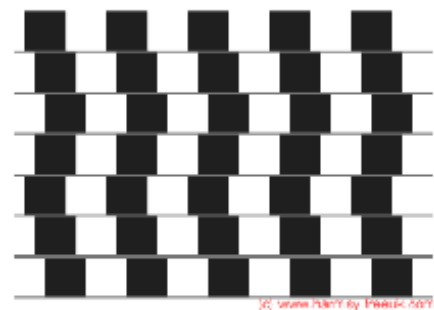
1. We are here to celebrate not just the nature outside of us, but also the nature within us.
2. We all have tremendous forces and powers which are not let out in daily life.

3. They are physical forces of motion, we find them in dance and making love.
4. They are mystical forces of intrigue, we find them in deep, searching eyes, in beautiful faces.
5. They are our natural feelings of power, of helplessness.
6. We all have tremendous psychic powers of change and tremendous helplessness and vulnerability, and we have to admit this.
7. In the same vein let us not idolize one thing over another.
8. One pointedness, whether it be of heroes or of ideas, is not our way.
9. Rather, let us celebrate the unique beauty of each season; weather, tree, mountain, and mood.
10. This extends to religion.
11. To regard each religion as unique and wonderful in its own right.
12. Especially to practice tolerance, the tolerance of all peoples, all objects, all religions.

### Chapter the Fifth

1. Finally, we are here to celebrate the cycles of life.
2. To celebrate the circle in all we see, the cycles of seasons, the cycles of childhood, youth and old age, and to celebrate each in its own right.

Heiko Koestler  
Farm House, Carleton College  
Autumnal Equinox 1987



# Mike's Farewell Epistle

(By Mike Scharding, 1994)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. December 11, 1994
2. To Hrobak, Graham & Curtis
3. Dear Sisters-In-The-Earthmother,
4. All in all, Druidism at Carleton can be wearing upon the Priests of the RDNA. It requires so much quick-planning and is filled with worries of whether one is "doing it right."
5. I ask you to remember that Druidism is first and foremost, a personal journey; which may intersect other's paths for a while, will ultimately be your own. No two people's Druidism is identical (or it seems like it, so far).
6. Yet we are called to "leadership" of Druidism at Carleton. Whatever that means.
7. Matt Cohen, a Druid from Carleton '92, told me that the secret of Druidism to him was doing what you normally like to do. If you do that, then others will be interested by your positive attitude towards the subject.
8. The unfortunate problem is that if you wish to "save Druidism" or actively recruit, people get turned off. Truly a pickle, this one is.
9. Carleton is much different than it was in the 60's and 70's, freedom of expression and appreciation of foreign cultures and religions is much more accepted now. That aspect of Druidism is now kind-of assumed as a basic tenet by most people coming to Carleton.
10. However, just because it's assumed doesn't mean it is carried out in practice.
11. To me, Druidism is an active/passive attempt at living a life of accepting & exploring the diversity, which is in the reality around us. It's that simple and it's that difficult.
12. Sure we can explore Wiccan beliefs; in fact it's probably a very good starting point for many. The term "Witch" conjures up so many of our culture's fears, that overcoming those fears of "witchcraft" is a great step towards overcoming our fears of other strange, non-Christian religions.
13. Another area that could well benefit exploration are the Asian, Native America & African religions; although the materials on the first two are far more accessible.
14. There is so many wonders, treasures and insights available from the many religions/philosophies of the world; wonders to be explored in class and social settings. Let us not stick to just one: there are many other student organizations capable of doing just **one** focus!!
15. Above all, let us not represent our personal paths as that of all Druidism.
16. Druidism is also very vague about it's purposes and provides a nice umbrella-organization for all other sorts of activities associated with practicing/exploring many religions: Candle-making, cloak-making, bonfires, vigiling/camping, offers experience in leadership roles in religion, debates, sweat lodges, vision-quests, arb-walks and meditations.
17. Druidism is a unique activity that Carleton is blessed with, unlike many colleges, because it is accepting of diversity and disparaging of dogma at a critical time in a person's life: college.
18. Thus, the trick, for me, was doing all the activities of a Druid, because I wanted to and inviting other people to join me, if they felt like it.
19. I kind-of wish I was better at group organizing, had encouraged yet more members to lead activities, and excelled at group-image-consolidation, but (in hindsight) that would have been unappealing to the easy-come/easy-go atmosphere of Druidism.
20. Similarly, I wish I could have encouraged greater study of the International Druid Archives by the members, because of the wisdom stored there that is so much like our own.
21. But, to indirectly force members to use any one source is as bad as the Bible-Thumpers' practice of only listening to arguments based on excerpts from the Bible. It remains an immense resource or rituals, debates, articles, opinions, poetry and humor at your disposal.
22. When time permits, please reflect upon the progress of your spiritual journeys. For some of you, it may be a time of unbridled exploration and dissent from rules, and for other it may be a time of intense scrutiny of a new system being sold to you by a bookstore.
23. Whatever the case may be, keep the Reformed Druids open to many types of people, be they pagan, Christian or "just plain don't know."
24. Avoid the dangers of over-ritualism and try to have quiet reflection, by group & individually, plus study nature in scientific & philosophic terms.
25. Read widely from as many traditions as you can. you never know where wisdom may hide! Your opportunity here at Carleton is so unlimited that you have no idea of what kind of person you will be in 4 years!
26. If Druidism should die in the next five years, I'm quite certain that it will spring up anew with someone exploring the archives, reading old Carletonians, a visit by an Alumni-Druid, etc. Druidism may have trouble flourishing, but it has no trouble reviving.
27. So release any anxieties about an "active grove." Trying to "save" one form of Druidism and you will fail, but if you explore the ways of the Mother, then she will bless you with abundance.
28. Enjoy your ever-so-brief stay at Carleton and share your joys and insights with whomever wishes to join you. I've enclosed \$50 to help fund your pursuits, as I have tried over the last 5 years. Use it frivolously!
29. Be Druidic, whatever that means to you and allow the same freedom to other members in the group.
30. I wish you the greatest of experiences, AWARENESS.
31. Write to this lonely Druid and tell me of your Druidic studies.
32. I, an old Druid with wist-full memories, have rambled on long enough.
33. I hope that I have given you some encouragement for the upcoming Summer half of the year.
34. Try not to take Druidism as over-seriously as I did.

-Michael

# The Third Epistle of Robert

(By Robert Larson, 1996)

(New to ARDA 1)

An fh'rinne in aghaidh an tsaoil. (the truth against the world.) -old druid motto (really)

Everything you know is wrong. -The Firesign Theater

## Chapter the First: Greetings

1. Dear Siblings in-the-Mother,
2. Go mbeannai an Mhathair sibh go léir. (May the Mother bless all of you.)
3. I wish to convey to you some thoughts that occurred to me while I was helping edit this edition of the Chronicles. I believe they may well give you something to meditate upon as you progress along your druidic path.
4. Of course, some of you may well think I'm crazier than ever.
5. Be that as it may, I ask you to think about my ponderings, which result from both long study and sudden illumination. (It is longer than I intended, but it just grew.)
6. I believe you'll find them interesting and, I pray, helpful.

## Chapter the Second: What am I?

1. To those who are uncouth enough to ask my religious persuasion I normally reply that I am a devout pagan. However, I've always felt ambivalent about the term "pagan" or "heathen."
2. On the one hand, I prefer the tolerant and inclusive attitude of the vast majority of "paganisms" toward other belief systems to the exclusive and intolerant attitudes that have historically adhered to monotheistic and dualist creeds.
3. Also, most paganisms are pretty vague about their concepts of deities, which I find suits my druidic view very well.

## Chapter the Third: The Term "Pagan"

1. On the other hand, "pagan" has periodically had a pejorative taint, and the present is one of those periods.
2. This pejorative context did not originate with the Christians, but with the ancient "pagan" Romans. "Pagus" in Latin means "countryside," and urban Romans considered "pagans" to be "hicks."
3. "Pagan" religion was looked down upon by the adherents of the more "sophisticated" State polytheism, much in the way that High Church Episcopalians look down upon Holy Rollers.
4. Also, Roman soldiers used "paganus" as an insulting term for civilians. This usage was picked up by the "soldiers of Christ" who used it as a generally pejorative term for non-Christians. "Pagan" has vacillated between being neutral and being pejorative ever since.
5. During the 19th century it was used in both ways when colonialists applied "pagan" or "heathen" to any non-European people, culture or belief system.

## Chapter the Fourth:

### The Term Neo-Pagan

1. Nor do I find "Neo-Pagan" truly acceptable. "Neo-Pagan" is a term first applied pejoratively (surprise!) to pre-Raphaelite artists which was later adopted as a self-description by another artistic group in the early 20th century.
2. The history of this latter group is curiously similar to that of the RDNA. It started as essentially a group of people who liked to take nature walks but had no real interest in restoring pagan religion.
3. One of its members was Francis Cornford, a follower of one Jane Ellen Harrison, who was a pagan reconstructionist, basing her reconstruction on Frazer. These people influenced others, including Margaret Murray, whose work underlies Wicca.
4. An interesting parallel to us, isn't it?

## Chapter the Fifth:

### Neo-Pagan Pantheonizing

1. Parallels and linguistic connotations aside, one of the problems I find in "Neo-Paganism" in its current context is its tendency to over-define and personalize deity concepts.
2. In this "Neo-Paganism" models itself after the polytheistic pantheons of "established" mythologies, such as those of Greece and Rome, and tries to extend this structure to other vaguer pantheons, such as those of the Celts or Norse.
3. In this attempt they make the same mistake that the Romans did in their attempts to describe Celtic gods in terms of Roman deities.
4. Such a description seizes upon one aspect of a deity and equates it with a familiar god who has a similar aspect, even though it may be the only one the two gods have in common. The result is rather like a Christian identifying all healer entities with Jesus.
5. The attempt to structure Neo-Paganism is a mistake that confuses paganism with polytheism. They are not totally synonymous.

## Chapter the Sixth: Folk Religion

1. Paganism or heathenism is, as the terms imply, folk religion.
2. As such, paganism is an accumulation over time of a myriad of traditions and beliefs, which are sometimes contradictory and always confusing to those outside the belief system or culture (and often to those in it!)
3. One should not look for consistency in paganism, such a search will lead only to confusion and frustration.
4. While some structuring exists, and a loose hierarchy of deities often emerges, paganism is essentially an organically grown mélange of beliefs with roots deep in the past. It is religion built from the bottom up.
5. Deities are numerous and each has many aspects, often overlapping. Most deities are localized.
6. For instance, there are some 400 deities recorded in the Celtic "pantheon," the vast majority of them mentioned only once, similar concepts and representations appearing under different names in different locales.

7. While the basic concepts may well be seen to be universal, the deities are different for each has different accretions overlaying the basic concept.

## Chapter the Seventh: Organic Religion

1. It is this very organic quality which leads me to believe that paganism is "truer" in human terms than "revealed" religions such as Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism and their like. Such cults are fine as parts of a greater whole, but when they become the whole, much human quality is lost.
2. The organic quality of paganism usually leads to its being open to new cults and religious concepts.
3. The average pagan of ancient times found no difficulty or contradiction in belonging to many cults. While he would respect and venerate all god concepts and spirits, he would only worship those which he believed impacted on his life or in which he had a particular interest. (Household gods, craft patrons, ancestral spirits, etc.)
4. Intellectual and curious pagans would always find themselves attracted to new cults.
5. The normal pagan did not differentiate between religious and secular life as we do today. Rather, religion was an integral part of life and imbued all its facets, as the spirits and gods were imminent.

## Chapter the Eighth: State Religion

1. Structured polytheism and mythology, on the other hand, were constructs of the state and literature.
2. Though built from native beliefs, they were constructed from the top down rather than from the bottom up.
3. The political powers, priestcrafts and writers took one concept/god/myth from here, another from there, a third from yonder, etc. and set up a hierarchy and accepted mythology.
4. Essentially a state religion was built artificially. Similar deity concepts are amalgamated and their powers and responsibilities more rigidly defined.
5. For instance, under the Romans many local chieftain/thunder gods were amalgamated and called Jupiter or Jove, using their original names or localities as subtitles. Differences between the original deities were either submerged or particularized to a sub-cult.
6. The gods became eminent rather than imminent and adopted homes such as Mount Olympus.

## Chapter the Ninth: Religious Persecution

1. Such a state religion, while still tolerant of other beliefs, has much tighter boundaries to its tolerance than does paganism.
2. While pagans found no difficulty in including the state-based religion in their belief systems, messianic and revelatory exclusivist cults did.
3. Though conflicts between cults are not unusual in paganism, and such conflicts could lead to "theological debate by other means" (to paraphrase Clausewitz on war,) such conflict rarely disrupted normal life for long; some accommodation would be reached.
4. However, with a state religion in place, some cults found themselves in conflict with the state, which led to the sporadic banning and/or persecution of the cults.

5. The most famous of these persecutions (because the cult eventually won) was that of the Roman state against the Christians.
6. While the Christians are the most famous example of Roman persecution, they are hardly the only example, nor are they the first. That honor probably belongs to the Dionysian cults.
7. The Roman state, as the era's biggest control freaks, had real problems accepting ecstatic and mystery cults, they were just too disorderly. Mithraism, Egyptian mysteries, Great Mother cults, and, of course, the druids among others were all banned or persecuted at some time.
8. Note, though, that these persecutions of religious cults were for political reasons, and usually occurred when the state was having troubles. They were essentially scapegoating operations.
9. As such the severity varied greatly according to the time and place, and many magistrates made great efforts to avoid punishing members of proscribed cults.
10. Of course, once a Christian sect won power, it banned pagan worship and persecuted both pagans and other Christian sects. That, however, is another sad story, one of persecution for religious reasons using state power.
11. Other examples of religious persecution for state purposes include Confucianist China against Buddhism, Shintoist Japan against Christianity, the Nazis against the Jews and Gypsies (and the other pogroms against the Jews), the U.S. government against Native American religions (still going on), and the Egyptians against the Aten cult.
12. This last example, however, is better seen as a case of revenge for Akhematon's religion-based persecution of the polytheistic Egyptian priestcraft.
13. Other persecutions for religious reasons include the Christian church against the German, Slavic, and Baltic paganism (among others), Islam against pagans (Islam has historically been tolerant toward other "people of the book," i.e. Christians and Jews, but has always been intolerant of paganism.), the Crusades, the Inquisition, the medieval witch-hunts, Communism against all other religions (counting Marxism as a religion), and Cromwell against the Irish Catholics.
14. The RDNA may well evolve into a true pagan religion given a few centuries; it certainly has the openness to do so, but it can only so evolve if it continues to avoid over-structuring its belief system in a Neo-Pagan manner.

## Chapter the Tenth: Christian or Pagan?

1. For further illustration of the dichotomy between paganism and polytheism I'm making (and just for the fun), let's apply it to present day Christianity.
2. Catholicism can be seen as polytheistic with a triune god at the top, a mother cult, and myriad subsidiary deities (the saints).
3. Belief and structure are imposed from the top. The same is true of Eastern Orthodoxy and High Church Anglicanism.
4. Mainline Protestantism is a mixture of polytheistic structure and pagan belief. Fringe Protestantism, such as the Holiness Church, Primitive Baptists, snake handlers, Christian Science, etc. are essentially intolerant pagan cults.
5. (Well, I've always been a hillbilly at heart.)

6. Most pagan of all are the African-American churches, especially the small denominations which freely mix Christianity with African traditions.

## Chapter the Eleventh: Getting Out of Bed in the Morning.

1. Having talked about my concept of paganism at much greater length than I originally intended, I will now take on the concept of "ritual."
2. Some of us consider ritual a hindrance in our druidic paths, Isaac is a ritualist par excellence, and the majority don't care about it.
3. I believe that everyone is using an overly tight definition of ritual. In truth, ritual is unavoidable.
4. The second time a baby cries and is fed, changed, or cosseted a ritual is born, both for the supplicant (the baby) and for the deity (the adult).
5. Ritual pervades human life, though it is normally unperceived.
6. For instance, we each have our own ways of starting the day. If we must rush, leave something out, or do things out of order we get upset. We have "gotten up on the wrong side of the bed" because our "morning ritual" has been disrupted.
7. Similarly, each of us has his own way of doing every habitual task, our personal rituals, though the individual differences are often masked by the similarity of the tasks.
8. But if we try to do a task in a different way, we'll usually screw up. At the least we'll feel we're doing something wrong until we learn a new ritual.

## Chapter the Twelfth: Unconscious and Conscious Ritual

1. Most of these rituals in our lives are carried out unconsciously, of course.
2. If we had to think our way through every task, life would be much more difficult, if not impossible.
3. The ritualization of a task puts the body on automatic pilot, freeing the mind to concentrate on the goal of the task or to think of other matters.
4. Ritual can thus best be seen as an enabler and liberator rather than as a hindrance and encumbrance.
5. The freedom of mind brought by ritualization applies to both unconscious and conscious rituals.
6. Whole conscious ritual is not as necessary to life as is unconscious ritual, it is a normal human tendency and desire.
7. To suppress this desire is to suppress a part of our humanity.
8. Indulgence in conscious ritual, however, raises an important question. Will we control the ritual, or it control us?

## Chapter the Thirteenth: Internalizing Ritual

1. Any conscious ritual, such as the druid liturgy, should be memorized and, preferably, rehearsed until the officiant can run through it in his sleep.

2. An officiant who does not do this, for whatever reason, does a disservice to both himself and the congregation.
3. The ritual will stumble and will not feel right. If it doesn't feel right to the congregation and the officiant, its results will be at best problematic.
4. A ritual must be done right to be truly effective.
5. This is one reason for a ritual's increasing power with repetition.
6. To use a theatrical parallel, an actor who must concentrate on remembering his lines and blocking will be unable to give sufficient attention to his actual performance, which necessarily will suffer.
7. Internalization of ritual permits the officiant to concentrate upon actually performing it and accomplishing its goals.
8. Instead of restricting his freedom, internalization enables the officiant to better pace the ritual and to improvise meaningfully in response to events and the congregation, leading to greater interaction on both physical and psychic levels.
9. The end result is a better more purposeful ritual.
10. A parallel to what internalization of ritual accomplishes can be found in traditional music or jazz.
11. The musician has internalized the basic tune; he knows where he's been, where he is, and where he's going at all times without having to think about it.
12. This enables him to experiment to ornament the tune and improvise around it as he plays, while maintaining the tune's basic structure.
13. The result is that every playing of the tune is both different and the same, increasing its meaning and personalizing it, and giving greater entertainment to both the audience and the musician.
14. What an officiant is trying to accomplish with a ritual varies with both the ritual and the officiant.
15. Some may try to invoke actual powers, external or internal; others may seek to increase the sense of togetherness in the congregation.
16. In the standard druid liturgy I believe that the entire purpose is summed up in the line "cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation."
17. It is in the meditation, after all, that each druid pursues his understanding of the Mother in his own way in the group setting.
18. A well-run service can assist this pursuit, which is really the thrust of Reformed Druidism.
19. So, fellow druids, do your rites right, each in your own way.

## Chapter the Fourteenth: Facts and Myths

1. So much for old business, now on to new(ish) business.
2. On a deep level myth is truer than fact.
3. "Facts" are ephemeral; they change as new facts are found or current thinking is revised. Myth is much longer lived.
4. We all know that the Washington and the cherry tree story is false, it was invented by Parson Weems.
5. Yet the story has entered the American mythos.
6. Intellectually we discount it, but it still affects us and inspires us.



7. Similarly, few today believe in the literal truth of ancient myths (in fact, it's likely that few ancient pagans believed in their literal truth), but we can still be moved by them.
8. Biblical debunkers and fundamentalists make the same mistake about the factual content of the Bible.
9. Whether certain events happened or not, whether the Bible is factually true, doesn't matter. To a believer the Biblical mythos rings true; even to a disbeliever it is moving.
10. Facts speak only to the intellect; myth speaks to man's heart and soul.
11. With the longevity and tenaciousness of myth in mind, I will now address some myths about the RDNA, myself, the Berkeley grove, the Celts, and the ancient druids.

## Chapter the Fifteenth: Celtic Culture in the Early RDNA

1. In his history of the RDNA Brother Michael reaches some conclusions on the Celtic influences in the founding at Carleton of the original grove to which I would answer, "Yes, but..."
2. He is correct in saying that the Celtic trappings were there only to lend the name "druids" some legitimacy, and that reading were from various religious traditions with a heavy Zen influence (especially when Frangquist was Arch Druid).
3. My own interest in Celtiana was actually sparked by my involvement with the RDNA, probably due to my innate tendency to seek out the roots of ideas.
4. At Carleton, however, I knew Celtic culture only through song and poetry, both in English.
5. At that time (1963/64 c.e., 1/2 Y.R.) little was generally available on Celtic society or religion.
6. What was available usually relied upon classical sources and was either pretty basic and sketchy (and often wrong) or highly speculative.
7. Being a language freak, I started my research by learning Irish, which further sparked my interest.
8. Then the flood of Celtiana, which persists to this day, began.
9. For the most part I've swum in the more serious scholarly and semi-scholarly stream of this flood while dipping into the metaphysical and speculative eddies.
10. (Some of this stuff is quite good, much of it has some good perceptions, and some is downright ridiculous. Caveat.)
11. As I learned, I shared with others of my acquaintance. As a result, the Celtic veneer became thicker in the Berkeley Grove, but it was never more than a veneer.
12. For services I stuck to the original liturgy with appropriate additions for the High Days.
13. Meditations were often taken from the Chronicles.
14. The Celtic thing was my personal search, but I never consciously attempted to impose it upon the grove as a whole, though I welcomed fellow seekers.
15. (Thus my involvement with Clann na Brocheta.)
16. Some seem to think I became some kind of druid evangelist.
17. Nothing could be farther from the truth. While it is true that I desired a somewhat higher profile for the RDNA, my purpose was not to recruit, but to enable those who

were searching for their religious footing to find us more easily.

18. I believed, and still do, that the RDNA has something to offer to such people, the same thing many of us found in it, a chance to define their own religious beliefs without preaching, pressure, or persuasion in a supportive group.
19. I've always found active proselytizing repugnant, however worthy the cause.
20. My attempt to increase the organizational coordination of the RDNA was similarly motivated.
21. The goal was to enable the most organizationally active druids and Archdruids to better serve other's searches for awareness by setting up a forum for discussing problems which groves and individuals encounter.
22. The hallmark of the Third Order is service, after all. This should be especially true for Archdruids.
23. One of the problems a priest runs into after setting up a grove or becoming an Archdruid (especially when the members are not living in close proximity and are not well acquainted with each other as at Carleton College) is that grove members look upon the AD as an authority figure (at least at first).
24. One of the problems of hierarchy.
25. This in turn rather constricts the A-D's search for "awareness," unless he wishes to hopelessly confuse the congregants.
26. A similar problem to that of Zen "masters" and "students.
27. How can you lead another to "awareness" if you're looking for it yourself, when they have to reach their own "awareness"?
28. You can tell them this, but it is often difficult to get through their own preconceptions. (Gee, you're the teacher, so teach!)
29. What I found myself doing (and, I suspect, other A.D.s too) was using their preconceptions to aid my own search, hoping they'd grow in their awareness, too, or at least become aware of their unawareness.
30. Thus, at least partially, the growing Celtic flavor, though I would often take my readings from meditations.
31. The Celtic flavor was always more window-dressing than substance, though.
32. When a congregant asks a metaphysical or philosophical question, the priest should always encourage the congregant to find his own answer.
33. If an answer is insisted upon, the priest should make clear that the answer is only his opinion.
34. All in all, Arch Druid can be a very comfortable position, if you go for anything deeper than having a good time sitting under the oak.

## Chapter the Sixteenth: Those Amazing Celts

1. Despite what I have written of Celtic influence on the early RDNA, I would suggest that it was unknowingly greater than intended.
2. This influence was inevitable, for the Celts made many contributions to our own culture, though these are usually overlooked.
3. Certainly we seem to have evoked the Celtic talent for disorganization.

4. Much to their sorrow (and our loss) when they ran up against the Romans, Germans, Saxons, and Normans, the Celts in their own culture rarely displayed much talent or desire for tight organization.
5. Celtic society, though structured and somewhat hierarchical was essentially libertarian and individualistic with a distinct tendency to surface anarchy.
6. To those who may wish to build a tightly-run pagan religion or organization I would suggest that Celtic deities and society are poor models to invoke.
7. Try the Romans, Greeks, or the Germans (though Himmler sort of ruined the last).
8. The picture that most people have of the Celts is that of a savage, bloodthirsty people who fought naked.
9. This myth is largely the result of Roman writings and can be laid to cultural differences, racism, and propaganda.
10. The centralized and orderly Romans found themselves repelled by the disorderly Celts, who refused to be quietly enslaved.
11. Romans had been racially traumatized by the Celtic sack of Rome early in their history, and the Celts frequently allied themselves with Rome's enemies, notably Hannibal.
12. Celts wouldn't play the Roman game.
13. Instead of pitched battle, Celts preferred raid and ambush.
14. Instead of whole armies facing off against each other with a resultant general slaughter, the Celts preferred individual combat, which might or might not escalate.
15. The fact is, the Celts simply had different cultural values from the Romans (and later the English).
16. The picture is now emerging of the Celts is that of a sophisticated society with a technology that was in some ways more advanced than the Romans', especially in agriculture and iron-working.
17. In fact the yields produced by Celtic agriculture were the best in Northern Europe prior to the development of modern agriculture.
18. Many roads in Gaul and England which are credited to the Romans have proved to have substantial Celtic foundations.
19. The conflict between Celtic and Roman aesthetics can be plainly seen in their art.
20. Celtic art was complex, elaborate, and intricate but was largely nonrepresentational. Roman art was mostly severely representational.
21. Perhaps worst of all to the Romans, Celts had little concept of private land ownership, and belonged to the tribe, not the individual, and no concept of primogeniture.
22. They even "allowed" their women to fight in battle and participate actively in their society and would even follow female leaders.
23. Surely such a people must be total savages!
24. True, the Celts had their savage side, but don't all societies?
25. True, some warriors fought naked. In fact, some Scottish Highlanders stripped for battle as late as 1745.
26. The reason was both religious and practical.
27. Symbolically, fighting naked relies upon the gods and upon one's own skill for protection, and better displays that skill to the gods.
28. Practically, a wound is less likely to infect without dirty cloth pressed into it.
29. If you didn't have armor, which was rare and expensive, you were better off fighting naked and unrestricted.
30. Also, cloth is expensive, mon! (Scots joke)
31. True, the Celts were headhunters.
32. Again the reason was religious, and the practice may only have been that of one warrior cult.
33. But the Romans enslaved conquered peoples and humiliated and murdered their leaders, not to mention their gladiatorial games and mass executions.
34. The English displayed the heads of executed felons until the 18th century and taught the Amerindians the quaint custom of scalping.
35. Who were the savages anyway?!
36. Certainly the Irish considered the English uncouth savages.
37. The same culture clash that led to their misunderstanding and fear of the Celts made both the Romans and English oblivious to or unable to acknowledge the Celtic contributions to their own cultures.
38. Many Latin writers and poets were in fact Romanized Celts from Cisalpine Gaul and Iberia.
39. Some Roman emperors, even, were Celts by descent.
40. Many "English" writers were really Irish, Scottish, or Welsh and thought of themselves as such. (I may be British, laddie, but I am NOT English!)
41. The most basic contribution to English culture is usually totally overlooked. It lies in the language itself.
42. Lexicographers will tell you that surprisingly few English words are derived from Celtic languages.
43. They're right, especially considering the long contact between the peoples.
44. The Celtic contribution is more basic and is found in the structure of the language itself.
45. English relies heavily upon the progressive tenses for the subtlety and flexibility of its verbal system.
46. These tenses are not found in either Anglo-Saxon (or other Germanic languages) or Latin.
47. In Celtic languages, however, such tenses are those most used, sometimes almost exclusively. (As I recall, linguists count some 26 tenses in Irish Verbs. This may be an undercount if various compound constructions are taken into account.)
48. All in all, then, Western culture owes a great unacknowledged debt to the Celts.

## Chapter the Seventeenth:

### Interrelated Religions

1. I would also suggest that there is a greater relationship between Celtic paganism, Hinduism, Christianity, and even Zen than is usually realized.
2. Let us look again to the roots, Celtic paganism, like all European paganisms except those of the Basque, the Magyar, and the Finns, evolved from the same Indo-European root as did Hinduism.
3. Hinduism gave birth to its own salvation cult, Buddhism, one sect of which became Zen. So Zen is actually a very distant cousin to Celtic paganism.
4. In the centuries before Christ, Judaism was influenced by both Hellenism and the dualist ideas of Zoroastrianism,

another salvation cult outgrowth of Indo-European paganism.

5. These influences can be seen in both the messianic idea and the increased emphasis on Satan as a worldly power.
6. Buddhist ideas were also penetrating Judaism at this time.
7. All this influx of ideas led to the development of Jewish mystery cults, such as the Essenes and Christianity.
8. During its early years of development, Christianity absorbed yet more Greek influence, along with Egyptian ideas, which were themselves heavily Hellenized by this time.
9. Many influential early Christian theologians were from Alexandria or God, both places where persecution was relatively light.
10. Most of those from Gaul were, of course, Celts, and it is likely that some druidic beliefs and philosophies found their way into early Christianity.
11. Therefore, we should not be surprised when we find similar ideas expressed in all these religions and cultures.
12. Nor is it a total coincidence that some early Irish Christians wrote epigrammatic poetry similar to haiku, or that some surviving druidic teachings resemble Zen koans, for there is a root connection.

## Chapter the Eighteenth:

### Who were those old Druids?

1. The standard myth about the druids is that they were the primitive Celtic priesthood who conducted bloody rites in the deep woods and practiced human sacrifice.
2. The revisionist myth sees them as the priesthood of a nature-revering Celtic paganism, but discounts the human sacrifice as Roman propaganda.
3. Both those myths are based upon the Romantics' misreading of classical sources and ignorance of Celtic sources and society.
4. To take the human sacrifice question first, I know of only one Irish source that mentions such a practice, and there it is presented as a heretical aberration.
5. Surely, if human sacrifices were common the early Christian monks would have used the practice to discredit the druids.
6. Even Julius Caesar does not claim that the druids conducted such sacrifice; he says merely that the Celts would not sacrifice without the presence of a druid.
7. To me, this implies that the druids were required mainly to see that it was done right.
8. Caesar also admits that most sacrificial victims were convicted felons and prisoners-of-war, the ensnarement or execution of whom was common in all early societies.
9. Physical evidence of Celtic human sacrifice, though extant, is sparse.
10. We are led to conclude that human sacrifice was not a common practice, and probably only took place in times of great danger, if at all.
11. Such acts may have been a hankering back to earlier practice, much like the constant Roman theme of returning to the practices of the early republic. (We have deserted the way of our ancestors and must return to them if we wish to avert disaster.)

12. Certainly the ancient Irish and Welsh law texts that have come down to us prefer restitution to punishment. Capital punishment is unknown.
13. The myth that the druids were a priesthood has, in fact, no basis in either classical or Celtic sources.
14. Though they certainly had sacral duties, we must remember that religious duties were an integral part of every pagan's life.
15. In fact, neither classical nor Celtic writings refer to the druids as priest, and one, Dio Chrysotom, distinctly differentiates between them.
16. My own opinion is that some druids had a priestly function, but most did not.
17. Their privileged, sacred status is explained best by the druids' many important functions in Celtic society. They were the Celts' poets, seers, judges, doctors, philosophers, teachers, and repositories of tradition (Historians and genealogists).
18. No one druid practiced all these professions, of course.
19. Even the most primitive societies have specialists, and the Celts, as I have shown, were hardly primitive.
20. In historical Irish society all these trades ran in families, members of which were trained in the family trade from an early age, with some cross-training through the custom of fosterage.
21. It should be noted that in early Irish society all these professions were open to both sexes.
22. Only after the victory of the Roman Catholic Church over the Celtic church, a victory due more to organization than theology, did women disappear from the professional class.
23. It is as a professional and intellectual class that we can thus best define the ancient druids, and it was as such that they won the respect of both Greek (who found most of Celtic society as frightening as did the Romans) and early Christian philosophers.
24. This concept invites comparison with the Brahmin caste of India, and this comparison has often been made.
25. It is likely the Brahmins and the druids (and perhaps the Persian magi) had a common root in early Indo-European society.
26. Certainly many parallels exist between the Celtic and Hindu societies, and both mythological and even musical similarities exist.
27. If we look upon the druids as an intellectual caste, rather than as a priesthood with repugnant practices, Roman antipathy towards them is better explained, for a society's intellectuals are always the first target of a conqueror.
28. We can also see that the original druids did not die out with the coming of Christianity (there are mentions of them as late as the 9th century in Irish texts). Rather they metamorphosed and maintained many of their positions under a new name.
29. In Ireland, they were known as the aos dana (people of art/learning) who retained much of the sacred status and privilege of the druids.
30. It is likely that the early Celtic Christian church owed some of its beliefs and philosophy to the druids, which it would later reintroduce to the continent through missionaries.
31. Pelagius, either a Briton or an Irishman, was specifically attacked as trying to "revive the natural philosophy of the

druids" for his stands against the doctrine of original sin and in support of free will. (He believed Augustinian predestination theology led to immorality.)

32. He was finally condemned as a heretic after long political manipulation by Augustine and his followers.
33. It is certain that the knowledge preserved in Ireland which made it a magnet for those seeking education during the Dark Ages was not only Roman, Greek, and Christian, but also druidic.
34. We can only mourn the loss of knowledge caused by St. Patrick's boasted destruction of 180 druidic books and by England's later banning and destruction of Irish books, even as we deplore the destruction of the library of Alexandria by Christian zealots and Mayan books by the Spanish priests.
35. Truly all these acts were crimes against all humanity.
36. If we wish to stretch a point, it can be argued that the original druidic caste did not totally die out until England's final suppression of the bardic schools and the Brehon law in the 17th century.

## Chapter the Nineteenth:

### So Where Does That Leave Us?

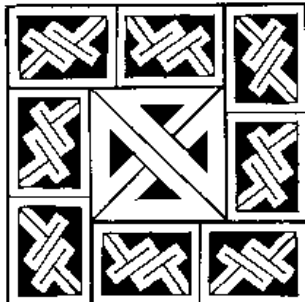
1. If we accept the original druids as an intellectual caste, we can see a parallel with early Reformed Druids. For what were we at Carleton if not a somewhat mischievous group of intellectuals?
2. But surely I'm not suggesting that any real connection to the ancient druids existed, am I?
3. Certainly not. But, as I have shown, Western thought may well owe an unconscious debt to the druids.
4. No, certainly not, but I'll leave you with a short bit from a story from the Life of St. Guénolé, a 6th century Breton saint, by Wurdistan, a 9th century monk.
5. The story recounts the meeting of St. Guénolé with the last Druid in Brittany!
6. After the events of the story and a brief theological argument, which is essentially a draw, Guénolé offers the Druid refuge in his abbey.
7. The Druid declines and takes his leave, saying, "Do not all tracks lead to the same center?"
8. How druidic!

Peace Siocháin Heddwch

Is mise,

Robert D.A.L., Be.

Spring Equinox XXXIII Y.R. (1996 c.e.)



# The Book of Lacunae

(By Mike Scharding, 1996)

(New to ARDA 1)

## Chapter the First

1. I believe Gerre would agree with me that, "It's a gift to be simple, it's a gift to be free."
2. In my personal form of Druidism, I consider this cliché to be an unspoken Third Basic Tenet.
3. Despite my quest for simplicity, you may have noticed that I have put together this huge tome.
4. Without exaggeration, I have probably spent more time collecting, analyzing, and commenting on Reformed Druidic laws, customs, rituals, letters, and calendars than anyone else. Has this helped me?
5. I have read thousands of our pages, interviewed scores of Druids from every Branch, and spent the better part of three years of my precious youth in this process. As Garfield said, 'Big, fat, hairy deal!'
6. Do you know what I've really discovered?
7. I think that I now know less about Reformed Druidism than when I started, and yet this is good.
8. Do you understand this?

## Chapter the Second

1. Many was the long hour that I wended my way through the twisting trails of Carleton's Arboretum; down footpaths of which only the trees and I knew.
2. I would go to those quiet woods to escape the noise of student life in the Goodhue Dormitory.
3. Although I walked in the hoary homeland of Druidism, I was not always Druidical; instead I often puzzled over the intricacies of the Reform's organizational history, with a stubborn drive to somehow "prove" my form of Druidism.
4. Then suddenly!, I'd be distracted by some noise or scent, and I'd be totally enraptured by the starry sky of a Minnesota night; watching my tiny friend, Pleiades, try to escape from big old Orion.
5. In a moment such as that, I would forget about Provisional Councils, Ribbons, and Higher Orders.
6. I would then truly be a Druid; gawking in abject awe, trying to comprehend the Universe in all of its unimaginable vastness and layers of complexity; yet all the while knowing that it was impossible.
7. I would sometime try to compensate for such "limits" by trying to master something so banal and unimportant as the vagaries of our Council's voting methods. But that is, truly, the work of the dying.

## Chapter the Third

1. Do you know how I now regard most religions?
2. It's much like story telling, "One mouth speaking and many different ears listening."

## Chapter the Fourth

1. My dictionary (AHD) defines a grove as "a small wood or stand of trees that lacks dense undergrowth."
2. If the undergrowth creeps into a grove, it will no longer be a grove, but it becomes a woodland.
3. Woodlands are better than gravel pits, but realize that the old trees will now be more difficult to be discerned or even to be approached, and the youngest saplings may be choked of life-giving sunlight.
4. I sometimes wondered if this desire to remove undergrowth underlaid the practice of the ancient Druids when they removed mistletoe vines from their oak trees, in order to protect their grove's simplicities from parasitic complexities?
5. Likewise, tend ye thus to your groves, not in designing complexities, but in seeking simplicity.
6. Do not fear innovating to suit temporary needs, but be aware of the tenacious nature of traditions, once they become established.

## Chapter the Fifth

## Chapter the Sixth

1. It is a delicious irony that we, as a simplistic group, have accumulated so much hokey literature.
2. This collection from 33 years of Druidism contains about 800 leaves. Yet I tell you, verily, that a single shrub can match this feat within a year.
3. Perhaps the ancient Druids never wrote down any books about their beliefs, because Nature doesn't write in words, but in a rich tapestry of changing interrelationships and new experiences.
4. This book will probably never change, although you may very well change between your readings.
5. Unlike this book, there are billions of shrubs, which will grow, produce offspring, die, and return to the soil. This book will only sit on a shelf.
6. Would you rather be "of the shrub" or "of the book"? Would you rather be "now" or "the past"?

## Chapter the Seventh

1. At the site of Carleton's first Druid service, on Monument Hill, there is a four-sided marble obelisk.
2. On one side is an inscription commemorating the first Christian service held in Northfield.
3. On the second side, a man chiseled in a reminder that the first marriage in Northfield was held here.
4. On the third side are details about the first Christian baptism of a baby in the whole region.
5. But the fourth side is smooth and blank.
6. Richard told me this side tells about Druidism.

## Chapter the Eighth

1. Bruce Lee once told a story about a professor from a large university, who visited a Zen Master to seek more wisdom and to have a tea ceremony.
2. Now, he actually went there to impress the Master with his thesis on the Diamond Sutra, which is a difficult work. The Master listened patiently to him and presently he said, "Let us have some tea."
3. The Master carefully poured the hot tea into the professor's cup, but then would not stop pouring. The tea began to overflow and spill over onto the fine *tatami* mats, thereby ruining them.
4. The professor finally could restrain himself no longer and he cried out, "The cup is full, no more will go in!"
5. The Master smiled, and replied, "You, like this teacup, are full of your own opinions and theories. How can you hope to benefit from my words, unless you first empty your cup?"

## Chapter the Ninth

1. A bowl's true usefulness requires emptiness, although you could still try to use it as a hammer.

## Chapter the Tenth

## Chapter the Eleventh

1. It is one of the remarkable aspects of "awareness" that with every breakthrough of understanding, I realize more about the flawed or irrelevant nature of so many dogmas that I carry around.
2. Yet, I am not disturbed by this.
3. Truths have risen and fallen amongst the many cultures of the world, and yet new systems will always arise and pose new solutions to us. We must be ready to choose wisely, or even to contribute.

## Chapter the Twelfth

1. Do you know what most people have told me that they most fondly remember about their days of active participation in a Grove?
2. It's not something they can put into words.
3. Richard Shelton, may his camel herds thrive, told me that he had spent far too much of his time in Ann Arbor explaining what Druidism *was not*.
4. I have heard similar words from most Archdruids, and many of them as a result have despaired of passing on the awareness that they achieved at Carleton College (or elsewhere) to other seekers.

5. But where did you get your awareness? Did it come from the words of an Archdruid or did it come from just being out there with Nature, perhaps with other Druids being present, so many years ago?
6. We can only try to help those who want our help. An unwanted gift, no matter how beautiful it may seem to us, is a burden unto the receiver.
7. But what is this obsession with proselytizing? Some evangelists are like problem drinkers; they do not set responsible limits on their vice and they do not know when its time to leave the bar.
8. Do not consider yourself a missionary out to spread "the truth," for that is not our way. Rather be like a humble traveler and teach wisdom to yourself. Ask good questions and listen to the answers.
9. But if your interests and pursuits of "awareness" should only find wooden ears and you receive a cold shoulder from your Grove, and yet you still need to talk, then go ye into the woods and talk to the trees.
10. For though a tree's ears are wooden, and their shoulders are cold, at least they will listen patiently and provide welcome support for your weary back.
11. When it is time, people may notice what is wise in your words, no matter where you are at the time; whether it be at a Druidical circle in a deep wood, at a New York coffee shop, in the classroom, at the assembly plant, at a hospital, or even (God forbid!) in distant lands during a bloody war.
12. Verily, the Earth is our Carleton College, and all of us are merely pupils in her classrooms. We have to tune our ears to her lectures and occasionally focus away from the voices of other students who murmur around us and pass notes to each other.
13. Let us boldly ask questions in our classes, listen to our classmates, do the best on our exams, exceed our homework's teaching objectives, play hooky, enjoy the games during recess periods, go on field trips, and work together on class projects.
14. Some say that we forget 90% of what we learned in College, but do not forget that there is no end of lessons that can still be learned out there.

### Chapter the Thirteenth

1. I have also heard complaints that too many Reformed Druids are "going back" to a monotheistic faith, or moving on to another religion.
2. Why do you now seek to bind other people solely to the ways of Reformed Druidism?
3. Many of us joined Reformed Druidism, not because it was the only way to find spiritual truth, but because we agreed that it was "one way, yea, one way amongst many."
4. I would also remind you that many of us never officially "left" our previous religions, because Reformed Druidism does not require us to abandon our previous affiliations or commitments.
5. When people judge that they have sufficiently explored our ways, who are we to begrudge them a chance to explore yet more ways?
6. I consider Reformed Druidism to be a spiritual way-station for pilgrims who are seeking for spiritual truths. They come from everywhere, they stay until rested, and they eventually go somewhere.

7. If we have been good caretakers of this way-station, they will remember our hospitality and perhaps they may return for a visit, but certainly they will fondly remember us and our ways.
8. May our gift of Druidism to these travelers not be a heavy ball and chain that will bind them to our ways, but rather may we give them a set of wings and a telescope to aid their journeys.
9. Perhaps you are worried that their relationships with the Earth-Mother will deteriorate or disappear under another religion?
10. Look ye at the Green Book and note ye how every religion of the world has wisdom in it, and that at least one voice in every religion has incorporated a respect or reverence for Nature.
11. If the people have truly met the Earth-Mother while they were with us, then when they leave they may naturally gravitate towards such voices.
12. Finally, I would ask you if such a preoccupation with other people's spiritual welfare is perhaps an indication that you are avoiding the tending of your own spiritual growth?

### Chapter the Fourteenth

### Chapter the Fifteenth

1. I tell you that when you develop "awareness" you can gain wisdom from every word, every book, every encounter, and from every possible silence.
2. No longer will you need to keep to the outer structures of Reformed Druidism, except as one keeps a beautiful painting on a living room wall; yet one still goes outside for a breath of fresh air, and to see what the squirrels & foxgloves are up to today.
3. If your copy of ARDA distracts you from the rest of Reality, then it is only worthy of recycling.
4. Keep it simple, stupid (KISS).

### Chapter the Sixteenth

1. Indeed, after reading the ARDA, some of you may wish to adopt all those old customs, or perhaps even to revive the Reform's organization above and beyond the Grove level (i.e. a new Council).
2. Please, do not be surprised if you find that most of the older Reformed Druids (and myself) will refuse to participate in such a revival.
3. It is not because we disdain the past forms of Reformed Druidism, for I and the others will always be glad to

advise you and help you on your journey, but consider this story:

4. "Chuang Tzu was fishing in the P'u when the Prince of Ch'u sent two high officials to ask him to take charge of the administration of the Ch'u State."
5. "Chuang Tzu went on fishing and, without turning his head, said: "I have heard that in Ch'u there is a sacred tortoise which has been dead now some three thousand years, and that the Prince keeps this tortoise carefully enclosed in a chest on the altar of his ancestral temple. Now would this tortoise rather be dead and have its remains venerated, or be alive and wagging its tail in the mud?"
6. "It would rather be alive," replied the two officials, "and wagging its tail in the mud."
7. "Begone!" cried Chuang Tzu. "I too will wag my tail in the mud."

## Chapter the Seventeenth

1. That's about all that I can think to write about, but you can find more of my thoughts in the selections of Volume 2 and 3 of the Green Book.
2. I hope that this Apocrypha has shown to you the problems of Druidism, or of even knowing what is Druidism! "The never-ending search for religious truth" must continue for me, as it will for you.
3. Blessings of peace be upon you!

Michael James Anthony Ulhail Scharding  
Grand Patriarch of the Ancient Order of Bambi  
Day One of Samradh  
Year XXXIV of e Reform  
May 1st, 1996 c.e.



## The Epistle of Amanda

(By Amanda, 1997)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. Dear Michael,
2. Thank you for your long-distance support, it's nice to know that because of our devotion to the Earth we can share our experiences and friendship.
3. There are many people who follow a Druidic path and call it Buddhism, Catholicism, etc.
4. I always find it interesting to attend the religious services of another faith, or get into a discussion with someone who think they believe differently, and see just how much we have in common.
5. We're all seeking, taking the paths that seem the most fitting for our beliefs, but we're all going to end up in the same place.
6. What, may I ask, pulled you to Druidism?
7. For me it was the combination of religion and Nature, the fact that it doesn't require me to think that other religions are "wrong."
8. [Many people have always believed that there is only one "right" way to spiritual awakening or whatever one would call it. However, you are right in that so many religions are very similar, they probably ARE the same religion, but some people found things they didn't like about one, changed it, and denounced the original.
9. Also, Christianity DID borrow from the Pagan religions in order to get more Pagans to convert.
10. These similarities aren't limited to Christianity and the Pagan religions of Western Europe, though. In Indian religions three is also a holy number, and there is a trinity of the Buddha, his Spirit body, Enjoyment body and Dharma(human) body, and there are parallels with Indian religion in Native American religions. Sorry about the run-on sentence. (24 Oct 1996)]
11. You asked about my vigil. It was one of the most surreal experiences of my life. Michelle started out with me in the lower Arb shortly before sunset. She shared with me information I would find valuable through the night.
12. As darkness fell, I expected it to bring fear, but I felt fear only once that entire night when something ran across a field and I thought it came at me through the foliage lining the trail.
13. I did a lot of thinking before the sun rose that morning, mostly about the mother-daughter relationship I have with the Earth/Goddess (I'm Wiccan).
14. I saw it as an omen that I stood on the hill at sunrise, a doe and her fawn stepped into view in a nearby field. I can think of nothing else to say about the experience, it was beyond any verbal description.
15. Things are going well with the Druids. We have good participation for most things, but for our last full moon ritual no one showed up. Probably, because it was fairly cold and there were three inches of snow on the ground.
16. All in all a good fall term.
17. I don't have an Anthology yet, so I'm borrowing the Religious Diversity House copy for now.

Have a good Yule. -Amanda

# The Sigil Letters

(By Various Authors, 1997-8)

(New to ARDA 2)

## Chapter the First: The Sigil Vigil

1. Dear Siblings
2. You asked me what I see when I look at this neat little sigil you sent to me? Is it now traditional to wear Druid Sigils as jewelry, this smacks of proselytization, don't you think?
3. I had always preferred retaining the sigils for liturgical work and carving them on the winds at the close of the service with our hands (Peace, Peace, Peace), thus showing vividly how temporary is our mark on the world.
4. But, it was a good question, so I stayed up last night and thought about it, which is not hard since we have 23 hours at the South Pole.
5. Here are the more comprehensible thoughts that resulted;
6. I see two parallel lines intersecting a circle. (is there more to it than that?)
7. I see the original ritualistic gestures of its shape carved on the winds (where do they go?)
8. I see a fork and a knife on a plate (what was for dinner?)
9. I see two chopsticks resting on a bowl (is it full or emptied?)
10. I see a lid to a pot with bars to keep it from falling in (what's for dinner?)
11. I see a grate to filter out the flow of something (what's to be kept out?)
12. I see two boards placed on a well-top (are you thirsty?)
13. I see two pins and a ring, holding up a hairdo (how fancy is it?)
14. I see a drum and two drum sticks (what music does your rhythm accompany?)
15. I see two saplings with the sun rising behind them (what will happen today?)
16. I see two bars on window (is it locked?)
17. I see a galloping turtle with his head pulled in. (what is he afraid of?)
18. I see the world's tropics of cancer and Capricorn. (where will you go?)
19. I see a thing that cannot be described (do you see it too?)
20. I see a raggedy baseball in mid-flight (how will you swing?)
21. I see a bridge spanning over a pond (is it deep?)
22. I see rabbit ears on TV antenna. (What channel are you tuned to?)
23. I see a drawbridge of a castle entrance (what is protected?)
24. I see a Celtic cross, with swords unlocked (why were they fighting?)
25. I see some planks laid over a chasm (what made the hole?)
26. I see eyelashes on a half-closed eye (what does it see?)
27. I see the stalactite & stalagmite lined entrance to the Earth-Mother's womb (what will come out?)
28. I see three enclosed spaces (what else in there?)

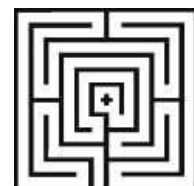
29. I see a gold platter and two ivory tusks (was it worth the cost?)
30. I see the trails of two friends in a grassy meadow (which flowers will they pick?)
31. I see two streams of a waterfall pouring over the mouth of a cave (must you get wet?)
32. I see infinite space stretching away from the sigil (what is out there?)
33. I see the refined end-product of some melted rocks, hauled far from home (just like us, isn't it?)
34. I see a division of a perfect year into two half seasons and two "days between the years"
35. I see analogies that have gone on too long (when will I stop?)
36. I see a short tube when viewed from the sides (details depend on the vantage point)
37. I see two parallel lines intersecting a circle on the other side. (sometimes opposites are similar)
38. It is a lump of pewter, than I hung on my computer.

-Ian Friesland, June 1997

## Chapter the Second: Sigil Musings

1. November 11th, 1997
2. Dear Amanda Bradley, Sister-in-the-Mother.
3. I wish you a happy Celtic Year and beginning of the Time of Sleep in Reformed Druidism (Samhain to Beltane).
4. As a present I offer you this Druid Sigil which I usually give to new 3rd Orders. What does it mean?
5. It is merely a lump of silver to some, worth \$20.
6. To others it is a symbol of weirdness, of people who refuse to accept societies predetermined paths of spirituality.
7. To others it is a symbol by which to recognize other Druids, but verily I believe that there are many people in many faiths or codes who follow the Druidic path but use a different name for it. Seek these people, too.
8. To others, it is a symbol of their desire to control the "magic" of Nature. I have done this too, but beware of egotism, because the control of Nature's magic can be abused just as we have abused Nature's other resources.
9. To others, it is an indefinite thing. This simple symbol has seemingly never been adopted or named before by any known group before 1963. It can be used as a tool without existing prejudice for teaching.
10. To you, it will mean whatever you wish. If you wear it, people will associate your deeds and words with this symbol.
11. I give it to you with this in mind.

Yours in the Mother,  
Michael  
Druid Missionary in Japan

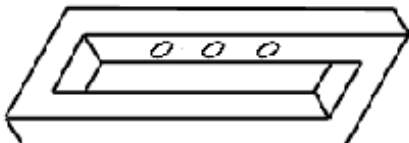




## Chapter the Third: My Vision of the Sigil

1. I've thought a bit about the sigil. The following is born out of my experiences with a Rosen Method practitioner, my experiences with the Mists of the Stone Forest Grove in Minneapolis, as well as the events of the night of my vigil. In Neopagan Druidism, such as we are, there is a tendency to three-ness.
2. There are a number of three aspected Godheads in Celtic mythology, for example.
3. There is also the aspect of three in time, which has Gaelic names for past, present and future that I cannot remember.
4. Also, the three realities that the Cosmic Tree unites: Upper World, This world, Lower World. Another "three" that we at Mists worked with is that of Gods & Goddesses, Nature Spirits, and Ancestors. In our rituals we invoke these three.
5. The sigil of OBOD is the three-rayed sign, commonly translated as the rays of spirit, mind, and body.
6. My view of the RDNA sigil is that the two vertical rays represent spirit and soul. Soul could alternately be called mind. I see the difference between spirit and soul as being the two parts of life that reach for the heavens(spirit), and that which embraces the Earth(soul). I won't say that this is a sharp definition.
7. They could just as easily be two aspects of the same immaterial aspect of a human as two different things altogether.
8. However, they have a body around them, and I believe that is very effectively symbolizes the unity of Life, especially within a Pagan worldview.
9. The two rays extending in both directions beyond the "body" can than have significant meanings of the need to have the balance of an inner life coupled with the outer life of experience.
10. I am a believer in the mind/body connection, and this sigil could well symbolize that too.
11. That has been my experience of late with this Rosen Practitioner. It's a subtle form of touch that reads the soul as kept in the body. I was doing some experiments of my own in my last session, and the results were outstanding.
12. This practitioner I see is good. If I changed my mind in mid-stream, he felt it. I was changing my energies, by centering very deeply. When I hit core, I get body rushes, and when I did, he immediately noted it.
13. I was being silent the whole time, and experimenting with the method because I see this as being a powerful tool for healing souls, which is a desire of mine.
14. So the sigil to me is very profound. I wear it constantly, and it serves to remind me of my Third Order calling.

-Robert Harrison, ODAL,  
Carleton Grove (associated)

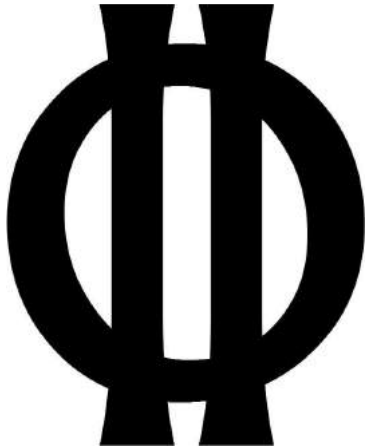


## Chapter the Fourth: History of the Sigil

1. What is a sigil?
2. The circle bisected by two vertical parallel lines is known as the Druid sigil in modern Druid groups. It is one of the many symbols now widely used by Reformed Druids of North America, its offshoot called Ar nDraiocht Fein (ADF) which started in 1983, which also had an offshoot The Henge of Keltria. Therefore, it is a prominent symbol of Druidism in America.
3. Any group can use the sigil, if they wish, we're not possessive about it, just send us a copy of your artwork for our gallery collection.
4. False Origin Myth #1
5. There is a well publicized myth that it came from a photograph of a Celtic-Romano temple's foundation which had a square Roman foundation over laying an older Celtic circular structure. It looks remarkably like the Druid sigil with two of the rectangular while parallely intersecting the circle. However, this shot published in Stuart Piggot's seminal work "The Druids" was first published in 1966, three years after the RDNA was already documented as heavily using the symbol.
6. So that can't be it. None of the founders probably had the background knowledge in 1963 of obscure archeological digs, so they couldn't have come across it anywhere else in the first two weeks of the founding of the RDNA.
7. Closer to the Truth Story
8. David Fisher, the founder of the RDNA, was eating lunch at Goodhue Dorm Cafeteria on Carleton College Campus in Northfield, Minnesota, USA in early April 1963 (perhaps April 1st?) and talking to Norman Nelson and a few of his other friends.
9. They were complaining about a mandatory requirement to attend weekly religious services by the college. They decided to start THEIR OWN religion to see if that was satisfactory, and they decided on the name "Reformed Druids of North America."
10. So they traipsed up to the hill of three oaks soon thereafter (April 17th, 1963) and had the first ceremony. David Fisher claimed to have been initiated into a Fraternal Druid order in Missouri, but they didn't believe him, because he had also tried to set up three other semi-secret farcical organizations on the campus with a similar story. But the others recognized the power of continuing an older tradition.
11. The sigil was apparently used during that ceremony. So from whence did it come? Probably from David Fisher's fevered imagination (divine inspiration?, definitely inspired by spirits of whiskey).
12. I have conducted over 21 hours of research through various books of symbols and magical runes, but I have found no trace of the circle with two vertical lines. The closest thing is a Greek letter of a circle with one vertical line (and David was possibly interested in starting a Greek fraternity style group, which were banned at Carleton). The alchemical symbol for oil is similar to that Greek letter.
13. What does it mean?
14. Good question. There is no definitive answer on this subject. It both means what you think it means, and it means something you don't think it means.

15. Various designs have popped up, but there were no ornate designs until 1969. It had always been simple three strokes of a pen until that date. Recently, people have tended to draw it as a wreath pierced and supported by two wooden poles.
16. Since then, various designs, visualizations, and descriptive readings have been attempted of the Sigil. I'm in the process of collecting and listing them

Michael Scharding,  
Former Arch Druid of the Carleton Grove,  
Current Arch Druid of Monument Grove



## The Epistle of Sam

(By Sam Adams, 1997)

(New to ARDA 2)

### Chapter the First

1. April 31, 1997
2. Dear Michael,
3. I hope you are well and enjoying your present circumstance, which I believe is very likely the case.
4. It was very good to hear from you and to receive your weighty tome on the Carleton Druids, a work which shall certainly bring you some degree of fame and/or notoriety in days to come.
5. I was just reflecting on the irony that this same organization, this merry band of "Zen anarchists" should remain so dear to my heart, closer, even, than some of the other manifestations that my spirituality has taken on over the years.
6. I am still intent on becoming Catholic. I am a member, still, of the Henge of Keltria. These are parts of my personality as well.
7. Yet I shall always remain a Druid, and I realize the flaws in the codifications of belief and expression that these latter institutions have adopted, limits and snares that the RDNA avoided by never defining itself so rigidly in the first place, and never, ever being that serious.

### Chapter the Second

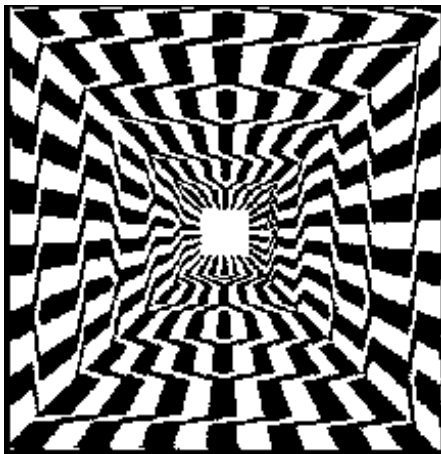
1. I continue with my studies of Celtic music, performing occasionally with a rather untraditional Irish musician, Sean Egan, who plays the clarinet: a strange instrument for Irish music, though familiar in Breton music, and most pleasant in combination with the accordion.
2. I have also a little one-drone bagpipe now, a "veuze," which I am struggling with— I need to get some hemp and wax and get it sealed up properly before I shall make any progress, I fear. Hopefully I will gain some degree of competence over the next few years.
3. I have not been speaking much Welsh, but I have found some excellent resources on the Web, and soon shall subscribe to the WELSH-L e-mail list to get more practice in it.
4. So as you see, my Celtic interests continue unabated, as they are part of my soul life now and will no doubt continue as such.

## Chapter the Third

1. Yet I marvel at my past preoccupation with “Real Druidism” and the attempts to force it into Reformed Druidism, which Bonewits made so fervently all those years ago, and which I perhaps harkened back to, in my own small way.
2. I remember a couple of rather prickly articles I posted to NOTES about such matters as the appropriate activities for an Imbolc ceremony – it all seems rather ridiculous now, as perhaps such things always do.
3. It is interesting how the whole “druid” label seems to have been a massive red herring in the context of the RDNA – there was a real interest in Celtic stuff, which I have seen in Richard Shelton and his wife, but a more immediate preoccupation with personal development through Zen and Taoist concepts.
4. Still there is the sense though, that “Druid” stands for something noble and lost to the present culture, something to be reintroduced as a thing that is new, yet very old, native to us though unfamiliar. And that is what still draws me to it.
5. There are Neo-Pagan Druids who can quote chapter and verse from the Tain and plan elaborate Neo-Indo-European rituals, as though mocking something, which they really hold to be dead.
6. Then there are people who enjoy sitting around in smoky pubs with fiddles and pipes and accordions. I’m somewhere in between now, I think.
7. Have a nice time and be sure to call when you get back. Write and let me know when that will be! Heather Gruenberg sends regards. I’ll be at Carleton for Beltane.

Yours in the Earth/Sky Mother/Father,  
Sam Adams

P.S. Words for the day: Never be an “ex”-anything. Just keep adding things to your resume, and leave behind only the pain; ex-racist, ex-classist, ex-xenophobe, etc. Never ex-Catholic, ex-Christian, ex-Pagan, ex-Druid. Thanks for the brandy!



## What Are Druids?

(By Irony Sade, June 6, 1998)

(New to ARDA 2)

### Chapter the First

1. Irony, I will be writing a short press release for the college news bureau about the Carleton Druids.
2. The news bureau's press releases are sometimes published in local newspapers or call the attention of a newspaper to send down their own reporter to do a longer story.
3. I would like to take the angle of how the druids give an environmental consciousness to religion.
4. On the druid web page, it says "Everyone today realizes that we have to be environmentally aware of the earth's cycle and druids often go a step further."
5. If you could, please expand and maybe give some examples. (which I might quote) I will e-mail you the final press release before sending it out.
6. The news bureau is really just a public relations office and only wants to publicize the positive about our college.
7. Thanks! Jeff email: radkej

### Chapter the Second

1. The Carleton Druids cannot help but give an environmental consciousness to religion.
2. We have only two tenets, or fixed beliefs. The first is an awareness that the quest for spiritual truth is an important and life long search. The second is that through study, awareness, and reverence of nature one can further this endeavor.
3. No one will claim that this is the only path to spiritual truth and understanding- it is merely one that we have chosen to follow.

### Chapter the Third

1. Druids are by nature fairly solitary creatures, so the ways in which this reverence for the natural world plays itself out is as varied as we are.
2. Of the druids at Carleton, some become Biology majors, taking the path of rigorous study of nature and the environment. Others throw themselves into Philosophy.
3. All of us tend to spend an inordinate amount of time outside, and to think seriously about life- our own and that which we see around us.
4. We try to teach each other and those who approach us what little we have learned about nature, life, and living; for us, none of those are separate things.
5. Even as the hypothetical leader of the Carleton Druids I cannot tell you what being a druid means to every one of us, nor how that belief encompasses an environmental consciousness.
6. I can only tell you of my own experience in such matters, or of those things that the group as a whole has done concerning nature and the environment.

## Chapter the Fourth

1. As a group we celebrate between four and six major festivals a year, each firmly connected to the seasonal changes in the world.
2. The most recent of these was Beltane, a celebration of the returning spring. It is marked by a recognition that the flowers are finally back, the Wood Ducks are nesting, herbs are growing in the forest again, and the Minnesota winter is finally really gone.
3. The celebration was held on Mai Fete island over midterm break, and held a bonfire, two weddings, a may pole, and hours of music and story telling. At the end of the day the northern lights came out in a display to pale the best that anyone there had witnessed.
4. Our other major holidays occur in the late autumn, midsummer, and midwinter, each focused around the season that it falls in. We also celebrate the solstices and equinoxes throughout the year.

## Chapter the Fifth

1. One thing that will help to clarify the great importance that we place in the changing cycles and patterns of the natural world is to realize that the year is seen as a pattern for the life of man.
2. In its growth, maturity, decline and death, we see an endlessly repeated microcosm of our own lives. By celebrating these elements as they occur in the world around us we can acknowledge their existence in our selves.
3. Beltane is a time for celebrating not only the budding life in the world, but for becoming aware of the elements in our own lives that are passing through the spring of the soul – new projects, new loves, new life. It is a time of rejoicing in the beginnings that are always happening in the world and in our selves.
4. Samhain – the autumn festival- is similarly a time for recognizing death and sleep in the natural world and in ourselves. When all the world is preparing for winter we take the time to reflect and remember, to say good-bye to those who have died over the past year, and to the parts of ourselves that have changed, moved on, or withered.
5. By celebrating the endless and cyclic process of natural change in the world, we can also see it in ourselves.
6. By witnessing nature within our own lives, we create a framework within which to grow, to embrace birth, death, maturity, decay, and to endlessly recreate ourselves throughout our lives.

## Chapter the Sixth

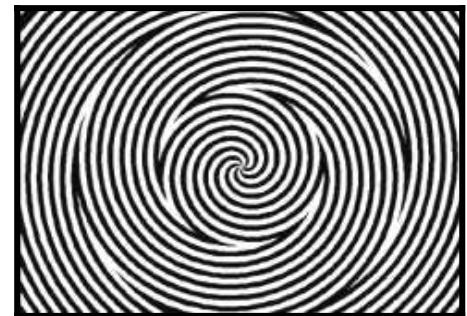
1. But perhaps you wanted more material stories of what we as a group have done.
2. This year the Carleton Druids have led sweeps through the Arboretum to clean it of litter after the spring floods.
3. Members of the group have bussed out to St. Peter's to witness the destructive power of the environment and to build new roofs over houses that were divested of them by tornadoes.
4. Less recently we have led Arb walks to acquaint new students with the landscape around Carleton, and arraigned herb gathering expeditions in the early spring.

5. We take care of the Arboretum in all the little ways that we can, collecting litter, clearing trails before the grounds crew arrives, keeping fires in the areas that are safe for them, and occasionally assisting lost and benighted folks who cannot find their way out.
6. Through our daily interactions we try to instill a sense of respect and reverence for the environment in those we meet, telling them the stories behind the constellations, pointing out the wonders that they are missing, and making them aware of the casual damage they do to the world without ever realizing it.
7. Last year we arraigned and created the stone circle in the upper Arb as a place where people can come to enjoy the peace and beauty of the natural world in the closest thing we will ever have to a shrine.

## Chapter the Seventh

1. I guess I don't really know what else to say.
2. Our 'environmental consciousness' is more of a cosmology than anything else.
3. It is something that affects everything we do, not a list of activities that we publicize.
4. If you want entertaining stories of the various ways that this has played out I would much rather talk in person.
5. There is a wealth of wonderful anecdotes even from just the years I've been here.
6. The time security interrupted a sweat lodge – twice! – and it was only luck that we all had our clothes back on when they came...
7. The time the folks at Farm House were dying for snow the day before winter carnival – they approached the Druids who adapted a rain-dance, half as a joke, and dropped a foot of snow over just Rice County the following night...
8. A time when one of the druids walked into a misplaced party and put out an illegal fire by trampling it barefoot...
9. Let me know if any of this is useful to you in your writing. If you have any questions, or other areas you would like me to address, give me a call.
10. Good luck getting the article printed – I hope to see it before it goes to press.

Yours,  
Irony Sade  
Current Archdruid at Carleton College



# The Exile Letters, Part One

(By Irony Sade, 1998-9)

(New to ARDA 2)

## Chapter the First

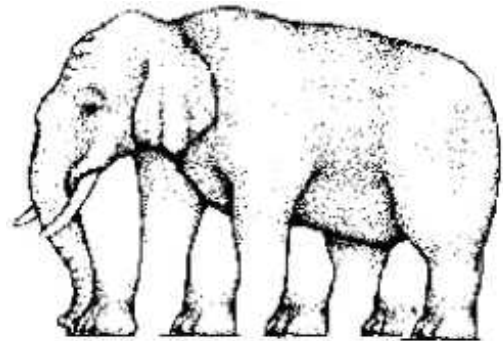
1. Dear Mec, [i.e. Mike Scharding]
2. My friend Chrissie is coming to Carleton in the fall, and I will teach her all I know about the workings of this place and to the dubious wisdom and traditions of the last three years.
3. She has that rarest of gifts, true initiative. NO one remaining here does. There is no feedback, no suggestions are offered.
4. Things happen only when out of the nothingness, I, or alas more rarely Michelle Hajder, decides that they will. Then people come participate and wander off again without comment.
5. Chrissie, though, creates her own schemes and is inspired by those she sees. She arrived at my door with a bag of tricks and announced that we were to celebrate.
6. After the feeling I have here of having to force things through by my will and my presence – All the while trying not to be a leader- it was unspeakably refreshing to have someone enthusiastic, creative in their own right and willing to walk beside, instead of behind or before.
7. I feel vaguely bad about planning for her to assume the leadership here and even a tad of humorous guilt for 'importing' an active and dynamic Druid when there were no local ones forth coming.
8. I have known Chrissie since before she could walk. Promoting her to Archdruidcy feels almost dynastic sometimes.
9. And now I've returned [to Carleton].
10. I have designed the first ethics major at Carleton, which may open up a new concentration.
11. Someone has stenciled John Lennon upon the north facing stone of the circle. Somehow it does not bother me much. The place is well loved by the people here, the lady has a path beaten down to her and I find flowers and offerings there at times.
12. I performed the weddings at Beltane to the great delight of the couples and onlookers. One was a couple from my class. The other, Harriet Erwin and her boyfriend – the secretary of philosophy/religion/classics if you don't recall.
13. We danced the maypole into the ground and Michelle led the last dance so that I could watch it all happen for once.
14. I am happy in a peculiar way with the near future looking full, serious, and wonderful. I miss my love immensely but we will be together again for another while soon. I am sorry to have missed your wedding.
15. Enough for now, for one letter,

Yours in service,  
Irony  
Carleton College, MN

## Chapter the Second

1. Date: Fri, 06 Nov 1998 14:44:00 -0600
2. Druidism, as I practice it, is at its heart the recognition of only two things:
3. That the spiritual search is important, individual, and life long, and that nature presents one avenue down which to take this search.
4. What it requires is simply a great degree of intellectual honesty with ones self. You do not simply choose what you will believe; you search out what might be true and subject it to some rigorous examination.
5. Approach life with the premise that everyone and everything can teach you something you don't yet know, and knows something that you never will.
6. Druidism is about actively learning as much as you can about life and yourself- not merely on the spiritual plane.
7. I could go on forever, but it will become a description of my search rather than classical reformed druidism if I continue much.
8. It may help you to know one of the very basic suppositions and assertions of that system. You have a right to believe what you know to be true, no matter what anyone thinks of it.
9. I would be glad to talk to you in person about anything. An important learning technique is sharing with others the things you have learned, unlearned, or wondered about. Through their reflections on it, you glean a lot.
10. Give me a call if you wish, or stop by.

Irony



# The Epistle of The Rising Sun

(By Mike Scharding, 1998)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. Dear Brethren and Sistren, a zestful spring to all of you from the land of the rising sun.
2. Every day I greet the sun while all of you are slumbering; a fitting place for a priest of Belenos, isn't it?
3. It is interesting how so many of us are interested in meeting space aliens from across the universe, but are reluctant to go next door and talk with the neighbors or to research the Maori culture of New Zealand... An idea that struck me today.
4. Recently, I've acquired a new "convert," or at least a new brother, Ikari Segawa who lives in Shikoku.
5. To further his studies (perhaps to retard them?) I've loaned him my copy of A Reformed Druid Anthology. Well, its a pretty boring book full of irrelevant historical trivia, old debates and (to me) interesting anecdotes.
6. Strangely enough, after I mailed him the book, I felt strangely NAKED. I felt like a bible-thumper who had to enter a debate without making a reference to the bible.
7. Why was this? I had gone through Druidism at Carleton, quite happily anarchic (sometimes autocratically, I suppose) without a book, what had changed?
8. I suppose instead of living each day in a Zen-like renewal of appreciation in the multitude of joys and pains of my life in Nature, I have instead come to dwell upon written memories and past experiences.
9. Now for you who are still at the College, this might sound like a cliché, but you are darn lucky for 4 (or 5) years.
10. Carleton, while not true wilderness, is a magical wonderland for Druidical pursuits both in the classroom and in Nature's own classroom- The Arb.
11. I wholly recommend unto you that you frisk and frolic and meditate outside as much as possible in Minnesota's short spring season! Your precious days at Carleton ARE numbered.
12. While in Japan, I've had a field day with all the Shinto festivals and the general lackadaisical attitude toward religion here, which to me is almost Druidical, except most of them don't have that drive to search out and contemplate new religious ideas that I believe is essential to nurturing Druidism.
13. If you folks ever get the chance, please spend a year here on the JET program, teaching English with no qualification other than a BA (you don't have to know a word of Japanese). It's quite pleasant right after college....
14. As a parting thought, remember that Neo-Paganism are but a drop in possibilities of religion, and there are alternatives to religion (like philosophy and atheism).
15. I would like to hear more from you fellows, maybe some pictures. I don't know your names, but I'm sure we would be friends/companions if we were together.

Your in the Earth-Mother,  
Michael, wandering busy-body  
Akita, Japan Day 65 of Earrach,  
Year XXXV of the Reform (4/6/98)

16. P.S. Has it been eight years already since my entry into Druidism? What have I learned? What have I forgotten?

# Freedom Within and Freedom Without

(By Mike Scharding, 1999)

(New to ARDA 2)

## Chapter the First: Greetings

1. Ho fellow Druids! Blessings of the Mother upon thee and may you revel in her fields and woods!
2. Come hear my words and ponder what I have to say.
3. It has long been the custom at Carleton and other groves that each congregation of a grove may choose its leaders, rituals and customs, as is fitting.
4. Now those at Carleton have been deeply moved by the purpose of the Reform, to ask questions from the heart and listen for the heart's answer.
5. Yet again, they have targeted the Third Order with their inquiries.
6. I regret to inform you of this as a fait accompli, but the ways at Carleton have changed. Now let me explain my reflections on recent history.

## Chapter the Second: Past Changes in the Ordinations

1. Since the Founding until the great sleep of the 80s, those entering the 2nd Order have had to answer questions about the Order of Worship, and the 3rd Order offered meditations during the services.
2. Indeed, for in answering of these and other questions, the congregation has been enriched by these two orders at the services.
3. Since the Great Revival of the 80's until my time, the Order of Worship has faded in importance and services have changed, but the roles of the 2nd and 3rd Order have retained the role of asking challenging questions and offering their own insight to the problems of the grove.
4. During this time, the initiates of the 1st and 2nd Order were asked some questions during ordination and if deemed fit, they were proclaimed to have entered the Order in question.
5. In fact, from 1985-1993, because the 3rd Order liturgy was lost, vigilers to the 3rd Order were only briefly visited in the morning and the vigil was mostly a personally overseen activity separate from the assumption of the role of priesthood.
6. Indeed in those times, the performance of rituals was the right of any with such interest, regardless of their order, a practice that has continued to this day. Many who had vigiled performed services, many who had not vigiled also did great work; and knowing "which was which" was not easy.
7. As a result of my studies of our past, I reintroduced the 3rd Order liturgy, with the help of Brother Richard, in 1993 and have seen its usage prosper.
8. In fact, many who had vigiled on their own in earlier days, sought to vigil again so as to re-enter the Third Order through the liturgy, but we both knew that they had been already working many years for Dalon ap Landu.

9. From that date, at Carleton, no one to my knowledge has vigiled without using the Third Order liturgy, and many were their number. As much as I've enjoyed the liturgy, I have longed for the spontaneity of the style in the Great Revival.
10. Regardless, the idea up to my time has been, that Nature has wrought the change in the initiate of all Orders, not the ordainer. And Nature would often instigate subtle changes to each vigiling.

### Chapter the Third:

#### What's Wrong With the Ordinations?

1. Now, two Druid generations since my Archdruidcy, in the time of Irony and Michelle's Archdruidcy (1999), many questions have arisen upon the importance of the Third Order Liturgy.
2. Indeed, we have much debated the role of the Third Order here in the Apocrypha and I need not repeat all the previous points, but I feel that one point has emphasized greatly; mainly that the Third Order must guard against the fossilization of religion and/or ritual experience.
3. And yet, in our very own backyard, we have rigidly stuck to a rigid reading of our 3rd Order liturgy, which is one of last strict customs of the Reform.
4. Don't get me wrong, I love to use it (perhaps too much) and I've been present at its usage before 17 vigilers at the time of this epistle, so I know its power and effectivity.
5. However, even I must admit that there are some things in the Third Order liturgy which are Fisherisms, and which have little relevancy for the Druids of today.
6. The Ordination services of the 2nd and 3rd Orders are patterned after the Order of Worship, which is not used at Carleton very much any more.
7. They invoke Be'al, Dalon ap Landu whose names are not used often any more.
8. Many in the Grove do not know if they believe in a God/dess so why invoke one anyway?
9. It is a bit patriarchal in style and language, isn't it?
10. But some have found new ways to be declared into the order, which they feel make a greater contribution to the grove.

### Chapter the Fourth:

#### Liturgy Bends to Our Needs

1. Over the years we have bent the liturgies to our needs and exceptions have been permitted
2. We used to require attendance at a grove's services for a year and a day before ordination to the Third, now we generally let Nature choose her own timing.
3. We used to ordain only during the Summer Half of the Year, now some cold ordinations have occurred.
4. We used to require only an Archdruid of an active grove to perform the liturgy of the Order of Worship and all ordinations, now anyone can ordain anybody to their own order or lower at Carleton.
5. Some groves would only have one Third, now many groves allow simultaneous members to be of the Third Order.
6. We've also performed Ordinations over the phone.

7. And I can provide examples both in my times and in the 60's/70's.
8. Anything to get the job done, right?
9. So we when we talk of change, we are not talking of a new trend, but a continuation of a long process.

### Chapter the Fifth:

#### Recent Changes in the Ordinations

1. Let us look at some of the ways that Irony & Merri have offered.
2. During my time till Irony's, we have changed from a 7 hour+ solitary night vigil of stationary meditation to a 7 hour vigil, which may be stationary or perambulatory, preceded by a 1 or 2 hour pre-vigil meeting with friends and well-wishers asking questions and giving advice on what to think about during the long hours.
3. In the morning, there was the liturgy, the Ordeal of the Waters and the Breakfast of Peers, in which the new Third bought people breakfast and the boozing continued.
4. This year, the morning pattern has changed a little; a simple invocation of the winds was done, Waters then consecrated, and all were thus served the Waters, and the Waters returned. Nothing too unusual. They were now Third Order.
5. And then a shift of sites to the Great Stone Circle and the Ordeal of Questioning began: various members of the Grove surrounded the new Third and fired question upon question at the groggy Druid, ultimately seeking to reduce the Druid to an honest, "I don't know," thereafter the Druids decide (in a light-hearted seriousness) whether they accept this person's role as a leader of the grove.
6. As a side note, much the same thing seems to happen with the 2nd Order service, nowadays there.

### Chapter the Sixth:

#### Personal and Public Roles

1. Now it appears that there are two forms of ordination being used at Carleton.
2. The first being the affirmation of a personal search for spirituality, similar to the Liturgy.
3. The second being an assumption of responsibility in a leadership role.
4. In the old days, while a grove could choose their Archdruid from the current Third Order members, the Archdruid could (theoretically) choose to ordain or not ordain her future prospective successors, but now it is up for the grove to choose whom it calls teacher, based on the wisdom shown.
5. For where does a grove's power come from: the Arch Druid or the people of the grove?
6. Now some of you will note that many have joined our council who are of the quiet nature and not much inclined to teaching or preaching. I'm sure it would be acceptable for them to avoid the questioning or simply respond with silence (or perhaps a Zen response), which may actually be a more enlightening response.
7. But in any case, the Third may call themselves priest of the Third Order regardless of the result of the questioning in the Ordeal, the only point being decided at the questioning is whether the grove chooses to follow this new priest.

## Chapter the Seventh: Self-Initiation, A Dangerous Precedent?

1. Some may say that such ritual is nothing but self-initiation, and that the world may become overrun with self-proclaimed Third Order Druids, with no contact, tutelage or raising in a Reformed Grove.
2. Or perhaps you are worried that one bad apple may spoil the barrel? [She is as fine an apple as I've ever seen.]
3. Each decade has examples of Reformed Druids fearing some runaway permutation: Fisher in the 60's, Shelton in the 70's, Abbot in the 80s and Scharding in the 90s. Yet we have overcome these fears through patience and wisdom.
4. Are we not ourselves self-declared in some way, even if others were ordaining us?
5. If there is a bad apple in Druidism, it is myself, for writing down all this fluff and nonsense to misdirect future generations of Druids.
6. Why even do an ordination? Being ordained with the liturgy doesn't make you a better Third Order anymore than being married in a church makes you a better spouse. In fact, many couples living together, have stronger & open relationships with each other than married couples!
7. Every religion has been afflicted by con artists who irreverently pretend to bear their mantle of leadership and fool the people, who never check their background of the teachers very deeply, then leave the seekers with a bad taste in their mouth.
8. Others are more thorough and go to the seminary first before professionally unleashing their shenanigans.
9. As was said before about the Council of DAL in the 70s, a Druid will be known by their (in)action and words (or silences).
10. If a faker comes along to start a grove, those who become aware (by accident or nature) will soon realize this. Druidism is as Druidism does.
11. Anyway, if someone wanted to do this to the Druids, they can do it easily, and perhaps already have done it! Cons are easy, a liturgical format won't slow them much.
12. Unlike Isaac's goal of making the ordinations easily available to other Neo-Pagans, which is essentially recognizing the Druid already in them, this system is merely allowing for more personal participation and responsibility in the transformation of roles from 1st to 2nd to 3rd.
13. For each step and each person has special needs that we must address.
14. If there is really some magical power transferred by a previous Third Order Druid through the Liturgy (like a well-pipe from an underground aquifer), it may be more natural to roam and seek a spring or lake for the water we crave; rather than staying tethered to a well-head.
15. Essentially we are trying to teach them where to find water, not use a faucet.
16. As the saying goes; "If you give a man a fish, you feed him for a day. If you give a man a fishing pole, you feed him for a lifetime."
17. So it is with the priesthood, for me.

## Chapter the Eighth: Apostolic Succession?

1. But what about the Apostolic Succession?
2. In what meaning is this question?
3. If you mean the act of people reading the same words at each other for 40 years after sitting up all night, is that the extent of transference and exchange between the generations of a grove? I hardly think that is sufficient!
4. Each applicant, ideally, has been in apprenticeship to the Earth-Mother for a long time and they have shared these insights with a previous member of the Council such that we invited or resigned ourselves to their entrance into a quest for awareness, one they may choose to share with other. This will continue to be the norm.
5. Change is a fact of life, and I can see the role and needs of the Third Order changing over the years. Our spiritual connection of purpose, to me, is far more important than the reading of any specific paper's words.
6. Most of us agree that we are merely recognizing a change already wrought.
7. If it is a mere pat on the back, as such, one may pat a back differently in many ways. We should concentrate on aiding their search rather than concentrating on the back-patting.
8. Indeed, following the example of none other than David Fisher, they are making up tradition as they go and it works.
9. Let us think about continuation, I quote from Idries Shah;
10. "Ordinary people, only through lack of experience in reflection, are without the means to judge such situations as these. They therefore tend to accept mere imitators who step into the shoes of a teacher and reject those who are indeed carrying on his work.
11. "When a teacher leaves a community, by dying or otherwise, it may be intended for his activity to be continued – or it may not. Such is the greed of ordinary people that they always assume that this continuity is desirable. Such is their relative stupidity that they cannot see the continuity if it takes a form other than the crudest possible one."
12. I'm not calling any of us stupid, although we often are, but I would guess that leaders have always felt uneasy about the changes of their successors.
13. Will these unorthodox vigilers be strangers unto us?
14. How well do you know yourself that you call others stranger?
15. Surely they have shaken up my preconceptions of my own role and where my "authority" comes from, as perhaps they have of yours.
16. That, after all, is the purpose and sign of the Third Order, to test preconceptions for falseness.
17. If their lives and activities are like unto ours, what's amiss if 15 specific minutes of ritual activity doesn't coincide with our own past?
18. I am sure they will continue to find new ways to innovate and restructure the Reform such that they can meet the needs of the Reform and groves in the new millennium and (perhaps) beyond.
19. Should we support them?

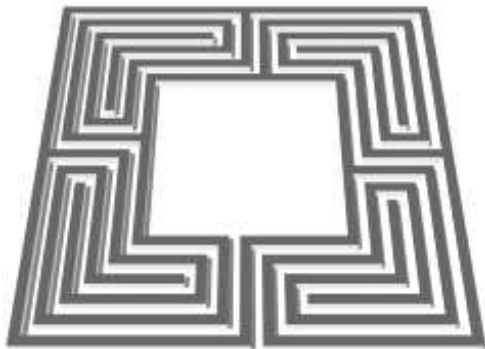


20. What else could we in good conscience do? We are not to obstruct the spiritual growth of others, we must merely to pursue our own growth and share our thoughts with others.
21. I know some of you will disagree with this, and that is why I am discussing it with you.

## Chapter the Ninth: The Conclusion

1. I, for one, welcome them and their new ideas and I hope you do also.
2. For we and they have the same goals and hopes for the Reform and may that be the basis of our kinship relationship.
3. Warm, deep relations will continue between Druids as they learn from each other and Nature and most will enter the orders after deep consideration for the responsibilities, both to themselves and others.
4. The old script of the liturgy, and the ways of its usage, will continue to be passed down to new Third Orders, to be used or not as is willed by the initiate's own choice.
5. Some will choose to use it. Some will choose not to use it.
6. Hopefully, regardless of the style, the appropriate spirit has been conveyed to the next torch bearers.
7. But the greater choice has already been made, to enter a new life as a Third Order Druid and begin another stage of the search for Awareness. May they attain such goals.
8. Let us have Freedom Within and Freedom Without.
9. I wish you all wisdom and welcome your responses.
10. Peace! Peace! Peace!

Michael J.A.U. Scharding  
 Pursuant of Bambi  
 Arch Druid of the mysterious Akita Grove  
 Day 18 of Samhradh, Year XXXVII of the Reform (May 18, 1999 c.e.)  
 Written at Yuwa Town Junior High School, Akita Japan on a lazy afternoon.



# Being A Druid

(By Robert Harrison, Aug 1999)

(New to ARDA 2)

## Chapter the First

1. Being a Druid is an appealing experience.
2. Since my practice of Druidism has a strong element of introspection, I have a tendency to investigate my motives and prejudices that are still hanging around. I have discovered in my experience that I have had to think seriously about what it means to be a Druid.
3. So I hope this little letter will help shed some light on this subject, which I believe is still relevant late in this century.

## Chapter the Second

1. I used to think that there needed to be a specific cultural element involved in one's life if you claimed to be a Druid.
2. Preferably Irish, but Scottish would do. I happen to be Irish, so I have that bias. It also happens they were the last Druids to exist as a historical group.
3. I have come to rethink this idea though. Mind you, I'm glad to be Irish. But I'm also Scottish, with a wee tad of English, so I'm British by heritage.
4. The culture that existed on the British Isles was the Celtic culture. And who wouldn't want to identify with a colorful culture like the Celtic, which lived out loud in their dancing, music, and festivals?
5. So surely that at least was the cultural identification that was needed.
6. My studies of late have given me different ideas about the cultural and national origins of the Druids. I'm not so sure that the Druids were a creation of the Celtic race.

## Chapter the Third

1. When the Celts settled in Southern and Western Europe, there existed a group of people that are referred to as the Megalithic, and little is known of them. Part of the reason for this designation is that the multitude of stone dolmens that exist in Europe, and the Stonehenge, were built during the times the Megalithic people existed, before the Celts arrived on the scene. Many of these stone structures required a great deal of knowledge in physics and mathematics, knowledge that is usually attributed to the Druids.
2. My opinion is that the Druids were possible exiles of the Old European civilization (South and East Europe) that existed roughly 7000 B.C.E..
3. The Old European civilization apparently had the level of knowledge needed to build the dolmens.
4. When the Kurgan invasion of Old Europe occurred, the invaded people moved into the western portion of Europe. The Celts then moved in many years later.

5. There are characteristics of the Celts and the Megalithic folk to indicate that so far as the Druids are concerned, a wedding of the two cultures occurred.
6. The Celts were known for their personified deities, and a zeal for learning, but other characteristics that the Druids possessed seemed lacking from Celtic culture.
7. The Megalithic people had the rituals, the doctrines, and the Druids. It would seem that the Megalithic also had understandings of social organization, a characteristic that the Celts never fully appropriated.
8. The wedding of the two cultures then brought forth the Druid schools, the personified deities that hallmarked the Celts, the rituals, and doctrines included.
9. So to be realistic, we have to consider the possibility that the areas from whence Druids could have come would be more in the area of southeast Europe: south to Crete, north to Czechoslovakia, east to the Black Sea and west to Austria.
10. So what cultural element do we identify with? Right, now you know why I found that a groundless meaning for being a Druid.

## Chapter the Fourth

1. Another distinction I discovered was that between pagan and Druid.
2. Pagan is a Latin term that means country dweller. If you lived out of the city, where civilization existed, you were pagan no matter what you believed.
3. However, part of this distinction took into account that most country folk had their beliefs shaped by their relationship with the Earth around them.
4. At that time in history, it was a mostly undomesticated Earth. They had mostly local deities, and ceremonies that were related to seasons. Their calendar was based on the moon and stars and sun, nothing else.
5. There were likely local shaman, but neither level of knowledge nor group sizing such as the Druids had.
6. Jump ahead now several centuries.
7. Pagan as we currently know it are Earth based religions, or belief systems. Native American beliefs could be called pagan. Most indigenous belief systems can be.
8. Yet being Pagan does not make one a Druid.
9. If my take on history is correct, most likely the Druids were city dwellers before the Kurgan invasion.
10. After the invasion though, I believe many of them exiled to the wilderness of Europe.
11. Their demonstrated knowledge of natural sciences and celestial sciences would indicate a rather intimate knowledge of their environment.
12. However, there was a difference between the Druids and the rest of the culture.
13. Most people were not Druids. The Druids became the scholars of their culture due to their commitment to learning.
14. So one can be pagan and not a Druid.

## Chapter the Fifth

1. So just what does it mean to be a Druid?
2. Personally, I believe it means to identify with the Druids as a level of knowing.

3. If you want to call yourself a Druid, I believe you should aspire to the level and breadth of learning that we are told the Druids achieved. That to me is the most important criteria.
4. From Julius Caesar we learn that the Druids studied for up to twenty years.
5. There were different classes of Druids, and if one reads the accounts of them in Celtic history, besides being masters of natural sciences, they were masters of High Magic.
6. They were doctors, judges, counselors, poets, musicians, magicians, herbalists, and astronomers to name just a few of the subject matters they learned.
7. Obviously today because of societal changes we can't expect ourselves to be doctors and lawyers. But we can learn justice and healing.
8. And the power of words and music.
9. And how to combine these energies in a ritual to a specific purpose, in other words, magic.
10. Of course we should anticipate a lifetime of learning for this!
11. That's what separates the real Druids from the "New Age" fluffy bunnies (to borrow a phrase from Isaac Bonewits) who want the mysterious image and read a book on quick spells and think they are Druids.
12. They give up though when a spell goes awry and their personal energies get jazz-balled and they don't know how to correct it.
13. It's easy to quote the myths. Anyone can read those.
14. But can I identify herbs in the garden or woods, and their uses?
15. Can I look into the night sky and tell what time of the year it is by identifying the constellations and their place in the heavens?
16. What of my ability to heal?
17. My understanding of justice, and how to apply these things to current world problems?
18. What relationship do I have with poetry?
19. After all, the Bards were considered the *creme de le creme* of the Druids, and there's a good possibility that the Ogham was a poetical way of speaking that coded the speakers true message.
20. How good is my magic?
21. Does it really accomplish that which I set it out to do? And am I aware of what the myths symbolize, and can I teach those truths to others?
22. So to me, the challenge is to come close to what was known by the Druids, not just quote what I've read about them.

## Chapter the Sixth

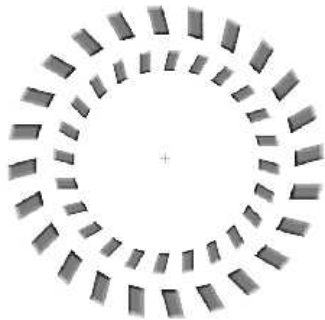
1. The only cultural identification I would stipulate is one that I learned from my own experience.
2. Having left the Funny-Mentalist Charis-Maniacs (no puns intended) I felt spiritually adrift.
3. While I was studying chemical dependency counseling there was a great deal of discussion of spiritual nature.
4. There were some indigenous Natives in class, and their lifestyle struck me as to how whole their spirituality seemed.

5. Wanting what they have, I adopted the Medicine Wheel as my path, yet I had a nagging feeling that it wasn't mine. Well, it wasn't.
6. It belongs to the Red Tribe for the most part. Mind you, the White Tribe is part of their Wheel, but culturally the Wheel they live by isn't ours.
7. So I searched my own background. What Wheel did my ancestors live by?
8. As I mentioned, I'm British. The British have several centuries of Anglican, Catholic, Protestant, Pilgrim, and Puritan history.
9. But no Wheel. Several centuries of violence, I might add, and a lot of that violence against indigenous people.
10. So I asked myself, what preceded the advent of Christianity in Britain, and the world opened up to me.
11. Now among those who seek ancestral paths in America, there are numerous possibilities.
12. There are Teutonic (German) religions. There are the Scandinavian Runic systems and religions. Remember Thor, and Odin?
13. There are the Gypsy belief systems of the mid Eastern Europe area.
14. Italian and Greek beliefs.
15. I just happened to be Irish, thus Celtic.
16. I chose the Druid path because of its needed commitment, its pagan philosophy, and the breadth of learning.
17. It fit me, and it fit my culture.
18. To me, that's what it means to be a Druid.

Rob Harrison, Third Order  
 28 Fomhar, 5th Meton. 6th Era of Moytura  
 37th Year of Reform Circa August 28, 1999

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## The Exile Letters, Part Two

(By Irony Sade, 1999-2001)

(New to ARDA 2)

(Full Text in Part Nine: Book of Exile)

### Chapter the Third

1. Dear Mec,
2. After nearly four years, I am no longer Carleton's Archdruid. It is an odd feeling. My sigil necklace broke on the trip home and there was a longish space of time where I felt that I could no longer do magic, like that was a thing that went with the position... How was your severance experience?
3. It seems that I am still a servant of whatever it is I've finally begun calling god. Its strange.
4. I feel like this is another training period for a task I can't see yet. The other side of my brain thinks it's all hogwash of course. Who is to say who is right?
5. I enjoyed our contest last night. However long it took to recover from it...
6. I would be honored if you would come to my wedding.
7. For the Apocrypha: "Tread lightly on Fairy toes, and beware all drinking games with past Arch-Druids."
8. You taught me a lot, Mec, I thank you.

Til next time. Irony  
 June 1999, New York

### Chapter the Fourth

1. Dear Mike
2. I read all the books you sent me. Thank you deeply.
3. Machiavelli was fascinating, deserving of further study. The one truly disturbing thought it produced was this: will any system of thought, that does not make the acquisition of power one of its objectives, eventually become a tool for one that does? If so, what are we to do about it?
4. As my mother kindly pointed out one must distinguish between force and power, but still I suspect the quandary remains.
5. The Buddhist answer – I suspect– would be to distinguish between inner and outer power. Have enough power in yourself and no one can wield power over you (or have no self...)
6. When I think of Reformed Druidism as a "system" of thought, it seems that its goal – if it has one – is understanding.
7. (I also suspect it is also too small and esoteric a way for any external power monger to notice!) The old Druids though, were very powerful, and very hard to manipulate – which is why Rome had them killed. Bears thinking about....
8. Fate seems to enjoy messing with my mind. Each time I get something all planned out the wyrd's weave some new thread past mine that sets me all adrift again. I don't know if I will aim for Japan.
9. The need to do useful work I can believe in is nagging at me and I am struck with Socrates' truth that the

philosopher needs to be a citizen of the world. The U.N.'s calling me.

10. The creation of a cooperative peaceful, culturally diverse and environmentally sound planet is something I could work for whole heartedly. I know not by what means I would do this, nor how, nor where, but it tempts me to try.
11. My worry is the assertion that the world's ills are not susceptible to political solutions, but spiritual ones.... There seems to be some truth in that.
12. The Bahai's (worth intensive study – they are practically Druids already!) maintain that the purpose of religion is peaceable union and understanding, a cross cultural binding force – and insist further that it is better to be without religion than to support one that serves division. Them too I must learn more about.... Yours truly, Irony

## Chapter the Fifth

Dalon ap Landu: Lord of the Palm Trees  
Irony Sade, ODAL, VCN, in Tonga

1. Spring 2001?
2. Druidism becomes exactly as serious as you take it to be (not serious-dull, but rather, important, personal, life affecting.) You and I have taken it more seriously than most, and have (I hope) been rewarded accordingly.
3. I have moved in this year from the pyrhic and phoenix-like sacrifice of leading, loving and leaving a grove and into what must be old territory for you: the life of a devout, wandering, groveless and lonely Druid priest.
4. Tonga is a lonely place in which to be a druid. The land and the people both challenge and passively assault my understanding and values.
5. Much of what we do as druids harks back to the life and cycles of Mother Earth. The seasons, Beltane, the living and dead halves of the year, growth and rebirth...
6. Even if you do not postulate the horned king, consort to the Goddess, whose life is that of the changing seasons – birth in mid-winter, love in spring, growth, Maturity and sacrifice at Samhain – there is much that is tied implicitly to the mysteries of the natural world.
7. But now I am thrust into confronting what I had always wondered about: the cycles we follow are those of a NORTHERN TEMPERATE world. Here in the tropical South, things differ. There is no spring, no autumn, no time of general death and growth.
8. The moon remains, bless her, but she travels widdershins. An anti-clockwise sky! I knew it would be that way in my mind, and I have adjusted my internal compass for the navigation, but then deeper questions begin to spring.
9. Clockwise, I have learned and practiced (during the rare occasions when I engage in ritual or external magic working) is the natural and appropriate direction of things.
10. Beginnings, summonings, progressions, growth, movement, callings- every natural "Good" ritual movement begins clockwise. North East South West, with endings, banishments, etc. being the opposite.
11. All that was explained and justified by the movement of the heavens and anti-clockwise movement is now regarded as "un-natural." The "left-hand path" was never, explicitly mind you, to be avoided as destructive and evil.
12. Now the stars move widdershins above me, and I must ask if the practice of magic is relative to geography (for every ritual culture I know of in the north proceeds clockwise...)

13. Now there are no seasons, and I must wonder if different gods and goddesses hold sway. The Earth remains – the Goddess is eternal- but does the Green Man peer between the coconut palms? Does Llyr swim amidst the reefs I see?
14. Does the Wild Hunt of the Northern Climes hold any truck with hurricanes? Do the Gods I know and serve even visit these regions or have they siblings I have yet to meet and love?
15. It is easy to say that all the gods and all their lovers are but facets of one Brahmanian whole, but it is a difficult thing to act upon.
16. I was consecrated a priest of the Lord of the Groves (though by my well-meaning, but foolish tongue I may have been the last) and I am faithful to that charge, but if Landu's son is a purely temperate beast where does that leave me in the tropics?
17. Such questions are the product of a fevered mind. The spiritual quest may be furthered through the study and experience of nature- all of her.
18. If I have wandered farther a field than our linguistic predecessors, it is absurd to blame my confusion on their ignorance.
19. The Goddess is Mother of all, and the lord of the Groves is present even amongst palm trees. Let not the Welsh name I met him under distract me from that fact.

## Chapter the Sixth: What Do Druids Do?

1. June 2001
2. Dear Mec,
3. One of the men I work with here, Saia, by name, has been asking me about Druidism.
4. Religion plays a huge role in Tongan life, and I often ask him to describe parts of its impact.
5. Invariably he returns the questions; "What are the religious duties of a druid?" "What money does the church collect, and what is it used for?" "What are the requirements for being a priest?", "What obligations do they have?", "Do they serve for life?", "Can they marry?", "Are there Druidic schools?", "To what moral code are Druids bound?"
6. As it is the delicious doom of every Druid to answer such things for his or her self, I can only pass the questions on. May they stimulate much thinking.
7. A thing that fascinates me about his line of questioning is its purely practical focus. Not "What do you believe?" but "What do you do?"
8. In a way it is not such a bad place to start. Actions are driven by values, which may be derived from and supported by wildly divergent beliefs. Thus, if it be found that a group of Druids hold similar values, they can act in concert, even if those values are supported by different or even incompatible beliefs which each individual has developed through his or her independent search for spiritual truth.
9. The forum then becomes: I value X; therefore I will do Y. This shift in paradigms has immediate consequences. Not the least being that it moves one out of the highly contested and poorly articulated realm of theology.
10. Values, furthermore, seem to have a longer half-life than beliefs, which may suddenly shift in the light of new experience. Changes in what people value come only – I

suspect – with a distinct change in a person’s character, which experience shows is rare indeed.

11. The challenge is that one must engage in serious introspection to discover to which values one is really committed.
12. I did tell Saia the three moral commands supposedly taught by the old Druids: Act Bravely, Honor the Gods, Do No Evil. Tongan is a tongue of many puns, and I discovered as I said it that the last statement also translates as “Don’t Fu\*k Badly,” a commandment bound to enthrone a certain class of Druids....
13. Life here is good. Much of my work involves counseling and advising rather than hands on work. Sowing seeds of reason into the discussion of kindergarten politics, suggesting accounting changes in the youth groups budget, encouraging people to engage in continuing education (and walking them through the application!)
14. To a large extent, I am simply living here, being part of an alien community, understanding and participating in its life, caring for my neighbors. The island’s doctor has started referring me his patients, which is a bit ridiculous.
15. Most important to me I am starting to understand how people here think and am now able to engage in the same sort of thinking myself. That competence snuck up on me. Its existence was highlighted by the recent arrival of an anthropologist who stayed for a month at the other end of town.
16. She has been studying the culture of Tonga (actually the cultural change and how housing reflects that) for nine months, but apparently only the more diluted samples you find on the bigger islands. She tried to play a game which I have long learned to avoid, and was in too deep within two days and had to flee the island under threat of imminent marriage. Very entertaining.
17. Somehow or other I have now been here over a year. Next Beltane will mark my release from the Peace Corps. Still no clear plan on what is to follow. Japan is looking less likely.
18. So is traveling right round the world, a trip many ex-volunteers arrange. I have gotten too deeply into this culture to enjoy a touristic whirlwind of several dozen others. I intend to see many other countries, but I wish to know them personally, and that will take time.
19. I know I will return to the states, see my family, maybe publish a few stories. If possible I would like to criss-cross the country a time or two, visiting all my scattered friends and correspondents. Perhaps I will build a new harp and simply be a bard for a while. Tis still too soon to tell..
20. There is yet another Pai Kava running across the road, possibly the last one with electric lights for some time. The island is out of gasoline again.
21. I’ve had to cut back on my kava intake. I hit a stretch where I was drinking every night for three weeks running. Several gallons a day. The stuff is a drug, after all. Turns you into a lizard if you don’t watch it.
22. Much of the business gets transacted at such gatherings, so they are still obligatory, but I try not to drink so long these days.
23. Hope all is reasonably well state-side. How’s that Washington Grove coming?

Yours in service. Irony.

## Chapter the Seventh: Rampant Chickens

1. December 19, 2001.
2. Rain. Thought we might be in for a hurricane last night.
3. We had to seal all the windows of the town hall and to keep the water out. Now the wind has left for somewhere cooler and we retain only a solid perpendicular drizzle.
4. I can’t recall if I mentioned my chickens.
5. For the longest time, I held off adopting any, figuring I could have either them or a garden. With zero local vegetables, the latter was more important.
6. One day, I came home to find two young hens hiding under my bed. I took the hind, tied them up and built a large cage to keep them in.
7. One puzzling fact about chickens is that after a week or two in a new environment, they forget having lived anywhere else. Once these two were thoroughly brainwashed I let them roam free.
8. First thing they did was devour my cabbages and tear up the onions. They haven’t even produced any eggs yet!
9. Still, they are adorable – and I can always eat them if they bug me too much.
10. Time flies like a hummingbird. Magically still while sucking life’s nectar, then gone too fast to follow. My time approaches the latter phase. Twelve weeks till escape from paradise. With luck I will be home for Beltane.
11. Send nothing to Tonga after March 16.  
Till then, I remain your sun burnt emissary.  
Irony.

## Chapter the Eighth: Burial Shenanigans

1. The following account is perfectly true and factual. The events happened last Friday. Makes you wonder just how thorough the missionaries were:
2. **HARD CORE PAGANS IN TONGA**
3. After being assured by the Doctors that there was nothing wrong with him, Siona Pko (false name) visited a good Christian card reader to diagnose on-going pains in his abdomen.
4. The reader examined his playing cards and announced that two of Siona’s deceased in-laws were trying to take the family with them. Siona’s wife had died just before his pains started, her brother only months before. Unless the spirits were stopped they would haul off the whole family.
5. Siona returned to his island and tearfully related the story to the surviving relatives. “I know I’m going to die,” he told them.
6. Two of Siona’s good Wesleyan cousins decided enough was enough. They stole into the graveyard in the early morning and dug up the bones of the two offenders.
7. Carrying as many parts as they could, they snook to the lava field, doused the bodies in kerosene and burned them in the night. The skulls they carried to the wharf and then threw them into the sea, which promptly spat them back out.
8. “We are Christians!” the local priest bellowed at Mass the next Sunday. “Stop doing this! Haven’t I taught you anything?”
9. Villagers were somewhat sympathetic, “Sure, we dig up our families graves ... to clean and oil the bones sometimes.”

10. Said one woman who spoke to me on conditions of anonymity; “The Spirits occasionally make us sick then show up to complain about tree roots prying their ribs apart. Once we clean the grave they always leave us alone.”
11. Others were merely terrified of ghostly reprisals because the bones had not been completely destroyed. According to the police officer who recovered the ashes, the deceased were still alive and well and prevented his car from starting when he tried to leave for work.
12. “Go away and let me do my job!” he cried. Under Tonga’s very Christian law such acts carry a ten-year sentence.
13. The local Druid when pressed for comment, smiled quietly behind his tea cup and simply asked if Siona Piko had recovered.

Fresh off the coconut wireless report

Irony Sade Reporting

P.S. Still digesting Marcus Aurelius’ “Meditations.” Very good. Definitely high class paganism.



# New Selections: The Internet Years

## (The Parenthetical Epistle of Mike)

(By Mike Scharding, 2001)

(New to ARDA 2)

### Chapter the First

1. As always, I speak for myself, and certainly do not represent the opinions of the Reform or other members.
2. Why, in fact, I don't often agree even with my self.
3. Sometimes, I have the most interesting conversations when I talk to myself...
4. Few people join the Reform, or any other Druid group for that matter, without some pretty strong preconceptions already established.
5. Man has always wished to control Nature, rather than be controlled (or rather, just a part) of Nature, so myths are rife with gods, demigods or even mere mortals can twist or manipulate mighty Nature to their own whims and needs.
6. "Man" is often defined 'as the animal which uses tools', although we know that chimps use sticks and some birds sew their nests.
7. I would redefine "Man is an animal that uses drugs," which may make you smile (I refer you to the 5<sup>th</sup> Order for further guidance), but in a real way we all wish that we were something that we are not.
8. There are several avenues to accomplish this goal, mainly: drugs, insanity, and fantasy.
9. Religion tends to wander in and betwixt these three options, acting as a possible accelerant to their flames.
10. Fantasy is by far the most socially acceptable option in our present society.
11. This can take on many forms; day-night-wet dreams, the entertainment media which provides us a brief respite, living our dreams vicariously through other more famous people (i.e. soap operas), myths, gossip, stories, drama and games.

### Chapter the Second

1. Tolkien is often credited with being the grand-daddy of the Fantasy movement, so we all should add "The Hobbit" to our Grove libraries.
2. I seriously believe that without Tolkien, there would be no Reform. (Or if there had been no McCarthy, or inquisition.
3. As all of you Dr. Who fans know, changing the past in reality is a very dangerous activity, but changing our understanding of the past is big business).

4. So, let's talk about Dungeons and Dragons, an influential off-shoot of this Fantasy movement.
5. We all know that Role-Playing Games (RPG) and the medieval Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA), both starting in 1971-ish, grew hand-in-hand with the Neo-Pagan/Wiccan/New-age emergence.
6. Perhaps, those evangelists are correct in saying that RPGs are a breeding ground for Paganism; which they add is a "bad thing."
7. Strangely enough, I kind of agree with them.
8. I first played D&D in 4<sup>th</sup> grade in the school yard, exploring the "S2: White Plume Mountain" scenario, as, can you guess? Yes, a 6<sup>th</sup> Level Druid named "Magoor," if I remember rightly.
9. My understanding of magic was heavily influenced by that game over the next 8 years, as well as by the definitions of the 9 alignments (Lawful Good, Neutral Evil, True Neutral, Chaotic Neutral, etc.), and the ordering of the Planes of Existence. (I dare not touch the topic that experience points and advancement are only gained by slaughtering others, which is actually capitalism...)
10. D&D provided a structure for me in which multiple pantheons of deities, ruling separate realms, could co-influence their respective spheres of activity over our mortal plane of existence (a concept that is no doubt conducive to my own eclectic brand of Druidism).
12. Yet it wasn't until College, that I began to depart Catholicism (the True Paganism!, according to some people.)
13. I am sure that Brother Isaac Bonewits (refer to his academic "Real Magic" tome or his RPG "Authentic Thaumaturgy") would be the first to agree with me, that these popular visions of fireball-flinging wizards are perhaps detrimental and distracting to the more practical magic that we are usually inclined towards practicing (although it would be fun to unleash a ninth-level "creeping doom" (i.e. a cloud of bugs) upon certain opponents...)

### Chapter the Third

1. So that brings us back to Nature and our relation to it.
2. In numerous fantasy novels (in particular, the "Shannara" series), computer games ("The Druid," and the game "Mystery of the Druids", advertised in this issue, etc) and also in AD&D (where we are a special sub-class of Cleric); where we have been laden with the image of a rather crotchety old man, usually robed with a deep hood, who is rather neutral of human concerns (because nature does not concern itself with good or evil), hauling rocks around the landscape for no apparent reason (perhaps they were the inventors of the construction cartel?), in control of secret powers related to the control and protection of Nature, and loitering in dark leafy groves singing groovy tunes (that sounds like me, except the "old" part, I'm only 30).
3. Unlike most clerics, the powers of fantasy figures come through the study of Nature not the imploration of the god(s), and "absorbing of energies," or the gruesome activities of which the Ancient Druids are often accused (perhaps rightly), we can also change shape!
4. Adding to this stew, are the Celtophiles; who claim the Druids could do anything your ancestors could do, and

could do it better (if they really wanted to try), including an imposing list of cultural, judicial, musical, medicinal, philosophical & astrological skills that would make a modern renaissance liberal-arts student blush in shame.

5. I suppose they didn't have specialists back then?
6. Don't forget that famous verse of "Gimme that old time religion" goes "We will worship like those Druids, who drink fermented fluids, waltzing naked through the woods, and that's good enough for me!" (This, at least, describes the Carleton Grove rather too perfectly.)
7. As for the general public's opinion, don't forget lead guitarist Nigel's adept summary, in the movie "Spinal Tap," with his introduction to the song Stone Henge; "Long ago, in a mystical land, were a strange race of people, the Druids. No body knew who they were, or what they were doing.... But their legacy lives on in... STONEHENGE!"
8. Of course, the Wiccans bring over their ideas, thinking we that we must also like athames, pentacles and quiet moonlit walks on the beaches... (which are cool too.)
9. Finally, there are our siblings in the UK & Europe, who are dotty over dolmens, heady over henges, and have a really poor fashion sense towards ridiculous headgear, unflattering robes, & gaudy jewelry. (I'm sorry, perhaps I'm really AM talking about us?)
10. This has been going on for at least four centuries, (see "The Famous Druids" by Owen in 1979)!

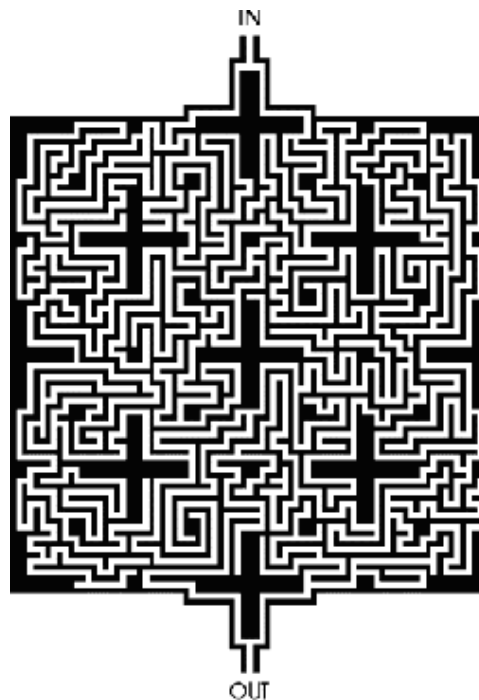
## Chapter the Fourth

1. Whew! For good or bad, this is the image and mental baggage, which nearly all our recruits bring with them to the RDNA.
2. What's the problem with it, because it sounds really exciting and it's great for marketing our image (except that bit about sacrificing, which I might discuss further next time)?
3. Well, nothing I guess is really wrong, but I believe the founders of the Reform had different key elements; simplicity, revolutionary defiance and a love of whiskey (which I might add are key Scottish attributes...).
4. The RDNA began over the issue of not being coerced into worshipping the way other people want us to do (and perhaps it still is?).
5. Now, I'm a rather antagonistic person myself, being 41.32352% or so Celtic-ish ("The easiest way to make an Irishman to decline an action is to order them to do it"), always taking up an opposite view to balance things (there's my lasting imprinted notion of "neutrality" again), so I hate being defined by other's fantasies (mine are sufficiently strange, thank you!).
6. But it is only by examining your presumptions and preconceptions that you can know where you're coming from and going to.
7. The previously described image (the word "describe" also has a meaning of corralling or limiting) is rather similar to the one that many in the ADF, OBOD, Keltria & some of us are (perhaps willingly) striving towards, I believe.
8. What has made us stand apart from the pack of other Druid groups, is probably our well-developed sense of sarcastic humor (an ancient Druid trait) & our skillfully inept organizational skills (unfortunately, also an ancient Celtic trait).

9. However, borrowing the Taoist image of "the un-carved block of wood," whose future shape is yet undetermined, and therefore infinitely versatile; I believe each and every grove, yea!, every Druid in the Reform should consider stripping away these accretions (there's that "Waltzing naked in the woods" cry for simplicity!), return to the seed of Druidism (which may be something about Nature, isn't it?), then allow their trees (& groves) to follow Nature's course (please be reserved on pruning the mistletoe that clings to your boughs, too).

## Chapter the Fifth

1. Like it or not, as a group, we are diverse, anarchic and eclectic. In the past we had Norse, Zen, Celtic, Hasidic, Wiccan, Non-Aristotelian, Humanistic, Orthodox and others paths which had no easy labels (take a look at [www.geocities.com/mikerdna/wheregrove.html](http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/wheregrove.html) for a fuller list).
2. In all honesty, our group has not been conducive to a Reform-wide mythology, theology, voting rules, set ritual, long-term membership, powerful-lobbying body, fund-raising, recognition by IRS, or fashion (Och lord, how I've tried, but I am a color blind Scot, yowsers!)
3. For most, that sounds like failure. But a leopard shouldn't complain about its spots.
4. I heard once that a sign of a good teacher (hopefully, one of ours is the Earth-Mother) is not the answers she gives, but the kinds of questions that she raises.
5. I believe that, under her tutelage, we have produced a healthy crop of really good questions about some very basic concepts and issues, (bull-shit is very good fertilizer).
6. As long as that activity continues, whether we call it Druidism or not (an oak is an oak is an oak), then the RDNA lives on.
7. What a long and twisting journey that was! Now that I've said my piece, what do you think?





# Why Are We Called Reformed?

Reflections on Judaism and Calvinism

(By Mairi Ceolmhor, ODAL, DC Grove, 2002)

(New to ARDA 2)

## Chapter the First

1. Ogmos, and other gods interested in elegant speech, please guide my words to present my own personal views and reach the hearts of my readers; who will not mistake my views for those of the RDNA in general.
2. I'm sorry it's so long, so perhaps it should be read in two parts if you have a short attention.
3. Enough said, let's roll

## Chapter the Second

1. What's in a name? Depends on the person, I guess.
2. Many people take great pride and derive much support by the names and associations, which they adopt.
3. Labels, much as we hate pigeonholing, provide a reference point for understanding someone.
4. How about members of the Reformed Druids of North America?
5. We've certainly spent a lot of time researching, defending, deprecating and defining the term "Druid," because in the RDNA, we call ourselves "Druids."
6. It is natural to understand the background and implications of that term.
7. But why are we also called "Reformed?"
8. What are we referring to "Year XXII of the Reform" or when we speak of our movement as "The Reform?"
9. Where exactly does the word "Reformed" come from?
10. The word "*reform*" first appears in surviving English literature as "*reformen*" in 1340, derived from French "*reformer*" or Latin "*reformare*" with a meaning of "make again" or "restoration."
11. After 1440 it added the nuance, "to improve"; and in 1563 "changed for the better" was added.
12. Around 1663, it was used popularly to denote "improvement by removal of some abuse or wrong," due to its use in describing the 16<sup>th</sup> century religious movement of the "Reformation."
13. "Reformatory Schools" began in 16<sup>th</sup> century to "reform" juvenile offenders (did the Founders believe they were in a prison-like school?). In days of Prohibition, it was also used to refer to drunkards who have given up the habit.
14. Today, the Oxford English Dictionary describes it as:
15. 1 a. to put or change into an improved form or condition.
16. 1 b. to amend or improve by change of form or removal of faults or abuses.

17. 2. To put an end to evil by enforcing or introducing a better method or course of action.
18. 3. To subject hydrocarbons (gasoline) to cracking to produce new products. (And most Druids like carbohydrates and they are "crackers")
19. Some members of the RDNA understand it in the "recasting" or "re-creation" or "re-constructing" modes with moderation. But, it is primarily under the religious and moral meaning that the term is now used in our general society.
20. So in order to appreciate this term, I looked at two churches (I'm not sure if we really are a church) that use "Reformed" in their title; Reformed Judaism and Reformed Christianity (sadly there's no Reformed Islam, I think.)
21. Let's hypothesize how their traditions may (or may not) have affected our own self-identity in the early 60s.
22. If nothing else, when discussing your "reform" during inter-faith dialogue, we should understand what their "reform" means.

## Chapter the Third

1. We know that a movement, known as "Reformed Judaism," solidified around 1810, see [www.ccarnet.org/platforms/principles.html](http://www.ccarnet.org/platforms/principles.html) It is described on several sites on the internet as:
2. "Judaism marked by a liberal approach in nonobservance of much legal tradition regarded as irrelevant to the present and in shortening and simplification of traditional ritual." -Anonymous
2. We Reform Jews are heirs to a vast body of beliefs and practices embodied in TORAH and the other Jewish sacred writings. We differ from more ritually observant Jews because we recognize that our sacred heritage has evolved and adapted over the centuries and that it must continue to do so. And we also recognize that if Judaism were not capable of evolution, of REFORM, it could not survive. Reform Judaism accepts and encourages pluralism. Judaism has never demanded uniformity of belief or practice. But we must never forget that whether we are Reform, Conservative, Reconstructionist, or Orthodox, we are all an essential part of K'lal Yisrael – the worldwide community of Jewry. <http://rj.org/index.html>
4. The vernacular language is used in most services. Judaism is adapted to contemporary conditions. The spirit of the law, rather than the letter of the law, is observed. Revelation is seen as coming through the human spirit and nature, as well as sacred text. Traditional home rituals are not as highly valued as in other traditions of Judaism. [www.interfaithcalendar.org/ReformedJudaism.htm](http://www.interfaithcalendar.org/ReformedJudaism.htm)
5. Reform Jewish services allow for women cantors, choirs, organs and pianos as well as other instruments, and "music" as well as chanting. Women are also allowed to read from and chant the Torah, as well as pray aloud. The worship service involves the congregation much more than Orthodox and Conservative counterparts. This allows for quite a bit of variety in worship, especially with regards to the musical language used in worship. <http://simplechemistry.w00tcentral.com/Kyles/rejud.htm>
6. Gosh, that sounds quite a bit like us!

7. I believe, there were at least a few members with a Jewish background in the Founding Days of the Carleton Grove, such as Howard Cherniack and Deborah Frangquist.
8. Throughout our history, some members have knowingly called ourselves “Drues,” and cracked jokes like “That’s funny, you don’t look Druish” in Berkeley.
9. We also had our very own Hassidic Druids of North America branch in St. Louis Missouri during the mid-70s (for more info see, ARDA part 5 at: [www.geocities.com/mikerdna/arda.html](http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/arda.html))
10. This belief seems also to niche in with the neo-old-testament style of the early Druid Chronicles of the 60s; e.g. rebuilding the altar, the psalm-like meditations of “David” Frangquist, lonely hermits seeking god in the wilderness, invocation of weather, prophetic ranting at authorities, and images of a persecuted people seeking release (“let my people go” by Cherniack). The prevalent “Cult of Carleton” has an apparent belief that Northfield is a special holy-land (let’s see, that makes Israel in the Middle East and Carleton in the Mid-West...)
11. That, plus an innate desire for academic excellence, love of dancing & song, self-deprecating humor, a world-wide Diaspora, a tendency to delve into anti-defamation and fight persecution, adaptation to various cultures, and inveterate kibitzing, plus being human beings is as far as the resemblance seems to extend.

## Chapter the Fourth

1. Of course, there are points of difference.
2. We look to the possibility of more than one divinity.
3. Most of the Druids aren’t obsessed with returning to Ireland.
4. We don’t have sacred scriptures, and don’t read what few words we do have recorded.
5. The ancient Celts were illiterate, and we proudly continue that tradition by not “liter”-ing indiscriminately.
6. We also try to not blow our own horn, “sho far” as I can tell.
7. Nor do we have no dietary customs, except to eat enough to live and limit whiskey during the winter season (which sounds backwards in practicality to me), although the vegetarians amongst us are rather noisy and self-righteous. (I’m a Texan; we worship cows best when they’re inside our bellies and on our feet.)
8. There is a definite lack of a sense of racial separatism (i.e. “us vs. the gentiles”) among Druid (with the Celtophiles excepted), and we have no objections to marriage with members of other religions (in fact we seem to practice a bit of all of faiths) as long as they are civil.
9. And, we don’t require members to cut off pieces of their bodies (either gender), although the Orthodox Druids have this thing about lopping off the heads of their enemies....
10. Finally, except for Brother Peter, most Druids don’t seem to wear strange headgear.

[She added in 2003:

11. I’m not sure if we are a chosen people, but we are certainly a people who have chosen.]

## Chapter the Fifth

1. We also know that many of the Founders were also members of the Protestant branch of Christianity, such as

- Fisher, Nelson & David Frangquist, and so the term “Reform” must have had several inescapable meanings that were attractive to them (although the first image of Presbyterian-style Druidism is a bit comical at first.)
2. “Reformed” often indicates a Protestant church that is related to the Calvinist branch, as formed in various continental European countries.
3. Calvinism had a “strong emphasis on the sovereignty of God and especially by the doctrine of predestination.”
4. At first, this seemed like a strong mis-match for the RDNA, so I further investigated a lengthy sermon at a “Reformed” site at: [www.geocities.com/mikerdna/arda.html](http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/arda.html)
5. This is when I discovered other meanings latent in the term. The lecture taught that;
6. “This position commits us to a high view of Scripture. We receive it as the infallible and fully inspired Word of God. **We will bow to no higher authority.** Historically this has meant that we do not elevate church tradition to the level of Scripture – as the Roman Catholic Church has done. But neither do we canonize our own experience, no matter how spectacular or supernatural it may be. Church tradition and personal experience have no independent status and are always subservient to the teaching of the Bible.” (My emphasis)
7. Again, much of that does not mesh well with most Reformed Druids’ beliefs (or, at least the Druids I know).
8. However, the revolt against the original Roman Church (the history of Catholicism is about warring factional beliefs), by a strong-willed minority of the oppressed, is quite heroic (despite what many of them would later do to other minorities) and well paralleled by the early Grove at Carleton.
9. The Founders of the RDNA revolted against the Deans of Men and Women for the imposition of mandatory religious attendance, but perhaps not to the extent of nailing 95 complaints onto their office doors (I’m sure they would have used thumb-tacks).
10. The distrust of “experience” part written above doesn’t jive that well with us either. Again, the RDNA apparently does not look highly upon its own literature.
11. Attempts were made to stop publishing the 1976 Druid Chronicles (Evolved) and that 1996 A Reformed Druid Anthology, because the works were seen as encouraging dogmatism by providing too much material in a portable format that could encourage spiritual dependency on others’ past experiences in written form (i.e. Bible hugging).
12. Brother Mike, an assistant editor of ARDA, recommended the book as a doorstopper or paper-weight on a desk; rather than as a ‘brain-stopper’ or ‘dead-weight on the soul’. He is pleased to report that, “very few people have read it.”
13. Indeed, the RDNA seems to lean more toward the individual’s experiences as having greater spiritual power, rather than asserting the institutionalized fossilized customs of past members.
14. Reading further, I noted:
15. Because God is sovereign, He is Lord of all of life. Hence, we seek to live all of life to the glory of God. As Paul wrote to the Corinthians, “Lo, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God” (I

Cor.10:31). This is a far-reaching command, which Reformed people have generally taken quite seriously.

16. Hey, I'm not a Christian myself; but, change that deity to "Earth-Mother," remember that every sovereign has court officials, and add a flavor of Zennish "Everyday life as religion" with unexpected moments of enlightenment, and I can swallow that pretty well.

## Chapter the Sixth

1. A bit further:
2. "Hand in hand with this missions emphasis goes a concern for revival. Although this word has suffered abuse in recent years, there is nothing unreformed about revival! Again and again throughout the history of the church God has poured out His Spirit to bring times of refreshing."
3. IMHO, my own Reformed Druidism believes in the cycle of revivals of Nature and the pressing need for a continual discovery of Awareness and Wisdom through introspection and revelation from the gods.
4. And Gods know!, how the Groves crash and need a good rejuvenating jolt every few years.
5. The coming and going of members, or a change of focus, often breathes new life. So I can parallel with this thinking again.
6. As for missionary activity, I am rather neutral.
7. Make your presence findable and those who come, will come.
8. Don't be a public nuisance (unless it's necessary). That's my system.
9. I'm not a missionary of Druidism or grove-oriented like Brothers Isaac, Larson or Mike.
10. I think a well-balanced RDNA Druid can enjoy fulfilling participation in any religion's congregation, without forming their own "druid" grove.
11. This is what I plan to do. It's called "Guerrilla Druidism," but I'm not into aping those around me (that would be "Gorilla Druidism," something I'm not bananas over.)
12. I'm definitely a "Solitary Druid," see my song in <http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/bard.html> (Salvo #5).

## Chapter the Seventh

1. Further on, it continues:
2. "To the Reformers the Roman Catholic sacramental system seemed to be part of a transaction that was always going on between man and God. In it, people made sacrifices designed to appease and please God. They would attend the mass, bring offerings, show sorrow, do penance – which might involve self-punishment or compensatory good works – until God would be gracious. The leaders of the church, from priests through bishops and popes, mediated the transaction. The Reformers believed that such an arrangement could easily be misused as a political instrument for forcing rulers to comply with the church's wishes and as a personal instrument for keeping people in uncertainty or terror. It was this vision of Catholicism that helped inspire the Protestant leadership to rebel and to define justification in other terms."
3. The RDNA doesn't fit in with this, as we definitely are into pleasing the Gods, sacrificing, and seeking their wishes, although remaining doubtful of its effectivity.

4. I think, if you're going to live somewhere, you should ask those in the neighborhood what the rules are (including Nature, the first resident) and follow them.
5. The Brothers David (Fisher & Frangquist) say much on this subject of sacrifice;
6. "For one man, the sacrifice of life is the offering up of himself to a god or gods. To another, it is an offering up of his mind to a search for truth. As a priest, I repeat the great Answer to calm men's hearts and minds, not as a magical formula of absolution; but some the Answer is an absolution, washing away the distractions of a week of worry, and reaffirming confidence in the idea of a purpose in life." Book of Faith, V.9. The Apocrypha. [www.geocities.com/mikerdna/arda.html](http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/arda.html)
7. I feel, that if the Gods don't like us at all, then they shouldn't have made us (or we shouldn't have made them).
8. We all have our good days and bad days, and any omniscient deity should realize that and take it into consideration on what to dish out to us.
9. I also believe that a mother knows what her child needs, no matter whether it gurgles, coos or grimaces; so we should remember that when the debate on "proper" ritual is brought up.
10. Brother MaDagda & Sister Tegwedd claim that the "Reformed" part of our name refers to some ancient practices which we have "reformed"; notably, our decision in 1963 to end the sacrifice of animals for religious purposes (including humans -and arguably- even politicians) or the offering of blood.
11. Sister Tegwedd recommends getting consent from the plant sacrifice by some means.
12. "The Book of Customs in the "Druid Chronicles (Reformed)" recommends several Celtic customs and practices, but does not require their mandatory obeisance.
13. Now, I'm not a bible-stroking, verse quoting, steely-tongued debater; but Cherniack once said,
14. "Have ye not forgotten that we are reformed, yea, we do even call ourselves by the name of Reformed, wherefore we must put behind us those things which do bring offense to our senses;" –Book of Latter Chronicles, Ch 5 Vs 9

## Chapter the Eighth

1. The RDNA has been firmly silent on issues of an afterlife (and strangely reticent on a "before-life," by the way!).
2. Rather, I think most people to concentrate on this existence, or basically to "get a life."
3. Some members use the RDNA as a garnish or decoration attached to other religions that provide full-service after-life systems; other members treat the RDNA as the main-course and consider it to provide for all their needs.
4. Call me a Humanist, but I think there are enough good reasons to be gentle, responsible and caring member of a community or have a religious life without an "afterlife bribe/threat."
5. I believe that Confucius said, "How can a virtuous man understand the world of ghosts and spirits when they can't even program a VCR to stop blinking 12:00 on its clock?! Oi vey!" or thereabouts.
6. The Protestant "priesthood of believers" revived an ancient concept of a direct link to God(s) without the mediation of professional priests (who still have a role).

7. Members of the RDNA appear to be very careful not to vaunt the offices of the three orders; and we certainly don't get paid well enough to make a living off it.
8. I, personally, see them more as undertaking extra responsibilities rather than as an achievement of "perfection" or "completion" of Druid-ity.
9. In other words, a life-long First Order might just as speedily reach enlightenment or Awareness as a high muckety-muck 9<sup>th</sup> Order Patriarch, without vigiling or drinking the Waters of Life every weekend.
10. Surely, the Earth-Mother knows her own, and all our fancy titles won't bias her relationship with us.
11. More than likely, according to the ARDA history, these orders were both an attempt to overthrow Fisher's control of the Carleton Grove, plus a carry-over from the Fraternal groups that David Fisher wanted to simulate at Carleton.
12. Yet, I believe they still have proponents who've found a use for them.
12. As Brother MaDagda states, "As a reformed druid, I take what I can from our ancestors of the Oaken Brotherhood and reshape, reform it to fit within this time, this age."
13. Until now, the usual response to "Why are you called Reformed?" has always been (and Brother Mike just loves this joke), is "Because we also worship bushes... except elected ones..."
14. I hope that this essay will help you to go beyond that sort of reply in some way and start a good dialogue with other faiths.

Peace!  
Mairi Ceolmhor

P.S. Proudly call yourself Reformed Druids when the Celtophiles criticize you. We can stand up to them also. Perhaps you can console them that without a "Reformed Druid" you can't have an "Orthodox Druid"?

## Chapter the Ninth

1. Going back to the "Reform Sermon";
2. "In theory, Protestantism has stood throughout its history for a principle of protest that calls under judgment not only the beliefs and institutions of others but also one's own movements and causes. On those grounds, however, most students of Protestantism would recognize that the Protestant tradition has not been substantially more successful than have other faiths at remaining self-critical or at rising above institutional self-defensiveness."
3. This last aspect seems the firmest legacy of Protestantism for the RDNA.
4. I have heard, "Show me two Druids and I'll give you at least 3 opinions on any topic."
5. Well, in my opinion, we are a rather argumentative, critical bunch of curmudgeons, who take matters into our hands, and are fiercely suspicious of hierarchy and the institutionalization & fossilization of religion. (And some aren't.)
6. Our name does have a potentially empowering meaning that could encourage activism and rebellion, without demanding it. Yet, like the last part, we also sometimes slip into ruts, avoid hard choices, resist natural adaptations and don't seek to know or correct our errors.
7. Remember the expression that, "It is easier to see smoke coming from a neighbor's kitchen window than to notice the burning roof on top of our own house?"
8. At the end of the ritual, we have to go home, sweep our corners, air the linens, and wash the dishes like our other fellow mortals.
9. I would add one last shade to the word "Reform" as in OED's 1A definition; its first meaning. That is to change into a new form.
10. As Nature breaks down and rebuilds all things (vegetable, animal or mineral), there is no "eternal," only change and adaptation.
11. Again, in my opinion and twelve years of experience, the RDNA's greatest power has been the power to take older diverse creeds, traditions, rules, and faiths and transform them into a new product (perhaps even "improved") by using our humor, reflection and piercing inspection such that could meet the current needs of our grove members.

## Responses to Mairi

(Various Authors, 2002, New to ARDA 2)

### Chapter the First

1. Date: Tue, 16 Apr 2002 07:09:28 -0400
2. In the Vernal Equinox edition of the Druid Missal-Any, Mairi Ceolmhor speculates that Reformed Judaism "sounds quite a bit like us!" (in reference to the RDNA).
3. Though this may be only one perspective on the historical similarities between the RDNA and other "religious movements" throughout history, and not to reflect on other Groves beyond an historical anecdote, Silent Grove does not in any way, past or present, draw parallels to any aspect of Judaism, whether Reformed or not, or it's natural extension – Zionism.
4. Indeed, Silent Grove strongly disengages itself from the current atrocities committed by the Zionist regime, and does not wish to have its Grove sullied by any suggestions of connections, associations or similarities with historical or contemporary Judaism/Zionism in part or as a whole.

-Glen  
Silent Grove

### Chapter the Second

1. Dear Glen,
2. I'm glad you've broken your silence to speak out on issues that matter to you. :) The following, is of course, my personal opinion in reply to your personal opinion for the possible benefit of the readers' opinions. :)
3. Each grove in the Reform is naturally free to choose its sources of inspiration, and equally free to choose which one's not to be inspired by (if it is possible to ignore a "purple rhino" once the idea is mentioned to you.)
4. I believe what you most object to here is the collaboration between politics and religion.
5. Any religion, once it has a desire to achieve and keep political or military power, will then proceed to protect that power, usually against rival religions.
6. This is the sad fact of Northern Ireland, Cyprus, Sri Lanka, Israel/Palestine, Timor, the Wild West and numerous other locales.

7. I understand the dilemma that possible association or resemblance to any group can bring about unfavorable comparisons.
8. I'm still proud to have German ancestry, although I disdain the Nazism of the 20th century.
9. I'm proud to be part Irish, but deplore the violence of North Ireland.
10. I speak English, despite the millions of Celts killed, disenfranchised or enslaved (etc.) by Anglo-Saxon & French descendants.
11. I doubt that any western institution (especially a religious one) or academic environment that hasn't been affected, influenced or involved with Judaism or Christianity (which is Judaism blended with Mithraic and Greek Mystery cults) or Islam for that matter, which was Mairi's argument.
12. While I'm sure some Reformed Judaics support Zionism, I believe the underlying purpose of that movement is to adjust Judaism to the realities of modern life, rather than to adjust the world to Judaism, which is more Zionistic to me.
13. If there is one lesson I've learned in Reformed Druidism, it is that there are allies and good lessons in nearly every religion, if you know where to look (the opposite also holds true) and search well.
14. But I will agree with you, that the current situation in the Middle East, with its messy blend of racism/ politics/ religion/ class/ lunacy is just plain discouraging.
15. I hope that America doesn't go any further down a similar road of its own, towards extremism or preferential treatment for population based on religion.
16. But, I do not know enough of the details and history behind these religious conflagrations which touch so many related topics. But I am applying myself to a growing understanding.
17. After all, the last reason why we're "reformed" is that we're trying to fix our mistakes, and we can learn much by relating to and engaging ourselves in the dilemmas of others, and we'll need your help.
18. This reminds me of what Isaac told Carleton-graduates in the 70s about "throwing the baby out with the bath water" (2nd Epistle of Isaac) when it comes to magic and associations with neo-paganism.
19. Interestingly, Isaac (of all people) was accused by several people of being Jewish because of his name (which resembles the founder of Reformed Judaism), involvement with founding the Hassidic Druids of North America, and a few other reasons.
20. I believe his reaction was "I'm charmed, but you're very mistaken."
21. On a final thought, I'm reminded that poem by Issho (Zen Harvest #19):  
Over the pond  
Every night casts its light  
But the water won't be soiled  
The moon won't be either.
22. But, I hope you at the very least found Mairi's article to be thought provoking? I welcome other input on dealing with PR issues of association with other groups and movements by the readers.

Yours moderately,  
-Mike  
April 16, 2002

## Chapter the Third

1. Dear Mike,
2. Actually, Brother Mike, all I am saying is that Silent Grove does not consider itself, in any way, influenced by historical or modern Zionism.
3. We despise the situation in the Middle East, as provoked by war criminal Ariel Sharon in 1999 by his visit to a Palestinian holy location. We also despise the fact that your nation continues to fuel Zionist arrogance by providing \$3B/annum in aid to a bellicose nation whose hegemonic aspirations in the region are a detriment to world prosperity.
4. Any Druid would plainly see that the balance is completely torn asunder by misguided foreign policy that funds 'war brokers' to pad their corporate coffers.
5. This is not the wish of the Mother. As such, and I am sure you feel it as well, things will be corrected in the near future. Divination would tell you as much.

With warm regards,  
Glen

## Chapter the Fourth

1. Dear Glen,
2. It seemed a poor choice on his part, wasn't it?
3. Canada is a wonderful country, after all, I've thought of moving there. In a way, your grove appears to be negatively influenced by Zionism, as is shown by your outrage.
4. It doesn't take a Druid to realize such matters of the world exist. But it would take a Druid to know how to respond wisely. Without time travel, what would be a good course to take?
5. Most of my divination is about the Earth-Mother's acceptance of my sacrifices, not those of others'. I'm sure the gods hear those.

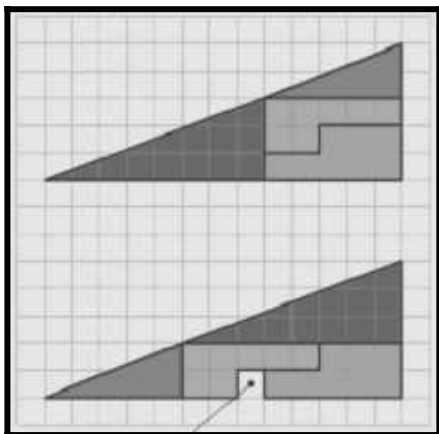
With warm regards,  
-Mike

## Chapter the Fifth

1. All in the Mother,
2. It is in the spirit of good ale, good music, and a good heart, that I need to rectify Brother Mike in his assumptions as to my sunrise message.
3. Indeed, the message is that each Grove delivers unto themselves the deeds they see as fit.
4. It is simple to be an editorial proxy, however to be representative, that has been the downfall of all political/ religious movements.
5. I welcome, each and everyone of you, to visit our website in the weeks to come, as we begin to practice "Druidism" without getting lost on provocations such as, "What is Reformed?" and glorify far more important trivial frivolities from days a' yore! Indeed, you may find our catalogue will soon surpass the "un-official website" of the RDNA.
6. Tsk! Such a shame that your arrogance exudes in statements that extol the self, rather than the Grace of the Mother. An old Taoist once proclaimed, "visit the river and sit there until you forget yourself. Only then can you become selfless."

7. As far as the Zionist regime is concerned, our Grove feels no bitter hatred, only a sullen remorse that such a wondrous group of people could degrade themselves to the pit of hate once again, such that many societies will reward them with violence as they have done throughout history.
8. BTW, I'm glad you left in question marks.
9. A Zen Buddhist once dropped by a pizza parlor called "Zen Pizza."
10. He ordered one with everything.
11. The pizza came, and he paid, but he complained when the clerk didn't give him any change.
12. The clerk quickly pointed out that, "change comes from within"
13. Therein lacks the wisdom.

With the Mother in our hearts,  
Silent Grove



## The Epistle of Adaptation

(By Dusty White, 2002)

(New to ARDA 2)

### Chapter the First

1. From Dusty White
2. All of this spirited thought has caught my eye. It is good to see some serious and intelligent exchanges of thought in neo/pagan (pick-your-favorite term and leave me alone!) circles – as it has been a bit dry around here locally.
3. I most highly agree with "Brother Glen" (hmm.. Can I be different and call him "Unca Glen?") in philosophy and perceived fact (I was not there; therefore I must assume what is reported is somewhat factual).
4. But there is so much more to this. I just wanted to put that in first! :-)
5. In as short of a statement of my view as I can squeeze this:
6. Hmm... "Reformed." I will avoid whipping out the dictionary and will just go straight into my personal diatribe here.
7. The druids of old are dead. (Or they are rrrrrreally old and hiding with the faeries under the cairns!).
8. They were hunted down like so many other wonderful indigenous civilizations of the earth by the "conquering empires" (I blame the x-ians mostly – but that is entirely personal) and most of the records we could hope to have to trace a solid lineage or collection of rituals and purposes are lost.
9. This means that we in a very real sense are indeed practicing one of the most mysterious of all religions of the world in this day.
10. Because no one alive (except for the afore mentioned rrrrrreally old druids) knows exactly what they did and how they did it and why... We have only our best guesses.
11. I hope I do not need to point out the fallacy of "modern science" over the past few millennia to show how mistaken we may be on them.
12. But I like to think we have a pretty good idea of "what drooids did."
13. They like trees. Hey! I like trees! And there we have a start.
14. This reaches into the shadowy realms of Celtic-recreationism and I am bound to (hopefully) offend some here with my line of thought.
15. Anything we do today is nothing more than an educated guess of those who walked before us. But this can be quite liberating!

### Chapter the Second

1. With all due respect to my Wiccan(TM) friends – including those I have to meet – Wicca(TM – Gerald Gardner circa 1964?) is a "re-formation" of a collection of beliefs from all over Europe.

2. Pre 1960 there was no "Wicca." There were a variety of indigenous beliefs on every spot of dry land where people resided and the gods there reflected the environment of that locale.
3. Now we have a hundred different official sects and a million different interpretations, blending Egyptian, Assyrian, Celtic, Hindu and other beliefs and calling it "Wicca(TM)." Hence it is an amalgamation of beliefs.
4. Okay – that's cool as long as we can see it for what it is. Today's Wiccans(TM) are as eclectic as today's fast food establishments. A burger at Mc Donald's is vastly different from one at Burger King ("they use microwaves!") but they are both lumped into the category of burgers or the larger grab-bag term of American "fast food."
5. So my mini-point here is that the systems of beliefs are varied even under the umbrella title of the predominant de facto "pagan" line of thought.
6. So – to bring this all together; "if" the druids are dead and gone (not to worry – we ALL die someday) and most of the records we could hope to enjoy have been destroyed then what we really have is a base of ideas and a completely new era.
7. The planet is the same, but the world has changed. Some of us may choose to be "guardians of history" and keep to what little we do know – calling ourselves purists (I like that term btw) and that is all good.
8. But... Isn't the very essence of life – of nature herself the ability to adapt and survive?
9. As druids we (should) all look around to the grand old lady herself and seek guidance by example. What does nature do? Nature adapts.
10. The lion eats the zebra (yum!). If there are not enough zebras the lion eats something else or starves. Nature allows the cycle to evolve. Where there are fewer zebras and giraffes (for example) the trees grow more plentiful and the grass grows taller.
11. Humans punch giant holes in the ozone and nature says – okay kids; playtime is over – you die now. "Next!"
12. All in all, nature just adapts and keeps going on.
13. So if the world is a different world than it was back in the days of our fun-loving, golden-sickle wielding forebearers, then "could" (note: I did NOT say "should" – do NOT flame me for implying "should") our beliefs not adapt also?
14. Would not those who went before us be disappointed if we did not see the world and create new songs and rituals to honor and bond with nature that are contemporary to our times and world around us?
15. This is not to imply abandoning old beliefs at all – but more that the term "re-formed" could well be taken as: solid ideas based on a sound premise ("nature is good") and applied to the world around us in a contemporary style that has the maximum impact of intended purpose ("nature is cool").

## Chapter the Third

1. I mean we could all build a house using only an axe. We "could" make a 'Lincoln Log' cabin of sorts (note that I expressly do NOT condone the abuse, murder or butchering of trees or any plant-life – EVER!!!) but we have air-hammers now that shoot these really cool nails into (ahem) wood and build solid, well insulated houses – in a fraction of the time – it took our grandfathers and

even more so those before to build homes for their families.

2. Should our personal spiritual beliefs remain in the Stone Age while all of our realities and perceptions advance forward at blisteringly divine speeds? Is this not the very reason that x-ianity has suffered such an attrition of real followers over the past 600 years and more so in the now deceased "2nd millennia"?
3. The Renaissance came about as the "common man" (a sexist term I know) had more free time from labor and thus better health, more time to learn and thus a chance to look above the rantings of the Church and local nobility and say something to the effect of "screw this! This makes no sense at all!" Europe's collective eyes were opened and the world started a change that has led us to this very moment of internet debates.
4. None of this discounts any basic precepts ("nature is good") but it DID invalidate the forced dogma of the previous generations as they had infected current religious thought of that time ("nature is good because God is better than thou and so is the Earl and therefore thou must toil in the fields of thy Earl in service to him, in all of his holiness, so thou mayest achieve a servile position in his garden in paradise"). I realize this is a lot to chew on – but it is blissfully simple.
5. If we strip away all but the premise of what those who came before us held true then we have a tree (no?). Okay – so let's consider decorating that tree one belief at a time.
6. Add the ornaments of old by examining them to see if they are kept because of their timeless truth – or simple nostalgia. Can some broken and soiled ornaments not be placed in a jeweled box on display at the base of the tree in an honored position while new ornaments that reflect the time and the base notion ("nature is cool") be placed on the tree in their stead?

## Chapter the Fourth

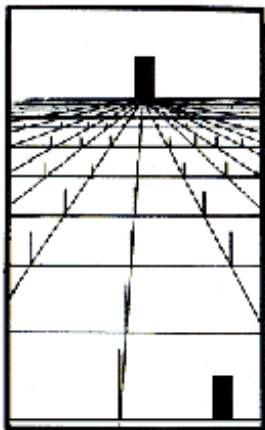
1. This is how I see us as reformed druids. I believe we laugh at nothing our forebearers did. If they thought the sun rose every day, and not that the earth revolved around the sun – cool!
2. But we know differently now; our understanding of that fact may negate a certain ritual that is focused on making the sun rise (I am being whimsically hypothetical here for example only) – but our songs of love of the sun rising are an extremely personal expression, as we know that it is to our eyes that the sun rises and that is how we romanticize the moment and draw power from it.
3. The eternal flame has long-been extinguished. Okay – we still know how to make fire. Drop the torch – light a new one. Hell! Use "Hazel" or "Birch cut under the light of the first smiling crescent when Venus and the moon make a one-eyed smiley face just after sundown" if you like – but the fact that the torch is lit and carried and protected from harsh winds seems more important to me than trying to use the same old charred stump soaked in gasoline.
4. I think that we all have our own interpretations of druidism – just as we all have our own beliefs on sex and monogamy/polygamy and polyandry.
5. But one thing I do know for a fact is that whether we choose to like it or not – we all are products of this world as it is – not as it was "back when" and those beliefs are inherent in us.

6. We can no more reject the world as it is today in our spiritual belief systems than we can live without the wonder of toilet paper, washing machines, refrigeration, toothbrushes or readily available soap and hot water.
7. So we are "21st century druids." Cool! I still like trees. But I also like my computer.
8. Okay – enough of my proselytizing! Thank you for reading – please feel free to write and tell me how sacrilegious I am.

## Chapter the Fifth

1. One last fun note though:
2. Mike wrote:
3. "I doubt that any western institution (especially a religious one) or academic environment that hasn't been affected, influenced or involved with Judaism or Christianity (which is Judaism blended with Mithraic and Greek Mystery cults) or Islam for that matter, which was Mairi's argument."
4. X-ianity draws from Hinduism as well – this is a fun factoid I always like tossing at Jehovah's Witnesses (because I AM an ass): The "forbidden fruit" of the Vedas (circa several thousand years pre-xianity) was a Banana!
5. So.. if x-ianity is the one and only "true belief" – why did the Hindus (heathen bastards:-) get the idea first? And what about when Sid (the Buddha) said a full 500 years before Jesus "I am the representation of the Buddha on earth.
6. But I am also the eternal spirit of the Buddha and I am the creator of all of this being the Buddha eternal!" (I need to get the actual quote for you scholarly types – but it is there in the lotus Sutra).
7. Ain't life great?
8. Okay... faeries to you!

Dusty the passing druid  
April 16, 2002



# The Silent Cacophony

(Disgruntled Druid, 2002)

(New to ARDA 2)

## Chapter the First

1. April 24th, 2002
2. Our Grove has decided, not in haste, that we share no connection with the RDNA, and since our actions will be fairly robust in the weeks, months and years ahead, that we should singly represent ourselves as the Canadian Druid and Bardic Society.
3. We initially toyed with the idea back in January, prior to Imbolc, but recent events leave us little doubt that this is in the best interests of our Grove.
4. In the Mother, please notify all that we are leaving the Reform, and wish to have little to no contact with your organization, up and beyond the people we have met on a one-to-one email basis.
5. Best of Luck!

## Chapter the Second

1. April 29, 2002
2. With good food, immaculate manner, and a belly full of ale we warmly greet you.
3. Just to let you all know, our Grove has broken with the RDNA.
4. The reasons are many, some that we wish to retain for ourselves, but others that should be glaringly obvious to others.
5. The Carleton Grove is nothing more than some faded venture, using its name for some place in obscure history.
6. The facade that each Grove manages itself is diaphanous as the day is long.
7. Most Groves have one member.
8. In essence the whole organization, at least the initial mandate as laid down by the original, founding organization is wind-worn and lichen bound.
9. It is time to shake the moss from your beards!
10. It is time for us to truly encapsulate the love of nature that we so, seemingly, cherish.
11. Am I not to hear so much as a mouse fart from the RDNA when your US government plans on allowing mountain mining ventures to completely ease their dumping restrictions?
12. Or is it just some sort of "past-time" with most of you?
13. How do you do druidism??
14. Everywhere, they all ask the question.
15. Up! All of you!
16. Make your organization again the robust entity it once was.
17. Principles are empty vapors. Seeming wisdom is nothing more than foolishness.
18. It is time to rise all!
19. Let us not miss this opportunity!



# The Epistle of Alyx

(By Alyx, 2002)

(New to ARDA 2)

## Chapter the First

1. May 1, 2002
2. If you are looking for the RDNA to be an organized protest movement, waving the banner of environmental protection (or any other "protest cause of your choice") in the vanguard of the counterculture, you are doomed to disappointment. It isn't going to happen.
3. You talk of the organization's initial mandate; what you forget is that its founding came as a protest ~against~ compulsory behavior (in this case, religious attendance). Compulsory political protest or even compulsory political ~belief~ is no different.
4. However – to take the lack of "Organized RDNA Presence" in the protest lines and conclude from that that the ~members~ of the RDNA are likewise uninvolved is an egregious and quite frankly careless error in judgment on your part.
5. Members of the RDNA, perhaps even individual groves, may be involved in all sorts of protests, causes, and yes even organizations of which you know nothing about. How one person or one grove lives out their spiritual belief is not a matter for you to judge, especially when you possess a remarkable lack of factual information about them.
6. If your concepts of "druid" and "grove" involve organized and visible political action on the part of and in the name of same, then perhaps it ~is~ best for all that you have disfellowshipped yourselves to form your own body.
7. I truly wish you all the best.
8. But to make sweeping and ill-informed judgments about the group, its members, and the validity and expression of our beliefs (even stooping to compare us to Nazis and Aryanism) because the RDNA does not meet your own personal expectation of "What It Really Means To Be A Druid" (or even a Reformed Druid) is in my opinion childish, inflammatory, and wholly unproductive.

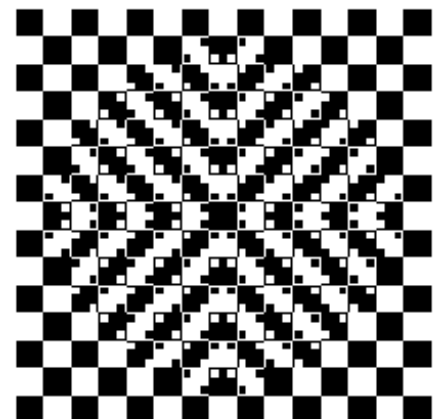
## Chapter the Second

1. Back in my more-or-less conservative Christian days (well, okay, a little bit on the "less" side by this time) and during my several year stint as a "career temp," I found myself coincidentally assigned to the headquarters of a national conservative men's ministry, which was located in our city and used my temp service.
2. During a lunch conversation with a Hispanic coworker one day, I discovered that the name "Chui," (pronounced "Chewie"), was a nickname for "Jesus" (pronounced "Haysoos"...). Inexplicably (and rather wickedly) delighted by this revelation, I wondered out loud if that meant one could then pray to Lord Chewie Christ...
3. I got some very odd looks around the office for a while.
4. But my intent, both then and now, was not to be disrespectful or sacrilegious.

5. There are many religions floating around these days, and many personal beliefs and faiths of people within those religions. And many people argue, fight, and even war over which religion is "right" or "correct" or "The One True Way."
6. But if one's beliefs are so "sacred" as to allow no examination, no questioning, (or dare I even say, no fun) then what on earth good are they?
7. It's not the form of a religion that is the useful part – it's what is inside.
8. To me, religion is like a pinata. On one hand, a faith or belief system that can't withstand some thumps or whacks is nothing but an empty shell; although it may look pretty hanging from the ceiling, but in the end it's nothing more than a decoration.
9. But more importantly, it's not the container that matters, but what's inside. Like the pinata, no matter what shape it is, how fancy it's made, or how elaborately it's decorated, religion is ultimately of no use to you unless you smash it open to get to the goodies inside.
10. And whether the stick is need, hardship, or even humor, eventually you're swinging it blindly until, finally, you connect.

## Chapter the Third

1. "In the old days men used to worship sticks and stones and idols, and prayed to them to give them luck. It happened that a man had often prayed to a wooden idol that he had received from his father, but his luck never seemed to change. He prayed and he prayed, but still he remained as unlucky as ever. One day in the greatest rage he went to the Wooden God, and with one blow swept it down from its pedestal. The idol broke in two, and what did he see? An immense number of coins flying all over the place."
2. ("The Man and the Wooden God," pg. 268 of ARDA, pg. 46 of Part Six The Green Books.)



# The Second Epistles of Norman

(By Norman Nelson, 2002-2003)


(New to ARDA 2)

## Chapter the First


1. 12 Nov 2002 12:58:26 -0700
2. I've been waiting a couple days for someone to come up with a definitive reply to you, but Druids, too, have a bad case of manana syndrome.
2. Let me introduce myself briefly, I'm Norm, and I'm about to turn 61. I'm one of the "Founders" and was the second Archdruid. [However, as you'll see below, that doesn't mean that anything I say is definitive!]
3. There is no single route to being a "Druid"; in fact, I would believe that every individual has found his/her own path. The Reformed Druids of North America have no creed; we used to say, "Look around you at the natural world; there must be something bigger than we are, and we choose to honor it as the Earth Mother."
4. That honor may be called worship, or just appreciation, or \_\_\_\_\_ [You fill in the blank]. The RDNA has \*never\* required anyone to give up another faith to become a Druid. We've always been complementary or supplementary, not exclusive.
5. Similarly, those who have attended RDNA services (or had other contact with RDNA) have either agreed with our premise and added it to their own beliefs (I know there are Druids with Jewish, various Christian, Shinto and Wiccan backgrounds, and there are probably representatives of other faiths, major and minor) or else have gone away and had nothing to do with Druidism. For a few, it has become their only religion; that's okay, too.
6. The whole RDNA "religion" started as a joke, anyway; a protest against required attendance at religious services at Carleton College in Minnesota. The day I graduated in 1964, the Board of Trustees repealed the requirement, thereby rendering RDNA moot, but to the surprise of the Founders, RDNA kept on going, and is now approaching its 40th birthday!
7. For some, including me, it remained a "supplement" to another belief (e.g. a way of getting in touch with the feminine, creative side of a patriarchal god, or whatever).
8. For others, it became their core belief because it answered their questions [which seems to me to be the real function of humanity's need for any religion].
9. If someone were to take a poll of RDNA today (don't worry, it won't be done because most folks wouldn't bother to reply!) I think you'd still find a whole spectrum of beliefs.
10. Consequently, there has never been a successful attempt to codify what Druids believe. As the joke goes, if you have two Druids together, you have at least three belief systems!
11. Imagine!!! A do-it-yourself religion that lets you pick and choose from a whole buffet of options. Start doing some reading (Mike Scharding's book is the obvious place to start) and devise your own "book" of readings, etc., to answer the questions you have. It won't match anyone else's, but it'll be right for you.

11. And, as I like to say, "Funny, you don't look Druish."

## Chapter the Second

1. 21 Dec 2002 12:34:24 -0700
2.  I concur that there is no authority that can "unmake" a Druid, just as there is none that can make one. You're a Druid if you feel Druish. I guess you could be kicked out of a particular (pun intended) Grove, but that doesn't mean you cease to be a Druid.
3. In the early days, everyone who partook of the Waters was automatically made a member of the Carleton Grove, including John Nason, the then president of Carleton, and his wife, to whom I served the waters the weekend before my graduation (with my fingers crossed, on a campus where the discovered possession of alcoholic beverages was an automatic 10-day suspension). By that standard, there are a lot of Druids out there, even if they don't know it.
4. The long-defunct Council of Dalon ap Landu never, to the best of my memory, ever tried to excommunicate anyone (even Isaac!). Given the above criterion, I don't think we even thought it possible.
5. The closest thing to a "head of the RDNA" would probably be David Fisher, since I think he's the highest ranked Patriarch. However, he's no longer practicing Druidism (at least officially he's not) and the opinion of any Patriarch is worth just as much as the opinion of any member of RDNA. For us to have a "head" would be the tail wagging the dog!
6. "The optimist proclaims that we live in the best of all possible worlds; and the pessimist fears this is true." – James Branch Cabell

## Chapter the Third

1. 28 Oct 2002 16:16:36 -0700
2.  Excommunication? Can't have that unless we first have communication!
3. As I noted to someone recently, the "founders" didn't give up sacrifices. We gave up virgin sacrifices (couldn't find anyone willing to lose theirs in public), but we sacrificed plant life.
4. Given the cannibalistic overtones of the Christian communion [there's that word again!] sacrifice of some sort seems to be integral to most religions, serious or otherwise, be it a literal shedding of blood or the sacrifice of self during Lent or Ramadan.
5. Meseems that the Reform can stretch far enough to encompass almost everything. I'd qualify that by saying that "everything" should be limited to what's legal, but I also remember that I once served the Waters of Life to the president of Carleton on a campus where possession of alcoholic beverages was an automatic 10-day suspension (and the pop machine in the dorm parlor sold lemon sour and club soda!), so we've been stretching the limits since the Founding.

## Chapter the Fourth

1. Sun, 4 May 2003 18:38:16 -0600
2. I'm just back from the reunion at Carleton; I'll tell you more later, if anybody is interested.
3. During the weekend, I had an insight that I want to pass along: one of the things that has attracted people to RDNA over the years is that, when we put it together, we forgot to include something that is a major aspect in most other "religions" – guilt.
4. While the service begins with "forgive three sins" (some modern versions say "three errors"), there's none of the "I'm a miserable sinner and have to spend the rest of my life trying to atone" that's a major aspect in most of the other major faiths.
5. Ergo, Druids are free to enjoy all the aspects of Nature, and to revel in them, without having to worry about crossing some invisible line and winding up among the damned. We don't have a hell... nor a heaven.
6. We don't object to those faiths that do, and if an individual believes in them, that's his/her business. We won't criticize them, as long as they don't try to demand that we share their beliefs.
7. As I said, this came to me this weekend as a genuine insight, one I'd never thought about before. Just thought I'd pass it along to see what others think about the concept. Several people to whom I mentioned the concept over the weekend agreed that it was a good point.
8. Right now, though, it's still "firmly carved in Jello", so if you want to dissent, go ahead. On the other hand, I think it could be a real revelation about what RDNA has meant to so many people from so many backgrounds.

## Chapter the Fourth

1. Sat, 11 Jan 2003 12:05:11 -0700
2. I'd bet that each of us has had similar feelings at one time or another; it's one of the things that has led us to seek answers in Druidism, in communication with and honoring of Nature.
3. I've been extremely fortunate in finding another person who feels about these things as I do (although I don't think she's ever considered Druidism).
4. She used to live here, and now lives in Delaware, but she tries to arrange her schedule so that she can spend a month every summer at my family's cabin in one of the most beautiful spots in the Black Hills. And, as she likes to say, she just sits on the porch and stores up memories to hold her for the rest of the year when she's not here.
5. I've often found myself seeing something special, from a dew-spangled spider web to a lone pine tree growing out of a solid wall of granite, and showing it to her or telling her about it.
6. We don't use any mystical language to try to describe these things; in fact, we often don't use any language at all but to nod in appreciation. With her, I know I've found a kindred soul to whom such explanations are unnecessary.
7. Keep going out into Nature. I second the suggestion to get linked with some sort of group (mine is Sierra Club) that takes like-minded people into Nature, perhaps you'll find such a friend there.
8. Sierra Club also has something they call "Inner City Outings": they take young people from the inner city out on camping trips, etc. Such a trip could give you an

excellent chance to pass along to others (it's easier with strangers) some of what you feel without worrying about being thought odd.

9. Most of all, keep seeking... spirituality is not something you find, it finds you. It has found many of us, in one form or another, and somewhere out there there's a person with whom you can have that silent understanding I feel you're seeking.

## Chapter the Fifth

1. Sat, 18 Jan 2003 13:14:49 -0700
2. Here's a suggestion for "following your own path" in a contemplative way. An ancient (Celtic? it looks like it) tradition in Christianity is the Labyrinth, a pattern laid out on a cathedral floor or paths in a garden, etc. I've even seen one made with duct tape on a carpeted floor in a church "parish hall".
3. There's no reason you couldn't make one in your own living room or yard. It's NOT a maze, just a winding walk from outside to the center and back again.
4. The concept is that tracing the pattern allows you to center yourself, to think the necessary thoughts; it can be used for prayer, or meditation, or just relaxation. It can be very powerful to use.
5. (Also, it is customary not to acknowledge someone if you meet in one; they're there for their own reasons, and shouldn't be interrupted.) It's also something that would fit well into Druidism! Look into it, one and all.
6. [I haven't looked, but I'm sure that a search at Google, etc., would lead you to more information. I first encountered the idea from a young Episcopal priest who was heavily into Celtic spirituality; she laid out one at our church for a couple weeks.]

## Chapter the Sixth

1. Sun, 19 Jan 2003 13:21:14 -0700
2. Ineffable is not secret, it's just impossible to describe. Words can not communicate individual experiences, because there aren't the right words for that.
3. Make up one and give it a specific meaning, and you can use it to communicate, but the subtle nuances will never be there.
4. Perhaps this is why many groups use metaphor to discuss internal experiences. I remember a group that once spent two hours discussing "having the chair pulled away as you're sitting down" to describe various experiences in their lives. Each had an ineffable experience, but all shared the common feeling(s), and true communication happened.

## Chapter the Seventh

1. Tue, 21 Jan 2003 11:59:24 -0700
2. It will be interesting to see the interchange on this. I don't think I've ever sat down and tried to define it for myself; could be fun to try to work it out.
3. A good discussion group (or bull session) can force you to do that kind of thinking. You can't express [to others] what you've not found the words for.
4. Breathing is certainly part of it (if you don't breathe daily, you'll have a hard time worshipping), but worship is something more. Perhaps that sharp intake of breath when something really hits you, like the autumn tree.

Interestingly, the Greek word translated as spirit in the Bible is pneuma, breath.

5. Falling down prostrate when struck by something special is optional, obviously. Getting a little weak in the knees is pretty common, at least for me. Awestruck is one word that comes to mind.
6. Finally, I'd note that worship is not just something done in your church, mosque, synagogue, or grove. If the pneuma is there, you're worshipping. If you're just tracking along through life without being aware, you're not.

## Chapter the Eighth

1. Fri, 24 Jan 2003 11:48:49 -0700
2. From the very beginning, RDNA was \*not\* (yea, verily, \*never\*) intended to replace any other "religion", but merely to be a supplement recognizing the importance of Nature in the individual's life.
3. For some, it has become their sole belief, but many others find no conflict between Druidism and whatever else they practice.
4. I once said (literally giving the sermon from the pulpit on an Earth Day Sunday!) that until the 1979 revision of the Book of Common Prayer, when Episcopalians heard the word "stewardship" they knew it was Pledge Sunday. The new BCP has a dozen or so references to stewardship in the meaning of caring for the creation.
5. My favorite is from a section of additional prayers and thanksgivings in the back of the BCP. Thanksgiving #5 [For the Nation] is probably a good one (with appropriate changes) to use for Druid meditations. {incidentally, I usually refer to it as "the zingers") In usual usage, the leader reads each paragraph, and everyone joins in the responses. It is not copyrighted, so if you want to use it, feel free.
6. For the Nation [p. 838]
7. Almighty God, giver of all good things: We thank you for the natural majesty and beauty of this land. They restore us, though we often destroy them.
8. Heal us.
9. We thank you for the great resources of this nation. They make us rich, though we often exploit them.
10. Forgive us.
11. We thank you for the men and women who have made this country strong. They are models for us, though we often fall short of them.
12. Inspire us.
13. We thank you for the torch of liberty which has been lit in this land. It has drawn people from every nation, though we have often hidden from its light.
14. Enlighten us.
15. We thank you for the faith we have inherited in all its rich variety. It sustains our life, though we have been faithless again and again.
16. Renew us.
17. Help us, O Lord, to finish the good work here begun. Strengthen our efforts to blot out ignorance and prejudice, and to abolish poverty and crime. And hasten the day when all our people, with many voices in one united chorus, will glorify your holy Name.
18. Amen.

## Chapter the Ninth

1. Wed, 29 Jan 2003 11:17:31 -0700
2. But I heard just last weekend that they're ice-fishing on Lake Wobegon... Did you hear about the [fill in your own favorite ethnicity] who went ice-fishing?
3. Caught two 25-pound blocks and a sack of cubes!
4. Wed, 12 Mar 2003 15:07:53 -0700
5. This Explains Everything!
6. In preparation for the Earth Summit, the UN conducted a world-wide survey. The only question on the survey was: "Please give your honest opinion about solutions to the food shortage in the rest of the world."
7. The survey was a complete failure. The Chinese didn't know what "opinion" meant; the Middle East didn't know what "solutions" meant; the East Europeans didn't know what honest" meant; the West Europeans didn't know what "shortage" meant; the Africans didn't know what "food" meant; the South Americans didn't know what "please" meant; and the USA didn't know what "the rest of the world" meant.

## Chapter the Tenth

1. Mon, 3 Feb 2003 10:48:36 -0700
2. I don't think it's a benefit to ANY religion to make it compulsory that one must attend the services.
3. If you're getting something from it, you'll go to services or practice the rituals or meditate on your navel or whatever. If you're only there because somebody made you go, you're going to become restless and rebellious – dispirited in several senses of the word.
4. I would guess that exactly that happens to a majority of teens, for a shorter or longer period of time. I'll further guess that many in this discussion quit going to "church" for exactly that reason.
5. In other words, if you want someone to NOT practice a religion, make them do it.
6. RDNA was not started to protest religion; it wouldn't still be here if it was. It was started to protest making people practice religion. As I've noted before, at Carleton even the atheists had to meet to get chapel credit!
7. Carleton was founded by the Congregationalists, and the requirement was a left-over from the 1870s, when the population was much more homogeneous.
8. To end on a lighter note: I once was in a town where the Congregationalists and Baptists had combined; everybody called it "the Congo-Baptist Church", which always gave me some really great mental pictures.

## Chapter the Eleventh

1. 5 Feb 2003 12:34:35 -0700
2. Phrased that way because we wanted everyone to be able to participate. Most religions are either/or – you're a Christian or a Jew or a Buddhist or a Muslim or whatever, and can't be true to any combination thereof; you've got to pick one.
3. In that Tenet, RDNA very carefully described itself as a "supplementary" religion – it was not necessary to give up any other beliefs to participate. We were consciously trying to be non-threatening to any other belief system.

4. And when I read that last sentence, I realize again that we expected RDNA to be ephemeral, and not to continue after its purpose was completed.
5. Please don't try to make RDNA one of those either/or types. You can believe almost anything and still get the benefits of contemplating the lessons of Nature, the Earth-Mother.

## Chapter the Twelfth

1. Thu, 13 Feb 2003 11:00:11 -0700
2. Rather than respond to several postings individually, here's a sort of all-encompassing string of answers. You are cordially invited to thank me for not filling up your mailboxes with 4 or 5 postings!
3. If you'll check, you'll find that in the early 1960s the Christian fundamentalists were a very small minority, not the behemoth they've become today.
4. I very much doubt that any of them ever saw the Chronicles. They wouldn't read anything that smacked of paganism, anyway. [And remember: the Religious Right is neither!]
5. As for the "style" of the early Chronicles, bear in mind that they were written ONLY for the few of us who were at Carleton at the time; since most of us were also practicing Christians, the parody of the Biblical style only added to the fun.
6. Frangquist may dispute this, but I don't think they were meant to be enduring. I certainly never thought so. They were just a little "in joke" for us, because we could read between the lines and know what was actually being referred to.
7. For example, the "altar which was small and portable" was a wire phonograph stand from somebody's dorm room, draped with a sheet.
8. I don't think anyone outside our little group ever saw them when they were first written, so it was not necessary to write in a style intended to be "taken seriously".
9. Only when it became obvious that RDNA would continue to have real meaning for some did they become our "scriptures", subject to all sorts of interpretations. The theologians among us still enjoy that game.
10. I don't think that at the "founding" any of us thought that RDNA would have any life after we beat the religion requirement. Remember that it took more than a year to accomplish that goal. We held services in the spring of '63, fall of '63, and spring of '64.
11. By that time, all of us began to realize that we'd hit some sort of a chord that had real meaning to some folks; this is when the exploration of antecedents and meditations, etc., became more than a joke.
12. I'd say that it was also the time when the Chronicles evolved from the parody to serious thinking about our relationship to the world. I believe that it was also at this time that we began to realize that RDNA might continue to exist.
13. When you are reading the meditations, etc., which were recorded for use at services and as individual exercises, you're looking at RDNA after some people began to take it seriously.
14. Dr. John Messenger, who became our "faculty advisor", contributed some of the Celtic poetry which made it into the book. It became part of the service to read some meditation (including much not in the Chronicles-I

sometimes used appropriate portions of the Psalms when I was A-D) aloud, and have a period of silence for people to think about it.

15. We didn't have a "sermon", with some leader telling us what to think, but each person was free to make his/her own interpretation (or just twiddle thumbs during the silence).
16. In the initial stages, only a Third Order could consecrate the Waters. (Actually, he/she didn't \*do\* it, just verified that they had been consecrated by the Mother.)
17. Everyone who partook of the Waters was considered a First Order, so there were lots of people who only attended one service but (usually without their explicit knowledge) became First Order Druids, including the Nasons.
18. As I recall, subscription to the Tenets was only necessary for Second and Third Orders. Again, note that the Tenets were written to be supplementary to other faiths, not exclusionary. [And remember that the Tenets weren't written until after the first few services.]
19. I hereby add the disclaimer that the above are my own opinions and memories. Others may have differing viewpoints. After all, it was 40 years ago!
20. I still think that the RDNA we know today was a process of evolution from joke to serious Weltanschauung. What's important is not what it was meant to be, but what it means to each of us today. If it still has validity, it lies in that.

## Chapter the Thirteenth

1. 5 May 2003 11:03:44 -0600
2. The vigil, I'd say, can be any of these, although I think your "chapel in the woods" is closest to the intention, unless you have a nearby Bo Tree where you can find enlightenment. You need to spend the night thinking about Nature and your place in it. (This would presumably rule out a snipe hunt.)
3. A few hours of personal meditation and contemplation. A few hours of finding out WHO you really are. A few hours of finding out who the other people in your life are. A few hours of finding out WHY you are. A few hours of finding out WHAT you're here on earth to do.
4. Do a little digging and find out about the vigils of young men about to be knighted. There are some obvious similarities in intention, if not in rituals.
5. An unexpected side effect of being a Third Order is that, in the eyes of others, you become oracular. You're expected to know "the answers" to life's questions (and "42" doesn't count!).
6. You've got to find the answers inside yourself, for yourself. This will NOT equip you to counsel others with "the" answers, since the answers you find will be personal, but it'll give you some insight into how to help others find their own answers.

## Chapter the Fourteenth

1. May 25, 2003 3:11 PM
2. It is a curious phenomenon by which, when you learn something new or get into a good discussion about something, it starts popping up all over the place. I remember once learning a fancy new word in 4th grade, and there it was in the funny paper that night!
3. I suspect that the "something" has been there all along, but you're newly sensitized to it, so it jumps out where

previously you wouldn't have noticed it. I think we've all experienced it, though. Which brings me to:

4. As we were having our discussion on morality, I was reading a science fiction book, \*The Parafaith War\*, by L. E. Modesitt. In it, I found the following, supposedly taken from the sacred text of one of his future societies. It seems worth passing along.
5. "...As cultures advance in knowledge and power, the conflict between reason and faith becomes apparently greater. Not only have people attained through technology the powers of old gods to cast thunderbolts or to heal or to destroy, but they have exercised those powers, and they know that divinity is not required. They can determine that sufficient power determines destiny.
6. "The problem with technology is that it rewards the able while also empowering those who are less able. A man who cannot fathom a computer or an infonet can destroy those who can, and who have been rewarded for their skills.
7. "Yet, if each individual obtains and wields the power within his or her scope, few individuals will survive. By placing power in a greater being, a deity, in some force greater than the individual, or even into a belief that the community is greater than the individual, an individual is expressing a faith in the need for an entity greater than mere personal ambition or appetite. That faith... allows the individual to refrain from exercising power, yet it also places such an individual at the mercy of those without such faith.
8. "While it can be and has been argued that all people are created equal, genetics and environmental analyses have verified that such equality ceases at birth, perhaps even earlier.
9. "With unequal power and unequal ability the lot of humanity, religion has sought to establish a common ground by subsuming all to a mightier god, yet reason and technology have conspired to communicate that no such god exists -or that such a god does not interfere- and that some form of might makes right. And no god has, in recent historical times, destroyed the side with the bigger battalions and mightier technology.
10. "So... how can a rational individual confront the problem of power? In the same way that all the faithful have throughout history – any sharing a set of ideals and a spirit of community more highly valued than individual application of power....
11. "One of the cries of the true believer is that there are moral absolutes that can only be set forth by a deity. Yet if life is sacred, as many deities have proclaimed, how can a deity command people to kill in his name, as most deities have done? How can we even exist, since we must consume, in the natural state, some other organism, and that means killing? Likewise, if life is not sacred, then the injunction to be fruitful and multiply is a military command, not a deistic one...."

## Chapter the Fifteenth

1. June 19, 2003 1:22 PM
2. Everybody has/had two parents. Each of them, two likewise. Run this logic
3. back a few generations, and the number of ancestors of each of us is greater than the population of the whole earth at that time. Ergo, we're all related, in one sense.

4. The path that is right for you is not necessarily the path of your people", even if you know who they were. It's probably not even the path of your own parents. It's your path, and it's probably pretty eclectic.
5. I've maintained for years that much of the famous "adolescent rebellion" we all went through (and some of you are now seeing from the other side!) is a process of questioning the beliefs (not just religious, but almost everything) that have been handed down to you; from the whole buffet available, you eventually pick your own, personal, set of beliefs, and when you've internalized them, they're your own beliefs.
6. (Most of the time, for most people, they wind up being very close to the parental version, but by being tested, they've become internalized, instead of imposed.)
7. Accretions to your own personal beliefs can come from anywhere, and usually do. This one reason some people find Mike's books of meditations so fascinating. Just pick out the parts that fit!
8. I doubt that you could find two pastors in the same Christian denomination who share identical personal beliefs. Then throw in all the other denominations that call themselves Christian, and consider the number of individual paths involved! Yet they're all aimed at the same end. [Or do the Catholics believe all roads lead to Rome?]

## Chapter the Sixteenth

1. Wednesday, July 2, 2003 1:01 PM
2. Some time in the late 70s or early 80s, I was up at the local mall and met a guy in a Carleton sweatshirt; I ask if he went there, and he said "Yes". I told him I was Class of '64, and he said, "Wow! We really admire your class, because you were radical before it was fashionable!"
3. The founding of RDNA was only a small part of what was going on there at the time... lots of other revolts against the Administration and the archaic "in loco parentis" rules (of which the religious attendance requirement was a part). Women's hours were enforced at almost every college in the country at the time; remember, we were only a couple years away from the 50s!
4. >Of course the whole chronicles are a biblical allusion in language, esp. book 5 which is something like the druids "sermon of the mountain".
5. The earliest part of the Chronicles was a deliberate parody of the Bible; it was part of the in-joke we were playing. I've long believed, and finally confirmed from Frangquist's own lips at the Beltane reunion, that as a couple years pass, in the later Chronicles you can literally watch RDNA change from a protest joke to being quite a serious philosophical system.
6. The idea of a personal search for "truth", for meaning in life, indeed for meaning beyond one's own life, is (to me) the best explanation for the continuation of the RDNA.
7. For many people, even those such as me who continued to belong to "traditional" religions, that mind-set of seeking for meaning continues to hold a powerful sway.
8. I took a 4-year seminar through an Episcopal seminary to learn about the history and theology of the church, and it was incredibly meaningful to me.
9. If you don't think questioning the articles of your faith is a widespread phenomenon, ask any priest or pastor or rabbi or imam about their own spiritual path.

10. They've all had the questions; they've found the answers that they sought in their faith, whatever faith it is. As has been pointed out many times before, you cannot find faith by logic; you have to work it out for yourself.
11. Our "mission statement" (if you will) remains "Look around you at the world. There's got to be something bigger than we are." RDNA honors that concept by praise of the Earth-Mother.
12. RDNA may have started rather haphazardly, but at the same time it was carefully crafted to supplement, not supplant, any other faith.
13. For some, it became their sole practice, and that direction has attracted many other people to those Groves or as solitaries. For most of those who were there in the early days, RDNA remains an adjunct to their way of finding their own view of their faith.
14. Given the origin, RDNA really has little control over who calls him/herself a Druid! By announcing to the world (or just to yourself) that you are a Druid, you become one!
15. Originally, we considered anyone who attended a service and partook of the Waters to be a First Order Druid automatically. Today, apparently, to become a First Order requires a ritual of commitment of some sort in many Groves.
16. At the same time, I'll bet that some of you in this class consider yourselves Druids without ever having attended a service. No problem, at least in my mind.
17. Well, this has turned into more of a sermon than I intended. Take it all with a grain (or a block!) of salt.

## Chapter the Eighteenth

1. Wednesday, July 9, 2003 12:00 PM
2. I'm reminded of two or three things by this discussion The JWs, working from some obscure Bible passage (in Revelation?) have as an article of their faith that only 144,000 souls will be saved at the end of the world. When I find them at my door, I ask them to verify this, and then ask how many members their sect has (it's above that number). They usually go away, then.
3. Back in the days when Mormon missionaries were easily recognizable (18-year-old boys wearing suits and hats, with name tags saying "Elder So-&-so"), my dad was sitting on the front porch when a pair of them approached, and politely asked if Dad would be interested in learning about their church. Dad, equally politely, replied that he wasn't interested, because he "belonged to a church that was in the apostolic succession".
4. They then made the fatal mistake of asking, "What's that?" For the next 30 minutes, my dad gave them a lecture on the history of the formation of the Christian church, the apostles having laid their hands on the bishops to pass along their "powers", the bishops ordaining the priests, etc., etc. The poor Mormons were too polite to interrupt him! They, too, went way as soon as they politely could.
5. I've also found that you can get rid of most door-to-door missionaries by telling them either that you're a Druid or that you're a Roman Catholic. They're afraid of the former, and know that it's hopeless to try to convert the latter!
6. And, of course, there's the option that's been discussed here: politely invite them in, start to undress, and ask them to assume the missionary position!!! [If that doesn't work, at least you'll have some fun!]

## Chapter the Nineteenth

1. Sat Jul 26, 2003 11:56am
2. Some important points here. Every faith has something to contribute to the personal growth of one who reads their writings. Western civilization tends to be Bibliocentric, but that's unavoidable, given European history.
3. I once saw a very neat (and very hard) quiz which presented short quotations; all you had to do was decide if each came from Shakespeare or from the Bible. I consider myself well educated and well read, but I only got about half of them!
4. I strongly urge each and all of you to start your own "Green Book" – there's an old word for it, "chapbook"; a collection of quotations, etc., that have particular meaning to you at the time you collect them.
5. Your book will evolve, of course, as you do; today's incredibly apt words may be meaningless next year, but if you've gotten a year's worth of value from them, you're ahead!
6. The collections in the Reformed Druid tradition are items that have, at some time, appealed to somebody, and been deemed worthy of being passed along. Bear in mind that you were not the compiler(s), so some of them will have no relevance to you. Others will strike just exactly the right chord for where you are in life right now. And you'll add your own gems to your collection.
8. Some traditions are shared by RDNA and others. In fact, it's possible that our practice had its origin in a practice with which I was familiar before the founding.
9. Our family has a cabin up in the Black Hills, along with several other cabins, all owned by Episcopalians, and there's a little chapel there where they've had services every summer since the early 1920s. It's beautiful, with a window over the altar looking out at the Hills and with only waist-high walls and a roof where the congregation sits. [If a priest is not available, I'm licensed to read Morning Prayer, but so far this year I've not had to do it.]
10. Long ago, the then bishop decided that any priest who was staying there was on vacation: if he took the service, he shouldn't be asked to prepare a sermon, which was too much like work.
11. Consequently, the tradition for many years has been that after the readings from Scripture, where the sermon would normally be, we just say "be silent and look around you for a few moments".
12. Readings and meditation! In fact, I've been told by some who've attended there that they've never heard a better and more meaningful sermon!



# The Epistle of Eric

(By Eric Powers, Feb 2003)

(New to ARDA 2)

Beltane 2003, A Druid Missal-Any

## Chapter the First

1. Dear Mike,
2. I apologize for not being able to attend the Reunions at the Mecca of Druidism, but please read this at a service, if you think it of suitable quality.
3. I was inspired, this morning when I was taking out my liturgical ribbons for a service, and noticed that an application for employment was being yet again delayed.
4. The rest followed naturally.

## Chapter the Second

1. On Beltane, the Reformed Druids have a custom of switching from white ribbons to red ribbons, for the six months until Samhain.
2. My understanding of this custom goes back to the origins of the RDNA, which was a protest against the unreflecting organizational tendencies of religion, and the tendency of authorities to categorize and vaunt past practices over current experience, by the liberal use of red-tape.
3. Since the 1700s, bureaucrats had the habit of tying up legal documents with red string and whenever they needed to reread them, they had to be cut open again; which they were reluctant to do. As a result many things were never examined again.
4. In the Reform, it is the Third Order Druids who are most beset and bound by self-imposed restrictions, copious literature, and the encrustation of customs, many of them conflicting.
5. If you notice, most Druids loosely hang their red ribbons around their neck, this symbolizes that they have not locked away the sources of their tradition, but keep them open to constant review.
6. Indeed the constant questions by new Druids, keeps them on their toes, and their understanding timely.
7. The ribbons are more than a decoration; they are a tool held in reserve.
8. What you choose to bind, will be bound, for a while; and what you unbind, will be unbound, for a while; so speak with caution, but with a full heart.
9. And don't forget, even the newest of Druid will wield the colorful ribbon of Beltane's maypole; wherein the beauty is in the motion of weaving and unweaving; not the unfocused ribbons in the beginning, nor the snug final pattern.
10. During the Season of Life, we also add the whiskey to the Waters of Life, and should remember that alcohol too is a poison, but one that in moderation may stimulate, assist in the expression of joy, and build communion; yet used too much, and it often brings sickness, despair and discord.
11. And the basis of those Waters, is simple water; the universal solvent and the supporting medium of life through our liturgical year.

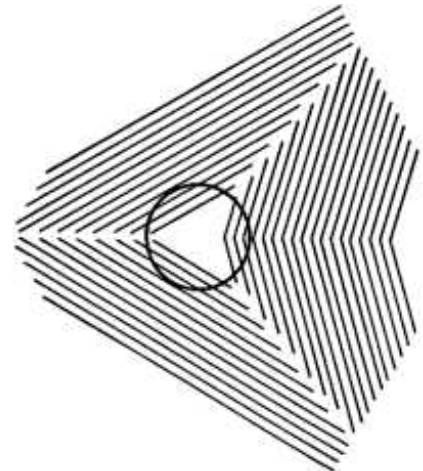
## Chapter the Third

1. The hand that is always clenched, or always open and flat, is considered deformed, but a healthy hand is one that opens and closes when bidden.
2. We understand that some rudimentary organization is necessary to function, but we leave the options open and flexible to the current needs, rather than building a structure that will outlast our purpose.
3. We cannot always be celebrating and carrying out duties, for we must also have periods of inactivity and contemplation.
4. The Earth is a good example, in which the forces of life themselves have a period of rest during the winter, coming out leaner and hungrier.
5. And so we have the Season of Sleep, in which groggy Druids do not partake of the grog, but rather pull up their settled thoughts for review and purification.
6. This is the meaning of the white ribbon, that of cleansing, crystallizing and reinvigoration, whilst the white snow blankets the earth, storing waters that will melt and flood the streams and fields in the spring.

## Chapter the Fourth

1. These are my thoughts that I wanted to share.
2. So I ask you on this 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary to think about those ribbons when you put them on your necks, what do they mean to you?
3. There are yet many more mysteries in them.

Yours in the Mother,  
Eric Powers, O.D.A.L.  
February 10, 2003





# Wind Borne Seeds

(By John Slattery, 2003)

(New to ARDA 2)

## Chapter the First

1. After reading several messages posted here dealing with paths or religions, if you will, I'm struck by the thought that everyone's point of view contains some grain of truth.
2. I feel that I must stop here to state that I follow no strict path or religion. Please don't misunderstand. I do believe in a power greater than the human race. If pressed I'd have to admit that I believe in the religion of nature.

## Chapter the Second

1. Take a moment and look to the trees. They will easily show you the religion of nature.
2. Sure, you can say that trees stand alone or in clusters of their own kind. I'll agree.
3. I've seen stands of Pine or Oak or Maple tightly grouped as if guarding against intruders. But in truth they're not.
4. A gust of wind could carry the seed of a Maple amongst a stand of Oak. The groundcover consisting mostly of oak leaves and downed branches will freely nurture the maple seed.
5. As a seedling the maple will be protected from the harmful direct rays of the sun, by the mighty Oaks towering canopy. That same canopy will soften a downpour into gentle thirst quenching raindrops.
6. Another concern of the sapling is erosion, but once again the Oak plays a role. This time its extensive root system holds the ground fast.
7. They live together in harmony for years until finally the oak dies. But not before it drops an acorn. Now it's the Maple's turn to nurture and protect.
8. Through all this shared life, they are still different, one never wanting or able to grow to become the other, the stronger never forcing the weaker into change, neither thinking themselves the better.
9. In this way they share the world as one. Giving freely of their resources. Teaching the right of it through example.

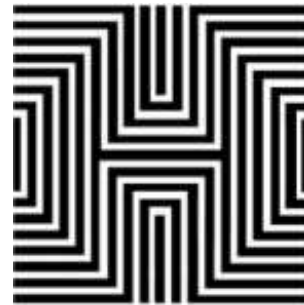
## Chapter the Third

1. You might say it's just the way of things. You may well be right.
2. I, on the other hand, think of it as that higher power giving us guideposts, examples of the way.
3. On the path through the woods one should never focus on the path. The true knowledge is gleaned from the woods.
4. When dealing with narrow-minded people it'd best not to buy into their agenda. Rather, look to the whole for something of value.
5. When dealing with good people learn as much as you can. Absorb the knowledge.
6. Don't think you have to change yourself to receive the knowledge. Knowledge is a nutrient of growth, and growth brings change naturally.

7. Remember the Oak and the Maple.

## Chapter the Fourth

1. By applying what I've noted of nature's ways to the people I encounter I'm able to sift the good and the valuable unknowns from the chaff.
2. Walk in the woods every chance you get. Feel the harmony.
3. Look for more of the connections that I've touched upon today.
4. If you know that, along with knowledge, friendship, kindness, understanding and tolerance are the food of growth, then whatever path you're on will be smoother.
5. I wish you enough.



# When Leaves Leave Us

(By Mike the Fool, 2003)

(New to ARDA 2)

Fall Equinox 2003, A Druid Missal-Any

## Chapter The First

1. Those of us in the northern half of the American continent are treated to the spectacular cycle of the four seasons.
2. With our Druidic tendency to learn from trees, I thought it appropriate to write a little about what I've raked up from our teachers.
3. Trees and plants offer so many possible models to understand the world and our place in it.
4. Naturally, this consists of only my own opinions.

## Chapter the Second:

### The Science of Leaves

1. Leaves amaze us. They come in many shapes and sizes, some are single leafed, others are compound (like an ash or locust).
2. It appears that the shape has much to do with strategy. The vascularization of the leaf (the plumbing) tends to be radiative from the stem and spine, and the farther you are from that "backbone," the harder it is to supply and receive nutrients.
3. It's more efficient to keep the edge of the leaf equidistant from these veins. Thus you tend to see lobing like oaks, maples, and such rather than just round leaves.
4. No leaf can utilize all the sunlight that falls on it, and by being slightly transparent and lobed, lower branches can pick up the excess that is missed.
5. If they are so wonderful, then why do leaves change color and fall off in the autumn?
6. Actually leaves are never constant, they change from the first pale greens of spring, to the dark greens of summer, and then finish in a blaze of rainbow glory.
7. This is all due to the varying concentration of chlorophyll, a vital green pigment, that is present in the leaves.
8. This chemical aids in transforming water and carbon dioxide from the air into sugars and starch that will feed the rest of the tree, something science is still trying to imitate.
9. There are also yellow to orange pigments hiding in those leaves, which are completely masked from view by the abundance of chlorophyll for most of the year.
10. In the fall after the fruits, nuts and seeds are ripened, due to dropping temperatures and declining sunlight, the tree turns off the mechanisms of the leaves, and begins to withdraw the sap from the leaves, and the chlorophyll is allowed to degenerate.
11. The more hardy pigments like orange (carotene), yellow (xanthophylls) or red (anthrocyanin) gradually become more visible.
12. Different trees tend to have different colors in the fall, and the amount of sunlight or water and temperature will also affect the display. Aspen, birch and hickory tend to be yellow.

13. Oaks are usually brown from the tannin. Beech can be bronze. Dogwood and sumacs range from purplish to red due to the anthrocyanin formed by trapped glucose.
14. In order to slowly suffocate the leaf and protect the branch, a fragile cuticle of cells begins to build a barrier from the branch to the leaf. Eventually the leaf will be broken off by the wind or from its own disintegrating weight.
15. Much can be understood about Druids by contemplating these matters.

## Chapter the Third:

### The Philosophy of Leaves

1. Leaves are the faces of the trees. Such tender, thin, flexible and fragile on the fringe of the organism.
2. If they were made of the same sturdy materials as the branches, they would be unable to accomplish their tasks.
3. It is their short, sad duty to be bombarded by the sun, munched on, blighted and live short lives; while sustaining the larger organism.
4. For me the leaves are representative of our interaction with the environment.
5. We all have these little "antennas" out to bring in nourishment to different parts of our lives raining on us in all directions. Some of these leaves are attuned to sports, love, religion, food, politics, relationships, environment, entertainment, music, etc.
6. The new ones on the top of our consciousness, tend to get more attention and sunlight, while the older ones down a few stories, live in shade, doing the best they can to get the sun's eye. In such a way, our irregularities can nourish others near to us, allowing them to supplement our weaknesses with what they pick up.
7. Every season of the year has its rough storms and strong winds, but most of us have gone through a few periods of "autumn" when we have pulled away from our outer world, shunned tradition sources of comfort, withdrawing resources inside ourselves away from extremities, and hunkered down for a long winter of re-examination of our identity and roots.
8. But these leaves, when they fall, also will land on the outside of our roots, enriching the exterior soil; and next spring, new leaves will likely emerge in most of the same spots as before on the branches.
9. Sometimes a branch or limb may not grow back in the spring, but that's the changing palate of life.
10. I now must leave you with these thoughts.

The leaves never know  
Which leaf will be the first to fall...  
Does the wind know?

—Soseki



# Thoughts on Chaos

(By Fearadyn Arendelinn, June 2003)

(New to ARDA 2)

## Chapter the First

1. TAG all, \*good read by the way, I enjoy tongue in cheek and Norm, I am very glad you are here, my thanks.
2. Ok, I'll start. The beginning's of this movement interests me first as a part of the larger whole.
3. The cogs of human evolution had pretty much slowed to a rusty stop in the fifties. Or you could say the mass consciousness creative juices had begun to stagnate.
4. I am very much a chaos theorist. And any period in history that reaches this state of stagnation is a prime target for rebellion of youth, who are designed for just such a thing.
5. Chaos is something handled much better by the young, whose lives are usually this. Once a certain age is reached, comfort of the known becomes more important, except by the few oddballs who are goaded by something in their lives to produce radical change.
6. Our parents accepted what they were taught, by society, government, and established religion, and this was pretty much across the board. They lived a known and comfortable life, they knew what to expect down the road.
7. Any 'rebels' were extremely visible. However as the sixties rolled in, a few strategically placed adults planted seeds that were tailor made for the now simmering pot of mass chaos that was fixed to boil over. This who and what fueled the pot is of especial interest to me.
8. Once the ball started rolling and youth realized that adults could truly only do so much – then many 'stagnant' ideas were questioned and discarded as being mostly useless for the growth spurt needed to propel us to where we are now.
9. In a word it was needed. The mass conciseness of humanity desires to evolve. The only way this can occur is to keep stagnation to a minimum.
10. Now granted any form of chaos will fist turn all in its path upside down and inside out. Only the strongest creatures or ideals survive this. The ones that do are the next step.

## Chapter the Second

1. Creativity flourishes in such an environment. However-stability always will occur. This is balance – my species represent balance. This is good. (Just realize chaos is also balance.)
2. But all too often the flows of such are dammed by those who have an extremely difficult time riding the waves of chaos flows.
3. These creatures also happen to be ones who are really good at organizing. (its is like being an accountant-I don't see it as a fun job – so there are not to many who are good at it)
4. And so, as most really good ideals are something the authors wish to share – a group occurs. Groups can only move in unison by organization.
5. Any visionary or dreamer will happily give the responsibility of organization to someone else – "Good to

and make it work, I want to dream and have more visions."

6. Organization is held together by rules. Rules tend to become dams of creativity. And progress of such groups tends to become measured in how well you follow the rules.
7. Which means the members of the group are kind of discouraged from independent thinking and urged to follow the now well-trod path to whatever. This leads to allowing oneself to become spoon fed.
8. Once this begins to happen, beings who are leader types (usually the good organizers, the dreamers having wandered off somewhere else confused as to why the dream is not taking shape as he first saw it) take the ropes of such to hold those under them together.
9. The leader then usually holds the keys to any new creativity and rules are changed or broken according to what he or she finds. Their group most of the time will follow, if what is changed is not damaging to them.
10. Which will eventually lead to stagnation.

## Chapter the Third

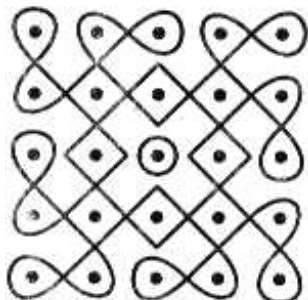
1. The next thing is the rules to keep a group like modern druidism together and growing in numbers are copied by studying other groups to see what works.
2. The uncertainty of this early group to decide if it was a religion or not shows how we tend to copy what works. I am comparing "A spring Thaw" by David Frangquist-passage where he is claiming RDNA is a religion to be counted among the others. "Yet several churches have not been granted the privilege of credit. Among them is the Reformed Druids of North America."
3. As opposed to 'The Book of Faith' David Fisher- passage # 30 – where he states "Since Druidism has never claimed to be a religion."
4. A 'religion' tends to carry more weight than just an organization. It (this weight) was needed to make a point. So, I see this as normal seesawing.
5. Though it is of immense interest to me to see a 'nature based group' that accepted so many norms of organized religions. Nature is chaos in action. It never stops. Life in such is dangerous. Long life is rare is such an environment.
6. And yet almost one of the first things they did was to make an altar the Monument Hill "over a ton rock." Altars are not needed in nature. But they are in most religious models we have.
7. Ritual was also an almost immediate addition to this- and I disagree with David Fisher in 'The Book of Faith' passage33-38 where he says " It has been asked, and again with good reason: if your purpose is to ask and to inquire, they why your use of ritual? Can not men seek for answers without the crutch of a ritual, which has no real religious purpose? I can only answer that the Druid ritual has a value because it can be used by different men in different ways."
8. Sure it can and all with the same base of purpose. I see ritual the same as I do the medical language. Those that know it can dole it out to those that do not.
9. There is always someone who knows it more than the one who comes after- if only because the first guy has had more time to learn it. It keeps power in certain places or with certain people.

10. There are always those who have a talent for this. And those that don't. Just as creatures who love to organize will always find their way to disorganization.
11. Why, because they are good at it. And it feels good to do something you are good at.
12. I think the pendulum of druidism leaned more into the religions category than just an organization.
13. There is the wording by David Fisher in 'The book of Faith' passage 34-10 where he calls himself 'priest', and again in passage 34-10.
14. And then when we get to David the chronicler we have Bishops. And this guy by now is dead serious. As compared to the more easy going Norm who he has some (well more than a few) concerns for.
15. He clearly by this time surrounded himself with all the trappings of organized religion- and you better damn well follow the rules buster!! Lol
16. He goes on to show that he has swallowed all the garbage most religions use to keep power to themselves.
17. The religions we know of are most likely composed of two parts (chapter the Third) 63-1) philosophy and the ritual.
18. I mean hey, it works. But, I argue that it is not essential. Philosophy can be completely free flowing changing as the flows change.
19. If we keep a (third) eye open all the time for opportunity to learn of our truer selves, worship can occur every second we are aware.
20. It is all and only a matter of perspective. But if you allow this, don't count on numbers of followers. It is a one on one thing.

### Chapter the Fourth

1. I have to say in admiration- there were enough loopholes and creatures who allowed chaos in this mix so that it could be a manageable organism.
2. And so we see mutations of it without to much flack from the group the mutation occurred from or at least this is what I am gathering so far.
3. This being very healthy.
4. And I love that a person need accept nothing else except the truth of "nature is good."
5. Ok, dig in guys! Lol I'll come back at it in another perspective, but not tonight.

hugs  
feara



## Thoughts on Discord

(By Anonymous, 2003)

(New to ARDA 2)

### Chapter the First

1. From: C de Malmanche <mist42nz@hotmail.com>
2. Date: Saturday, April 12, 2003 3:19 PM
3. Subject: Re: [druidcraft202] Are We Alive?
4. I've just finished reading of the Isaac affair.
5. I do think we're moving through this way too fast for the volume of reading material that there is to absorb. It takes a while to swap mindsets to see where people are coming from in their Epistles.
6. It would be easy enough to skim through and treat them as "just someone-else's opinion." But that would, IMHO, destroy the Druidry woven into each letter.
7. People have put time, effort and their life position into their replies. No matter how simple or not-particularly-heavy the persons thoughts on their druidry, each piece is truthful and honest. Is that not amazing... and worth taking a moment to understand?
8. For those with a background in the people, the organization or the druid philosophies, it might take them much less time.
9. For example, as I mentioned I have a long neo-pagan history – yet I formed completely the opposite opinion to the one Isaac formed.
10. The strength of the RDNA is no dogma, no grovelly teachings, and all "outside" religions are welcome (encouraged even).
11. That is why I think this method of teaching is quite clever.
12. Once we understand the formation and history of the group then we can understand the dilemma that occurs when Carleton's Compulsory Religious Service is revoked.
13. Sure RDNA looks and acts like a "real" religion. That was its purpose, no?
14. If it had not had the appropriate parts then the Universities Administration would have stopped it.
15. So what parts did it have? The simple, most reductionist pieces of religion (and Carleton qualifiers.)
16. Surprisingly enough, they seemed to have stumbled onto the core consciousness that builds "real" religions.
17. So what to do with it when the initial purpose of its creation is gone? Forget it? Destroy it? Bury it in Bureaucracy in an attempt to keep it? hmmm...

### Chapter the Second

1. And of young Isaac. He so reminds me of a neo-pagan in their 2 to 5 year period. so so sooo reminds me:) IMHO, with my background.
2. He didn't throw the baby out with the bathwater – he just kept the bathwater and threw out the baby!

3. Of course RDNA looks like neopaganism. RDNA created a real religion. It \*should\* look like \*any\* other religion. It was created that way!
4. If anything, RDNA looks like the spiritualist (i.e. non-authoritarian/hierarchical. i.e. community-based not clergy based) versions of its founding faiths.
5. To say druidry is "this" religion, is the anti-thesis of the original intent if I read the histories right. If I read the forming of the church and the liturgies correctly. If the description of the rituals and attendances are accurate.
6. The founders were of different religions and they laid aside there differences in favor of what they agreed on (in the Mother:)
7. They declared all was good, and that only those who wanted to destroy that union (i.e. the anti-druids initially or latter those that decided others could not have their own druid path) did not understand what the druid path was.
8. I'm glad the schism occurred as it did. It would have been a sad day had it resulted in the eclipse of the original purpose by evolving the existing RDNA.
9. This way Isaac could have his own religious path as he should (called Druidry just to confuse the issue) and the others stayed on their own religious paths.
10. This, as I understand it, is the nature of it, of RDNA (and possibly of Be'al?)

### Chapter the Third

1. All very heavy. Yes I'm catching up.
2. Near the end I find Norm's comment important. That the rituals were supposed to be fun, lighthearted.
3. It is hard to be fun & lighthearted, and oppose somebody or create a mission of conversion.
4. In this we can see that the RDNA was not to be a teaching institution (as people already had their faiths), it was not a body to perform formal duties (marriages, funerals, etc) and it was not a place to force people to observe correct religious protocols.
5. All things that are bogging down and destroying the spirit of modern churches.
6. All things that Isaac was promising (threatening?) to bring to the RDNA.
7. I'm not surprised there was such a reaction.
8. Yet how could a druid reply? Force? Teach? Over-rule?
9. The only way I see to stay true to the original principles (non-coercion, non-dogmatic, nature is good) was to let the vine grow on its own path.
10. I wonder what Isaac's learning on the RDNA is these days?
11. I wonder whether he has got passed his 2-5 year rush and matured into a druid Druid, or whether his hiding of his own sight has blinded him further (as happens to other churches that take on the principles that RDNA left at the door when the founders sat to their first meeting?)

Yours in the Mother,  
Anonymous

## A Whole of Druidry

(By Dana Felber, 2003)

(Reprinted with Permission)

(New to ARDA 2)

Summer Solstice 2003, A Druid Missal-Any

What is the "whole" when it comes to Druidry? Since Druidry is a spirituality that largely looks to the past for its practices and beliefs, this begs the question of, what was the whole of Druidry when there were actual Druids in the world? We tend to romanticize our ancestors, certain that they were not stumbling around in the dark as we are, wishing they were here to teach us their supposed certainties. But...is there such a thing as a One True Druidic Way to seek for? Did such a thing ever exist?

The Celts were a dominant force in Europe for the better part of a thousand years. As moderns in a culture that changes significantly from one decade to the next, we tend to telescope time when we think about the past and speak of Celtic culture and spirituality as though it were a neat, easily-defined package and that what was valid at the end when things were actually written down was bound to be already in place in the beginning. But no culture, especially a fragmented tribal one such as the Celts' is going to ever be consistent across the board, let alone over a period of a thousand years. Moreover, Celtic spirituality is rooted in venerating the spirits of place, which can differ drastically from location to location and even change over time. The nature of those spirits—temperament as it were—will also effect that particular tribe's outlook.

A lot of people today base their Druidry to a greater or lesser extent on the Irish materials that date to around 400 CE and later. It's very tempting to do so because there's a lot of it, more documentation than for any other place or time. And this is fine of course if this is what truly calls to an individual. But to exclusively focus on this material as what should define Druidry for everyone contains some inherent and flawed assumptions.

One assumption is that, coming as it does from the period when Druidry either died out or went underground, the Irish material represents all that was best in the whole history of Celtic culture, a synthesis and summary as it were. This in turn contains an underlying—erroneous—assumption of its own: that a culture or spirituality "progresses" in a linear fashion, i.e., that what comes first is "primitive" and what comes later is "advanced" and therefore "better." But is this in fact the case? If it is, then it would logically follow that the spirituality we possess today is what is truly superior. Why on Earth are we looking back to a "primitive" past for anything worthwhile or valuable? Or...perhaps our more remote ancestors possessed wisdom we have in fact lost, but that could be regained, if we make the effort.

Another assumption is that one Celtic culture is interchangeable with another because "we're all Celts." Yet Irish culture is very distinctive from Welsh, Scottish, Manx, Breton or Cornish culture, as anyone familiar with them or living within them would explain. Indeed, those could be fighting words to actual individuals living within these cultures today and seeking to keep them from being overwhelmed and lost. It's also frustrating and ultimately offensive to the many people living outside the Isles on the European continent who are reaching back to their ancestors of the Celtic tribes of their region. Some

of these people are working very hard to discover that culture, their sacred sites and local spirits, yet when they reach out beyond their locale to share or to learn from other groups, they are often met with indifference or dismissal or an attempt to assimilate them into a thinking they have no resonance with.

So...what is the whole of Druidry? That which, by rights, we should be giving our allegiance and devotion to even as we seek to uncover what it is out of the obscuring mists of the centuries? I think most people here would agree that no modern Druidic group has the exclusive corner on our wisdom. In my experience of the larger groups, the leaders themselves would agree with that. And Celtic culture itself was so steeped in intense individuality as to preclude such a thing. Yet one continues to run into this notion in the broader modern Druidic community. How does it come about?

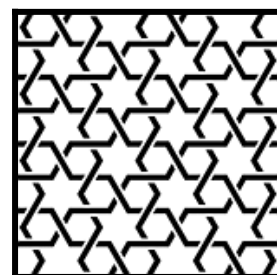
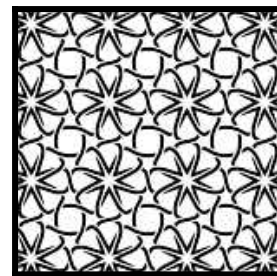
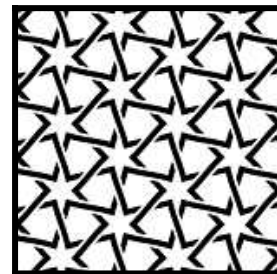
A lot of people come to paganism and/or Druidry with the Judeo-Christian model of spirituality/religion so embedded within them that they can't conceive of something significantly different that can legitimately be called "spirituality." There must be deities, there must be hierarchy, of both pantheon and clergy, there must be set rituals, liturgies, practices, prayers, creeds and beliefs common to the whole group. So that's what they go looking for—and it's easy enough to find exactly that in certain segments of Druidry. But what about the rest? What about the people in the next newsgroup, next email list, next Druid organization? Are they wrong? Sometimes that's the reaction that occurs—we've all seen it. But that gets right back to attitudes found in Judeo-Christian thinking, the Protestant who tells the Catholic they're going to hell because they pray to saints, or the Jew who smiles smugly at the Gentile neighbors because he/she is certain of being one of "God's chosen people." Why do people who have – apparently – broken free of these molds want to go there? There's so much more to Druidry and Celtic culture and history than any one tribe's piece, or one person's interpretation of that piece. But it demands that we stretch ourselves, be willing to take some risks and be willing to think outside the box we've grown up with. Ultimately it's a quest for a Grail that will heal the very real Wasteland that's all around us. But we have to strive for what the warriors of the Red Branch and Arthur's Logres had: courage to step into the unknown. In this day and age, this kind of courage is less about facing a challenging enemy or dangers in a physical contest and more about opening our minds.

It's tough. We come to a new spirituality not knowing the ropes, uncertain of what we're doing. If someone takes a stance of authority and declares, "This is the way it is!" we often don't know enough in that neophyte stage to be able to judge whether or not the pronouncement is valid for us. Add to that we want to belong, be a part of a group, a community. Accepted, validated even, in what is often a scary decision taken in defiance of friends and family. So even if these authoritative pronouncements strike us as not quite right, we tend to say, "Well, that's the way it is. The group needs me to go with them." Which all right as long as there's an adequate comfort level. But that doesn't mean we should stop seeking for our personal Truths (and we all have them) or refuse to accept them when they lead us away from the group, however difficult that parting might be. Because putting acceptance in a group above that seeking flies in the face of the Druidic maxim "The Truth against the world."

I think it's no accident that the hero who goes on a quest into unknown and dangerous lands is revered in the Celtic cultures and held up as an ideal to emulate. Imagine someone like Cu Cuchulain or Gawain coming back home, eager to tell of his adventures and the strange things he saw and experienced—and being told to shut up because he might upset people. Or being called a liar by the elders because they've never seen or heard of what he's talking about, so of course it doesn't exist.

The seeking of adventures was expected of Celtic warriors and was encouraged by the institution of set occasions when the tribe would gather to hear—and praise—what had befallen them. Perhaps it's because our ancestors didn't have the kind of access to information we do today—we tend to think we can know it all, or at least be able to look it up. They lived in a world full of unknowns and, if the tales are true, valued an eagerness to learn about what lay outside their sphere, an open-mindedness and acceptance of the unexpected that anyone would do well to emulate. The Druids were acknowledged the intellectuals of their day, and as modern intellectuals on a Druidic path, we too should be always striving for the open mind, and be alive to the spirit of inquiry that is part of the concept of awen/imbas. It's true, this may take us outside our comfortable notions of who and what we are, but to me this is what every story ever written about a quest is all about: leaving what is comfortable to take risks and achieve something. It's no accident that overcoming fear is an integral part of these stories. Fear is what keeps thinking narrow and what truly breeds differences, persecutions and wars, what alienates people and causes their voices to fall silent. Water needs to flow free to be clear and healthy; trapped, it stagnates, grows foul and breeds poisons.

So what is the Druidic "whole"? What else can it be but every person who comes to this path heeding a call of ancient voices with a sincere desire to learn and a willingness to be open to new ideas and teachings but who also has the conviction to hold to their own Truth against the world, however nascent and unarticulated it might be to begin with. They may come by unlikely or unpromising paths, enamored of teachings they will later discard in quiet embarrassment, but the point is that they do come and they should be welcomed with encouragement rather than contempt for their ignorance. For the wisest person who ever reads these words will remember that he or she once knew no more than they.



# Sacrificial Sentiments

(Dialogue of Various Druids, 2003)

(New to ARDA 2)

From: Oriana May 13, 2003 4:01 pm

Here is one that's been banging around in my head a lot lately, it kind of goes along with yours... What is morally/ethically correct/incorrect? And once you figure that out, does it stand for all cultures? If so, why? and... If not, why?

Does it really boil down to...if it harms none? What about human rights issues? Other countries have far different views on what is ethical and moral.

-O.

From: Tegwedd May 14, 2003 5:32 pm

There may be some universals but as fragmented as we are, we don't know the answer to that yet.

"An it harm none" is as good a place to start as any but you can't carry it to extremes. Balance in this, as in all things, is vital.

Tegwedd

From: gandald952 May 18, 2003 10:49 AM

But then we come to the thorny task of defining "harm."

There's also the issue that, since we never know the full ramification of any activity (the snow flake that starts an avalanche), there is always a possibility that the best intended action will ultimately end up causing harm.

I think that we are essentially obligated to making a "good faith effort" to cause no harm.

-Gandalf

From: sybok33 May 18, 2003 3:11 PM

I don't believe we are obligated to any such thing.

"Harm none" is from the Wiccan Rede. WE are Druids, not Wiccans.

The rule simply does not apply to us. Culturally, we Druids come from the ancient Celts, whose idea of tasteful decorating included the heads of their enemies displayed on staves.

Not exactly a "harm none" culture, eh?

nt - Sybok /\

From: Ric Knight May 18, 2003 3:46 PM

True, Wiccans we are not, but "Reformed" Druids we are (though some too be Wiccans, yet I digress greatly as always)....

What distinguishes us from the Celtic Druids of ages past is that we don't do those "icky" things or to quote "The 15 Lousy Lessons of Merlin the Schlep":

"No Bad Stuff. Well, we've succeeded, so far, at least. Like the vast majority of Neo-Pagans; we don't do blood/animal/human sacrifice (although we occasionally offer a carrot or zucchini) because we are "Reformed" and we think that's yucky. We are however divided on whether fungi should be ritualistically categorized as animal or plant because they do possess characteristics of both. Likewise, we don't do such uncool things like brainwashing (who wants a clean mind?), orgies (which is obviously a fast way to get STDs), take money/property, or abuse our members (who'd want to be in such a

group?). We treat our members with respect, and they freely come and go."

And does not the Fifth Chapter of Early Chronicles demonstrate the reluctance of the Druids to engage in animal sacrifice?

I refer you to verses 9-13 and the wisdom of Howard the Preceptor and the compromise of Jan.

These things from our RDNA culture form the basis of our obligation.

Thus Endeth the lesson

Blessed be Dalon Ap Landu...

Cheers, Ric

From: Norm Nelson May 18, 2003 4:18 PM

Well put! But I keep thinking these sniggly little thoughts, such as "If we don't do human sacrifices, why do I have a mental list of candidates?"-:-) [Norm hums Gilbert & Sullivan... "I've got a little list..., they'll none of them be missed..."]

Or as I sometimes say, "Not only do I support abortion, I have a list of people for whom it should be retroactive!"

From: sybok33 May 18, 2003 4:55 PM

Ric Knight wrote:> or to quote "The 15 Lousy Lessons of Merlin the Schlep"....

I'm giggling uncontrollably at the last line..... But "nature is good." In nature, we have the Cougar, who has no qualms about taking down the innocent, vegetarian doe.

We also have the owl, who feasts on innocent, vegetarian rabbits, and mice, and (if we didn't keep ours in the house at night) pet cats.

By living and being a part of nature, we harm other beings all the time. Every time you walk out the door, you risk stepping on something smaller than yourselves. Every time you take a breath, you inhale countless numbers of microscopic organisms who die a horrible death.

How many spiders have you killed on purpose because they got into your house? How about wasps? Yellowjackets?

We rip innocent radishes and lettuce and cabbage, etc., out of the ground, torture them to death in steamers, or eat them alive in salads.

We eat meat - sure, most of it's from Safeway in nice sterile plastic wrapped trays - but still, we know where it comes from.

"Nature is good." So the tornadoes, floods, earthquakes, wild fires, tsunamis, etc., that kill millions every year, are "good" also. It's all part of "nature." And we, as Reformed Druids, celebrate this nature we are part of. In fact, celebrating nature, proclaiming it's inherent "goodness" is our entire raison d'etre.

Yes, "nature is good," but it's not 'harm none.' And neither are we. At best, we are "humane." We're for the most part anti-war, or at least we are against killing others of our own species.

But "harm none" is both far too broad of a brush, and impossible to live up to.

nt - Sybok /\

From: "Dee" May 14, 2003

I agree wholeheartedly. We have had this debate in our own group, and I'm glad that we have people who are able to see beyond black and white. Sometimes you must choose a lesser evil, or a greater good.

B\*B Cerrulis /\

From: Mike, A Capitol Fool May 19, 2003 8:06 AM

Dear Sybok,

I always preferred "Nature is complete and instructive" as a short hand for the basic tenets. As for the Wiccan Rede "An it harm none, do as thou wilt," I first heard it and immediately asked, "an it harm one, what should I do?" and my friend answered me, "be careful, consult, and considerate."

I also believe that the bad after effects of the "three-fold law" of cosmic karma, does not rebound on the individual, but on the community; which if you are "one with them", will affect you as if it hit you individually.

For the ostracized loner, the effects are not felt as strongly.

-Mike

From: Norm Nelson May 19, 2003 1:16 PM

To me, animal sacrifice is simply the taking of the life of an animal (people are animals, too, but that subset is usually called human sacrifice) as part of a ritual.

Whenever the topic comes up, I visualize some small, furry creature (for some reason, I usually think in terms of a gerbil!) having its throat cut and the blood spilled on the altar with some sort of incantation.

Invertebrates don't count, in my thinking at least. Stepping on an ant in front of the altar wouldn't be a sacrifice, unless it was done deliberately and with some ritual calling attention to the sacrifice involved.

Thus, stepping on it accidentally during the course of doing the Booty Sigil wouldn't be, because that ritual is not a sacrificial one.

I don't know how we would have considered the famous grasshopper that jumped into the chalice, had it not been removed before the waters were shared. Can suicide be considered a sacrifice in the sense discussed here? Until right now, while writing this, I've never thought about the possibility of sacrificing an amoeba or a lobster, although both are obviously invertebrates.

The sacrifice of vegetable life, on the other hand, seldom means the death of the plant, since I've always used only a few leaves or a flowering stem.

From: Mike, May 19, 2003 4:54 PM

The atheist would ask if it was to appease various psychological elements of the worshipper. By the way, would religious preparation of animal food products (holy butchering) be considered animal sacrifice?

I still consider capital punishment as a continuing indirect form of human sacrifice to the Gods of Justice and Revenge.....

-Mike

From: Ric Knight May 19, 2003 1:39 PM

You are giving the Cougar and Doe elements of morality they cannot possess. The Doe cannot be guilty or innocent as it lacks the moral agency to do so. Likewise the Cougar cannot have qualms.

The Cougar eats the Doe. It is neither good nor evil. It just IS. Nature IS Nature. The rest is pathetic fallacy. We however are moral agents. We divide actions into good and evil and order our communities along those lines.

Is there a RDNA morality? What is it?

Cheers, Ric Knight odm

From: popinjay June 16, 2003 4:25 PM

I have to agree with healingline and Ric.

"Nature is nature" is a Schardingism. You \*can\* adopt that philosophy as your own but it does not apply to all of RDNA.

Stacey, Weinbergerisming

From: sybok33 May 19, 2003 6:27 PM

The Cougar's morality is survival. That's its entire raison d'etre.

We don't say "nature is nature," we say, "Nature is good." We've assigned "nature" (and all its complexities, whether beneficial to us or not – whether nature kills us or not) a value – "good." Therefore we are saying all that nature does and is "good."

Therefore killing another being for food is "good." Morality is a human invention, and changes from culture to culture and from religion to religion, and even, from person to person. There are no absolutes.

You asked, "Is there a RDNA morality? What is it?"

Good question for Norm I think. I would say that the RDNA is amoral, but that is strictly from a study of the ARDA, which doesn't seem to have any moral guidelines (but I haven't seen the new ARDA yet). But in general, religions without dogma tend to be amoral as well.

nt – Sybok /\

From: Ric Knight May 19, 2003 10:28 PM

We actually do say Nature is Nature... It is simple and brings about less debate than the entire 2 basic tenets.

Good is subjective, but only in the eyes of a moral agent. Beings incapable of moral judgment don't see the "goodness" they see the "being." If Morality is Human then the Cougar's Morality cannot be the Cougar's... but rather the subjective view of the human watcher.

The question of absolutes is yet to be determined. Various sides in the debate may choose to believe or not depending various factors.

It changes with the whims of the Humans and the gods, but in no way do the animals and plants share in this. ARDA points out several moral incidents of morals.

The decision not to sacrifice animals and avoid the first schism. The decision of the Druids to refrain from ever using the Druid's Curse again. These are moral choices made by the founders. An amoral group would not have cared.

Cheers, Ric Knight odm

From : Oriana May 19, 2003 10:33 PM

There is also the discussion of acting "contrary to nature."

It is the Cougar's nature to kill the doe.

If the doe were to turn carnivorous, would it then be evil, or amoral? So, then, what is "human"? Nature? Cruel? Benevolent? Immutable? Changeable? Is simply acting against our nature, be it good or evil, immoral?

B\*B\*, Cerrulis

From : Ric Knight May 19, 2003 10:57 PM

Nature is good the same way Beer is good. Both are pleasing to humans.



It is not a comment on the moral state of either nature or the nectar of the gods. Contrary to nature is hard to nail down as nature can oft be so contrary.

A carnivorous doe (or rabbit with huge sharp gnarly fangs) would be neither good nor evil since it lacks the moral capacity to choose between the two concepts. I agree with Sybok that morality is a human thing, but I disagree that nature is a good teacher of morality.

Nature can be inspiring, it can uplift us, and fill us with wonder and awe, but only after humans apply intellect to the sensory inputs.

Were human morality to be solely based on nature... woe to the infirm and weak. Human morality can make allowances for the weaker and infirm... Nature does not.

Cheers, Ric Knight odm

From : gandald952 May 19, 2003 3:53 PM

Is it your position that deliberately trying to cause harm is acceptable?

I consider the "cause no harm" concept to be universal. I believe that we all have an obligation to make a conscious effort not just to avoid causing harm, but to help each other. The evils of this world will not be solved by any dramatic revelation.

Instead, it will take all of us making small contributions whenever we can.

Gandalf

From : Mike, A Capitol Fool

Sent : Tuesday, May 20, 2003 8:47 AM

>An amoral group would not have cared. Maybe moral decisions can be made by individual practitioners, while the teaching and group remains amoral?

-Mike

From : Ric Knight May 20, 2003 11:24 AM

Possible, but I rather think that, as with most groups, the morality of the group is molded by the collective morality of the practitioners.

If a particular grove decided that animal sacrifices were OK, then RDNA would become known as the group that practices animal sacrifices.

Group literature would need to be altered... the whole "Less is More" document on the unofficial website is rife with non-amoral statements.

I think a RDNA morality of sorts exists even though it is understated and subtle.

Cheers, Ric Knight odm

From : Norm Nelson May 20, 2003 1:04 PM

Aren't the moral agents the guys who work for Atty. Gen. Ashcroft? Abetted, of course, by the Religious Right. (Which is neither.)

From : Norm Nelson May 20, 2003 1:49 PM

>Maybe moral decisions can be made by individual practitioners, while the teaching and group remains amoral?

There was, as I recall, no specific discussion of moral issues at the founding.

Since we all came from "the Judeo-Christian tradition", there were obviously certain unstated assumptions, such as that sacrificing people was not a good thing.

Since (as we understood it) the original Druids were nature worshippers, and since it therefore seemed like the services should include a sacrifice from and to nature, it seemed appropriate to choose the sacrifice of plant material, rather than animals or humans.

The assumption that there was a superior power (we phrased it, "Look around you at the world; there's got to be something greater than we are; we choose to honor it in the name of the Earth Mother.") clearly implied that we were subordinate to something.

The word "honor" was specifically chosen as an alternative to "worship", since we didn't intend to supplant any other faith.

The whole "do no harm" mantra opens a wide area of philosophical discussion (as has already been demonstrated here!).

To me, the implication of "do no harm" is not to do harm \*intentionally\*. [Thus, when the (in)famous Druid curse seemed to work, we agreed not to pass it along to our successors.]

I referred to this in my previous posting about "sacrificing" an ant. There is, to me, a world of difference between stepping on an ant unintentionally and doing it with intention. I must admit that I do sometimes step on them intentionally, but I don't do it as a sacrifice in the context of a ritual. When I'm walking down the sidewalk, I usually don't stomp on them, but once in a while,.... But is it "doing harm" to stomp the scorpion that you find in your boot at the campground in the morning? The implication of that question is that there must be a hierarchy of harm, no? Can you blame the snowflake that starts the avalanche? Or, in the metaphor I prefer, the straw that breaks the camel's back? That comes closer to the question of intention.

Does the drover load a little more fodder to kill the camel, or to save its life in the event that the trip is longer than planned? Since, as someone else mentioned, each of us has worked out his/her own morality, I would venture that RDNA is not amoral, since it assumes a certain widely-accepted morality among its practitioners; it just doesn't spell out its morality explicitly. I didn't intend to be so long-winded here, but this is a topic in which each thought seems to lead to another.

A pity we can't get together in a chat room and toss it around with each of us being able to toss in the thoughts as they occur to us!

From : gandald95 May 20, 2003 4:00 PM

For some, all food preparation has religious significance. If an animal is going to be slaughtered, then thanks to the Gods were in order.

The part that I disagree with is using animal sacrifice (or any ritual for that matter) as supplication to the Gods for them to grant some kind of boon.

Gandalf

From : sybok33 May 20, 2003 4:10 PM

>Is it your position that deliberately trying to cause harm is acceptable?

That depends on how you define "deliberate."

But I think "intent" is more important.

If men come into my village, armed to the teeth, with the stated intent to harm my family or my tribe, then it's acceptable for me to attempt to disable (not kill) as many of them as I can (unless one proves to be sufficient).

OTOH, if I walk into a neighboring village, and decide to punch out the first person I see, just for fun, that is unacceptable.

In either case, I have deliberately chosen an action, but the intent is different.

> I consider the "cause no harm" concept to be universal. Well, even stated that way, it's still too broad.

Originally though we were talking about "an it harm none," known as the Wiccan Rede. Not the Pagan Rede, not the Druid Rede, not even the Witches Rede. "Rede" means "advice," not law. So it's not even an absolute. "Harm" is abstract. Do we mean actual physical harm? Or psychological harm? Is stress harm?

If I, a Pagan, move into a neighborhood and my neighbor on one side is Christian, have I harmed him? He would probably perceive it so. And who is "none?" Humans only? Or any life form? For something to be "universal" everyone must believe / adhere to it. Well, it simply is not. Some embrace it, and some do not, and some fall in between.

>I belief that we all have an obligation to make a conscious effort not just to avoid causing harm, but to help each other.

I agree with that, and that is why I am a Socialist.

Human nature is such that most would never consider the condition of another without it being pointed out, and then they still might decide to follow Ann Rand.

Capitalism will never provide enough adequately paying jobs to employ everyone (and thus eradicate poverty and homelessness) because it's not in Capitalisms best interest.

The law of supply and demand insists that there must be unemployment (over supply or under demand of labor) in order to keep the cost of labor down, and profits up.

>The evils of this world will not be solved by any dramatic revelation. Instead, it will take all of us making small contributions whenever we can.

Agreed: "We're not trying to start the world on fire. We just want to light a few candles." – Adam Walks Between Worlds

My problem with the whole "Rede" thing came when some began to interpret it way too broadly, so that it became impossible to live a normal life without worrying that some small thing I do would harm another life.

We examine this whole issue early on in \*Druidcraft 101. On balance, we try to instill the sense that we value human life, and other plant and animal life as is necessary to sustain human life, but "harm" is too ultimate a value. In order to sustain human life, we have to harm some plants and some animals.

"Nature is good," and the whole cycle of nature, of life and death and rebirth, and of one life ending so that another life can live, is also "good."

nt – Sybok /\

From : Tezra May 20, 2003 6:31 PM

> Is it that we are squeamish, or that we are in agreement with modern mores and laws, and are therefore "Reformed"? I think it's because animal sacrifices make more of a mess than plant sacrifices, and they're yucky, blood, gore, and guts getting all over the place.

The Founders would have had a lot more to explain had they sacrificed animals, remember they were at a Christian college in a small town..

> Maybe moral decisions can be made by individual practitioners, while the teaching and group remains amoral?

I think you've hit the nail on it, Mike. Groups tend to be amoral or even become immoral when they become a mob.

Tegwedd

From : Norm Nelson May 21, 2003 1:01 PM

Barbecuing sacrifices is an ancient tradition. Reference all the instructions for temple rituals in the Old Testament. I don't recall any mention of small, furry animals there, but it's easy to consider by extension. Of course, such critters would have to be killed in accord with the laws of kosher slaughter...

Naaahh, that's too much work. I'll stick with leaves and flowers!

From : Tezra May 21, 2003 8:31 PM

Norm, thank you for bringing up another consideration that I didn't even think of. But I think that can comfortably come under the "ick" factor.

Tegwedd

From : sybok33 May 21, 2003 8:46 PM

Reminds me of a "Northern Exposure" episode called "A Hunting We Will Go," where, in the opening sequence, Fleishman berates Maggie about the buck she just killed that is laying in the back of her truck.

Her response was timeless; "You eat meat don't you Fleishman? Well, meet meat."

BTW, those bbq'd animal sacrifices of the ancient Hebrews were eaten by the Priests themselves (I wonder if they had a "special sauce"?). According to my old Rabbi, the "sacrificial" aspect of these offerings was in the "giving up" of property.

Today, the religious generally take up monetary "offerings" ("sacrifice" = "offering"). The extent of the sacrifice is dependent upon the wealth of the postulant. That also takes care of the "ick" factor.

nt – Sybok /\

From : Dee , May 22, 2003 10:48 AM

Here's another aspect of the "ick" factor. The Hebrews knew the mystical significance of blood. Their scriptures state that the life resides in the blood, and that there could be no remission of sins without the shedding of blood (theoretically the basis of Jesus' sacrifice).

The ancient pastoral traditions sprinkled blood on the fields for fertilizer, to bless the fields and ensure good crops, and I'm sure that practice eventually came from generations of observing the lush growth that would eventually spring up in fields where battle had been done. Even as children, we knew that a blood ritual would seal friendship between us forever. (Of course, this was before AIDS was an issue).

Cleansing the sacred space at Beltane fell to me this year, and, having reflected on the above thoughts regarding blood, I decided that I would make a personal sacrifice of my own blood in the cleansing and dedication. I presented my idea to the rest of the group. No one was comfortable with it. The "ick" factor hit full force.

So I wonder how we got from acceptance of ritual slaughter and use of blood, to a resistance to a small pinprick and 2 or 3 drops. I think it is because of the society we live in. People who don't live on farms (or work in meat packing plants) are not familiar with the slaughtering process. We find our meat in neat, bloodless packages in a refrigerated bin in the supermarket.

Even the butcher counter is a thing of the past; and I remember that in the early 70's. No more neighborhood butcher coming to the counter in a bloodstained apron. Anyway, that's just my 2 cents.

B\*B\*Cerrulis/\

From : Norm Nelson May 22, 2003 1:44 PM

It's difficult to gross out a biologist.

Back in the middle 1960s, I had taught a comparative anatomy laboratory in the spring while I was in grad school, and my sister was an undergraduate biology major and had just taken an anatomy class.

That summer, she and I were staying at our family cabin up in the Black Hills, and we drove into the little town of Custer to buy some groceries.

As we stood in front of the butcher counter, we started to "anatomize" the T-bone steaks [which come from the sides of the cow's spine, behind the ribs. The "T" is actually half a vertebra]: "There are the dorsal and ventral processes of the spine, and the lateral process, and there's the neural arch..." "Look, there's one that still has the spinal cord in the neural arch..."

We then looked at the butcher, and saw that he had turned a definite shade of green! Apparently he had never given any thought to where meat comes from!

From : Mike, A Capitol Fool May 22, 2003 4:21 PM

I was sitting on the Subway the other day and got to thinking about what the medieval and iron age Europeans would have been most concerned with praying for.

Yes, it was Health and Wealth, with wealth being primarily defined through fertility of crops, children and livestock.

When's the last time you worried about if there was going to be enough food (not whether you could afford it, but would it be available)?

And yet with the assured supply of near-continuous availability of food throughout the year in America.

The impact of the seasons, the joy of Hazel gathering, and other seasonal delicacies has, I believe, been stripped from modern culture. It is another barrier to surmount to understand what ancient religion must have been like.

From : Ric Knight My 22, 2003 4:31 PM

Well... I think it's the age old division between the city and country mice... I'm sure Alberta Beef ranchers are praying hard to their "god(s)(ess)(es)" TM of choice for good old health and wealth of their livestock right now... what with BSE (mad Cow) and all.

As we become more "Urbane" (and Urban) we start to loose track of natural rhythms...

This was even a problem for the Romans who spent a considerable percentage of their government time on arranging wheat shipments from Egypt to ensure a well-fed populace who had no notion about troubles down on the farm....

From : Norm Nelson My 23, 2003 1:22 PM

O Tempora! O Mores! Our ancestors made sacrifices in their fields to ensure the fertility of their crops and cattle. Today, we sacrifice pieces of government-issued paper at the Safeway to ensure having enough food to sustain us. True, we're disconnected from the source of that food, but have we lost something, or gained something?

An orange in the toe of your Christmas stocking was a rare treat 100 years ago, because such tropical fruits were not readily available year around.

From : sybok33 June 6, 2003 4:29 PM

There's a bumper sticker available from AzureGreen that reads: "Vegetarian:" Ancient word for "lousy hunter."

"Mike, A Capitol Fool" wrote:

I've heard that one, and my room-mate replied to it: "How much intelligence does it take to realize that there are plentiful nutritious roots under the grass you're stomping upon like a Neanderthal, looking for the occasional scurrying critter out trying to feed its family." He was great at debates. :)

Mike

From : healingline June 16, 2003 4:20 PM

Folks, we say "Nature is good" because it is one of our "human limitations", being humans, to judge things.

Compare Krishna's justification of worship of divinity in human shape, to the questioning Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita. Divinity kindly makes allowances for our human limitations. That is why, the first time I heard the first lines of the Liturgy, I knew at last what I was, which was this sort of Nature lover.

In the old days, us humans sacrificed and prayed in all sorts of ways we now find outlandish, and were suffered to live and reproduce up till the present, despite it all. Hallelujah!

Katya Luomala



# The Third Epistles of Norman

(By Norman Nelson, 2003)

(New to ARDA 2)

## Chapter the First

### The Forty-Year Long Protest March

#### Summer Solstice 2003, A Druid Missal-Any

1. Imagine yourself and a couple friends organizing a protest march to correct what seems to be an injustice.
2. A year later, the injustice is irrevocably ended. Forty years later, the march continues! What happened?
3. Since I find myself in exactly that situation, I was asked, "What do you think about the continuation of Druidism?"
4. These comments are mine only, but from conversations with some of the other founders, I believe they represent a consensus of opinion.

## Chapter the Second

1. First, some forty-year-old history:
2. Back in the long-ago days of the early 1960s, several students at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota, decided that the college's religious attendance requirement was actually doing a disservice to religion by forcing people to attend.
3. (A graduation requirement, it said that, seven weeks out of each ten week term, students must attend a religious service of some sort.)
4. Most of us were religious, but we felt that forced religion turns people away from faith, rather than attracting them.
5. Most students at Carleton attended the weekly Congregational services at the college chapel, conducted by the chaplain.
6. Some attended the downtown churches of their own denomination, and then filled out "chapel slips" to be handed in to the deans for credit.
7. For those who belonged to churches or religions not represented in town (such as Jews), there were official campus organizations which gave them credit for attending their meetings.
8. The situation had actually become so ridiculous that even the atheists had a campus group which met for chapel credit!

## Chapter the Third

1. To organize a protest against the requirement, we decided to start our own "religion" and apply for chapel credit. If we got it, we would show how ridiculous the requirement was; if we didn't, we would protest and accuse the administration of hypocrisy, since we were attending religious services.
2. In the early spring of 1963, the Reformed Druids of North America was formed; we even drew up a constitution for ourselves as a campus organization. The official date of the founding was Beltane, 1963.
3. We were very careful to structure our "religion" so that it didn't require giving up any other faith; we didn't want to

antagonize any one. (I've always called Druidism supplementary, not designed to supplant any other belief.)

4. After six or seven weeks of Saturday afternoon services, at the end of the school year in mid-June, several men and two or three women submitted chapel slips for the last Druid service of the school year.
5. We were careful also to go for our "regular" chapel credit, just in case. (The Druids met on Saturday so as not to conflict with any Sunday services people wanted to attend.)
6. The slips for the women were accepted by the Dean of Women's office, while the Dean of Men's office rejected credit for the men.
7. After the rejection, one of the founders went to the Dean of Men's office and asked why we had been turned down. He took along a list of "strange" religious groups from the Minneapolis phone book, and asked "Would this be acceptable? Would this? Would this?"
8. Finally, with all his other reasons exhausted, the Dean said that we couldn't receive the credit because we weren't "an officially recognized campus organization;" we didn't have a faculty advisor.
9. The next fall, the speaker at one of the first (also mandatory) weekly all-student convocations was a new professor, who spoke about his anthropological work in the Aran Isles, where Druid practices still continued under a thin veneer of Roman Catholicism. Before he left the room that night, RDNA had a faculty advisor! We knew we had outfoxed the Dean!
10. That fall, we received chapel credit for our services, and again when we started at Beltane for the spring. We felt that we had definitely won our protest.
11. It gets even better: the day I graduated in 1964, the college Board of Trustees met and abolished the religious attendance requirement.
12. I learned recently that one of those who most favored the repeal was the Episcopal bishop of Minnesota, who also argued as we had that the requirement was a disservice to religion. I've also heard that the college chaplain supported it, and that subsequently, enrollment in religion classes increased dramatically.
13. So, in June of 1964, there was suddenly no more need for protest, and therefore no more need for the Druids. Our victory was total, and most of the founders fully expected our organization to disappear very quickly.

## Chapter the Fourth

1. However, for some participants, RDNA had begun to take on a meaning of its own. (We joked that, for the students who couldn't stomach organized religion, our disorganized one was perfect!)
2. In reality, through their meditations and study of their role in nature, they had begun to find a personal, meaningful realization we had never intended to impart.
3. RDNA met their requirements for a faith that explained their lives. For them, it was no longer a joke.
4. You can see this happening with David Frangquist, the author of "The Chronicles," as his writing changes from a parody of the Bible in the first chapters to a serious examination of what it meant to be a Druid.
5. Now, forty years later, here we are. Not only is Druidism still here, it's thriving! RDNA continues in its original form for some, but numerous "offshoots" have also arisen,

attracting different sorts of people to their different emphases. While I've not looked into them, I salute them for answering the religious needs of their participants.

6. Personally, I still believe that RDNA is a supplement to other faiths, as I think do the other founders. But I must respect those for whom it has become their exclusive faith. Given our origin, I'm a little bemused by that, but I think I can understand it.
7. And, more importantly, I think that Druidism, in its various manifestations, should and will continue.
8. Even if it eventually becomes meaningful only to one person, it still deserves recognition for that. I guess we wrought far better than we thought we did when we started our little "protest march."

## Chapter the Fifth

1. 10 Aug 2003 21:12:13 -0600
2. IMHO, an AD doesn't "head" a Grove... s/he is the person appointed/elected to conduct the services, not to speak on behalf of or to determine the thinking of the Grove's members.
3. The reason we've had a "meditation" instead of a sermon is that the AD doesn't tell the members what to think or believe, s/he just suggests ways for each member to make up his/her own mind.
4. Since the demise of the Council of Dalon ap Landu (due to the individuality of its members, who couldn't/didn't bother to reply to questions put to the Council), there has been no governing body of RDNA.
5. Ergo, each person who calls him/herself a Druid is one. There is no higher authority to determine orthodoxy or to declare excommunication.
6. This may be embarrassing to us old-timers, but it's a fact of life, and we've learned to live with it. We may fervently disagree with what a particular group is doing, but there's no way we can stop them from doing it.
7. From the beginning, RDNA has prided itself on being a "disorganized" religion; neither then or now is it time to start imposing criteria for what makes one a Druid.

## Chapter the Sixth

1. Wed Aug 13, 2003 1:50pm
2. Isn't the term "orthodox Druid" a bit of an oxymoron? How can any group or "religion" which can be joined by saying "I'm a Druid" have an orthodoxy?
3. RDNA has been eclectic since its founding (believe me, I was there!) and remains so to this day. There may be some people calling themselves Druids whose practices are peculiar to me, but it has never been my job to determine what Druidism is (at least in its RDNA version(s)).
4. I suspect that to the Druid groups in Europe which are not part of "our" Druidism, we're as bogus as you can get! And it's highly unlikely to me that they, any more than we, are practicing the "true" Druidism of 2,000 years ago.
5. Originally, you became a Druid by partaking of the waters. Period. Belief that "Nature is good" quickly cropped up as an additional criterion. Remember, these were people whose "robes" were bed sheets and whose first altar was a small metal phonograph stand from someone's dorm room!
6. Most importantly, if we were to succeed in our purpose of ending the "religious attendance" requirement at Carleton,

we couldn't do anything that would give the authorities an excuse to shut us down.

7. All the founders were Christian and Jewish, and we didn't want (and couldn't afford) to offend anyone. I've always maintained that RDNA was conceived as supplementary and/or complementary to "organized religion", not as a replacement for it.
8. The only reason that I can find for the continuation of RDNA 39 years after it became unnecessary is that for some people it is a means of the search for "truth" (yea, one way among many). For some it has become their exclusive "faith"; for others, be they Wiccan or other pagan or Christian, it remains a supplement.
9. For me as an Episcopalian, it gives new emphasis to the many places in the Book of Common Prayer where we are exhorted to take care of creation as a way of honoring the Creator.

## Chapter the Seventh

1. 15 Aug 2003 11:08:55 -0600
2. I've been trying to distance myself from the OMS debate going on in RDNAtalk, but I do have a comment or two which may be relevant.
3. To my way of thinking, anyone who wants to call him/herself a Druid is one. To be a Reformed Druid, part of the RDNA, I'd add that one must partake of the Waters consecrated by an Archdruid in the RDNA.
4. Sorry if this makes a hardship for solitaries, but it's in the original Constitution, etc., and I can't change it unilaterally. [I'd be glad to send you some Waters, if you need them! You'll have to do your own ceremony, though.]
5. Likewise, anyone who is associated with RDNA can call her/himself a member of RDNA, or "a Druid" for short.
6. BUT, and this is the important thing, nobody (repeat, NOBODY), not me nor any other founder nor you nor any "offshoot" or Grove or individual member, can claim to \*speak for\* RDNA.
7. You can proclaim your own beliefs from the rooftops, or go door to door proselytizing, or whatever turns you on, but by the very nature of RDNA, you can't say "this is what RDNA thinks" or "this is what RDNA believes".
8. We don't have a pope, a moderator, a Sanhedrin, a senate, a General Assembly, or whatever you want to call the central authority.
9. The Council of Dalon ap Landu, which consisted of all ordained 3rd orders, was to be such an authority, but in the days before e-mail, it was impossible to get a quorum to make any decisions after the first couple years (and would probably have been so even with easier communication), and the CoDaL died a quiet death. I don't think it would be possible (or sensible) to try to reconstitute it.
10. If we're to continue as a "disorganized" religion, which I think is one of our great strengths, we should not have any such central, final, (and probably arbitrary) authority.
11. One of the serious problems in which any group, secular or religious, can find itself is to have such an authority, which must inevitably lead to that authority wanting to perpetuate itself.
12. This is what leads to schisms in religions, and to anarchy in civil organizations. RDNA does not want or need such an authority. "My way or the highway" is not a Druid attitude!

13. That little tirade doesn't really answer your question, so: First, bear in mind that the "original intent of the founders" was very specific – to get rid of a graduation requirement at Carleton College.
14. After that was accomplished, most of us never expected RDNA to continue. I've gone into my thinking on why it's still around elsewhere, and won't take the time or space here to repeat it.
15. To the extent that any group, splinter or symbiotic, carries on the "purpose" of RDNA – the search for [personal] truth with the assistance of Nature – that group is good because it carries on the purpose of RDNA for its members.
16. Someone noted someplace that any time you have two Druids in a room, you have at least three different opinions.
17. There is one thing we all agree upon, however, and that each Druid's search for "the truth" must be a personal search. We've never been a group which tries to impose "The Truth" on anyone. I don't think we've ever capitalized the word "truth".
18. To the extent that any group has found \*the\* truth, and begins to try to make others think exactly their way, they are doing a serious dis-service to RDNA.
19. Indeed, I'd go so far as to say that they have left RDNA by their own choosing, because that's inherently not the way RDNA does things.
20. I believe it was the wonderfully cynical Mark Twain who said, "Mankind is the only animal that has ever found the True Religion. Thousands of them!"

## Chapter the Eighth

1. 15 Aug 2003 13:37:15 -0600
2. There are plenty of Archdruids. Every Grove has to have one. Each AD is, automatically, autonomous. Add in the "retired" ADs, and you're into the hundreds of people. But, and this is important, there is not, never has been, and organizationally can't be an "Arch-Archdruid", one supreme head of the RDNA.
3. When the "higher Orders" were conceived, it was never intended to make them leaders of the organization; rather, they were "honorary" higher levels for the ego of the participants. [Note that we made Fisher the Patriarch of the 4th Order, thereby limiting him from being patriarch of even higher orders.]
4. In a way, it's similar to Masonry: every Mason receives the first three degrees. There are additional degrees (two sets of them, in fact), but they are both adamant that there is no "higher degree" than Master Mason, the third degree.
5. There is no-one qualified to accept or reject any person or any group as part of RDNA.
6. If Mike chose to accept OMS stuff for ARDA2, that's his decision as an archivist. If ARDA is to represent the whole spectrum of the original RDNA and its subsequent manifestations (as I think should be its purpose), it needs to be all-inclusive.
7. Putting something in ARDA is not giving it the imprimatur of RDNA, since that's not the function of ARDA. There's a lot of stuff in there that's not "official".
8. ARDA is not an official RDNA publication, it's Mike's contribution to the RDNA. RDNA has no control over it (and vice versa).

## Chapter the Ninth

1. 20 Aug 2003 11:46:34 -0600
2. Security Council of the United Druids? SCUD? Why not? Then any correspondence between the members would be guided missives?
3. Actually, deep in my heart, I don't like the idea of any body able to make decisions for me on what my version of RDNA is or will be or should be.
4. The original (now, if not dead, somewhere beyond moribund) CoDaL was a good idea at the time; there were only a dozen or so members, and many of them knew each other personally.
5. They all had a shared background. They could, therefore, be said to be the "collective thought" of RDNA at that time. As the number of Thirds grew, and as the Reform moved beyond Carleton, the Council became impractical, logistically.
6. There were members who had no connection with the original grove, and there were members nobody even knew about.
7. In the era of snail mail communication only, it was impossible to contact every member, let alone to force them to respond to anything they did receive.
8. How do you establish a quorum for a body so nebulous you don't even know who's in it?



# The Missionary Im-Position

(By Mike Scharding, Jul 2003)

(New to ARDA 2)

Printed in Fall Equinox Issue, A Druid Missal-Any

## Chapter the Zeroeth

1. [This chapter's contents written in August 2004.]
2. The "P" word, proselytization, is rarely evoked in the Reform without scorn, bewilderment or anger. It seems that everybody has a story to tell or a lesson they learned from an experience with a zealous evangelist.
3. It is a sad fact, that without some type of recruiting, the thousands of members in the RDNA would not exist beyond the one or two dozen Founding members; not that that would be an all together bad thing, but that would be the reality.
4. Whereas other Groves may have had core membership stretch with little interruption for a decade or two, Carleton has had to constantly acquire more members due to the fact that members keep graduating and leaving to start new lives elsewhere, involving some type of missionary activity both at Carleton and abroad.
5. We try to go about it with a good sense of humor, but in some ways, it still bothers many of us, but I think that it is in the manner in which you advertise your presence and the reasons you give to join that make a big difference from the ways other religions and organizations recruit.
6. As I'll mention, we're just so odd and strange, that word of mouth soon spreads that we're Druids, and eventually everyone knows. And the one who wants to be a Druid will indeed be looking for such type of people and will find us, rather than we find them.
7. If a grove shrinks down to one person, that's fine, we have the seeds to sprout anew within us when the climate or circumstances turns fortuitous again; and if not, there is always correspondence to give us a taste of interaction.
8. Don't worry so much about the quantity, but focus on the quality whenever possible. It will be okay, whatever Fate has decided. Now let's go to my original epistle.

## Chapter the First

### Some Opening Comments

1. Naturally, I speak here only for my own opinion. As you may have been following in the RDNA talk conference, my thoughts have been turning to those young MIB who knock on my door to share the Good News with me.
2. I'd like to share some thoughts based on my own limited experience in door-to-door sales of the mundane variety, although I have little academic marketing experience. However, perhaps some of the parallels may be interesting.
3. I should start off by admitting that I actually admire the dedication and sense of inquiry that most door-to-door missionaries possess.
4. I am also a somewhat reluctant spiritual missionary myself, as is shown by the fact that most of you are

reading this essay because of my outreach internet efforts, providing access to RDNA historical material.

5. My strategy is however naturally passive. I make suggestions but do not insist on them to the exclusion of others. I am just there. People come, sometimes stay, and often leave soon. Like a tree, I passively watch their passage and shade them while they are near by. I occasionally invite a friend to attend. Many pass under my limbs without even knowing a Druid is present.
6. This I feel is a rather common RDNA method of grove dynamics, it may not be the most organizationally effective way, but it is the most satisfactory method I have found. It is one way, yea, one way among many.
7. Now, if I was a Treant, like in the Tolkien movie, I could pull out my roots and walk about lobbing boulders about and being a noisy nuisance. And in certain circumstances, I might contemplate such action.
8. Others make this a matter of course, and we see them at our doors every month or two, because we have a large Mormon barn in our neighborhood, so we tend to get the lazy ones who are not willing to travel far.
9. It pains my cynical post-modernist heart to credit them, but most of those to whom I talk to are actually rather nice, wholesome people with more community spirit that my hermitic nature can muster up. But there is something rather unsettling about the whole door-to-door thing, and I'm not sure that they are aware of it.
10. Occasionally, you'll get the hard sell from some door to door friends, that reminds me of a past part-time job that I once had, I think you'll see the parallels and be forewarned.

## Chapter the Second

### Nature Abhors a Vacuum Salesperson

1. In 1995, I answered one of those "Big money for part-time fun work" posters, and got sucked up into a scam-filled operation selling well-known expensive vacuum cleaners in Minnesota. I learned a lot about the way you set up a campaign with many applications to missionary activities.
2. First you divide up a town among the employees, distribute invitations for a free "no-obligation" comparison test via newspapers or coupons, with free complimentary present and literature.
3. When someone bites at the bait, you send out the young commission-paid worker to the address at the appointed time, with promises of how well they will be awarded on the often slim chance of a successful sales (10% conversion rate is considered high, with a 10% cut of the overpriced good).
4. Other times you just knock on doors up and down the neighborhood taking advantage of your sad tired visage to entice compassionate people to invite you in.
5. What happens next is you give your spiel, and start doing good deeds (such as vacuuming like a madman around the house) and showing off the features of a professional cleaner.
6. Now most people, (and few will admit it), don't mind a little grime in the corners, dust on the lampshade, or dirt under the sofa-cushions. People get by with a simple system of their own, but feel a bit guilty about it, and this is your entry point.

7. You, as a seller, by your zealous example associate your vacuum cleaner with a virtuous clean lifestyle. Mites and dust are a natural part of life, and for most of us they actually build-up our immunological defenses against real parasites; but if given a choice in life, people would like to live in aseptically clean environment, free of grossness.
8. The odds are, even if they buy your brand of cleaner, that they wouldn't put that much more effort into cleaning, but they COULD if they wanted to.
9. This is called "overbuying" and the car and computer salesmen ply this trick just as often as door-to-door salesmen.
10. The customer is also acquiring "membership" or association with great clean people, who like mountains, are more often admired from afar or bypassed, rather than climbed and imitated.
11. Certainly, some will actually read your cleaning suggestions book and may actually follow the instruction manual you provide; but similar results could probably be had by diligently using any other cheaper vacuum cleaner.

## Chapter the Third

### Cleanliness is like unto Godliness

1. Mark Twain once said, "A cynic knows the price of everything but not its worth." Every salesman must truly believe in the product that they are selling.
2. You must study the other brands of vacuum cleaners only so far as to know their weaknesses, to be able to denigrate them, and then select tests that you know are going to show those faults.
3. Few people are prepared to defend their own cleaners to a well-prepared offense that they are not expecting.
4. The salesman makes it a matter of faith that your own product's deficiencies are more than matched by its strengths; and the cleaner must naturally be taken as a whole item.
5. I spent 30 minutes being instructed in the cleverness of its foaming carpet cleaner head. All types of methods of agitating the cleaning liquid were attempted before the inventor realized that a simple cheap cloth mesh over the end would foam-up the liquid.
6. When explaining this to the people, they begin to associate a few clever features of the cleaner to the rest of the whole contraption, which may indeed be pretty standard fare.
7. Now the vacuum cleaner sales pitch would start by discussing how much it cost to attain this marvelous product, for which a newly invented need was now apparent.
8. For those of you interested, this \$900 vacuum cleaner really only cost \$250 to produce, and were sold to the local head agent for \$300. The salesman would naturally calm down the customer and "call his boss" to cut a deal, say to \$750, which was still too much. Eventually you barter down to a reasonable \$500 in regular payments.
9. They get a slightly sup-ed up cleaner, and probably put on a list of "easy marks" for other high-pressure sales agents.
10. You and your boss split the profits. My idealism got the better of me, as did low sales performance, and I left soon afterwards. [Naturally, I thought the job sucked.]

## Chapter the Fourth

### What to do with Door Knockers

1. I know that most missionaries perform their actions as a matter of testing the strength of their faith, a sign of compassion to the benighted followers of the wrong faith, and to follow the instructions of their superiors, and these I tolerate and a few I admire.
2. A few are witless and naïve people with but a few scraps of scripture to cover their nakedness, and I try not to scare them in their delicate condition.
2. For some, their sense of self-worth is painfully dependent on getting others to follow their own pathway, and I feel sorry for these.
3. Indeed I generally feel that those who come to my door may well indeed be the gods in disguise and I feel obligated to assist them in some fashion, even salesmen and missionaries.
4. However, others are belligerently bigoted and seek to stamp out anything that disagrees with their vision, and these I abhor.
5. I suspect that many of these groups are outward oriented, sometimes in a pyramid scheme, with all the spiritual profits rising organizationally to the founder.
6. It is true that perhaps some form of spiritual community is better than none, but I like to think that the ones that I choose are better, than the ones that choose me; assuming there is free will, of course.
7. Most people, I believe, tend to belong to a faith that operates nearby out of convenience more than avid support of their "small print" of social policies and theological beliefs outlined by their inner circle of organizers. I have always wondered why they don't apply this strong energy into improving the members that are already part of their community?
6. Some groups even seem to exist only to recruit more members. The Mormons are so desperate for growth, as to actually convert the already deceased ancestors of current members, and as a result, they have one of the most massive genealogical collections in the world, as my parents found out in their own family research.
7. Quite likely, several of your own ancestors have been converted in this manner already! Thus much good occasionally does appear to result indirectly from these activities.
8. There appears to be a few common responses in the Neo-Pagan and Druid community towards these wandering door knockers.
9. Some choose the "duck and cover" maneuver and refuse to answer the door, which is avoiding the whole issue.
10. There a few (like me) who politely listen and refuse to respond either way, giving neither support nor denial to their cause, basically taking up their time to save some other unknown resident the experience.
11. The most popular and funny, but probably rarely performed, are the "shock and awe" responses of overwhelming these people from narrow backgrounds with lavish displays of "see how weird and unsettling my lifestyle is! oooga booga!"



12. However, if you think you can surprise them with your Druidness, your mirthful days may be numbered. I recently came across a book which I read a 92 page point-by-point book of a series by Zondervan Guides to Cults and Religious Movement that teach how to witness to Pagans.
13. It is called Goddess Worship, Witchcraft and Neo-Paganism. (ISBN 0-310-48881-8 \$6.00) If you want to go head to head against the toughest bible-thumper, I recommend you read it to see what arguments are coming.
14. It was an interesting applying logical methods to sell rather non-sensical fantastical spiritual myths. It is another of those circular argumentative systems that once you accept one point, you are locked into a series of semi-logical faith-based points of belief. Maddening as I found it, it provides intriguing insights into the whole process.
15. A nice counterpoint is to realize that world views are a dollar a dozen, and I'd recommend reviewing the following two books: The Truth About Neo-Paganism written by one-time RDNA member Anodea Judith (of Chakra fame), ISBN 1-56718-567-3 which is \$3 at 60 pages.
16. Another book is Pagans and the Law: Understand Your Rights which is a good handbook to simple legal questions that many Pagans should know, if you get flak for your religious beliefs. I'll hopefully be reviewing this book in a future issue.

## Chapter the Fifth In Conclusion

1. In conclusion, I believe that the best preparation for dealing with the missionary is to follow the Druidic path of asking yourself the hardest questions ahead of time, to know what you really believe; and find out what areas of your spiritual life can be met with community involvement, psychiatry, lifestyle modifications and simple greater awareness.
2. After you've done that you should be able to explain the satisfactory nature of your beliefs and perhaps give them a little useful insight to take back with them.



## Newer Selections: The OMS Affair

(By Various Druids, Aug 2003)

(New to ARDA 2)

The OMS Affair deals with the discussion by various Druids in the RDNAtalk conference about the manner of relationship that existed or didn't exist between the RDNA and the OMS groups. The debate raged fiercely throughout most of the month of August of 2003 and totaled about 500 posts or so, from which I have boiled it down to about 350 documents in the form of an epic dialogue of 60 or so pages that will be more easily readable. The main topics discussed are about the manner in which groups and individuals join the RDNA, the role of the Council of DAL, and the ways in which we understand the qualities of being a Reformed Druid. Your average Hairpull.

The whole mess ended up with much of the OMS withdrawing most formal associations, but keeping much in the way of culture and tradition of the RDNA, and I haven't heard much from them since then. The rest of us had a good venting, and will be much more careful in the future in our relationship with other organizations, and think deeply about the aspects of belonging that ties us together.

However, due to the very lengthy nature of this exchange it would unduly mess up the printing plans for the Apocrypha, and the extensive editing and disjointed manner of interaction are too much to blend into our current format, so they are being made available at the following on-line address in September;

<http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/2part2-3.doc>

<http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/2part2-3.pdf>



# Newest Selections: Rambling Onwards

## The Epistle of Corwin

(By Corwin Troost, Oct 20, 2003)

(New to ARDA 2)

### Chapter the First

1. Dear Brothers Stephen and Mike,
2. It has come down to me that our predecessors in Druidism wrote 'epistles'. It would seem that these are merely letters written in a stilted, silly, Druidic style. This is for the best.
3. During my studies of Japan, it has come to me to return my gaze to that of the Grove, verily the grove of Carleton, for that is where my heart lies.
4. In these times, some of the wisdom of the ancient [aka 1960s] druids has been revealed to me through the works of the Heiman who did Mark and of Mike of the Schard.
5. For it is written in these works the epistles of those who came before, the wisdom they did impart therein.
6. Verily, though these be of less certain value than the Chronicles, it could perhaps be said that in their uncertainty they possess more value, for they impart direction. (but the Meditations are also pretty good, and the Isaac stuff gets old fast.)
7. The wisdom imparted to me through the joint efforts of tree, human, and breath (and... umm... what does ink come from?) is of three parts:
  - A) Ritual is of great importance.
  - B) Druidism began as a protest against standard(ized?) religion, and I think that much of its continued value lies therein.
  - C) Carleton Druids/prospective Druids as a whole do not have enough spiritual common conception, experience or elaboration to have productive spiritual discussion.
8. Lo, but the one is three and the three are one!
9. For where lay the protest of druidism but in its ritual, its silliness and newness combating both the fist of fundamentalism and the emptiness of the mainline?
10. Where lies the protest or the irreplaceable, the spiritual, in quietly sitting down to discuss said spirit?
11. Verily, to speak is good, but to do is better, for in the doing comes speaking, and where lies common experience but in ritual?
12. Does not thinking arise more readily from the implicit provocation than the blunt query?
13. If we are truly a group without dogma and received teaching, then the lowliest, most ignorant initiate may participate at all levels— yet in discussions, previous spiritual knowledge and confidence create a substitute hierarchy.

14. Further, if we are truly an experiential and material-embracing religion, then discussion, with its head-centeredness, lack of interaction with nature, and lack of shared starting points/beliefs/assumptions is not the Druidic path.
15. Simply put, we are NOT outdoor UU's— particularly if we stay inside.
16. [Sorry about lapsing in the silly style, I can only keep it up so long, and only communicate so much in it]
17. I hope that Druidism is doing well on campus— I have no way of knowing at this point. It might perhaps be good that I'm not there... there are times when I'm a bit too serious and Isaac like. <sigh>

### Chapter the Third

1. Let's ponder what 1) we think Druidism is and has been, 2) what is good about Druidism (what we have liked?) 3) What Druidism should become.
2. Certainly, the survival of Druidism in others should be secondary to the quality of what Druidism we create.
3. My suggestions for what are good about druidism are: lightheartedness, nature, indy search for spirit, non-hierarchical, questioning.
4. I'm at best marginally satisfied with teas in their current form.
5. I really liked the rituals of the Elder Druids, with their silliness— though I think we could come up with a form that wouldn't require too much preparation and would allow people to free-form participate.
6. I'm thinking like the calling the winds thing in the sweat lodges, but instead of just winds, whatever it is that we've picked out to praise/worship/recognize... including anything from a Colonel Sanders statue to a tree to one particular grain of sand on the sidewalk, but other forms are cool too...
7. One of the epistles said that playacting can become sincerity, and I sort of believe it...
8. The other thing is that I think we need to promote the 2nd and 3rd order ordinations, I think, cause they really do have an effect... mine made me much more into the whole thing, and really worked out a lot of stuff for me.
9. Perhaps we could reinstitute some 1st order ceremony.
10. I'm also thinking that we always have at least a minimal trip outside, be it most of the tea/event or just 5 minutes.
11. I think it'd be cool if, when the weather permits (oops, I'm too late for this) we make a habit of meeting at Nourse for 15 minutes to have tea, processing to the circle or to the bald spot, meditating for 5 minutes, and only then doing something... it might take some time, but I think that it would actually have more and better effect than having more discussion.
12. Further, do silly things in public.
13. I am but a feeble monk, whose eyes cannot see the way, yet I pray that my words may find some harbor in your breast.
14. Nor should you consent to trust them more than words from thine enemy, for I am young and of quick temper, soon to speak and late to listen. But if the Reform will be aided by my speech, I am well rewarded.

Humbly,  
Corwin, Arch-Druid in Exile

# The Epistle of Stephen

(By Stephen Crimmins, November 2003)

(New to ARDA 2)

## Chapter the First

1. My brother in the mother Corwin,
2. I was elated to see your epistle, and it has weighed long upon my thoughts this past month for it did not deserve a hasty reply.
3. I am glad that you have turned to history, for history is ever present.
4. Though, yay, we are also removed from history, and must be wary of it. And there is much that history can tell us.

## Chapter the Second

1. Certainly many have benefited from the old rituals. From the earliest days there have been some rituals.
2. Yay, even between the days of the lapse in the parly eighties and till the revival of Mike the Fool, those druids who did rebirth in the late eighties did have some ritual. And yay, it did work for many of them.
3. But verily I note that you are right, that we have in many ways forgotten the rituals, we do not consider them as closely as we might.
4. And so I can see that you are wise in asking to restore such rituals. And because they are, indeed silly.
5. Lo, the Druids do misstep and founder, and they must be guided, hand held along a reasonable path.
6. But be wary, I warn you. This is not an easy path to follow, and think careful about this path and others, for the path of the ritual is a difficult one, and this I have come to realize early this year.
7. Having departed on a similar journey as you, though through the documents that Mike the Fool and his partners did first look at before they did compile more than their compilation.
8. And I myself saw that we do miss much of the ritual of our forefathers.
9. And yay, I too did mourn that loss, and I did also mourn the loss in our current situation our the great numbers of Druids which hath preceded us.
10. And upon opening I did decide to hold such a ritual, thinking that this may be right.
11. But, lo, I did arrive at the circle, and did commence to spake those old words, in a slightly altered state (the words, not me), but they did not feel quite right to me.
12. For, though I had seen the paper upon with Brother Larson did write his third Epistle, and though I had read it thoroughly and gained much understanding from it, I had not truly understood it.
13. For Brother Larson talks of ritual, and says most wisely that we cannot just speak the ritual, as I spake it, but as we speak it we must breath it.
14. Wary be! It was not just that I had not practiced, but I have not seen a true good ritual, in good form, as Brother Larson might suggest, except for two or three, in the year of the anniversary.

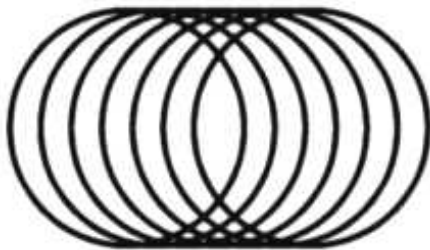
15. And lo, I thought I could mimic those, but I certainly could not mimic the power to be had in them.
16. Even our former Brother who does instead now Fish, had the experience of his previous days, of the Episcopalians to guide him in his rituals.
17. And in the days since the Druids have had one always who has heard the words in some lineage from our Fishing Brother.
18. Even Mike the Fool, Foolish for reestablishing the rituals bolder than he might have been wise to, had an experience to help him.
19. For it is off said that the Episcopalians are but Catholics without a Pope. And so in many ways their service, that inspired Brother Mike did look similar to the service that did inspire our Fishing Brother.
20. In the days of later eighties they did not follow the older rituals. And in this they were wise, though they, like you and me and Mike the Fool, were all fools; for they did instead bring in the ritual of that which they knew and were already keenly interested, of various Neopagans and of the Native Americans.
21. And there is more, for the rituals that I have heard never quite spoke to me.
22. In trying to use them, with just lightly altering, I was quite the fool. For how could they speak through me if they did not speak to me.
23. And here I give you some positive advice. Look not to the old rituals, for if you are to use them you must have either great experience with them, or you must utterly rework them, going so far as to be barely recognizable.
24. They do not speak to me, and I am not sure that they speak exactly to you. Before you can speak them, you must find a ritual that speaks to you, in it's words, in it's rhythm, in it's everything.
25. And that ritual will speak through you brilliantly, if that will be your choice, though it will be a hard work.

## Chapter the Third

1. And here I will give you more advice, though be wary of it, for it may lead you astray. You have many ways to look.
2. The first, which I am quite eager to see, is this. You have been in exile these past months, and I can only hope that your exile has taught you much, that your time as peregrinatio is not to be wasted.
3. I have often heard from Brother Mike that Japan is a land of Paganism, and that it may offer much to us, if you have seen it, and if anything it speaks to you.
4. But more generally, you must consider all that has spoken to you, and all which has not. And then write a ritual from what has spoken to you, be wary not to merely write what you think may speak to you.
5. And then I say this more, look not just at the early rituals, but look at all the rituals that you can find, if you want to reestablish rituals. There are many sources for those.
6. I would say, first, go down to the basement of the building of the Explorer President, and ask Eric the Hill Man to see the archives of the reform, first, and all the rituals that are recorded there, even the rituals of Isaac.
7. And look also at the descendants of the Reform, and look at their rituals that are recorded, for they are resplendent in variety.

8. And those that speak to you, diligently copy them in the scriptorium, so that you may work from them in creating your own rituals.
9. And then look even further. Look at the (inter)net that A Druid Fellowship has cast, because it also contains many rituals.
10. And look also at the rituals of the Henge an hour to our north, either at the site of a similar net or, if need be, write to them to see what rituals they perform.
11. And then widen your search even further, for other brothers, and for all the rituals that you might glance at.
12. And having collected those that speak to you, see what it is that speaks, and then begin to right anew and afresh from those rituals, and drawing them into the framework of the reform, without considerable reference to the original rituals, except that which truly speaks to you.
13. Yay, it would be a hard long path in front of you, fraught with much which could make you stumble, but if that is your journey, than you must tread it.
14. Moreover, I cannot help you. Though I also cannot stop you, and cannot but release you to look for an appropriate ritual, and wish you look, for indeed, now, the time of the comps is at hand, and I must heed that.
15. You then must walk a path that you will find, and learn in doing. I can only offer a few words here and there.
16. And I see that you already have many new ideas, and for that I am thankful, but do not let them say that you have what speaks to you.
17. For if you merely add little effects to a base that does not help you, you only gild the ritual, rather than make it work.

Yours in the Mother  
 Stephen Crimmin  
 Arch Druid of Carleton



## Mike's Mini-Missive

(By Mike Scharding, 2003)

(New to ARDA 2)

1. Dear Brother in the Mother, Stephen
2. Your words are legion and confusing, which is a sign of Druidic obfuscation in good tradition. :)
3. I agree with you both that every generation must look to the old for some strand of the rope to the continue, but must weave in new strands where old ones can stretch no further, and no single strand of a rope reaches the whole length.
4. And so no one tradition can be expected to continue uninterrupted from beginning or end, if one looks close enough.
5. Indeed, I encourage you to know what has been done, pay attention to what you're doing now, and think about what you would like to do, then do it.
6. Use any tool that you have, if it will accomplish your task adequately, we are the sum of our experience.
7. Go to your source of inspiration, if it be by the stream or on a hill and speak with the tongue of the trees, let their words and your words merge, and let that be the message you share.
8. The Earth Mother and DAL, among many, are ready to give advice if you'll give them an ear.
9. You need not speak the same words of the ancient Druids, for they are not there to hear them.
10. You have new Druids who need to hear the new words that our times need; and if you can find a way to express them from your studies of the past, so be it.
11. But words without action are soon lost in the winds that you call forth, may those winds that you move, also move you to realize your potential in changing this world.
12. I also hope that brother Corwin will learn much from his sojourn in Japan.
13. "Exile" has also greatly changed me, but I reflect that as Socrates said, the Earth is our home, and as long as I walk on its face, I am "home," even if I be out of sight of my friends and relatives.
14. Although the Japanese do not see through the Monotheist lens, their vision is also clouded by other matters, such as modernism and a growing disconnect from Nature as they move from the farms to the cities.
15. Yea, verily each culture has its blindspots and sharp insights into the condition of Man and Nature, so draw your conclusions and give praise & critique carefully.
16. As I've stated before, Druidism existed at Carleton before the first student set foot in Northfield, and will continue long after the last student graduates.
17. It is the very connection and relation between materials and living creatures, of which we are but one, and whose mysteries we can only participate in part, limited by our form and schedule.
18. Strengthen your understanding of it with whomever else is also interested during your few years there, and beyond. But do not fret about it. :)

19. I have talked more than enough.
20. Fare thee well.
21. You're doing fine and my thoughts drift to you nearly every day,
22. May my prayers be carried to you with the sun that I see.

Mike the Fool  
 Day 31 of Geimreadh, Year XLI of the Reform  
 Dec 1, 2003



## The Alphabet Epistle

(By Ian Friesland, 2004)

(New to ARDA 2)

### Chapter the First: Cordial Greetings

1. Dear Brother Michael,
2. How I wish the tyranny of distance did not so separate you and me, alas I have not written as often as I could or should, but things are well with me....
3. ...I now have a letter for you, a most remarkable one, yea, one among many. Pardon me if I go too long now, as it is a common error in my Order, perhaps even a requisite one.
4. There is now more than I must relate to you on the further mysteries of the Druid sigil.
5. As you'll see, I'm afraid my sanity has cracked further after another frost upheaval from leaving the extreme of a long cold wintry place and returning to warm climates.
6. New seeds have sprung from that crack in the ground.
7. Such is the renewing nature of Druidism in Minnesota with every year too, isn't it?
8. May my words find welcome eyes and hearts, for I would speak wisely, for a change.

### Chapter the Second:

#### The Vision of "S" Appears

1. The other day, I stood by a slender willow sapling on a hill, looking down at the slinking stream situated on the plain below me.
2. The branches of the tree swayed in the wind. As my ego deflated in awe, I felt the letter "S" sibilantly hissing syllables at me in the rustling of the dead leaves at my feet.
3. I held up the mighty Druid sigil, upon which I have so often gazed rapt in thought, and the sigil blazed against the setting sun as if the sky itself was aflame.
4. In this setting, my sigil uncurled before my eyes as circle & straight lines melted into a single curved line, twisting like a Chinese dragon in a majestic dance amongst the clouds, briefly forming a Celtic knot and finally silently assuming the shape of an "S."
5. And I realized that the "S" is without voice, only the fricative escape of air through a narrow trap's entrance, and so did my soul sail forth from my solid heavy body, in joy at the wonders of pondering a single letter.
6. A famous Druid two centuries before mused that "To see the world in a grain of sand" was to know the whole from a piece. Verily, great wisdom sometimes comes to us unobserved in an overlooked tiny package.
7. Precious is the message of this sigil then. From the sigil's nature's perfect endless "o" and man's straight and limited "i" come the primordial "s," naturally bending but with a start and finish, but able to return to the original form.
8. The letter "S" is the same upside down, but flatten it's head and it is a "5" and flip in over and it become a "2." In

this way, the “S” can be of the literary world of the left-brain and mathematical world of the right-brain.

9. Nature works in curves and man thinks linearly, but in that way Druidism melds a compromise between these opposites, which are both part of a single system, each dependent on the other for existence, with a myriad of children in between in search of adoption.
10. Therefore, Druidism holds the number three sacred, since between the opposites is a third choice, “The Middle Path,” espoused by the Buddha, between the purely rational & systematic path and the irrational & creative path.
11. Like a sigil tied by two rubber bands to opposing trees, the closer it is pulled to one side, the less stress on that side, and the increasing pull from the other side.
12. A solution to this tug-of-war is to seek a natural equilibrium between the two, or snap both rubber bands; and the resulting awful amount of freedom.
13. Like so many clues in our lives, we pass them without even noticing them. I must endeavor hard to keep every-moment Awareness, even in the darkest night or brightest day, until it become effortless and self-renewing.
14. Indeed, you know not when or where a window on the universe will be quietly and quickly thrown open. Then the terrible immensity and complexity of the universe will be comprehensible for an all too brief moment.
15. For this was one of those moments of synergy.

### Chapter the Third: The Rede of Read

1. And my soul was moved by these thoughts, such that a great prayer did come from my lips, saying:
2. Lord “S,” or should I call you sire? Or savior?
3. You are not in the Holy Land, but in our hearts.
4. In opposites and similarities.
5. You are in all phonetic systems, so flexible, so primordial.
6. You are the most appendable to all sounds.
7. From the first in-rush of breath to the last out-pouring of death’s sigh.
8. The great multiplier of things by your very presence.
9. I can hardly talk without invoking your name.
10. Nor can I go anywhere now Lord “S” without being aware of your gospel.
11. You are as present in the library of books as in the curves of streams, bends of grass, and necks of cranes, in the movements of the winds during the service.
12. You are in the sun & stars of the skies above and in the scum and slime in the sewers below, and all in between.
13. You are not just on the paper, you are also in our ears, oh “S.”
14. You are not just in the paper, but unwritten in our ink and our very blood.
15. Life is like an alphabet, which emerges with an alphic bang, full of words and events in the beginning.
16. Life follows with ups and downs, and is thickest and most reliably filled in the middle.
17. But life all too often tapers off with a zedish whimper of partly-filled years in the end.
18. Only when we reach “x, y & z” in our study do we truly “now know our a, b, c”s.

19. As your servant, Lord Zed who learned the alphabet and came and left the world of the immortals in a flying head to find his Alpha, he learned the solution lay in the union of the separated.
20. I now know your visage and nature, regardless of thy font, size and formatting!
21. May I be further enlightened, O king of consonants, by your brother consonants and sister vowels, punctually arranged and filled with spaces for growth and rest.
22. May I and you not obscure the page but adorn it like jewels.
23. What more should I know of you?

### Chapter the Fourth:

### The Sybil of the Sigil

1. In reply, the radiant sybilic sigil looked ready to speak.
2. I again asked it; “What saith the letter “S” about Druids?”
3. It said, “You are indeed wise in my ways, and learning well, so I would teach you further, young Druid.
4. The letter “S” has provided the beginning of many virtues and vices, but only you can spell out and complete the remainder in your deeds and thoughts.
5. Ian, sear these short sentences to your soul:”
6. Be a staunch supporter of civil liberties, especially those of others.
7. Be savage and scornful for the servile submissive sycophant to the State.
8. Be Sisyphean and steadfast in noble causes, but not squeamish and sickly of a challenge’s chores.
9. Be speedy in certain matters, but slow in uncertain ones.
10. Be strange, surprising and stealthy to your enemy’s traps, but sure, servicing and stable to your friend’s entreaties.
11. Be stout in virtues, but sickly in vices.
12. Be still, silent and sophisticated amidst racket, but swift, sonorous, and strident when men fear to speak.
13. Be subtle and sensitive in delicate matters, but straightforward and spiky in ordinary ones.
14. Be sacramental and sentimental in spiritual matters, but not superstitious or slavish.
15. Be studious, but not stupidly bookish.
16. Be safe and secure, but not scared or skittish.
17. Be scrupulous in your resources, but not selfish.
18. Be sincere and succinct in your expressions, not sly or superfluous.
19. Be sumptuous to your guests, not stingy.
20. Be sensible in judging, not subjective.
21. Be skillful in the arts, not a sham.
22. Be strategic and systematic in your projects, but not slovenly and sloppy.
23. Be strict and supportive to your grove, but not sadistic or stifling.
24. Be stark, simple and spartan in your structure, but not sterile, secretive, or snobby.
25. Be scientific and shrewd in secular matters, but sacred and sublime in saintly ones.

26. Be syncretic and synthesizing in your beliefs, not sporadic and scattered.
27. Be soppy, sweet and sensual in matters of the heart, but stolid, stony and stoic before the hate-monger.
28. Be sedate and serene in thought, but sprightly and sporty in activity.
29. Be splendid and sensational in achievement, not sullen and sad in reluctance.
30. Be serious and sober in dire straits, but silly and sassy in farces.
31. Be solemn in times of grief, but spirited in times of joy.
32. Be stylish, spacey, surreal and screwy in humor, but not stiff, staid, stodgy and stale.
33. Be sarcastic and skeptical of fools and liars, but supplicative and sympathetic to wise sages and noble heroes.
34. Be sexy, steamy, seductive and sleek in courting, but not sordid, seamy, skanky and sleazy.
35. Be soft and smooth in eroding great obstacles like a river or wind on a mountain and strong and sturdy in blasting small obstacles like a tornado or thunderbolt.
36. Be ye never shady, shaky, shallow, shitty, shabby, shirky, shadenfreudish, shameful, shadowy, shameless, shapeless, shifty, shocking, showy, shlocky, or shrewish. Better to say “shhhh!” to yourself these than hear “shhhh” spoken of your character. [It is okay to be Shaggy or shiny.]
37. It is not a matter of which letters are used, but in how they are arrayed, and which words are sought and followed.
38. Know ye that “S” is but one letter, yea, one among many.
39. Keep one foot in the middle, lean towards the first, but know well the ways of the latter, lest your foes trick you.
40. Be a master of letters, lest letters be the master of you.
41. Do you understand all of this, Ian?

### Chapter the Fifth: The Afterletter

1. And it was too much too bear and I cried out;
2. “By thy 26 ways! The choice is mine to be made.
3. Many are your ways I have mastered, but much more are your ways that I haven’t.
4. May I live up to my words and my letters.”
5. The sigil cooled and I collapsed, lay exhausted and rested for I know not how long.
6. When I awoke, I was under the willow tree which swayed by the river which flowed, while clouds sailed above in the sky; all doing their roles in this world, as I must do and be Druidism.
7. I can do no other.

### Chapter the Sixth:

#### Final Thoughts on Words

1. Indeed in this way, the Ancient druids learned many things from the trees, streams and stone around them.
2. Druids found guidance in Nature, for it was their holy book with uncountable chapters, always being rewritten and edited.

3. Druids did not write down words, but stored them deep in their hearts, to be replayed and sifted for edification.
4. Modern Druids transform many trees into papers and books, especially in the Reform, but do the words transform us?
5. Words and gestures rarely express our thoughts perfectly, so much harder through squiggles on compressed wood fiber.
6. The ink of scholars last longer than the blood of martyrs, but both change the world in a different way.
7. What an amazing discovery speech and writing!
8. What unlimited potential with a finite set of 26 tools!
9. Many men complain about being unable to speak of the ineffable, while I bemoan conveying the inessable.
10. We all have ways to express these thoughts.
11. You have given me words, and are part of those words, as I am too.
12. These words you read as your eyes snake across this page are part of you and us too.
13. I must finish this letter here as I grow weary from the recounting, fearing my skill with words will not be able to better convey my message.
14. Know ye, that this epistle was brought to you by the letter “B” and “S,” by the numbers “2” and “5,” and by your local Grove’s tutelary deity.

Ian the Lettered Scholar

S-squire of ODAL

Day 13 of Foghamhar, Year XLII of the Reform

Friday, the 13th of August, 2004 c.e.

### Chapter the Seventh

14. P.S. Sorry if I have made an “S” of myself, but it is me, and I am it.
15. As one last question. We have heard much of how to become a great Druid in the letters of our siblings, but how does one become a good Arch Druid?
16. I ask this, for I am considering a Grove with humans here in Europe, and I know you have led several Groves and talked to many Archdruids, so please share in your wisdom on this issue.



# The Arch Epistle

(By Mike Scharding, 2004)

(New to ARDA 2)

## Chapter the First

1. Dear Brother Ian,
2. Thank you for your welcome e-mail on Friday the 13th, alleviating an otherwise thankfully uneventful day.
3. I was deeply moved by the sigil inspiration you have drawn from B & S, which is a good part of every conversation I can remember on Druidism. Your words will fertilize much contemplation in the future.
4. Coming as it does in the middle of the Athens Olympics, I can not refrain from appending comments on the Greek alphabet, for Caesar said that the Druids (at least in Narbonnia) only used Greek letters when it was necessary to write down matters. Greek keys open some Celtic mysteries.
5. Have you not noticed that the letters alpha  $\alpha$  and omega  $\Omega$  are but the same line twisted and crimped?
6. Omega reminds me of the strongly twisted Druid's torc worn around the neck, from whose synaptic terminals a leap of faith is required to complete of a perfect circle.
7. And is it not also amazing that the letter phi  $\phi$  or  $\Phi$  are so similar to our Druid Sigil? And is it not strange that pi  $\pi$  so irrationally resembles the megalithic henges?
8. Now that I'm done with my letters, I will continue with your letter.

## Chapter the Second

1. I noted the question at the end of your missive, "How can I be a good Arch Druid?" I thought you already knew.
2. But, I feel like the Japanese monk who exhorted his disciple, "Strike me hard like a bell, that I may peal even louder in my reply."
3. You will indeed have more of a challenge organizing humans, as opposed to your ministrations to penguins and monkeys in your last few Grove attempts.
4. I caution you to be careful as the former are less forgiving and far more unruly, for they resemble cats when herded.
5. I feel a word to the wise on the matter of Arch Druids is enough, but in your case, a single letter should suffice.
6. As you mentioned, locked into every word of our language are associations and roots which give a hint as to what a word means and what we should do.
7. The word Arch Druid (or its alternative Archdruid), doesn't appear in the dictionary, so I will instead concentrate on "arch."
8. As I attempt to define "arch", I must paraphrase Brother Irony that "Like a moth before a flame, the Druid is doggedly drawn towards their doom in definitions."
9. I also hesitated to write this as every bit of advice I will give here is often a painful reminder of a lesson learned by failure or missed opportunity.
10. Hopefully, you will avoid my mistakes and surpass my successes and find the path to greatness more well-lit and cleared of obstacles that trip or slow you.
11. Yet, so I must try to define the indefinable.

## Chapter the Third

1. Literally, the prefix "arch" in Arch Druid is derived from Latin "archus" or Greek "Arkhi," meaning "chief, highest or most important." And much is hidden in that meaning.
2. In the Roman Church, there are Archdeacons, Archpriests, Archbishops who are the head of the deacons, priests or bishops in their domain. In this way, you are the chief of the Druids in your Grove.
3. You are high, in that you are raised by the election to hold much responsibility. No matter how high you go, do not forget those who support you.
4. You are most important, in that without an Arch Druid, the Grove cannot function well as we know it. However, beware of pride, for although the role is often necessary, you are not irreplaceable; and it were far better for a Grove to have no Arch Druid than a bad Arch Druid.

## Chapter the Fourth

1. The most obvious origin of the arch is a bow, the tool from which the archer derives his occupation [L. Arcus], and you are indeed a tool of the Grove.
2. The bow directs immense power to the task of flinging objects; whose speed, distance and trajectory are uniquely determined by many combined factors: the degree to which the bow is flexed, the direction & strength of the winds, the skill of the archer, the angle fired, the whims of Gods, the laws of Physics, and most importantly; the strength, shape and material of the bow and arrows.
3. Take these elements into consideration when assisting fledgling [fletching?] Druids on their way, and do not quiver before the task, and so be of good aim and choose your targets well.

## Chapter the Fifth

1. Some history about buildings and its relation to Druidism.
2. The ancient Greeks, although they used bows, did not significantly use the arch in their largest buildings, which relied on columns to support the dead weight of roofs vertically.
3. As a result, the space between columns had to be kept short, resulting in large building being filled with a forests of columns, choking out the interior space; but the columns could be shifted a little without endangering the building, which is important in an earth-quake zone.
4. The ancient Romans lacked the immense marble slabs of the Greeks, and used smaller materials like bricks and molded-concrete, so they adopted the arch and oval as their standard.
5. Roman architecture abounds with arches, bridges spanning unthinkable rivers, and domes providing more spacious and taller buildings at lower cost with less materials and difficulty.
6. But the graceful arch has many weaknesses in addition to its strengths; for if one stone in the arch should be removed the whole structure will collapse, and an arch requires a solid, immovable foundation, pulling the bases of support towards each other.
7. Using this analogy, an Arch Druid's authority rests on two foundations; first their wisdom and Awareness of Nature, and secondly the trust and goals of the membership which elected them. Without that, there is rubble and grumble.



8. But remember, of course, that we Druids are an outdoor people, for even the grandeur of the cathedral pales before the majestic canopy of an oak forest.
9. Indeed, our churches are without walls, roofs or boundaries, ever present in the world around and within us.

## Chapter the Sixth

1. Arch also implies an attitude that is “mischievous or roguish,” as in an “arch glance.”
2. For though an Archdruidcy is a serious undertaking, it need not be a dull or stuffy one.
3. Since our beginning, the RDNA has been a thorn in the side of many pretentious civil and secular authorities; and the Arch Druid has often been the wry mouthpiece of the Grove.
4. Verily, in those ventures, we are a bit like foxy outlaws, bound together by circumstances and camaraderie, on the fringes of the respectable mainstream of religions; without the laws or the easily recognizable traits that most large traditions have embraced. Mobile, clever and stinging in our forays of Guerrilla Druidism.
5. Without our humor, impishness and joviality we would become dour and disapproving.
6. Without our rebellious nature, we would congeal into an ossified religion of superstitions and dogma.
7. It is a delicate balance, like riding a tiger, too much disorder and the group loses its focus or becomes frenetic; too much order and it is unable to adapt or adopt new practices or goals.
8. It is your job to steer the Grove towards its goals in this manner.

## Chapter the Eighth

1. The term arch is also used to mean “principal or strongest,” as in arch foe, archenemy, archfiend, archangel, arch-rival, archconservative or archliberal.
2. This term implies a bit of extremism that discomforts me, for Druidism is about the moderate third way between the unlivable environment of the extremes.
3. Like it not, you are the role model for new Druids, and your virtues and vices will be noted and scrutinized; so act and speak with care in times of trouble and historic moments.

## Chapter the Ninth

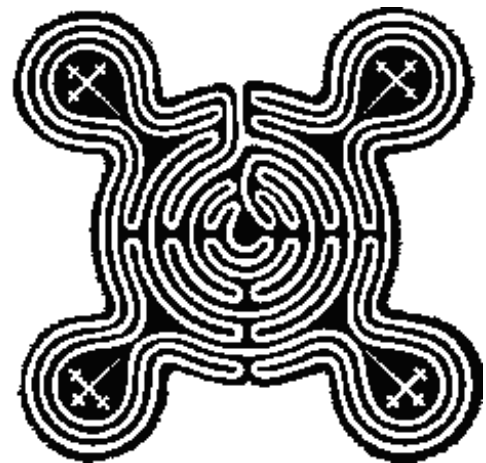
1. Finally, there is the term archetype, archive and archaic which have implications for Druidism, derived from Greek “Arkhi,” meaning “beginning” or “primordial.”
2. The Arch Druid is often the first Druid in an area, and the one who bears the seeds of wisdom, Awareness and traditions for founding a Grove, always in a unique blend.
3. Choose carefully, for the Grove will undoubtedly in the beginning mistakenly believe that all Druidism is in your mold; but you should always make them aware of alternatives, for one day they may have to steer a new course in uncharted waters without your assistance.
4. The Arch Druid must archive the actions and words of her Grove, either on paper or in her heart, so that they can be brought up again for review and amendment. To know a Grove’s future, you must know and understand its past.

5. The Arch Druid must also avoid the deadening hand of archaic tradition, for if the origin of customs becomes too difficult to recognize or justify, then they must be dropped to better utilize the time and effort of the Grove’s members.
5. Thus, by carefully selecting, creating, collecting and explaining the terms and practices of Druidry to incoming members, instead of relying on blind faith, you will soon realize how many and which customs and traditions can be best borne and applied by the Grove.

## Chapter the Ninth

1. And so Brother Ian, these are my rambling thoughts on running a Grove as an Arch Druid.
2. I may have more advice on the topic later, but this should be enough to get started.
3. You need not do it all, for you will often rely on the other Druids in your grove, nor need you be the only Arch Druid.
4. I hopefully can live up to my own advice, which I’m far better at giving than following.
5. Finally, I must add that it is in service to others that we best serve ourselves, for that is why we are called to Archdruidry, and we will often have to choose the more difficult course if we are to succeed.
6. I wish you the best of luck in your endeavors.
7. Write more often, even if things go well.

Yours in the Mother,  
 Mike the Fool  
 Day 20 of Foghamhar, Year XLII of the Reform  
 August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2004 c.e.



# The Epistle of Ric of the North

(by Ric Knight, odm, Aug 2004)

(New to ARDA 2)

## Chapter the First

1. By the grace of the Universe that gives birth to us all, I, Ric of the North, do write these words to the assembled Druish folk in the 42nd year of the reform. I had originally thought to name this document "A Knight's Tale" however copyright law and lawyers being what they are, and my desire not to have the movie of said name and this document confused in any way, I chose another title. (Note: The jousting in the movie is much better)
2. This would be the place, in any decent epistle, where Druids of the Reform admonish the readers to not pay too much attention to the following words. Reasons for this are varied. My words are not your words, my thoughts are not your thoughts, you may look at the universe in a much different light than I do, and quite frankly I may have written this whole thing while enjoying the company of a very lovely bottle of fifteen year old scotch. So beyond here there may be dragons. You've been warned.
3. Reformed Druidism is not so much a faith for me as it is a way of being. A way of being each moment of every day. It is not enough to profess the Reform, for me the Reform must be indistinguishable from breath,
4. How can this be accomplished? What is the nature of the Reform? These are questions that you may well expect an answer to, and with any luck I may eventually give one, or at least a hint of one.
5. I arrive at the Reform without any history of participation in it. I am not associated with any grove derived from any of the various groups of the Reform. I can trace no apostolic succession to Fisher, nor have I every set foot on the Hill of Three Oaks, at Carleton. My conversion to the Reform was sudden and complete. Call me Saul and reading ARDA on Brother Mike's website was my road to Damascus.
6. The Reform is a revolution in spiritual thought and practice for two reasons; Anarchy of organization, and complete openness and acceptance of membership. The Reform is ruled by none and, as history has shown, has resisted all attempts by anyone to organize it for more than a weekend BBQ. The membership is fiercely independent and guards with tenacity their rights to believe whatever they choose. There are no complicated membership requirements and anyone searching for a spiritual truth can find company, encouragement, and wisdom within the Reform's embrace.
7. The ties that bind us are the Two Tenets.
8. Verse seven was short and to the point and deserved therefore to stand solitary on the page. It falls to the following verses to explain. There has been much debate, discussion, yelling, hair pulling, and general mayhem whenever the Druish gather and discuss either the Tenets or anything more organizational than a BBQ (good humor is self referential). Anyone who cares to review the

RDNATalk archives for August of 2003 will see this in abundance. The cause of the debate is not important. Other causes will spark other debates and the wheel will turn again.

9. Perhaps it is the Reform's circadian rhythm that requires a hair pull ever so often about what the Reform is, how it should grow and what being "Reformed" truly means. Rather than being the road less traveled it becomes the road oft taken. Schism unto schism, Reform without end, forever and ever amen. When really, what it means to be Reformed is intensely and immensely personal. It defies structure. It confounds order. In the end I know what it is to be a Reformed Druid for me as well as any other will know what it is to be a Reformed Druid for them. It is our search and while we may walk together for a spell, our footsteps are our own to make.
10. We find ourselves in the Reform and in doing so find this community of interest. The "structure" grows organically. It may be imperfect, it may not be a straight path, but nature abhors a straight line. It's not up to me or any other Reformed Druid whether anyone joins the Reform. It is up to the searcher to discover for themselves whether the Reform has something to offer them, and by that search awareness comes.
11. While there is a history and a tradition for the Reform it is also adaptive and ever evolving. The trick is to adequately balance the two. To be a Reformed Druid is to search for the truths through the guidance of Nature. Other Reformed Druids can help in that search; some can offer us no help for their search does not resonate with us. But we all agree that we are searchers together, and we respect each other and the revelations that are received, even if these revelations have nothing to show us. It's not about getting anywhere; it's about the journey.
12. How do we judge who is or is not from the Reform? We cannot. What makes my interpretation of Reformed Druidism significantly different or qualitatively better than anyone else's? Nothing. The Reform is a university of sorts. We agree (sort of) on a common approach to investigating questions concerning faith and belief, but there are vast differences as to what those beliefs are. Once we start stamping things as "officially recognized by the Reform" we will quickly approach the dreaded state of dogma. Better that we remain the contentious, debating, questioning, hair pulling lot that we are.
13. But no one is bound to accept more than the two tenets. It's our way.

## Chapter 2 Oh Canada!

1. The Reformed Druids of North America sprang into being 41 years ago as an American group and has since surfaced in many different parts of the world; Europe, Japan, Turkey, and even Antarctica.
2. As Canada is a sizable portion of North America, at least in sheer landmass (we are the large pink blob on most maps just north of the U.S. of A.), it would seem fitting that a Canadian should shed some light on the North American nature of the Druish folk as it appears from under the maple trees. I realize that North America includes Mexico and is in fact a triad, however not being Mexican, I cannot comment on the Mexican contribution to the Reform. That must be left to a future Epistle from a much more reliable source. I do however, love Mexican food (if that helps any).

3. Canada is big. It's incredibly mind bogglingly huge in a way that say Liechtenstein is not. But in our bigness we have inner smallness. We are one-tenth the population of our American cousins and suffer a kind of size performance anxiety as a result (not that size matters).
4. Canada, vast land of resource and opportunity, itty-bitty population.
5. The United State on the other hand is big with a capital B. Everything is big. Big territory, big budget, big cars, and big army. It's as if the entire nation is a vast colony of Texas (the "biggest", just ask a Texan and Alaska doesn't count).
6. A Canadian Prime Minister (Trudeau – loved and reviled by Canadians and Americans alike) once said that the Relation between Canada and the United States is much like a marriage between a mouse and an elephant. While the mouse is glad of the protection the elephant's size affords, it is always nervous that the elephant might roll over in its sleep.
7. Canada and the United States are the best of childhood friends. Sure we've had scuffles; The Revolutionary War (or as we like to call it Treason), the War of 1812 (which incidentally we won, but that would be a whole other epistle), and various Fenian raids during the later 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Otherwise, on the whole relations have been peaceful and friendly.
8. But like most friends of childhood, we have grown and followed different paths. We feel different things. We have different values. We love each other like siblings, but we just don't really understand each other.
9. In the beginning (1867) Canada was formed rather peaceful and boring with a founding principle of "Peace Order, and Good Government" which is a stark contrast from the "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness" (1776) which is the creed of the United States (our rebellious older sister who stormed out of the house while we stayed on good relations with our mother country).
10. This is an important point as it sheds light upon the national character of our two distinct North American societies. The United States is the embodiment of individualism Canada is more communally oriented. "Canada and the U.S. have grown up with substantially different characters: group rights, public institutions, and deference to authority have abided north of the border, while individualism, private interests, and mistrust of authority have remained strong in the south."<sup>1</sup>
11. The Reformed Druids of North America is a truly North American group as it combines the essential character traits of both.
12. There is a fierce independence about the Reform that won't be dictated to by anyone, including other Reformers.
13. There is also a strong sense of community and inclusion that welcomes all, accepts and adapts to changes, and grows stronger as a result.
14. Perhaps this "Canadianism" aspect of the Reform is due in no small part to Howard Cherniack. A boisterous Canuck and founding member of the Reform who was instrumental in the forming of the ties that bind the reform together – the Two Tenets and Constitution (Canadians, Compromise and Community oh my).
15. The path of the Reform is a successful balancing act between the two polarities. Too much towards the individualism of the south and we will see splinter and schism as new groups form in protest of some slight or disagreement. Too much towards the communalism of the north and the reform risks becoming dogmatic, traditional and a barrier to new ways.
16. It is the combination of the North American genius that forms the successful middle way of the Reform.
17. It is my hope that the Reform will continue to include and promote the best virtues of the North American nations as it lives and grows into a brighter future



# The Sixth Epistle of Isaac

(By Isaac Bonewits, 2004, New to ARDA 2)

## Chapter One

1. Brothers and Sisters in the Mother, I write this epistle with a sad heart, having just heard about the death of Br. Robert Larson, DAL, BE around Lughnasadh of 2004 c.e.
2. As many of you may know, Robert was the graduate of Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota who first introduced me to the Reformed Druids of North America and who eventually ordained me as a priest of the Earthmother in 1968.
3. It was his (accidental?) omission of early non-Pagan materials in the RDNA teachings (in his copy of *The Green Book*) that led me to believe that Druidism was and should be a Neopagan path; which belief I made into a self-fulfilling prophecy, much to the annoyance, amusement, and/or approval of various other Reformed Druids.
4. Robert was the priest who showed me how powerful invoking Celtic deities in a Celtic language could be and whose love of trees influenced my environmental concerns.
5. He was the one who encouraged me to edit, write parts of, and typeset *The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*, which eventually became *A Reformed Druid Anthology* under Br. Scharding's care.
6. Although health problems have erased many personal memories of my younger days, I still have an image of the two of us burning hundreds of printing plates and offset printing *TDCE* day after day, working at his printing job after hours, then collating it and shipping it off to as many Reformed Druids as we could find.
7. If Robert had not thought of doing this project, who knows what would have happened to the Reform? The new *Apocrypha*, rituals, and the unforgettable *Great Druidish Books* raised a ruckus and got people back in touch with each other, if only to argue!
8. The Carleton Grove was revived—twice!—because students found copies of *TDCE* in the college library, which ultimately became home to what may be the world's largest Druid Archives.
9. To this very day, the pages Robert Larson printed are still there in the library, a legacy to future generations of Carleton students.

## Chapter Two

1. But his legacy is greater than this, even if by accident.
2. If I am the father of a few Branches of the Reform, including *Ár nDraíocht Féin: A Druid Fellowship*, then Robert Larson was the unknown grandfather.
3. Without him, there would have been no New Reformed Druids of North America, no Orthodox Druids of North America, no ADF, no Henge of Keltria, and none of the other Neopagan Druid offshoots of the Reform.
4. His humor, his laid-back attitudes about religious orthodoxy, and his teachings live on in hundreds (perhaps thousands) of people he never knew.
5. Another memory of him that survives is of the day I asked him about Druid holidays. "Robert," I said to him, "today's

the fall Equinox. Aren't we supposed to observe it or something?"

6. He put his banjo down, got up and went to the balcony of our apartment and looked at the setting sun.
7. "Yep, looks like an equinox to me!" he said and went back to his chair and resumed his playing.
8. Though I was mildly annoyed at the time, years later this incident was a source of much fruitful meditation for me.

## Chapter Three

1. I have not been to California for many years and long ago I lost touch with Robert.
2. Occasionally I would hear about local groves out there and someone who had moved or passed away, but seldom news about him.
3. I bitterly wish that I had made more of an effort to connect with him, for this week I was informed that he had become another example of a disposable elder.
4. For this is America, where those who are old, sick, and poor are free to simply curl up and die.
5. After all, universal health care would be "socialized medicine" – a horror beyond belief to those who profit from the current medical-drug-insurance industry (even though every other civilized nation in the world has it).
6. The tale of Robert's death is not a pretty one, but it is one that some of us may expect to repeat.
7. Like many inside and outside of the Reform, he had no retirement savings. He wound up being evicted from his apartment May 5th of this year.
8. Now there's a Happy Beltane for you!
9. He moved into a residence hotel with the help of a family member and lived there for about three months.
10. Naturally he had no medical insurance, so he was unable to buy medication for his diabetes.
11. The diabetes eventually caused a heart attack around Lughnasadh and killed him.
12. As far as I know, he was alone at the time.

## Chapter Four

1. I'm fairly sure that Robert never thought of himself as a "Pagan Elder," but he died like one.
2. Non-Pagan Druids may be unaware that many of the founders and older leaders of the Neopagan movement have died over the last several years, most of them alone and in poverty.
3. For while creating mythologies and temples and clergy and festivals and traditions, we have somehow neglected to create a safety-net for our elders.
4. There don't seem to be any Pagan nursing homes, hospitals, homeless shelters, or retirement communities.
5. I have often remarked that most of the good things and the bad things about American Neopagans have to do with the fact that we are Americans who happen to be Neopagans.
6. Like most Americans, we have simply not thought much about the future, or assumed blithely that everyone had enough money in a Social Security account to protect them.
7. All too often we also assumed that "somebody else" would take care of anyone needing help, so few Pagan charities have been started.

8. Ironically, the women and men who have spent the most time and energy helping to birth and nurse the Neopagan movement usually live at a much lower standard of living than the majority of their students or congregations.
9. For hours spent serving others don't count for salaries or retirement plans, and those who claim to know magic are assumed (erroneously) to be able to conjure whatever they might need.
10. So Pagan Elders who spend 40 or 50 or even 60 hours per week helping their community often wind up living on the streets or turning down the heat in their homes to save energy costs.
11. And whereas members of other faiths would be horrified to see one of their clergy living in genuine poverty (without an oath to do so), while most of their members are middle-class, Neopagans all too often simply don't bother to look.
12. For they have decided that money is evil and that spiritual people shouldn't really need any.
13. Besides, they need to save their money for beer and pizza and CDs and DVDs and a faster computer and trips to the beach and other sorts of self-indulgence.
14. None of this may be of interest to some of you, for hardly any of the Reformed Druid clergy function as such on a full time basis, which may be just as well.
15. But Robert's death, following on so many others, has renewed a determination on my part to see to it that my Neopagan brothers and sisters start paying attention to these issues.
16. In his death I fear I see my own and the deaths of many of my colleagues.
17. So I will be focusing much of my personal time and energy over the next several years working with others to create the long term resources we will all need sooner or later.
18. Pagan communities both urban and rural, some just for elders and some with a full range of ages, as well as homeless shelters, food pantries, visiting nurse services and more are on the table.
19. Eventually we will have Curmudgeonly Acres and the Pagan Old Coots home, as well as Bridget's Maternity Services and Thor's Lodge for Pagan Veterans.
20. You my sisters and brothers in the Reform are most welcome to join the planning now and use the results later.
21. I will post information about these projects on my website, which should be <[www.neopagan.net](http://www.neopagan.net)> for the next ten years or so.

## Chapter Five

1. I had planned to make this epistle a cheery one, for we have much to celebrate; though Robert's passing has (no doubt much to his amazement) sobered me.
2. It is really amazing that the Druidic memes planted so long ago should still be bearing fruit today.
3. Now there are tens of thousands of people calling themselves Druids, all around the world, and the Founders of the RDNA deserve a bit of the credit.
4. I thank you all, living and passed over, for the joy and beauty you created, accidentally or deliberately.
5. And this Samhain and every Samhain thereafter, let us raise a glass of the Waters to Robert Larson, priest of the Earth Mother and now one of the Mighty Dead.

# The Last Epistle of Robert

(By Robert Larson, 2004?)

(New to ARDA 2)

An fh'rinne in aghaidh an tsaoil. (the truth against the world.) - old druid motto (really)

Everything you know is wrong. -The Firesign Theater

1. The First of these sayings should, I feel, serve as a motto for all druids, whatever their personal belief systems.
2. As druids, we have committed ourselves to the search for that which we believe to be true.
3. By implication, then, we commit ourselves to maintain our truth even though the entire world disagree, much less other druids.
4. After all, virtually all the generally agreed upon truths of today began as individual or minority opinions.
5. For instance, atomic theory, which most accept as demonstrable scientific fact, has its basis in a philosophical truth of Epicureanism.
6. As the ancient Druids believed, truth will be recognized, sometimes suddenly, when truth will shake the world, or other times gradually.
7. The belief in the moral force of truth was not the exclusive property of the druids, of course.
8. Indeed, it is found throughout the Indo-European realms, from the Hindus through the Persian and Greeks to Ireland.
9. From the Greek Stoic philosophers it spread itself to early Christianity in the form of the logos. More about this later.
10. For now, let me say that each druid must maintain his truth, come what may, even if it leads to the conclusion of the second motto.
11. Well it may lead to this conclusion, for history is written by the victors and the beliefs that are most familiar are those of the majority.
12. Familiarity and victory are, however, no guarantee of truth, nor have they ever been.
13. With all this modestly in mind, I will expand in this epistle some things that seem to me to be true.
14. Some of you may think that I'm crazier than ever, but my hope is not to convince you, but to give you some insights into matters druidical which formulated themselves to me as a result of my studies while I was reading Brother Michael's history of the RDNA.....

[The text ends abruptly at this point.]

# Some Final Thoughts

(By Norman Nelson, 1976)

(Carleton Apocrypha Only)

1. In creating the RDNA, we took as our basic philosophy what I usually sum up as, "Take a look around you at nature there must be something bigger than we are!" For many people, this came to be a deep and abiding sort of faith. Many who could not stomach 'organized religion' were attracted to Druidism, which was most definitely a disorganized religion.
2. RDNA never asked people to renounce their own religion, but was rather supplementary to the "standard" religions. If you read the Tenets, you will see this. For some, Druidism remained supplementary; for some, it became primary; and for the majority, I believe, it was an interesting experiment which was soon dropped and probably forgotten.
3. It is difficult from my perspective, remembering the beginnings of our "joke," to know what Druidism means to those who encountered it in later years, after the founders were gone. It has remained viable, which means that we must have tapped some sort of fundamental need in people; it is taken quite seriously by quite a few, which means that we created something deeper than we originally intended.
4. To all who have experienced it, in the various Groves which have been established or through the telling of the story, THE BLESSINGS OF THE EARTH-MOTHER BE UPON YOU.

Peace! Peace! Peace!

## A Conclusion, 1996

It would be false for me to imply to you that everything was milk and honey amongst the Druids after the *A Cup filled to the Brim with Druidism* in 1976 until the *Book of Lacunae* in 1996. There were quite a few more broadsides fired between 1976 and 1982, but rarely with any great amounts of debate or essays of introspection. Most of the surviving essays from that period are found in the Part Twelve collection of Druid Chronieler newsletters. I just feel that the Druids stopped writing really interesting letters, or they were just repeating, in less flowery prose, most of the points that we have already covered. The further study of other letters in the Archives is always available to you.

Please remember that the authors of the Apocrypha cannot be considered as speaking for anybody in the Reform but rather for themselves alone. The Apocrypha was a collection of opinions about how Druidism has been experienced by various Druids, at different times, in various ways. Each is but "one way, yea, one way among many."

May the Blessings of the Earth-Mother be apparent to you everyday of your life.

Mike the Confused

# Reference Selections

## Between the Lines

End Notes for the

Books of the Apocrypha

Essentially, this is a collection of small commentary by Isaac Bonewits (IB), Richard Shelton (RMS), Norman Nelson (NN), and Michael Scharding (MS).

## The Book of Faith

1 David Fisher, retired and became a somewhat embarrassed Instructor in Christian Theology at a Southern University. He is now an ordained Anglican Priest and occasionally wishes that everybody forgot about the Reformed Druids. IB

8 All original sexism have been left intact. IB

9 "Every form of religious ritual is magickal." IB

10 Others do, however. IB

## Epistle of David the Chronicler

1:1 To Norman Nelson from David Frangquist; written originally in Aug. of 1964. IB

1:5 Nelson was in what was then known as the "missionary quandary": if all three officers were needed to consecrate the Waters, and if consecrated Waters are necessary to create First and Second Order Members, how could a single Third Order Druid/ess star a Grove? This was later solved by a vote of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu (see Records). "I held my own services during the Summer of 1964 at our cabin in the Black Hills of South Dakota. My sister acted as Preceptor in an abbreviated Grove." NN

The Missionary Quandary was settled by the Council in 27 January 1965 Missions (a). When celebrating with no 2nd Order present, the priest has the entire congregation give the responses in unison. RMS

1:7 The Episcopal Bishop of South Dakota, who was staying in an adjacent cabin. IB

1:8 As David Fisher mentions in the Book of Faith, "none of us at first thought the RDNA would continue: it had started out as a joke to protest the religious requirement, which was now accomplished. Given the perspective of ten more years, I know we created more than we suspected. The self-mocking ritual to which David Frangquist refers (in chapter three below) was what led to my comments about playacting." NN

2:1 A summer scout camp in Northern Wisconsin where Frangquist was a counselor that summer. RMS

2:8 "The Grove there died out after two years, when Hirsch and Holding moved out of the area and lost touch." Frangquist.

2:10 "In the Fall of 1964, I started a Grove at Vermilion, South Dakota (where I was in Graduate School) and found much the same results as described in this chapter." NN

- 3:1 "Another way in which this is frequently stated is that a religion is a combination of a magical system and a philosophical system, although there is usually a mention of an orientation towards Higher Beings." IB
- 3:3 See note to The Book of Faith 8 above.
- 3:7 There is a great deal of disagreement among Druids concerning this and the subsequent references to the negative aspects of rituals. For a totally opposite opinion, see The Second Epistle of Isaac. IB
- 3:11 This can prove difficult, as we know very little about the Ancient Druids. Some Reformed Druids now hold that any Paleopagan religion may serve as proper inspiration for new rituals. IB

## The Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals.

Written by David Frangquist in 1970 c.e. [Shouldn't that be 1966? MS] The note of the Book of Faith 8 above applies here as well. "This particular book can be said to represent the original philosophy behind the founding of the RDNA (insofar as any one person's opinion can ) better than any other Book currently in the Apocrypha. Which may go a long way towards explaining why so many of the older members of the RDNA were so upset at the ideas that later led to the forming of the various offshoots." IB

### The Discourse of Thomas the Fool

III: 1 See Customs XI. See the End-Notes for Customs XI. RMS

### The Wisdom of Thomas the Fool

- 2:2 A reference to the Consecration of the Waters of Life in the Order of Worship. MS
- 2:3 This is his own interpretation. MS
- 2:4 The Wisdom of the Waters appears to be his own creation. MS
- 2:8 Druid numerology perhaps? The Seven-Fold powers are called upon when consecrating the Waters of Life and the Thirteen-Fold mystery was discussed deeply in the Discourse of Thomas the Fool. MS

### The Book of Changes

- 1:6 For an explanation of all these terms, see *The First Epistle of Isaac*. IB
- 1:11 "At the time of the writing of this letter, I knew of only the Berkeley and the Twin Cities Groves as still active. I later found out that the Chicago and the Stanford Groves were also still alive (the first vigorously and the second barely)." IB. It now turns out that the Ann Arbor Grove was also in existence at this time, however, their ArchDruids did not disseminate this news widely. It is also claimed that the Carleton Grove was also active. (see notes to 1:13, below).
- 1:12 Although it is confusing to monotheistic theologians, Neopagans apparently suffer no difficulties in being clergy in several religions at the same time. It should be noted, however, that at least one ArchDruid of the RDNA has emphatically stated his belief that being a priest/ess in a Neopagan religion does not automatically constitute a conviction or qualification to be a Third Order Druid/ess in the RDNA. -IB

1:13 It certainly seemed to be defunct at the time, however, your Editor [IB] is now told that it actually was not officially defunct at all, merely less active than in the past (though there is some disagreement among Druids as to what constitutes an "active Grove). One ex-ArchDruid of Carleton has offered this explanation for his position that the Carleton Grove has never actually been defunct: The Grove has seen several lean years, he says, but with one exception, its continuity has never been broken. This exception was the Great Interim in 1968, which lasted only a few months but caused multiple difficulties. ArchDruid Thomas Carlisle left Carleton during the Winter, leaving behind an active Grove with no one to lead it. David Frangquist helped start it up again the next Spring, "but much tradition and lore had been lost and it took us nearly two years to recover them, " through much correspondence with David Frangquist and Norman Nelson (most of it now in the Carleton Grove Archives). Since then, personal friendships and a concern for the Grove's continuity has led to deliberate efforts to keep continuity going, which have been for the most part, successful.

He notes officially, the Grove still exists during the Summer Vacation and that (even if there are no meetings) the ArchDruid still gets much work done. The "chaos of the last two years" (1972-74) was caused by all but one of the Third Order Druids deciding to take a year off and go abroad at the same time, so that interest on campus lagged. But "the tradition at Carleton is" that anyone elected ArchDruid/ess stays as such until a new one is elected, so the Grove continued to officially exist as an "active Grove."

In any event, at the time this letter was composed, the author had received a written note from Carleton indicating the demise of that Grove ("The Druids are dead, long live the Druids!") IB

- 1:18 As this verse obviously show, this letter was not edited at all, except to correct spelling and punctuation. It was felt that historical accuracy was of more importance than felicitous phrasing in this Book. IB
- 1:27 It is important to note that verses 2-27 of this chapter were written before The First Epistle of Isaac, but that Chapters 2-4 were written shortly afterwards (and were meant to go out with it). As explained in Chapter 5, things didn't work out as expected.
- 2:8 The Berkeley, Chicago and Stanford Groves wanted a coup, while the Twin Cities Grove wanted to Schis. IB
- 3:8 A matter insisted upon by the ArchDruid of Chicago, as necessary to further the existence of Reformed Druidism. IB
- 4:4 At least one Bardic Order has been founded since then, the Order of Oberon, by Br. David Geller. A Healing Order called the Order of Diancecht is being started by Sr. Joan Carruth and an Order for the practice of Pagan Ceremonial Magick, called the Order of Merddyn, by Adr. Isaac Bonewits. IB
- 4:6 Actually, the only drastic removal of material done by Bonewits was the removal of Customs 8:13-15. The other editing was primarily the altering of sexist phraseology. IB
- 5:11 "It is a remarkable tribute to the basically antipolitical character of Reformed Druidism that even we revolutionaries tend to be incompetent at politics." IB
- 5:12 This was founded by Isaac Bonewits, who stopped en route from his previous position as ArchDruid of the Twin

Cities to his subsequent position as ArchDruid of the Mother Grove which was also located in Berkeley. Sr. Vicki Rhodes became the new Archdruidess of the Twin Cities and was a member of the PCoADs. Hasidic Druidism is a Branch of the Reform out of the SDNA, consisting of Neopagans of even greater piety (see the writings of the Hasidic Druids) The name of the "Arch Grove" was chosen because (a) they did not want to name their Grove after a Christian Saint, and (b) because of the magnificent 630 foot Arch that is the symbol of the City of St. Louis. The HDNA has agreed to continue to use the same ordination ceremonies as those of the other Branches of the Reform (with its own additions), so as to retain the Apostolic Succession; and to encourage those who are interested in Reformed Druidism, but not Hasidic style, to get in touch with the other Branches. MJS

- 5:15 Isaac was notified just before the DC(E) went to the printers, that Richard Shelton, had founded a Grove in Ann Arbor, MI during the summer of 1973. IB
- 5:16 The PCoADs did not as of August of 1975, include ArchDruids Shelton (Ann Arbor), Morrison (Carleton) or Corey (New York 2). Therefore these have not approved of this Book of Changes nor of the DC(E), although Shelton and Morrison did provide publication feedback. IB

## Some Final Thoughts

You may have seen some tiny numbers occasionally in the text. This was Norman's numbered endnotes for the Carleton Apocrypha.

- 1 i.e. The Druid Chronicles, for which this book was once intended. Many Druids would not use the word "canon" in this context.
- 2 See the Between the Lines entry for this verse.
- 3 A summer camp in Wisconsin where David worked as a counselor.
- 4 See Cus. 8 and Med. 4.
- 5 Cus. 11.
- 6 Tao The Ching. Chapter 17.
- 7 President of Carleton College when Druidism was founded.
- 8 Professor of Religion at Carleton, and later Dean of the College. For a time he served as the faculty advisor for the Carleton Grove.
- 9 From his introduction to The Sufis by Idres Shah.
- 10 Gerre Goodman, in a letter to Isaac dated 9/3/74.

# Historiography of the Books of the Apocrypha,

(By Mike, 1996 & 2003)

A.K.A.

## The Dirty Laundry of the Reformed Druids

### Note to the Reader

According to the American Heritage Dictionary, a historiography is: "The writing of history based on a critical analysis, evaluation and selection of authentic source materials and composition of these materials into a narrative subject to scholarly methods of criticism." Essentially I am writing a history of Reformed Druidism by discussing trends shown in the letters of past Druids, and I expect you to disagree with me and write to me why you disagree. These analyses of the contents of the Books of the Apocrypha put them into a historical context and timeline, making them more meaningful. If you have no prior familiarity with Reformed Druidism, you might find this historiography confusing and boring, and you might be better off by first reading my "History of Reformed Druidism." After that, you may be more interested in the historicity of the Apocrypha.

### A Spring Thaw?

This is a rare and interesting look into a young and passionate David Frangquist in the spring term of 1964. The chapel requirement had not yet been lifted, the Chronicles had not been finished, and the Third Order was not created. Many of the early Druids at Carleton had a connection with the local radio stations (KARL AM and KRLX FM) being broadcast from Willis Hall (then the Student Center). David had obviously done some of his homework on Celtic matters and was beginning to show us his ability to inspire and lead at this point, just at the point when Fisher was beginning to have his first doubts on his participation in the RDNA.

### The Book of Faith

This book was written by David Fisher, the founder of the RDNA, on 4/12/64.

Fisher at this point was ending his junior year at Carleton and felt deeply that he was going to enter the Episcopal Seminary after graduation in 1965, which he eventually did. He was slightly worried by how Reformed Druidism had taken on a life of its own, and that he may have founded a full-blown religion. There may have been some anxiety that the review board of the Seminary might frown on his Druidical activities. Fisher knew that Nelson and Frangquist would be succeeding him as ArchDruid in May and November, respectively, and that Frangquist was currently writing the Druid Chronicles (Reformed). Fisher wanted to add some commentary to the Chronicles, perhaps to keep readers from taking the Reform too seriously. The Book of Faith was Fisher's attempt to reconcile all these points and leave some guidance as the Reform left his guardianship.



The Book of Faith was never appended to the Druid Chronicles (Reformed), which people felt should be kept as a self-sufficient document. The Book of Faith has been looked upon in many ways by different people. Some saw it as more meddling and control-attempts by David Fisher, others as a valuable lesson. Whatever their opinion, it has been one of the more widely read letters in the Reform, and it provides a rare insight into the mind of David Fisher. It is the only real document of any size left to us from Fisher's pencil. It is also a good book to read when a Druid feels that their faith is under assaults of credibility. Outside of the three Apocryphas, the Book of Faith has never been published.

## The Epistle of David The Chronicler

This book was written at the end of the summer of 1964 from David Frangquist to Norman Nelson. Norman Nelson had been a summer stand-in ArchDruid of Carleton, after Fisher stepped down, from April of 1964 to September of 1964, at which point Frangquist became ArchDruid of Carleton until April of 1966. Norman Nelson had graduated in June of 1964 and moved back home to South Dakota. As mentioned in the End-Notes, above, the grove in question was his cabin. He later started a grove at Vermilion, S.D., at his grad-school.

David Frangquist was writing this letter after having published The Druid Chronicles (Reformed), and Frangquist was about to begin his two year Arch-Druidcy of Carleton. In many ways, Frangquist was a major shaper of how Druidism would develop at Carleton for decades. Frangquist wrote the Druid Chronicles (Reformed), assembled the Green Book, (and with his wife Deborah Gavrin Frangquist) restarted the Carleton Grove on at least three occasions, been a mountain of resources & advice to countless Archdruids, and has played a major role in the Isaac Affair. This letter, therefore could be construed, with the Druid Chronicles, as showing Frangquist's view of Druidism at the beginning of his Arch-Druidcy. It is a good statement on how and why a Third Order Druid should undertake a missionary Grove. I, myself, wish that my own Druidry had been so far advanced after only one year! Like the Book of Faith, the Epistle of David the Chronicler has never been "published" outside of the three Apocryphas.

## The Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals

David Frangquist wrote this on June 6th, 1966 at the close of his ArchDruidcy at Carleton. Dick Zempel was taking over at this point. David had just completed the last touches on the Green Book and was probably thinking back on his two productive years at Carleton. It is difficult to know how many levels of humor are buried in this work, even the dating 6/6/66 is a joke. Outlines are the strictest forms of thought, yet there is no strict binding of Reformed Druidism in this Outline. Frangquist appears to have had a love-hate relationship with form and officialness. Many of his other early letters show him spoofing officialness and talking strictly with his tongue in his cheek. This is perhaps the last of these jokes. Outside of the Apocryphas, this has never been published, although it seems to have been widely-read.

## Leabhar Toirdhealbhaigh

These poems were written by Robert Larson in the spring of 1967 before his Archdruidcy while of Berkeley (1968-1976). The title is Irish for "Book of Torvel" and could be pronounced as "Lyow-ur Turuli(g)" (it could also be pronounced "kkakzppozidkdkaltzt," but that would be very silly). At the time of its publishing in 1975 for DC(E), Robert was in the SCA

and ran under the name "Toirdhealbhaigh MacLorcain, mainly to bedevil any herald attempting to pronounce it. The grove jokingly called me Turlock MacGargle (At least, I think it was a joke.) Earlier, I might have called it "Leabhar Aedha," later "Leabhar Chathail," or whatever."

Robert Larson is an old Carleton Druid, present during the birth of the RDNA, although like Frangquist, he only joined the RDNA after the initial weeks. Robert Larson, like I mention in his interview in Part 10, never graduated from Carleton, but left midway through Frangquist's ArchDruidcy. Larson had drunk deeply of Carleton Druidism and was a proto-hippie. He was also deeply interested in Paleo-Celtic material, far beyond any of the other Carleton Druids in the original Grove. Larson was the one to introduce much of the Celtic flavor into Berkeley Druidism and start its leanings toward Celtic Neo-Paganism (which Bonewits later accentuated). However in Larson's own life, Druidism was a quiet and contemplative activity, as is shown in this poem. His reference to being Archdruid of Clann-Na-Brocheta was a foreshadowing of his founding the Orthodox Druids of North America in 1977 with a group of Celtic reconstructionist entertainers (who performed at the Northern California Renaissance Pleasure Faire). That group met occasionally for outdoor parties (Paddy's day, Beltane, Solstice) usually on Mount Tamalpais in Marin County, all dressed in costume with lots of swords around.

This poem was rarely seen by Pre-1976 Druids outside of Berkeley. It is of a similar flavor to Letter to My Brothers. The verse "Softly go, wanderer, Where the wood calls, And lives." Somehow was not in the 1996 version, and has been re-inserted.

## Letter to My Brothers

This was written by Steve Savitzky who was ArchDruid of Carleton from 1968 to 1969. He was the last Carleton Druid to have personally met one of the Founders until a reunion in the 80s. Steve went onto to found the long-lived Stanford Grove (a.k.a. the Southern Shores) in California. The original copy of this letter is not extant, and has only been published in the Carleton Apocrypha. Compare it with Leabhar Toirdhealbhaigh.

## The Discourse of Thomas the Fool

This document was probably only known to the Carleton Druids of the 1970-1978 period, or the Age of Shelton, as I humorously call it. The author was Thomas McCausland (CL70: Shelton) and it was probably written as a sermon after May 1970 but before June 1971. It is perhaps one of the most mystical pieces of writing to ever come from the Carleton Druids. It is also a very rare example (along with The Wisdom) of an detailed opinion of a Carleton Druid upon their own literature. I suspect that many sermons and discussions have been made orally by dozen of Druids about the Book of Meditations of DC(R) or the Green Book, but this is the only example in writing that we have. Thomas experienced what I call, "Way Deep Druidism." It is a pity that we only have two of Thomas' sermons, because I really like them. The Discourse was only released in the Carleton Apocrypha and Isaac probably never knew of its existence.

As was explained elsewhere, the Thirteenfold mystery, is a powerful poem composed by Amerghin the Druid, as described in the well known "The Book of Invasions of Ireland." Most Druid groups in America agree that is very special meditational poem. The version possessed by the Reform was translated from the original Gaelic by Prof. John Messenger. It is a poem of union with Nature, and of full self-Awareness. It is commonly used in the Invocation phase of the Order of Worship.

The remainder of the Discourse concerns itself with trying to describe Be'al. Be'al, as is mentioned elsewhere, is one of the strange terms used in Reformed Druidism. The Book of Meditations in DC(R), which Thomas must have read many times, devotes chapters in trying to describe Be'al, and acknowledges its failure. Although it may be related to the Irish Bel, I suspect most Druids use the term "Be'al," because it sounds like "be all," as in "the be-all and end-all." It is a neutral term, perhaps, for what Christian Mystics call "God," or perhaps "the Holy Spirit." No one agrees with me on a definition.

## The Wisdom of Thomas the Fool

Again, written by Thomas McCausland, but we know the specific date of August 25th, 1970.

It is another rare letter, because it examines the underpinnings of liturgical terminology of the Reform. It was probably put in the Carleton Apocrypha by Richard Shelton as a Zen-ish experiential counterbalance to Isaac's meticulous and dogmatic examination of the Order of Worship, as was shown in *The Second Epistle of Isaac*. Indeed, this is a very Zen-Druidic piece, which is filled with Carleton Druidism, in my opinion. Sometime in the early 70s, an abbot (Eshin Nishimura) from a Japanese Zen monastery taught courses on meditation and religion at Carleton. Thomas attended every one of them.

One detects more clearly here, than in The Discourse, the unusual tone of fervency, perhaps even an evangelistic overtone? This would not be due to fear that Carleton Druidism was in one of its "down-phases." Richard Shelton was in the middle of his prosperous two year ArchDruidcy at Carleton and he had groomed Glen McDavid as his successor. If anything, this was a time of Druidic Renaissance. Some Zen masters have been very intense in their attempts to "awaken" their pupils out of ignorance; perhaps this is what Thomas is trying to do?

The purpose of this sermon is about "True Names," a term that I have not heard used anywhere else. However, I suspect that Thomas was deeply inspired by the Zen in the Book of Meditations from DC(R), as was shown in the Discourse. Perhaps the idea of "True Names" was taken from Med. 1:11, where Frangquist (on his Third Order Vigil) heard his "name" called three times? With that verse, Thomas may be interpreting "name" to mean the inner reality & consciousness of Frangquist, what Reformed Druidism calls "Awareness." Thomas's discussion of "True Names" seems to have a similar purpose as the Zen master's question; "What was your original face (or name) before you were born?"

As is common with Carleton Druidism, Thomas wonderfully attacks the role of ritual in Reformed Druidism (see the Book of Faith and Epistle of David the Chronicler). Thomas appears to be putting a heavy stress on the importance of Vigiling, which I believe all Druids should do regardless of whether they choose to accept the burden of the Third Order. Another interesting reference is 3:7, that "The Patriarchs know your Name." That is a very strange statement. He is, uniquely, also playing here with a bit of numerology.

## The Smiley Letters

The Smiley Affair began at the end of the Savitzky Archdruid, and finished by the start of school at the beginning of Richard Shelton's formative Archdruidcy. Richard Smiley (CL67:Frangquist) returned to Illinois after Carleton and went to Purdue University for Grad School. It was during the Vietnam war and after graduate school, he faced the possibility of being drafted again for a war he did not believe in. Like the Cherniack affair in the Chronicles, it was a direct confrontation with authority on the issue of recognition of a religious group. What I

find so fascinating about it is the way it was resolved without having the group recognized, but accomplishing its mission and dodging definition. Also it raised the thought to me of why the government authorities allowed religious authorities not to go to war, but the laymen had to go. Are priests always more conscientious in their objection to war, or is it one scratching the other's back?

The Following is some commentary by Richard Shelton who assembled these letters.

On Thu, 30 Jan 2003 17:40:24 -0500,

Dear Michael –

I owe you a profound apology for putting this off so long. When you first asked for the Smiley stuff, I did look, but couldn't find it. Your continued prodding prompted me to look further– and further. Finally after your last phone call, I ransacked all my files. (It took several hours.) I still haven't found \*my\* copies of the letters, but in about the last place I expected to find anything– a file marked "New Stuff" – I ran across some copies I made recently of Dave's copies, which he had given to Eric. So anyway, I found something. The "originals" (themselves copies) are all in the Archives.

One look at them made me realize they wouldn't FAX very well, so I tried scanning them in and applying some image processing before hitting them with optical character recognition. That worked pretty well; I only had to re-type two of the letters, though manual editing of the optical scan was required throughout. Anyway, I give you the letters in electronic format, so at least you won't have to key them in.

Some notes about the format:

(1) The file is an ordinary .txt file, so you should have no trouble reading it and importing it into whatever text processor you're using.

(2) The letters are in chronological order, each separated from the next by a line of hyphens.

(3) All the originals were typewritten, so a monospaced font like Courier would be appropriate – but suit yourself. I did take care to preserve the line breaks of the originals, but I regularized the indentations to 3 spaces and 33 spaces.

(4) I used slashes // to delimit comments about the format: e.g., / letterhead/ to indicate that the SSS letterhead is preserved in the copy, /s/ to indicate that a signature is preserved in the copy. Comments that are not in slashes are typed or handwritten on the copy. (Exception: the "[sic]"s are my additions to this file. You can ignore them if you like.)

(5) I used the HTML <u> ... </u> tags to mark underlining. But I cheated: in the typescripts, each word is underlined separately (not the intervening spaces), while I put the tags around the entire underlined phrase.

(6) I was pretty careful about preserving non-standard punctuation (including absence of punctuation). I don't know how much flavor of the original you want to preserve.

-Richard

**Mike:** What was your view of the Smiley affair? Was it just helping a friend, a feeling of ministry-ship in the RDNA, or a protest against the war's categorization of people? I'd like to know how it affected you.

**Richard:** Principally, it was just an understanding that what Smiley was asking was something that came as part of the Archdruid's job: verifying that he was a priest, that priesthood answered our notion of minister, that insofar as I was aware, he was holding services. Of course, it didn't hurt that it was a way to help someone stay out of Vietnam – though I was not yet a staunch anti-war partisan. Steve was way ahead of me on that;

my political radicalization (such as it was) came only after the bombing of Cambodia and the frightening conservative backlash unleashed against the anti-war movement. [See Exorcism of War, Part Three of ARDA.]

However, the categorization of young people for military service is not something that bothers me per se – how else will you raise an army in need? The SSS was a creation of Congress; how else is a democracy going to meet the necessity of raising an army? I will agree that the idiocy of how people were chosen for service bugged me (still does), and the stupidity and vengeful unfairness of many of the people they got to serve on the draft boards was criminal. Also that the argument for raising an army for \*that\* war was never well established. But that there needs to be \*some\* fair mechanism for raising defensive man-power was not an issue for me.

**Mike:** When was his status finally deferred, due to age? Can't remember how it closed.

**Richard:** I don't remember the date, but it was not long (weeks?) after my last letter of 1 August 1969 to his draft board. He knew the 4-D deferment was hopeless, but he also knew that since they had scheduled his personal appeal on his 26th birthday, the board was effectively offering him a deal: they would let the matter drop without giving him the deferment, but also without giving him a motive to push things any further, lest they get into real legal difficulty. He intended to give them a good argument at the hearing, but he didn't expect to convert them.

But this was not really about 4-D deferments at all, or about whether the Druids should be recognized as a bona fide religion. My interpretation of Smiley's entire strategy is that it was one long delaying tactic to stave off the draft for several months until he turned 26. He did not raise the issue at all until the draft board finally figured out that he was no longer in grad school and reclassified him 1-A – and then he waited to the last possible moment at each stage before sending the board the requisite letter to prolong the process into the next stage. Whether he could string it out long enough was something of a long shot – but he was lucky in that the board (or the executive secretary) made a couple of procedural errors that bought him more time. (Boards were notorious for making such errors; draft evasion handbooks gave careful instructions for capitalizing on them.)

The real wildcard (and what makes the story interesting) is that RDNA had just the right whiff of legal complication about it that the draft board decided to play it easy.

Peace, – Richard

## The Codex of Form Missive

It was with great trepidation that Shelton released this document into the young eager hands of Mike the Packrat, and with great hesitance that I publish it now. Every Arch Druid makes mistakes, and this is the one that Brother Richard regrets the most. Not so much for the content, but for the manner in which it was phrased and presented. A bit too official sounding. Too much, too fast, too soon. Brother Richard is now a glacially slow Druid, but back in the early 70s, he was a rocket of energy and organizing. Perhaps in this respect, he parallels the rise of Isaac Bonewits, except that Shelton pulled back eventually, and Isaac kept going.

There had been a period before Savitzky during which much tradition had been lost, due to a poor overlapping of members, or perhaps it was a period of reformulation? Regardless, Shelton felt the pressure of the Smiley Affair, and wanted to tidy up the ship before leaving the port at the beginning of his two year Archdruidcy that Fall Term in 1969.

The records, a blue binder of past documents, was without rhyme or reason, and difficult to fathom; perhaps being planned so. Missing services and inconsistencies bothered the young Archdruid. Thus, this letter was a request for clarification.

Things that had been traditionally understood, were seemingly felt to be unnecessarily canonized here as the only way by some of the recipients, who naturally began to respond back rather vigorously at the believed imposition. In Shelton's view it was mostly a paraphrasing of what previously passed measure had stated, in a more full description. However, not all things need to be said. It is possible that many Third Order Druids had not read the Record of the Council or had fuzzy memories, and over-reacted also, as the following sample letters will attest.

**Mike:** By the way, you were involved in the Smiley Affair during the beginning of your tenure as AD, so I was wondering if the scramble for officiality influenced the Codex of Affair into being?

**Richard:** No. The Codex of Form owes far more to the grove's near brush with extinction in 1967. I wanted to be sure that what was in the Record of the Council was known; I wanted to be sure that tradition was not lost. I wanted people to let the AD know when they moved and when new priests were consecrated – because keeping track of that is the AD's responsibility. While the Codex (as I came to understand) was not the apposite solution, it addressed a problem that many besides me (including both Frangquist and Bonewits) also felt (as witness later proposals to the Council): we all realized that communicative inertia would hamper orderly change. But we finally gave up on that; gave up even on adopting a regular voting scheme (despite two or three tries). I did take the role of being the "head of a national religion" seriously. I think the Order of Investiture (Spring, 1969) reflects many of the same concerns that later engendered the Codex of Form. But the main concern was Continuity, not Recognition.

## The Reply of David

This reply by David the Chronicler left such a fierce mark on the memory of Richard Shelton, who didn't originally feel he had done anything wrong, from a person he had only just begun corresponding with over the Smiley Affair. In addition, perhaps enough years had passed to inflate the memory of Frangquist? Frangquist at the time was in Illinois, but also a few years earlier had been stationed in Korea, with a belly full of military red-tape. What a shocking reply! Glenn McDavid, in 2002, told me that, Shelton read the letter and read it again, and sat quietly stunned for a long time after that. In many senses, this letter would set Shelton on a new path for subtler expression, and perhaps steel his responses to Isaac in a few years, at what he saw as a repetition of his own mistakes in the Codex Affair.

Perhaps, with the encouragement of Frangquist, Shelton better organized and looked after the Blue Book of the Archives, despite its adventures of being shuffled between Druids and lost on several occasions.

## Reply of the Other David

Sadly, despite the professed belief that RDNA Druids could also belong to any religion, the Founder David Fisher, felt that he could no longer be a Druid. After 1976, contact did not resume with Fisher until 2002, despite repeated attempts on my part. Perhaps, like Shelton, I did not sound in the original tone of the Reform, and therefore couldn't muster a response from him. Fisher's study for the priesthood would continue until the mid 1970s, and would later go on to be a Professor at a university; rather Druidic, I believe.

## Fisher's Farewell

Fisher, five years after leaving Carleton, and a brief attempt at a grove in New York City, had found greater solace in the Episcopal church, and no longer felt need to continue the RDNA services. The letter shows a strong awareness of the different actors involved in founding the Druids, perhaps an attempt to distance his creation from himself? I recollect how difficult it had been for Nelson and Frangquist to pry the Archdruidcy from Fisher for 1964-1965. Most of the early rules of the Council of Third Order were quickly pounded out in person, and the priestess issue was a sticking point for Fisher, despite ordaining Jackie Hotz, early on the days of the Reform.

The passage about Jan Johnson writing most of the Chronicles is rather puzzling, and is not discussed anywhere else, even in Frangquist's writings. We know that Jan Johnson wrote an epistle in the summer of 1963 after he graduated, it's mentioned in the Chronicles, but nothing else is mentioned about the letter, which was not kept in the records, although Shelton mentions having it in 1976. One wonders, did Frangquist incorporate the material into the early Chronicles, or was Fisher simply mistaken? Fisher had been rather unhappy with Frangquist's publication, which made him sound too much like a prophet for a new religion, which is why Fisher attempted to have "Book of Faith" added to the Chronicles; thus starting the tradition of the Apocrypha.

## The Polite Refusal

Now chastened, Shelton had quickly determined to withdraw the Codex, but was still standing rather firm on the matters of protocol in regards to the Order of Grannos (4th Order), whose Patriarch had to be appointed by the Council. This problem of distant Patriarchs would continue to plague the RDNA debates into the mid 80s, as priests wished to join existing Higher Orders, but were unable to travel easily or locate the necessary Patriarchs.

## Apology for Simplicity

This letter refers to the new attempt by Shelton to yet again redress the Priestess issue, by making them identical in all respects with that of Priests. Fisher was considered the last holdout in the search for unanimity on the issue. As Shelton would be cautious of Isaac's reforms, so Frangquist and Fisher and Larson would apply brakes on Shelton during this period of campus unrest and revolutionary fervor.

## The Report of Richard

The Priestess vote, the last to be passed by the Council, would consume the remainder of Shelton's two years in office, as this report shows at the end of his first year in the role as Arch Druid. A taxing precision of protocol would later pay off during the Isaac Affair. The feminist movement, I believe had not yet reached its peak, when this issue had been raised; and it may seem like semantics to some viewers, but was the longest simmering debate in the Reform, only resolved in 1971. The choice to remove the phrases in the Book of Customs in DC(E), and other "objectionable" material, caused some discomfort in 1976.

## The Epistle to the Encyclopedist

The last writing that I have from Fisher before his disappearance from records. Gordon Melton is a rather famous publisher of encyclopedias on religious matters. After this letter, the RDNA would begin to show up in his various works, with

information gathered from Fisher's correspondence with Melton. During this period at Carleton (1971-74), there are few letters of correspondence available to me, and there is some indication, that Druids after McDavid were not very concerned about the Council, until Isaac showed up.

## Book of Changes, Part One

As was mentioned elsewhere, I broke this Book into three parts, in order to facilitate the model of a dialogue. This first part contains the letter sent by Isaac Bonewits to the many members of the Council on July 18th, 1974. I fully describe the impact of this letter in my "History of Reformed Druidism in America." Essentially, the last few Archdruids of Carleton had been lax in their Chairship of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, such that Isaac had assumed that Berkeley & Twin Cities were the only groves left. Isaac by this point had fully embraced Neo-Paganism, which few of the other Druids had ever heard of, and he wished to redefine the Reform into a Reconstructionist Neo-Pagan religion. There were other Reconstructionist Neo-Pagan religions at the time such as Nordic, Egyptian and Greco-Roman; but no exclusively Celtic ones (except possibly Celtic Wicca). Thinking the rest of the Third Orders had "given up" on Druidism, he wanted to make the simple necessary changes for reconversion of the RDNA.

This was not the first time that members of the Council had heard of Isaac. Most knew that Isaac had been ordained to the Third Order in 1969 by Larson. We have letters of communication with Isaac between McDavid, Frangquist and Shelton from the early 70s which are congenial and discuss his interest in the occult. Surprisingly, during those early years, Isaac disapproved of proposals for incorporating more hierarchy or dogmatizing the Chronicles. This letter must have seemed a complete about-face to the Druids in 1974 who thought that they had known Isaac. However, I can understand this as Isaac seeing the growing developments, and wishing to take a greater role, especially after working in a national publication like Gnostica in Minneapolis.

The problem was, as the letters point out, that Carleton and many other groves were still operating, just not talking. Also, the Druids not active in Groves, disagreed with the idea that they were lesser Druids than Grove-active Druids. In short, Isaac should have tested the waters before starting a hurricane in a teacup. A few reconnaissance letters could have avoided most of the acrimony that the Isaac Affair brought up. It is also my opinion from hindsight, that Isaac really had little idea of what Carleton Druidism was, because he only had really known Larson, who was not one to aggressively correct the mistakes of others. Sometimes, such brinkmanship is necessary to goose a response out of the Council.

This one letter, along with the First Epistle of Isaac, which came a month later, rudely awoke the slumbering Druids throughout the Reform. It galvanized them to reaffirm their distaste of several aspects of organized religions. This is probably one of the most important letters every written in the RDNA, at least from an Archival perspective, because it generated controversy and a flood of letters which give us a good idea of the mindset of Reformed Druids during the mid-70s. It also gave us a chance to see their condensed Druidic instruction to Isaac, what would normally take years of living at Carleton to absorb naturally. The resulting letters also show, pretty effectively, what Druidism WAS NOT.

As the following letters will explain, their were several aspects of Isaac's letter that disturbed them, primarily: a need for definition, an interest in evangelizing (and quickly at that), swapping priesthoods with non-Druidic Neo-Pagans to assure the survival of the Apostolic Succession, an assumption that

Druidism for everyone is really Neo-Paganism, sexist language (on the Reform's part), a desire for stronger National organization, a feeling that Carleton Archdruids were not suited for the Chair of the Council, that the Higher Orders should be restarted, the issue of majority (instead of unanimity) for settling votes in the Council, the incredible haste of the voting proposal deadline (within 3 months, by November 1st), and what appeared as the dogmatizing of the Druid Chronicles.

All very alarming, considering that it all came from out of the blue. However many of the issues of communication, first raised in the Codex of Affair and Priestess voting letters, would not so easily be put to rest.

## The Epistle of Renny

Renny was the second female Archdruid at Carleton, and had taken over from Steve Corey, who had left a mess. Now normally Renny, titled "the Silent," is not one given to anger. Much of the bitterness in this letter, which I am uncomfortable with, is due to the fact that she did not access to a copier and would have to distribute handwritten copies of Isaac's July 18 1974 letter to dozens of past Carleton Druids in time so that a vote could be done by Isaac's imminent deadline.

Her complaints (unbrotherly tone, undemocratic presentation, haste for growth, and concern with restrictive definitions) were commonplace among the replies to Isaac's original letter, and were not assuaged by the First Epistle of Isaac that soon would follow it, as you'll soon see. It should be remembered that Isaac probably didn't really expect a response from Carleton, thinking it was moribund.

## The Epistle of Ellen

Ellen Conway wrote this on almost the same day as Renny's Epistle and the Words of Green. This is not unusual since, Richard Shelton and Ellen Conway were good friends, Carleton Druids of the early 70s, and were then studying together at University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. Ellen would later marry Richard. She also founded the Ann Arbor grove and worked hard with Richard to control the Isaac Affair. Here we see the first instance in the debate about the primacy of the Basic Tenets and the need to distinguish between personal beliefs and Reformed Druidism. I suspect that Ellen's comment on Neo-Paganism, probably did not sit well with Isaac.

## The Words of Green

This was a letter from Richard Shelton to the entire Council on 8/14/74 to begin an actual discussion of Isaac's two letters, something that Isaac's letters had neglected to do (instead of putting things up for a near-immediate vote). Its title comes from the fact that Richard chose green ink when mimeographing copies for people. Shelton, as I mention in his biography, was similar to Frangquist and myself in that we three have a deep long term dedication to preserving the existence of Druidism at Carleton. We three also were involved in producing some of the literature of the Reform. At the time of writing this, his wife, Ellen Conway was currently ArchDruid of the Ann-Arbor Grove (where they were in grad-school); to which Shelton succeeded her. Since Shelton had written to most of the Druids up to this point, it was natural that he would be the one to put the "Carleton Response" into a dignified order. In many ways, Shelton's letter quickly turned Isaac's seemingly belligerent letter into an intensely interesting debate.

An ironic background fact to this letter, was that Shelton had naively proposed the Codex of Form back in the summer of 1969 which had sought to clarify the literary history of Druidism, formalize certain definitions and to clarify the

structure of the Council to enable legislation to proceed more smoothly. Isaac at that time, along with Larson and Frangquist, had felt that such codification was too restrictive on Druidism. Now here in 1974, Isaac was seeking codification (among many of the items on his agenda) and Richard was opposing it! Richard was also the only Chair of the Council, besides Frangquist, to oversee the successful passage of legislation through the Council. In fact, Shelton was probably one of the few Druids who understood how the Council worked!

As you can see, Richard succinctly crystallized some of the important points of objection; the non-necessity for extensive self-definition, the inherent non-authority and humbleness of the priesthood in Reformed Druidism, the need to apply Reformed Druidism upon one's own personal religion (and not vice-a-versa), and the need to dialogue in a calm manner befitting Reformed Druidism.

## The First Epistle of Isaac

As Isaac mention in his endnotes to DC(E), that this Epistle was written after the letter in the Book of Changes Part One, and that the First Epistle was intended to have been mailed with that letter. The Letter was mailed out, and the Epistle followed about four weeks later in late August of 1974, although we do not have an original copy in the Archives. This delay may have caused even more discord, because the July 18th letter was too curt to really explain Isaac's intentions, and, arriving all by itself, may have negatively predisposed the Druids to any further mailings from Isaac (not that the First Epistle improved their opinion of Isaac). Isaac apparently had already gotten some strong feedback before he had a chance to mail out the First Epistle, and you can see some "Damage Control" being performed through out this Epistle to soothe irritated Druids (see Chapter One). It is likely that he had already received letters from Ellen Conway '72, Richard Shelton and Renny Seidel (who was then currently the ArchDruid of Carleton). Isaac is therefore especially carefully to explain Neo-Paganism, because it is unlikely that any non-Berkeleyite knew much about this term, which was created in 1970 or so. Reformed Druids up to that point had faced many verbal attacks from outsiders that they were practicing "paganism," and now here was one among them who was claiming that it was!

As I discuss in my History, Isaac has a knack for analyzing and micro-labeling things into categories, although he can also be very creative and satirical. Isaac wrote a book, "Real Magic" in 1971, after his graduation and became famous for receiving the first degree in Magic in the entire world. The First Epistle, along with the Second Epistle, shows how Isaac put his sharp mind to examining Reformed Druidism and to show how easily the forms and purposes of Reformed Druidism could be interpreted as being complementary with Neo-Paganism. This was nothing really new, in principal, to Reformed Druidism. Since the beginning, Reformed Druids have always related Reformed Druidism to their own religion; whether it be Christian, Jew, Zen, Taoism, atheism, etc. What was new to most Reformed Druids, was that Isaac was claiming that Reformed Druidism **was the same thing as** Neo-Paganism because it practiced magic, worshipped (what he felt were) authentic gods and goddesses, and had its own scriptures and priesthood. As the responding letters pointed out, many Reformed Druids considered these to be mere outer trappings around a basic common activity and experience of Awareness.

## Gobbledegook and Red Tape

I always enjoy reading Gerre Goodman's letters because she constantly reminds us of the need for simplicity in our Druidism. Gerre was at Carleton during Richard's and Glenn's Archdruidcy, but she never really played a big role as a leader. Isaac never got this first letter or her second one, or if he did, he soon forgot about it (based on my talks with him). Which is a pity, since hers was one of the most calming letters that he could have received.

## The Epistle of Norman

This letter was written by Norman Nelson to Isaac (and others) on November 10th, 1974.

As I mentioned earlier in the notes to the Epistle of David the Chronicler, Nelson had been deeply involved in the original founding of the RDNA at Carleton, a stand-in Archdruid for a few months, led many services at Carleton, helped to found the Higher Orders, was a Patriarch of the 5th order, had run at least two official missionary groves, and was a general resource for confused Druids. It was apparently rare for Norman to intrude upon the folly of others, much like Larson, but he decided to step in after receiving Isaac's letters. Norman would later help Isaac's preparation of *The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*, by providing commentary about the early Days of the Reform.

Norman's letter has a few prominent themes; the value of humor in the Reform, the role of "dis-organization," the independence of Reformed Druidism from allegiance with any other religion/philosophy (including Neo-Paganism), its applicability to any religion or philosophy, the unimportance of external trappings, and the viable existence of solitary Reformed Druidism outside of Grove activity. Perhaps, not readily apparent, was the understanding attitude that he conveyed while still holding to his own opinion; the hallmark of good Druidical communication.

Norman has recently joined the RDNA talk conference on yahoo.com in 2002, and is now contributing more of his insightful (pun-filled) mini-epistle on how things all got started. He has always been jovially friendly to phone-calls for assistance in Druidical matters.

## The Book of Changes, Part Two

The Book of Changes was written by Isaac near July of 1976 as he was doing the final preparations for printing the *Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*. "Changes" is essentially his look back on the early half of the Isaac Affair, which never really ended until he started ADF in 1983, and to relate to the world his analysis of the situation in mid-1976. Chapter two shows the voting results of his July 18, 1974 letter. The issue of voting methods is covered more fully in my *History of Reformed Druidism*. Essentially, I believe that most of the Druids had come from Carleton (about 80% of the voters) and many declined or abstained (abstaining is particularly Druidic in that it is a show of independence from organization). It is questionable if anybody "won" since each side was using different standards of "winning"; the Carleton contingent believing in unanimity and Isaac believing in majority-rule, or at least 2/3. Those Druids who did agree on some points (esp. the current ArchDruids of Carleton origin) were primarily concerned that greater communication was required amongst members of the Council, so that future debates would not be so bitter, and founded the New RDNA.

As I've stressed before, this split into three branches is confusing. The New RDNA (NRDNA) was primarily a collection of Third Orders who wanted greater communication

and organization than the RDNA felt was necessary. This first variant of the NRDNA primarily existed as long as the Provisional Council of ArchDruids existed (up until about 1977) to discuss possible issues to bring up for vote with the Council of Dalon Ap Landu. The Schismatic Druids of North America were predominantly, if not officially, a Neo-Pagan enclave headed by Isaac. When the NRDNA & Provisional Council fell into disuse after 1977, the remaining Post-Larson Berkeleyites and the SDNA Mother Grove assumed the abandoned name of the NRDNA, with the provision that non-pagan members would still have equal rights. Therefore be aware of the existence of essentially two versions of the NRDNA, especially in the interregnum year of 1976-1977, when the transformation of the NRDNA took place.

Indeed as Chapter Three explains, most people agreed on what the existing traditions of voting and hierarchy was, but wished to discuss possible adjustments to organization, liturgy and other minor points.

## The Epistle to the Myopians

This was written by Joan Carruth on March 25th 1976. The title means "Letter to the Near-Sighted," which I think was appropriate. She was an Archdruid or at least a Co-ArchDruid of Berkeley from around 1975 to 1981, with various gaps. She was one of Larson's protégés and a close friend of Isaac, although she would eventually oppose Isaac's full plan of transforming the NRDNA. She also at various times edited the *Druid Chronicler* magazine and proposed the modest organizing referendums of the Coalition Council of the Order of Dalon ap Landu in the late 70s (that were more modest than Isaac's) when Carleton Druidism had once again lapsed. From my interviews with her, she is an aggressive debater and a leader of people. An overabundance of leadership was one of the factors leading to the Diaspora of Berkeley Druidism. She currently runs the Birch Grove in New Hampshire.

Her Epistle is part praise of the universe, and partly a reminder to the Reform that the world around us (The Earth-Mother) exists above and beyond the dualism of monotheistic thinking. As with Isaac's letters, the issue of ecological awareness and feminism is encouraged. She brings up a good point that Carleton Druidism, or rather most of the US, had to change from a nodding appreciation of Nature to a responsible stewardship of the Earth. It is a valuable lesson to us all. The letter had also been mailed independently of the *Druid Chronicles* to many members of the Council.

## Lessons for a New Archdruid

Isaac was planning to visit Carleton in the Mid-summer of 1976, during school break, just prior to publishing the *Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*. Despite Shelton's early attempts to produce a reading collection for future Archdruids, Richard did not really trust Isaac's motivations, after the earlier Isaac Affair debacle and the introduction of a full-fledged religion such as Neo-paganism. After a very difficult transition of Archdruidcy, the very young Donald Morrison had just taken office, and we can tell that Shelton didn't want an impressionable young Archdruid being confused by Isaac, or leaving Isaac the impression that the current Chairman of the Council of Dalon ap Landu was a novice. Shelton almost appears to be a regent guiding a young prince, not unlike when he took me under his wing in 1993. In retrospect, this letter paints Richard as a frightened schemer, which is certainly not the case anymore, but in the context, we can understand why he was being so cautious, with all the debates that were being raised about replacing the Carleton Archdruid in the organizational hierarchy.

This letter and the succeeding letter, “Post Carleton Perplexations,” give us an interesting window into the progress of the publication efforts by Shelton to produce an alternative text to the *Druid Chronicles (Evolved)* and to disassociate with Larson & Isaac’s pet project. It also gives us his rationale for the stage instructions of the Beltane service that you’ll find in Part Three. Much of this lore could have been lost without this being written down here.

## The Epistle of Richard

This was written by Richard Shelton sometime in May of 1976 to Isaac, but circulated to others. Richard was then the ArchDruid of Ann-Arbor, Morrison had returned from France and finally took up the responsibilities of ArchDruid of Carleton, and Isaac had left Minneapolis to return to Berkeley; an opportunity lost. Richard had spent the last year and a half as a reference source for Isaac, and Isaac had spent the last 18 months putting the *Druid Chronicles (Evolved)* together with Robert Larson. The initial rift between the two Druids had narrowed as they worked together and talked more. Isaac, at some level, had come to the general assumption that he was the odd-man-out in the Reform and was using the *Druid Chronicles (Evolved)* as a kind of self-inspection tool to work out a blue print for a new Druidic Neo-Pagan religion. Apparently the previous letter from Shelton had picked a raw nerve, probably telling him that most of the Carleton RDNA wouldn’t be interested in the DC(E), which was Isaac’s new baby. There was some dissent at Berkeley also in this period as Larson’s unifying influence began to recede and control of the Mother Grove pass to Joan and Isaac.

Shelton provided a useful look back at the Isaac Affair and tried to explain this to Isaac. He reiterated that the Reform needs to avoid formalism, must keep itself separate (but applicable) to other religions, the need for sober and responsible discussion, the avoidance of Archdruid “kingship” over the lower Orders, the independence of each Grove, and the omnipotence of the individual within Druidism. Is it well known to all the Druids, that the publication of DC(E) (and Isaac’s further public interaction) would forever form a connection in the public’s mind between “Neo-Paganism” and “Reformed Druidism.” Up to this point, most outsiders didn’t know squat about Druids, and this vagueness had been a boon to Reformed Druidism. In all likelihood, even without Isaac Bonewits, a Celtic form of Neo-Paganism would have adopted the name of Druidism and influenced public perception of the word Druid.

The big debate of this time period was the provisional Council of ArchDruids which was, as described above, an attempt to improve communication between the Groves. One of the points that the Sheltons were especially worried about was idea of the Chair of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu being chosen from members of the Council of Archdruids. Shelton, amongst others, feared that without the influence of the Carleton environment upon the current Chair of the Council, that the Council might actually abandon the traditional ways of Druidism and start willy-nilly passing legislation or definitions that would force older-Druids to drop out as minority losers. It is also noteworthy that Shelton had just managed to finally relocate the Blue Book of the Archives, and was not interested in having it travel through the Postal Service.

The phrase “questions not tending to edification” is a favorite of Frangquist and Shelton, and comes from a reading in the Green Book.

## Post Carleton Perplexations

Despite the calm demeanor of the Epistle of Richard, Shelton was seriously bothered by the activities of the DC(E), the formation of the NRDA, and their tinkering with the Council. In addition, Shelton was reformulating his Druidism after some disappointing years at the Ann Arbor Grove. What to do, but write to Frangquist for further guidance, and explain his background strategy during the current and previous debates?

More is written here about his attempts to get the Green Book and Carleton Apocrypha. To the best of his recollection, neither was officially distributed or published, due to lingering copyright concerns, graduate school, and burnout over the current issues. A rather deliciously enticing mention is made of the Epistle of Jan, but we cannot locate this letter.

My own feelings about post-Carleton blues are rather similar. One of the great difficulties for life after Carleton, is getting the requisite frequent interaction, facility use, and friendship with other Druids. For every Druid service at Carleton, there were several folk-dances, sing-a-longs, plays and shared classes to improve and deepen the relationships. I guess one comparison to the problem is that for some Carleton Druids, being away from Northfield is like a Jew being away from Israel; things don’t come as forcefully the farther you go from your origins, unless you can adapt them to new circumstances.

## The First Epistle of Robert

This missive was written by Robert Larson and postmarked as May 26th, 1976. For more information on Robert Larson see the *Historiography* on “Leabhar Toirdhealbhagh.” Larson wasn’t one to butt in other people’s business, but there comes a time when you must step in between the combatants and heal the peace. Larson, a printer at this time, was in the process of preparing the *Druid Chronicles (Evolved)* for publication.

There are several points of interest for the historian about Robert’s two epistles. It is one of the few glimpses into the originator of Berkeley Druidism, an old-time Carleton Druid, and the ArchDruid nurturer of the Berkeley Grove from 1968 to 1976/7. From the sheer literary output, one would assume that Isaac was the most dominant spokesmen for the Berkeley Grove. After a dozen interviews with other Berkeleyites, it appears that Isaac was merely the most vocal and liberal with the pen amongst them. The people might have listened to Isaac, but they followed Robert. There was scattered interaction between Frangquist, Shelton, Sherbak, Savitzky, Carruth and Larson up to the mid-70s. Larson’s was the quiet, steady voice of Berkeley.

In this letter we get another idea of what form of Druidism was being pursued in Berkeley, and why so many of the Berkeley Druids resisted Isaac’s changes over the next decade. It also provides us with an eye-witness description of Isaac’s behavior that we don’t have elsewhere in our records. This letter gives more depth to NRDNA than Isaac’s letters alone would have provided to us.

Robert’s First Epistle is essentially discussing his idea of a Provisional Council of Archdruids among the original NRDNA, but also being open to the RDNA. Its purposes are plain and simple; dissemination of news, record keeping and a safeguard for keeping communication open amongst the Council; in case the Carleton ArchDruidcy should go into remission. In those circumstances, the Chair of the Council of Dalon ap Landu would annually rotate around the members of the Council of Archdruids, until Carleton got back on its feet. The letter spends a great deal of time reaffirming basic Reformed Druidic ideals

of traditional disorganization and independence, which Larson understood as a member of the original Carleton Grove.

## The Second Epistle of Ellen

Ellen's snappy response to Robert's proposal is to lay the red-tape even thicker on the process, ensuring that things can't progress without safeguards. Rather ingenious, I do believe. It makes you wonder if the red-ribbons on the third order are a symbolic reminder of our tendency to get dogmatic and officious, despite our best intentions, thus acting as a warning to Druids, that this is a person to avoid, or does it indicate we're already hopelessly bound already?

## Felicitous Communications

A very calm response to relax and not let things eat you up. Just what Shelton probably needed at the time. Having dealt with his own attempt at a schism (see Epistle of Midsummer and Early Chronicles), Frangquist knew how to deal with division in the ranks; with calm words and a ready ear.

The Frangquists were in Germany during the Mid-70s to work on several computer projects as civilian computer programmers for the U.S. Army. An earlier overseas posting in Korea in the late 60s had also given Frangquist sufficient experience with red-tape. The Epistle of Midsummer was the second part of this letter.

## The Epistle of Midsummer

This was written by David Frangquist and Deborah Gavrin Frangquist to be read, in their absence, at the Midsummer service at Carleton's Monument Hill on June 21st, 1976. Don Morrison was the current Archdruid and many of the older Druid alumni were returning for their class Reunions. It was also the hope that Isaac Bonewits would come down from Minneapolis to heal some bitter wounds. Unfortunately, Isaac had to leave Minneapolis a few weeks earlier and return to Berkeley, postponing the final reconciliation between him and the Carleton faction for 17 years when he returned to Carleton in April of 1994. The atmosphere at the time of the reading of this Epistle was a bit frantic. The last two years had seen some fierce debating, unsettling accusations, the schisming of the Reform, the soon-to-be-published DC(E) which threatened dogmatization of the Reform and the realization that the Carleton ArchDruidcy was a shaky institution at best with an uncertain future viability. The movement felt exhaustion, distrust and nervous confusion. Wounds needed healing.

Realizing this, David & Dee brought up the essential foundations of Druidism to re-enforce the strength of the listener's Druidism. They reaffirmed the listener's memories of how Carleton and Reformed Druidism overlapped so heavily as to be indistinguishable and pleasant. Druidism served its purpose by helping the present Druids, which was sufficient now, even if the organization disappeared tomorrow. The present was all-important, by looking ahead you defeated the purpose of Druidism. Druidism existed to ourselves outside of labels, definition, or the opinions of others. The Basic Tenets were dredged up again as the only basic definition for Reformed Druids, regardless of whatever else a Druid later professed. Finally the Council was recognized as a tool for communicating within the Reform, but not as the only sign of the existence of Reformed Druidism, which would live in the hearts of every Druids. If the Council changed its purpose, such as to become a tool to divide the Druids, then they should ignore it and continue on with what they believed was the Reform.

Soothing as this letter was, the debates on the Council of Dalon ap Landu and the provisional Council continued on for

another two years until most Carleton Druids promptly decided to drop the issue completely. Druidism among enrolled Carleton students kind of disappeared after a few years too. The West Coast NRDNA, pretty much was left to its own devices not so long after this point. Contact between the RDNA of Carleton and the NRDNA was resumed in 1992, but has been consistently spotty since then.

## The Second Epistle of Robert

This letter was written by Robert Larson on July 2nd, 1976. As mentioned in the First Epistle of Robert, Robert has emerged from silence and had entered into the debates of the Reform, providing us with an opinion of a Berkeleyite besides Isaac. It was also written after Robert had assumed the Chieftainship of the Council of Archdruids. As far as I know, no one officially succeeded him in that role after the first year. Due to the instability of the times, the Council of Archdruids collapsed along with many groves. Most of the communicative and record-keeping functions proposed for the Council of Archdruids were undertaken by Isaac & Joan Carruth with the publication of the Druid Chronicler newsletter for the next three years, then by the Pentalpha magazine, and finally by the Druid Miscellany newsletter.

Robert acknowledged the Sheltons' objections to formalization, but pointed out several practical points to the Council of Archdruids. Most of these points have been repeated before. An interesting prediction was that most of the future Third Orders would not be from Carleton. Had the NRDNA not stumbled at the end of the 1970s, this might have held true. By my estimates, there has been a 50/50 mixture of post 1976 priests coming from the NRDNA and Carleton.

Most delightful, he gives us a story that can be examined on many, many levels. I love stories.

## The Second Epistle of Isaac

This was written by Isaac Bonewits in the summer of 1976, probably in late July 1976, two years after the First Epistle of Isaac. It is generically addressed to the Council, but it is uncertain if he actually mailed it or if he merely published it to be read in the DC(E). The first half of 1976 had been filled with a resurgence of letters between Druids, after an interestingly quiet 1975. It appears that the Second Epistle, was Isaac's way of explaining himself in full-blown-detail, to clarify his terms, to prove his competence, to drive home his point that Reformed Druidism could indeed be easily converted into a Neo-Pagan religion, and to better express his world view. Like Chapter Eight explains, he has acknowledged that the Epistles would not change many peoples' view of Reformed Druidism, but at least they would understand what he was going through.

Most of the themes of the Epistle are apparent to the reader and need little review here. What is perhaps interesting is the fact that the First and Second Epistle are very good examples of how the Neo-Paganistic worldview could be interpreted by a Reformed Druid. Like Gerre's letter, each Druid often reinterprets their own religion after their experience with Druidism. One should not assume that all the Neo-Pagans of the NRDNA from 1976 until the present are in agreement with Isaac in his world view, just as no one would assume that David Fisher's view of Christianity is identical to Norman's or even my own. Isaac's Epistles are perhaps best read alongside of Larson and Carruth's to give the reader an idea of the opinion diversity amongst the Neo-Pagans in the NRDNA.

The early seventies were the nascent years of the Neo-Pagan movement, which had emerged from Wicca and the



occult scene. As with any newborn religious movement, there were some people who were interested in defining and shaping their own movement, and Isaac was amongst the forefront. Isaac, since around 1972 when Neo-Paganism first identified itself, had been deeply involved in this movement and is still considered a knowledgeable expert on the Neo-Pagan movement today. With this in mind, one may reinterpret the Epistles as his way of laying down a path for future Reformed Druids to investigate the possibilities of the Neo-Pagan movements. In fact, the entire *Druid Chronicles (Evolved)* serves this purpose well. Indeed, the original *Druid Chronicles (Reformed)* and the *Green Book* appear to be laying down a path oriented towards the East and towards personal philosophy. Isaac would, however, continue to encourage the Neo-Pagans of the NRDNA to redefine Reformed Druidism as a Neo-Pagan movement, adopt the strength of a clear religious structure and (perhaps more importantly) follow Isaac. Most of the Neo-Pagans chose not to go with Isaac, for reasons I detailed in my *History*. Suffice it to say, many objected in the same way the Carleton Druids did.

The Epistles also foreshadowed the kinds of questions that Isaac was dealing when he sabbaticaled in 1979 (to return briefly in 1981). He had begun to formulate the structure and rules of what would become “Ar nDraiocht Fein” (ADF), a definitively Neo-Pagan religion, in 1981 to 1983. Although Isaac did go on to formulate an unquestionably definable religion in ADF, it should be noted that each Reformed Druid essentially did so also in that they either returned to their religion in a new interpretation or formed a new solitary religion or philosophy. Isaac’s religion, merely had more followers than the mostly solitary religions/philosophies of the other Reformed Druids. Something to think about.

## The Book of Changes, Part Three

As Isaac describes in Chapters four and five, everything was in a big confusing mess during the summer of 1976 when Isaac & Larson were working on the DC(E), published in August. Procedural steps had been skipped, diplomacy dropped in favor of speed, and issues voted upon before opinions had solidified. The next couple years saw a grudging acceptance of DC(E) as a reference tool for secluded groves, as a fountain of trivia, a nostalgic look upon the early traditions, and a recruiting tool for the NRDNA. Interestingly enough, it was the publication of DC(E) that permitted the reconstruction of Carleton Druidism in 1985, after yet another cyclical collapse.

The Provisional Council, as mentioned earlier, didn’t operate effectively after 1976 due to Grove-closings through the country. The idea of a majority vote in 4:13, was never widely accepted, even inside of the second NRDNA. The long-term result of the Provisional Council of Archdruids was that everybody had come to the conclusion that their Groves were independent, as were all the individuals in a Grove. Indeed what authority does an organization have, except what you give to it? Somehow the anarchic underpinnings of the Reform would continue to pester Isaac within the NRDNA, until he finally quit in 1981 and went to make a fresh start with ADF. Interestingly enough, the same problem cropped up again in ADF, but in a more manageable form.

## Cup Filled to the Brim with Druidism

This letter was written by Gerre MacInnes Goodman on October 21st, 1976 to Isaac, but circulated widely amongst her friends and enemies. Gerre Goodman was a participant of that Druidic renaissance that occurred under Savitzky-Shelton-

McDavid during the height of the Vietnam War. Her letter comes after the *Druid Chronicles (Evolved)* had been published, and all the sides were getting tired of the debate.

Her letter was a letter of healing. It is also a deeply personal letter and self-examination, not uncommon amongst Reformed Druids, but very topical to the debates of her time. Her message is simple; love and tolerance; although that message has been harder to practice than to preach. One can see in this letter, one more attempt to break Isaac of his now legendary habit of categorizing and labeling everything around him. With labeling comes exclusion, with exclusion potential experiences are denied, with experiences denied spiritual growth may be stymied. The letter also shows another attempt by yet another Reformed Druid to analyze their own religious heritage with fresh eyes, but being cautious not to redefine Druidism as their newly rediscovered religion that they now have joined. Druidism is a tool, not the final products. Like Isaac, she feels that Druidism is related to her own Christian religion, much as Druidism is related to his Neo-Paganism. While she may go further into “oneness” than most other Druids, it still an admirable example. The last vital note for the researcher is her opinion of the impossibility of defrocking or excommunication with the Reform, an activity vital for a serious organization to maintain its sense of separateness.

## Salutations

A pleasant, brief poem from Dale, a Carleton Druid. I cannot remember who she wrote this to, probably Morrison, Shelton or Frangquist.

## The Third Epistle of Isaac

After a few years of experimenting with the Pentalpha organization (see Part 4 & 11) and designing ever more complicated rituals (see Part 3), and noticing that the Carleton Faction of RDNA was not corresponding very much anymore, he felt the need to preach again on the matter of ritual strength. I believe he was becoming more result oriented, and not very happy with certain inadequacies in the existing format traditionally performed by the RDNA.

This era of the Reform, as yet, has very little documentation outside of Pentalpha and Live Oak publications. Hopefully with the further examination of personal archives from NRDNA members, greater light will be shed on the reasons for the schisming of the Mother Grove at this point.

## Musings of an Ancient Religion in A Modern World

Shirine had posted a few articles to the Pentalpha/Druid Chronieler, which reached most of the NRDNA, SDNA and other interested Druids on the scene in 1979; but the Carleton network was apparently dispersed, so few will have seen this letter or its original publication. I was particular enthralled by the simple question that this letter posed, on where we draw our traditions from; the spoken or written word. I believe that much of RDNA tradition is found in the customs, odd quirks, mannerisms, method of discussion, character, and a hundred other small actions that are picked up in the traditional year of following an older member through the cycle of the seasons. You can’t get salvation from a book (or a bottle), but a book may help in that journey towards truth; but never taking its place.

## The Fourth Epistle of Isaac

Another editorial by Isaac in the Pentalpha Journal. Isaac's research and writings mentioned appear to be the nucleus of the establishment of a new system that was to develop into the ADF. However, it might have been one of the many book projects of Isaac that never got around to publishing. It is around this time that Isaac caught the "Indo-European Fever" that was beginning to garner interest in the Neo-Pagan community.

## The Fifth Epistle of Isaac

After a rather disastrous re-election conflict in the Mother Grove, when it became apparent that the majority in the NRDNA would not accompany Isaac on his changes, Isaac decided to break off more completely than before.

I really admire Isaac for breaking out of the two weak bonds of the Reform, and proceeding to give birth to a new (and more complicated) creation that many others would lovingly assist in raising. It must have been as much a relief for him as when he left the Catholic seminary high school as a youth. However, he also took with him, his ability to keep the RDNA moderately in communication with each other. This job would soon be taken over by Emmon Bodfish and his Druid Missal-Any newsletter (see Part 11).

## Epistle of Sally

I included this letter from one of Isaac's earlier wives, to show the enthusiastic support that he received in those early 80s as he began a Neo-Pagan religion, based on several years of planning and experimentation. Sally apparently was a big help to Isaac in the Pentalpha project, and apparently married him for a few years.

## The Beginning of ADF

Now obviously this was not meant to be an RDNA epistle, however, it shows Isaac's first steps out in the new religion of ADF. After a year of planning, the basic framework was set and he wrote quite an excellent letter for the first issue of the Druid's Progress magazine. This letter has been floating about on the internet and gets quite a bit of press time, and is referred to unconsciously whenever Isaac speak. Isaac by this time had spent over 13 years in the developing Neo-pagan movement and was well known in the community.

## Open Letters to the Grove

There are at least two types of Druids in the Reform; those who write a lot, and those who don't. Emmon joined in the late 70s, and became a very important member of the Live Oak Grove that split off from the Berkeley Mother Grove's satellite. Larry Press nominally ran the Live Oak Grove, but it appeared that it was the diligent and forceful Emmon who produced the newsletter, provided and maintained the Grove site, and kept track of the official matters since the Live Oak Grove had incorporated as a tax-recognized charity (i.e. a government approved church). Unfortunately, after a few years of bliss, there was a difficult period leading up to an election, in which several new members (including a token third-order Bob Blunt) elected themselves as the officers of the Grove, in effect forcing out Larry, Emmon and Susan. Emmon's response was to refuse access to his property for rituals to the corporation and continue business as usual, just un-officially. Grove services would continue on his property until 1993, but in a diminishing sense after 1990.

## Druidism and Truth

Now the Druid Missal-Any publication by Emmon was a fine publication in the pre-computer age, and showed a great deal of artistic ingenuity, that isn't really captured by my republication efforts in Part 11. One of the more constant authors of articles was Tom Cross from Post-Oak Grove in Texas, who was a linguist by training, and an educator by profession. His specialty was Ancient Gaul, which is a difficult

specialty since there isn't much surviving material on that culture, and is also easier for the same reason.

This letter, in his standard didactic manner, was the seed of the ensuing year long debate. In his writings, I catch the faintest parallels with Isaac; that here is another NRDNA Druid who has the embryo of a new system, and yet remains in the NRDNA during the gestation period; sharing all those hormonal creative reflections every time they feel a kick in their womb. Isaac and Tom are not currently friends, and appear to avoid each other; yet they both are rather allergic to monotheism and sketchy scholarship, claiming rather high standard for themselves and others.

## Letter to the Editor

In contrast to Tom, Albion seeks inspiration from doing things, rather than reading and reconstructing them. Albion is a gentle sort of soul, the water to Tom's fire, so to speak. When they mix you get smoke and steam. Apparently Albion had been taking some type of correspondence course with Tom up until this letter, which was published in the Missal-any by Emmon, and had had disagreements with Tom, but had been unable to resolve those either. The resulting debate here in our records is not unlike overhearing a married couple who airs their private argument at a public restaurant. Like most 70s cop shows, the two partners are opposites, whom we love to watch argue on their beat.

## A Rebuttal to Albion

While the ancient Celtic Bards were renowned for their prowess with satire and sarcasm, I think Tom overreacted a bit to Albion's letter; perhaps demonstrating the rather touchy pride and short temper that gets the Celts so often into trouble. He has taken Albion's light deference to scholarship as a personal affront and unleashes a torrent of ink. After reading this, you can imagine Albion's feeling; no, actually, you can read it, since it is the next letter.

## A Rebuttal to Cross

Despite being baited by Tom, Albion shows restraint. I find it an eloquent and conciliatory response, an equally important bardic skill.

## The Balanced Epistle

Les Craig was a "solitary third" order druid in Humboldt county in California, who apparently had epic battles trying to maintain her garden against the beasties and weather. I wanted to put in several dozen of her regular correspondences into this Apocrypha, but instead decided to make a collection of seasonal essays along with Emmon's introductory letters. However, even this laid-back Druid with pronounced Bardic skills (she founded the Order of Oberon) had to step into the ring. If anything, this debate centers around knowledge, tradition and authority; topics which she gently weaves together.

## Spring Equinox Salvo

People will get angry at what they wish to be angry about. You'd think the two didn't realize that scholarship and experience were both necessary together in some ration. Tom Cross however brings up an issue that Isaac had always eluded to, the rather tenacious refusal of Reformed Druids to accept being labeled, Isaac usually referred to it as anarchistic, but Tom comes at the issue from a linguistic angle. The next letter describes this further.

## Druidaxta

When I reflect on Tom's arguments, in some ways I do try to defer hard choices by refusing to take sides, but sometimes, I feel the harder choice is to refuse accepting standard categorizations. From this letter and other references, Tom had done his research into the Indo-European theory of a distant prehistoric common culture to the people of Europe and India, but he preferred to focus on that of the continental Celts. We can see that Tom has his act generally together, and yet it lacks the self-effacing humor that I normally see in Reformed writings. Having standards for oneself is one thing, but must one take it so seriously, in order to accomplish them? The final part of his letter reveals a lot of interesting details of the diverse nature of the Post-Oak Protogrove that he ran in Texas.

## Albion's Response

It appears that Albion can lose his temper also. It is said that even the Buddha does not smile after the third slap.

## The Gift of Horses

Les reenters the debate, after it has dominated the Druid Missal-Any for about six months. This kind of debate would have erupted and finished in a few weeks on the modern Internet conferences, but perhaps it would not have waxed so eloquent as the old "paper battles." I think she brings up all the salient points of the debate, and puts them into perspective, while offering a viable third alternative of moderation to Albion and Cross mud-slinging soap-boxing.

## Farewell of Tom Cross

Apparently calming down, or perhaps sulking, Tom feels the necessity of pulling out of the Reform. Not too long thereafter, he published the book "The Sacred Cauldron" under the name of Tadhg MacCrossan, and founded Druidiactios; a group centering on practices drawn from ancient Gaulish religion and culture (a rarity in the English literary world).

This letter gives a rare insight into the character of Emmon's fascination with scholarship. For Tom, and to me to some extent, the contemplation of concepts and perusal of documents are a ritual in and of their own. While Celtic scholars were beginning to release new research in the 60's and 70s, it wasn't until the late 80s that a sort of renaissance boom of books flooded the market due to the bountiful consumers willing to buy their works.

Tom departed to ride on that wave. Many rumors floated that he was hostile to Neo-Pagans, rejoined Catholicism, or that he was working with a French Fraternal Druidic order of some type. Wherever he's gone, I do appreciate the time he spent discussing his views on the Reform, and I will also ponder on those questions he raised.

## Albion's Thoughts

After Albion's conclusion to the debate, Emmon decided not to publish any more letters from the two until both had cooled down some more. Albion would continue to read the Druid Missal-Any and submit more articles of his experiences.

## Epistle of Gruntwork

My will is weak, but I had to include at least one of Les' wonderful semi-seasonal letters as it dealt with how to build a Druidic community, and it appears to show her final thoughts from the debate. She raises rather organic issues of family life that have been rarely raised by the more individual-oriented letters of past Druids.

## Balance & Synthesis

Perhaps I shouldn't have included this letter, but it somehow stands on its own as separate from the acrimonious preceding debate and stands as a reminder, that there was more to Emmon's vision of a Druid Community than two bickering Druids.

## The Speaking of Beliefs

Written by Heiko Koestler, who with Alice Cascorbi, helped to restart Carleton Druidism in the mid 80s. This speech, originally in crude outline, is from the Fall Equinox ritual of 1987. Heiko was one of the first Carleton Druids to self-identify himself as a Pagan. The Druids at Carleton since 1985 have shown a greater interest in liturgy and magic, but still moderate by most standards. Although Heiko is a bit more ceremonial than most, you can see that little has really changed in the message at Carleton over the missing years. I therefore suspect this continuity has less to do with oral transmission by fellow Druids than with the natural beauty of the arboretum, the friendliness of the rural landscape, and the respectfully fierce academic discipline of Carleton College.

## Mike's Farewell Epistle

Written in the closing months of Mike's Archdruidcy at Carleton, in which the torch was being passed to the Triple Archdruidcy of Becky, Michelle the Dark and Ann, which would last until 1996. Despite Mike's best efforts, grove attendance was usually only 5 to 6 people at service and sweat lodges, although there were about 80 people on the mailing lists. Since the latter two were definitely into Wicca, I just wanted to caution them to keep it open to members of all denominations and explore widely and have fun. It is a difficult thing relinquishing what little authority I did have, but they had capable hands, and I could go off to spend the next two years feverishly typing up ARDA, while occasionally checking up on them, in the most unobtrusive ways (monthly visits to the science fiction club).

## The Third Epistle of Robert

Well, this was quite a long one! Robert wrote this epistle on the Spring Equinox of 1996 to discuss his reaction to my General History in Part Eight or ARDA. In particular he was intent on providing a much simpler alternative vision of Paganism, as opposed to Isaac's more grandiose schemes that eventually became Ar nDraiocht Fein. Neopaganism can search for the simple, seemingly chaotic roots or it can choose to build as complex a structure as many of them are trying to escape from.

I wonder if he was inspired by my comment that the early Founders were impressed by the anarchic resistance of the Celts and Druids to centralized government and religion. As he well puts it, the Monotheism isn't necessarily the problem with religious persecution, but rather it is the organized aspect of some religions when married with the power of the state. While

such a match may increase a religion's resources for helping people, it can also magnify the ability of the occasional petty religious individuals to crush and repress the views of minority dissenters. While his message may seem a bit harsh and rough compared to his normally quiet contemplation, it should be remembered that freedom of religion has not always been achieved without struggle. Compared to some of the persecutions mentioned by Robert, the state of the early RDNA at Carleton seems rather tame and bearable.

It is also refreshing to see the old topic of ritual being brought up again in such an unusual way. I feel that Larson's view is pretty much in between my disdain for ritual and Isaac's fascination with the issue. For Larson it is a matter of practicality. The lines in 15:23-34 were lifted from another letter I received from Larson on that Equinox, and which I felt should have been included with the Epistle proper. A final topic that I enjoyed reading about was the inter-connectedness of religions, how they adopt and borrow from each other, even if they won't admit it.

It is entirely possible that The Last Epistle of Robert was a discarded prologue to the Third Epistle of Robert.

## The Book of Lacunae

Some wild ramblings written by Michael Scharding between December 30th 1995 and May 1st 1996, ironically about the same time (unbeknownst to Mike) that Isaac was preparing to announce the end of his Archdruidcy of ADF. How cosmic can you get? This was Michael's weak attempt to stick his foot into the Apocryphaic tradition, to add a happy note to the end of the Apocrypha, and to bridge the twenty long lacunal years of Apocryphal-style letter writing from 1976-1996.

The term Lacunae (Latin Lacuna, meaning a gap or a space] as you may guess refers to the holes in my logic, or to the emptiness of Form, the need for leaving "personal" time, the virtues of simplicity, hearing the pauses in a stream of music, and in the blank chapters of this epistle. You may imagine whatever you wish to exist in those blank spots. If you like these blank spots, look around through ARDA, I'm sure you can find more empty spaces to stare at.

## The Epistle of Amanda

I received a call from Amanda, apparently not long after Michelle the Blond ordained her and then became disinterested in Druidism, and Irony had gone to Germany to become a blacksmith's apprentice. During their Archdruidcy, a great number of members had joined, pulled by their charisma, and rather powerful sense of fun experimentation (free of Michael's boring speeches, perhaps) She somehow spotted me on the campus, and knew who I was, perhaps old pictures. We chatted for awhile, and I gave her the standard advice of most Archdruids; think for yourself and search widely. This is the letter, I received in gratitude. Only met her twice after that, but quite a joy each time. For a brief time, the Druids were using the newly created Religious Awareness House to anchor the group's social activities, much like Farm House had been in the 1980s, this idea had been floated in the 93-95 period, but never enacted as Druid House.

## The Sigil Letters

Before I left St. Cloud to go to Japan, I made up a big batch of one ounce silver sigils, and began to give them out to people at Carleton. Druids apparently are drawn to big clunky jewelry and clothes with a poor fashion sense, so apparently they were quite fetching and inspired people to write about them.

The letter by Ian Friesland was written not long after he left St. Cloud and went on to do scientific research in various parts of the world. Never did ask him what he was studying, but it would take him to the South Pole and the jungles of the Amazon.

The letter by myself was in response to the Epistle of Amanda, and I sent her a sigil.

The letter by Robert Harrison was a delight, that he wrote in 1998, but I don't believe that I read it until 2003, when Mark sent me a number of files that were sent for the 2000 ARDA edition, that never got produced. Robert comes from a Keltria background, with long studies into Tibetan Buddhism. Being about 40 years old at the time, he was able to give a lot of mature advice to the Grove members.

The History of the Sigil, was something that I wrote on the internet to start spreading a counter-history to the popular theory that we got the sigil from Stuart Piggot's 1966 "The Druids." We can only assume that Fisher just made it up.

## The Epistle of Sam

I got this letter in response from Sam after I mailed him a copy of ARDA in early 1997, while I was in Japan. Sam is one of the more unusual and special members of Carleton's legacy, precisely because he is from the neighboring college of St. Olaf; a Lutheran private institution, but still in the top 30. Sam graduated in 1991, and is a native Minnesotan with a deep and abiding interest in Welsh culture and language. His interaction with the Carleton group was greatest from 1988 to 1995, when he played the ornery outsider, widening our understanding of social causes. He also played the head monk, Plexus, in the movie *Gatorr*, for which he was widely considered the best actor in the film.

## What Are Druids?

Irony was ordained in 1997 and proved to be one of the most charismatic druids I've ever met, despite his interesting quirks. He expanded membership rolls, kept the group in funding, wrote this letter to the Carletonian newspaper, published many poems, sang lustily at SCA events, built the great Stone Circle, brought in ecological concerns, started the RDNA conference at Carleton, encouraged para-psychological research by members, traveled the world, stomped out a fire with his bare feet, broke many hearts, glowed in the dark, worked for Peace Corps in Tonga, wrote the twenty page *Sociology of Reformed Druids*, and was just outstanding as the first Ethics major at Carleton. Currently running the Hemlock Grove in New York.

## The Exile Letters, Part One

These letters reveal a bit of Irony's late discomfort with running the grove and encouraging members to initiate activities; a perennial problem faced by Archdruids, now two years into a long Archdruidcy (since 1996). However, he has brought in a few old friends to bolster him as he enters his senior year.

## The Epistle of the Rising Sun

After publishing ARDA in summer 1996, I spent four years in Japan and started the Akita Grove at the Minnesota State University of Akita, a sister school of St. Cloud University in Minnesota. I met Nozomi and Pat there and I ran the Akita Grove for a few years before turning it over to them, and someone forwarded Ikari's address to me while I was there. Having been nostalgic for Carleton since my Sophomore year

journey to University of Glasgow, I naturally began to pine for her forests again, despite the charms of Japan. Upon hearing of the difficulties that Irony was having, I thought I would send a letter to cheer him up, since I wouldn't be going back to Carleton than often.

## Freedom Within and Freedom Without

This was one of the hardest experiences I had in the Reform. For a long time, including my Archdruidcy, there had been little interest in the traditional service, upon which the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Order were designed. Upon hearing of the contents of the Third Order, Merri naturally didn't find that it spoke to her, and asked if DAL could be removed and a stripped down version be performed. Being on the border between the self-ordination and traditional ordination periods, I feel caught in the middle by the pros and cons of both positions, and in the end, I decided to support Carleton students to choose the one that made more meaning for themselves. I think it is more important to have them do a good job, then give up over semantics.

## Being a Druid

One of the tasks that I gave to Robert after his ordination was to write an essay on what it means to be a Druid. Again, I didn't read his completed essay again until 2003. Those Celts are such malleable images for the essayist. In the end, the essay always returns to the more important question, who are we and who do we want to become?

## The Exile Letters, Part Two

Well, Irony finally put Carleton behind him, after a very long Archdruidcy and returned to the world of mortals, only to head off on a journey to Tonga, a volcanic island in the Pacific Ocean, that managed to avoid being colonized, by eating all the missionaries, then converting to Christianity on their own, thereby becoming a self-declared Christian kingdom (you are what you eat), and immune to colonization according to the rules of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. He spent his time teaching sanitation planning, industrial arts skills and whatever else was needed. He was located on one of the smaller of the islands in this chain, with a dormant volcano and a crater lake. Naturally, transplanting his Druidism to the tropical jungle was as difficult as transplanting mine to the mountains of Northern Japan, and I enjoyed hearing how he adapted, and during this period, I constantly kept his spirits up by sending care packages, and druidical readings.

## The Parenthetical Epistle of Mike

Since the Druids have started on-line mailing lists, the number of letters has vastly increased to several thousand a year, most being quick replies, and not that many of epistle length or quality. Perhaps by piecing them together, I will be able to get a sizable amount of material for future epistles, but the long letter writing tradition of the past seems to be the exception.

I have a terrible habit of rambling when I talk and getting into side-conversations even when thinking to myself. This letter is rather illustrative of my wit, and we should all pity those who have to deal with it on a regular basis. Like the interview in Part 10, it talks about what brought me to Druidism, and what I believe are our society's main image of Druidism, and how that affects the views of incoming new Druids. As Shelton said, we spend a lot of time, dispensing with cherished myths about the Druids. I was inspired by reading a similar essay by Daniel (which is in Part 7).

## Why Are We Called Reformed?

This is by Mairi, a person who used to hang around in the 1995 period at Carleton, but she wasn't a student, but rather, a very interesting lady. We ordained her in 1996, and then we happened to meet again in Washington DC, since she was working in the Pentagon from 1997-2002, before going off to Guam (I think). I believe her mother's side is Jewish and her father's side was Presbyterian, so I guess she had Reformed ancestry on both sides, and she wrote this fine essay and delivered it to my door, wrapped in a little red ribbon. I think it is an excellent example of comparative religion, and would like to see more examples in the future, perhaps Zen or Taoism would be particularly productive? Not everyone enjoyed the comparison.

## Responses to Mairi

One person in particular, a Canadian named Glen from the Silent Grove on Lake Ontario, and was quite eager when he first joined. However, he appeared rather activist oriented, which is fine, but intolerant of those who were, which caused problems. Druids tend to be rather sluggish, and he had places to go and things to do, and we apparently weren't his preferred vehicle for pursuing Druidism and politics. Sadly, a few harsh words were exchanged, but I do hope he understood that few things in this world are unconnected, even if we do not appreciate those linkages. The interchange was then published in the Missal-any.

## The Epistle of Adaptation

Dusty is a strange fellow from southern California. Never ordained, that I can recall, but a wonderful writer and free-spirit. His take on the whole debate, was wonderful, and I'm glad to have a chance to share it with you. This was also published in the Missal-any. His sense of humor and self-deprecating simplicity, are truly in the vein of Reformed Druidism; but sadly he hasn't posted with our group in a long time.

## The Silent Cacophony

While I was hesitant to support an Anti-Zionist tirade in his first batch of letters, despite my own concerns, I did admire his energy and enthusiasm for activism, but of course, the Reform does not speak as a group, only as individuals, and so we were unable to please him.

## The Epistle of Alyx

Alyx was from Colorado, and I ordained her in 2002, near Denver. A witty girl, I always enjoy getting her occasional letters, and she very succinctly summed up the group's feeling about Glen, to much kudos. Unfortunately, Glen, soon left after that, and we do miss him. Alyx's other contribution was the delightful image of the piñata, with religion needing a good whack once in awhile to keep it interesting.

## The Second Epistles of Norman

These are a collection of Norman's first year of thoughts from the RDNAtalk conference and D202 study of ARDA 2's early version. He can ramble on, so be careful when talking to him on any subject!

## The Epistle of Eric

The last of the Epistle to make it in by the deadline of Feb. 14<sup>th</sup>. Eric is a graduate student in Washington DC, who attended my services regularly, and always wrote great off-the wall stories for the Missal-any on cleaning, Lucky Charms, Druidical diets, and then helped to run the 2002/2003 Bardic contest for the RDNA. Like the Sigil Letters, this epistle gives us more to think about a symbol of the Reformed Druid, those ribbons. Since he couldn't make it to the 40<sup>th</sup> Reunions in 2003, he wanted me to read this as one of the meditational readings at the service.

## Wind Borne Seeds

Occasionally in the RDNAtalk conference we will have a rather quiet member, John Slattery in this case, just suddenly post something and then resubmerge. He apparently had been working on this thought for awhile and found the conversation on some point in March 2003 to be a bit combative and so posted this little reflection. I have not much since from John, but I rather liked the grove imagery and decided to insert it. I'm not quite sure I totally agree with the analogy, since I think Nature is indeed "red in tooth and talon," and that trees and plants do indeed fight for space in the sun and for resources under the ground, but still an interesting letter.

## When Leaves Leave Us

Once I decided to add Wind Bourne Seeds to the Apocrypha, this one by my own hand came to mind immediately as a natural complement. Brother Robert's death a year later in August 2004 when I was releasing the Main Volume, also reminded me of the poignant message of falling leaves. Druids are inescapably drawn to trees with their expressive nuts, leaves, roots, bark, sap, wood and spirit. This was a result of a bit of study on what particular aspect, the departure of leaves in the fall every year. We all reflect on it, but many do not know why it happens, so I wrote it. The original article was also accompanied by a chart of un-named leaves that the person would have to guess. I suppose I should take out chapter two, but Druidry is not simply the artistic wonderings of chapter three, but the observation of science, so I guess I'll leave it in.

## Thoughts on Chaos

This letter was lifted from early on in the D202 conference that was initially set up by Sybok of OMS to teach the ways of ARDA 2 to the members of Mithril Star. I later was given the conference, but it petered out mid-way through the study course, naturally, due to the immense length of ARDA 2. These people had access to an early version of ARDA 2 that I had hoped to have published by July 2003 by Mark Heiman. Fear's comments were directed towards the Earliest Selections.

If there is one thing Druids are it is unstable and constantly reshaping itself, especially at Carleton with its high rate of turnover in membership. There are certain parameters on this cauldron of chaos, and even some continuity of spirit, but the spirit of chaos is prominent in the questioning ways of the average Reformed Druid who often re-opens cans of worms and re-examines the very foundations of their beliefs to inspect their soundness and make adjustments. I enjoyed his comments on the prominent issues of that period and his theory of how generations and groves renew their sense of period by a transitory period of re-evaluation.

## Thoughts on Discord

Naturally, what would a discussion of Chaos be without mentioning Discord? Since the 1980s, at least, Discordians have been an active part of the interplay of Druids at Carleton and abroad. Like Thoughts on Chaos, this was a response to the examination of the Middling Selections of the Isaac Affair, which I thought was an interesting summary, in which she takes the side of the Carleton faction, despite her neo-pagan background, due to her knowledge of the cycles of group forming. Isaac himself has mentioned often, that if he had understood group politics better at that time, and known that the other groves were still alive, he might have been able to head off much of the problems of the later years of the Berkeley Grove.

## A Whole of Druidry

Dana Felber, as far as I know, is not a Reformed Druid, but Sister Stacey snagged this article off the internet discussions list and published it in the Druid Missal-Any.

After a few re-reads, I think the reason that I decided to insert it into our “inner cannon of bickering” is that it offers a very well-thought examination of why some people from monotheistic backgrounds have made their way into adapting elements of the ancient Druid traditions to their modern spiritual quests.

She also does a good job of explaining that the ancient Druids and the Celtic practitioners did not have a monolithic common system, but were an fractious, individualistic lot in some ways and had diversified into several pantheons, story cycles and customs. There is much to learn in here.

## Sacrificial Sentiments

In the RDNAtalk conference we got into a spirited discussion of the Wiccan Rede, Druid Tenets and the underlying concepts of why we don't do animal sacrifice. The original debate on animal sacrifice was in the Spring of 1963, but we only have one quote from the members, so it was perhaps appropriate that 40 years later, the Reformed Druids re-examined their notions of why and what they sacrifice.

Most people wrote rather short notes, and there were dozens of side-conversations on various topics that I pruned from the conversations. Due to the dialogue nature, I dispense with individual chapters for each letter and grouped them together in a serial format, stripped of versification. It's nice to depart from the system once in a while.

## The Third Epistles of Norman

Norman, Franguist, Shelton, Carruth, Press, Weinberger and a handful of other old-timers attended the 40th Reunion at Beltane 2003 at Carleton College and mingled with the current students and discussed many matters of common concern after chatting only on-line for 2 years.

Norman's summary of the event is standard, but I felt, giving the timing that it was time to repeat it again! I also appended several other letters from the summer and fall of 2003 which I thought would fit in by providing more thoughts of Norman.

## The Missionary Im-Position

Missionary activity is naturally a sore point and hot button issue for me, especially in the David Fisherian sense of having promoted something that will inevitably take on a life of its own, to who knows what purpose. All the events in this epistle occurred while I was the Arch Druid of the Big River Grove in St. Cloud Minnesota, and looking for a decent paying job. We all get taken in by these schemes sometimes in our lives, and hopefully we emerge wiser for the interchange.

I hesitated until the last minute to include this letter, but after reading Norman's encounter with the Mormons, and hearing of the hardships that Irony, Corwin and so many have had with recruiting, that I thought a little warning on the perils of proselytizing might be in order, so that they don't walk down that dark road, and withstrain themselves from excess. And yes, I can't help but love that response, “How well did you do at your job selling vacuum cleaners?” “Oh, I sucked.”

## The OMS Affair

As the introduction mentions, this was a long raucous affair that spanned too many pages to be neatly inserted into the Apocrypha, yet I felt I needed to insert a link to that affair, so as to not ignore it. Unfortunately few of the letters, as in Sacrificial Sentiments, were of sufficient length and quality to be extracted as summary letters for representing the whole debate. Perhaps in the Third Edition of ARDA 2, I'll add them to the printing, but not quite yet, despite their importance.

I guess I started the whole mess by encouraging the OMS to join as a group, rather than individually, but I doubt the end resulting structure of the OMS splinter would have been radically different, but I suppose it would have been in better protocol for some of the old hands from California who felt left out of the process and suspicious of the intentions and reputation of OMS's first Arch Druid, Sybok, accusing him of posting under various names, unsubbing dissenters and being generally unpleasant and rude.

## The Epistle of Corwin

It has been quite rare for a sitting Archdruid at Carleton to actually get off their butt and write a decent letter on Druidism, much less to send out their State of the Groves letter on retirement. It is like prying teeth out to get them to put pen to paper, since they appear to prefer frolicking in the woods to laboring over a piece of wood pulp.... Hey that does sound good doesn't it?

Any way, Corwin had taken a page out of the Book of Franguist and Scharding and decided to go off to Japan and learn more about their ways. After the Reunion, she stopped by Washington DC's grove a few days before departing and I shared some thoughts on the liturgical practice and Zen and such, and sent her on her merry way.

Naturally, after the long Archdruidcies of Irony, Merri and Ehren, it was time for the Carleton Druids to re-examine their style of liturgy and grove structure. They were facing a low membership and need to rebuild the grove from scratch, but a vision was necessary first.

## The Epistle of Stephen

Stephen always seemed more down-to-earth than the flighty red-headed Corwin. He was much more interested in the ancient customs and lore of the Celts, and wrote his Comps project on an arcane aspect of the Brehon laws. He, like Irony, had also written a few tracts on what was Reformed Druidism.

Stephen has also acted as my Johnny-on-the-spot to rendezvous with the archives and do some research, look up matters and keep the archives in good shape. I, in return, recompense him and chew his ear off with dull archival discussion.

Ritual does seem to be the obsession of Druids, either they love it or hate it; but seem unable to avoid it. I expect many more epistle from this young Druid over the years.

## Mike's Mini-Missive

My letter was simply a summary of theirs and an encouragement to keep on the same paths of Reforming the Carleton Druids into a format that fit their times. As with counseling young lovers hoping to get married, is to ask what they want and generally advise them to do it.

## The Alphabet Epistle

What to say on this epistle? On the one hand, every once and a while one of your fellow brothers or sisters goes off into la-la land and has a stunning visionary experience that's rather hard to respond to. On the other hand, you have to support and encourage them through the strangest of times.

I suppose Druids, like most modern people, have their thought processes bound up into words; both spoken and written which affect the way they relate objects to each other due to resemblance, similar spelling, word-origins, homonyms and a score of other historical factors and nuances. In this letter, Ian has focused simply on the letter S and B, which goes to show you that even the most little clue can help to solve a big mystery.

I don't like the exhortatory tone, which seems a big like the ten commandments, but I think he did so in a rational manner, without going too far. The reference to Lord Zed is apparently from the movie "Zardoz" with Sean Connery in a trippy 1973 science fiction movie.

## The Arch Epistle

My reply, also crafted during the Athens Olympics also has a bit of a Greek theme running through it. According to my interview with David Fisher, the sigil might actually have come from his feverish imagination, as he was minoring in Latin at Carleton, and had been studying the Greek alphabet in early preparation for a classics major, that later switched to history.

Perhaps the epistles of the Apocrypha are too plentiful in their advice for young aspiring Reformed Druid priests, but the purpose of the Arch Druid had not always seemed as well discussed. Most Third Order Priests go on to become Arch Druids, but not always.

I also enjoy puns and references to words with a common root origin, so I wrote this response after re-reading how Sister Mairi focused on one word "Reformed", and I in turn focused on the word "Arch." Hopefully there is a bit of wisdom in there.

## The Epistle of Ric of the North

Ric Knight lives over on the northern shore of Lake Ontario in Canada. As you'll remember, Howard Cherniack, one of the Founders, was from British Columbia, and gave us the Druid Tenets, a constitution, and petitioned the authorities to accept the Druid's religious services as fulfilling the religious requirement. Since then, we have not had many prominent Canadian Druids, although we do call ourselves Reformed Druids of NORTH AMERICA, which should ostensibly include Mexico, Greenland, Canada the Caribbean and Central America.

Ric is not technically an ordained Druid, having forsook the Orders as too hierarchical, much like Gandalf, and has lived

a more or less solitary lifestyle with his fellow canine grove members. He runs the Order of Druids Minor, and operated an on-line conference for that group. He is a frequent puckish poster to the RDNAtalk conference and obviously a funny fellow.

The original Epistle he sent had a chapter for the group's constitution and three chapters of mediations that I will include in the Green Book 11 next year.

At my request, Ric graciously added a chapter on Canadian/U.S. relations lambasting us for our shortcomings and offering some advice from our big neighbor. A picture of Ric should be in the liturgy section somewhere.

## The Sixth Epistle of Isaac

This striking epistle eulogizing Robert's departure, has several arguments that Isaac has been making in ADF for many year about the need to compensate priests for the long unrewarded efforts they have made for their parishioners. Even ADF is currently far from fully funding it's handful of Third Circle priests, as is true throughout the various Neo-pagan movements, due to the aversion to handling money or charging for services, as being "too churchy".



## The Last Epistle of Robert

Sadly, even Druids must pass on, and Robert was mortal like the rest of us. He died suddenly on August 6<sup>th</sup>, which was Lughnasadh, and Sister Stacey received a letter from his brother on August 16<sup>th</sup>. Included was a single page Epistle of an unfinished nature, that was found among his few remaining possessions in his Spartan apartment. I suspect that it might have been a discarded prologue to the Third Epistle of Robert, but it might indeed have been of a long letter whose contents I will never know in this world.

There is this adage of “Truth against the world” that the British Druids cooked up a century or two ago, and it makes me a bit uncomfortable. While there may be relative truths, I think if the entire world does disagree with you, that’s a pretty good sign that it is time to do a bit of re-evaluation. The phrase, naturally, doesn’t excuse being wrong or allow you to defend an ill-inspected belief or superstitious dogma to be held, but only a well contemplated and rational position.

Being the probable last letter from Robert, I felt it appropriate to end with his words.

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i

So Endeth  
Vol Two  
Of ARDA 2

# VOLUME THREE

## LITURGY OF THE DRUIDS

The various collected rites, activities, ordinations, blessings, and services of the various branches of the Reform, with a few additional selections from other modern Druid movements related to the RDNA.



Figure 1 Fisher, Nelson, Hotz & Frangquist on the Hill of Three Oaks, c.1964

The Drynemetum Press





## 2003 Introduction

Welcome to the expansive liturgical section.

Perhaps, I have agonized and labored most over this section of ARDA. According to the older traditions of the Reform, most groves require third ordination to perform the services, seemingly putting most of sections 1-7 of Part 3 out of the usage of most readers; which seemingly is against the rather egalitarian nature of Druidism. I would hope that the reader be encouraged to undertake the responsibilities of ordination more quickly, rather than be disenchanting; overcoming likely distance problems.

As a result of this imposed rule, it is quite likely that the Druid priest will be most strictly judged by their enactment of the liturgies. Your words and very gestures in a ritual context may have a far greater impact and weight than you realize on the Druids, especially the new comers, so be careful to distinguish personal and group beliefs, lest dogma flower from mere artistically selected statements. Nor should you become jaded with the formats, lest you forget the confusing tumult of misconceptions that you had when you first attended. A priest should also be a poet, a contemplative, a counselor, and a mortal human being. Thus, you should meet with such courageous newcomers beforehand to not seem so unreachable. Always keep that appropriate balance of reverence and humor.

Ritual is simply actions you like to do, over and over again. Your liturgies are only limited by your knowledge, imagination and experience. For those of us not gifted in public performance, it can be a series of difficult hard-fought lessons as you put together the pieces and styles that you can call your own, hopefully with the advice & example of a mentor, but often a result of trial & error and much reflection. It would be well for an aspiring liturgist to attend the services of as many different religions as is possible, to see in practice how different techniques are employed and how different elements are absent or held in common; especially since there are few comparative books on liturgy. You need not belong only to your Grove's community. A few acting lessons, a public speaking course, and simple practice in a mirror or before a trusted friend will vastly improve your performance ability. Explore, contemplate, try, decide and repeat. Then with honed skills and a fresh appreciation for the diversity, you may see how other parts of ARDA 2 may enrich your own liturgical design.

Each section of ARDA can richly inter-relate with each other, and means less when viewed only by itself. Pt 2 illuminates some of the debates on how to understand liturgy and ordination. Pt 4 gives tips on forming stable groves, and when to use seasonal liturgies. Pt 8 gives a sense of historical progression and how different factions of the RDNA have schismed over the importance of different elements in the liturgy. And Part 6 provides one vast resource, one among many, from which to draw songs, seasonal essays, meditations, stories, jokes, and a host of resources for researching ancient Celtic resources.

Without doubt, the liturgical additions to ARDA 2 are an enormous increase, and it has now become a daunting task to sift through and choose the best representatives of the various traditions within the Reform. You might even get lost if you don't pay attention to the way it has been divided. It may soon become difficult to keep the liturgical collection from becoming overwhelming, as happened with them Green Book and Magazine, which necessitated a separate printed volume.

For example, all the 1978-1980 liturgies by Isaac are of a different caliber than the previously published NRDNA liturgies of DC(E). Some elements are rather dogmatic in nature, nothing the average Neo-Pagan wouldn't agree with, but perhaps less amenable to many in the Reform. Yet, I decided to add them to ARDA 2 since this is primarily a historical collection, and they show the tangent that Isaac was walking that would lead to ADF beyond. Naturally one service from Keltria and OMS were added for good measure to show other examples of modern Druid groups related somehow to the RDNA.

One other section, which I'm ambivalent about, is the Solitary Services, which Eric recommended me to include. It may also swell out of control later with local customs, magical and spiritual exercises. Yet, as long as they seem practical for the general Druid and not too dogmatic, I'll have to include them. Druidism usually tends to err on the side of inclusion. But, I'm sure you'll find a few things in here of use to add to your core collection, that will influence the design of your own personalized system.

I suppose there is no way to curb the ceremonialist episcopagan from overly focusing on this section of ARDA 2, but I would like to remind them that there is much more than liturgy in Druidism. The non-liturgical materials were therefore added to give a greater emphasis that a group need not only meet with a person yakking at them in the same old format. Festivals can also be lively mixes of crafts, activities and free-form interactions beyond the spoken service. Don't neglect the seasonal essays of Green Book 7 in Part 6 and Part 4's calendar, as they'll give you greater depth of understanding to those holidays.

Finally, one last interesting trend is the element of randomness. In early traditions of Carleton and Berkeley, although the winds are divined, in nearly every case, the sacrifice was accepted in the summer and rejected in the winter. Since the 1980s, many groves have begun to actually acknowledge that the sacrifice is a less assumed item. How you deal with a "failure" is a good sign that we don't "control" nature and it's a good test of a leader's mettle, requiring some quick thinking, in which case it is good to have a "back up" plan. Proper rest, eating, contemplation, familiarization and rehearsal will do wonders for you.

There is so much that you can worry about, you might forget to have a good time. After all, "you have no need of these prayers and sacrifices." Regardless, I have great confidence in your ability to adapt and overcome difficulties. I wish the best of fortune to you.

Mike Scharding  
September 13, 2004

### Liturgy Formatting Note:

Naturally, the liturgies have been laid out in a format that is most useful to people who are reading them, so original formatting, fonts, spacing, etc. have been slightly adjusted to make them fit the pages easily on a windy day for an Archdruid juggling several cups, bottles, regalia and a sheaf of notes.

It's not pretty, but hopefully it will be easier to find your place. Naturally, it would be better to memorize the piece. Alternatively have someone hold the service papers while you read, and keep a finger on the spot where you finish for quick resumption. Plastic coating a printed high-service liturgy is a good idea to make in advance.

# 1996 Introduction

When I began to put together this collection of old liturgies, designed by various Reformed Druids at Carleton, I had many misgivings about publishing them. I was not disturbed because they are secret or anything like that, since there are very few secrets (if any) in Reformed Druidism, but because they can be so easily misunderstood by someone not familiar with Reformed Druidism at Carleton College. If any terms confuse you, refer to Part Four of ARDA where I'm sure many of your questions will be answered. If there is any one section of the Anthology that I was considering dropping, it was this section, but that's just my personal tendency to downplay ritual.

The Liturgy has an unusual place and role in Reformed Druidism, unlike that found in most other religions. Reformed Druidism began as a protest against enforced attendance and fixed liturgies as found at the mandatory Carleton College Chapel service of the early 60s. It would be a very sad day when a fixed or forced liturgy were to become established in Reformed Druidism itself! There are several points about Reformed Druid liturgy that should be remembered: irregular attendance is acceptable (perhaps even desirable), it isn't fixed in its final form and the existence of liturgy may even be antithetical to Reformed Druidism itself

## Irregular Attendance:

While many earlier members may have enjoyed going to every Saturday services and to every one of the eight great festivals; this was not the case with everyone. For many, the need to gather in a group for "formal" worship is an urge that only comes once in long time. One can have a great many religious moments outside of a group, perhaps even purer moments. Many a person would come to a Druid ritual and just sunbathe, ignoring the ritual in effect, being there just to be with the people. Attendance has no reflection on how "Druidic" you are. Others took it quite seriously.

Nor is liturgical attendance the only way to be with other Druids. Over the years, both at Carleton and abroad at our missionary groves, there have been many other group activities that have developed that don't use a standard liturgy (or even need a liturgy). Such activities include: sweat lodges, candle-making parties, Bardic sing-a-longs, group-feasts, nature-walks, group meditation sessions, pseudo-theological debates, magic-working groups, book reading clubs, herbology and many other activities (depending on local talents that exist within the group). However, some groups just did the services 4 times a year and nothing else.

## The Liturgy isn't fixed in its final form

Even from the beginning, the liturgies have been constantly changing. Although the Council of Dalon Ap Landu had voted that they:

"adopt the Order of Worship of the Carleton Grove (as formulated by David H. Fisher) as the basic order of worship of the Reformed Druids of West America."

This restriction has been stretched and experimented with. Every priest is expected to change, adopt and mutate the liturgy to fit the existing mood, their religious sensibilities, and the specific purposes of the moment. Ad libbing and spontaneity, within reasonable bounds, is encouraged. As a result there are dozens and dozens of alternatives to every single ritual example that will be presented to you in this book.

Many a person has added Wiccan elements or Cabalistic elements or Judeo-Christian elements, etc. The purpose of the liturgy is to bring people together, and if the majority of the people in the grove belong to one particular tradition you can add elements from that tradition (if you want to). However, the original version has been judged over the years to be relatively ecumenical enough and dogma-free to be acceptable to most people, so we recommend it when dealing with a "mixed" crowd.

## The Liturgy isn't Sacrosanct

There is no claim of divine origin for these liturgies, although a few writers may have felt a bit inspired when they wrote them. Sanctity is in the eye of the beholder, isn't it? For many, the liturgy is merely a philosophical exposition by the Priest who is using deities in the Jungian sense of the archetype. For others, the liturgy is the direct invocation and worship of whatever deities are being invoked. For some it is merely being quiet together at someplace while someone reads something out loud. For some, powerful magickal energies are conjured forth by the magickal words and the power is delegated to various tasks. For others, it's a quaint little service that's fun to attend. Let us respect the right of the beholder and individual congregant to have their own interpretation of the liturgy.

## The liturgy may even be antithetical

Perhaps it was the Protestant streak in the early founders which made Reformed Druidism into the religion of the individual. The goal of Reformed Druidism, for many, is a never-ending search for religious truth; a truth which can be meaningful only to the particular individual who grasps it. Words and gestures cannot communicate the subtleties that define our thoughts (little can, unless you have telepathy). Let us beware from ever taking the liturgy as the most effective way of expressing our religious thoughts!

Who can say whether the individual with the title "Priest" has any better understanding of her/his religion than the young first-order Druid sitting near them? For all we know, the role/title of "Priest" within Reformed Druidism may be merely an "ego-stroke" of comfort for those who feel the need to make sure that someone in the group holds a service every now and then. I hope not, although I have been a priest, for three years as of writing this, I don't feel any more divine than the next guy.

Michael Scharding

Day 31 of Geimredh, Year XXXIII of the Reform

December 1st, 1995 c.e.



Figure 2 Lower Arboretum Trails, 1960s.

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David's Final Meditation  
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# Section One:

## The Simple Package of Generic Liturgies

This section can be printed out for a Druid on the run, who needs to hold a service, and it should cover all their needs for weekly services. I recommend having a plasticized copy of this section for all-weather use. Based on DC(E) concept, which was derived from a simplified hymnal pamphlet made by David Frangquist in 1964.

### Order of Common Worship Simple Summer Version

From May 1st up to, but on Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>  
By Mike Scharding, 1993

#### The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**  
Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**  
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**

O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

**O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.**

#### Optional Procession

#### Drawing the Sigil & The Incantation

#### The Sacrifice

**Priest:** Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life. *Place sacrifice on Altar*

**Priest:** Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East...and of the West.

#### The Reply

**Priest:** Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted!

### The Catechism of The Waters-of-Life

**PRIEST:** Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

**PRECEPTOR:** THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PRIEST:** From whence do these Waters flow?

**PRECEPTOR:** FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

**PRIEST:** And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

**PRECEPTOR:** BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PRIEST:** Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

**PRECEPTOR:** SHE HAS!

**PRIEST:** Then give me the Waters!

#### The Consecration

O Dalon Ap Landu, Hallow these waters by thy seven-fold powers and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together as we take and drink of thy secret essence!

#### The Communion & Optional Ordinations & Libation

To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

#### The Meditation followed by The Benediction

Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with her blessing.

Peace! Peace! Peace!



Figure 3 Nelson, Frangquist & Fisher  
on Hill of 3 Oaks, 1964.

# Order of Common Worship

## Simple Winter Version

From on November 1st to, but not on May 1st.  
By Mike Scharding, 1993

### The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:  
Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**  
Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**  
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**  
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.  
**O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.**

### Optional Procession

### Drawing the Sigil & The Incantation

### The Sacrifice

**Priest:** Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life. *Put Sacrifice on Altar*  
**Priest:** Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

### The Reply

**Priest:** The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

### The Catechism of The Waters-of-Sleep

**PRIEST:** Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?  
**PRECEPTOR:** THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.  
**PRIEST:** From whence do these Waters flow?  
**PRECEPTOR:** FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.  
**PRIEST:** And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?  
**PRECEPTOR:** BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.  
**PRIEST:** Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?  
**PRECEPTOR:** SHE HAS NOT! THE WATERS ARE HERE, BUT THE SPIRIT HAS GONE OUT OF THEM.  
**PRIEST:** Of what, then, do we partake?  
**PRECEPTOR:** THE WATERS-OF-SLEEP.  
**PRIEST:** Then give me the Waters-of-Sleep.

### The Consecration

O Dalon Ap Landu, descend once again into these waters, and hallow them. Give us to know Thy power and the promise of life that is to return.

### The Communion & The Libation

To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

### The Meditation followed by The Benediction

Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you.  
Peace! Peace! Peace!

## Ordination of Second Order Druids

By David Fisher, 1963

*To be inserted after the consecration and before the meditation in the Order or Worship. It can of course be the sole purpose of the Order of Worship, or an incidental part. It is generally only done in the Summer Half of the Year as it requires Alcohol or Something Perky. Usually the PRIEST of the service asks if anyone wishes to enter the Second Order after having consecrated the Waters..*

*Another alternative is to bring the aspirant forward during the Order of Worship's invocation and after asking the **Questions, shown below**, have the aspirant respond to the normal **Catechism of the Waters**. After the **Consecration of the Waters**, proceed to the **Sealing to the Second Order**.*

*(NOTE Have everybody sip the Waters before the initiate, but leave plenty for her/him to drink. It is often a good idea to consecrate a second chalice to ensure that enough Waters will be ready for the Aspirant's ordeal.)*

### Invocation

O Earth-Mother, bountiful and ever flowing forth, we Thy children, invoke Thy blessing upon this aspirant to serve thee.

### Questions

**PR:** Do you, in full consciousness, promise to serve faithfully the Earth-Mother, ministering to Her followers, and following you duties as a Druid of the Second Order to the best of your ability? Do you?

**Aspirant:** I do. *(or close enough)*

**PR:** Do you understand from whence comes the source of all life, and the nature of the source of all life? Do you?

**Aspirant:** I do.

**PR:** Do you understand the partaking of the Waters-of-Life, and the sacrifice of life that we offer-up to our Mother? Do you?

**Aspirant:** I do.

**PR:** Are you ready, then, to be sealed up to the service of the Earth-Mother? Are you?

**Aspirant:** I am.

### Sealing to the Second Order

*(PRIEST dips fingers in consecrated waters and makes a Sigil on forehead of the candidate every time the word "seal" is spoken in the following:)*

In the name of the Earth-Mother;  
I **seal** you to Her service in the house of the spirit of the South.  
I **seal** you to Her service in the house of the Spirit of the North.  
I **seal** you to Her service in the house of the Spirit of the West.  
I **seal** you to Her service in the house of the Spirit of the East.  
Finally, I **seal** you to the service of the mighty, the blessed, all  
powerful and fertile All-Mother Earth, thus consecrating  
your life to Her cause.

## The Ordeal

*(Hand the candidate all the remaining Waters-of-Life)*

**PR:** Take and drink, all of it!

*(Return to the Order of Worship, usually at the Meditation,  
which may be just watching the staggering initiate!)*

## Ordination of First Order Druids

By David Fisher, c. 1963

Unlike the other Orders of Reformed Druidism, there is not a fixed liturgy of ordination. There is a general custom which can be elaborated upon as the Priest sees fit.

Usually the Priest will ask for aspirants to the First Order as the waters are about to be passed around. The Priest will go to the aspirant and ask if the aspirant believes in the two Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism:

1. The object of the search for religious truth, which is universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.
2. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual important, of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it do people live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face-to-face with it.

If the aspirant replies affirmatively, the Priest takes the chalice and dips their fingers in the Waters and draws the Druid Sigil on the forehead of the aspirant. Then the aspirant drinks some of the Waters. The Priest then declares them to be a First Order Druid.

If there are several aspirants, say a dozen, instead of going through each separately, they may be ordained as a group with separate head-anointing.

Another custom has developed at Carleton of anyone of the first or second orders being able to ordain another person into their own orders, in the absence of an existing Priest.

## The 13-Fold Mystery

I am the wind which breathes upon the sea,  
I am the wave of the ocean,  
I am the murmur of the willows,  
I am the ox of the seven combats,  
I am the vulture upon the rocks,  
I am a beam of the sun,  
I am the fairest of plants,  
I am a wild boar in valor,  
I am a salmon in the water,  
I am a lake in the plain,  
I am a word of knowledge,

I am the point of the lance of battle,  
I am the God who created in my head the fire,  
Who is it who throws light into the meeting on the mountain?  
Who announces the ages of the moon?  
Who teaches the place where couches the sun?  
If not I

## Invocation

I invoke the land of Erinn,  
Much-coursed be the fertile sea,  
Fertile be the fruit-strewn mountain,  
Fruit-strewn be the showery wood,  
Showery be the river of waterfalls,  
Of waterfalls be the lake of deep pools,  
Deep-pooled be the hill-top well,  
A well of tribes be the assembly,  
An assembly of rulers be Temair,  
Temair be a hill of tribes,  
The tribes of the sons of Mil,  
Of Mil of the ships, the barks,  
Let the lofty bark be Erinn,  
Lofty Erinn, darkly sung,  
An incantation of great cunning,  
The great cunning of the wives of Bres,  
The wives of Bres, of Buaigne,  
The great lady of Erinn,  
Eremon hath conquered her,  
Ir, Eber have conquered for her,  
I invoke the land of Erinn.

## Incantation #3

Fain we ask Erin, Faring o'er oceans',  
Motions to Mountains, Fountains and bowers,  
Showers, rills rushing, Gushing waves welling,  
Swelling streams calling, Falling foam-thunder,  
Under lakes filling, Willing abiding,  
Riding rounds, holding, Olden fairs meetly  
Fleet to lift loyal, Royal king's towers,  
Bowers for crowning, Frowning foes over  
Rover Mil's warlike, Starlike sons therein,  
Erin shall longer, Stronger, show honour,  
On our Milesians, Wishing, in trouble,  
Noble isle's wooing, Suing, we stay here  
Pray here to sail in, Wailing maids royal,  
Loyal chief-priests, Priests, blend pray'r in  
So we seek Erinn

## Hymn to the Earth-Mother

O Earth-Mother!  
We praise thee,  
Who seed springeth,  
Who flower openeth,  
Who grass waveth.  
We praise thee for winds that whisper  
Through the graceful elm,  
Through the shapely maple,  
Through the lively pine,  
Through the shining birch,  
Through the mighty oak.  
We praise thee for all things.  
O Earth-Mother!  
Who givest life.

# Order of Common Worship

New Reformed Druids of North America

Detailed Summer Version

By Isaac Bonewits, 1976

For use from on May 1st up to, but not including Nov 1<sup>st</sup>

## Preparatory Details

This is the basic Order of Common Worship from which all the others are adapted, and is to be used during the Summer Half of the year (i.e., from Beltane to Samhain). The chalice is to be filled with the Waters-of-Life.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.

## The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**  
Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**  
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**

O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

**O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.**

## The Procession

*Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess step into this Sigil, which is then close by the two staves.*

## The Praise

*Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.*

## The Sacrifice

*The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:*

**Pr:** Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

*(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)*

**Pr:** Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East...and of the West.

## The Reply

*(If the sacrifice is accepted, and it almost always is accepted, then continue. If bad omen, the service ends at this point.)*

**Pr:** Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted!

## The Catechism of The Waters-of-Life

*(The preceptor holds the Waters-of-life while the priest ask the Catechism of the Waters-of-Life. The local custom may or may not replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)*

**PR:** Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

**PREC:** THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PR:** From whence do these Waters flow?

**PREC:** FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

**PR:** And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

**PREC:** BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PR:** Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

**PREC:** SHE HAS!

**PR:** Then give me the Waters!

## The Consecration

*(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)*

**PR:** O Dalon Ap Landu, Hallow these waters by thy seven-fold powers and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together as we take and drink of thy secret essence!

## Optional Ordinations

*First Order consecrations can be done at this time, but it's not necessary to enter into the first order for a person to drink Waters. If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Order (in which case the Priest/ess will have consecrated an additional chalice, filled with the Waters-of-Life) the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.*

## The Communion

*The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Life," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.*

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

*In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.*

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess*

with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:

**PR:** To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

## The Meditation

*(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually 2 or 3 minutes in length, though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end of the Service with:)*

## The Benediction

Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with her blessing.

## Drawing the Sigil in the Air

*The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:*

Peace! Peace! Peace!



**Figure 4** Press, Weinberger (hidden), Nelson, Frangquist, Shelton & Webber, 2003  
Little Bird Grove (Stone Circle) 40th Reunion

# Order of Common Worship

New Reformed Druids of North America  
Detailed Winter Version  
By Isaac Bonewits, 1976  
For use from on November 1st up to,  
but not including May 1st

## Preparatory Details

This is a basic Order of Common Worship from which all the others can be adapted, and is to be used during the Summer Half of the year (i.e., from Beltane to Samhain). The chalice is to be filled with plain water.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.

## The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**

Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**

Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**

O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

**O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.**

## The Procession

*Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess step into this Sigil, which is then close by the two staves.*

## The Praise

*Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.*

## The Sacrifice

*The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:*

**Pr:** Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

*(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)*

**Pr:** Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East...and of the West.

## The Reply

*(The sacrifice is not accepted, except in emergency situations.)*

**PR:** The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

## The Catechism of The Waters-of-Sleep

*(The preceptor holds the Waters-of-Sleep while the priest ask the Catechism of the Waters-of-Sleep. The local custom may or may not replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)*

**PR:** Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

**PREC:** THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PR:** From whence do these Waters flow?

**PREC:** FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

**PR:** And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

**PREC:** BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PR:** Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

**PREC:** SHE HAS NOT! THE WATERS ARE HERE, BUT THE SPIRIT HAS GONE OUT OF THEM.

**PR:** Of what, then, do we partake?

**PREC:** THE WATERS-OF-SLEEP.

**PR:** Then give me the Waters-of-Sleep.

## The Consecration

*(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)*

O Dalon Ap Landu, descend once again into these waters, and hallow them. Give us to know Thy power and the promise of life that is to return.

## Ordinations

*No ordinations are normally done in the Winter Half of the Year.*

## The Communion

*The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Sleep," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.*

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

*In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.*

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

**PR:** To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

## The Meditation

*(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length, though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end of the Service with:*

## The Benediction

**PR:** Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you:.

## Drawing the Sigil in the Air

*The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:*

Peace! Peace! Peace!



**Figure 5 Nelson, Fisher & Frangquist on Hill of 3 Oaks, 1964 with original record-stand altar.**

# Section Two: Old Carleton Seasonal Versions

Authorship and dates are quite a bit uncertain in this section.

## Samhain Version #1

(By Fisher?, 1964?)

### The Invocation

Be'al, sign Ap handrahch.  
Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations:  
Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee here;  
Thou art without form, but we worship you in these forms;  
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;  
Lord, forgive us these three sins that are due to our human limitations.  
Be'al, sign Ap handrahch.

### Procession and Drawing of the Circle

*Here shall be lit a fire, from a torch carried by the Archdruid, upon the high altar.*

### Chants or Hymns

*Here may be sung a hymn.*

*Here shall be given a ritual chant of mourning*

(Perhaps the following chant was used)

### Samhain Chant

by David Fisher 1964?

Druid Chronicles (Customs Chap. Seven)

**Priest:** Ea, Lord, Ea, Mother, thou with uncounted names and faces, Thou of the many faceted nature, in and above all, to thee we sing our chants of praise.

**Chorus:** Go thou not from us!

**Priest:** Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and all Groves, mover by night and by day, descend not beneath the earth, turn not thy pleasing face from us.

**Chorus:** Go thou not from us!

**Priest:** The leaves wither, the trees and fields are barren, on what can we depend? Where is thy order, where thy strength?

**Chorus:** Depart not from our midst, sleep not, O most high!

**Priest:** The Sun, the bright fire of day, withdraws his chariot; his face is veiled with clouds, and the breath of the North Wind walks the land.

**Chorus:** Return to us his warmth!

**Priest:** Lo, we are as wraiths; our fire is turned to ashes and darkness walk the land.

**Chorus:** Preserve us, O spirit of Day. Keep us in thy mind, O spirit of power!

**Priest:** Ishtar, Astarte, guide our paths. If thou will leave us, save us through the time of silence, keep bright within our hearts 'til spring.

**Chorus:** So let it be, O our Mother, for we are faithful, and would keep thy ways!

### The Sacrifice

*Here shall be offered up a bough of pin, a branch of oak, and a crest of grass.*

**Priest:** Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried aloft to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy presence yet.

**Priest:** Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? Hast thou accepted our gifts, O Be'al? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

### The First Answer

**Priest:** The four winds are silent, neither does the Mother answer. The time of SAMHAIN is upon us.

### The Second Answer

**PRIEST:** Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

**PRECEPTOR:** THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PRIEST:** From whence do these Waters flow?

**PRECEPTOR:** FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

**PRIEST:** And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

**PRECEPTOR:** BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PRIEST:** Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

**PRECEPTOR:** THE WATERS ARE HERE BUT THERE IS NO LIFE WITHIN THEM, NEITHER DO THEY SING. THEY ARE THE WATERS-OF-SLEEP.

**PRIEST:** Give me the Waters-of-Sleep.

**PRIEST:** O Dalon Ap Landu, O Be'al return to these Waters, we pray thee. Hallow them, descend into them that we may have life.

**PRIEST TO CONGREGATION:** Take, and drink, in token of our acceptance of Samhain for I tell you that it is truly upon us.

### The Sermon

*Here may be given the sermon.*

### The Dismissal

Take up these torches, and go forth. Rest sure in the knowledge that after Samhain comes Beltane, and that the Earth-Mother will return to us. Peace to your spirits;

Rest, Rest, Rest.



Figure 6 Stone Circle, Hill of 3 Oaks, 1997

## Samhain Version #2

(Shelton? Early 1970s Version?)

### The Invocation

Lord, overlook these three errors that are due to our human limitations:  
Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee here;  
Thou art without form, but we worship you in these forms;  
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;  
Lord, overlook these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

### Changing of Vestments

#### Procession and Drawing of the Circle

*Here shall be lit a fire, from a torch carried by the Arch Druid, upon the High altar.*

### Chants or Hymns

*Here may be sung a hymn.*

*Here shall be given a ritual chant of mourning.*

### The Sacrifice

*Here shall be offered up a bough of pine, a branch of oak, and a crest of grass.*

**Priest:** Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried aloft to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy presence yet.

**Priest:** Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? Hast thou accepted our gifts, O Be'al? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East...and of the West.

**Priest:** The four winds are silent, neither does the Mother answer. The time of Samhain is upon us.

### The Answer

**PRIEST:** Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

**PRECEPTOR:** THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PRIEST:** From whence do these Waters flow?

**PRECEPTOR:** FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

**PRIEST:** And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

**PRECEPTOR:** BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PRIEST:** Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

**PRECEPTOR:** THE WATERS ARE HERE BUT THERE IS NO LIFE WITHIN THEM, NEITHER DO THEY SING. THEY ARE THE WATERS-OF-SLEEP.

**PRIEST:** Give me the Waters-of-Sleep.

**PRIEST:** O Dalon Ap Landu, O Be'al return to these Waters, we pray thee. Hallow them, descend into them that we may have life.

**PRIEST TO CONGREGATION:** Take, and drink, in token of our acceptance of Samhain for I tell you that it is truly upon us.

## The Meditation

*Here may be offered petitions to the Earth-Mother.*

### The Benediction

**Priest:** Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that after Samhain comes Beltane, and that the Earth-Mother will return to us. Peace to your spirits;  
Rest, Rest, Rest.

## COLD, COLD!

(Ancient Irish, suitable for Samhain)  
From Druid Chronicles (Evolved) 1975

Cold, cold!

Cold tonight is the broad plain of Lurg,  
Higher the snow than the mountain range,  
The deer cannot get at their food.  
Cold till Doom!

The storm has spread over all:

A river is each furrow upon the slope,  
Each ford a full pool.

A great sea is each loch, which is full,

A full loch is each pool,

Horses do not get over Ross-ford,

No more do two feet get there.

The fishes of Inis Fail are a-roaming,

There is no marge nor well of waves,

In the lands there is no land,

Not a bell is heard, no crane talks.

The hounds of Cuan-wood find not

Rest nor sleep in the dwelling of hounds,

The little wren cannot find

Shelter in her nest on Lon-slope.

On the little company of the birds has broken forth

Keen wind and cold ice,

The blackbird cannot get a lee to her liking,

Shelter at the side of Cuan-woods.

Cozy our pot on the hook,

Crazy the hut on Lon-slope:

The snow has smoothed the wood here,

Toilsome to climb by kine-horned staves.

Glenn Rigi's ancient bird

From the bitter wind gets grief,

Great her misery and her pain,

The ice will get into her mouth.

From flock and from down to rise

Take it to heart! Were folly for thee:

Ice in heaps on every ford,

That is why I keep saying "cold!"

Taken from Ancient Irish Tales

(The Hiding of the Hill of Howth)



# Service at the Winter Solstice

By Norman Nelson, 1964-65?

## Opening Blessing

O Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations:  
Thou art everywhere, but we worship you here;  
Thou art without form, but we worship you in these forms;  
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer you these prayers and sacrifices;  
O Lord, forgive us these three sins that are due to our human limitations.  
O Belenos, hear us as we praise thee in thy returning.  
O Earth-Mother, wake and hear our prayers; cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation.

## Procession

*(Circle is omitted) Here may be lighted a fire if one is desired.*

## The Sacrifice

Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Wake now, and hear, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life that is to come. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts granting us peace and renewed life.

*(Here shall be offered up a branch of evergreen, a branch of mistletoe, if available, and a branch bare, yet bearing buds.)*

Hast thou heard our prayers and wakened? Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, dedicated to the renewal of life? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer, of the South, of the East, and of the West.

Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the return and renewal of life and fertility has been accepted.

## The Answer

Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

THE WATERS OF LIFE.

From whence do these Waters flow?

FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER-CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

And how do we honor this gift that causes life in men?

BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS OF LIFE.

Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

IT IS THE TIME OF WINTER, AND THE WATERS OF LIFE FLOW NOT FORTH. THE MOTHER GIVES US ONLY THE WATERS OF SLEEP.

(THEN SHALL THE A-D SAY) It is indeed the time of winter, when the Earth-Mother is wrapped in sleep, and the blanketed in snow and cold; yet it is also at this time that the sun, whom we have called Belenos, turns again to the north, bringing the promise of returning life to all things. For though the Earth be wrapped in sleep, within her rest the seeds and buds of renewed life, to come forth in all their glory with the return of the life-giving Belenos.

All people have celebrated the return of the sun, from time immemorial, and in many ways, but to the Druids does this have a special meaning, for in the Waters of Sleep is

the promise of the Waters of Life. Then give me the Waters.

## The Consecration

O Dalon-Ap-Landu, hallow these Waters of Sleep and life to come by thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. O Belenos, pour into these waters thy life-giving powers and the promise of renewed life. O Earth, our Mother, cleanse our hearts and join us together by Thy power, as we take and drink of Thy waters.  
To Thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee. Hear us pray that with the return of the Waters of Sleep to the Earth, may come the return of mighty and life-giving Belenos; hear us, O Earth-Mother. O Earth, our Mother, O Belenos, even now and daily do we praise thee.

## Reading and Meditation

*(Here shall be read Customs 4:3-4)*

*(Here may follow a silent meditation and prayer.)*

*(Here may be appended any other prayers or thanksgivings at the discretion of the Archdruid.)*

## The Benediction

Go forth into the world of men, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer: that life shall return to the face of the Earth, even as does mighty Belenos return, and that we go forth with her blessing.  
Peace. Peace. Peace.

*Note: This service is designed for use as close as possible to the Solstice. It may be performed by an Archdruid alone, or as an act or worship of the Drynemeton. Suggested vestments are plain black with white, or vice versa.*

## A Call to Mother Nature

Author Unknown, Date Uncertain, perhaps 1964

Earth, divine Goddess, Mother Nature, who generatest all things and bringest forth anew the sun which thou hast given to the nations; Guardian of the sky and sea and of all Gods and powers; through thy power all nature falls silent and then sink in sleep. And again though bringest back the light and chases away night, and yet again thou coverest us most securely with thy shades. Thou dost contain chaos infinite, yea, and winds and showers and storms. Thou sendest them out when thou wilt, and cause the seas to roar; thou chases away the sun and arousest the storm. Again, when thou wilt thou sendest forth the joyous day and givest the nourishment of life with the eternal surety. And when the soul departs to thee we return. Thou indeed art duly called great Mother of the Gods; thou conquerest by thy divine name. Thou art the source of the strength of nations and of Gods, without thee nothing can be brought to perfection or be born; thou art great, queen of the Gods. Goddess! I adore thee as divine; I call upon thy name; be pleased to grant that which I ask thee, so shall I give thanks to thee, Goddess, with due faith.

## A Chant for Midwinter

By Fisher or Nelson? , 1963?

Ea, Lord, Ea, Mother, thou of uncounted names and faces, hear us now as we thy humble servants call upon thee

\* GLORIOUS ARE ALL THY WORKS, O OUR MOTHER

Hear us, Mother, as we do call upon thee in the form of Belenos, great God of the golden sun.

\* MAKE THY FACE TO SMILE UPON US, THOU GOD OF THE BRIGHT LIFE-GIVING LIGHT.

Lo, Belenos, for more than six full moons hast thou drawn away from us since our rejoicing at the festival of Midsummer, and for these moons have our days dwindled shorter.

\* YEA, AND COLDER TOO, AS THOU HAS LEFT OUR SKIES FOR THE SOUTH.

Yet though we know we shall suffer yet more cold before Beltane, do we rejoice today to see thee stop thy flight and begin to return to us.

\*AND WE SHALL REJOICE THROUGH THE SNOWS TO SEE THE SOURCE OF WARMTH AND LIFE DAILY RETURN NEARER.

We know, Mother, that as there is Samhain there must be Beltane, and as there is Beltane there must be Samhain.

\* WE KNOW, BELENOS, THAT AS THERE IS MIDSUMMER THERE MUST BE MIDWINTER, AND AS THERE IS MIDWINTER THERE MUST BE AGAIN MIDSUMMER.

As the sun began to sink, it must now begin to climb.

\* AS IT NOW BEGINS TO CLIMB, IT MUST SINK AGAIN.

All that passes away must come again. We praise thee, our Mother.

\* ALL THAT COMES MUST PASS AWAY. PRAISE BE TO THEE, BELENOS.

## A Meditation for Midwinter

By Frangquist, 1964?

Better is the end of a thing than its beginning;

And the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.

Be not quick to anger, for anger lodges in the bosom of fools.

Say not, "Why were the former days better than these?"

For it is not from wisdom that you ask this.

In the day of prosperity be joyful, and in the day of adversity consider;

God has made the one as well as the other.

*(Ecclesiastes 7:8-10, 14)*



Figure 7 Monument Hill 1993

## Oimelc Service of Worship, Version #1

By Fisher?, 1964 or 65?

### Invocation

Lord, forgive three sins that are due to our human limitations. Thou art everywhere, but we worship you here.

Thou art without form, but we worship you in these forms.

Thou needest no prayers or sacrifices, but we offer you these prayers and sacrifices.

Lord, forgive three sins that are due to our human limitations.

### Chant

*(Here shall be chanted by the Archdruid an appropriate chant of praise.)*

### Sacrifice in Silence

We have raised our voices to thee in praise, O our Mother.

Hear now, we beseech thee, as we offer thee praise in our hearts.

*(Here shall the Archdruid place a branch of evergreen upon the altar.)*

### Words of Assurance

This Earth is a mother that never dies.

Of this the evergreen is a constant sign.

Of this at OIMELC we are given to know by the lactation of the ewe.

Take now, and drink of this milk, in assurance that life will return to the world. Join together in this act of faith.

*(Here shall the Archdruid pour the milk of a ewe (or a cow) into a chalice, saying:)*

O Dalon Ap Landu, we praise thy name and beseech thy return to the world of men. Come and dwell within us as we take and drink of this sign of thy eternal life.

### The Readings

*(Here shall be read suitable words of truth.)*

*(Here may be given a sermon.)*

### The Benediction

Go Forth now into the world of men, secure in the knowledge that our prayers have been heard, our sacrifice answered, and that you go in the peace of the Mother.

Peace, Peace, Peace.



Figure 8 The Amphitheater 1993

# Festival of Oimelc Meditation

Fisher or Frangquist? 1965?

Celebrated—from sundown Jan. 31 to sundown Feb. 1  
Occasion—Beginning of the Second Quarter of the Druid year, also called the period of Earrach.

Very little is known about the Festival of Oimelc. This is because less of it has survived to modern times than any of the principle festivals of the Druid year. Oimelc was almost totally eclipsed, on purpose, by the feast of St. Bridget in the Catholic church. There is some question as to the identity of Bridget. She is supposed to have lived at about the same time as St. Patrick, and like him, it is uncertain whether or not she actually existed. Furthermore, Bridget has been identified as one of the Celtic Goddesses – that of fertility- and it is possible that she was simply adopted as a saint out of the Celtic mythology. This may indicate that there were traces of the fertility rites in the celebration of Oimelc; however, considering the season, it is not very likely that they reached any proportion. Rather, it would seem that the festival was something of a repetition of mid-winter. As in mid-winter, the evergreen is made the center of attention as the symbol of continued life in the midst of the seemingly dead world. The fire, so important to all Druidic festivals most probably took the form of the Yule log as in the case of mid-winter. At any rate, the emphasis is placed on the fact that winter is now half-over and that life is not dead (as is seen in the evergreen) but is going to return to the earth in the spring.

## A Service for Oimelc, Version #2

By Gary Zempel, 1966 or 67?

### The Invocation

Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee here;  
Thou art without form, but we worship thee in these forms;  
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer thee these, our prayers and sacrifices;

Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations.

### Chant

*(Here may the arch-Druid chant an appropriate chant or praise)*

### Sacrifice

Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried aloft to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, O our Mother, as we offer up to thee this sacrifice of Life. Accept it, we pray thee, and acknowledge for us thy presence here.

*(Here shall the priest place a branch of evergreen upon the altar.)*

Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O Our Mother? Hast thou accepted our gifts, O Be'al? I call upon the spirits of the North to give answer, of the South, of the East, of the West.

The four winds are silent, neither does the Mother answer. Thus has it been before; yet thrice since Samhain has the moon gone before us in her full glory and thrice has she fully hid her glory from us. We know that as Belenos last hid his light from us, Geimredh came to its end. We have lived, through Geimredh, in the hope of the return of the Earth-Mother, yet she still answers us not, and all about us she appears dead.

### The Answers or Words of Assurance

**Priest:** Has she given a sign of this?

**Preceptor:** Of this constant life is the evergreen a sign.

**Priest:** Does the Mother give us any sign, special to Oimelc, to remind us that though the winds answer not, she shall yet return and awake?

**Preceptor:** Of this at Oimelc we are given to know by the lactating of the ewe.

**Priest:** It is written, "Take now, and drink of this milk, in assurance that life will return to the world."

**Preceptor:** We drink together in this act of faith.

*(Here shall the Priest pour the milk of a ewe (or of a cow) into a chalice or goblet saying:)*

O Dalon Ap Landu, we praise thy name and beseech thy return to the world of men. Come and dwell within us as we take and drink of this thy sign of eternal life.

*(Here shall the server pass the milk among the assembled grove)*

### The Meditation

*(Here may be read a suitable written meditation)*

*(Here may be given a sermon)*

*(Here may be provided time for personal meditation)*

### The Benediction

Go forth into the world of men, secure in the knowledge that our prayers and sacrifice have been heard and answered, that the Earth-Mother will return to us in less time than she has been gone from us, and that you go ever in the peace of the Mother.

Peace. Peace. Peace.

*Set down by me on this eve of Oimelc, for the service celebrating Oimelc, in the third year of the Worship of the Mother*

*-Gary Zempel*

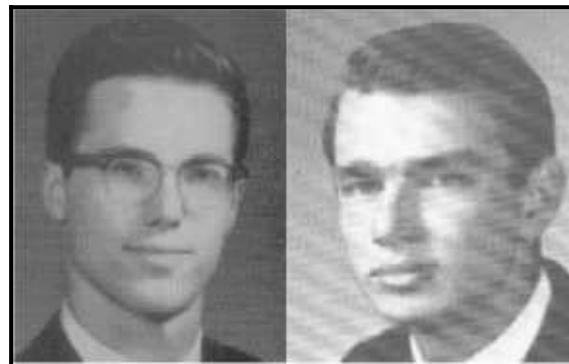


Figure 9 Dick Smiley, Gary Zempel, c 1965

# Yet Another Service for Oimeic, Version #3

By Shelton? Early 70s?

## The Invocation

O Lord, overlook these three errors that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee but here;

Thou art without form, but we honor these forms

Thou art that which we take to give in dedication, yet we so take and give.

O Lord, overlook these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

## Chant, then Sacrifice

Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried aloft to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, O our Mother, as we offer up to thee this sacrifice of Life. Accept it, we pray thee, and acknowledge for us thy presence here.

*(Here shall the priest place a branch of evergreen upon the altar.)*

The four winds are silent, neither does the Mother answer.

Thus has it been before; yet thrice since Samhain has the moon gone before us in his full glory and thrice has he fully hid his glory from us. We know that as the sun hid her last light from us this day, the time of Geimredh has come to its end, and as the serpent swallows his tail, so moves the world on. But around us all seems barren and cold.

## The Response

**Chorus:** The Earth is a mother that sleeps but never dies.

**Priest:** Has she given of this a sign?

**Preceptor:** Of this the evergreen a constant sign.

**Priest:** Does the Mother give us any sign on this day of Oimeic to remind us that though the winds answer not, she shall yet return and awake?

**Preceptor:** Of this at Oimeic we are given to know by the lactating of the ewe.

**Priest:** It is written, "Take now, and drink of this milk, in assurance that life will reawaken in the world."

**Preceptor:** We drink together in this act of faith.

*(Here shall the Priest pour the milk of a ewe (or of a cow) into a chalice)*

O Dalon Ap Landu, we praise thy name and beseech thy return to the world of men. Come and dwell within us as we take and drink of thy sign of eternal life.

*(Here shall the server pass the milk among the assembled grove)*

## The Reading

### The Benediction

Go forth into the world of men, with faith that the Spirit of the World remains alive, and dwelleth within the hearts, aye, and moves the hearts of *all* men, and that Spirit hears our plea. May the peace of the Mother find each of you.

## (Beltane)

### SUMMER HALF OF THE YEAR

The Earliest Known Version,  
(Perhaps by Fisher, Beltane 1963.)

#### I. OPENING BLESSING:

O Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, but we worship you here;

Thou art without form, but we worship you in these forms;

Thou needest no praise, yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;

O Lord, forgive [*these*] three sins that are due to our human limitations.

Mighty and blessed, fertile and powerful, to thee Earth-Mother, we sing your praise, asking that what we offer up to thee will be accepted, and thy blessing of life granted to us.

#### II. PROCESSION AND DRAWING OF THE CIRCLE (& LIGHTING OF FIRE)

#### III. HYMNS OR CHANTS OF PRAISE

#### IV. THE SACRIFICE

Our praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried to thee on the shoulders of the winds.

Hear now, O our Mother, as we offer up to thee this our sacrifice of life. Accept this we pray, and grant us life.

Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call on the Spirit of the North to give answer, of the South, of the East, and of the West.

Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life has been accepted.

#### V. THE ANSWER

1. Of what does the Earth-mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

From whence do these Waters flow?

FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

And how do we honour this gift that causes life to men?

BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

SHE HAS

Then give me the Waters.

2. O DALON AP LANDU, HALLOW THESE WATERS BY THE SEVENFOLD POWERS, AND BY THE THREE WAYS OF DAY AND THE ONE OF NIGHT. GIVE US TO KNOW THY POWER AS WE TAKE AND DRINK OF THY SECRET ESSENCES.

3. To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

#### VI. THE SERMON

#### VII. THE BENEDICTION

Go forth into the world of men, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that you go forth with her blessing. PEACE, PEACE, PEACE.

# Mayday, Season Surpassing!

(Ancient Irish Poem, suitable for Beltane)

By Larson, Early 70s.

Mayday, season surpassing! Splendid is color then. Blackbirds sing a full lay, if there be a slender shaft of day.  
The dust-colored cuckoo calls aloud; Welcome, splendid summer! The bitterness of bad weather is past, the boughs of the woods are a thicket.  
Summer cuts the river down, the shift herd of horses seeks the pool, the long hair of the heather is outspread, the soft white bog-down grows.  
Panic startles the heart of the deer, the smooth sea runs apace, season when ocean sinks asleep, blossom covers the world.  
Bees with puny strength carry a goodly burden, the harvest of blossoms; up the mountain-side kine take with them mud, the ant makes a rich meal.  
The harp of the forest sounds music, the sail gathers, perfect peace. Color has settled on every height, haze on the lake of full waters.  
The corncrake, a strenuous bard, discourses; the lofty virgin waterfall sings a welcome to the warm pool; the talk of the rushes is come.  
Light swallows dart aloft, loud melody reaches round the hill, the soft rich mast buds, the stuttering quagmire rehearses.  
The peat-bog is as the raven's coat, the loud cuckoo bids welcome, the speckled fish leaps, strong is the bound of the swift warrior.  
Man flourishes, the maiden buds in her fair strong pride; perfect each forest from top to ground, perfect each great stately plain.  
Delightful is the season's splendor, rough winter has gone, white is every fruitful wood, a joyous peace in summer.  
A flock of birds settles in the midst of meadows; the green field rustles, wherein is a brawling white stream.  
A wild longing is on you to race horses, the ranked host is ranged around; a bright shaft has been shot into the land, so that the water flag is gold beneath it.  
A timorous tiny persistent little fellow sings at the top of his voice, the lark sings clear tidings; surpassing Mayday of delicate colors.  
Taken from *Ancient Irish Tales*,  
(The Boyhood Deeds of Finn)



Figure 10 Beltane Maypole, 2001.

# A Service for Beltane

By Shelton, c. 1970-1976

*It is traditional to gather on Mai-Fete island first, light the torches there and then process to wherever (usually Monument Hill) in torchlight procession.. It is said that the Ancient Druids extinguished all fires throughout the land before Beltane sundown, and then rekindled them all after sundown from a fire kindled by the Archdruid. The main fire, of course, is built and doused w/kerosene hours in advance, waiting to be kindled from the Archdruid's torch.*

## The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:  
Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee here;  
Thou art without form, but we worship thee in these forms;  
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;  
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

## The Incantation

*Use the Mystery, Imagine the AD flanked by torches, reading this chant (That always makes my hair stand on end) and glancing significantly at a torch when he come to the line "Who created in the mind the fire".*

## The Lighting of the Fire

O Thou, that art this day awake, we greet thee!

## Incantation and first Sacrifice

*Place the evergreen bough reverently on the fire at the end of this speech. (Oh yes, each sacrifice should be entrusted to some worthy Druid or another, and you should ask for the appropriate one at the appropriate time. It is well worth the time to talk through the mechanics of the service with your cohorts the day before.*

From Samhain, now half-year past, we have kept watch of the sun that divideth time as we ourselves. And we have seen the earth barren and deemed that life had fled. Yet thou abidest through all. In token of this we have taken the evergreen as sign, and the evergreen do we consecrate to ourselves that we may consecrate it to thee.

## Changing of Vestments

*I.e. the ribbons (from white to red). This marks the changing of the season.*

## Incantation and Second Sacrifice

*Again, cast it [the wildflower] on the fire.*

We behold the wild flower, the supreme sign of thy life and power. O Thou that returnest to the ways of the waking world, kindle within us thy joy, thy spirit, thy life!  
Come ye winds and ye spirits of the wood, from earth and from sky, from greening tree and running stream; speak to us of the coming of spring, of rain on the hill and sun on the field, of the promise of ripening summer, of the quickening of life and quickening of spirit that springeth from the heart of all things and raiseth all unto life!

## The Answers

**Priest:** Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

**PRECEPTOR:** THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PRIEST:** From whence do these Waters flow?

**PRECEPTOR:** FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

**PRIEST:** And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

**PRECEPTOR:** BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PRIEST:** Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

**PRECEPTOR:** SHE HAS!

**PRIEST:** Then give me the Waters!

## Consecration of the Waters-of-Life

O Dalon Ap Landu, who givest all life but yet who art sprung from the life of us all, hallow these waters by thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Give us to know of the force and power that resideth in the heart of each of us as we bind ourselves in communion with thee and with each other.

To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, even as we must return to thee.

## The Reading

*Feel free to read several, and/or have other of the grove read their favorites. This is where the meat of the Modern Reformed Druid service resides, a sharing of thoughts.*

## The Opening of the Arb

*A prerogative of the Archdruid. Any boor venturing to spend the night in the Arb before the Archdruid declares it officially open deserves the snow storm that may come his way. Traditional reading for Arb Opening is Yeats's Faery song (in the Green Book).*

## The Incantation and the Last Sacrifice

*For the life of me I can't remember what the sacrifice was. As I recall, I wanted an oak, but oaks probably won't be in leaf. Grass is appropriate but not very dramatic. (Grass is about as eternal as anything) So think of something else.*

## Benediction

*Write your own!*



**Figure 11 Paul Schmidt, Nikki Lambert, Mike Scharding, Hannah Landman & Richard Shelton at Monument Hill, 4/14/1993 for 30<sup>th</sup> Reunion.**

## Beltane Tips

By Shelton, 1976

21 April 1976

Shelton to Morrison

Dear Don,

We were delighted to get your letter, and to learn that you'll be around this summer and next year. It's beginning to look as though the Midsummer service will break a record for number of 3<sup>rd</sup> Orders present; there will probably be people from the cities (though not Isaac), and there's even a side chance that we'll have a majority of the Council.

You should receive shortly a document from Diana appointing you Arch-Druid of Carleton (pro-tempore). When you receive it, you will become 13<sup>th</sup> Arch-Druid of Carleton and Chairman of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu. The "pro-tempore" signifies only that you are appointed, rather than elected, and you don't have to mention the "pro-tempore". You can drop it altogether as soon as you can rustle up a Grove to elect you Arch-Druid. But you will have all powers of a regularly elected Arch-Druid, including the right to consecrate priests to the third order. I want you to have this office by Beltane so that you can meet Isaac on equal footing. If necessary, you should make it clear to him that you are the presiding Arch-Druid, and that you are running the show.

Now any Arch-Druid needs some paraphernalia, and to help tide you over until you can get the real thing, we enclose the following:

1. The Order of Worship – containing basic services for the Summer Half and Winter Half, 2<sup>nd</sup> Order Consecration, and a few other things. This is most of what you need in the way of liturgy. Always remember: except for third order consecration, all priests are encouraged to write their own liturgy, and (except for third order consecration) there is no fixed liturgy. Oh yes I have written in pencil the text as it appears in the Carleton Liturgy (the Black Books) as it differs somewhat from the printed version. The black book version is the one we used (when we were following the book at all). Second order consecration was the one service of these that we regularly did follow the book on.
2. A service for Beltane. This is meant only as a suggestion; if you like it, use it, but don't feel bound to it. I guarantee it will take Isaac by surprise, since whatever he is calling the "Standard Beltane Service" he must have written himself – the Black Book contains none (or didn't at my time, anyway). This service I wrote myself at Carleton, Glenn might have stuck it in the Black Book, but Isaac can hardly have found a copy anywhere. Also enclosed are some "stage directions," which might be useful. If you use this service and if Isaac asks for a copy, refer him to me, its mine, and I don't want it showing up in his Magnum Opus.
3. A copy of our printed version of the Green Books. Read the introductory material carefully, and peruse the contents with pleasure; for here is the essence of Druidism. Without the Green Books, no Grove is complete. But: for the time being, keep this to yourself. Our problem is that we do not yet have all the copyright releases necessary, and I have been using that as an excuse not to send a copy to Isaac until after it's too late to include in his thing. So let him have no inkling that you have a copy. Of course, you will get the real Green Book with the

paraphernalia; in the meantime find a bind for this – and keep the temporary copyright page right after the title page, as its our only protection against pirated copies.

4. A handy-dandy Druid Calendar – works even in leap year! – plus directions for use.
5. Copies of the Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals and of Letter to my Brothers. They are part of the Carleton Apocrypha. Isaac has O.F.F. , but not letter- it would be best if he did not know of the existence of the latter.
6. Our very last copy of the Chronicles – we haven't been able to reach Kelton, so I don't know yet whether he has been able to recover the rest.
7. The Carleton Constitution. (as amended) Notice the striking resemblance to the Book of Law.

That should be enough to get you started. Let me know if you require anything else. I don't know how well-versed you are in the art of performing a service, so please forgive me if you already know all the following. But just in case you don't, I offer these tips:

- A. It is traditional for Carleton priests to inscribe (with their fingers) the Druid symbol on the North (Blank) face of the Monument just before services. This is a token, looking forward to the day when we can have it inscribed (with a chisel) together with the legend "The First Reformed Druid Service was held on this spot on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1963."
- B. The presiding priest (usually, though not necessarily the A-D) gives the invocation somewhat apart from the congregation, and then processes (with his assistant, e.g. the Preceptor) to join the congregation. Upon reaching it, the two draw a symbol with their staves, into which the presiding priest steps, and from which he gives the rest of the service.

### (Druid Symbol Illustration)

- C. An incantation is nice, though not necessary. It is hard to find (or write) good ones. The ones in Customs are nice, but they are given much too often.
- D. "The Sacrifice" Oh yes, the Sacrifice. Did anybody remember to bring a Sacrifice? -Uh, just a minute folks, I have to find a Sacrifice. Be right back." MORAL: Don't forget to bring a Sacrifice. This is the responsibility of the presiding priest. (This is particularly important for 3<sup>rd</sup> Order consecrations – the candidate will be pretty groggy, and very impressionable, so it is important that the A-D have gotten a good night's sleep and have everything all ready for the consecration so that everything goes smoothly. This instant is the most serious Druidism gets – it means a lot to the candidate, and it is important that it be done well.)
- E. The responses in the Answer are given by the assistant, who should be of 2<sup>nd</sup> order (or more). If no 2<sup>nd</sup> order are available, they can be given by the congregation in union. But it doesn't really matter.
- F. Waters of life: the traditional ratio of Scotch to Water is determined by the marks on the cruet (part of the paraphernalia): one fills with Scotch to the first mark, then with water (traditionally from a drinking fountain from 1<sup>st</sup> Goodhue, but only because A-D's traditionally forget about the water until the last minute) up to the 2<sup>nd</sup> mark. I measured out once what this came to in

milliliters, but have forgotten exactly. It came to about 1 part Scotch to 2 parts water, for a total of about ¾ cup. Remember, for 2<sup>nd</sup> Order consecration, you need another cruetful in reserve for each 2<sup>nd</sup> order to be consecrated – for it is required that the aspirant consume the lion's share of the standard cruetful of waters.

- G. Waters of Life (for Beltane): the ration is reversed: fill with water first, then Scotch. (This is one reason 2<sup>nd</sup> order consecration is traditionally **not** performed on Beltane!)
- H. Waters of Sleep: Straight water ("neither do they sing...")
- I. Mechanics of 2<sup>nd</sup> order of worship (p.3) it says the 2<sup>nd</sup> order consecration is performed before the remainder of the waters is returned to the Earth-Mother. However, you need that chalice for the consecration, and the aspirant isn't supposed to leave any to be returned. So instead you proceed as follows: (suppose you have an aspirant)
- J. Hallow the Waters of Life and serve the congregation, returning the remainder to the Earth-Mother, exactly as in a regular service.
- K. Go to the aspirant. Ask him to kneel. Hallow the next batch of waters. Proceed with the consecration.
- L. Go back to your home plate (the Symbol) and continue the service (with the reading). Now you begin to see why you need an assistant or two: to hold bottles (of water and of scotch), cruet, chalice and liturgy, and torches at night!
- M. Sermons. Nobody gives sermons anymore. A reading, or three or four, followed by a period of silent meditation is usual. I believe Renny was somewhat more imaginative – but you would know more about that than I.
- O. Oh yes, the official liturgical scotch of RDNA is Black & White (Although we considered changing it when they changed the clip tops to screw tops – wrote them a letter to about it, too (didn't get any response)).

That's all I can think of. Hope it helps. Let me know if I can be of further assistance.

News Department: The Ann Arbor Grove has been revived (see enclosed missive, which is for the Archives). So I may be addressed as "Richard, Arch-Druid of Ann Arbor" though I'll think you stuffy if you do! (Except formally of course.)

Although it is not required, if you fell energetic it might be a good idea to send out an accession letter. But you might hold off until after Midsummers, in case anything important is decided (Hah!) Whatever you think best.

Peace  
Richard!



Figure 12 Altar stone, Hill of 3 Oaks c.1976

## A Service for Mid-Summer

Small Fragment  
By Fisher?, 1964?

### Invocation:

- O Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations:  
Thou art everywhere, yet we worship thee here;  
Thou art without form, yet we worship thee in these forms;  
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer thee these, our prayers and sacrifices.
- O Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations.
- O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

(Here shall the sign be drawn upon the ground, the presiding priest stepping into it.)

## A Chant For Midsummer

By Fisher, c. 1963

Ea, Lord, Ea, Mother, thou of uncounted names and faces, hear us now as we thy humble servants do call upon thee.

*(The BOLDFACE lines to be read by the congregation in unison: )*

**GLORIOUS ARE ALL THY WORKS, O OUR MOTHER!**  
Hear us, Mother, as we do call upon thee in the form of  
Belenos, great God of the golden sun.

**MAKE THE FACE TO SMILE UPON US, THOU GOD OF  
THE BRIGHTLY SHINING LIGHT**

Lo, Belenos, we have rejoiced these six full moons since the  
festival of midwinter, as we watched thee day by day  
lengthening thy reign of light.

**O GLORIOUS ARE THE DEEDS OF BELENOS, AS THE  
WINTER SNOWS DO MELT AND WE REJOICE IN  
THE MOTHER'S RETURN TO LIFE AT BELTANE.**

Yet do we know that with the coming of Midsummer the days  
will begin to shorten, all the mother's activities will  
begin slowing for the winter period, and the eve of  
Samhain shall come upon us.

**WE SHALL MOURN AS THE SUN SINKS DAILY  
LOWER. BUT STILL YET BE GLAD FOR WHAT  
THE MOTHER DOES STILL GIVE US TO LIVE  
WITH.**

We know, Mother, that as there is Beltane there must be  
Samhain, and as there is Samhain there must be Beltane.

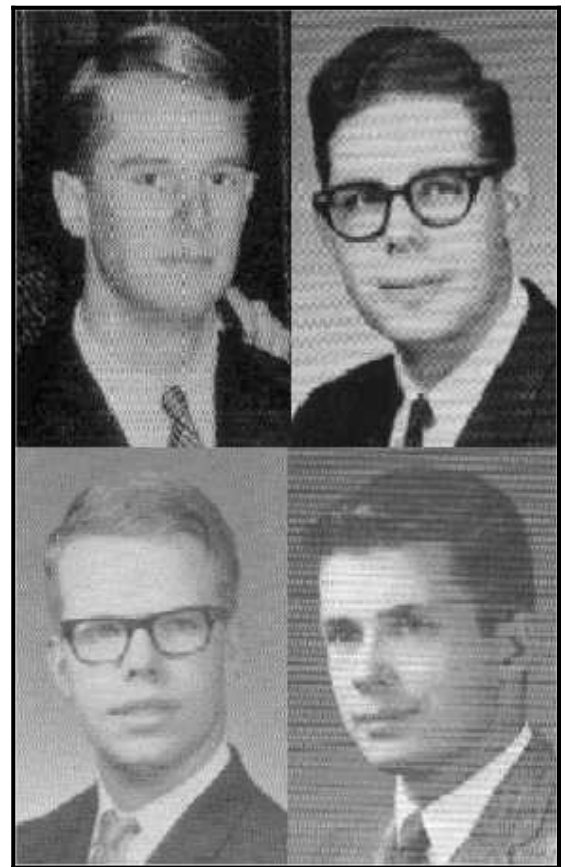
**WE KNOW, BELENOS, THAT AS THERE IS MIDWINTER  
THERE MUST BE MIDSUMMER, AND AS THERE  
IS MIDSUMMER THERE MUST BE AGAIN  
MIDWINTER.**

As the sun began to climb, it must now begin to sink.  
**AS IT NOW BEGINS TO SINK, IT MUST CLIMB AGAIN.**  
All that comes must pass away. We praise thee, our Mother.  
**ALL THAT PASSES AWAY MUST COME YET AGAIN.**  
PRAISE BE TO THEE, BELENOS.

## Incantation to Midsummer

By Frangquist, 1964  
Given at Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan

O glorious sun,  
Won the fight,  
Light over dark,  
Stark nigh recedes,  
proceed to thy fullest,  
Best day today,  
May thy radiance  
Dance over all,  
Fall to give  
Living strength from on highs  
Thy power goes through all, Belenos



**Figure 13 Four Founders of the RDNA  
David Fisher, Howard Cherniack (Top)  
Norman Nelson & David Frangquist, c. 1963**



# A Service for Lughnasadh

By Shelton?, Early 70s?

## The Invocation

Lord, overlook these three errors that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, yet only here do we seek thee;  
Thou art without form, yet in these forms do we honor thee;  
Thou hast no need of prayers and dedication, yet of thine own self do we gather that which we dedicate to thee;

Lord, overlook these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

*Here shall the priest and preceptor together draw the sign upon the ground, and the priest shall step into it.*

## The Praise

**Priest:** Let us praise the Earth-Mother! She has smiled on her children.

**Chorus:** Three times since Beltane has the moon gone before us in her full glory, and three times has she fully hidden her glory from us.

**Priest:** In those three months the Earth-Mother has quickened the Earth and brought forth life upon it; and in these three months to come she will bring forth the fruit of this life.

**Chorus:** Yet as the moon now waxes near to full only to wane again, so at Samhain will the Earth-Mother withdraw from us a while.

**Priest:** Even so we praise her, for now at Lughnasadh the life which has grown through Samhradh comes to fruition, that we her grateful children may gather it to endure and remember her until she returns again at Beltane.

**BOTH:** Let us gather and praise the bounty of the Mother!

## The Dedication

**Priest:** Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this dedication of life. Accept it, we pray thee, in token of the dedication of our hearts, and grant us awareness of thy presence with us.

*(Here shall the priest place a stalk of wheat (or of field grass) upon the altar)*

**Priest:** Hast thou accepted our dedication, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

**Priest:** Praise be, our dedication has been accepted. The Mother smiles on her children and brings forth of her bounty.

## The Response

**PRIEST:** Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

**PRECEPTOR:** THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PRIEST:** From whence do these Waters flow?

**PRECEPTOR:** FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

**PRIEST:** And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

**PRECEPTOR:** BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PRIEST:** Does the Earth-Mother give any sign on this day of Lughnasadh to assure us that she will sustain life while she sleeps?

**PRECEPTOR:** OF THIS AT LUGHNASADH WE KNOW BY THE HARVEST-BOUNTY OF FOGHAMHAR.

**PRIEST:** What token does the Earth-Mother give of this bounty to come?

**PRECEPTOR:** IN TOKEN OF THIS BOUNTY SHE HAS MIXED THE WATERS OF LIFE WITH THE GRAIN OF THE EARTH AND THE FRUIT OF THE TREE.

**Priest:** Give me this token.

## The Consecration

**PRIEST:** O Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of Groves, sprung from the Mother of all life, who is herself sprung from the life of us all: hallow this thy fruit by thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Impart thy power to thy fruit that we who partake of it may know our unity with all life. Cleanse our minds and heart and prepare us for meditation.

*(Here shall the cider be passed to all present. Then shall the priest pour the remainder on the altar, saying:)*

To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, even as we must return to thee.

## The Reading and the Meditation

### The Benediction

**Priest:** Go forth into the world of men, secure in the knowledge that our dedication has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, and that her presence is with us always if we do but open ourselves to her. May the peace of the Mother find each of you.

# A Reading for Lughnasadh

By Shelton?, Early 70s?

(From the Kekchi Indians of Guatemala)

Thou, O God my Lord,  
Thou my Mother, Thou my Father,  
Thou Lord of hill and valley.  
Now, after three suns, and three days,  
Shall I begin to gather my maize  
Before Thy mouth, before Thy face.  
A little of Thy food and drink gave I to Thee.  
It is almost nothing, that which I give to Thee,  
But I have plenty and good  
Of my own food and drink;  
Thou hast revealed it to my soul and to my life:  
Thou my Mother, Thou my Father.  
I begin therefore the harvest,  
But I am not this day ready for the harvest  
Without Thy word, and without Thy countenance.  
Who knows how many suns, how many days I reap?  
It is no quick matter to harvest from among the weeds.  
I can only complete it slowly.  
Who knows till when I can speak to Thee,  
Thou my Mother, Thou my Father,  
Thou celestial one, Lord of hills and Valleys?  
I will again speak to Thee:  
Wherefore not, my God?

From A.C. Bouget. Sacred Books of the World. Baltimore, Penguin Books (A283), 1967. p. 31.

# Service for Lughnasadh

By Katya Luomala, 1978

## Invocation:

O Lord, forgive us these three sins that are due to our human limitations:  
Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee here;  
Thou art without form, but we worship thee in these forms;  
Thou hast no needs of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices.  
O Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations.  
O Mother, cleans our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation.

## Incantation:

(Appropriate and optional – Lugh Manifest)

I am the wind which breathes upon the sea,  
I am the wave of the ocean,  
I am the murmur of the billows,  
I am the ox of the seven combats,  
I am the vulture upon the rocks,  
I am a beam of the sun,  
I am the fairest of plants,  
I am a wild boar in valour,  
I am a salmon in the water,  
I am a lake in the plain,  
I am a word of knowledge,  
I am the point of the lance of battle,  
I am the God who created in the head, the fire;

Who is it who throws light into the meeting on the mountain?  
Who announces the ages of the moon?  
Who teaches the place where couches the sun?  
If not I---

## Sacrifice:

P: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles;  
our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders  
of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we  
offer up this sacrifice of Life.

P: For the sun has come to warm us.

G: SEE HOW WE ARE WARM.

P: The newborn plants, the worthy tasks, the thoughts of Lugh  
have we nurtured

G: SEE HOW THEY HAVE COME TO FRUITION (HAVE  
MET WITH LUCK)

P: We have praised the Mother with the work of our hands

G: WE HAVE REACHED BE'AL WITH THE WORK OF  
OUR HANDS.

P: The abundance we have found will sustain us

G: SEE HOW WE HAVE PLENTY.

P: The flowers of the earth, the fruit of the earth we can offer  
you freely (hold up sacrifice, portion of the feast)

G: THY BEAUTIFUL CHILDREN WHO WILL SEE US  
THROUGH COLD AND DARKNESS

P: We know you are drawing away from us, but first partake of  
the comforts you have brought us

G: WE REJOICE TODAY!

P: Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us  
thy peace and life.

(Sacrifice offered)

P: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon  
the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South... of  
the East... of the West.

P: Praise be; our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and  
renewal of life, and the cleansing of our minds and  
hearts, has been accepted.

## Consecration:

(Includes any beverage for the feast)

P: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the  
continual flow and renewal of life?

G: THE WATERS OF LIFE.

P: From whence do these Waters flow?

G: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE  
(N)EVER-CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

P: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

G: SHE HAS, AND HER BOUNTY IS AT ITS HEIGHT.

P: The give me the Waters.

P: Oh inspiration of Be'al, oh manifestation through Lugh, oh  
sacrifice of Ea, come and meet in our festival cups today.  
And hallow these waters by the three ways of day and  
one of night; bring to them the purity of thy seven-fold  
powers, oh Dalon Ap Landu.

## Partaking of the Waters

P: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother,  
even as we must return to thee.

## Reading(s)

Earth, divine Goddess, Mother Nature, who generatest all  
things and bringest forth anew the sun which thou hast given to  
the nations; Guardian of sky and sea and of all Gods and  
powers; through thy power all nature fall silent and then sinks  
in sleep. And again thou bringest back the light and chases  
away night, and yet again thou coverest us most securely with  
thy shades. Thou dost contain chaos infinite, yea and winds  
and showers and storms. Thou sendest them out when thou  
wilt, and cause the seas to roar; thou chases away the sun and  
arousest the storm. Again, when thou wilt, thou sendest forth  
the joyous day and givest the nourishment of life with the  
eternal surety. And when the soul departs to thee we return.  
Thou indeed are duly called great Mother of the Gods; thou  
conquerest by thy divine name. Thou art the source of the  
strength of nations and of Gods, without thee nothing can be  
brought to perfection or be born; thou art great, queen of the  
Gods. Goddess! I adore thee as divine; I call upon thy name;  
be pleased to grant that which I ask thee, so shall I give thanks  
to thee, Goddess, with due faith.

-Ms. Harley 1585, FF. 12 v. -13r.

## Meditation

(from the Kekchi Indians of Guatemala)  
Thou, O God my Lord,  
Thou my Mother, Thou my Father,  
Thou Lord of hill and valley.  
Now, after three suns, after three days,  
Shall I begin to gather my maize  
Before Thy mouth, before Thy face.  
A little of Thy food and drink give I to Thee.  
It is almost nothing, that which I give to Thee,  
But I have plenty and good  
Of my own food and drink;  
Thou hast revealed it to my soul and to my life:  
Thou my Mother, Thou my Father.  
I begin therefore the harvest,  
But I am not this day ready for the harvest  
Without Thy word, and without Thy countenance.  
Who knows how many suns, how many days I reap?  
It is no quick matter to harvest from among the weeds.  
I can only complete it slowly.  
Who knows till when I can speak to Thee,  
Thou my Mother, Thou my Father,  
Thou celestial one, Lord of hills and valleys?  
I will again speak to Thee:  
Wherefore not, my God?

-A.C. Bouquet. Sacred Books of the World. Baltimore, Penguin Books (A283), 1967, P.31.

## Benediction:

P: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, and also our rejoicing. And go forth to feast with your brethren, even unto excess; be merry, for soon all shall sleep.

Peace! Peace! Peace!

Katya Luomala  
Lughnasadh 1978



Figure 14 Fisher, Frangquist & Larson  
at Monument Hill, c. 1964

## Section Three: Early Berkeley Seasonal Versions

These were in common use in the NRDNA groves and were the bulk of services in *Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*, published in 1976.

## Samhain

New Reformed Druids of North America  
By Bonewits & Larson, c. 1975  
**For use from on/near Nov. 1st.**

## Preparatory Details

*The following is a Special Order of Worship for Samhain. The chalice will be filled with ordinary spring water (the Waters-of-Sleep). The sacrifice should be of bare branches. All Third Order Druids and Druidesses, including the Grove's Archdruid/ess, should be wearing their red ribbons-of-office around their necks at the beginning of the service, but carry their white ribbons-of-office in an easily accessible place.*

*The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation..*

## The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**  
Thou art without form, **but we worship you in these forms;**  
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**

O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

**O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.**

## The Procession

*Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess step into this Sigil, which is then close by the two staves.*

## The Praise

*Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.*

## The Sacrifice

*The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:*

**PR:** Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

*(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)*

**PR:** Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

## The Reply

*(The sacrifice is not accepted.)*

**PR:** The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

## The Chant

**PR.:** Ea, Lord, Ea, Mother, Thou with uncounted names and faces, Thou of the many faceted Nature in and above all, to Thee we sing our chants of praise.

**Chorus:** Go thou not from us.

**PR:** Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and all Groves, mover by night and by day, descend not beneath the earth, turn not Thy pleasing face from us.

**Chorus:** Go thou not from us.

**PR:** The leaves wither, the trees and fields are barren, on what can we depend? Where is Thy order, where Thy strength?

**Chorus:** Depart not from our midst, sleep not, O most high.

**PR:** The Sun, the bright fire of day, withdraws His chariot; His face is veiled with clouds, and the breath of the North Wind walks the land.

**Chorus:** Return to us his warmth.

## The Second Sacrifice

**PR:** Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

*(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. All will turn to face the directions that are called.)*

**PR:** Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.



## The Second Reply

*(The sacrifice is not accepted.)*

**PR:** The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

*(The priests now remove their red ribbons and replace them with their white ribbons. The following is the Mourning and Declaration of Faith)*

## The Declaration

**PR:** Lo, we are as wraith, our fire is turned to ashes and darkness walks the land.

**Chorus:** Preserve us, o spirit of Day. Keep us in thy mind, O spirit of Power.

**PR:** O Earth-Mother, guide our paths. If Thou wilt leave us, save us through the Time of Silence, keep bright within our hearts 'till spring.

**Chorus:** So let it be, O our Mother, for we are faithful, and would keep thy ways.

## The Catechism

**PR:** Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

**PREC:** THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PR:** From whence do these Waters flow?

**PREC:** FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

**PR:** And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

**PREC:** BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PR:** Has the Earth-Mother given

**PREC:** SHE HAS NOT! THE WATERS ARE HERE BUT THE SPIRIT HAS GONE OUT OF THEM!

**PR:** So be it. Now is the Time of Life ended. Now shall we need our faith to keep us strong, for the Time of Sleep is begun in truth and in deed. Of what then, do we partake?

**PREC:** THE WATERS-OF-SLEEP.

**PR:** Then give me the Waters-of-Sleep!

## The Consecration

*(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)*

**PR:** O Dalon Ap Landu, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by Thy power as we take and drink of Thy secret essences!

## Ordinations

*No ordinations are normally done in the Winter Half of the Year.*

## The Communion

*The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Sleep," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.*

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the*

chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.

In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:

**PR:** To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

## The Meditation

(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length – though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end of the Service.

## The Benediction

**PR:** Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you.

## Drawing the Sigil in the Air

The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

**PR:** Peace! Peace! Peace!

NOTES:



Figure 15 Robert Larson c. 1964.

# Winter Solstice

New Reformed Druids of North America  
By Bonewits & Larson, c. 1975

## Preparatory Details

The following is a Special Order of Worship for the Winter Solstice. The chalice will be filled with the Waters-of-Sleep. The sacrifice should be of evergreen boughs and mistletoe.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.

## The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee here;

Thou art without form, but we worship thee in these forms;

Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;

O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

## The Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor & Server or any two others use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid steps into this Sigil, which is closed by two staves.

## The Praise

Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.

## The Sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

**PR:** Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn.)

**PR:** Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East...and of the West.

## The Reply

*(The sacrifice is not accepted, except in emergency situations.)*

**PR:** The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

## The Chant

**PR:** Belenos halts his outward flight,

**Chorus:** And turns to us today.

**PR:** The shortest day, the longest night.

**Chorus:** He turns to us today.

**PR:** So let us rejoice in his sight,

**Chorus:** He turns to us today.

**PR:** O Belenos, to Thee we pray,

**Chorus:** Smile on us today.

**PR:** O look on us who keep Thy ways.

**Chorus:** Smile on us always!

**PR:** O Belenos, Who givest light,

O Belenos, Who givest life,

We rejoice at Thy turning,

A sign of life to us returning,

To Thee all praise, O Lord of Light

Thou Who takest away the night,

Thou Who givest life to land,

And warmth and joy unto Man.

**Chorus:** O Belenos, we praise Thee!

## The Catechism of Waters-of-Sleep

*(The preceptor holds the Waters-of-Sleep while the priest ask the Catechism of the Waters-of-Sleep. The local custom may replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)*

**PR:** Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

**PREC:** THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PR:** From whence do these Waters flow?

**PREC:** FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

**PR:** And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

**PREC:** BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PR:** Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

**PREC:** SHE HAS NOT! THE WATERS ARE HERE, BUT THE SPIRIT HAS GONE OUT OF THEM.

**PR:** Of what, then, do we partake?

**PREC:** THE WATERS-OF-SLEEP.

**PR:** Then give me the Waters-of-Sleep.

## The Consecration

*(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)*

**PR:** O Dalon Ap Landu, descend once again into these waters, and hallow them. Give us to know Thy power and the promise of life that is to return.

## Ordinations

*No ordinations are normally done in the Winter Half of the Year.*

## The Communion

*The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Sleep," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.*

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

*In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.*

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

**PR:** To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

## The Meditation

*(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length – though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end:)*

## The Benediction

**PR:** Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you.

## Drawing the Sigil in the Air

*The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:*

Peace! Peace! Peace!



**Figure 16 Sue & Larry Press with Stacey Weinberger at Live Oak, Beltane1984**

# Oimelc

New Reformed Druids of North America  
By Bonewits & Larson, c. 1975  
For use on/near Feb. 1st.

## Preparatory Details

*The following is a Special Order of Worship for Oimelc. The chalice will be filled with milk (goat's, sheep's or cow's). The sacrifice should be of evergreen boughs.*

*The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.*

## The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**  
Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**  
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**

O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

**O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.**

## The Procession

*Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and Server or any two chosen by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid steps into this Sigil, which is closed by the two staves.*

## The Praise

*Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.*

## The Sacrifice

*The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:*

**PR:** Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

*(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)*

**PR:** Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

## The Reply

*(The sacrifice is not accepted, except in emergency situations.)*

**PR:** The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

## The Chant

**PR:** For three months, O our Mother, has Thou been gone from us.

**Chorus:** Wilt thou not return?

**PR:** Our hearts are heavy, our days our dark.

**Chorus:** Wilt thou not return?

**PR:** All seems dead, hast thou departed?

**Chorus:** Never to return?

**PR:** O, our Mother, we ask a sign.

**Chorus:** A sign of thy return.

**PR:** A sign of Life in the midst of Death.

**Chorus:** A sign of thy return.

**PR:** Sleep in peace, but send a sign!

**Chorus:** A sign of thy return!

**PR:** A sign of Life!

**Chorus:** The Life of thy return!

## The Catechism of Waters-of-Sleep

*(The preceptor holds the Waters-of-Sleep while the priest ask the Catechism of the Waters-of-Sleep. The local custom may replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)*

**PR:** Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

**PREC:** THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PR:** From whence do these Waters flow?

**PREC:** FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

**PR:** And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

**PREC:** BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PR:** Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

**PREC:** SHE HAS NOT! BUT THE EWE GIVE MILK.

**PR:** Of what, then, do we partake?

**PREC:** THE MILK OF THE EWE!

## The Consecration

*(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)*

**PR:** O Mother, we thank thee for this sign of thy continual presence and thy life. O Dalon Ap Landu, descend into this milk and hallow it by thy three ways of day and one of night. Give us to know thy power and the promise of life that is to return.

## Ordinations

*No ordinations are normally done in the Winter Half of the Year.*

## The Communion

*The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the milk of ewe," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.*

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is*

blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.

In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:

**PR:** To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

## The Meditation

(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length – though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end: )

## The Benediction

**PR:** Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you:

## Drawing the Sigil in the Air

The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!



**Figure 17** Beltane picnic 1997 at the site of where the New Circle would be built. David Coil, Sam Adams, Matt Gogla facing and Andrea Davis is standing.

# Spring Equinox

New Reformed Druids of North America  
By Bonewits & Larson, c. 1975

## Preparatory Details

The following is a Special Order of Worship for the Spring Equinox. The chalice will be filled with the Waters-of-Sleep. The sacrifice should be of budding branches.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.

## The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**

Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**

Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**

O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

**O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.**

## The Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess steps into Sigil, which is closed by two staves.

## The Praise

Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.

## The Sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

**PR:** Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)

**PR:** Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.



## The Reply

*(The sacrifice is not accepted, except in emergency situations.)*

**PR:** The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

## The Chant

**PR:** And the God of the Sun did arise from His tomb in the South; and once more did He fare forth to His children in the Northern lands. (Pause) O Belenos, O Thou unchanging God of many names, but one Face, we, Thy children, welcome Thee back to our lands.

**Chorus:** O Lord of Light, we welcome Thee.

**PR:** O Belenos, O Lord of Light, long have we awaited Thy return, that the coldness of the Night might be taken from our lands.

**Chorus:** O God of Sun, We welcome Thee.

**PR:** The nights were long, the trees had shed,

**Chorus:** The night had conquered day.

**PR:** The days were short, and life had fled.

**Chorus:** The night had conquered day.

**PR:** The winds were cold, the land seemed dead,

**Chorus:** The night had conquered day.

**PR:** But the Sun returns from the Southern lands.

**Chorus:** Balanced now are we.

**PR:** Plants spring up on every hand,

**Chorus:** Balanced now are we.

**PR:** "Let Life return!" is the Sun's command.

**Chorus:** Balanced now are we.

**PR:** The Sun grows stronger every day.

**Chorus:** The day will conquer night.

**PR:** The world grows lush and Life holds sway,

**Chorus:** The day will conquer night.

**PR:** So let us praise Him in all ways.

**Chorus:** The day will conquer the night.

\*\*\*\*

**PR:** O Belenos, O Sun, we praise Thee at Thy return to our midst. Welcome art Thou among us.

**Chorus:** Bless with thy presence, O Lord of Light.

**PR:** O Belenos, O Lord of Light, bless us with Thy warmth and light, that we may rejoice in Thy sight.

**Chorus:** Bless us and light our way, O God of the Sun.

## The Catechism of Waters-of-Sleep

*(The preceptor holds the Waters-of-Sleep while the priest ask the Catechism of the Waters-of-Sleep. The local custom may replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)*

**PR:** Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

**PREC:** THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PR:** From whence do these Waters flow?

**PREC:** FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

**PR:** And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

**PREC:** BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PR:** Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

**PREC:** SHE HAS NOT! THE WATERS ARE HERE, BUT THE SPIRIT HAS GONE OUT OF THEM.

**PR:** Of what, then, does Belenos give that we may rejoice on this day of His return.

**PREC:** THE WARMTH OF THE SUN AND THE WATERS WHERE he SLEEPS.

**PR:** OF WHAT, THEN, DO WE PARTAKE?

**PREC:** The Waters of the Sun.

**PR:** Then give me the Waters of the Sun.

## The Consecration

*(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)*

O Belenos, O Lord of Light, descend into these waters and fill them with Thy presence. Give us to know, O Lord, of Thy promise of Life as we take and drink of Thy warmth and light.

## Ordinations

*No ordinations are normally done in the Winter Half of the Year.*

## The Communion

*The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Sleep," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.*

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

*In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.*

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

**PR:** To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

## The Meditation

*(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length – though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end:)*

## The Benediction

**PR:** Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you:.

## Drawing the Sigil in the Air

*The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying: Peace! Peace! Peace!*



# Beltane

New Reformed Druids of North America  
By Bonewits & Larson, c. 1975  
For use on/near May 1st.

## Preparatory Details

*The following is a Special Order of Worship for Beltane. The chalice will once again be filled with whiskey and water (the Waters-of-Life). The sacrifice should be of flowering branches. All Third Order Druids and Druidesses, including the Grove's Archdruid/ess, should be wearing their white ribbons-of-office around their necks at the beginning of the service, but carry their red ribbons-of-office in an accessible place.*

*The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation..*

## The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:  
Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**  
Thou art without form, **but we worship you in these forms;**  
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**  
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.  
**O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.**

## The Procession

*Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess steps into this Sigil, which is closed by two staves.*

## The Praise

*Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.*

## The Sacrifice

*The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:*

**PR:** Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

*(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)*

**PR:** Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East...and of the West.

## The Reply

*(The sacrifice is accepted, except in very unusual situations.)*

**PR:** Praise be! Our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted!

## The Chant

**PR:** The Mother wakes from her long sleep and smiles on us today!

**Chorus:** SHE IS AWAKE!

**PR:** She brings us Life!

**Chorus:** SHE IS AWAKE!

**PR:** She brings us Light!

**Chorus:** SHE IS AWAKE!

**PR:** The Mother wakes and seeks Be'al.

**Chorus:** QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS.

**PR:** We light our fires to show the way.

*(The fires of Be'al, the bonfire, are now lit by the plunging of a torch into the kindling.)*

**Chorus:** QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS!

**PR:** To couch with the Mother and bring forth Life.

**Chorus:** QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS!

*(This next section should be chanted at an accelerating pace.)*

**PR:** O Be'al

**Chorus:** WE WELCOME THEE!

**PR:** O our Mother

**Chorus:** WE WELCOME THEE!

**PR:** O Earth-Mother, O Be'al

**Chorus:** WE WELCOME THEE!!

**PR:** O Be'al, O Mother, parents of all that lives, we welcome Ye back to our midst. Give us of Your Life, O Most High, that we may share Your joy.

**Chorus:** WELCOME ARE YE, AMONG US, O MOST HIGH. SMILE ON US, WHO HAVE KEPT YOUR WAYS, THROUGH THE TIME OF SLEEP.

## The Catechism

**PR:** Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

**PREC:** THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PR:** From whence do these Waters flow?

**PREC:** FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

**PR:** And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

**PREC:** BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

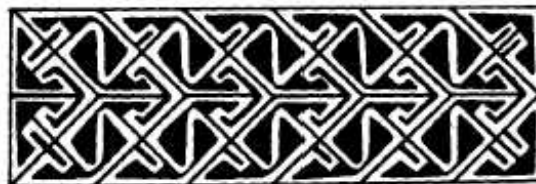
**PR:** Has the Earth-Mother given

**PREC:** SHE HAS!

**PR:** Praise be!! At last is the Time of Sleep ended. Now our faith bears fruit, and the Time of Life is begun in truth and in deed.

*(All priests remove the white ribbons and don the red ribbons.)*

**PR:** Now give me the Waters!



## The Consecration

*(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)*

**PR:** O Dalon Ap Landu, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by Thy power as we take and drink of Thy secret essences!

## Ordinations

*First Order consecrations can be done at this time, but it's not necessary to enter into the first order for a person to drink Waters. If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Order (in which case the Priest/ess will have consecrated an additional chalice, filled with the Waters-of-Life) the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.*

## The Communion

*The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Life," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.*

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

*In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.*

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

**PR:** To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

## The Meditation

*(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length, though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end:*

## The Benediction

**PR:** Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with her blessing.

*Drawing the Sigil in the Air: The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying: Peace! Peace! Peace!*



## Summer Solstice

New Reformed Druids of North America  
By Bonewits & Larson, c. 1975

## Preparatory Details

*The following is a Special Order of Worship for the Summer Solstice. The chalice will be filled with the Waters-of-Life. The sacrifice should be of green branches and mistletoe. The fire should be especially large.*

*The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.*

## The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**

Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**

Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**

O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

**O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.**

## The Procession

*Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess steps into this Sigil, which is closed by two staves.*

## The Praise

*Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.*

## The Sacrifice

*The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:*

**PR:** Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

**PR:** A Bhelenos, a Dihia na Greine soilsigh orainn inniu. Glac leis an iobairt seo, A Bhelenos, mas e do thoil e, agus tabhair dhuinn cuid do theasa ' do shoilse. Loin le bheatha sinn-ne, a Thiarna Soilse, agus dein solas an bhealaigh dhuinn agus sinn ag moladh d'ainm.

{O Belenos, O God of the Sun, shine on us today. Accept this sacrifice, O Belenos, we pray thee, and give us of your

warmth and light. Fill us with life, O Lord of Light an light our way as we praise your name.}

**Chorus:** Hail Belenos, To Thee all praise! Hail Belenos, smile on us always!

*(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)*

**PR:** Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

## The Reply

*(The sacrifice is accepted, except in unusual situations.)*

**Priest:** Praise be! Our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted!

## The Chant

**PR:** Welcome Belenos, this day of days.

**Chorus:** Welcome art thou.

**PR:** Welcome Belenos, to Thy golden rays,

**Chorus:** Welcome art thou.

**PR:** Welcome Belenos, to Thee all praise,

**Chorus:** Welcome art thou.

**PR:** All praise to Belenos, this day at full height

**Chorus:** Praise to Thee, O Lord of Light.

**PR:** All praise to Belenos, Who conquers night,

**Chorus:** Praise to Thee, O Giver of Life.

**PR:** All praise to Belenos, Who warms our life,

**Chorus:** Praise to Thee, O God of the sun.

**PR:** All hail Belenos, who smiles on us today.

**Chorus:** Hail Belenos! To Thee all praise!

**PR:** All hail Belenos, who keep His ways,

**Chorus:** Hail Belenos! To Thee all praise!

**PR:** All hail Belenos, light our paths always,

**Chorus:** Hail Belenos, God of Sun! Hail Belenos, Giver of Life! Hail Belenos, Lord of Light!

## The Catechism of Waters-of-Life

*(The preceptor holds the Waters-of-Life while the priest ask the Catechism. The local custom may replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)*

**PR:** Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

**PREC:** THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PR:** From whence do these Waters flow?

**PREC:** FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

**PR:** And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

**PREC:** BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PR:** Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

**PREC:** SHE HAS!

**PR:** Then give me the Waters!

## The Consecration

*(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)*

**PR:** O Dalon Ap Landu, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the tree ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by Thy power as we take and drink of Thy secret essences!

## Optional Ordinations

*First Order consecrations can be done at this time, but it's not necessary to enter into the first order for a person to drink Waters. If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Order (in which case the Priest/ess will have consecrated an additional chalice, filled with the Waters-of-Life) the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.*

## The Communion

*The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Life," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.*

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

*In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.*

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

**PR:** To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

## The Meditation

*(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length, though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end of the Service with:*

## The Benediction

**Pr:** Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with her blessing.

## Drawing the Sigil in the Air

*The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:*

Peace! Peace! Peace!

**\*\* (THE END) \*\***

## Notes:

# Lughnasadh

New Reformed Druids of North America

By Bonewits & Larson, c. 1975

For use on/near Aug. 1st.

## Preparatory Details

*The following is a Special Order of Worship for Lughnasadh. The chalice will be filled with mead or hard cider (instead of the usual whiskey) as for the Waters-of-Life. Since this is a harvest festival, it is suggested that members of the Grove bring a sacrifice of fruits or vegetables, from their own gardens if possible. These are laid on the altar and/or around the fire along with the regular sacrifice (which should be of green branches) either at the end of the Procession or at the point in the service at which the regular sacrifice is offered up.*

*The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.*

## The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**

Thou art without form, **but we worship you in these forms;**

Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**

O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

**O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.**

## The Procession

*Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess step into this Sigil, which is then close by the two staves.*

## The Praise

*Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.*



## The Sacrifice

*The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:*

**PR:** Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

*(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)*

**PR:** Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East...and of the West.

## The Reply

*(The sacrifice is accepted, except in very unusual situations.)*

**PR:** Praise be! Our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted!

## The Chant

**PR:** Thy trees do grow and give us shade,

**Chorus:** O Dalon Ap Landu, we thank thee.

**PR:** Thy waters stream forth and ease our pain,

**Chorus:** O Grannos, we thank thee.

**PR:** Thy waters pour forth and bring us joy,

**Chorus:** O Braciaca, we thank thee.

**PR:** Thy rivers flow and give us drink,

**Chorus:** O Sirona, we thank thee.

**PR:** Thy thunder cracks and heralds rain,

**Chorus:** O Taranis, we thank thee.

**PR:** Thy seas are deep and full of fish,

**Chorus:** O Llyr, we thank thee.

**PR:** Thy earth is fertile and full of Life,

**Chorus:** O Danu, we thank thee.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PR:** Though the Sun is bright, the Shade is dark.

**Chorus:** In the midst of light is dark.

**PR:** Dark though the night, the stars are bright.

**Chorus:** In the midst of dark is light.

**PR:** Thy light shines on us today.

**Chorus:** O Belenos, we thank thee.

**PR:** The plants give fruits which then do die.

**Chorus:** In the midst of life is death.

**PR:** We eat the fruits and they give us life.

**Chorus:** In the midst of death is life.

**PR:** Thy life is here in us today.

**Chorus:** O Earth-Mother, we thank thee.

**PR:** O Be'al, O Lugh, O our Mother, O all ye Gods and Goddesses, we thank You for the bounty which Ye have given us during this year. Accept our praise, O Most High and smile on us always, that we may praise You the more.

**Chorus:** We thank you, O most high. Keep us in your minds, we pray you, as we keep in your ways.

## The Catechism

**PR:** Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?  
**PREC:** THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.  
**PR:** From whence do these Waters flow?  
**PREC:** FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.  
**PR:** And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?  
**PREC:** BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.  
**PR:** Has the Earth-Mother given forth of Her bounty?  
**PREC:** SHE HAS! RIPE ARE THE GOLDEN APPLES OF THE SUN, AND BRIGHT IS THE HONEY OF THE HIVES. OUR CUPS OVERFLOW WITH CIDER AND MEAN, AND ALL THE GOOD THINGS OF THIS SEASON!  
**PR:** Then give me the Waters!

## The Consecration

*(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)*

**PR:** O Dalon Ap Landu, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by Thy power as we take and drink of Thy secret essences!

## Ordinations

*First Order consecrations can be done at this time, but it's not necessary to enter into the first order for a person to drink Waters. If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Order (in which case the Priest/ess will have consecrated an additional chalice, filled with the Waters-of-Life) the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.*

## The Communion

*The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Life," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.*

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

*In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.*

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

**PR:** To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

## The Meditation

*(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length, though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end:)*

## The Benediction

**PR:** Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with her blessing.

## Drawing the Sigil in the Air

*The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:*

Peace! Peace! Peace!

**\*\*(THE END)\*\***



Figure 18 Nelson, Frangquist & Fisher on the Hill of Three Oaks, c. 1964

# Fall Equinox

New Reformed Druids of North America

By Bonewits & Larson, c. 1975

## Preparatory Details

*The following is a Special Order of Worship for the Fall Equinox. The chalice will be filled with the Waters-of-Life. The sacrifice should be of branches with turning leaves.*

*The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.*

## The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**

Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**

Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**

O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

**O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.**

## The Procession

*Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess steps into this Sigil, which is closed by two staves.*

## The Praise

*Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.*

## The Sacrifice

*The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:*

**PR:** Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

*(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)*

**PR:** Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

## The Reply

*(The sacrifice is accepted, except in unusual situations.)*

**Priest.:** Praise be! Our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted!

## The Chant

**PR:** The Sun-God did spend half the year with His children in the North and then did depart to his winter home.

O Belenos, O Thou unchanging God of many names but One Face, we, Thy children, mourn Thy passing from our lands.

**Chorus:** O Lord of Light, return to us soon.

**PR:** O Belenos, O Lord of Light, short seems the time that we have rejoiced in the warmth of Thy presence.

**Chorus:** O God of the Sun, return to us soon.

**PR:** The nights were short, the trees in leaf,

**Chorus:** The Day had conquered night.

**PR:** The days were long and full of Life,

**Chorus:** The day had conquered night.

**PR:** The Sun was warm, the land gave fruit,

**Chorus:** The day had conquered night.

**PR:** But the Sun must return to the Southern lands,

**Chorus:** Balanced now are we.

**PR:** Though the world is warm and full of Life,

**Chorus:** Balanced now are we.

**PR:** Yet the cold approaches to stalk the land,

**Chorus:** Balanced now are we.

**PR:** The Sun grows weaker every day.

**Chorus:** The night will conquer day.

**PR:** The leaves will wither and Death draw nigh,

**Chorus:** The night will conquer day.

**PR:** We pray Thy return with all our might.

**Chorus:** Or the night will conquer day.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PR:** O Belenos, O Sun, we mourn Thy passing from our midst. Welcome wert Thou among us.

**Chorus:** Thou blessed us with Thy presence, O Lord of Light.

**PR:** O Belenos, O Lord of Light, return to us soon that we may rejoice in Thy sight.

**Chorus:** Bless us and light our way, O God of Sun.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PR:** But winter will pass and spring will come,

**Chorus:** And the day will conquer night.

**PR:** The Sun will return and warm our land,

**Chorus:** And the day will conquer night.

**PR:** Death will pass and Life return,

**Chorus:** And the day will conquer night!

\*\*\*\*\*

**PR:** O Belenos, O Sun-God, O Lord of Light, though Thy presence depart from us, yet art Thou with us, for Thy light does guide our feet and Thy warmth is in our hearts.

**Chorus:** All hail Belenos, God of Light!

**PR:** All praise Belenos, who keep his ways.

**Chorus:** O Belenos, we praise Thee!



## The Catechism

*(The preceptor holds the Waters-of-Life while the priest ask the Catechism. The local custom may replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)*

**PR:** Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

**PREC:** THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PR:** From whence do these Waters flow?

**PREC:** FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

**PR:** And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

**PREC:** BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PR:** Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

**PREC:** SHE HAS!

**PR:** Does Belenos still give us a sign of His presence?

**PREC:** HE DOES! THOUGH HE DEPARTS FOR THE SOUTHERN LANDS, STILL IS HIS SPARK WITHIN THESE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PR:** Then give me the Waters!

## The Consecration

*(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)*

**PR:** O Belenos, O Lord of Light, descend yet once more into these waters and fill them with Thy presence. Give us to know, O Lord, of Thy impending return, as we take and drink one more time of Thy warmth and light.

## Ordinations

*First Order consecrations can be done at this time, but it's not necessary to enter into the first order for a person to drink Waters. If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Order (in which case the Priest/ess will have consecrated an additional chalice, filled with the Waters-of-Life) the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.*

## The Communion

*The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Life," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.*

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does not drink more than once.*

*In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.*

*In either method, the last person in the circle should not finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

**PR:** To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

## The Meditation

*(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length, though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end:*

## The Benediction

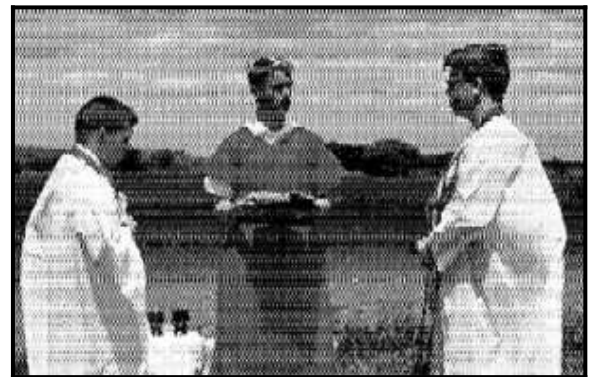
**PR:** Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with her blessing.

## Drawing the Sigil in the Air

*The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:*

Peace! Peace! Peace!

## NOTES:



**Figure 19** Frangquist, Fisher & Nelson at Hill of Three Oaks c. 1964.



**Figure 20** The Vigiler



# Section Four:

## Later Berkeley

### Seasonal Variations

After Larson retired as Archdruid, there were a number of permutations of Archdruids in charge until the Grove's break-up in 1982. Isaac became more interested in devising new liturgy, increasing the service's magical intensity, and investigating new Indo-European liturgical designs.

### Order of General Common Worship (Summer Version)

Samhradh & Foghamhar (Fall) 17 y.r. (Bkly)  
Mother Grove NRDNA  
Circa late 1979 c.e.

(This is a very unusual one, see historiography)

*Druids line up for the Procession, standing several yards North of the altar stone. The Archdruid (AD) and the Archdruidess (Ads) are at the front, followed by the Chief Bard and the Server, and the other members of the Grove (G).*

#### Opening Song (All):

#### "O Earth Mother" (Customs 2:1-3)

##### Invocation:

**ADS:** In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of Life.  
**G:** And we partake of it, we and all living beings.  
**AD:** In the mighty helix we dance,  
**G:** And in harmony with all of Life, we sing:  
**ADS:** Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten,  
male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving and  
destroying...  
**G:** Be in our awareness, teach us Your joy, let us share Your  
sorrow, extend our limitations.  
**AD:** Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even  
the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely,  
**ALL:** LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

#### Procession Song (ALL):

#### "Will Ye No Come Back Again?"

*All process to altar stone, CB & S mark sigil on ground, AD & ADS step inside and go around either side to back of altar stone, sigil is closed. Grove members split into an arc in front of the altar stone.*

##### Centering:

**ADS:** Why have you gathered here under the oaks?  
**G:** This is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.  
**AD:** What brings you here out under the sky?  
**G:** We come to worship the Gods.  
**ADS:** What do you know of the Gods?  
**G:** We seek to know what we can, with our mortal limitations.  
**AD:** The Gods are everywhere,  
**G:** But we worship Them here.

**ADS:** The Gods are without form,  
**G:** But we worship them in these forms.  
**AD:** We do not know what to offer to our Gods,  
**G:** So we offer Them our prayers and sacrifices.  
**ADS:** Each of us in our own way,  
**G:** Each of us with our own prayers,  
**ALL:** EACH OF US WITH OUR OWN SACRIFICES.  
**ADS:** Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary of Be'al, in each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of the spirit; evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, that the Gods may help us to understand these experiences as sources of wisdom and growth.

(Silence)

#### Individual Goals and dedications:

**AD:** Now let each of us, within our own hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our live, and make our individual dedications to the spirits Whom we worship and honor.

(Silence)

#### Statement of Beliefs:

**ADS:** How many Gods are there?  
**G:** Every God and Goddess is a star!  
**AD:** Where are the Gods?  
**G:** Where is the air we breathe? The waters that surrounds us?  
The ground upon which we stand?  
**ADS:** Are the Gods male?  
**AD:** Or female?  
**G:** Yes!  
**ADS:** How do we find the Gods?  
**G:** Every Goddess is within us.  
**AD:** Thou art Goddess!  
**G:** Every God is within us.  
**ADS:** Thou art God!  
**AD:** Who is Our Lady?  
**G:** She is the Earth Mother, spirit of all that lives upon the earth, and swims beneath the waters, and flies throughout the air.  
**ADS:** Who is Our Lord?  
**G:** He is Be'al, the Shining One, spirit of truth and of light, spark of the sun, and flame within the heart of every being.  
**AD:** And Who is the God of this place?  
**G:** He is Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, Patron of Druids, and Comforter of the People.

#### Group Goals and Dedications

**ADS:** Now do we declare our goals:  
**G:** To grow as human beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength; to promote in our actions, a human and interdependent society; to heal and protect the biosphere of this planet; and to further the process of Evolution, in ourselves and in our groups, and throughout all time and space.  
**AD:** Thus, in order to achieve these goals:  
**G:** We dedicate ourselves, here and now, in body and mind, in heart and in soul, to our Holy Mother the Earth, and our Holy Father the Sun, and to all Their Holy Children.

## Offering and Praise:

**ADS:** We are together, yet we often feel separate.

**G:** Thus we bring our sacrifices, to the Lord and Lady.

**AD:** What have you brought for our Mother and Father?

*Members of the Grove bring their sacrifices to the altar stone.*

**ADS:** Not all offerings are physical. Has anyone brought praise for the Gods?

*Members of the Grove offer poems, songs, music, etc.*

## Sacrifice:

*The ADS holds up the sacrificial branch and speaks:*

**ADS:** Our praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices. Accept them, we ask, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us Thy peace and life.

*The branch is laid upon the altar stone. Then the AD turns to the Four Quarters and ask:*

**AD:** Have you accepted our sacrifices, O Our Mother? We call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer... and of the South... of the East... and of the West... and of the Holy Center..

*If the sacrifices are accepted, the rite continues:*

**ADS:** Praise be! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the honoring of our Gods, have been accepted!!

## Statement of Needs:

**ADS:** O Mighty Ones, we have called upon You and You have heard us. We have offered of ourselves and You have accepted. Yet each of us has needs for guidance and for aid, without which we cannot fulfill Thy ways. Hear now Thy children, and help us, as ever You have done.

*At this point, each person present may state, silently or out loud, her or his needs they wish fulfilled by the Gods, in order to accomplish their goals. After all have finished:*

**AD:** And we declare, that as this Grove:

**G:** We need Your strength and wisdom, Your healing and joy, so that we may accomplish our goals, and fulfill our dedications. Bless this Grove, and bring us all that we may need, materially and spiritually, so that we may grow ever stronger, in beauty, wisdom, health and joy.

## The Waters:

**ADS:** Of what does the Earth-Mother give, that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

**G:** The Waters of Life.

**AD:** From whence do these Waters flow?

**G:** From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing, All-Mother.

**ADS:** And how do we honor this gift that causes life?

**G:** By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.

**AD:** Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?

**G:** She has! Ripe are the golden apples of the Sun, and bright is the honey of the hives. Our cups overflow with cider and mead, and all the good things of this season!

**ADS:** Then give me the Waters!!

## Consecration:

*The ADS takes the chalice of waters, and invokes the power of the Gods into them, thus initiating a return flow of divine energies:*

**ADS:** O Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and Every Grove, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and eyes, and join us together by Thy power, as we take and drink of Thy secret essences.

## Sharing:

**ADS:** What are these waters?

**G:** A sign of the power, and the bounty of the Gods;

**AD:** Who are themselves but fractions of that which Is

**G:** Beyond all human concepts

**ADS:** Of male and female,

**G:** Mortal and divine.

**AD:** She surrounds us.

**ADS:** He penetrates us.

**ALL:** THEY BIND THE UNIVERSE TOGETHER!

*The chalice is passed around to all present, each person being blessed by the Server with the Druid Sigil and returning the blessing, before and after drinking, with the words "The Waters of Life." The remaining waters are returned to the ADS, who pours them out over the altar stone, saying:*

**ADS:** To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return unto Thee.

## Group Bonding:

**ADS:** Now do we declare ourselves:

**ALL:** ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENGTHENED, BETWEEN US, AND OUR SISTERS AND OUR BROTHERS, IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

*All sing "We are One Family" song.*

## Prayer/Meditation/Spell:

*Led impromptu by the ADS.*

## Thanking the Gods:

**ADS:** O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all ye Goddesses and Gods around us and within us;

**ALL:** WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.

**AD:** That You have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the wild things and ourselves.

**ALL:** WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.

**ADS:** That we have offered to You of ourselves, and You have accepted.

**ALL:** WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.

**AD:** That You have heard our prayers, our griefs and our needs,

**ALL:** WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.

**ADS:** For all that You have given, all You give around us, all You will give in the future,

**ALL:** WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.

**AD:** For that we need each other, mortal and divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now and throughout all the ages,

**ALL:** WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

**ADS:** Now as we prepare to leave this place in joy and peace,

**ALL:** WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.

**ADS:** Great the power we have raised

**ALL:** STRENGTH OF WOMAN AND OF MAN.

**AD:** What shall we do before we leave?

**ALL:** ABSORB AS MUCH AS EVER WE CAN!

*All now pause and absorb as much of the divine power present as they can manage.*

**ADS:** And all the rest...?

**ALL:** WE SEND TO GROUND, TO SKY ABOVE AND TREES AROUND.

*All now send all remaining energies into the physical world around them, blessing and cherishing the earth and sky, plants and animals.*

**AD:** Is it done?

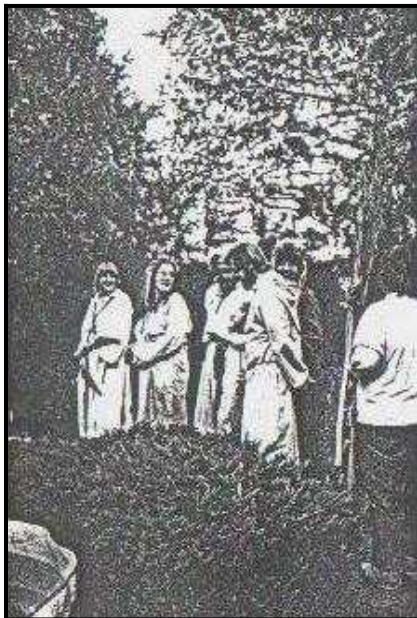
**ALL:** IT IS DONE!

### Benediction:

**ADS:** Let us go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifices have found acceptance in the Earth Mother's sight, that She has answered our prayers, and that we go forth with Her blessing:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

*The sigil around the altar stone is now broken, and all retire to picnic and celebrate, making sure the area is physically clean before leaving.*



**Figure 21 Live Oak Grove in Procession at Lughnasadh 1983.**

## Order of General Common Worship (Winter Version)

Mother Grove of the NRDNA 18 y.r. (Bkly)

Circa early 1980 c.e.

This is an unusual version. "Class C"

See the Historiography at end of part 3.

*Druids line up for the Procession, standing several yards North of the altar stone. The Archdruid (AD) and the Archdruidess (ADS) are at the front, followed by the Preceptor (P) and the Server (S), and the other members of the Grove (G).*

### Invocation "O Earth Mother" (Customs 2:1-3)

**AD:** In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of Life.

**G:** And we partake of it, we and all living beings.

**ADS:** In the mighty helix we dance,

**G:** And in harmony with all of Life, we sing:

**AD:** Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving and destroying...

**G:** Be in our awareness, teach us Your joy, let us share Your sorrow, extend our limitations.

**ADS:** Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely,

**ALL:** LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

### Procession Song (ALL): "Now do we with Songs and Rejoicing"

*(All process to Altar. Prec. & Server draw Sigil, AD & ADS enter, Prec seals it).*

### Centering:

**ADS:** Why have you gathered here under the oaks?

**G:** This is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.

**ADS:** What brings you here out under the sky?

**G:** We come to worship the Gods.

**AD:** What do you know of the Gods?

**G:** We seek to know what we can, with our mortal limitations.

**ADS:** The Gods are everywhere,

**G:** But we worship Them here.

**AD:** The Gods are without form,

**G:** But we worship them in these forms.

**ADS:** We do not know what to offer to our Gods,

**G:** So we offer Them our prayers and sacrifices.

**AD:** Each of us in our own way,

**G:** Each of us with our own prayers,

**ALL:** EACH OF US WITH OUR OWN SACRIFICES.

**AD:** Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary of Be'al, in each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of the spirit; evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, that the Gods may help us to understand these experiences as sources of wisdom and growth.

*(Silence)*

## Individual Goals and dedications:

**AD:** Now let each of us, within our own hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our live, and make our individual dedications to the spirits Whom we worship and honor.

*(Silence)*

## Statement of Beliefs:

**AD:** How many Gods are there?

**G:** Every God and Goddess is a star!

**ADS:** Where are the Gods?

**G:** Where is the air we breathe? The waters that surrounds us?  
The ground upon which we stand?

**AD:** Are the Gods female?

**ADS:** Or male?

**G:** Yes!

**AD:** How do we find the Gods?

**G:** Every God is within us.

**ADS:** Thou art God!

**G:** Every Goddess is within us.

**AD:** Thou art Goddess!

**ADS:** Who is Our Lord?

**G:** He is Be'al, the Shining One, spirit of truth and of light, spark of the sun, and flame within the heart of every being.

**AD:** Who is Our Lady?

**G:** She is the Earth Mother, spirit of all that lives upon the earth, and swims beneath the waters, and flies throughout the air.

**ADS:** And Who is the God of this place?

**G:** He is Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, Patron of Druids, and Comforter of the People.

## Group Goals and Dedications:

**AD:** Now do we declare our goals:

**G:** To grow as human beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength; to promote in our actions, a human and interdependent society; to heal and protect, the biosphere of this planet; and to further the process of Evolution, in ourselves and in our groups, and throughout all time and space.

**ADS:** Thus, in order to achieve these goals:

**G:** We dedicate ourselves, here and now, in body and mind, in heart and soul, to our Holy Mother the Earth, and our Holy Father the Sun, and to all Their Holy Children.

## Offering and Praise:

**AD:** We are together, yet we often feel separate.

**G:** Thus we bring our sacrifices, to the Lord and Lady.

**ADS:** What have you brought for our Mother and Father?

*Members of the Grove bring their sacrifices to the altar stone.*

**AD:** Not all offerings are physical. Has anyone brought praise for the Gods?

*Members of the Grove offer poems, songs, music, etc.*

## Sacrifice:

*The Ad holds up the sacrificial branch and speaks:*

**AD:** Our praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices. Accept them, we ask, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us Thy peace and life.

*(The branch is laid upon the altar stone. Then the ADS turns to the Four Quarters and ask:)*

**ADS:** Have you accepted our sacrifices, O Our Mother? We call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer... and of the South... of the East... and of the West... and of the Holy Center..

*(The Sacrifice is not accepted.)*

**ADS:** The Four Winds are silent; the Earth Mother yet sleeps.

## Statement of Needs:

**ADS:** O Mighty Ones, we have called upon but you have not answered, we have offered to you, but you have not accepted. Yet though you speak not, you whisper to us with your Spirit of Growth, and to this we turn in silence, to seek the changes we desire, to see our goals coming into being in the days and weeks ahead, knowing the answers are within us.

*(Silence)*

**ALL:** WE NEED YOUR STRENGTH AND WISDOM, YOUR GUIDANCE AND PROTECTION, SO THAT WE CAN ACCOMPLISH OUR GOALS AND FULFILL OUR DEDICATIONS. SEND YOUR QUIET SPIRIT TO THIS GROVE, THAT WE MAY FIND THE WELLSPRINGS WITHIN OURSELVES AND EACH OTHER, TO OBTAIN OUR NEEDS, AND TO BE FOR YOU YOUR EYES AND HANDS THROUGHOUT THE TIME OF SLEEP.

## The Waters:

**AD:** Of what does the Earth-Mother give, that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

**P:** The Waters of Life.

**AD:** From whence do these Waters flow?

**P:** From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing, All-Mother.

**AD:** And how do we honor this gift that causes life?

**P:** By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.

**AD:** Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?

**P:** She has NOT! The waters are here, but the Spirit is yet faint within them!

**AD:** Of what, then do we partake?

**P:** The Waters of Awakening.

**AD:** Then give me the Waters.



**Figure 22 Emmon and the Neo-Pagans at the Berkeley Inter-Faith Annual Thanksgiving Pageant, Samhain 1987. Emmon second from left.**

## Consecration:

*The Ad takes the chalice of Waters, and invokes the Power of the Gods into them, thus initiating a return flow of divine energies:*

**AD:** O Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and Every Grove, descend once again into these Waters and hallow them. Give us to know Thy power, and the promise of Life that is to return.

*(AD shares the Waters with the ADS, who then asks:)*

**ADS:** What are these waters?

**G:** A sign of the power, and the bounty of the Gods;

**AD:** Who are themselves but fractions of that which Is

**G:** Beyond all human concepts

**ADS:** Of male and female,

**G:** Mortal and divine.

**AD:** She surrounds us.

**ADS:** He penetrates us.

**ALL:** THEY BIND THE UNIVERSE TOGETHER!

## The Sharing

*The ADS then shares the Waters with the P, who shares them with the S, who shares them with the rest of the Grove. During this time, The Bards may wish to perform. The S returns the cup to the P, who returns it to the ADS, who gives it to the AD. P&S do not drink twice.*

**AD:** To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return unto Thee.

## Group Bonding:

**AD:** Now do we declare ourselves:

**ALL:** ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENGTHENED, BETWEEN US, AND OUR SISTERS AND OUR BROTHERS, IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

*All sing "We are one family" song.*

## Prayer/Meditation/Spell:

*Led impromptu by the ADS.*

## Thanking the Gods:

**AD:** O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all ye Goddesses and Gods around us and within us;

**ALL:** WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.

**ADS:** That You have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the wild things and ourselves.

**ALL:** WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.

**AD:** For all the bounty You have given through the Time of Life:.

**ALL:** WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.

**ADS:** That you stir now in sleep, and send forth flowers and green shoots to announce your coming:.

**ALL:** WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.

**AD:** That you have sent the Maiden and the Fool to give us joy after winter's silence, and to guide us to you again:.

**ALL:** WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.

**ADS:** For that we need each other, mortal and divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now and throughout all the ages,

**ALL:** WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

**AD:** Now as we prepare to leave this place in joy and peace,  
**ALL:** WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.

## Absorption and Grounding:

**AD:** Great the power we have raised

**ALL:** STRENGTH OF WOMAN AND OF MAN.

**ADS:** What shall we do before we leave?

**ALL:** ABSORB AS MUCH AS EVER WE CAN!

*All now pause and absorb as much of the divine power present as they can manage.*

**AD:** And all the rest...?

**ALL:** WE SEND TO GROUND, TO SKY ABOVE AND TREES AROUND.

*All now send all remaining energies into the physical world around them, blessing and cherishing the earth and sky, plants and animals.*

**ADS:** Is it done?

**ALL:** IT IS DONE!

## Benediction:

**AD:** Let us go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth Mother shower her blessings upon you:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

*The sigil around the altar stone is now broken by the P, and all retire to after making sure the area is clean.*



**Figure 23** Bob Blunt after ordination  
**October 18, 1983.**

# 1978 Samhain

By Bonewits & Others?  
"Class B"

*The following is a Special Order of Worship for the Samhain. The chalice will be filled with ordinary water (the Waters-of-Sleep). The sacrifice should be of bare branches. All Third Order Druids and Druidesses, including the Grove's Archdruid/ess, should be wearing their red ribbons-of-office around their necks at the beginning of the service, but carry their white ribbons-of-office in an easily accessible place.*

*The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruidess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand).*

"D" =Druid/ess presiding.

"P" =People attending.

"E" =Everybody.

## Song: "Processional Hymn"

### Invocation:

D: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.

E: AND WE PARTAKE OF IT; WE AND ALL LIVING BEINGS.

D: In the mighty helix we dance.

E: AND IN HARMONY WITH ALL OF LIFE WE SING.

D: Gods known and unknown, life potential and actual, noisy and silent, seen and unseen, beginning and ending, uniting and dissolving.

E: BE IN OUR AWARENESS. TEACH US YOUR JOY. LTE US FEEL YOUR SORROW. EXTEND OUR LIMITATIONS.

D: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely, let this ritual begin!

### Procession:

*Here occurs the Procession, with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the server (or any two others designated by the Grove) use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom incomplete. The Druid/ess steps into this Sigil, which is then closed by the two staves.*

Song: "Now Do We"

### Praise:

*Here an Incantation, Poem, or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.*

## Sacrifice:

*The Druidess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:*

D: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray Thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray Thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us Thy peace and life.

*The sacrifice is laid upon the altar or in the fire. The Druid/ess then turns to the Four Quarters and asks:*

D: Hast Thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer... of the South... of the East... of the West...

## Reply:

*The Sacrifice is not accepted!*

D: The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

## Chant:

D: Ea, Lord, Ea, Mother, Thou with uncounted names and faces, Thou of the many faceted Nature in and above all, to Thee we sing our chants of praise.

E: GO THOU NOT FROM US.

D: Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and all Groves, mover by night and by day, descend not beneath the earth, turn not Thy pleasing face from us.

E: GO THOU NOT FROM US.

D: The leaves wither, the trees and fields are barren, on what can we depend? Where is Thy order, where Thy strength?

E: DEPART NOT FROM OUR MIDST, SLEEP NOT, O MOST HIGH.

D: The Sun, the bright fire of day, withdraws His chariot; His face is veiled with clouds, and the breath of the North Wind walks the land.

E: RETURN TO US HIS WARMTH

## Second Sacrifice:

D: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray Thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray Thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us Thy peace and life.

*The sacrifice is laid upon the altar or in the fire. The Druid/ess then turns to the Four Quarters and asks:*

D: Hast Thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer... of the South... of the East... of the West...

## Second Reply:

*The sacrifice is not accepted!*

D: The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

*The Archdruid/ess, and all other members of the Third Order present, remove their red ribbons and replace them with their white ones. Then follows the mourning and Declaration of Faith.*

D: Lo, we are as wraiths, our fire is turned to ashes and darkness walks the land.  
 E: PRESERVE US, O SPIRIT OF DAY, KEEP US IN THY MIND, O SPIRIT OF POWER.  
 D: O Earth-Mother, guide our paths. If Thou wilt leave us, save us through the time of Silence, keep bright within our hearts 'till Spring.  
 E: SO LET IT BE, O OUR MOTHER, FOR WE ARE FAITHFUL, AND WOULD KEEP THY WAYS.

### Catechism:

D: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?  
 P: The Waters-of-Life.  
 D: From whence do these Waters flow?  
 P: From the bosom of the Earth-Mother, the never-changing All-mother.  
 D: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of Her bounty?  
 P: She has not! The waters are here, but the spirit has gone out of them.  
 D: So be it. Now is the Time of Life ended. Now shall we need our faith to keep us strong, for the Time of Sleep is begun in truth and in deed. Of what, then, do we partake?  
 P: The Waters-of-Sleep.  
 D: Then give me the Waters-of-Sleep.

### Consecration:

*The Druid/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Druid/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:*

D: O Dalon Ap Landu, descend once again into these waters, and hallow them. Give us to know Thy power and the promise of life that is to return.

### Communion:

*The Druid/ess drinks from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words "the Waters-of-Sleep" and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.*

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Druid/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return, and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does NOT drink more than once.*

*In some Groves, the Druid/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person on that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.*

*In either method, the last person in the circle should NOT finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Druid/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip, pouring the remainder upon the altar or fire, saying:*

D: To Thee we return this portion, O our Mother, even as we must return to Thee.

## Meditation

*Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture the Druid/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Druid/ess and a period of silence and private meditation (usually two to five minutes in length – though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Druid/ess signals the end of the service with:*

### Benediction:

D: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you:

*The Druid/ess blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:*

Peace! Peace! Peace!

## End of a Special Order of Worship for Samhain



**Figure 24** Tree libation offering, Live Oak Spring Equinox 1985.

# 1979 Samhain

Order of Common Worship, Samhain  
(dated 17 Y.R. but probably 1979)  
By Bonewits & others?  
"Class C"  
(Berkeley) Mother Grove, N.R.D.N.A

AD: Archdruid ADS: Archdruidess P: Preceptor S: Server  
G: Grove

Opening Song: "O Earth Mother"

## Invocation:

ADS: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.  
G: AND WE PARTAKE OF IT; WE AND ALL LIVING BEINGS.  
AD: In the mighty helix we dance.  
G: AND IN HARMONY WITH ALL OF LIFE WE SING.  
ADS: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving, and destroying...  
G: BE IN OUR AWARENESS. TEACH US YOUR JOY. LTE US FEEL YOUR SORROW. EXTEND OUR LIMITATIONS.  
AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely:  
ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

## Processional Song (ALL):

Song: "Will Ye No Come Back Again?"

## Centering:

ADS: Why have you gathered here under the oaks?  
G: THIS IS THE APPOINTED PALCE, NOW IS THE APPOINTED TIME.  
AD: What brings you here out under the sky?  
G: WE COME TO WORSHIP THE GODS.  
ADS: What do you know of the Gods?  
G: WE SEEK TO KNOW WHAT WE CAN, WITH OUR MORTAL LIMITATIONS.  
AD: The Gods are everywhere;  
G: BUT WE WORSHIP THEM HERE.  
ADS: The Gods are without form;  
G: BUT WE WORSHIP THEM IN THESE FORMS.  
AD: We do not know what to offer to our Gods,  
G: SO WE OFFER THEM OUR PRAYERS AND SACRIFICES:  
ADS: Each of us in our own way,  
G: EACH OF US IN OUR OWN PRAYERS,  
ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR OWN SACRIFICES.

AD: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary of Be'al. In each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of the spirit, evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, that the Gods may help us to understand them as sources of wisdom and growth.

(Silence)

## Individual Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our lives, and make our individual dedications to the spirits whom we worship and honor.

(Silence)

## Statement of Beliefs:

ADS: How many Gods are there?  
G: EVERY GOD AND GODDESS IS A STAR!  
AD: Where are the Gods?  
G: WHERE IS THE AIR WE BREATHE? THE WATERS THAT SURROUND US? THE GROUND UPON WHICH WE STAND?  
ADS: Are the Gods male?  
AD: Or female?  
G: YES!  
ADS: How do we find the Gods?  
G: EVERY GODDESS IS WITHIN US.  
AD: Thou art Goddess!  
G: EVERY GOD IS WITHIN US.  
ADS: Thou art God!  
AD: Who is our Lady?  
G: SHE IS THE EARTH-MOTHER, SPIRIT OF ALL THAT LIVES UPON THE EARTH, AND SWIMS BENEATH THE WATERS, AND FLIES THROUGHOUT THE AIR.  
ADS: Who is our Lord?  
G: HE IS BE'AL, THE SHINING ONE, SPIRIT OF TRUTH AND LIGHT, SPARK OF THE SUN, AND THE FLAME WITHIN THE HEART OF EVERY BEING.  
ADS: And Who is the God of this place?  
G: HE IS DALON AP LANDU, LORD OF THIS AND EVERY GROVE, PATRON OF DRUIDS, AND COMFORTER OF THE PEOPLE.

## Group Goals and Dedications:

ADS: Now do we declare our goals:  
G: TO GROW AS HUMAN BEINGS, IN JOY AND LOVE AND WISDOM AND STRENGTH, TO PROMOTE IN OUR ACTIONS, A HUMAN AND INTERDEPENDENT SOCITY, TO HEAL AND PROTECT THE BIOSPHERE OF THIS PLANET; AND TO FURTHER THE PROCESS OF EVOLUTION, IN OURSELVES AND OUR GROUPS, AND THROUGHOUT ALL TIME AND SPACE.  
AD: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:  
G: WE DEDICATE OURSELVES, HERE AND NOW, IN BODY AND MIND, HEART AND SOUL, TO OUR HOLY MOTHER THE EARTH, OUR HOLY FATHER THE SUN, AND TO ALL THEIR HOLY CHILDREN.

## Offering and Praise:

ADS: We are together, yet we often feel separate.  
G: THUS WE BRING OUR SACRIFICES, TO THE LORD AND LADY.  
AD: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?  
(Members of the Grove bring sacrifices to the altar stone.)  
ADS: Not all sacrifices are physical. Has anyone brought Praise for the Gods?  
(Members of the Grove offer poems, songs, music, etc.)



## Sacrifice:

*(The ADS holds up sacrificial branch and speaks: )*

ADS: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices of life. Accept them, we ask, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us thy peace and life.

*(The branch is laid upon the altar stone. The AD then turns to the Four Quarters and asks: )*

AD: Have You accepted our sacrifices, O Our Mother? We call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer... and of the South... and of the East... and of the West... and of the Holy Center...

*(The sacrifice is not accepted!)*

AD: The four winds are silent: the Earth Mother sleeps.

## Chant:

AD: Ea, Lord, Ea, Mother, Thou with uncounted names and faces, Thou of the many faceted nature in and above all, to thee we sing our chants of praise!

G: GO THOU NOT FROM US!

AD: Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and all groves, mover by night and by day, descend not beneath the earth, turn not thy pleasing face from us!

G: GO THOU NOT FROM US!

AD: The leaves wither, the trees and fields are barren, on what can we depend? Where is thy order, where thy strength?

G: DEPART NOT FROM OUR MIDST! SLEEP NOT, O MOST HIGH!

AD: The Sun, the bright fire of day, withdraws his chariot; his face is veiled with clouds, and the breath of the North Wind walks the land.

G: RETURN TO US HIS WARMTH!

## Second Sacrifice:

AD: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices of life. Accept them, we ask, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us thy peace and life.

*(The second branch is laid upon the altar stone. The ADS then turns to the Four Quarters and asks: )*

ADS: Have You accepted our sacrifices, O Our Mother? We call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer... and of the South... and of the East... and of the West... and of the Holy Center...

*(The sacrifice is not accepted!)*

AD: The four winds are silent: the Earth Mother sleeps.

*(The ArchDruids, and all other members of the Third Order present remove their red ribbons of office, and replace them with their white ones.)*

*(AD presides from here on out)*

## Mourning and Declaration of Faith:

D: Lo, we are as wraiths, our fire is turned to ashes and darkness walks the land.

G: PRESERVE US, O SPIRIT OF DAY! KEEP US IN THY MIND, O SPIRIT OF POWER!

D: O Earth Mother, guide our paths! If thou wilt leave us, save us through the Time of Silence, keep bright within our hearts till Spring!

G: SO LET IT BE, O OUR MOTHER, FOR WE ARE FAITHFUL, AND WOULD KEEP THY WAYS.

## Statement of Needs:

AD: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon you, and you have not answered. We have offered of ourselves, but you have not accepted, for the Old Year sleeps in the silence and dark, awaiting new birth, and your eyes and ears are turned from us. Yet, as we have listened to you through the Time of Life, there has grown within us your Spirit of Truth, and this we will cherish and keep of you, to guide us through the Time of Sleep. To this we turn in silence, to seek the answers to our needs, to accomplish what we wish in the weeks ahead, knowing that the answers are within us.

*(At this point, all state silently their needs, and listen for reply)*

AD: And we declare, that as this Grove:

G: WE NEED YOUR STRENGTH AND WISDOM, YOUR GUIDANCE AND PROTECTION, SO THAT WE CAN ACCOMPLISH OUR GOALS, AND FULFILL OUR DEDICATIONS. SEND YOUR QUIET SPIRIT TO THIS GROVE, SO THAT WE MAY FIND THE WELLSPRINGS WITHIN OURSELVES, AND IN EACH OTHER, TO OBTAIN OUR NEEDS, AND BE FOR YOU YOUR EYES AND HANDS THROUGHOUT THE TIME OF SLEEP.

## The Waters:

AD: Of what does the Earth-Mother give, that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

P: The Waters of Life.

AD: From whence do these Waters flow?

P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All-Mother.

AD: And how do we honor this gift, that causes life?

P: By partaking of the Waters of Life.

AD: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

P: She has not! The Waters are here, but the spirit has gone out of them.

AD: So be it. Now is the Time of Life ended. Now shall we need our faith to keep us strong, for the Time of Sleep has begun in truth and in deed. Of what, then, do we partake?

P: The Waters of Sleep.

AD: Then give me the Waters.

## Consecration:

*(The ADS then takes the Waters, and consecrates them: )*

ADS: O, Dalon Ap Landu, descend once again into these Waters and hallow them. Give us to know your power, and the promise of life that is to return.

## Sharing:

ADS: What are these waters?  
G: A SIGN OF THE POWER, AND THE BOUNTY OF THE GODS;  
ADS: Who are themselves but fractions of that which is  
G: BEYOND ALL HUMAN CONCEPTS  
ADS: Of male and female,  
G: MORTAL AND DIVINE.  
AD: She surrounds us.  
ADS: He penetrates us.  
ALL: THEY BIND THE UNIVERSES TOGETHER!  
*(The Server passes the chalice to all present, and then returns it to the AD, who pours it on the altar stone, saying: )*  
AD: To Thee we return this portion of your bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return unto thee.

## Group Bonding:

AD: Now do we declare ourselves:  
G: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENGTHENED BETWEEN US, AND OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS, IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

(All sing "We are One Family" song.)

## Prayer/Meditation:

*(On of the AD's leads the meditation)*

## Thanking the Gods:

AD: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all you Goddesses and Gods around us and within us:  
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.  
ADS: That you have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the Wild Things, and ourselves:  
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.  
AD: For all the bounty you have given throughout the Time of Life:  
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.  
ADS: That you have not left us utterly alone, but have left the Hunter and the Hag to guide us and protect us:  
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.  
AD: That you have gone now to sleep, to bring forth again the whole world, in flower and in fruit:  
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.  
ADS: For that we need each other, Mortal and Divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now and throughout the ages:  
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.  
AD: Now, as we prepare to leave this place in joy and peace:  
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.

## Absorption and Grounding:

AD: Great the power we have raised;  
ALL: STRENGTH OF WOMAN AND OF MAN.  
ADS: What shall we do before we leave?  
ALL: ABSORB AS MUCH AS EVER WE CAN!  
*(All pause and absorb as much of the divine power present as they can manage.*  
AD: And all the rest...?

ALL: WE SEND TO GROUND, TO SKY ABOVE AND TREES AROUND.

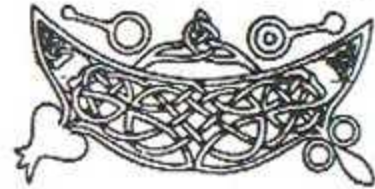
*(All now send remaining energy into the physical world around them, blessing and cherishing the earth and sky, plants and animals)*

ADS: Is it done?  
ALL: IT IS DONE!

## Benediction:

AD: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the earth, and then will the Earth Mother shower her blessings upon you:  
PEACE! PEACE! PEACE!

*(The sigil around the altar stone is now broken by the P, and all retire, after making sure that the area is physically clean.)*



**Figure 25** Order of Puck, with Scharding, Bonewits, Tony Taylor & Sam Adams at Hill of 3 Oaks on April 23, 1993 for Isaac's second visit to Carleton.

# 1979 Oimele

By Bonewits & Others?  
"Class B"

*The following is a Special Order of Worship for Oimele. The chalice will be filled with milk (goat's, sheep's or cow's). The sacrifice should be of evergreen boughs.*

*The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruidess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand).*

"D" =Druid/ess presiding.

"P" =People attending.

"E" =Everybody.

## Song: "Processional Hymn"

### Invocation:

- D: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.  
E: AND WE PARTAKE OF IT; WE AND ALL LIVING BEINGS.  
D: In the mighty helix we dance.  
E: AND IN HARMONY WITH ALL OF LIFE WE SING.  
D: Gods known and unknown, life potential and actual, noisy and silent, seen and unseen, beginning and ending, uniting and dissolving.  
E: BE IN OUR AWARENESS. TEACH US YOUR JOY. LTE US FEEL YOUR SORROW. EXTEND OUR LIMITATIONS.  
D: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely, let this ritual begin!

### Procession:

*Here occurs the Procession, with the Grove singing the hymn "Now Do We." Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the server (or any two others designated by the Grove) use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom incomplete. The Druid/ess steps into this Sigil, which is then closed by the two staves.*

### Praise:

*Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire grove.*

Song: "Oimele Hymn"

Song: "She Will Bring"

## Sacrifice:

*The Druidess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:*

D: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray Thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray Thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us Thy peace and life.

*The sacrifice is laid upon the altar or in the fire. The Druid/ess then turns to the Four Quarters and asks:*

D: Hast Thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer... of the South... of the East... of the West...

## Reply:

*The sacrifice is not accepted!*

D: The four winds are yet silent. The Earth-Mother still sleeps.

## Chant:

- D: For three months, O our Mother, hast Thou been gone from us.  
E: WILT THOU NOT RETURN?  
D: Our hearts are heavy, our days are dark.  
E: WILT THOU NOT RETURN?  
D: All seems dead, hast Thou departed?  
E: NEVER TO RETURN?  
D: O our Mother, we ask a sign.  
E: A SIGN OF THY RETURN.  
D: A sign of Life in the midst of Death.  
E: A SIGN OF THY RETURN.  
D: Sleep in peace, but send a sign!  
E: A SIGN OF THY RETURN!  
D: A sign of Life!  
E: THE LIFE OF THY RETURN!

## Catechism:

- D: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?  
P: The Waters-of-Life.  
D: From whence do these Waters flow?  
P: From the bosom of the Earth-Mother, the never-changing All-mother.  
D: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of Her bounty?  
P: She has not, but the ewe gives milk.  
D: Of what, then, do we partake?  
P: The milk of the ewe!  
D: Then give me the milk.

Song: "I Circle Around"



## Consecration:

*The Druid/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Druid/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:*

D: O Mother, we thank Thee for this sing of Thy continual presence and Thy life. O Dalon Ap Landu, descend into this milk and hallow it by Thy three ways of day and one of night. Give us to know Thy power and the promise of life that is to return.

## Communion:

*The Druid/ess drinks from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words "the milk of the ewe," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.*

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Druid/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return, and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does NOT drink more than once.*

*In some Groves, the Druid/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person on that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.*

*In either method, the last person in the circle should NOT finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Druid/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip, pouring the remainder upon the altar or fire, saying:*

D: To Thee we return this portion, O our Mother, even as we must return to Thee.

## Meditation:

*Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture the Druid/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Druid/ess and a period of silence and private meditation (usually two to five minutes in length – though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Druid/ess signals the end of the service with:*

## Benediction:

D: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you:

*The Druid/ess blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:*

Peace! Peace! Peace!

## 1979 Pentalpha Oimelc

By Bonewits & others?

*We held the Pentalpha Oimelc ceremony at The Dance Works in Berkeley, a redwood dance studio with a hot tub in the backyard. We started a half hour after our door closing to give people time to socialize, dance (we had put together a tape of our favorite music to dance to) and hot tub. Everyone had put their personal cups on the altar and just before the ritual started, Selene poured a mixture of extra-rich milk, amaretto, and vodka into the large bowl and chalice that sat in the center of the cups. Next to the bowl & chalice was a small cauldron filled with rubbing alcohol ready to light (we discovered that this works better if the alcohol is poured in just before lighting). A full spectrum of large candles was set up around the room.*

*All begin to form serpent lines of varying lengths and snake around the room to the music ("Spring Manifestations, – by SANTANA), eventually joining together in a circle just as the music ends.*

*Anodea and Selene lead Robert Larsen's -Oimelc Hymn" (to band 1, side 1 of "Durch die WustelDesert," by HANS JOACHIM ROEDELIIUS). Hymn is done in plainchant style (leaders chant each line, all repeat):*

The days are short the heavens dark, the Mother sleeps.  
The trees are bare the north wind stalks, the Mother sleeps.  
The nights are long and full of fright, the Mother sleeps.  
But the ewe gives birth the ewe gives milk, the Mother stirs.  
The Mother smiles with dreams of life, She will return.  
And on that day will we rejoice, when She returns.  
Long the day bright the sky, when She returns.  
Green the trees soft the breeze, when She returns.  
Short the night our fires alight, when She returns!

*Jinz lights alcohol in cauldron, all begin to dance, play drums & rattles, make noises, raise energy ("oya (Primitive Fire)," on "Drums of Passion, " by OLATUNJI).*

*Dance gets wilder & wilder (to last band, side 2, "Durch die Wuste," by HANS JOACHIM ROEDELIIUS), Selene begins to spin, gathering the energy in the room to a peak.*

*Selene lifts chalice and charges milk (to band 1, side 1 of "Renaissance of the Celtic Harp," by ALAN Stivell):*

O Mother

Blend your milk with ours.

Give us nourishment  
To strengthen our spirits  
As well as our bones.  
As we drink  
From your breast  
Pour your light in

Through our hearts,  
To dance in our cells,  
To glow with our eyes.  
Through us  
Your light spirals & spreads

Out our fingers  
To all we touch  
And on...  
To heal the Earth  
And to heal the people of the Earth  
So that we may live & die

In harmony with your rhythm.

*Charged milk is poured into the large bowl & mixed with the milk already in it. All are invited to drink of the Mother's milk. All come up and find their cups and the milk is ladled in to them one by one, with the harp music still in the background.*

*Isaac invites everyone to toast to the Gods & Goddesses, and "zany people toast to aspects of the deities, to the children, to the love in us all, etc. Isaac ends toasting with a final dedication:*

Blessed be the most high one, who was and is and is to come, always, now, forever more, throughout all eternal space and time, we rise.

*All chant:*

Like a bee my mind is buzzing round the blue lotus feet of my divine mother, divine mother...

*At this point we all brought the feast food into the backyard & feasting, hot tubbing & dancing continued on into the night...*



## Oimelc Poem

By Ailean MacGregor, 1979

Music filling the magical air whirling motion of dancing spirals of energy flowing from within the centre point of flame

Bleary eyed children of Brighid inebriated on the fruits of Dionysus celebrate Her mysteries around the cauldron fire

The Mother's milk is raised in salute to Her myriad aspects as sister and brother revel in the warmth of Her smile

Five times the magick point did merge into the star which illuminated the night while mushroom eating lovers huddled together and dreamt of the coming of the Spring

# 1980 Oimelc

Order of Common Worship, Oimelc, 18 y.r.

By Bonewits & others?

“Class C”

AD: Arch Druid ADS: Archdruidess P: Preceptor S: Server G: Grove

Opening Song: “O Earth Mother”

## Invocation:

AD: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.

G: And we partake of it, we and all living beings.

AD: In the mighty helix we dance.

G: And in harmony with all of life we sing.

AD: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving, and destroying.

G: Be in our awareness, teach us your joy, let us feel your sorrow, extend our limitations.

AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely..

G: Let this ritual begin!

## Processional:

Song: “Will Ye No Come Back Again?”

(All process to altar. P&S draw sigil, AD & ADS: enter, P seals it.)

## Centering:

AD: Why have you gathered here under the oaks?

G: This is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.

ADS: What brings you here out under the sky?

G: We come to worship the Gods.

AD: What do you know of the Gods?

G: We seek to know what we can, with our mortal limitations.

ADS: The Gods are everywhere;

G: But we worship them here.

AD: The Gods are without form;

G: But we worship them in these forms.

ADS: We do not know what to offer our Gods,

G: So we offer them these prayers and sacrifices:

AD: Each of us in our own way,

G: Each of us in our own prayers.

ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR OWN SACRIFICES.

AD: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary of Be'al. In each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of the spirit, evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, that the Gods may help us to understand them as sources of wisdom and growth.

*(Silence)*

## Individual Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our lives, and make our individual dedications to the Spirits whom we worship and honor.

*(Silence)*

## Statement of Beliefs:

AD: How many Gods are there?

G: Every God and Goddess is a star!

ADS: Where are the Gods?

G: Where is the air we breath? The waters that surround us? The ground upon which we stand?

AD: Are the Gods female?

ADS: Or male?

G: YES!

AD: How do we find the Gods?

G: Every God is within us.

ADS: Thou art God.

G: Every Goddess is within us.

AD: Thou art Goddess.

ADS: Who is our Lord?

G: He is Be'al, the shining one, spirit of truth and light, spark of the sun, and the flame within the heart of every being.

AD: Who is our Lady?

G: She is the Earth Mother, spirit of all that lives upon the earth, and swims beneath the waters, and flies throughout the air.

ADS: And who is the God of this place?

G: He is Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every grove, Patron of Druids and Comforter of the People.

## Group Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now do we declare our goals:

G: To grow as human beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength, to promote in our actions a human and interdependent society, to heal and protect the biosphere of this planet, and to further the process of evolution, in ourselves and our groups, and throughout all time and space.

ADS: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:

ALL: WE DEDICATE OURSELVES, HERE AND NOW, IN BODY AND MIND, HEART AND SOUL, TO OUR HOLY MOTHER THE EARTH, OUR HOLY FATHER THE SUN, AND TO ALL THEIR HOLY CHILDREN.

## Offering and Praise:

AD: We are together, yet we often feel separate.

G: Thus we bring our sacrifices to the lord and lady.

ADS: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?

*(Members of the Grove bring sacrifices to the altar)*

AD: Not all sacrifices are physical. Has anyone brought Praise for the Gods?

*(Members offer songs, poetry, music, etc.)*

## Sacrifice:

*(AD holds up sacrificial branch and speaks)*

AD: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we ask, O our Mother, as we offer up this (these) sacrifice(s) of Life. Accept it (them) we pray, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us thy peace and life.

*(ADS turns to the four quarters and asks: )*

ADS: Have you accepted our sacrifice(s), O Our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer... and of the South... and of the East... and of the West... and of the Holy Center...

*(The sacrifice is not accepted.)*

ADS: The Four Winds are silent; the Earth Mother yet sleeps.

## (All sing Oimelc song)

## Statement of Needs:

AD: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon you, but you have not answered, we have offered to you, but you have not accepted. Yet though you speak not, you whisper to us with your Spirit of Growth, and to this we turn in silence, to seek the changes we desire, to see our goals coming into being in the days and weeks ahead, knowing the answers are within us.

*(Silence)*

ADS: And we declare that, as this Grove:

ALL: WE NEED YOUR STRENGTH AND WISDOM, YOUR GUIDANCE AND PROTECTION, SO THAT WE CAN ACCOMPLISH OUR GOALS AND FULFILL OUR DEDICATIONS. SEND YOUR QUIET SPIRIT TO THIS GROVE, THAT WE MAY FIND THE WELLSPRINGS WITHIN OURSELVES AND EACH OTHER, TO OBTAIN OUR NEEDS, AND TO BE FOR YOU YOUR EYES AND HANDS THROUGHOUT THE TIME OF SLEEP.

## Chant of the Waters:

AD: Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

P: The Waters-of-Life.

AD: From whence do these Waters flow?

P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All-mother.

AD: And how do we honor this gift that causes Life?

P: By partaking of the Waters of Life.

AD: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?

P: She has not, but the ewe gives milk.

AD: Of what, then, do we partake?

P: The milk of the ewe.

AD: Then give me the milk.

*(The AD takes the chalice, and invokes the power of the Gods into it, thus initiating the return flow of divine energy.)*

AD: O, Mother, we thank thee for this sign of thy continual presence and life. O Dalon Ap Landu, descend into this milk and hallow it. Give us to know thy power, and the promise of Life that is to return.

*(AD shares the waters with the ADS, who then asks: )*

ADS: What are these Waters?

G: A sign of the power and bounty of the Gods:

ADS: Who are themselves a fraction of that which is

G: Beyond all human concepts

ADS: Of Male and Female,

G: Mortal and Divine:

AD: She surrounds us,

ADS: He penetrates us,

G: They bind the universes together.

## The Sharing:

*(The ADS then shares the Waters with the P, who shares them with the S, who shares them with the rest of the Grove. During this time, the Bards may wish to perform. The S returns the cup to the P, who returns it to the ADS, who gives it to the AD. P&S do not drink twice.)*

AD: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O Our Mother, even as we must return unto thee.

## Group Bonding:

AD: Now do we declare ourselves:

ALL: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENGTHENED BETWEEN US, AND OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS, IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

## Meditation:

*(Lead by the AD)*

## Thank the Gods:

AD: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all you Goddesses and Gods around us and within us:

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

ADS: That you have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the Wild Things, and ourselves:

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

AD: For all the bounty you have given through the Time of Life:

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

ADS: That you stir now in sleep, and send forth flowers and green shoots to announce your coming:

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

AD: That you have sent the Maiden and the Fool to give us joy after winter's silence, and to guide us to you again:

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

ADS: For that we need each other, Mortal and Divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now, and throughout the ages:

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

AD: Now, as we prepare to leave this place in joy and peace:

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

## Absorption and Grounding:

AD: Great the power we have raised;

G: STRENGTH OF WOMAN AND OF MAN.

ADS: What shall we do before we leave?

G: ABSORB AS MUCH AS EVER WE CAN!

*(All pause and absorb as much of the divine energy as possible)*

AD: And all the rest?

G: WE SEND TO GROUND, TO SKY ABOVE AND TREES AROUND.

*(All now send remaining energy outward to bless the earth and sky, plants and animals)*

ADS: Is it done?

ALL: IT IS DONE!

## Benediction:

AD: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth Mother shower her blessings upon you: Peace! Peace! Peace!

*(The sigil around the AD's is broken by the P, and all retire, after making sure the area is clean.)*

# 1978 Spring Equinox Fragment

By Bonewits & others?  
"Class A"

*The following is a Special Order of Worship for Spring Equinox. The chalice will be filled with the Waters-of-Sleep. The sacrifice should be of budding boughs.*

*The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruidess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the People (depending on local Grove custom) to join in speaking the alternating line in italic print.*

## Invocation:

D: O Lord, forgive these three mistakes that are due to our human limitations: Thou art everywhere.

*P: but we worship Thee here:*

D: Thou art without form,

*P: but we worship Thee in these forms:*

D: Thou wouldst have us offer our Living and Being,

*P: yet we offer Thee these prayers and sacrifices.*

D: O Lord, forgive these three mistakes that are due to our human limitations:

*P: O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation.*

## Procession:

### Praise:

*Here individuals may offer praise, gifts, or prayers to the Gods.*

### Sacrifice:

### Reply:

### Chant:

AD: O give praise to the Dark Gods who love: Praise to the Hunter, stalking and slaying, Praise to the Hag, weeping and raging.

G: Praise Be'al who is all Gods, praise the Earth Mother's many faces.

AD: Praise for food-store and tight roof, good wool and good health.

G: Praise for hearth and tale and friend.

AD: Praise for grey skies and healing rain, cutting wind and bedding snow.

G: Praise for the mystery of the Land of Shadow.

AD: The Earth went bare, the sunlight dimmed:

G: Light had turned to Dark.

AD: The nights were long, the winds were cold:

G: Darkness ruled over all.

AD: But within the cave, the bear cub waxed:

G: Darkness yearns to Light.

AD: Bough is barren, bud returns:

G: Balanced now are we.

AD: Belenos returns from the South:

G: Balanced now are we.

AD: The Mother stirs and wakes again:

G: Balanced now are we.

AD: Snowdrifts of blossom on earth and tree:

G: Dark will turn to Light.

AD: The world will be lush, the days will be long:

G: Light will rule over all.

AD: Til the sweet fruits of the boughs are warm in our hands:

G: And Light yearns again to Dark.

AD: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, we praise thee at thy return to our midst. Welcome art thou amongst us!

ALL: BLESS US AND LIGHT OUR WAY, O MIGHTY SUN GOD!

AD: O Earth Mother, beauteous and strong, rise up and let us rejoice in thy sight!

ALL: PRAISE TO THE LADY WHO GIVEST LIFE!

## Catechism of the Waters:

### Consecration:

### Communion:

### Meditation:

### Benediction:

AD: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you:

*(The Druid/ess blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:)*

Peace! Peace! Peace!



**Figure 26 Making bread from scratch at the Live Oak Grove Lughnasadh 1985.**



# 1980 Spring Equinox

By Bonewits & others?  
"Class C"

AD: Arch Druid ADS: Archdruidess  
P: Preceptor S: Server G: Grove

## Opening Song: "O Earth Mother"

### Invocation:

AD: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.  
G: And we partake of it; we and all living beings.  
AD: In the mighty helix we dance.  
G: And in harmony with all of life we sing.  
AD: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten,  
male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving,  
and destroying.  
G: Be in our awareness. Teach us your joy. Let us feel your  
sorrow. Extend our limitations.  
AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even  
the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely..  
ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

### Processional:

Song: "Will Ye No Come Back Again?"

*(All process to altar. P&S draw sigil, AD & ADS: enter, P  
seals it.)*

### Centering:

AD: Why have you gathered here under the oaks?  
G: This is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.  
ADS: What brings you here out under the sky?  
G: We come to worship the Gods.  
AD: What do you know of the Gods?  
G: We seek to know what we can, with our mortal limitations.  
ADS: The Gods are everywhere;  
G: But we worship them here.  
AD: The Gods are without form;  
G: But we worship them in these forms.  
ADS: We do not know what to offer our Gods,  
G: So we offer them these prayers and sacrifices:  
AD: Each of us in our own way,  
G: Each of us in our own prayers.  
ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR OWN SACRIFICES.

AD: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of  
the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary of Be'al. In each of  
our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our  
minds, in the quiet of the spirit, evaluating all that has  
happened in our private lives since last we stood  
together, that the Gods may help us to understand them  
as sources of wisdom and growth.

*(Silence)*

## Individual Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our hearts, declare silently our  
personal goals for the days ahead and for our lives, and  
make our individual dedications to the Spirits whom we  
worship and honor.

*(Silence)*

## Statement of Beliefs:

AD: How many Gods are there?  
G: Every God and Goddess is a star!  
ADS: Where are the Gods?  
G: Where is the air we breath? The waters that surround us?  
The ground upon which we stand?  
AD: Are the Gods female?  
ADS: Or male?  
G: YES!  
AD: How do we find the Gods?  
G: Every God is within us.  
ADS: Thou art God.  
G: Every Goddess is within us.  
AD: Thou art Goddess.  
ADS: Who is our Lord?  
G: He is Be'al, the shining one, spirit of truth and light, spark  
of the sun, and the flame within the heart of every being.  
AD: Who is our Lady?  
G: She is the Earth Mother, spirit of all that lives upon the  
earth, and swims beneath the waters, and flies throughout  
the air.  
ADS: And who is the God of this place?  
G: He is Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every grove, Patron  
of Druids and Comforter of the People.

## Group Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now do we declare our goals:  
G: To grow as human beings, in joy and love and wisdom and  
strength, to promote in our actions a human and  
interdependent society, to heal and protect the biosphere  
of this planet, and to further the process of evolution, in  
ourselves and our groups, and throughout all time and  
space.  
ADS: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:  
ALL: WE DEDICATE OURSELVES, HERE AND NOW, IN  
BODY AND MIND, HEART AND SOUL, TO OUR  
HOLY MOTHER THE EARTH, OUR HOLY FATHER  
THE SUN, AND TO ALL THEIR HOLY CHILDREN.

## Offering and Praise:

AD: We are together, yet we often feel separate.  
G: Thus we bring our sacrifices to the lord and lady.  
ADS: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?  
*(Members of the Grove bring sacrifices to the altar)*  
AD: Not all sacrifices are physical. Has anyone brought Praise  
for the Gods?  
*(Members offer songs, poetry, music, etc.)*  
*[Begin insert]*

# A Chant for the Spring Equinox

Spring Equinox Invocation  
A Druid Missal-Any Feb 1981

By Bonewits

But similar to another free floating leaflet.

AD: O give praise to the Dark Gods who love:

Praise to the Hunter, stalking and slaying,

Praise to the Hag, weeping and raging.

G: Praise Be'al, who is all Gods, praise the Earth Mother's many faces.

AD: Praise for food-store and tight roof, good wool and good health.

G: Praise for hearth and tale and friend.

AD: Praise for grey skies and healing rain, cutting wind and bedding snow.

G: Praise for the mystery of the Land of Shadow.

AD: The Earth went bare, the sunlight dimmed,

G: Light had turned to Dark.

AD: The nights were long, the winds were cold,

G: Darkness ruled over all.

AD: But within the cave, the bear cub waxed;

G: Darkness yearns to Light.

AD: Bough is barren, bud returns:

G: Balanced now are we.

AD: Belenos returns from the South:

G: Balanced now are we.

AD: The Mother stirs and wakes again:

G: Balanced now are we.

AD: Snowdrifts of blossom on garth and tree,

G: Dark will turn to Light.

AD: The world will be lush, the days will be long,

G: Eight will rule over all.

AD: Til the sweet fruits of the boughs are warm in our hands.

And Light yearns again to Dark.

AD: O Belenos, O Lord of light, we praise thee at thy return to our midst. Welcome art thou amongst us.

ALL: BLESS US AND LIGHT OUR WAY, O MIGHTY SUN GOD!

AD: O Earth Mother, beautiful and strong, rise up and let us rejoice in thy sights

ALL: PRAISE TO THE LADY WHO GIVEST LIFE!

*Followed by "A Beltane Chant" from Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*

*[End of Insert]*

## Sacrifice:

*(AD holds up sacrificial branch and speaks)*

AD: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we ask, O our Mother, as we offer up this (these) sacrifice(s) of Life. Accept it (them) we pray, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us thy peace and life.

*(ADS turns to the four quarters and asks:)*

ADS: Have you accepted our sacrifice(s), O Our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer... and of the South... and of the East... and of the West... and of the Holy Center...

*(The sacrifice is not accepted.)*

ADS: The Four Winds are silent; the Earth Mother yet sleeps.

## Statement of Needs:

AD: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon you, but you have not answered, we have offered to you, but you have not accepted. Yet though you speak not, you whisper to us with your Spirit of Growth, and to this we turn in silence, to seek the changes we desire, to see our goals coming into being in the days and weeks ahead, knowing the answers are within us.

*(Silence)*

ADS: And we declare that, as this Grove:

ALL: WE NEED YOUR STRENGTH AND WISDOM, YOUR GUIDANCE AND PROTECTION, SO THAT WE CAN ACCOMPLISH OUR GOALS AND FULFILL OUR DEDICATIONS. SEND YOUR QUIET SPIRIT TO THIS GROVE, THAT WE MAY FIND THE WELLSPRINGS WITHIN OURSELVES AND EACH OTHER, TO OBTAIN OUR NEEDS, AND TO BE FOR YOU YOUR EYES AND HANDS THROUGHOUT THE TIME OF SLEEP.

## Chant of the Waters:

AD: Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

P: The Waters-of-Life.

AD: From whence do these Waters flow?

P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All-Mother.

AD: And how do we honor this gift that causes Life?

P: By partaking of the Waters of Life.

AD: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?

P: She has not, the Waters are here, but the Spirit is yet faint within them!

AD: Of what, then, do we partake?

P: The Waters of Awakening.

AD: Then give me the Waters.

*(The AD takes the chalice, and invokes the power of the Gods into it, thus initiating the return flow of divine energy.)*

AD: O Dalon Ap Landu, descend once again into these Waters and hallow them. Give us to know thy power, and the promise of Life that is to return.

*(AD shares the waters with the ADS, who then asks:)*

ADS: What are these Waters?

G: A sign of the power and bounty of the Gods:

ADS: Who are themselves a fraction of that which is

G: Beyond all human concepts

ADS: Of Male and Female,

G: Mortal and Divine:

AD: She surrounds us,

ADS: He penetrates us,

G: They bind the universes together.

## The Sharing:

*(The ADS then shares the Waters with the P, who shares them with the S, who shares them with the rest of the Grove. During this time, the Bards may wish to perform. The S returns the cup to the P, who returns it to the ADS, who gives it to the AD. P&S do not drink twice.)*

AD: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O Our Mother, even as we must return unto thee.

## Group Bonding:

AD: Now do we declare ourselves:

ALL: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENGTHENED BETWEEN US, AND OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS, IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

*(All sing "We Are One Family")*

## Meditation:

*(Lead by the AD)*

## Thank the Gods:

AD: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all you Goddesses and Gods around us and within us:

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

ADS: That you have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the Wild Things, and ourselves:

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

AD: For all the bounty you have given through the Time of Life:

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

ADS: That you stir now in sleep, and send forth flowers and green shoots to announce your coming:

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

AD: That you have sent the Maiden and the Fool to give us joy after winter's silence, and to guide us to you again:

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

ADS: For that we need each other, Mortal and Divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now, and throughout the ages:

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

AD: Now, as we prepare to leave this place in joy and peace:

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

## Absorption and Grounding:

AD: Great the power we have raised;

G: STRENGTH OF WOMAN AND OF MAN.

ADS: What shall we do before we leave?

G: ABSORB AS MUCH AS EVER WE CAN!

*(All pause and absorb as much of the divine energy as possible)*

AD: And all the rest?

G: WE SEND TO GROUND, TO SKY ABOVE AND TREES AROUND.

*(All now send remaining energy outward to bless the earth and sky, plants and animals)*

ADS: Is it done?

ALL: IT IS DONE!

## Benediction:

AD: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth Mother shower her blessings upon you: Peace! Peace! Peace!

*(The sigil around the AD's is broken by the P, and all retire, after making sure the area is clean.)*

## 1980 Earrach

Order of Common Worship, Earrach Season, 18 y.r.

By Bonewits & others?

"Class C"

Almost the same as 1980 Spring Equinox

AD: Arch Druid ADS: Archdruidess

P: Preceptor S: Server G: Grove

## Opening Song: "O Earth Mother"

### Invocation:

AD: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.

G: And we partake of it; we and all living beings.

AD: In the mighty helix we dance.

G: And in harmony with all of life we sing.

AD: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving, and destroying.

G: Be in our awareness. Teach us your joy. Let us feel your sorrow. Extend our limitations.

AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely..

ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

### Processional:

*Song: "Will Ye No Come Back Again?"*

*(All process to altar. P&S draw sigil, AD & ADS: enter, P seals it.)*

### Centering:

AD: Why have you gathered here under the oaks?

G: This is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.

ADS: What brings you here out under the sky?

G: We come to worship the Gods.

AD: What do you know of the Gods?

G: We seek to know what we can, with our mortal limitations.

ADS: The Gods are everywhere;

G: But we worship them here.

AD: The Gods are without form;

G: But we worship them in these forms.

ADS: We do not know what to offer our Gods,

G: So we offer them these prayers and sacrifices:

AD: Each of us in our own way,

G: Each of us in our own prayers.

ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR OWN SACRIFICES.

AD: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary of Be'al. In each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of the spirit, evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, that the Gods may help us to understand them as sources of wisdom and growth.

*(Silence)*

### Individual Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our lives, and make our individual dedications to the Spirits whom we worship and honor.

*(Silence)*

## Statement of Beliefs:

AD: How many Gods are there?  
G: Every God and Goddess is a star!  
ADS: Where are the Gods?  
G: Where is the air we breath? The waters that surround us? The ground upon which we stand?  
AD: Are the Gods female?  
ADS: Or male?  
G: YES!  
AD: How do we find the Gods?  
G: Every God is within us.  
ADS: Thou art God.  
G: Every Goddess is within us.  
AD: Thou art Goddess.  
ADS: Who is our Lord?  
G: He is Be'al, the shining one, spirit of truth and light, spark of the sun, and the flame within the heart of every being.  
AD: Who is our Lady?  
G: She is the Earth Mother, spirit of all that lives upon the earth, and swims beneath the waters, and flies throughout the air.  
ADS: And who is the God of this place?  
G: He is Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every grove, Patron of Druids and Comforter of the People.

## Group Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now do we declare our goals:  
G: To grow as human beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength, to promote in our actions a human and interdependent society, to heal and protect the biosphere of this planet, and to further the process of evolution, in ourselves and our groups, and throughout all time and space.  
ADS: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:  
ALL: WE DEDICATE OURSELVES, HERE AND NOW, IN BODY AND MIND, HEART AND SOUL, TO OUR HOLY MOTHER THE EARTH, OUR HOLY FATHER THE SUN, AND TO ALL THEIR HOLY CHILDREN.

## Offering and Praise:

AD: We are together, yet we often feel separate.  
G: Thus we bring our sacrifices to the lord and lady.  
ADS: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?  
*(Members of the Grove bring sacrifices to the altar)*  
AD: Not all sacrifices are physical. Has anyone brought Praise for the Gods?  
*(Members offer songs, poetry, music, etc.)*

## Sacrifice:

*(AD holds up sacrificial branch and speaks)*  
AD: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we ask, O our Mother, as we offer up this (these) sacrifice(s) of Life. Accept it (them) we pray, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us thy peace and life.  
*(ADS turns to the four quarters and asks:)*  
ADS: Have you accepted our sacrifice(s), O Our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer... and of the South... and of the East... and of the West... and of the Holy Center...  
*(The sacrifice is not accepted.)*  
ADS: The Four Winds are silent; the Earth Mother yet sleeps.

## Statement of Needs:

AD: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon you, but you have not answered, we have offered to you, buy you have not accepted. Yet though you speak not, you whisper to us with your Spirit of Growth, and to this we turn in silence, to seek the changes we desire, to see our goals coming into being in the days and weeks ahead, knowing the answers are within us.  
*(Silence)*

ADS: And we declare that, as this Grove:  
ALL: WE NEED YOUR STRENGTH AND WISDOM, YOUR GUIDANCE AND PROTECTION, SO THAT WE CAN ACCOMPLISH OUR GOALS AND FULFILL OUR DEDICATIONS. SEND YOUR QUIET SPIRIT TO THIS GROVE, THAT WE MAY FIND THE WELLSPRINGS WITHIN OURSELVES AND EACH OTHER, TO OBTAIN OUR NEEDS, AND TO BE FOR YOU YOUR EYES AND HANDS THROUGHOUT THE TIME OF SLEEP.

## Chant of the Waters:

AD: Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?  
P: The Waters-of-Life.  
AD: From whence do these Waters flow?  
P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All-Mother.  
AD: And how do we honor this gift that causes Life?  
P: By partaking of the Waters of Life.  
AD: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?  
P: She has not, the Waters are here, but the Spirit is yet faint within them!  
AD: Of what, then, do we partake?  
P: The Waters of Awakening.  
AD: Then give me the Waters.  
*(The AD takes the chalice, and invokes the power of the Gods into it, thus initiating the return flow of divine energy.)*  
AD: O Dalon Ap Landu, descend once again into these Waters and hallow them. Give us to know thy power, and the promise of Life that is to return.  
*(AD shares the waters with the ADS, who then asks:)*  
ADS: What are these Waters?  
G: A sign of the power and bounty of the Gods;  
ADS: Who are themselves a fraction of that which is  
G: Beyond all human concepts  
ADS: Of Male and Female,  
G: Mortal and Divine;  
AD: She surrounds us,  
ADS: He penetrates us,  
G: They bind the universes together.

## The Sharing:

*(The ADS then shares the Waters with the P, who shares them with the S, who shares them with the rest of the Grove. During this time, the Bards may wish to perform. The S returns the cup to the P, who returns it to the ADS, who gives it to the AD. P&S do not drink twice.)*  
AD: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O Our Mother, even as we must return unto thee.

## Group Bonding:

AD: Now do we declare ourselves:

ALL: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENGTHENED BETWEEN US, AND OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS, IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

*(All sing "We Are One Family")*

### Meditation:

*(Lead by the AD)*

### Thank the Gods:

AD: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all you Goddesses and Gods around us and within us:

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

ADS: That you have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the Wild Things, and ourselves:

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

AD: For all the bounty you have given through the Time of Life:

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

ADS: That you stir now in sleep, and send forth flowers and green shoots to announce your coming:

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

AD: That you have sent the Maiden and the Fool to give us joy after winter's silence, and to guide us to you again:

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

ADS: For that we need each other, Mortal and Divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now, and throughout the ages:

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

AD: Now, as we prepare to leave this place in joy and peace:

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

### Absorption and Grounding:

AD: Great the power we have raised;

G: STRENGTH OF WOMAN AND OF MAN.

ADS: What shall we do before we leave?

G: ABSORB AS MUCH AS EVER WE CAN!

*(All pause and absorb as much of the divine energy as possible)*

AD: And all the rest?

G: WE SEND TO GROUND, TO SKY ABOVE AND TREES AROUND.

*(All now send remaining energy outward to bless the earth and sky, plants and animals)*

ADS: Is it done?

ALL: IT IS DONE!

### Benediction:

AD: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth Mother shower her blessings upon you: Peace! Peace! Peace!

*(The sigil around the AD's is broken by the P, and all retire, after making sure the area is clean.)*



Figure 27 Maypole at Live Oak, Beltane 1985.

## 1977 Beltane

By Bonewits & others?  
"Class A"

### "O Earth Mother" Song

#### Invocation:

D: O Gods, we recognize these three mistakes that are due to our mortal limitation: thou art everywhere,

E: But we worship thee here:

D: Thou art without form,

E: But we worship thee in these forms:

D: Though wouldst have us offer our Living and being.

E: Yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices.

D: O Gods, we recognize these three mistakes that are due to our mortal limitations.

ALL: O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts, and prepare us for meditation.

#### Procession:

*Song: "Now Do We With Songs & Rejoicing"*

#### Praise:

*People offer gifts, songs, etc. to the Gods.*

#### Sacrifice: (As usual)

#### Reply: (As usual)

#### Chant:

D: The Mother wakes from Her long sleep and smiles on us today!

E: SHE IS AWAKE!

D: She brings us life!

E: SHE IS AWAKE!

D: She brings us Light!

E: SHE IS AWAKE!

D: The Mother wakes and seeks Be'al.

E: QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS.

D: We light our fires to show the way.

*The Fires of Be'al are now lit (if they are not already going) by the plunging of a torch into the kindling.*

E: QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS!

D: To couch with the Mother and bring forth Life.

E: QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS!

*This next section should be chanted at an accelerating pace.*

D: O Be'al...

E: WE WELCOME THEE!

D: O our Mother...

E: WE WELCOME THEE!

D: O Earth-Mother, O Be'al...

E: WE WELCOME THEE!

D: O Be'al, O Mother, parents of all that lives, we welcome Ye back to our midst. Give us of Your Life, O Most High, that we may share Your joy.

E: WELCOME ARE YE AMONG US, O MOST HIGH,  
SMILE ON US, WHO HAVE KEPT YOUR WAYS,  
THROUGH THE TIME OF SLEEP.

### Catechism:

VD: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

P: *The Waters-of-Life.*

D: From whence do these Waters flow?

P: *From the bosom of the Earth-mother, the never-changing All-mother.*

D: And how do we honor this gift that causes life?

P: *By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.*

D: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of Her bounty?

P: *She has!*

D: Praise be!! At last is our Time of Sleep ended. Now our faith bears fruit, and the Time of Life is begun in truth and in deed.

*The Archdruid/ess and all other members of the Third Order present remove their white ribbons and replace them with their red ones.*

D: Now give me the Waters!

### Consecration: (As usual)

### Communion: (As usual)

D: Anyone wishing to be ordained as a First Order Druid should be sure to partake of the Waters as they go around. Since the chalices are small, and the crowd large, we ask everyone to take only a sip, so there will be Waters to return to the Mother.

### Ordination:

*The Arch Druid will call for all prospective First Orders to come to the lowest tier.*

Song: "Circles" see Green Book Vol. 6, and choose 7<sup>th</sup> Vol. Of Poetry.

Gwen Zak Moore, probably in mid 1970's.

Tune: Windmills, by Alan Bell

### Meditation:

*The AD will read a brief meditation which will be followed by silence.*

### Benediction: (As usual)

END OF A SPECIAL ORDER  
OF WORSHIP FOR BELTANE

MIKES NOTES: We can see in this liturgy, Isaac Breaking away from established traditions after the publishing of the *Druid Chronicles* (Evolved). The notable change in the Invocation "Thou wouldst have us offer our Living and being" in place of "Thou hath no needs of prayers and sacrifices" is understandable given that Brother Isaac is a liturgist and this would be negating his primary drive in the Reform, perhaps? From 1975, we see an increased interest in sexual imagery in the works of Isaac Bonewits, greater incorporation of duotheist ideas and imagery of Wicca. Perhaps a result of his several marriages in the mid-70s?

## 1978 Beltane

By Bonewits & others?

"Class B"

*The following is a new Order of Worship for Beltane (17 y.r.), as celebrated by the Mother Grove in the Berkeley Rose Garden. The chalice will once again be filled with whiskey and water (the Waters-of-Life). The sacrifice should be of flowering branches and other offerings. All Third Order Druids should be wearing their white ribbons-of-office around their necks at the beginning of the service, but carry their red ribbons-of-office in an easily accessible location.*

### Opening:

*The service starts with the Archdruid and Assistant Archdruid at the site where the ritual will take place. AD does whatever banishing is necessary while AA sings "O Earth Mother" chant. All other participants are some distance away, preferably out of sight, where they begin procession to the ritual site, singing "Will Ye No Come Back Again?"*

*If both safe and legal, AD starts a fire on or near the altar. Branch sacrifice is tucked away in his/her robe or held in one hand.*

### Invocation:

*(A piece of white paper was pasted over the normal text, presumably to skip this step and move onto the next section. Probably the swirling galaxy opener had been inserted impromptu since it would be a new innovation introduced by David Geller as follows:)*

[AD: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.

P: *And we partake of it, we and all living beings.*

AD: In the mighty helix we dance.

P: *And in harmony with all of life we sing*

AD: Gods known and unknown, life potential and actual, noisy and silent, seen and unseen, beginning and ending, uniting and dissolving-

P: *Be in our awareness, teach us your joy, let us feel your sorrow, extend our limitations*

AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely – let this ritual begin!]

### Offering & Praise:

AD: I see you have come from far and near

AA: Hail & welcome – enter in!

AD: But first, tell me- Why have you come to this place at this time?

BARD:

May I make my fond excuses for the late-ness of the hour;

But we accept your invitation and would bring you Beltane's flower.

For the May Day is the great day, sung along the old straight track.

And those who ancient lines did ley will heed this song that calls them back

Chorus: Pass the word and pass the lady.

Pass the plate to all who hunger.

Pass the wit of ancient wisdom,

Pass the Cup of Crimson Wonder.

AA: How can we learn more about his:  
Bard:  
Ask the Green Man where he comes from, ask the cup that fills  
with red.  
Ask the old grey standing stones who show the sun his way to  
bed.  
Question all as to their ways, and learn the secrets that they  
hold.  
Walk the lines of Nature's palm, crossed with silver and with  
God.

Chorus:

AD: What shall we do now?  
Bard:  
Join in black December's sadness, line in August's welcome  
corn.  
Stir the cup that's ever filling with the blood of all that's born.  
But the may Day is the great day, sung along the old straight  
track.  
And those who ancient line did ley will heed this song that  
calls them back.

Chorus.

AD: What have you brought for our Mother & Father?  
*People bring offerings down to altar.*  
AA: Not all offerings are physical. Has anyone brought praise  
for the Gods?  
*People offer poems and songs.*

## Sacrifice:

*AD holds up main sacrificial branch to the sky, saying:*  
AD: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles;  
our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders  
of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these  
sacrifices of life and human effort. Accept them, we pray  
thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and  
life.  
*Branch and some of the other sacrifices are laid in the fire. AA  
turns to Four Quarters and asks:*  
AA: Have you accepted our sacrifices, Mother? I call upon the  
Spirit of the North to give answer... of the South... of  
the East... of the West...  
*If the sacrifice is accepted, the Service continues; otherwise  
the Service is ended immediately.*  
AD: Praise be! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and  
renewal of life, and to the healing of our bodies, minds  
and hearts, have been accepted!  
ALL: General Cheering!

## Chant:

AD: So long the Earth has lain in sleep:  
P: Seed in ground, cloud on sun.  
AA: So long the Mother slumbered deep;  
P: Be'al in darkness hid.  
AD: So long Your children waited here,  
ALL: AND WE YOUR WAYS DID KEEP.  
AA: No going without coming is, no loss without returning:  
ALL: AND WE HAVE GATHERED HERE TO SET THE  
BELTANE FIRES BURNING!  
*AA sprinkles whiskey on the fire.*

AD: O Earth Mother, who art called by many names: Danu,  
Frigga, Terra, Shakti, Uti-Hiata, we welcome You in  
Your awakening.  
P: All praise to the Lady who gives us life!  
AA: O Be'al, who ariseth out of darkness, the Beauteous, the  
Beloved, the flame of life within everything that liveth,  
and the heart of every star, blessed be Thy face among  
us.  
P: Welcome are Thou, O Lord of Light!  
AD: O Earth Mother, we invoke you! O Be'al we invoke you!  
P: O Be'al, O Earth Mother, we invoke You!  
AA: We call by seed and root and bud, by stem and flower and  
leaf.  
ALL: LET ALL THE EARTH DELARE THY WAYS!  
AD: Couch with us, and let our hearts be thy bed of working.  
ALL: LET OUR WORKS DECLARE THY WAY IS LOVE.

## Chant:

D: The Mother wakes from Her long sleep and smiles on us  
today!  
E: SHE IS AWAKE!  
D: She brings us life!  
E: SHE IS AWAKE!  
D: She brings us Light!  
E: SHE IS AWAKE!  
D: The Mother wakes and seeks Be'al.  
E: QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS.  
D: We light our fires to show the way.  
*The Fires of Be'al are now lit (if they are not already going)  
by the plunging of a torch into the kindling.*  
E: QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS!  
D: To couch with the Mother and bring forth Life.  
E: QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS!  
*This next section should be chanted at an accelerating pace.*  
D: O Be'al...  
E: WE WELCOME THEE!  
D: O our Mother...  
E: WE WELCOME THEE!  
D: O Earth-Mother, O Be'al...  
E: WE WELCOME THEE!  
  
D: O Be'al, O Mother, parents of all that lives, we welcome Ye  
back to our midst. Give us of Your Life, O Most High,  
that we may share Your joy.  
E: WELCOME ARE YE AMONG US, O MOST HIGH,  
SMILE ON US, WHO HAVE KEPT YOUR WAYS,  
THROUGH THE TIME OF SLEEP.

## The Waters:

AA: Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know  
the continual flow and renewal of life?  
P: The Waters-of-Life.  
AA: From whence do these Waters flow?  
P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All-  
Mother.  
AA: And how do we honor this gift that causes life?  
P: By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.  
AA: Has the Earth Mother given forth of her bounty?  
P: SHE HAS!  
AD: Praise be! At last is the Time of Sleep ended. Now our  
faith bears fruit, and the Time of Life begun in truth and  
in deed!  
ALL: General cheering!

*Ribbons are changed.*

## Consecration of the Waters:

ALL: THE TIME OF LIFE, THE TIME OF LIGHT, THE TIME OF LIFE, THE TIME OF LIGHT, THE TIME OF LIFE..

AA: O, Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, hallow these waters by thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by thy power, as we take and drink of thy secret essences.

## Oatcakes:

AD: Of what does Be'al give, that we may know the continual growth and change of life?

P: THE SPARKS OF LIFE.

AD: From whence do these sparks flame?

P: FROM THE HEART OF BE'AL, THE EVER SHINING ONE.

AD: And how do we honor these sparks of life?

P: BY CHERISHING THE SEEDS AND SHARING THEIR FRUITS.

AD: Has Be'al given forth of his flame?

P: HE HAS! THE SEEDS OF THE OATS HAVE LASTED THROUGH THE TIME OF SLEEP AND CAKES HAVE BEEN PREPARED WITH LOVE AND CARE.

AD: Then give me the oatcakes!

## Consecration of Oatcakes:

ALL: THE TIME OF LIFE, THE TIME OF LIGHT, THE TIME OF LIFE, THE TIME OF LIGHT, THE TIME OF LIFE...

AD: O, Lady, Queen of the Heavens, Keeper of the Holy Flames, bless these oatcakes which we offer up to You, as our ancestors have done through centuries past. Join us together by thy power and let the flames of love raise within us, even unto the stars; so that the seeds may be planted throughout all eternity.

## Communion:

AA: What are these waters and these oatcakes?

P: SIGNS OF THE POWER AND BOUNTY OF THE GODS,

AD: Who are themselves a fraction of the Force

P: ABOVE AND BEYOND ALL HUMAN CONCEPTS,

AD: Of male and female, mortal and divine.

P: IT SURROUNDS US,

AD: It penetrates us,

ALL: IT BINDS THE GALAXY TOGETHER!

*AD drinks from the chalice and blesses the preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Life," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.*

*AD takes a piece of oatcake from the server and blesses the preceptor with the words, "the sparks of life," and again marks the Druid Sigil in the air.*

*Preceptor and Server drink and eat and return the blessing, then go around the circle of the Grove clockwise blessing each person, handing the chalice and cakes, blessing them and being blessed in return.*

*The last person in the circle should NOT finish the contents of the chalice or the last few crumbs of cakes. This is returned to AD with a last exchange of blessings.*

## Meditation:

*The AD will lead all in a guided fantasy, culminating in a chant.*

## Libation:

*Cups are returned to altar. Crumbs are poured into the fire, remaining waters are poured out.*

AD: To Thee we return this portion of thy bounty,

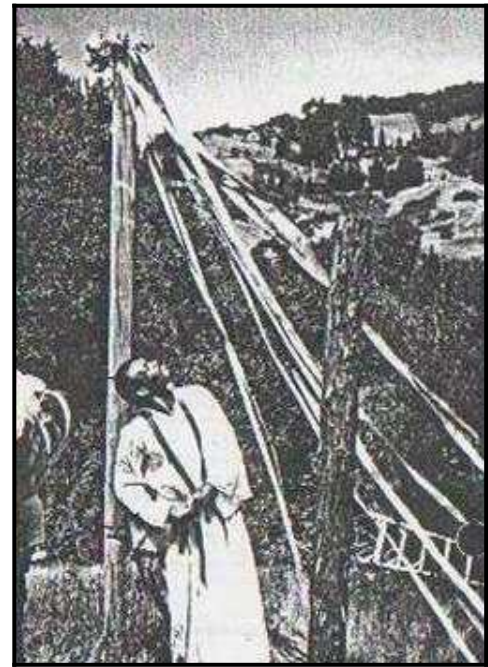
AA: Even as we must return unto thee.

## Benediction:

AD: Earth Mother, Be'al, all you other Goddesses and Gods, we gathered here today to praise and honor you. We have spoken from our hearts and You have heard us. From this place we now depart in love and joy, knowing that all things are purified in Your spirits, and that You have once again manifested the power of Life in a world that seemed so dead. We have offered of ourselves and You have answered. We go with your blessings: Peace! Peace! Peace!

## END OF ORDER OF WORSHIP FOR BELTANE

*All help to clean up ritual site, then move to picnic spot and feast, sing, dance, etc.*



**Figure 28** Bob Blunt enjoying the maypole streamers, Live Oak, Beltane 1984



# 1979 Beltane

By Isaac Bonewits & Others?  
"Class B"

The following is a new Order of Worship for Beltane (17 y.r.), as celebrated by the Mother Grove in the Berkeley Rose Garden. The chalice will once again be filled with the Waters-of-Life (whiskey) and oatcakes will have been cooked ahead of time. The sacrifice will consist of flowering branches and cut flowers (NOT roses!), as well as poems and songs brought by the congregation. All Third Order Druids should be wearing their white ribbons-of-office and have their red ones in an easily accessible location. If safe and legal, a small fire will be burning on or near the altar. At least one of the branch sacrifices will be on the altar at the beginning.

Cues: AD=Arch Druid/ess, AA=Assistant Archdruidess, PRE=Preceptor, SER=Server, CON=Congregation, ALL=All.

## Opening:

*The service starts with the AD and AA at the bottom of the Rose Garden, behind the altar. AD does whatever exorcisms are necessary while AA sings "O Earth Mother" chant. All other participants are some distance away, by the tunnel from Codornices Park. When the AD's messenger arrives, they process to the Rose Garden, singing "Will Ye No Come Back Again" and/or "Now Do We with Songs and Rejoicing."*

*Upon arrival, the procession walks down the center aisle, with the Preceptor/-tress and Server leading the members of the Order of Dalon Ap Landu to fill the second curved walkway. The rest of the congregation fills up the third and higher walkways.*

## Invocation:

AD: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.  
G: And we partake of it; we and all living beings.  
AD: In the mighty helix we dance.  
G: And in harmony with all of life we sing.  
AD: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving, and destroying.  
G: Be in our awareness. Teach us your joy. Let us feel your sorrow. Extend our limitations.  
AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely..  
ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

Song: "Let It All Happen" By Anodea Judith

Let the water fall, Let the water fall  
Let the water fall on the earth  
Let the trees grow tall, Let the water fall  
Let the greenery grow on the earth.

Let the greenery grow, let the greenery grow  
Let the greenery grow on the Earth  
Let the trees grow tall, let the water fall  
Let the greenery grow on the Earth

Let the air blow clean....  
Let the water run clear...  
Let the seals swim free...

## Affirmation:

AD: Where are the Gods?  
G: Every Goddess is within us!  
AA: Thou art Goddess!  
G: Every God is within us.  
AD: Thou art God.

## Offering and Praise:

AD: We are together, yet we often feel separate.  
G: Thus we bring our sacrifices to the Lord and Lady.  
AA: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?  
*People bring in their sacrifices to the Third Order members in the second walkway, who pass them on to the AD & AA, who place them on the altar.*

AD: Not all sacrifices are physical. Has anyone brought Praise for the Gods?

*People offer poems and songs.*

Song: "Goddesses, Goddesses Song"  
By Anodea Judith

CHORUS: Goddesses, Goddesses, Got to have Goddesses.  
Got to have Goddesses roaming above.  
Goddesses, Goddesses, got to have Goddesses  
Got to have Goddesses ruling with love.

In the ancient days of old,  
Goddesses ruled the heavens I'm told  
That was known as the time of mirth  
When there were many who worshipped the earth.

When you're in need and you call on the Goddess  
Her strength will illumine your wisdom within  
The Goddess, she answers with laughter and dances  
As we on the Earth become Pagan again.

When you're in crisis, then just call on Isis  
Her silvery horns will take troubles away.  
We dance in the moonlight, the sunlight and starlight  
And know that the world will better someday.

All of the Earth is just one big home  
Where all the Gods and the Goddesses roam  
Look to the forest you'll see what I mean  
Love of the Goddess will keep the Earth clean.

Song: Isaac's "Our Father"  
Song: Jean

## Sacrifice:

*AD holds up main sacrificial branch to the sky, saying:*  
AD: Our praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices of life and human effort. Accept them, we ask, and cleanse our hearts, granting us Thy peace and life.

*Branch and some of the other sacrifices are laid in the fire. AA turns to the four quarters and asks:*

AA: Have you accepted our sacrifice(s), O Our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer... of the South, of the East, of the West, and of the Holy Center.

*If the sacrifices are accepted, the ceremony continues; otherwise the ritual is ended immediately.*

AD: Praise be! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the healing of our bodies, minds and spirits, have been accepted!  
ALL: ((General cheering))  
*An appropriate song may be sung here.*  
Where gentle tides, go rolling by  
Along the salt sea strand  
The colors blend and roll as one  
Together in the sand  
And often do the winds intertwined, to send their distant call  
The quiet joys of brotherhood  
And love is lord of all

Where oat and wheat together rise  
Along the common ground  
The mare and stallion, light and dark  
Have thunder in their sound  
The rainbow sign, the blended flood  
Still hold my heart in thrall  
The quiet joys of brother hood  
And love is lord of all

But men have come to plow the hide  
The oat lies on the ground  
I hear their fires in the field  
The drive the stallion down  
The roses bleed, both like and dark  
The winds do seldom call  
The running sands recall the time  
When love was lord of all.

### Chant:

AD: So long the Earth has lain in sleep:  
G: Seed in ground, cloud on sun.  
AA: So long the Mother slumbered deep;  
G: Be'al in darkness hid.  
AD: So long Your children waited here,  
ALL: AND WE YOUR WAYS DID KEEP.  
AA: No going without coming is, no loss without returning:  
ALL: AND WE HAVE GATHERED HERE TO SET THE  
BELTANE FIRES BURNING!  
*AA sprinkles whiskey on the fire.*  
AD: O Earth Mother, who art called by many names: Danu,  
Frigga, Terra, Shakti, Uti-Hiata, we welcome You in  
Your awakening.  
G: All praise to the Lady who gives us life!  
AA: O Be'al, who arises out of darkness, the Beauteous, the  
Beloved, the flame of life within everything that lives,  
and the heart of every star, blessed be Your face among  
us.  
G: Welcome are you, O Lord of Light!  
AD: O Earth Mother, we invoke you! O Be'al we invoke you!  
G: O Be'al, O Earth Mother, we call upon You!  
AA: We call by seed and root and bud, by stem and flower and  
leaf.  
ALL: COME UNTO US! COME ONTO US! COME INTO  
US!  
AD: Couch with us and let our hearts be Your bed of working.  
ALL: LET OUR WORKS DECLARE YOUR WAY IS  
LOVE.  
AA: Lay with us and let our souls be Your bed of playing.  
ALL: LET OUR LIVES DECLARE YOUR WAY IS JOY.

### The Oatcakes:

AD: Of what does Be'al give, that we may know the continual growth and change of life?  
SER: The sparks of life.  
AD: From whence do these sparks flame?  
SER: From the heart of Be'al, the ever shining All-Father.  
AD: And how do we honor these sparks of life?  
SER: By cherishing the seeds and sharing their fruits.  
AD: Has Be'al given forth of His flame?  
SER: He has! The seeds of the oats have lasted through the Time of Sleep.  
AD: What has been done with them?  
SER: The cakes have been prepared with love and care.  
AD: Then give me the oatcakes!  
*The AD takes the plate of oatcakes and consecrates them with the combined spiritual energies of the people and the Goddess.*  
ALL: THE TIME OF LIFE, THE TIME OF LIGHT, THE TIME OF LIFE, THE TIME OF LIGHT, THE TIME OF LIFE... ((Etc., until the AD speaks))  
AD: O, Bridget, Queen of the Heavens, Keeper of the Holy Flames, Inspiration of Poets, bless these oatcakes which we offer up to You, as our predecessors have done through centuries past. Join us together by Your power and let the flames of love rise within us, even unto the stars, so that the seed may be planted throughout all space and time.  
ALL: SO BE IT!

### The Waters:

AA: Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?  
PRE: The Waters-of-Life.  
AA: From whence do these Waters flow?  
PRE: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All-Mother.  
AA: And how do we honor this gift that embodies Life?  
PRE: By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.  
AA: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?  
PRE: She has!  
AD: Praise be! Now at last is the Time of Sleep ended, and the Time of Life begun in truth and indeed! So give me the Waters!  
ALL: ((General cheering))  
*All Third Order Druids present, including the AD and AA, now remove their white ribbons-of-office and replace them with their red ones. The AA takes the chalice of waters, and consecrates them with the combined spiritual energies of the people and the God.*  
ALL: THE TIME OF LIFE, THE TIME OF LIGHT, THE TIME OF LIFE, THE TIME OF LIGHT, THE TIME OF LIFE... ((etc., until AA speaks))  
AA: O, Dalon ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, hallow these waters by Your sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by your power, as we take and drink of Your secret essences.  
ALL: SO BE IT!

## Sharing:

ADS: What are these waters and these oatcakes?

G: Signs of the power and bounty of the Gods,

AA: Who are themselves a fraction of that which is

G: Beyond all human concepts,

AD: Of Male and Female,

G: Mortal and Divine.

AA: She surrounds us,

AD: He penetrates us,

ALL: THEY BIND THE UNIVERSES TOGETHER!

*AD takes an oatcake from the plate, eats it, blesses the AA with the words "The sparks of life," and the forming of the Druid Sigil. The AA returns the blessing and sign, eats, and passes the plate to the Preceptor/-tress with the blessing and sign. He/she then blesses, signs, eats, blesses and signs. The plate is passed to the Server, who takes it around to the Congregation. In each case the blessing and the sign are exchanged.*

*AA takes the chalice, drinks of the waters, and blesses the AD with the words "The Waters-of-Life," using the sign again. The chalice is passed as before to the AD and the Preceptor/-tress, who passes it to each person present, following the Server.*

*The last person partaking should NOT finish the last oatcake nor the last drop of the waters. They are returned to the AD with a last blessing.*

*During the passing around of the oatcakes and waters, the Bards may sing an appropriate song.*

Song: "Let the Spirit Come To You"  
By Anodea Judith

Let the spirit come to you  
through you renew you  
Let the love shine on to you  
Pursue you undo you  
Let the light shine above you  
Be of you that loves you  
Let the peace settle in you  
Within you, begin you.

## Second Order Ordination?

*An ordination of one or more members of the Grove to the Second Order of the Druids may take place here.*

## Libation:

*The last crumbs of the oatcakes and the last drops of the waters are poured into the fire or onto the ground by the AD, saying:*

AD: To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty,

AA: Even as we must return unto Thee.

ALL: SO BE IT.

## Meditation:

*The AD will lead all in a meditation or guided fantasy, which may end with a mantra or other chant.*

Song: "We Are One Family"

We are the children of the Earth  
She is our Mother!  
Offspring of the Sun God's bright mirth  
He is our Father!  
We have our siblings in the air, on the land, in the sea...

Chorus: We are one family.

We are one family

Kin to the whale and the dove.

We are one family.

We are one family.

Joined by the strength of our love, of our love,

Joined by the strength of our love.

The dolphin so free and alive

She is our sister!

The wolf who must kill to survive

He is our brother!

We are the cousins of the eagle who soars in ecstasy...

Sequoia and bristle cone pine

They are ancestors!

The cactus and mushroom divine

We are related!

The D.N.A. that runs through us all is the key...

Throughout all of time and of space

Life has been granted!

Every intelligent race

We have been planted!

And those who have sown the seed now await patiently...

## Benediction:

AD: Earth Mother, Be'al, all you other Goddesses and Gods, we gathered here today to praise and honor you. We have spoken from our hearts and You have heard us. From this place we now depart in love and joy, knowing that all things are purified in Your spirits, and that You have once again manifested the power of Life in a world that seemed so dead. We have offered of ourselves and You have answered. We go with your blessings: Peace! Peace! Peace!

END OF THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

FOR BELTANE 17 Y.R. (Berkeley)

*All now clean up the area and may retire to the park or elsewhere for picnicking, playing games and otherwise carrying-on in the manner appropriate to the season.*



Figure 29 Tying the maypole, Live Oak, 1983.

# 1980 Beltane

ORDER OF COMMON WORSHIP,  
BELTANE, 18 Y.R. (Berkeley dating)  
New Reformed Druids of North America, Mother  
& Hazel Nut Groves  
Fourth Annual Beltane-in-the-Rose-Garden  
By Bonewits & others?  
"Class C"

AD: Arch Druid/ess, ADS: Archdruidess, P: Preceptor,  
S:Server, G: Grove & Guests.

## Opening Song: "O Earth-Mother"

(Customs 2:1-3)

### Invocation:

AD: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.  
G: And we partake of it; we and all living beings.  
ADS: In the mighty helix we dance.  
G: And in harmony with all of life we sing.  
AD: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten,  
male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving,  
and destroying.  
G: Be in our awareness, teach us your joy, let us feel your  
sorrow, extend our limitations.  
ADS: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even  
the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely:  
ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

### Processional:

Song: "Will Ye No Come Back Again?"

© 1973, 2001 c.e.

**words by Isaac Bonewits, music Scots trad.  
("Bonnie Charlie's Now Awa")**

### Key of C

In exile live our Olden Gods,  
Vanished o'er the foaming main,  
To lands no mortal ever trods.  
Will They e're come back again?

*Will Ye no come back again?  
Will Ye no come back again?  
Better loved Ye cannot be.  
Will Ye no come back again?*

Hills They walked were all Their own,  
Blest the land from sea to sea,  
Till the folk with tortured moan,  
Abandoned all the noble Sidh.

Many a gallant Pagan fought,  
Many a gallant Witch did burn.  
Priest and priestess, all have sought,  
To sing the prayers Ye cannot spurn!

Now with eagle and with dove,  
Sing we hear our heartfelt plea:  
Come with thunder, or with love,  
But come! Good Gods, we so need Thee

(All process in pairs, AD & ADS followed by P&S,  
then member of the Order of Dalon Ap Landu, then other  
Grove members, guests, and public)

## Centering:

AD: Why have you gathered here under the sky?  
G: This is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.  
ADS: What brings you here out among the flowers?  
G: We come to worship the Gods.  
AD: What do you know of the Gods?  
G: We seek to know what we can, with our mortal limitations.  
ADS: The Gods are everywhere:  
G: But we worship them here.  
AD: The Gods are without form:  
G: But we worship them in these forms.  
ADS: We do not know what to offer our Gods,  
G: So we offer them these prayers and sacrifice.  
AD: Each of us in our own way,  
G: Each of us with our own prayers.  
ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR SACRIFICES.  
AD: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of  
the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary ob Be'al, in each of  
our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our  
minds, in the quiet of the spirit, evaluating all that has  
happened in our private lives since last we stood  
together, that the Gods may help us to understand them  
as sources of wisdom and growth.

(Silence)

## Individual Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our hearts, declare silently our  
personal goals for the days ahead and for our lives, and  
make our individual dedications to the Spirits whom we  
worship and honor.

(Silence)

## Statement of Beliefs:

AD: How many Gods are there?  
G: Every God and Goddess is a Star!  
ADS: Where are the Gods?  
G: Where is the air we breath? The waters that surround us?  
The ground upon which we stand?  
AD: Are the Gods female?  
ADS: Or males?  
G: Yes!  
AD: How do we find the Gods?  
G: Every God is within us!  
ADS: Thou art God.  
G: Every Goddess is within us!  
AD: Thou art Goddess!  
G: Every God is within us.  
AD: Thou art God.  
ADS: Who is our Lord?  
G: He is Be'al, the Shining One, Spirit of truth and of light,  
Spark of the Sun, and the Flame within the heart of every  
being.  
AD: Who is our Lady?  
G: She is the Earth Mother, Spirit of all that lives upon the  
Earth, and swims beneath the waters, and flies  
throughout the air.  
ADS: And who is the God of this place?  
G: He is Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every grove, Patron  
of Druids, and comforter of the People.

## Group Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now do we declare our goals:

G: To grow as Human Beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength, to promote in our actions a human and interdependent society, to heal and protect the biosphere of this planet, and to further the process of Evolution, in ourselves and our groups, and throughout all Time and Space.

ADS: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:

ALL: WE DEDICATE OURSELVES, HERE AND NOW, IN BODY AND MIND, HEART AND SOUL, TO OUR HOLY MOTHER THE EARTH, OUR HOLY FATHER THE SUN, AND TO ALL THEIR HOLY CHILDREN.

## Offering and Praise:

AD: We are together, yet we often feel separate.

G: Thus we bring our sacrifices to the Lord and Lady.

AA: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?

*(People bring in their sacrifices to the altar.)*

AD: Not all sacrifices are physical. Has anyone brought Praise for the Gods?

*(People offer songs, poetry, music, etc.)*

## Sacrifice:

*(AD holds up sacrificial branch and speaks)*

AD: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we ask, O Our Mother, as we offer up these sacrifices of Life. Accept them, we pray, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us thy peace and life.

*(AD turns to the four quarters and asks)*

ADS: Have you accepted our sacrifices, O Our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer... and of the South... and of the East... and of the West...

AD: Praise be!!! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and the cleansing of our hearts and eyes, have been accepted!

*(General applause. 3<sup>rd</sup> Order Druids CHANGE RIBBONS)*

## Chant:

AD: So long the Earth has lain in sleep:

G: Seed in ground, cloud on sun.

ADS: So long the Mother slumbered deep;

G: Be'al in darkness hid.

AD: So long Your children waited here,

ALL: AND WE YOUR WAYS DID KEEP.

ADS: No going without coming is, no loss without returning:

ALL: AND WE HAVE GATHERED HERE TO SET THE BELTANE FIRES BURNING!

*(ADS lights Beltane Fire)*

AD: O Earth Mother, who art called by many names: Danu, Frigga, Terra, Shakti, Tara, Uti-Hiata, welcome art thou among us!

G: All praise to the Lady who givest life!!

*(AD sprinkles whiskey on fire)*

ADS: O Be'al, who ariseth out of Darkness, the Beauteous, the Beloved, the flame of life within everything that liveth, and the heart of every star, praise be thy face among us.

G: Welcome art thou, O Lord of Light!!

AD: O Earth Mother, we invoke you! O Be'al we invoke you!

G: O Be'al, O Earth Mother, we call upon You!

ADS: We call by seed and root and bud, by stem and flower and leaf!

ALL: LET ALL THE EARTH DECLARE THY WAY!

AD: Couch with us and let our hearts be thy bed of working!

ALL: LET OUR WORKS DECLARE THY WAY IS LOVE.

## Statement of Needs:

ADS: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon you and you have heard us. We have offered of ourselves and you have accepted. Yet each of us has needs for guidance and for aid, without which we cannot fulfill your ways. Hear now thy children, and help us, as ever you have done.

*(At this point, each person may state, silently or out loud, her or his needs they wish fulfilled by the Gods, in order to accomplished their goals. After all have finished:)*

AD: And we declare, that as this Grove:

ALL: WE NEED YOUR STRENGTH AND WISDOM. YOUR HEALING AND JOY. SO THAT WE MAY ACCOMPLISH OUR GOALS, AND FULFILL OUR DEDICATIONS. BLESS THIS GROVE, AND BRING US ALL THAT WE MAY NEED, MATERIALLY AND SPIRITUALLY, SO THAT WE MAY GROW EVER STRONGER, IN BEAUTY, WISDOM, HEALTH AND JOY.

## The Waters:

ADS: Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

P: The Waters of Life.

ADS: From whence do these Waters flow?

P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All Mother.

ADS: And how do we honor this gift that embodies Life?

P: By partaking of the Waters of Life.

ADS: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?

P: She has!

ADS: Praise be! Now at last is the Time of Sleep ended, and the Time of Life begun in truth and indeed! So give me the Waters!

*(The ADS: takes the chalice and invokes the power of the Gods into it, thus initiating the return flow of divine energies.)*

ADS: O, Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, hallow these Waters by thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by thy power, as we take and drink of thy secret essences.

AD: What are these Waters?

G: A sign of the power and bounty of the Gods.

AD: Who are themselves a fraction of that which is

G: Beyond all human concepts.

AD: Of Male and Female,

G: Mortal and Divine.

AD: She surrounds us,

ADS: He penetrates us,

G: They bind the universes together.

## The Sharing:

*(The AD then shares the Waters with the P, who shares them with the S, who shares them with the rest of the Grove and guests. During this time, the Bards will perform. The S returns the cup to the P, who gives it to the AD, who returns it to the ADS. P&S do not drink twice.)*

ADS: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O Our Mother, even as we must return unto thee.

## Group Bonding:

ADS: Now do we declare ourselves:

ALL: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY  
OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW  
STRENGTHENED BETWEEN US, AND OUR  
SISTERS AND BROTHERS IN ALL THE MYRIAD  
WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

*(All sing "We are one Family")*

### Song: "We Are One Family"

We are the children of the Earth  
She is our Mother!  
Offspring of the Sun God's bright mirth  
He is our Father!  
We have our siblings in the air, on the land, in the sea...

Chorus: We are one family.  
We are one family  
Kin to the whale and the dove.  
We are one family.  
We are one family.  
Joined by the strength of our love, of our love,  
Joined by the strength of our love.

The dolphin so free and alive  
She is our sister!  
The wolf who must kill to survive  
He is our brother!  
We are the cousins of the eagle who soars in ecstasy...

Sequoia and bristle cone pine  
They are ancestors!  
The cactus and mushroom divine  
We are related!  
The D.N.A. that runs through us all is the key...

Throughout all of time and of space  
Life has been granted!  
Every intelligent race  
We have been planted!  
And those who have sown the seed now await patiently...

## Meditation:

*(Lead by the ADS)*

### Thanking the Gods:

ADS: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all you Goddesses and Gods  
around us and within us:

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

AD: That You have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the  
wild things and ourselves.

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.

AD: Go now in peace, secure in the knowledge that our  
sacrifices have found acceptance and that we go forth to  
live in harmony with the blessings of the Earth Mother.  
Peace! Peace! Peace!

## Benediction:

AD: Earth Mother, Be'al, all you other Goddesses and Gods,  
we gathered here today to praise and honor you. We have  
spoken from our hearts and You have heard us. From this place  
we now depart in love and joy, knowing that all things are  
purified in Your spirits, and that You have once again  
manifested the power of Life in a world that seemed so dead.  
We have offered of ourselves and You have answered. We go  
with your blessings: Peace! Peace! Peace!

## 1980 Beltane (Variant #2)

Special Order of Worship, Santa Cruz gathering,  
By Bonewits & others?  
"Class B?"  
Beltane, 18yr (May 4, 1980)

## Opening:

*Before the service begins, the Sigil is marked on the ground,  
the sacrifice is cut, and the Third Order Druids are wearing  
their white ribbons-of-office, with their red ribbons-of-office  
handy.*

## Procession:

(Song: "Will Ye No Come Back Again?")

*Archdruid steps into the Sigil, which is then closed by  
Preceptor and Server with their staves. The rest of the group  
forms a circle around the Sigil.*

## Invocation:

AD: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.

Con: And we partake of it; we and all living beings.

AD: In the mighty helix we dance.

Con: And in harmony with all of life we sing.

AD: Gods known and unknown, potential and actual, noisy  
and silent, seen and unseen, beginning and ending,  
uniting and dissolving...

Con: Be in our awareness, teach us your joy, let us feel your  
sorrow, extend our limitations.

AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even  
the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely..

ALL: LET US BEGIN!

## Offering and Praise:

(Song: "O Earth Mother")

*Congregation may offer songs, poems, other things; AD holds  
up main sacrifice to the sky, saying:*

AD: Our praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles; our  
voices have been carried on the shoulders of the winds.  
Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices of life  
and human effort. Accept them, we ask, and may our  
hearts be cleansed and may we share our lives in peace  
and harmony.

*Turns to the Four Quarters and says,*

AD: I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer... of the  
South... of the East... of the West... of the Center...

*(If the sacrifices are accepted, the ceremony continues;  
otherwise the ritual is ended immediately.)*

AD: Praise be! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and  
renewal of life, and to the healing of our bodies, minds  
and spirits, have been accepted!

## The Waters:

AD: Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know  
the continual flow and renewal of life?

P: The Waters-of-Life.

AD: From whence do these Waters flow?

P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All-  
Mother.

AD: And how do we honor this gift that embodies Life?

P: By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.

AD: Has the Earth Mother given forth of her bounty?

P: She has!

AD: Praise be! Now at last is the Time of Sleep ended, and the Time of Life begun in truth and indeed! So give me the Waters!

ALL: (General Cheering)

*All Third Order Druids present, including the AD and Preceptor, now remove their white ribbons-of-office and replace them with their red ones. The Preceptor takes the chalice of waters, and consecrates them with the combined spiritual energies of the people and the God.*

P: O, Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, hallow these waters by your sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by your power, as we take and drink of your secret essences.

ALL: SO BE IT!

*Archdruid takes the chalice, drinks of the waters, and blesses the Preceptor with the words "the Waters-of-Life," and marking of the Druid Sigil in the air. The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Archdruid. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and give the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove clockwise, blessing each person, handing the person the chalice, being blessed in return, and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server drinks only once. (Alternatively, the chalice may be handed around the circle after blessings from the Archdruid.)*

*The last person partaking should NOT finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the AD with a last exchange of blessings.*

*Then the Archdruid takes the last sip, pouring the remainder upon the altar or fire, saying;*

AD: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

ALL: SO BE IT!

## Meditation:

*Brief readings/words of meditation, then a short period of silence.*

## Benediction:

AD: We have gathered here to praise and offer sacrifice to the forces of nature and to reaffirm our spiritual links with the unseen deities with whom we share this life. Let us go forth to live in harmony with all blessings and Peace! Peace! Peace!

# 1977 (?) Lughnasadh Fragment

By Bonewits & others?

"Class A"

## The Chant:

D: Let us praise the Earth-Mother! She has smiled upon her children.

G: THREE TIMES SINCE BELTANE HAS THE MOON GONE BEFORE US IN HER FULL GLORY, THREE TIMES HAS SHE FULLY HIDDEN HER GLORY FROM US.

D: In those three months the Earth-Mother has quickened the Earth and brought new life upon it; and in these three months to come she will bring forth the bounty of this life.

G: AND AS THE MOON NOW WAXES NEAR TO FULL ONLY TO WANE AGAIN, SO AT SAMHAIN WILL THE EARTH-MOTHER WITHDRAW FROM US A WHILE.

D: Then so we praise her, for now at Lughnasadh, the life which has grown during Samhradh comes to fruition, that, we her grateful children, may gather and praise her and remember her until she returns again at Beltane.

G: LET US GATHER AND PRAISE THE BOUNTY OF THE MOTHER!

*(Here is the Sacrifice part)*

## The Catechism:

D: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may remember the continual flow and renewal of life?

G: THE WATERS OF LIFE.

D: From whence do these Waters flow?

G: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

D: And how do we honor this gift of life?

G: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS OF LIFE.

D: Does the Earth-Mother give any sign on this day of Lughnasadh to assure us that she will sustain life while she sleeps?

G: OF THIS AT LUGHNASADH, WE KNOW BY THE HARVEST-BOUNTY OF FOGHAMHAR. *(FOE-war)*

D: What token does the Earth-Mother give of this bounty to come?

G: IN TOKEN OF THIS BOUNTY SHE HAS MIXED THE WATERS OF LIFE WITH THE GRAIN OF THE EARTH AND THE FRUIT OF THE TREE.

D: Give me this token.



# 1978 Lughnasadh 16 Y.R.

By Bonewits & others?  
"Class B"

*The following is a Special Order of Worship for Lughnasadh. The chalice will be filled with mead or hard cider (instead of the usual whiskey) as the Waters-of-Life. Since this is a harvest festival, it is suggested that members of the Grove bring a sacrifice of fruits or vegetables, from their own gardens if possible. These are laid on the altar and/or around the fire along with the regular sacrifice (which should be of green branches) either at the end of the Procession or at the point in the service at which the regular sacrifice is offered up.*

*The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruidess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand).*

"D" =Druid/ess presiding.

"P" =People attending.

"E" =Everybody.

Song: "Processional Hymn"

## Invocation

D: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.  
E: AND WE PARTAKE OF IT; WE AND ALL LIVING BEINGS.  
D: In the mighty helix we dance.  
E: AND IN HARMONY WITH ALL OF LIFE WE SING.  
D: Gods known and unknown, life potential and actual, noisy and silent, seen and unseen, beginning and ending, uniting and dissolving.  
E: BE IN OUR AWARENESS. TEACH US YOUR JOY. LET US FEEL YOUR SORROW. EXTEND OUR LIMITATIONS.  
D: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely, let this ritual begin!

## Procession

Here occurs the Procession, with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the server (or any two others designated by the Grove) use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom incomplete. The Druid/ess steps into this Sigil, which is then closed by the two staves.

Song: "Now Do We"

## Praise:

*Here may be inserted a reading or singing of Latter Chronicles 10:6-22 as a hymn of praise, with the entire Grove joining in on the refrain of "O Earth-Mother, we praise Thee."*

## Sacrifice

*The Druidess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:*

D: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray Thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray Thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us Thy peace and life.

*The sacrifice is laid upon the altar or in the fire. The Druid/ess then turns to the Four Quarters and asks:*

D: Hast Thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer... of the South... of the East... of the West...

## Reply:

*If the sacrifice is accepted, the Service continues; otherwise, the Service is ended immediately.*

D: Praise be!! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, have been accepted!

## Chant:

D: Thy trees do grow and give us shade.  
E: O DALON AP LANDU, WE THANK THEE.  
D: Thy waters stream forth and ease our pain,  
E: O GRANNOS, WE THANK THEE.  
D: Thy waters pour forth and bring us joy,  
E: O BRACIACA, WE THANK THEE.  
D: Thy rivers flow and give us drink,  
E: O SIRONA, WE THANK THEE.  
D: Thy thunder cracks and heralds rain,  
E: O TARANIS, WE THANK THEE.  
D: Thy Seas are deep and full of fish,  
E: O LLYR, WE THANK THEE.  
D: Thy earth is fertile and full of Life.  
E: O DANU, WE THANK THEE.

D: Though the Sun is bright, the Shade is dark.  
E: IN THE MIDST OF LIGHT IS DARK.  
D: Dark though the night, the stars burn bright.  
E: IN THE MIDST OF DARK IS LIGHT.  
D: Thy light shines on us today.  
E: O BELENOS, WE THANK THEE.  
D: The plants give fruits which then do die.  
E: IN THE MIDST OF LIFE IS DEATH.  
D: We eat the fruits and they give us life.  
E: IN THE MIDST OF DEATH IS LIFE.  
D: Thy life is here in us today.  
E: O EARTH-MOTHER, WE THANK THEE!

D: O Be'al, O Lugh, O our Mother, O all ye Gods and Goddesses, we thank You for the bounty which Ye have given us during this year. Accept our praise, O Most High, and smile on us always, that we may praise You the more.  
E: WE THANK YOU, O MOST HIGH, KEEP US IN YOUR MINDS, WE PRAY YOU, AS WE KEEP IN YOUR WAYS.



## Catechism

- D: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?  
P: The Waters-of-Life.  
D: From whence do these Waters flow?  
P: From the bosom of the Earth-Mother, the never-changing All-mother.  
D: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of Her bounty?  
P: She has! Ripe are the golden apples of the Sun, and bright is the honey of the hives. Our cups overflow with cider and mead, and all the good things of this season!  
D: Then give me the Waters!

## Consecration

*The Druid/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Druid/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:*

- D: O Mother, we thank Thee for this sing of Thy continual presence and Thy life. O Dalon Ap Landu, descend into this milk and hallow it by Thy three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by Thy power as we take and drink of Thy secret essences!

## Ordination?

*If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Order (in which case the Druid/ess will have consecrated an additional chalice, filled with the Waters-of-Life) the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.*

## Communion

SONG: "Lughnasadh Dance"

### Title: Lughnasadh Dance

Lyrics by: Gwydion Pendderwen  
Recorded on: "Songs for the Old Religion," Gwydion Pendderwen, 1975; "Once Around the Wheel," Ian Corrigan, 1987 ([Association for Consciousness Exploration](#), 1643 Lee Rd #9, Cleveland Heights, OH 44118)  
Subject: Sabbats – Lughnasadh  
Lugh the light of summer bright clothed all in green  
Tailltiu his mother true, rise up and be seen

### Chorus:

At your festival sound the horn, calling the people again,  
Child of Barleycorn, newly summer-born, ripening like the grain.

Lugh grew tall from spring to fall, and sought to find a wife  
But Balor came and made his claim and vowed to take his life

The two did fight from morn 'till night and Lugh did strike him one;  
And Balor's eye flew in the sky and there became the sun

Lugh was wed and made his bed with Erinn in the north,  
And there they lay through many a day and soon a child came forth

The child grew tall from spring to fall, Setanta was his name,  
And then at length, by honor's strength, Cuchulain he became!

*The Druid/ess drinks from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words "the Waters-of-Life" and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.*

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Druid/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return, and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does NOT drink more than once.*

*In some Groves, the Druid/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person on that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.*

*In either method, the last person in the circle should NOT finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Druid/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip, pouring the remainder upon the altar or fire, saying:*

- D: To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to Thee.

## Meditation

*Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture the Druid/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Druid/ess and a period of silence and private meditation (usually two to five minutes in length – though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Druid/ess signals the end of the service with:*

## Benediction

- D: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifices have found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that She has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with Her blessing:

*The Druid/ess blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:*

Peace! Peace! Peace!

*The edible sacrifices should now be used as part of a Lughnasadh feast.*

*End of a Special Order of Worship for Lughnasadh.*



**Figure 30 Eric Hillemann & Isaac examining his donation of archival materials, April 23, 1994.**

# 1979 Lughnasadh The Druid Ritual

(14 y.r. is typed on it, but contents belie a later date)  
By Bonewits & others?  
"Class C"

*Druids line up for the procession, standing several yards North of the altar stone. The Archdruid (AD) and the Archdruidess (ADS) are at the front, followed by the Chief Bard and the Server, and the other members of the Grove (G).*

## Opening Song: "O Earth Mother"

(Customs 2:1-3)

### Invocation:

ADS: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.  
G: And we partake of it, we and all living beings.  
AD: In the mighty helix we dance.  
G: And in harmony with all of life we sing.  
ADS: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving, and destroying...  
G: Be in our awareness, teach us Your joy, let us feel Your sorrow, extend our limitations.  
AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely..  
ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

### Processional Song (ALL):

*Song: "Will Ye No Come Back Again?"  
All process to altar stone, CB & S mark sigil on ground, AD & ADS step inside and go around either side to back of altar stone, sigil is closed. Grove members split into an arc in front of the altar stone.*

### Centering:

ADS: Why have you gathered here under the oaks?  
G: This is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.  
AD: What brings you here out under the sky?  
G: We come to worship the Gods.  
ADS: What do you know of the Gods?  
G: We seek to know what we can, with our mortal limitations.  
AD: The Gods are everywhere;  
G: But we worship Them here.  
ADS: The Gods are without form;  
G: But we worship Them in these forms.  
AD: We do not know what to offer to our Gods,  
G: So we offer Them our prayers and sacrifices.  
ADS: Each of us in our own way,  
G: Each of us in our own prayers.  
ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR OWN SACRIFICES.  
AD: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary of Be'al. In each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of the spirit, evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, that the Gods may help us to understand them as sources of wisdom and growth.

*(Silence)*

### Individual Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our lives, and make our individual dedications to the spirits whom we worship and honor.

*(Silence)*

### Statement of Beliefs:

ADS: How many Gods are there?  
G: Every God and Goddess is a star!  
AD: Where are the Gods?  
G: Where is the air we breathe? The waters that surround us? The ground upon which we stand?  
ADS: Are the Gods male?  
AD: Or female?  
G: YES!  
ADS: How do we find the Gods?  
G: Every Goddess is within us.  
AD: Thou art Goddess!  
G: Every God is within us.  
ADS: Thou art God.  
AD: Who is our Lady?  
G: She is the Earth Mother, spirit of all that lives upon the earth, and swims beneath the waters, and flies throughout the air.  
ADS: Who is our Lord?  
G: He is Be'al, the Shining One, spirit of truth and light, spark of the sun, and the flame within the heart of every being.  
ADS: And Who is the God of this place?  
G: He is Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, Patron of Druids, and Comforter of the People.  
ADS: Who do we honor on this day?  
G: We honor Lugh of the Long Arm, the Son of the Sun, Spear Thrower, Master of all Arts, Lord of all Crafts, Bringer of the Harvest.

### Group Goals and Dedications:

ADS: Now do we declare our goals:  
G: To grow as human beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength, to promote in our actions, a human and interdependent society, to heal and protect the biosphere of this planet; and to further the process of evolution, in ourselves and our groups, and throughout all time and space.  
AD: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:  
G: We dedicate ourselves, here and now, in body and mind, heart and soul, to our Holy Mother the Earth, our Holy Father the Sun, and to all Their Holy Children.

### Lughnasadh Chant:

ADS: Thy trees do grow and give us shade.  
ALL: O DALON AP LANDU, WE THANK THEE.  
AD: Thy waters stream forth and ease our pain,  
ALL: O GRANNOS, WE THANK THEE.  
ADS: Thy waters pour forth and bring us joy,  
ALL: O BRACIACA, WE THANK THEE.  
AD: Thy rivers flow and give us drink,  
ALL: O SIRONA, WE THANK THEE.  
ADS: Thy thunder cracks and heralds rain,  
ALL: O TARANIS, WE THANK THEE.  
AD: Thy seas are deep and full of fish,  
ALL: O LLYR, WE THANK THEE.

ADS: Thy earth is fertile and full of life.  
ALL: O DANU, WE THANK THEE.

ADS: Though the Sun is bright, the Shade is dark.  
ALL: IN THE MIDST OF LIGHT IS DARK.  
AD: Dark though the night, the stars burn bright.  
ALL: IN THE MIDST OF DARK IS LIGHT.  
ADS: Thy light shines on us today.  
ALL: O BELENOS, WE THANK THEE.  
AD: The plants give fruits which then do die.  
ALL: IN THE MIDST OF LIFE IS DEATH.  
ADS: We eat the fruits and they give us life.  
ALL: IN THE MIDST OF DEATH IS LIFE.  
AD: Thy life is here in us today.  
ALL: O EARTH-MOTHER, WE THANK THEE!

ADS: O Be'al, O Lugh, O our Mother, O all ye Gods and Goddesses, we thank You for the bounty which you have given us during this year. We thank you for the external growth of the plants and animals, and for the internal growth of our spirits. Accept our praise, O Most High, and smile on us always, that we may praise You the more.  
ALL: WE THANK YOU, HIGH ONES. KEEP US IN YOUR MINDS, WE PRAY YOU, AS WE KEEP YOUR WAYS.

## Offering and Praise:

ADS: We are together, yet we often feel separate.  
G: Thus we bring our sacrifices, to the Lord and Lady.  
AD: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?  
*Members of the Grove bring sacrifices to the altar stone.*  
ADS: Not all sacrifices are physical. Has anyone brought Praise for the Gods?  
*Members of the Grove offer poems, songs, music, etc. Ending with "Lughnasadh Dance" song.*

## Sacrifice:

*The ADS holds up sacrificial branch and speaks:*  
ADS: Our praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices. Accept them, we pray, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us Thy peace and life.  
*The branch is laid upon the altar stone. Then the AD turns to the Four Quarters and asks:*  
AD: Have You accepted our sacrifices, O Our Mother? We call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer... and of the South... of the East... and of the West... and of the Holy Center...  
*If the sacrifices are accepted, the rite continues:*  
ADS: Praise be! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the honoring of our Gods, have been accepted!!

## Statement of Needs:

AD: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon You and You have heard us. We have offered of ourselves and You have accepted. Yet each of us has needs for guidance and for aid, without which we cannot fulfill Thy ways. Hear now Thy children, and help us, as ever You have done.

*At this point, each person present may state, silently or out loud, her or his needs they wish fulfilled by the Gods, in order to accomplish their goals. After all have finished:*

AD: And we declare, that as this Grove:  
G: We need Your strength and wisdom, Your healing and joy, so that we may accomplish our goals and fulfill our dedications. Bless this Grove, and bring us all that we may need, materially and spiritually, so that we may grow ever stronger, in beauty, wisdom, health and joy.

## The Waters:

ADS: Of what does the Earth Mother give, that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?  
G: The Waters-of-Life.  
AD: From whence do these Waters flow?  
G: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever changing All-Mother.  
ADS: And how do we honor this gift that causes Life?  
G: By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.  
AD: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?  
G: She has! Ripe are the golden apples of the Sun, and bright is the honey of the hives. Our cups overflow with cider and mead, and all the good things of this season!  
ADS: Then give me the Waters!!

## Consecration:

*The ADS takes the chalice of waters, and invokes the power of the Gods into them, thus initiating a return flow of divine energy.*  
ADS: O, Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and Every Grove, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and eyes, and join us together by Thy power, as we take and drink of Thy secret essences.

## Sharing:

ADS: What are these waters?  
G: A sign of the power, and the bounty of the Gods;  
AD: Who are themselves but fractions of that which is  
G: Beyond all human concepts  
ADS: Of male and female;  
G: Mortal and divine.  
AD: She surrounds us.  
ADS: He penetrates us.  
ALL: THEY BIND THE UNIVERSES TOGETHER!  
*The chalice is passé around to all present, each person being blessed by the Server with the Druid Sigil and returning the blessing, before and after drinking, with the words "The Waters of Life." The remaining waters are returned to the ADS, who pours them out over the altar stone, saying:*  
ADS: To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O Our Mother, even as we must return unto Thee.

## Group Bonding:

ADS: Now do we declare ourselves:  
ALL: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENGTHENED, BETWEEN US, AND OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS, IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.  
*All sing "We are One Family" song.*

## Prayer/Meditation/Spell:

*Led impromptu by the ADS.*

### Thanking the Gods:

ADS: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all you Goddesses and Gods around us and within us:  
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.  
AD: That you have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the Wild Things, and ourselves:  
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.  
ADS: That we have offered to You of ourselves, and You have accepted.  
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.  
AD: That You have heard our prayers, our griefs and our needs,  
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.  
ADS: For all that You have given, all You give around us, all You will give in the future.  
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.  
AD: For that we need each other, mortal and divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now and throughout all the ages,  
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.  
ADS: Now as we prepare to leave this place in joy and peace,  
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

### Absorption and Grounding:

ADS: Great the power we have raised;  
ALL: STRENGTH OF WOMAN AND OF MAN.  
AD: What shall we do before we leave?  
ALL: ABSORB AS MUCH AS EVER WE CAN!  
*All pause and absorb as much of the divine power present as they can manage.*  
ADS: And all the rest...?  
ALL: WE SEND TO GROUND, TO SKY ABOVE AND TREES AROUND.  
*All now send remaining energy into the physical world around them, blessing and cherishing the earth and sky, plants and animals*  
AD: Is it done?  
ALL: IT IS DONE!

### Benediction:

ADS: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifices have found acceptance in the Earth Mother's sight, that She has answered our prayers, and that we go forth with Her blessing: Peace! Peace! Peace!  
*The sigil around the altar stone is now broken, and all retire to picnic and celebrate, making sure that the area is physically clean before leaving.*



## 1979 Order of Common Worship, Foghamhar (Fall season), 17

y.r.

Mother Grove, N.R.D.N.A.  
By Bonewits & others?  
"Class C"

*Druids line up for the procession, standing several yards North of the altar stone. The Archdruid (AD) and the Archdruidess (ADS) are at the front, followed by the Chief Bard and the Server, and the other members of the Grove (G).*

### Opening Song: "O Earth Mother" (Customs 2:1-3)

#### Invocation:

ADS: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.  
G: And we partake of it, we and all living beings.  
AD: In the mighty helix we dance.  
G: And in harmony with all of life we sing.  
ADS: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving, and destroying...  
G: Be in our awareness. Teach us Your joy. Let us feel Your sorrow. Extend our limitations.  
AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely..  
ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

#### Processional Song (ALL):

*Song: "Will Ye No Come Back Again?"*  
*All process to altar stone, CB & S mark sigil on ground, AD & ADS step inside and go around either side to back of altar stone, sigil is closed. Grove members split into an arc in front of the altar stone.*

#### Centering:

ADS: Why have you gathered here under the oaks?  
G: This is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.  
AD: What brings you here out under the sky?  
G: We come to worship the Gods.  
ADS: What do you know of the Gods?  
G: We seek to know what we can, with our mortal limitations.  
AD: The Gods are everywhere;  
G: But we worship Them here.  
ADS: The Gods are without form;  
G: But we worship Them in these forms.  
AD: We do not know what to offer to our Gods,  
G: So we offer Them our prayers and sacrifices.  
ADS: Each of us in our own way,  
G: Each of us in our own prayers.  
ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR OWN SACRIFICES.

AD: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary of Be'al. In each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the

quiet of the spirit, evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, that the Gods may help us to understand them as sources of wisdom and growth.

(Silence)

## Individual Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our lives, and make our individual dedications to the spirits whom we worship and honor.

(Silence)

## Statement of Beliefs:

ADS: How many Gods are there?

G: Every God and Goddess is a star!

AD: Where are the Gods?

G: Where is the air we breathe? The waters that surround us? The ground upon which we stand?

ADS: Are the Gods male?

AD: Or female?

G: YES!

ADS: How do we find the Gods?

G: Every Goddess is within us.

AD: Thou art Goddess!

G: Every God is within us.

ADS: Thou art God.

AD: Who is our Lady?

G: She is the Earth Mother, spirit of all that lives upon the earth, and swims beneath the waters, and flies throughout the air.

ADS: Who is our Lord?

G: He is Be'al, the Shining One, spirit of truth and light, spark of the sun, and the flame within the heart of every being.

ADS: And Who is the God of this place?

G: He is Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, Patron of Druids, and Comforter of the People.

## Group Goals and Dedications:

ADS: Now do we declare our goals:

G: To grow as human beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength, to promote in our actions, a human and interdependent society, to heal and protect the biosphere of this planet; and to further the process of evolution, in ourselves and our groups, and throughout all time and space.

AD: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:

G: We dedicate ourselves, here and now, in body and mind, heart and soul, to our Holy Mother the Earth, our Holy Father the Sun, and to all Their Holy Children.

## Offering and Praise:

ADS: We are together, yet we often feel separate.

G: Thus we bring our sacrifices, to the Lord and Lady.

AD: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?

*Members of the Grove bring sacrifices to the altar stone.*

ADS: Not all sacrifices are physical. Has anyone brought Praise for the Gods?

*Members of the Grove offer poems, songs, music, etc.*

## Sacrifice:

*The ADS holds up sacrificial branch and speaks:*

ADS: Our praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices. Accept them, we pray, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us Thy peace and life.

*The branch is laid upon the altar stone. Then the AD turns to the Four Quarters and asks:*

AD: Have You accepted our sacrifices, O Our Mother? We call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer... and of the South... of the East... and of the West... and of the Holy Center...

*If the sacrifices are accepted, the rite continues:*

ADS: Praise be! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the honoring of our Gods, have been accepted!!

## Statement of Needs:

AD: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon You and You have heard us. We have offered of ourselves and You have accepted. Yet each of us has needs for guidance and for aid, without which we cannot fulfill Thy ways. Hear now Thy children, and help us, as ever You have done.

*At this point, each person present may state, silently or out loud, her or his needs they wish fulfilled by the Gods, in order to accomplish their goals. After all have finished:*

AD: And we declare, that as this Grove:

G: We need Your strength and wisdom, Your healing and joy, so that we may accomplish our goals and fulfill our dedications. Bless this Grove, and bring us all that we may need, materially and spiritually, so that we may grow ever stronger, in beauty, wisdom, health and joy.

## The Waters:

ADS: Of what does the Earth Mother give, that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

G: The Waters-of-Life.

AD: From whence do these Waters flow?

G: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever changing All-Mother.

ADS: And how do we honor this gift that causes Life?

G: By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.

AD: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?

G: She has! Ripe are the golden apples of the Sun, and bright is the honey of the hives. Our cups overflow with cider and mead, and all the good things of this season!

ADS: Then give me the Waters!!

## Consecration:

*The ADS takes the chalice of waters, and invokes the power of the Gods into them, thus initiating a return flow of divine energy.*

ADS: O, Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and Every Grove, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and eyes, and join us together by Thy power, as we take and drink of Thy secret essences.

## Sharing:

ADS: What are these waters?  
G: A sign of the power, and the bounty of the Gods;  
AD: Who are themselves but fractions of that which is  
G: Beyond all human concepts  
ADS: Of male and female;  
G: Mortal and divine.  
AD: She surrounds us.  
ADS: He penetrates us.  
ALL: THEY BIND THE UNIVERSES TOGETHER!  
*The chalice is passé around to all present, each person being blessed by the Server with the Druid Sigil and returning the blessing, before and after drinking, with the words "The Waters of Life." The remaining waters are returned to the ADS, who pours them out over the altar stone, saying:*  
ADS: To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O Our Mother, even as we must return unto Thee.

## Group Bonding:

ADS: Now do we declare ourselves:  
ALL: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENGTHENED, BETWEEN US, AND OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS, IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.  
*All sing "We are One Family" song.*

## Prayer/Meditation/Spell:

*Led impromptu by the ADS.*

## Thanking the Gods:

ADS: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all you Goddesses and Gods around us and within us:  
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.  
AD: That you have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the Wild Things, and ourselves:  
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.  
ADS: That we have offered to You of ourselves, and You have accepted.  
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.  
AD: That You have heard our prayers, our griefs and our needs,  
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.  
ADS: For all that You have given, all You give around us, all You will give in the future.  
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.  
AD: For that we need each other, mortal and divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now and throughout all the ages,  
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.  
ADS: Now as we prepare to leave this place in joy and peace,  
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

## Absorption and Grounding:

ADS: Great the power we have raised;  
ALL: STRENGTH OF WOMAN AND OF MAN.  
AD: What shall we do before we leave?  
ALL: ABSORB AS MUCH AS EVER WE CAN!  
*All pause and absorb as much of the divine power present as they can manage.*  
ADS: And all the rest...?  
ALL: WE SEND TO GROUND, TO SKY ABOVE AND TREES AROUND.  
*All now send remaining energy into the physical world around them, blessing and cherishing the earth and sky, plants and animals*  
AD: Is it done?  
ALL: IT IS DONE!

## Benediction:

ADS: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifices have found acceptance in the Earth Mother's sight, that She has answered our prayers, and that we go forth with Her blessing: Peace! Peace! Peace!  
*The sigil around the altar stone is now broken, and all retire to picnic and celebrate, making sure that the area is physically clean before leaving.*



**Figure 31 Daniel Harger's over seeing Sue & Larry's wedding at Live Oak, Lughnasadh 1983.**

# 1978 (?) Fall Equinox

By Bonewits & others?  
"Class B"

*The following is a Special Order of Worship for the Fall Equinox. The chalice will be filled with Waters-of-Life. The sacrifice should be of branches with turning leaves.*

*The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruidess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand).*

"D" =Druid/ess presiding.

"P" =People attending.

"E" =Everybody.

## Song: "Processional Hymn"

### Invocation

D: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.  
E: AND WE PARTAKE OF IT; WE AND ALL LIVING BEINGS.  
D: In the mighty helix we dance.  
E: AND IN HARMONY WITH ALL OF LIFE WE SING.  
D: Gods known and unknown, life potential and actual, noisy and silent, seen and unseen, beginning and ending, uniting and dissolving.  
E: BE IN OUR AWARENESS. TEACH US YOUR JOY. LET US FEEL YOUR SORROW. EXTEND OUR LIMITATIONS.  
D: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely, let this ritual begin!

### Procession

*Here occurs the Procession, with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the server (or any two others designated by the Grove) use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom incomplete. The Druid/ess steps into this Sigil, which is then closed by the two staves.*

## Song: "Now Do We"

### Praise

*Here an Incantation, Poem, or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.*

## Sacrifice

*The Druidess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:*

D: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray Thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray Thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us Thy peace and life.

*The sacrifice is laid upon the altar or in the fire. The Druid/ess then turns to the Four Quarters and asks:*

D: Hast Thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer... of the South... of the East... of the West...

## Reply

*If the sacrifice is accepted, the Service continues; otherwise, the Service is ended immediately.*

D: Praise be! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, have been accepted!

## Chant:

D: The Sun-God did spend half the year with His children in the North and then did depart to his winter home. O Belenos, O Thou unchanging God of many names but one Face, we, Thy Children, mourn Thy passing from our lands.  
E: O LORD OF LIGHT, RETURN TO US SOON.  
D: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, short seems the time that we have rejoiced in the warmth of Thy presence.  
E: O GOD OF THE SUN, RETURN TO US SOON.

D: The nights were short, the trees in leaf,  
E: THE DAY HAD CONQUERED NIGHT.  
D: The days were long and full of Life,  
E: THE DAY HAD CONQUERED NIGHT.  
D: The Sun was warm, the land gave fruit,  
E: THE DAY HAD CONQUERED NIGHT.  
D: But the Sun must return to the Southern lands,  
E: BALANCED NOW ARE WE.  
D: Though the world is warm and full of LIFE,  
E: BALANCED NOW ARE WE.  
D: Yet the cold approaches to stalk the land,  
E: BALANCED NOW ARE WE.  
D: The Sun grows weaker every day.  
E: THE NIGHT WILL CONQUER DAY.  
D: The leaves will wither and Death draws nigh.  
E: THE NIGHT WILL CONQUER DAY.  
D: We pray Thy return will all Your might.  
E: OR THE NIGHT WILL CONQUER DAY.

D: O Belenos, O Sun, we mourn Thy passing from our midst. Welcome wert Thou among us.  
E: THOU BLESSED US WITH THY PRESENCE, O LORD OF LIGHT.  
D: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, return to us soon that we may rejoice in Thy sight.  
E: BLESS US AND LIGHT OUR WAYS, O GOD OF THE SUN.

D: But winter will pass and spring will come,  
E: AND THE DAY WILL CONQUER NIGHT.

D: The Sun will return and warm our land,  
E: AND THE DAY WILL CONQUER NIGHT.  
D: Death will pass and Life return,  
E: AND THE DAY WILL CONQUER NIGHT!

D: O Belenos, O Sun-God, O Lord of Light, though Thy presence departs from us, yet art Thou with us, for Thy light does guide our feet and Thy warmth is in our hearts.  
E: ALL HAIL BELENOS, GOD OF LIGHT!  
D: All praise Belenos, who keep His ways.  
E: O BELENOS, WE PRAISE THEE!

### Catechism

D: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?  
P: The Waters-of-Life.  
D: From whence do these Waters flow?  
P: From the bosom of the Earth-Mother, the never-changing All-mother.  
D: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of Her bounty?  
P: She has!  
D: Does Belenos still give us a sign of His presence?  
P: He does! Though He departs for the Southern lands, still is His spark of light within these Waters-of-Life.  
D: Then give me the Waters!

### Consecration

*The Druid/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Druid/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:*

D: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, descend yet once more into these waters and fill them with Thy presence. Give us to know, O Lord, of Thy impending return, as we take and drink one more time of Thy warmth and light.

### Ordination?

*If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Order (in which case the Druid/ess will have consecrated an additional chalice, filled with the Waters-of-Life) the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.*

### Communion

*The Druid/ess drinks from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words "the Waters-of-Life" and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.*

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Druid/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return, and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does NOT drink more than once.*

*In some Groves, the Druid/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person on that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.*

*In either method, the last person in the circle should NOT finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Druid/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip, pouring the remainder upon the altar or fire, saying:*

D: To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O Lord, even as Thou wilt return to us.

### Meditation

*Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture the Druid/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Druid/ess and a period of silence and private meditation (usually two to five minutes in length – though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Druid/ess signals the end of the service with:*

### Benediction

D: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifices have found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that She has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with Her blessing:

*The Druid/ess blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:*

Peace! Peace! Peace!

### End of a Special Order of Worship for the Fall Equinox.



**Figure 32 Isaac Bonewits & Sam Adams at the Hill of 3 Oaks on April 23, 1994.**



# 1979 Order of Common Worship, Autumn Equinox Service

Mother Grove, N.R.D.N.A.  
By Bonewits & others?  
"Class C"

*Druids line up for the procession, standing several yards North of the altar stone. The Archdruid (AD) and the Archdruidess (ADS) are at the front, followed by the Chief Bard and the Server, and the other members of the Grove (G).*

## Opening Song: "O Earth Mother"

(Customs 2:1-3)

### Invocation:

ADS: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.  
G: And we partake of it; we and all living beings.  
AD: In the mighty helix we dance.  
G: And in harmony with all of life we sing.  
ADS: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving, and destroying...  
G: Be in our awareness. Teach us Your joy. Let us feel Your sorrow. Extend our limitations.  
AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely..  
ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

### Processional Song (ALL):

*Song: "Will Ye No Come Back Again?"*

*All process to altar stone, CB & S mark sigil on ground, AD & ADS step inside and go around either side to back of altar stone, sigil is closed. Grove members split into an arc in front of the altar stone.*

### Centering:

ADS: Why have you gathered here under the oaks?  
G: This is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.  
AD: What brings you here out under the sky?  
G: We come to worship the Gods.  
ADS: What do you know of the Gods?  
G: We seek to know what we can, with our mortal limitations.  
AD: The Gods are everywhere;  
G: But we worship Them here.  
ADS: The Gods are without form;  
G: But we worship Them in these forms.  
AD: We do not know what to offer to our Gods,  
G: So we offer Them our prayers and sacrifices:  
ADS: Each of us in our own way,  
G: Each of us in our own prayers.  
ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR OWN SACRIFICES.

AD: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary of Be'al. In each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of the spirit, evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood

together, that the Gods may help us to understand them as sources of wisdom and growth.

(Silence)

### Individual Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our lives, and make our individual dedications to the spirits whom we worship and honor.

(Silence)

### Statement of Beliefs:

ADS: How many Gods are there?  
G: Every God and Goddess is a star!  
AD: Where are the Gods?  
G: Where is the air we breathe? The waters that surround us? The ground upon which we stand?  
ADS: Are the Gods male?  
AD: Or female?  
G: YES!  
ADS: How do we find the Gods?  
G: Every Goddess is within us.  
AD: Thou art Goddess!.  
G: Every God is within us.  
ADS: Thou art God.  
AD: Who is our Lady?  
G: She is the Earth Mother, spirit of all that lives upon the earth, and swims beneath the waters, and flies throughout the air.  
ADS: Who is our Lord?  
G: He is Be'al, the Shining One, spirit of truth and light, spark of the sun, and the flame within the heart of every being.  
ADS: And Who is the God of this place?  
G: He is Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, Patron of Druids, and Comforter of the People.

### Group Goals and Dedications:

ADS: Now do we declare our goals:  
G: To grow as human beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength, to promote in our actions, a human and interdependent society, to heal and protect the biosphere of this planet; and to further the process of evolution, in ourselves and our groups, and throughout all time and space.  
AD: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:  
G: We dedicate ourselves, here and now, in body and mind, heart and soul, to our Holy Mother the Earth, our Holy Father the Sun, and to all Their Holy Children.

*[NOTE: A large picture of the Stone Henge picture from an old antiquarian book seems to have been deliberately pasted over the 1976 section that had the Lughnasadh Chant, perhaps to shorten the liturgy?]*

### Offering and Praise:

ADS: We are together, yet we often feel separate.  
G: Thus we bring our sacrifices, to the Lord and Lady.  
AD: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?  
*Members of the Grove bring sacrifices to the altar stone.*  
ADS: Not all sacrifices are physical. Has anyone brought Praise for the Gods?  
*Members of the Grove offer poems, songs, music, etc.*

### Sacrifice:

*The ADS holds up sacrificial branch and speaks:*

ADS: Our praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices to life. Accept them, we ask, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us peace and life.

*The branch is laid upon the altar stone. Then the AD turns to the Four Quarters and asks:*

AD: Have You accepted our sacrifices, O Our Mother? We call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer... and of the South... and of the East... and of the West... and of the Holy Center...

*If the sacrifice is accepted, the rite continues:*

ADS: Praise be! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the honoring of our Gods, have been accepted!!

### Statement of Needs:

AD: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon you and you have heard us. We have offered of ourselves and you have accepted. Yet each of us has needs for guidance and for aid, without which we cannot fulfill your ways. Hear now thy children, and help us, as ever you have done.

*At this point, each person present may state, silently or out loud, her or his needs they wish fulfilled by the Gods, in order to accomplish their goals. After all have finished:*

AD: And we declare, that as this Grove:

ALL: WE NEED YOUR STRENGTH AND WISDOM, YOUR HEALING AND JOY, SO THAT WE MAY ACCOMPLISH OUR GOALS AND FULFILL OUR DEDICATIONS. BLESS THIS GROVE, AND BRING US ALL THAT WE MAY NEED, MATERIALLY AND SPIRITUALLY, SO THAT WE MAY GROW EVER STRONGER, IN BEAUTY, WISDOM, HEALTH AND JOY.

### Chant:

ADS: O give praise to the Gods of Light!

AD: Praise to the Dancer, singing and swaying,

Praise to the Mother, fruitful and shining!

G: PRAISE BE'AL, WHO IS ALL GODS; PRAISE THE EARTH MOTHER'S MANY FACES!

ADS: Praise for cold drink and good work, short sleeves and good times!

G: PRAISE FOR FIELD AND PLAY AND LOVER!

AD: Praise for sunsets and bright days, green leaves and flowing waters!

G: PRAISE FOR SURITY OF SUMMER PROMISE!

ADS: The Mother woke, the Sun God rose-

G: DARK HAD TURNED TO LIGHT.

AD: The Earth was lush, the days were long-

G: THE LIGHT RULED OVER ALL.

ADS: But the fruit formed over the quiet seed-

G: THE LIGHT YEARNS TO THE DARK.

AD: Leaf is crimson, day comes cool-

G: BALANCED NOW ARE WE.

ADS: Belenos turns his face to the South-

G: BALANCED NOW ARE WE.

AD: The Mother tires and drifts toward sleep-

G: BALANCED NOW ARE WE.

ADS: Flowers of hoar frost on leaf and pane-

G: LIGHT WILL TURN TO DARK.

AD: Limb will be sheared, day will be short-

G: DARK WILL RULE OVER ALL.

ADS: Til the seed wax full in the dampened earth-  
G: AND DARK YEARNS AGAIN FOR LIGHT.

ADS: O Cernunnos, O God of the Hunt, we praise thee at thy return to our midst, for we fear thee not.

G: BLESS US AND GUIDE US WELL, O MIGHTY WARRIOR.

AD: O Macha, O Kali, wise and strong, protect us through the Time of Sleep.

G: PRAISE TO THE LADY, TO WHOM WE RETURN.

### The Waters:

ADS: Of what does the Earth Mother give, that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

P: The Waters of Life.

AD: From whence do these Waters flow?

P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All-Mother.

ADS: And how do we honor this gift that causes Life?

P: By partaking of the Waters of Life.

AD: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?

P: She has!

ADS: Does Belenos still give us a sign of his presence?

P: He does! Though he departs for the Southern lands, still is his spark of light within these Waters of Life.

ADS: Then give me the Waters!

### Consecration:

*The ADS takes the chalice of waters, and invokes the power of the Gods into them, thus initiating a return flow of divine energy.*

ADS: O, Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and Every Grove, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and eyes, and join us together by Thy power, as we take and drink of Thy secret essences.

### Sharing:

ADS: What are these waters?

G: A sign of the power, and the bounty of the Gods;

AD: Who are themselves but fractions of that which is

G: Beyond all human concepts

ADS: Of male and female;

G: Mortal and divine.

AD: She surrounds us.

ADS: He penetrates us.

ALL: THEY BIND THE UNIVERSES TOGETHER!

*The chalice is passé around to all present, each person being blessed by the Server with the Druid Sigil and returning the blessing, before and after drinking, with the words "The Waters of Life." The remaining waters are returned to the ADS, who pours them out over the altar stone, saying:*

ADS: To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O Our Mother, even as we must return unto Thee.

### Group Bonding:

ADS: Now do we declare ourselves:

ALL: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENGTHENED, BETWEEN US, AND OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS, IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

*All sing "We are One Family" song.*

## Prayer/Meditation/Spell:

*Led impromptu by the ADS.*

### Thanking the Gods:

ADS: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all you Goddesses and Gods around us and within us:

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.

AD: That you have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the Wild Things, and ourselves:

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.

ADS: That we have offered to You of ourselves, and You have accepted.

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.

AD: That You have heard our prayers, our griefs and our needs,

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.

ADS: For all that You have given, all You give around us, all You will give in the future.

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.

AD: For that we need each other, mortal and divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now and throughout all the ages,

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.

ADS: Now as we prepare to leave this place in joy and peace,

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

### Absorption and Grounding:

ADS: Great the power we have raised;

ALL: STRENGTH OF WOMAN AND OF MAN.

AD: What shall we do before we leave?

ALL: ABSORB AS MUCH AS EVER WE CAN!

*All pause and absorb as much of the divine power present as they can manage.*

ADS: And all the rest...?

ALL: WE SEND TO GROUND, TO SKY ABOVE AND TREES AROUND.

*All now send remaining energy into the physical world around them, blessing and cherishing the earth and sky, plants and animals*

AD: Is it done?

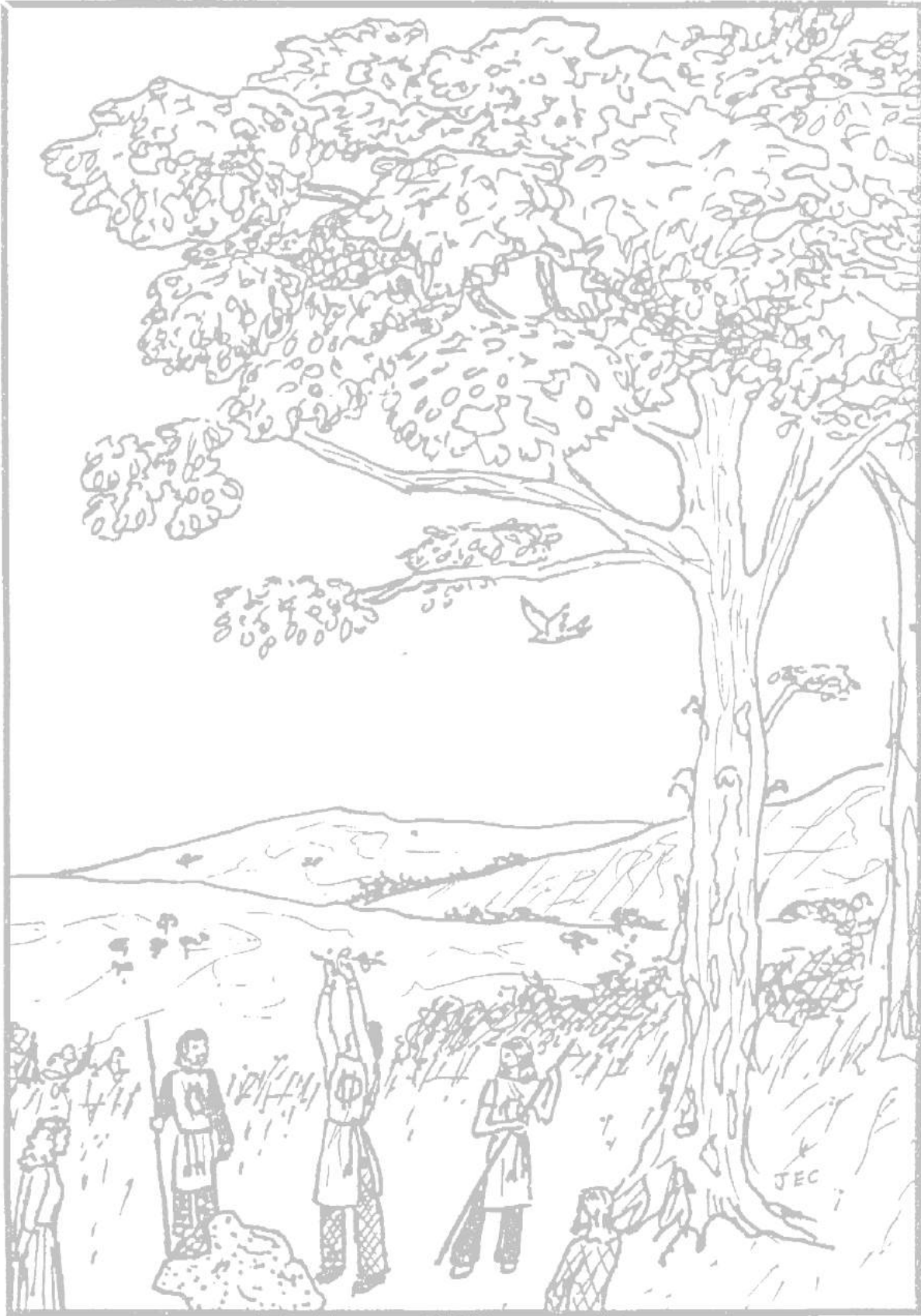
ALL: IT IS DONE!

### Benediction:

ADS: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifices have found acceptance in the Earth Mother's sight, that She has answered our prayers, and that we go forth with Her blessing: Peace! Peace! Peace!

*The sigil around the altar stone is now broken, and all retire to picnic and celebrate, making sure that the area is physically clean before leaving.*







## Section 4 ½: Other Druids' Liturgies

It may seem a bit odd putting ADF material into this RDNA publication, but I think it will show and illustrate some of the ways that ADF is indeed a mixture of continuation and also innovation in liturgical terms. As ADF entered the 90s, the influence of Isaac waned, new leaders advanced in the ranks and devised new liturgical elements without the nostalgia that Isaac clearly kept towards RDNA fragments; as is shown in Keltria. Cauldron and OMS definitely took more materials.

### ADF Liturgy Outline 1983.

By Isaac Bonewits

#### Preliminary Ritual Activity

- (A) Briefing
- (B) Individual Meditations & Prayers
- (C) Lighting the Sacred Fire(s)
- (D) Pouring the Sacred Waters
- (E) Consecrating the Sacred Pole/Tree
- (F) Consecrating the Altar & Tools

#### 1st Phase: Starting the Rite & Establishing the Group Mind

##### Clear-cut Beginning:

##### Consecration of Time

- (1) Musical Signal
- (2) Opening Prayer

##### Consecration of Space & of Participants

- (3) The Processional/Sigil Marking
- (4) Purification(s) of Participants
- (5) Optional: Purification(s) of Site
- (6) Honoring the Earth Mother

##### Centering, Grounding, Linking & Merging

- (7) The Grove Meditation
- (8) Unity Chant/Song
- (9) Stating Ritual Purpose & Historical Precedent
- (10) Naming Deity(ies) of the Occasion & Reasons for Choice

#### 2nd Phase: Recreating the Cosmos & Preliminary Power Raising

##### Creating the Vertical Axis

- (11) Planting the Cosmic Tree / Honoring the Sacred Pole
- (12) Evoking the Gatekeeper / Defining the Ritual Center

- (13) Evoking the Fire & Water Deities & Linking to Center

#### Gaining Assistance and Preventing Interference

- (14) Invoking the Bardic Deity(ies) or Spirit(s)
- (15) Acknowledgement of the Outsiders
- (16) Filling Out the Cosmic Picture by Invoking....  
Ex.: Triad Invoc. of Nature Spirits, Ancestors, Deities in Three Worlds  
Ex.: Invoc. of Helpful Beings of each World/Realm  
Ex.: Invoc. of Helpful Beings by Province/Function
- (17) The Settling & Focusing

#### 3rd Phase: Major Sending of Power to Deity(ies) of the Occasion

- (18) Descriptive Invocation of Deity(ies) of the Occasion

#### Primary Power Raising

- (19) Praise Offerings, Dance, Libations, etc.
- (20) The Sacrifice
- (21) Seeking the Omen of Return

#### 4th Phase: Receiving and Using the Returned Power

##### Preparation for the Return

- (22) Meditation upon Personal and Group Needs
- (23) Induction of Receptivity
- (24) Consecration Agreement

##### Reception of Power from Deity(ies) of the Occasion

- (25) Consecration and Sharing
- (26) Acceptance of Individual Blessings
- (27) Reinforcement of Group Bonding
- (28) Optional: Spell Casting/Rite of Passage

#### 5th Phase: Unwinding and Ending the Ceremony

##### Unwinding the Energy Patterns Created

- (29) Thanking of Entities Invited in Reverse Order
- (30) Thanking the Gatekeeper & Closing the Gates
- (31) Affirmation of Past/Future Continuity & Success
- (32) Unmerging, Unlinking, Regrounding & Recentring:  
Meditation
- (33) Draining off Excess Power: The Restoration

## Clearcut Ending: Deconsecration of Time & Space

- (34) Final Benediction
- (35) Announcement of End
- (36) Dissolving the Sigil
- (37) Musical Signal

## Step by Step Through an ADF Druid Worship Ceremony

By Isaac Bonewits  
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### Preliminary Notes

I hope that the previous essays on liturgical design and preparation have made it clear that decisions about the structure of a ceremony are not just a matter of arbitrarily picking and choosing things to do that seem "nice", "fun" or "traditional", nor of slavishly copying a script that someone else wrote a long time ago. The "Outline for Druid Worship Rituals", published in *DP#2*, was carefully constructed according to the principles we've been examining. It should, with the modifications mentioned in this essay, be usable without major changes for a few more years of further liturgical experimentation.

But even the best(?) liturgical design will not guarantee an effective and satisfying religious experience unless the people performing it actually understand what they are doing, and why they are doing it. So the purpose of this essay is to give you some of the details about actual ceremonial performance that the version published in *DP#2* did not have room for. I'm not going to repeat all of the rubrics, nor the text of the prayers (except for translation corrections). So you'll need a copy of that issue in order to get the most out of this. In the pages that follow, we'll go through that script, following the (modified) outline step-by-step, and taking into account comments, critiques, changes and variations that have occurred during the years it's been used.

Once you've digested the materials in this and the preceding essays, you should be able to come up with new scripts based on the outline, which will be repeated in its current form at the end of this essay. You can then publish these in your zines. We are especially going to need (a) scripts based on all of our different Indo-European ethnic focuses, and (b) scripts for rites of passage and spell castings which can fit into the ceremony as currently structured. And of course, we're going to need scores(!) of new songs and chants from our bards, so send those in too.

Let me emphasize this as blatantly as possible: I don't want to have to create the entire liturgy all by myself. I'm willing to figure out the basic liturgical designs necessary to accomplish various goals, but the artistic expression of those designs must be a community effort if what we are doing is ever to fulfill its potential. Don't worry about whether your new script is "as good as" mine, or constitutes immortal poesy, just work on making it better than the last one you did. As time goes by, we will all steal good lines from each other's scripts,

translate them into the languages we're each using, and explore the possibilities inherent in each design.

Before we begin this step through, let's review the five-part structure. (1) Starting the ritual and establishing the group mind; (2) Opening the Gates Between the Worlds and beginning the power flow; (3) The major sending of power to the deities of the occasion; (4) Receiving and using the returned power from the deities of the occasion; and finally (5) Unwinding and ending the ceremony.

### First Phase. Starting the Rite & Establishing the GroupMind

#### The Clear cut Beginning: the Consecration of Time

Every ritual, whether religious or not, should have a clearly designated beginning. This can be signaled by a bell ringing, by the clergy showing up in full regalia, by candles being lit, or in some other fashion. What's important is that the participants in the rite receive the cue that says to their subconscious minds, "the ceremony is Starting, it's time to be magical/spiritual/psychic."

In this rite, the opening phrase in a non-English language provides this vital cue: *ta muid anseo leis na deithe a adhradh*. "We are here to honor the Gods." The English translation immediately follows, and after this the English version of each phrase or prayer gets done first. Yes, I know that's the opposite of the way the script has them, but experience has shown that this pattern works better for congregations who are not familiar with the nonEnglish language involved.

(Linguistic note: the second phrase in the published script is better translated as "O Gods, whose power gives life to everything which is alive, be you here with us rather than "give to us your presence" as published. Obviously, the quality of the Irish/English translations still needs work.)

In any event, the first phrase is to announce to the subconscious and conscious minds of the human participants, and the second phrase is to announce to the Gods, that the ceremony is now starting. When loud instruments are available, a single blast of sound before the opening words are spoken helps, especially if there's a large congregation on hand. Right after the opening phrases are finished, the instruments can start up again with real music.

#### The Consecration of Space

Having begun the consecration of time, you need to immediately consecrate a bit of space. In a place that is normally used for religious activities, all you need to do is to walk into the temple or grove with a proper intent, and the sacred nature of the place will become activated. In a location that is normally mundane (or at least not normally viewed as sacred), you will need to mark the physical perimeter of the area you plan to use. This can be done loosely by processing around the area, or (if you are short on maneuvering room) by having everyone sit or stand in a circle (or other shape) and hold hands while singing a song about sacred space (such as "Circles", for example).

The physical perimeter of your ritual area can also be set up tightly by physically marking the edges of the area, followed by ritually consecrating those edges. The choice of a loose or tight boundary depends upon the type of magical/religious activity you intend to do. More specifically, it depends upon how critical it is that certain energies be kept in or out of the working area, either temporarily or permanently.

A number of people have been astonished that this Druid ceremony pays no attention whatever to the Wiccan tradition of "invoking the Four Quarters." In fact, although some folks have insisted on inserting Quarter invocations into it, and this doesn't actually hurt the energy flow, most of the time we don't bother. Here is why:

As near as I can figure, Quarter invocations probably weren't necessary for Paleopagan Druid ceremonies, since (a) everybody probably already knew which direction was which, so the orientation factor was covered, and (b) sacred groves were already sacred, so calling on spirits from the Four Quarters to "make" them sacred would have been redundant. I've seen little evidence that the Indo-Europeans paid much attention to the Four Quarters, and they certainly did not use the Judeo-Christian Cabalistic arrangement of four-elements-plus-one (Earth, Water, Air, Fire, plus Spirit). Instead they seem to have used three-worlds-plus-one (Land, Water, Sky, plus Fire). So rather than an equal armed cross with the fifth "element" of Spirit in the middle as their symbolic map of the cosmos, they would perhaps have used a triangle or a three legged spiral (triskelion) with Fire in the center. But then, for them Fire was the "fourth world" of Spirit.

There's also the fact that the "Guardians of the Quarters" or "Lords of the Watchtowers" in Neopagan polytheology are very vaguely defined. Every group, and often every member within such a group, who "invokes" (actually, invites) Them seems to have a different idea of who or what They are, and what (if anything) They are supposed to do upon arriving. Actually, the "Watchtowers" are another concept lifted by Gardner, I believe from the Masons, and those who aren't Masonic initiates can never be too sure of what they, or their Guardians, really are. For the rest of us, it's a matter of invoke a fuzzy spirit, you get a fuzzy answer!

Wiccan circles are an outgrowth of Goetic circles, but with the barriers meant to keep energy in, as well as to keep it out. They are very appropriate for private small group rituals, where intense magical work is going to be done by people expecting outside interference. On the other hand, Paleopagan Druid groves were, naturally, open to the air (though fenced on the ground), and were meant to attract energy, or at least the attention of spirits, ancestors and the Gods. There was no need to try and keep out energy, since no "demon" or other evil spirit would dare to invade a sacred grove. Did they have a need to keep energy in? I don't know. Keeping energy in may only be necessary for rituals involving the buildup to a single peak of power. My experience with the ADF ceremony is that the psychic/magical/spiritual energy can be successfully "breathed" in and out of the grove, throughout the entire ritual, without worrying about barriers at all. The pattern seems to turn into a vortex/whirlwind shape, with energies going up and down, in and out, simultaneously.

On a practical basis, having a loose "open" ritual area means that late-comers to the ceremony can join those already present, instead of having to wait outside and passively observe. This latter effect happened during an ADF Fall Equinox rite in Kansas City. A group of local Pagans arrived

late, did not realize that a traditional closed Wiccan circle had not been cast, and so assumed that they had to watch from the sidelines, which they very quietly and respectfully did. I was so focused on the rite, and on my prayers to Taranis to hold off an impending thunderstorm, that I didn't even notice them standing there in the dark until the ceremony was nine-tenths over. Here was another situation where it would have been good to have someone whose job it was to bring latecomers into the group. (The rain started as we were heading back to the cars.) On a polytheological basis, this distinction between tightly defined, closed magical boundaries that should never be crossed during the ritual (the Goetic/Wiccan style), and loosely defined, open boundaries that can be crossed without mishap (the style used in ADF rites), is one of the major differences between an exclusionary psychic/magical/spiritual system and an inclusionary one. Either approach can be appropriate for different groups at different times, but it's important that a choice be made one way or the other on each occasion, since this is one case where compromises usually fail.

In terms of defining the sacred space on the ground, one processional pattern that we have done successfully works like that described in the script – the forming of a giant Druid sigil shape: Q). Other patterns could be experimented with, such as a triangle (with banners of the Three Worlds at the corners), or an egg-shape (if you are working with the symbolism of a "cosmic egg"), etc. What would be important here is that everybody gets into motion, and that they all define on the ground a shape that has meaning to them. However, if you're going to use a noncircular shape, you should mark it out physically on the ground beforehand, and be sure to mention it in the pre-ritual briefing.

If this is a night Procession with torches, the torches should be put someplace safe at the end of it: either in the center bonfire, in a ring around the middle, or (if there are a lot of torches) in a ring far outside the edges of the congregation. Remember what was said in the preceding essays about the necessity of appointing a Fire Warden for supervision. His/her word should be final.

Although Processions get everybody moving in unison, and thus are the beginning of getting a group-mind together, they can also scatter the energy a bit, unless they've been well rehearsed, and the chants being done during them are simple and effective. For example, consider "We All Come from the Goddess" and "Hoof and Horn". These popular Neopagan chants go to more-or-less the same tune (along with a dozen others), and can be alternated or interwoven in a wide variety of ways. Lines or couplets or entire verses can be passed back and forth between male and female voices, parts can be inserted between spoken phrases by the clergy or bards, etc. Here's the version we used at the 1986 P.S.G. ritual:

We all come from the Goddess  
And to Her we have returned;  
As our ancestors Worshipped Her  
Air, land and sea.  
Hoof and horn, hoof and horn,  
All that dies shall be reborn.  
Corn and grain, corn and grain,  
All that falls shall rise again.

Those of you familiar with the Goddess chant will notice that the words have been changed somewhat. This was done (1) to avoid summoning rain, which the usual line about "like a drop of rain flowing to the ocean" usually does; (2) to emphasize that we have returned in our present lives, rather than "shall" return someday at our deaths; (3) to insert a



punning reference to reincarnation ("As our ancestors") for those who believe in such; (4) to place a reference to the Three Worlds at the very beginning of the rite (a model that continues throughout); and (5) to put an "eee" sound at the end of the chant, which would wrap around to the beginning "We" sound (thus making it a cyclical round instead of a linear poem). It's amazing how many polytheological implications you can get out of some very simple changes. (By the by, the original version of the chant began with "All things come from the Goddess", not the actual "We all come from the Goddess" that most folks are now familiar with.)

Many other songs and chants can be used for Processionals. I've used dozens over the years, and will share some of them with you in future issues. So don't fossilize the ones printed above (or in the rest of this essay). Instead, write your own, and send them in for the rest of us to enjoy.

As mentioned earlier in this essay, if you are working in a small indoor area, you may not have the room to process – especially if you have chairs or pillows set up in a circle or horse-shoe (oriented on a fireplace) shape. In this situation, it's a good idea to sing some sort of song, or chant a chant, with words that focus on the concepts of ritual space. Gwen Zack Moore's classic "Circles" song is good for this, though we could use some new ones that are more polytheistic and less Generic Wicca. You could also use the "I Circle Around" Amerindian chant here, doing it nine times.

One way of settling down the energy at the end of the Consecration of Space is to do a simple plainchant, and this is the function of the "O Earth-Mother" chant published in the script. This chant goes back twenty years to the old Reformed Druids of North America. The singing style is the Irish *Sean os* ("old style"), with much ornamentation and abrupt stops. Other chants can and will be used, but this one (a) is Earth oriented, and therefore begins the grounding process, (b) has triads and references to sacred trees, and therefore sounds Druidic, and (c) has been used effectively in RDNA rites for twenty years. It works, and I'm nostalgically fond of it. For those of you who can't find your copy of DP#2, here it is again:

O Earth Mother!

We praise Thee:

that seed springeth,  
that flower openeth,  
that grass waveth.

We praise Thee:

for winds that whisper  
through the shining birch,  
through the lively pine,  
through the mighty oak.

We praise Thee, for all things,

O Earth Mother, who givest Life!

Naturally, other plainchants could be written for this section, and I encourage you to do so. The idea is to have something striking, yet dignified.

## Centering, Grounding and Merging:

### The Tree Meditation

"Centering" is a term used in Neopagan ritual technique to refer to each person finding the center within him/herself. If you close your eyes and say to yourself, "Where am I in this body, anyway?", some of you will find your center behind your eyes, some of you in your heart area, some of you in your belly, or elsewhere. There is no right or wrong place to have your center in (at least not for the purposes of this ceremony)

from a polytheological aspect. However, from a movement awareness aspect, you might be better off to move your center of awareness to the solar plexus region, tuck your pelvis under, and otherwise stand or sit in a fully relaxed manner, in order to open your body up for the maximum internal flow of psychic energy (comments from martial artists, yoga students or dancers on this would be appreciated).

"Grounding", on the other foot, is one of those quasi-technical terms that Neopagans commonly use for two very different ideas. The first one is that of making a physical and psychic connection to the ground, both as a source of physical and psychological stability, and as a spiritual source of energy (the Earth-Mother). The second way in which the term "grounding" is used is as an electromagnetic metaphor for draining off "excess" psychic energy into the ground (or occasionally into one's ceremonial tools). At this point in the ADF worship ceremony, it is the first sense that is primary.

The next step is to merge into a "group-mind." For those of you unfamiliar with this term, think of it as getting everyone present to be "on the same wavelength", experiencing the same emotions and seeing the same visual and mental images. This is usually done through individual centering and grounding, followed by a reminder to the congregation of what they have in common (ancestry, beliefs, relations to the divine, etc.), and some sort of meditation, song or other activity designed to promote a sense of unity and to begin the circulation of coordinated psychic energy by the group.

In the ADF rite, this is all accomplished by the "Tree Meditation." This can be done as a spoken guided meditation by one of the presiding clergy, as mentioned in the script, or can be sung or chanted by one of the bards. See Karl Steinmayer's zine in this issue for the text and music to an excellent sung version of it. The Tree Meditation was deliberately designed (a) to accomplish the centering, grounding, and unifying steps just mentioned; (5) to use dynamic organic images in keeping with a Pagan worldview, rattler than static inorganic ones, and (c) to use the overall image of a tree, and thus to induce a Druidic feeling into the participants early on in the rite.

Let's go through this part of the liturgy in detail, because this is the first really critical stage of the ritual. We begin with individual centering. Each person in the group, including the presiding clergy and the bards, focuses their attention on finding their personal center, as described above. This can be seen as finding your "seed" of individual power and awareness.

Then it's time to put down "roots." You can visualize and/or feel psychic roots growing out of the bottoms of your feet (those of you who know how to "drop a cord" from the bottom of your spine should do this as well). You ground yourself to the actual dirt/sand/rocks that you happen to be standing upon, feeling the connection between yourself and the planet. If you are indoors, extend your awareness through the floor and directly downwards as far as necessary, until you connect with the Earth. If you are several stories up in the air, you may need to link yourself to the building first, then feel its connections to the Earth. If you are in an airplane or space station, you may need to skip grounding entirely.....

Think about all those dead ancestors of yours, buried in the earth, as well as your predecessors (the folks who have done these sorts of ceremonies in the past, whether as clergy or congregation). Make the psychic link to them, feel yourself as a part of something very ancient. Then return your mind to the recent past, thinking calmly (like a tree would) about any important events that have occurred to you in the days or

weeks previous. Contemplate the highs and lows with equal dispassion, and think briefly of the lessons each had for you. Then feel yourself absorbing nourishment from all these sources: the rock of the Earth-Mother and all Her holy biosphere, the rich psychic soil of your ancestors and predecessors, the spiritual compost of the lessons you have recently learned. Feel this nourishment flowing into you like sap rising up a tree.

As this sap rises up your legs and into your trunk(!), lift your arms as if they were branches. Feel your entire being glowing and growing, visualize branches sprouting out from you in all directions, reaching out to the limits of your aura. Feel the breeze blowing through your branches, let your mind become very clear and settled (your leaves will rustle in the wind, but your center should remain calm).

You are now in touch with all Three Worlds: the Land beneath your roots, the Water running through your trunk, the Sky caressing your branches. Now let your leaves begin to absorb the Fiery light from above (whether sun, moon or stars) and the hidden Fire within the Earth below. This Fire will circulate throughout your entire being, making your body, mind and soul glow with its creative power. You have become a human tree.

So now is the time to create the grove, by extending your roots and branches until they meet and intermingle with those of the others participating in the ceremony. Realize(!) that you are all rooted in the same Land, drinking the same Water, beneath the same Sky, and receiving the same Fire. With that realization, feel yourself becoming one with the others, merging into a single being – the grove, something that is far more than the sum of its parts.

Now is the time in most religions where an affirmation of group beliefs would be done. With Neopagans, however, creedal statements are difficult to write in a way that genuinely includes everyone. Small groups should experiment with trying to write such statements for themselves, but for most of us (especially with large-sized ceremonies), songs work far better than prose, and have the additional advantage of beginning an almost automatic circulation of energy around the grove. Such songs should have easy melodies and memorable choruses, so that literally everyone can join in, and be serious rather than humorous. If you can come up with polytheistic (rather than duo-) themes and Druidic images, so much the better. But for pacing purposes, you'll want to keep it down to three or four verses plus choruses.

Speaking of pacing, the entire Tree Meditation section should take five to ten minutes, depending upon the time necessary for the slower members of the group to trance out. It won't hurt for the more experienced ones to spend extra time being trees, but the less experienced folks need to be brought thoroughly into the group-mind. Yet spending more than ten minutes may (with some groups) offend and/or start to bore the majority of the congregation.

## Specification of the Ritual

### Focus and Deities

Once the group-mind has been created, it is reminded of the deity or deities that it is supposed to be concentrating on for that occasion, what the purpose of that occasion's ritual actually is, and of why the deities chosen are appropriate. This gives everyone the intellectual, artistic and spiritual themes they need to be concentrating upon. Unfortunately, with a small group, this part is easy to forget, since "everybody already knows" all this. But all you need is one newcomer or unexpected guest who doesn't already know, and he or she can generate a lot of confusion. So try not to forget this vital internal reminder.

### Second Phase: Opening the Gates & Preliminary Power Raising

#### Invoking the Gate Keeper

Having gotten the group-mind ready, it's necessary to next "tune" the group-mind's psychic powers to whatever "wavelength" the ancestors, spirits, and/or Gods will be communicating on. This is often symbolized in Pagan ceremonies as "Opening the Gates Between the Worlds", and is usually accomplished by invoking (although that may not be quite the correct term here) a particular deity who is considered a "Gate Keeper", and Who is the easiest of all deities to contact, since He/She is always halfway into this world already. The Gate Keeper is then requested to open the Gates, which She/He will usually do with little fuss. This deity was Ogma in the published version of the script, but we have also experimented with Manannan, based on suggestions from various members that the latter might be more appropriate.

(Another linguistic note: Molann muid thu mar gheall ar do chumhacht should really be translated as "We praise you for the brightness of your power".) Brightness/light/fire were considered primary attributes of divinity among the Indo-Europeans.)

The prayer of invocation is followed by a chant. So far, we've used two versions each of two different chants, in varying ways. The tunes for both chants are traditional Irish. The first one goes like this:

Siuil linn a Oghma...  
("shool-leen ah oh...mah")  
...Walk with us Ogma.  
Siuil linn a Mhanannon...  
("shool-leen ah wah-na-non")  
...Walk with us Manannan.

The pattern is sung either three or nine times. It's also been used successfully as a Processional chant. The second chant goes like this:

We invoke thee Ogma,  
Opener of every Gate. (repeat)  
You shall reach us,  
You shall teach us,  
and reveal our fate! (repeat)

The three-syllable name "Manannan." can be substituted for the words "thee Ogma" in the first line. Each line is done twice, and the whole pattern is sung either three or nine times.

(This habit of repeating things in threes and nines not only fits aesthetically with the Indo-European patterns, but also makes it easier for people to know when to when to stop, something that script writers frequently forget about.)

When the Gates are Opened, exactly where are they? Generally, I've noticed that they seem to manifest in the center of the circle, over the fire or altar, and anywhere from six to ten feet up. Different groups will visualize and perceive them differently, and this is something that should be discussed during your planning sessions.

One way to remind people of this (at least if you're outdoors or in a large area), and to focus their psychic energy towards the task of invoking the Gate Keeper, is to do some sort of choreography involving physical movement by a few clergy or bards (or even banner holders) circling around the Gates' intended location during the chanting. These Gates function as the ritual Center of the grove, regardless of their space-time coordinates. I'll have more on this later, but in the meantime I can't recommend too highly Mircea Eliade's writings on the mystical/magical importance of the Center.

## Invoking the Matron/Patron of Bards

Although it is not mentioned in the script published in DP#2, this is now followed immediately by an invocation of a deity in charge of bards, since bardic activity is our primary means of raising and tuning power. This deity should be of the opposite gender from the Gate Keeper, in order to maintain balance in the ceremony. So far, this has usually been Bridget in the ADF rites. This invocation (which deserves the term fully, since we are attempting to pull Her energies into ourselves) will begin the first trickle of energy from the Other Side, which is used to inspire the bards and the congregation to generate more energy. Here's the song, called "A Hymn to Bridget", that I've been using for the last couple of years (the transliteration is on the right):

A Bhríd, ar goroi, an-gheal (ah vree, ar gree, ahn-yawl von-  
Bheanrion; reen)  
Lo de thoil e beannachta sinn. (low da dolly bah-nacht-tah  
sheen)  
Is sinn bhur leanai, is tu ar (iss sheen vur lanni, iss too ar  
mamai mom-wee)  
Bi ag isteacht duinn mar sin. (be ah gay-stot dween mar shin)  
Is tu an coire, anois inar doire; (iss too ahn hweer-ah, ah-neesh  
in-ar deer-ah)  
A Bhean-domhan tinfim (ah van-dowan tin-feem or-rin)  
orainn.  
A thine ghra, a thine bheatha; (ah hinna hrah, a hinna byah)  
Lo de thoil e ag teacht Bhríd (low da doily ah tockt vree  
duinn! dween)

O Bridget, our heart,  
O brightest Queen;  
Cast your blessings unto us.  
We are your children,  
You are our mother;  
So hearken unto us.  
You are the cauldron, now in our grove;  
Earth-Mother inspire us.  
O fire of love, O fire of life;  
Please Bridget, come to us!  
A Bhríd, ar goroi, an-gheal Bheanrion....

Obviously, this is used to invoke Bridget as the Matron Goddess of Bards. The words are by myself and Shenain Bell,

and the music is Irish traditional ("Roving Galway Boy"). Currently the first verse is repeated after the English verse. The English translation-verse needs work, and it would be nice to have several more verses in Irish or English.

We've also used a chant called "Lady Lift Us Up", which has a jazzy sort of tune, and which (when done nine times) does a very good of exalting the participants. It goes like this:

Lady... lift us up.  
Up... where... we belong.  
Lady lift us up where we belong!  
And higher and higher!

## The Triad Invocations

In the ADF rites, the next step is the "Triad Invocations", which are designed to invoke entities associated with each of the Three Worlds. Each invocation, consecration, and passing of (or asperging with) the Waters of Life brings more power to the group-mind and makes the subsequent invocations more powerful. In effect, since we are tapping into a very sleepy and distant part of the collective unconscious, we are "lifting ourselves by our own bootstraps" through a back and forth exchange of energy through the Gates. Other religions accomplish the same effects in different ways. All of them spend time and effort to get the group-mind (a) generating lots of energy and (b) focused on the needs of the occasion.

If you have set up three altars around your site, you can do one of these invocations at each of them. The first at the Land altar, the second at the Water altar, the third at the Sky altar. Naturally, the fourth and final invocation (see Phase Four) would be done at the central altar.

I have recently come to the conclusion that the nature spirits should be invoked first, and the ancestors/predecessors second, even though this is the opposite of the way the published script has them. Originally I associated the ancestors with the World or the Land because of the common Indo-European tradition that the dead lived beneath the ground, in a mirror universe, where they walked "upside-down" to our perspective. The justification for associating the spirits with the World of the Waters was not quite so clear. The Waters are often seen as the Gateway to the Other Side, where the spirits exist, but the Gods and the ancestors exist there too.

Eventually it occurred to me that the nature spirits are, first and foremost, the spirits of the Land, and that their primary impact is on the producer caste – the hunters and the farmers (fishers, on the other fin...). To keep the tripartite Indo-European motif throughout the ritual, the first of the Triad Invocations should be of those entities who affect fertility, and the second be for those associated with death, such as dead people. There may even be occasions when warrior spirits may be appropriate to Invoke then instead of, or in addition to the ancestors/predecessors. (I'm not sure that I really understand the connections between war/death and the World of the Waters.)

However, I think that the most important principle here is to have the liturgy maintain the sequence of (1) fertility, (2) mortality, (3) divinity, and (4) transcendence.

So we now begin with invoking the nature spirits, both those of the ancient times and those in the locality where the ritual is taking place. The spirits being invoked here are those of the trees and the grasses, of the deer and foxes, the birds and the fishes. Even if you now live in the middle of a large city, you can make the psychic/spiritual link to the continent-wide forests that once covered Europe, as well as the woods, prairies

and swamps that once covered North America. This is the part of the ritual where you may want to think of Native American nature spirits who were once worshipped in your area.

In this part of the ceremony we are asking them to give us the comfort, knowledge and blessings that we will need to accomplish our goals for the rest of the ceremony, as well as in our private lives and group activities to come. The purpose of the consecration is to make the Waters a bridge between them and ourselves, so that as we partake (through drinking or asperging) each of us has a clearer and stronger connection to them – one that will last long after the ceremony has ended.

As mentioned in the rubrics, the energy flow during the invocation is directed from the center of the grove downwards and outwards, in a radiating cone. In the moments after the words are finished, the nature spirits reply by reversing the energy flow into the grove and thence into the Waters (thus consecrating them). The clairvoyantly inclined will "see" an arc of energy going from the center into the containers of Waters. Even after the Waters begin to be passed around, the energy flow continues to climb up the cone into the center. As the Waters go around the grove, the arc of energy from the center will touch each person. Eventually, everyone present will have a direct psychic link to the nature spirits through the center.

In order to keep everyone focused during the passing of the Waters, it's important to have some sort of chant or song, preferably one that reflects the flavor of energy being absorbed. Here's one (written by Sable) that we've used very successfully (it should be done at least nine times, and continued until everyone has partaken):

Fur and feather and scale and skin,

Different without but the same within.

Many of body but one of soul,

Through all creatures are the Gods made whole.

Next comes the invocation of our ancestors and predecessors. The vast majority of folks interested in Druidism have at least some European ancestry; even those who haven't feel a strong psychic and/or psychological link to the Ancient Druids/Godis/Flamans, etc. Here the energy flow is directed from the center outwards into the world around us, psychically connecting us to the ever-present spirits of those who have gone before. This energy pattern may be perceived as a horizontal disc floating around the center, or as the space between two shallow cones radiating from the center. (Stand with your arms pointing out horizontally from your shoulders. Lift them 15 degrees and slowly turn around in a full circle. Drop them to 15 degrees below horizontal, and turn around again. The area between your upper and lower arm positions is the sort of shape I'm talking about.)

As with the preceding invocation, the return response of energy comes from the center and arcs towards the containers of Waters, from whence it passes around the grove as the members partake. These energies are added to those of the nature spirits, which continue to radiate into the grove.

Here's a chant that we've used for this passing of the Waters. It should be done at least nine times, and continued until everyone has partaken.

It's the blood of the Ancients

That runs through our veins.

And the forms change,

But the Circle of Life remains.

The last of the Triad Invocations is of the Gods "in general". Most congregations will probably have a particular pantheon of divinities that they feel closest to, such as the

Celtic Gods, the Norse, the Slavic, the Greek, etc. Or a given ceremony may be focused around a particular ethnic group, so its divinities would thus be the appropriate ones. In any event, the purpose of this invocation is to open ourselves to the powers of the Gods as 12 collectivity. The power flow from each divinity will not be as strong as the energy to be received later from the specific God and Goddess of the occasion, but neither will it be as tightly focused. Thus if a weather working is to be done later, with a weather God and Goddess as the ones for the occasion, a person who needs healing or prosperity may receive at this point of the rite some appropriate strengthening from a healing Goddess or God of wealth. Everyone in the grove will, at the very least, find themselves exalted spiritually to the point where they will find it easier to absorb the powers of the specific God and Goddess to be invoked later at the high point of the ceremony.

The geometric pattern of the energy flow for this third invocation is the opposite of the first one – a cone of energy going from the center and radiating upwards, then reversing its direction as the Waters become consecrated. Again, an arc of energy will come from the center into the containers of Waters, and follow it around the grove as each person partakes.

Naturally, another chant or song is need for the third passing of the Waters. Here is one that we've used in the past (as before, nine repetitions minimum are recommended):

Mother I Feel You, under my feet.

Mother I hear Your heart beat! (repeat)

Father I see You where the eagle flies.

Spirit gonna take me higher & higher! (repeat)

This is OK, since it tends to establish the symbolic link between the earth and sky, but does have the drawback of being focused on only two divinities. Another, more polytheistic one we've used is my own "Will Ye Now Come Back Again?" song, which has a simple chorus for people to join in on and a tune almost all Celtophiles will recognize instantly ("Bonnie Charlie's Now Awa").

By the time the Waters have gone around the grove three times, the participants will not only be thoroughly charged up with psychic/magical/spiritual power from each of the Three Worlds, their group-mind will be a thousand times stronger than it was at the beginning (if each of the Triad Invocations strengthens it by a factor of ten...). Those drinking even tiny sips of whiskey or mead will be loosened up, but probably not drunk (and for some reason hangovers are very rare from these rites!). The total energy pattern for the grove will be one of energy flowing in and out of the grove, from below, around and above. The center of the grove, being the intersection point, should be glowing so brightly at this point that even folks who aren't normally clairvoyant may be able to "see" it. The Gates Between the Worlds will be wide open and waiting...

## Third Phase: The Major Sending of Power to the Deities of the Occasion

This is the stage at which most ceremonies will have some form or another of "sacrifice". There's no room here to go into a general theory of sacrifice, so suffice it to say that the purpose of a sacrifice is to "feed" the Gods with as much psychic energy as possible, in order to trigger a return response of divine power. Anything that will generate psychic energy can be (and has been, throughout history) used for this purpose. This includes chanting, singing, dancing, drama, storytelling, sex, drugs, the slaughter of animals, etc. The

overwhelming majority of Paleopagan religions, including the predecessors of the Judeo-Christian-Islamic traditions, have practiced human, animal and/or plant sacrifices, because any living thing will release psychic energy when killed.

However, blood sacrifices are messy, difficult for modern folks to do (unless they were raised on a farm) without excess pain to the animal, and are generally unnecessary. Additionally, most Neopagans (especially the vegetarians and animal rights activists) consider them morally repugnant (and far too reminiscent of Satanism), so including a blood sacrifice in a modern ceremony is far more likely to offend your congregation than it is to uplift them.

I can currently foresee only two circumstances under which I would consider a blood sacrifice to be acceptable in connection with any ADF ceremony: (1) when the presiding clergy person has decided that a genuine emergency exists, of a life and death nature, that requires the degree of intensity that blood provokes, and is willing to cut him or herself to provide it, or (2) when a young woman has decided to release her virginity as part of a coming-of-age ritual – something that is most likely to be a dyadic rite with no other witnesses anyway. In both of these rare situations, the informed and uncoerced consent of the person losing blood is required, and not enough should be shed to endanger their health. Sacrificing any animal (or human!!!) in any Neopagan Druid ceremony is absolutely forbidden. After all, that's one of the reasons why we're Neopagan instead of Paleo-.

Depending on the season, people may bring fresh cut flowers or recently harvested fruits and vegetables to be used as sacrifices, but most of the time our rituals, like those of the Reformed Druids before us, use small branches cut from trees. These do not contain enough psychic energy to be very effective sacrifices by themselves, but they make an excellent Focus of attention for sending the energies raised by singing, music and other artistic offerings by the congregation. These energies constitute the real sacrifice in our ceremonies.

This procedure begins when the presiding clergy person says something on the order of, "Has anyone brought praise for the Lady and Lord of this feast?" or "Now let us praise the Lady and Lord of this feast!" The first cue is most appropriate with a small group, all or most of whom are planning to offer Praise. The second cue is better with medium sized or larger groups, where particular people have been selected ahead of time and a performance order decided upon.

Praise Offerings most often consist of songs and poems, preferably original, designed to have the maximum emotional impact. We have also had ritual drama performances and storytellings, as well as ritual dances.

Dances done as performances are usually not as effective by themselves as those done with the participation of most or all of the other people present. However, a badly done group dance is much worse than no dance at all, so if a proposed participatory dance has not been thoroughly rehearsed by all parties concerned, you are best off to have your grove's dancer(s) do it as a performance piece between two other carefully chosen verbal/audio pieces. Even better, you can have them do it at the same time that a song or chant is being done. Either method will prevent the damage that a poorly done group dance can do to your ceremony's focus and pacing, while still allowing for group participation.

Pacing is absolutely critical here, because this is the main "power raising" for your ceremony. The folks who plan to offer Praise should show their material to everyone during rehearsals, or at least to the presiding clergy beforehand, so

that the best possible performance order be worked out ahead of time. Then people can be called upon to offer their Praises in such an order as to generate the greatest possible amount of energy.

You can, of course, just pick a person to begin, and go around the grove deosil, hoping that the energy will grow and that the last person will be terrific. With small groups where everyone is offering something, this approach is fairly common. But as far as results are concerned, it's very unpredictable, and of ten the last Praise Offering is not as good as an earlier one was.

With this sort of a situation, or if some outside event has disrupted the steady buildup of emotional power, the presiding clergy person may want to end this section by calling upon the best bard present to do a specific piece that she/he is known to be good at. Clear this with her/him beforehand, and make sure that they know what pieces they may be asked to do, so they won't spend precious time retuning their instrument, or trying to remember words they haven't sung recently. If the presiding clergy person is a bard him/herself, then he/she can make this decision instantly, knowing (we hope) their own strengths and weaknesses, and perhaps doing the final Praise Offering him/herself.

Another option you have hear is to have ready a simple, powerful, and well-rehearsed chant to use as the final Praise Offering. Start it out softly, then gradually build up the volume and speed of both the voices and the music (especially drums). Decide on a cue (such as raising their arms high) for the presiding clergy to use to indicate that the last verse is coming up. This part gets tricky. You can't just stop the music abruptly at the end, since folks are likely to start yelling and screaming (especially at a large festival rite), and your carefully woven web of energies will go splattering in all directions. If the musicians and chant facilitators drop their volume on cue and slow down for the final verse (which they should), with no visible signal to the rest of the grove, then the other participants may not notice, but instead continue to increase the volume and the speed of their chanting until it all falls apart.

Try this: When the cue is given, have your chant facilitators step three paces towards the center, turn around with their arms held high, and gradually lower their arms as they lower and slow their voices (and the musicians lower and slow their music). The presiding clergy person can be doing the same gesture near the main altar, slowly rotating in her/his place. The chant will end with everyone slowly whispering it, then stopping simultaneously. The chant facilitators can then return to their previous positions, and the energies in the grove will be at a strong and steady peak. (This technique will work even better if it's been used a few times earlier in the rite, or at previous ceremonies.)

It's important to remember that the primary purpose of all these Praise Offerings is to raise as much psychic/magical/spiritual power as possible, all of it focused around the deities of the occasion – not to boost the egos of the performers (that can be a secondary or tertiary purpose). By the time the last Praise Offering is done, the grove should be charged up with as much energy as it is capable of generating.

## The Prayer of Sacrifice

It is at this moment of supreme tension that the presiding clergy person lifts up the sacrificial branch (and perhaps one of the flowers or fruits, etc.) towards the Center. She/he then touches the branch with a sickle or other blade (to symbolize

death, mortality, harvesting, etc.), and intones the Sacrificial prayer. The one in the previously published script is a variation on the Reformed Druid version, but the concepts involved are universal ones. With this prayer/incantation, she/he sends the power in the grove through the Gates Between the Worlds to the God and Goddess of the occasion. All present should feel their energies going through the branch and out the Other Side. After a moment of silence, the clergy person puts the branch back on the altar.

## The Seeing of the Omen

Now he/she asks the deities of the occasion if they have accepted the Sacrifice. The reply from Them may be through a sudden wind, bird calls or flights, the fire leaping up, etc. If possible, you should have a grove diviner present to read these auguries, or to cast the runes, or to otherwise do some on-the-spot divination. She or he should announce the results clearly, in such a fashion as to make it clear that this is a legitimate divinatory process (for example, by calling out the runes that appeared, naming the omen observed, etc.). If the Omen is positive, the ceremony continues in the usual fashion. If not, further Praise Offerings are necessary, in which case the clergy person or bard should lead another song or chant. Then repeat the Sacrificial prayer and the divination.

If the results are still negative, try one more time. Make more Praise Offerings, repeat the Sacrifice, seek for the omen. A third answer of "No" indicates that the deities of the occasion, for Their own reasons, are not inclined to assist the grove in achieving the ceremony's goal. So this should be announced, the members of the grove should be advised to meditate upon these events, and the fourth phase of the ritual skipped. Instead, jump directly to the fifth phase of winding down the ritual.

But most of the time the Sacrifice will be accepted and the branch can be cast into the fire, alone with the aspergillums. Some folks object to the symbolism of burning flowers, so you may want to dispose of any sacrificed (and decorative) flowers in running water after the ritual is over. Fruits and veggies can be kept where they are, and consecrated (or just blessed) along with the Waters (see next section), then consumed as part of a ceremonial feast.

[Note: Current [ADF Liturgy](#), as of 1997, uses one round of praise offerings.]

Once your Sacrifice has been accepted, it's time to precede to the.....



Figure 1 Journeying to the Sidhe.

## Fourth Phase: Receiving and Using the Returned Power

### Preparation for the Return

This is what the whole process of a worship ritual is leading up to, so it's important that everyone be ready to receive and handle the divine power that is about to be returned to them through the Gates. This has (naturally) three steps: meditation upon personal needs, a repetition of the group's needs, and the induction of a state of receptivity.

The first step is relatively simple, since the presiding clergy person will ask everyone present to meditate upon what they need from the Goddess and God of the occasion. In a primarily theurgical ceremony, this process will take somewhat longer than in a mostly thaumaturgical one, since receiving these blessings will be the main point (the goal) of the entire liturgy. So folks should be given a few minutes to think quietly, with no outside sounds other than those provided by Nature, or perhaps some serene harp or flute music.

In a predominately thaumaturgic ritual, the second step becomes more important than the first. It's here that the participants are reminded of the group's goal(s) and target(s), and of the need for unity to achieve them.

The third step is a matter of getting the participants into a state of maximum openness and receptivity, by reminding them of what is about to happen and why. This encourages them to drop whatever remaining psychic shields or psychological blocks they may have between themselves and the deities. This third step is meant to be accomplished by the old RDNA "Catechism of the Waters", which was put into the script more for reasons of nostalgia, than because it's really effective.

It should be possible to write a quiet, powerful song to accomplish all three steps, with verses to add or subtract to change the pacing and focus. This would probably work best in a verse-plus-chorus or litany format being led by one or two singers, and including long pauses for meditation.

So now we come to the fourth and final consecration of the ceremony. Just as the first three represented the Three Worlds of Land, Water and Sky, this one represents the Fourth World – Fire. As the presiding clergy person lifts the two main cups towards the Center, she/he enchants the words that ask the Goddess and God of the occasion to bless the liquids within them (and the other containers to be passed), to make them truly the Waters-of-Life.

As before, an arc of energy will leap from the Center/Gates and into each cup (or other container) being consecrated. The power will be stronger and clearer than before, and may appear as twin area of differently "colored" energies. As each participant sips from the Waters of her/his choice (this is the consecration where asperging is not normally an adequate substitute for drinking), and does the breathing exercise mentioned in the script, the God and Goddess will fill her/him with the maximum amount of power that she/he is capable of handling safely.

Thus each individual and the group as a whole receive what they need in the way of "healing, blessing, power, and inspiration". Bonding within the group as a whole will be reinforced, something that will last beyond the ceremony,

whether it's bonding with the community at large, or with the members of one's local grove. Some people will have visions or be healed of ailments, others will be filled with a holy joy or suddenly recognize a psychic link to a deity they never really knew before. The changes may be simple or complex, subtle or obvious. Every participant will have a unique experience, as well as sharing those of everyone else. "Communion" with the Goddess and the God, as well as with each other, will be achieved.

We've used the following chant (given us at PSG 86 by Nicholas Sea) successfully for the final passing of the Waters. It should be done softly, a minimum of three times. Generally it's continued until all have partaken.

Burn bright, flame within me,  
Kindled of eternal fire.  
Of the people I do be,  
And the people part of me.  
All one in many parts,  
A single fire of flaming hearts!

Larry Cornet has collected this chant in a slightly different form, with the second line being "Kindle love's eternal fire." This has different polytheological implications, and folks may want to discuss which seems more appropriate at this point of the ceremony.

If food has been offered up as part of the sacrifice, the presiding clergy may choose to consecrate all or part of it along with the Waters. However, unless the food is bite sized and ready to eat, it may not be a good idea to pass it around with the Waters, since the distribution and consumption of food can easily destroy both concentration and pacing. Often it's better to do a lesser blessing (rather than a full consecration) on the food, and to consume it afterwards as part of a feast.

## Optional Activity:

### Spell Casting or Rite of Passage

Now is when the participants will be able to perform the most powerful spell castings and/or rites of passage. There's no room here to go into either category in detail, and the high points have mostly been covered in the preceding essays. I will, however, mention one bit of magical "tech" here: the use of the Center for casting spells, instead of the "cone of power" method.

The idea of "raising a cone of power" is that the participants are supposed to create, usually by dancing and chanting, a large, cone-shaped field of psychic energy. At a peak of energy buildup, the cone is supposed to "fire" a blast or energy towards the target, carrying the power and information content of the spell. Nice theory. Unfortunately, most of the time it doesn't work very well.

Leave aside the rude comments I've previously made about Neopagan ceremonial dancing, and the fact that most Neopagans don't physically mark the edges of their circle, and thus have no clear idea of where the base of the cone is supposed to be. Ignore the fact that no two cone raisers ever seem to agree about the size, shape (sharp or squat?), color, dimensionality (solid or hollow?), etc. of their cone. These are all symptoms of lack of planning and training in the community, and can eventually be overcome. We can even ignore the fact that the imagery is completely male. Let's look instead at a different cluster of factors, ones of physics and metaphysics.

When you fire off a spell in a straight line towards a distant target, you are essentially broadcasting a message. And like any other message broadcast, through normal space and time, a spell is subject to deterioration of (a) its power level, (b) its directional vectors, and (c) its information content.

The further away your target is, the more power will be used up simply in getting there. So when it does arrive, it won't be strong enough to do much. If your target moves, or you didn't really know where it was in the first place, or some other energy field deflects your "beam", your spell will wind up missing the target completely. And if the distance is great, the sheer psychic static of our biosphere (let alone deliberate efforts by others) can disrupt the psychic structure of your spell, causing it to lose all or most of its information content, or to suffer major changes in meaning. Thus, even if it arrives "on target" with lots of power, it may well wind up doing little or nothing that you wanted done.

How do you get around the problem of a spell deteriorating when it goes through normal space and time? You just go "around" normal space and time completely, by using the Center of your working area as a "shortcut". You see, every ritual Center is connected to every other ritual Center, since in one sense they are all the "same": each is the Center of the Multiverse. SO if you have previously created a sacred space around the target of your spell, or if you create one symbolically ("by remote control") at this point of the ceremony, you can establish (recognize, actually) a magical/psychic/spiritual connection between the ritual Centers of both places.

A spell that you cast into the Center of your grove will arrive instantly at the Center of the other location, without going through time or space as we know it. It will pop out of that other Center with full power and information content (directional vectors become irrelevant). It won't matter if your target is ten miles or ten thousand miles away (note to my great-great-grandchildren: or ten light years away).

I first discovered this technique by accident over fifteen years ago, when I was living in Berkeley and heard on the radio that the Canadian nesting grounds of the whooping cranes were about to be engulfed by a major forest fire. I had already noticed a 500 mile limit in my previous spell castings, and the distance involved was a couple of thousand miles, but I figured I had to do something. So I got out a map of Canada and drew a circle centered on the nesting grounds, then invoked Thor and did a rain spell. The circled map was in the middle of my altar, which was in the Center of my working area. I cast the spell into the map and hoped for the best. Much to my surprise and delight, a few hours later I heard on the news that a sudden rainstorm had "come out of nowhere" and stopped the forest fire a mile away from the nesting grounds.

For years I thought it was the use of a mandala/pentacle that had been the key, but eventually I figured out that the critical steps had been defining two ritual Centers and then merging them. So now I hardly ever do "cone raising" if I want to affect a distant target, and I highly recommend this "Center-to-Center" technique as a replacement. And now, back to our ceremonial step-through, which is still in progress...

Remember when you do spell castings or rites of passage at this stage of the liturgy, that you'll have no need to generate more power, since everyone will already have as much Gods-given power in them as they can handle. Instead, use chants, talismans, and gestures (mantras, mandalas, and mudras) as devices to focus your visualization and timing. That way, everyone can release their divinely enhanced power into the

Center at the same instant, towards a uniformly visualized target, with a unified intent, to achieve the agreed upon goal.

Now obviously with most rites of passage, or specific healings/blessings on people present in the grove, you are not going to be sending energies outside the boundaries of your current sacred space, but rather into the bodies/auras of folks right there. The ritual-within-the-ritual of child blessing, ordination, coming of age, healing, etc., should give everyone all the information they need to send or receive the energies. We'll talk more about this in future issues of DP. For now, let's go on to the...

## Fifth Phase: Unwinding and Ending the Ceremony

### Affirmation of Success: Following Through

Those of you who are familiar with golf, tennis, bowling, baseball, croquet or any other sport that involves casting or striking a small object away from you, will know about the importance of "follow thru". You don't just stop moving abruptly the instant the ball is struck or thrown, you continue the bodily motions you were engaged in at that instant. This insures that your motions will be smooth and continuous, rather than abrupt and jerky, and thus improves the accuracy of your casting/striking.

Oddly enough, this can be a very useful metaphor for casting a spell instead of an object. This is true even for purely theurgical workings in which you are, in essence, casting a spell upon yourself. The way you do a "follow-thru" in a ritual is by proclaiming that the blessings have been received, the spell is already working, Etc. This "affirmation of success" alerts your subconscious to stop receiving and/or sending energies. Just as importantly, it tells your subconscious to let go of the target(s) psychically. Without this letting go, your subconscious is likely to continue "worrying at" the target(s), which usually has the effect of draining away the energies sent, often ruining the results. So you need to have your conscious mind say to your subconscious mind (and any spirits who might be listening?), "Hey! It worked!"

In the script this affirmation of success is represented by the phrases, "the Lady and the Lord (of the occasion) have blessed us" and "Every time we invoke Them, They become stronger and more alert to the needs of Their people." That's because the primary goal of this liturgy has usually been to strengthen and awaken the Old Gods, and the secondary goal has been to obtain blessings for the participants. The affirmation is interwoven (incorrectly) with the silent contemplation and the "Let us return to the realm of mortals" cues necessary for the Recovery process (see next section).



## Recovery

After the follow through, it's necessary to bring people back in touch with the Earth plane level of reality, regardless of whether you have done a spell casting or rite of passage or neither. Otherwise folks will drift in their altered states indefinitely, and the energies absorbed and/or channeled will not be properly "digested". So at this point the presiding clergy should remind the participants to refocus their attention through the Three Worlds: thinking about what they've been doing, feeling the emotions that have been generated as a result, and sensing their physical connections to the "realm of mortals" again. This recovery process will continue through the rest of the ceremony, gradually returning everyone to their "normal" states of being (through we hope in an improved condition).

### Thanking of Entities Invoked

This portion of the ceremony accomplishes three tasks: (a) it shows courtesy to the entities invoked and invited, (b) it further affirms the ceremony's success, and (c) it lets the Gods and the lesser entities, not to mention the people, know that you are winding things down and that They can leave if They wish. As a general rule, you do not "dismiss" Goddesses and Gods. If nothing else, it's rude.

Yes I know that some ancient Egyptian magicians were in the habit of bossing their deities around, as are some modern followers of Voodoo/Hoodoo. But I've always considered these to be corruptions from the earlier states of these religions, something that happens when the magicians involved no longer believe in the Gods as Gods.

In the fully developed Afro-American religions unlike Hoodoo and Voodoo (which have lost most of their religious character and become mostly grab-bags of magical techniques), the initiated clergy will sometimes have to urge a possessing deity to leave Her/His "horse" (the human being possessed). However, I believe that they do this through reminding the deity of the contractual agreements made at the time of the clergyperson's initiation. It's done with love, courtesy, and respect – not with the typical arrogance of the Goetic magician (the source of Wiccan style "dismissals"). In general, I tend to think that the current Neopagan phrase of "Go if You must, stay if You will," reflects a much more appropriate attitude.

The entities are thanked in the reverse order of their invocation or invitation: first the God and Goddess of the occasion, then the deities as a group, the ancestors and predecessors, the Nature Spirits, the Matron/Patron of bards, and the Gatekeeper (even though it's not in the script). When the Gatekeeper has been thanked, this effectively closes the Gates, but it's still a good idea to overtly ask Him/Her to close them. That way, folks will know that they should stop having an "open line" to the Other Side.

### Reversing the Tree Meditation

In keeping with the unwinding process, it's now necessary to go through four steps: (1) to "unmerge" the group-mind, though some psychic links will remain in potential; (2) to drain off any excess psychic/magical/spiritual energies that might be remaining; (3) to return the participants to a more mundane consciousness; and (4) to recenter each of them within themselves as unique individuals. In this liturgy, you accomplish all this by doing a reprise of the Tree Meditation,



which should be done by the person who led it at the beginning of the ceremony, in a similar delivery style.

**Step 1** – Everyone is told to pull back their psychic branches and roots from being interwoven with each other's, and to become individual trees again.

**Step 2** – Folks are instructed to release any remaining excess energy that they might have and which they don't need. They can send the excess through their roots into the ground (the other sense of "grounding" mentioned earlier), or else into the ceremonial vestments or tools they may be wearing.

**Step 3** – All are guided in pulling back their roots and branches and "becoming humans" once more.

**Step 4** – Everyone is told to refocus their attention on their personal centers.

## The Libation

At this point, you should pour any remaining Waters onto the ground or into the fire. The traditional RDNA prayer is a nice one for this: "To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return unto Thee." (If you like, you can consider the fire to be masculine and say, "O our Father" instead.) If there is going to be a ceremonial feast afterwards, you may want to save a little of the consecrated Waters to mix into the punch bowl or ale cask, but you should not casually pass cups of consecrated Waters around, in order "not to waste" them. It's not wasting the Waters to return them to the Earth or the Fire, it's a sign of love, respect, gratitude, and courtesy, just as the various thankings are. Furthermore, it's a clear indication that you're not greedy, that you know when to stop taking and start giving.

Just as every ritual needs a clear-cut beginning, it also needs an equally definite ending. Your ritual space will need to be deconsecrated, unless you are lucky enough to have a temple building or sacred grove which you expect to be able to remain holy. Usually, however, deconsecration is necessary (a) to prevent outsiders from wandering through a still "charged" area and accidentally connecting up with the psychic links of the folks who have been worshipping there; (b) to prevent your people from worrying about fundamentalists or other hostile intruders committing sacrilegious acts there; and (c) to announce to the subconscious minds of the participants that they are "back" in the "real world" again.

You also need an overt cue to each person's subconscious that it's no longer "magic time". So announce that "this ceremony is over" verbally, then follow it up with snuffing out the candles, ringing a bell, or playing a special piece of music.

A good way to combine all this is through a Recessional (balancing out the Processional at the beginning). Make your announcement, then have everyone leave the area (thus destroying the temporary definition you had of sacred space by crossing its boundaries physically), while singing an appropriate song. Here's the Recessional hymn that we've been using since Summer Solstice of 1986:

Walk with wisdom,  
from this hallowed place.  
Walk not in sorrow,  
our roots shall e'er embrace.  
May strength be your brother,  
and honor be you friend,  
And Luck be your lover,  
until we meet again.

This should be sung a minimum of three times. The words and music are by Sable, of the Minneapolis Grove. See her zine in this issue for the musical notation, and Susan Kirsch's zine (also in this issue) for a "sitting" variation of the words. Some people may prefer to use "sister" instead of, or simultaneously with, "brother".

## Cleanup and Critiques

As soon as the liturgy is over, the presiding clergy and bards should go off somewhere to remove their ceremonial gear and perform any additional grounding and centering which they might need. In the meantime, their assistants can be packing up the ritual tools and supplies, putting out the fire, etc., while volunteers check the area to make sure that nothing has been left behind (especially litter – Neopagans, like scouts, always leave a site cleaner than it was when they arrived!).

Comments about the liturgy should be limited at this time to positive ones. Individuals may want to share visions with each other, or to write down any insights sparked by their experiences during it, but a critical analysis should wait at least twenty four hours. This is to enable everyone to digest what has happened and to enable any workings done to "solidify" without "second-thoughts chasing after them on the astral."

A few days later, but no more than a couple of weeks at most, gather together as many as possible of the participants to discuss the ceremony in depth. This is the time to say things like: "That chant we wrote for the second consecration just didn't sound right." "George, you kept missing cues. Do we need different cues or were you having an off day?" "The harmonies on the Processional were terrible. We'd better practice them some more." "Susie, your Anglo Saxon pronunciation needs work." "The altars for the Three Worlds are too big, the dancers kept running into them." "The clergy didn't project their voices quite loud enough." "I had an insight about the wording of the consecration prayer, and I'd like to rewrite it." Etc.

It's very important to state the criticisms in a friendly way, with the emphasis on future improvements rather than assigning blame. Positive feedback about every aspect that went well should be included. People should share any psychic/magical/spiritual events that occurred to them during or after the ritual. In effect, you should be doing the same kind of fair-but-firm critique session that a theatrical troupe or symphony orchestra would have after a major performance. Who knows, perhaps we will even have genuine ritual critics writing reviews in the Neopagan press someday!

Detailed notes should be kept, to be used in future planning, preparation and performance. These notes can be copied and distributed to all the members of the group who might be interested, including the ADF Mother Grove!!



Figure 2 The ADF symbol, now in sapling size.

# An Update on the ADF Liturgical Outline

This is the version of the Outline for Druid Worship Ceremonies that I would like people to use for the next few years, and which I've been discussing throughout this essay. Please make sure that the new liturgical scripts you send in for sharing with the other members all follow this basic pattern:

## First Phase: Starting the Rite & Establishing the Group-mind Clear-cut Beginning

Consecration of Time  
Consecration of Space  
Tree Meditation  
    Centering  
    Grounding  
    Merging  
Affirmation of Group Beliefs  
Specification of Ritual Focus and Deities of the Occasion

## Second Phase: Opening the Gates & Preliminary Power

Raising Invoking the Gate Keeper  
Invoking the Matron/Patron of Bards  
Triad Invocations, Consecrations and Sharing  
    Nature Spirits  
    Ancestors and Predecessors  
    Gods as a Group

## Third Phase: The Major Sending of Power to the Deities of the Occasion

Praise Offerings  
Prayer of Sacrifice  
Seeking of the Omen  
(Possible Repetitions of Praise/Sacrifice/Omen Seeking)

## Fourth Phase: Receiving and Using the Returned Power

Preparation for the Return  
Meditation upon Personal Needs  
Repetition of Group Needs  
Induction of Receptivity  
Final Consecration and Sharing  
Reception of Individual Blessings  
Reinforcement of Group Bonding  
Optional Activity: Spell Casting or Rite of Passage

## Fifth Phase. Unwinding and Ending the Ceremony

Affirmation of Success: Following Through Recovery  
Thanking of Entities Invoked  
Deities of the Occasion  
Deities as a Group  
Ancestors and Predecessors  
Nature Spirits  
Matron/Patron of Bards  
Gatekeeper – Closing the Gates  
Reversing the Tree Meditation  
    Unmerging Energies  
    Draining of Excess Energies  
    Pulling back of Branches and Roots  
    Recentering  
Libation  
Clear-cut Ending  
    Deconsecration of Space  
    Deconsecration of Time

## Conclusion: The importance of Joy

After reading sixty (very) odd pages on liturgical design, preparation, and performance, many of you may have decided that this is all a lot of grim, dull work. Nothing is (or should be) farther from the truth. Any harper will tell you that the joy of composition and performance comes after you have mastered the basics of your instrument, and learned your scales. A painter may spend years learning color mixing, anatomy, the laws of perspective, etc., yet if there were no joy in the learning and the practice, she/he would have stopped being a painter early on.

Creating, preparing, and performing a ceremony requires a series of artistic decisions and actions, no matter what other polytheological, psychological, magical, or technical factors may be involved. And for Neopagans, joy is an integral part of every art we practice. Regardless of whether your liturgy is one of thankfulness or of grief, of love or of rage, of celebration or of entreaty – if it is to be a Neopagan liturgy, it must be filled with joy. This may be the quiet, serene joy that strengthen, - as in times of fear and sorrow, or the noisy, boisterous joy of friends sharing pleasure, or the wild and dangerous joy of the tigress defending her young. Balder or Bacchus or Kali. If our liturgies are truly to transform both ourselves and our world, there must be joy! So make sure that you and the people you are working with pay attention to having fun during the entire process. The average Neopagan Druid liturgy is no more complex than putting on a three-act play, or a Beethoven symphony, things that thousands of people every year manage to do in high school – while having a great deal of fun at the same time. With sufficient determination, practice, imagination, love and joy in our hearts, we can create ritual experiences that will have long-term positive effects on ourselves and the entire world. And remember...

The Gods are watching us, so let's give Them a good show!

# A Druid Worship Ceremony

## Meán Samradh, '87

### Ár nDraíocht Féin (A.D.F.)

By Isaac Bonewits

*This is an abbreviated script, without most of the physical or ceremonial instructions included. Participants will need to read past issues of The Druids' Progress for those, and attend the ritual planning and rehearsals beforehand. This is the working script to be used at the sunrise summer solstice ritual at P.S.G. 87, and is not meant for re-publication.*

## Phase One: Starting the Rite & Establishing the Group Mind

*The people are called to order and formed into two parallel lines some short distance away from the ritual site. The presiding clergy ("D1" and "D2") stand at the head of the lines.*

- D1: Tá muid anseo leis na Déithe a adhradh.  
D2: We are here to honor the Gods.  
D1: A Dhéithe, an Airde, a Thabharthóirí ar Bheatha — éistigi agus freagairt orainn!  
D2: O Gods, High Ones, Givers of Life — hear and answer us!

## Procession

Along this route: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Procession Song/Chant:

Choose: \_\_\_\_\_

*Settling Chant: "O Earth-Mother" or \_\_\_\_\_*

## Tree Meditation

*Done by \_\_\_\_\_*

## Specification of Ritual Focus and Deities of Occasion (Belenos & Aine)

*Done by \_\_\_\_\_*

## Phase Two: Opening the Gates & Preliminary Power Raising

### Invocation of the Gate Keeper

- D2: O Ogma, Lord of the Gates, Lord of Knowledge, open the ways for us. We walk in your footsteps, we walk your roads. Reveal to us your teaching, reveal to us the

way to walk in safety. We praise you for the brightness of your power. Walk with us, Ogma!

- D1: A Oghma, a Thiarna na nGeataí, a Thiarna an Fheasa, oscail na geataí dúinn. Tá muid ag siúl i do lorg, tá muid ag siúl ar do bhealach. Scaoil dúinn do theagasc, taispeain dúinn cén chaol a siúl; I faidh muid slán. Molann muid thu mar gheall ar do chumhacht. Siúil linn, a Oghma!

*Ogma Chant/Song: "Siúl linn a Oghma" or "We invoke thee Ogma" or \_\_\_\_\_*

## Invocation of the Matron of Bards

*Song: "Hymn to Bridget" or "Lady Lift us up" or \_\_\_\_\_*

## The Triad Invocations:

### Invocation of the Nature Spirits

- D2: O spirits of the old times and of this place, our companions, our teachers, hallow these waters. Share with us the renewal of the Earth. Share with us comfort, knowledge, and blessing. Speak to our hearts, that we may become one with you all..... Behold the waters of life!  
D1: A sprideanna na seanaimsire, agus na háite seo, a chomhghuaillithe, a mhúinteoirí, beannaí na h-uisci seo dúinn. Roinnigí orainn athbheochan na Talún. Roinnigí orainn suaimhneas, eolas, agus beannacht. Labhraigí linn inár gcroí, le go mbeadh muid in aon bhall libhse..... Seo iad uiscí na beatha!

*Asperging Song/Chant: "Fur & Feathers" or \_\_\_\_\_*

### Invocation of the Ancestors/Predecessors

- D2: O people of the old times, our ancestors, our kindred, hallow these waters. Share with us the bond of life upon the Earth. Share with us comfort, knowledge, and blessing. Speak to our hearts, that we may become one with you all..... Behold the waters of life!  
D1: A sheana, a shinseara, a mhuintir, beannaí na h-uisci seo dúinn. Roinnigí orainn ceangal na beatha ar Talamh. Roinnigí orainn suaimhneas, eolas, agus beannacht. Labhraigí linn inár gcroí, le go mbeadh muid in aon bhall libhse..... Seo iad uiscí na beatha!

*Asperging Song/Chant: "Blood of the Ancients" or \_\_\_\_\_*

## Invocation of the Gods as a Whole

- D2: O Gods of the old times, our mothers, our fathers, hallow these waters. Share with us your power to regenerate the Earth. Share with us comfort, knowledge, and blessing. Speak to our hearts, that we may become one with you all..... Behold the waters of life!

D1: A Dhéithe na seanaimsiri, a mháithreacha, a aithreacha, beannaí na h-uisci seo dúinn. Roinnigí orainn bhur gcumhacht le go ngingfeadh muid an Domhan. Roinnigí orainn suaimeas, eolas, agus beannacht. Labhraí linn inár gcroí, le go mbeadh muid in aon bhall libhse..... Seo iad uisci na beatha!

*Asperging Song/Chant: "Mother I Feel You " or \_\_\_\_\_*

## Phase Three: Major Sending of Power to Belenos & Aine

### Praise Offerings

D2: Now let us offer our praise to Belenos and Aine, the Lord and Lady of this feast.

\_\_\_\_\_ done by \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ done by \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ done by \_\_\_\_\_

### The Sacrifice

D2: Our praise goes up to thee on the wings of eagles; our voices are carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, o Belenos, o Aine, we pray thee, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, giving to us of your peace and life.

D1: Téann ár moladh suas chugat ar sciatháin iolar; beirtar ár nglórtha suas chugat ar ghuailne na gaoithe. Éistigí anois, a Bhelenos, an Aine, más é bhur dtoil é, agus sinn ag ofráil na h-íobairte seo ar son na beatha. Glacaigí léi, más é bhur dtoil é, agus glanaigí ár gcroíthe, ag roinnt arainn do chuid síochána 'is do bheatha.

### The Omen

D2: Have you accepted our sacrifice of life and human effort?

D1 Give unto us an omen!

### Divination

*Done by \_\_\_\_\_*

*Possible repetition of Praise Offerings and Omen Seeking, if necessary:*

\_\_\_\_\_ done by \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ done by \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ done by \_\_\_\_\_

*When the Sacrifice has been accepted.....*

D1: Rejoice! The Lord and Lady have accepted our sacrifices!

## Phase Four: Receiving & Using the Returned Power

**Meditation on Personal Needs**, done by \_\_\_\_\_

**Repetition of Group Needs**, done by \_\_\_\_\_

**Induction of Receptivity**, done by \_\_\_\_\_

## Final Consecration & Sharing:

D2: O Belenos, o Aine, hear and answer us! Hallow these waters! We your children have praised you, and now we ask from you healing, blessing, power, and inspiration.... Behold the waters of life!

D1: A Bhelenos, an Aine, éistigí agus freagairt orainn! Beannaí na h-uisci seo dúinn. Muide do chlann a mhol thu, agus anois iarrann muid ort leigheas, beannachtaí, chumhacht, agus tinfeadh..... Seo iad uisci na beatha!

*Passing Song/Chant : "Burn Bright" or \_\_\_\_\_*

*It's possible, but not very likely, that a magical working or rite of passage may be done at this point. Far more likely is...*

### Meditation

## On Reception of Blessings and Reinforcement of Group Bonding,

*Done by: \_\_\_\_\_*

## Phase Five: Unwinding & Ending the Ceremony

### Affirmation of Success:

D2: Belenos and Aine have Blessed us!

D1: Tá beannacht na Belenos agus an Aine orainn!

D2: Every time we invoke them, they become stronger and more alert to the needs of their people.

D1: With joy in our hearts, let us return to the realm of mortals, to do the will of the Gods and our own.

D2: Yet, before we leave, we must give thanks to those whom we have invited here today:

### Thanking of Entities Invoked

D2: O Lord and Lady,

D1: A Bhelenos, an Aine —

D2: We thank you!

D1 Go raibh maith agaibh!

All: Go raibh maith agaibh!

D2: O Gods and Goddesses of the old times,

D1: A Dhéithe na seanaimsiri —

All: Go raibh maith agaibh!

D2: O people of the old times, our ancestors, our kindred,

D1: A sheana, a shinseara, a mhuntir —

All: Go raibh maith agaibh!

D2: O spirits of the old times, and of this place,

D1: A sprideanna na seanaimsire, agus na háite seo —

All: Go raibh maith agaibh!

- D2: O Bridget, Fire of Life and Fire of Love, Mother of Bards and Goddess of Inspiration, we thank you.  
 D1: A Bhríd, a Thine Bheatha agus a Thine Ghrá, a Mháthair na Bardaí agus Bheandia na Thinfeadh, go raith maith agat!

## Closing of the Gates

- D2: O Ogma, Lord of the Gates, Lord of Knowledge, we thank you. Now let the Gates Between the Worlds be closed!  
 D1: A Oghma, a Thairna na nGeataí, a Thairna an Fheasa, go raith maith agat. Anois bíodh na geataí idir na saolta a druidte!

## Reversing of the Tree Meditation

By \_\_\_\_\_

### Libation

- D1: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, o our Mother, even as we must someday return unto thee.

### Final Benediction

- D2: Let us go out into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifices have pleased the Gods and Goddesses, and that we go forth upon the Earth under their protection.  
 D1: Teigheadh muid amach faoin domhan, agus muid lan-chinnt, gur thug ár n-iobartí taitneamh do na Déithe, gur fhreagair siad ár n-urnaí, agus go bhfuil muid ag dul amach faoin Domhan faoina goímirce.  
 D2: We have finished this ceremony!  
 D1: Tá an searmanas críochnaíthe againn!  
 D2: So be it.  
 D1: Bíodh sé.  
 All: Bíodh sé!

### Recessional

Song/Chant: "Walk with Wisdom" or \_\_\_\_\_



Figure 3 The Dapper Druid

# A Full ADF Liturgy

By Ian Corrigan, c. 1991?

*0: The Sacred Grove is arranged as described. The celebrants hallow the Grove; the Fire is lit, the Well is filled, the Tree is blessed.*

## Procession

*With singing, arrive and circle the hallows deosil. The Druids complete the sigil, then give the opening prayers.*

## Opening Prayers

*A: Earth Mother: All kneel and kiss the earth. The Chief speaks as the Sacrificer makes an offering of grain, bread or flour:*

O beloved mother of all  
 From whose starry womb the green earth springs  
 You who are the bearer of all life  
 We pray you bless and uphold this rite.  
 All: Mother of all accept our offering!

*B: Awen: The Bard invokes, saying:*

Power of inspiration that attends us  
 Voice of the fire of wisdom,  
 voice of the well of inspiration  
 Come into our hearts' shrine  
 O! Into our hearts' shrine  
 Let us ken of every good or ill,  
 Guide our rite in the way of truth  
 I call you to place the clear heart in us  
 O power of inspiration in this holy place  
 O power of inspiration at this holy time  
 So be it!

## Grove Attunement

*The Druids lead a meditation intended to attune the company to the Earth and Sky powers and to join the company in spirit. This might conclude with an intoning or a proper chant or hymn.*

## Fire, Well And Tree

*Druids or members of the grove make offerings to the Sacred Center. Silver is offered to the well, saying:*

Druid: O sacred waters that flow and swirl beneath all being  
 accept our offering!  
 Let us know the elder depths within ourselves the source of all,  
 the well of elder wisdom  
 Tobar naomh, ruith a steach mise!  
 All respond: Sacred well, flow within us!

*An offering of oil is made to the Fire, saying:*

O sacred fire that consumes and transforms  
 True and holy light of the shining ones  
 Accept our offering! O sacrificed and sacrificer  
 Let holy flame warm our spirits and our lives.  
 Teinne naomh, Is a steach mise!  
 All: Sacred fire, burn within us!  
 The Bile is censed and sprinkled, saying:  
 O sacred pillar, boundary of all worlds,  
 Stand at the center of the sky,

Stand at the center of the sea,  
Stand at the center of the land on which we dwell.  
Let us be deepened in your depths  
Raised to your heights  
Strengthened in your strength  
Crann naomh, fas a steach mise!  
All: Sacred tree, grow within us!

## Purpose And Precedent

*As proper to the work.*

### Purification

*A: Outdwellers: An offering is made to the south of the Grove, saying:*

Ancient dark ones, we make this offering to you.  
You who dwell in the outer dark  
You who stood against the Gods  
You twisted and misshapen  
You cold of heart and dim of mind  
Take this offering and trouble not our working.  
Likewise we acknowledge in ourselves  
Weakness and perversity  
Hatred and spite  
Cowardice and ignorance  
We contemplate these ills and enemies  
And for this sacred time  
We set them aside!

*B: Fire and Water: Druids draw water from the Well and light a censer from the Fire. They quickly cense and asperge the company, while the company intones or chants.*

### Opening The Gates

*The sacrificer makes an offering to Manannan, saying:*

Druid: A Manannan, a thiarna na geatai duinn, ta muid ag siul ar do bealach.  
O Manannan, Lord of the Gates, Lord of Wisdom, open the ways for us. We walk in your holy ways, we walk the Sacred Road. Share your magic with us, ward us as we walk in safety. Manannan mac Lir, accept our sacrifice!

*An offering of oil is given to the Fire. The Druid then conjures the Gates, making an opening triskele on the Fire and Well, saying:*

Druid: Now, lord of ways, join your magic with mine and let the fire open as a gate, let the well open as a gate, let the tree be the crossroads of all worlds. Open as a road to our voices and to the spirits. Let the gates be open!  
All: Let the gates be open!

### Kindred Offerings

*The druids make proper offerings to each of the kindreds, standing at the fire.*

#### Ancestors

Druid: The children of the earth call out to the mighty dead.  
Hear us, our ancestors, our kindred.  
Eistigi anois, a shinseara, a mhuintir  
To all those whose bones lie in this land, whose hearts are tied to it, whose memory holds it; ancient tribes of this place, we offer you welcome.

To all of our grandmothers and grandfathers, our own beloved dead, blood-kin and heart-kin; ancient tribes of our blood, we offer you welcome.

To all those elder wise ones who guide their people, poets and seers, judges and magicians; wise women and men of ancient days, we offer you welcome. So, o mighty ones, we call to you as our kin, in the love of the all-mother, to join in our magic. Come to our fire, spirits; meet us at the boundary. Guide and ward us as we walk the elder ways.  
Ancestors, accept our sacrifice!

A shinseara, glac an h-iobairt seo muid!

*(an offering of food and/or drink is made onto the ground or into a shaft)*

### Nature Spirits

Druid: The children of earth call out to the spirits of this land.  
Hear us, companions and teachers.

Eistigi anois, a sprideanna na haite seo.

To all our allies, kindreds of stone and stream, crystal and fertile soil, pools and every water; kins of the earth, we offer you welcome

To all our allies, kindreds of the growing green, herb and flower, shrub and mighty trees, root and stem and fruit.  
Green kins, we offer you welcome.

To all our allies, kindreds of fur and feather and scale, all who walk or fly or swim or crawl, we offer you welcome.

So, o noble ones, we call to you as our allies, in the joy of life upon earth, to join in our magic. Come to our fire, spirits; meet us at the boundary. Guide and ward us as we walk the elder ways. land-spirits, accept our sacrifice!

A sprideanna na talamh, glac an h-iobairt seo muid.

*(an offering of herbs, flowers and/or trinkets is scattered around the nemeton's edge or hung on the tree)*

### Deities

Druid: The children of earth call out to the shining ones. Hear us, eldest and brightest. eistigi anois, a dheithe na seanamsiri.

To all the shining ones, first children of the mother, wisest and mightiest, loving and comforting; Gods and Goddesses, we offer you welcome.

To the Gods and Goddesses of this place, ancient and powerful, known to us or unknown; Gods of this place, we offer you welcome.

To all the deities of those here gathered, you whom we worship, you who bless our lives; o patrons and matrons, we offer you welcome.

So, o shining ones, we call to you as our elders, in reverence and love, to join in our magic. Come to our fire, shining ones; meet us at the boundary. guide and ward us as we walk the elder ways. deities, accept our sacrifice!

A dheithe, glac an h-iobairt seo muid.

*(an offering of scented oil is poured on the fire)*

*After all the offerings have been made, the druids recenter the company and lead an attunement to all the spirits that have been called, and a proper chant or hymn is sung to the three kindreds.*

## Key Offerings

Druid speaks, saying: Failte! A dheithe, a seanara, a sprideanna! Welcome to the God/desses, the dead and the sidhe! To all of you who have gathered at our fire, we pray you join us in worshipping the patrons of this holy rite here in our sacred grove.

*The druids now give the descriptive invocations of the patron powers of the rite. This is followed by any proper customs for the occasion, and by praise offerings. offerings are made, and a portion of each is held back for the final sacrifice.*

## Sacrifice and Omen

*The druids prepare the final offerings and say:*

Druid speaks: So we have given of our love and our wealth to the lord and lady. Now let our voices arise on the fire, let our voices sound in the well let our words pass the boundary to the Otherworld. o lord, o lady, we give you our love, our respect, our devotion as we pray you...

Bhantiarna agus tiarna, glac an h-iobairt seo muid!

All: Lady and Lord, accept our sacrifice!

*All are led to send their energy through the gates to the powers, meditating on the deities and the nobles. Then druid speaks:*

Druid speaks: Having prayed to the powers, let us open to them, asking what blessings they offer us in return.

*Omen is taken as usual. The seer then interprets the omen, leading the company to contemplate the things they would ask of the powers, especially as suggested by the omen. Company recenters in preparation for the blessing.*

## The Blessing

### A: The litany of the waters:

Druid: Ancient and mighty ones we have honored you. We pray you honor us in turn, for a gift calls for a gift. Hear your children...

All: Shining ones, give us the waters!

Druid: We thirst for the waters of wisdom, of bounty, of rebirth from the well of wisdom, from the spring of renewal, from the bosom of the Earth Mother. Hear us...

All: Shining ones, give us the waters!

Druid: We open our hearts to the great ones blessing. We stand in pride, honor and friendship with all the powers of the worlds. Hear and answer us now...

All: Shining ones, give us the waters!

### B: Hallowing the waters:

*Ale is poured into the horns and elevated. Druid speaks:*

Druid: We draw blessing from the cauldron of blessing. We pour the ale of inspiration. Behold the holy cup of magic, the outpouring of blessing from the mighty ones. When we share the draught of the Gods we drink in wisdom, love and strength to do as we will in the worlds, in service to the shining ones.

Eisdigh anois a tiarna, a bhantiarna; beannaich na h-uisci seo duinn! Hear us o lord, o lady; hallow these waters! We, your children, rejoice in your gift. Bless our spirits and our lives with love, magic and bounty as we drink these sacred waters.

Seo iad uisci na beatha!

All: Behold the Waters of Life!

*The horns are passed and all drink as a proper hymn is sung.*

## Work

*As needed.*

## Closing

*When all is done, the druids lead a resettling, then begin to close the grove, saying:*

Druid: The mighty ones have blessed us. With joy in our hearts let us carry the magic from our sacred grove into our lives and work.

Each time we offer to the powers they be come stronger and more aware of our needs and our worship.

So now as we prepare to depart let us give thanks to those who have aided us.

O (patron powers), go raibh maith agaibh!

All: We thank you!

Druid: O Gods and Goddesses of elder days, go raibh maith agaibh!

All: We thank you!

Druid: O spirits of this land, go raibh maith agaibh!

All: We thank you!

Druid: O ancestors, our kindred, go raibh maith agaibh!

All: We thank you!

Druid: To all those powers that have aided us, we say again...Go raibh maith agaibh!

All: We thank you!

*Druids renew the company's centering once more, signaling the return to common awareness and ease of access to the centered state. Then any unused offerings, return flow, incense, water etc. is given to the earth, saying:*

Druid: Mother of all, to you we return all we leave unused.

Uphold us now in the world as you have in our rite. Go raibh maith agaibh!

All: We thank you!

*The druids go to the center, bearing the wand. They speak:*

O gatekeeper, warder of the ways, for your presence and power, your guiding and guarding we say... Go raibh maith agaibh!

All: We thank you!

*Druid makes the closing sign over the hallows with the wand, saying:*

Druid: Now by the keeper of gates and by our magic we end what we began.

Now let the fire be flame

Let the well be water;

Let all be as it was before.

Let the gates be closed!

All: Let the gates be closed!

Druid: Go now, children of the earth, in peace and blessings. the rite is ended!

*The bard leads a proper chant as the company processes out of the Grove.*

# Keltrian Druid Ritual

## Walk-Through

By Pat Taylor & Tony Taylor  
Extracted from the Henge of Keltria Book of Ritual  
Granted to be used in ARDA 2

## Individual Preparation

It is important for the Grove members to enter ritual in a proper frame of mind, body, and spirit. Heavy meals should be avoided prior to ritual; they concentrate blood in the stomach, resulting in inattentiveness and sleepiness. A potluck after ritual is preferred, however, a light potluck several hours prior to the ritual is sometimes held. Alcohol drunk before the ritual in small amounts is usually acceptable, though no one should ever attend services inebriated.

You should be clean from the inside out. An herbal bath prior to ritual is helpful in easing muscle tension. Use herbs appropriate to the season to help tune your mind to the ritual purpose. Listening to mellow Celtic music, such as Celtic harp, reduces mental fatigue.

Celebrants who attend on a regular basis should obtain a robe or special clothing worn only for ritual. Ritual robes should not be worn over mundane clothing if they are to be effective in altering your mind-set. Underwear is acceptable, if desired. Robes should be clean and have been stowed with herbal sachets to enhance their magick. Keep them smelling fresh and “outdoorsy.”

You should always take at least ten minutes to meditate before ritual begins. An excellent place to meditate is at a small shrine to a personal patron or matron deity. At the base of a tree is another good place to do preparatory meditation. If you are not near a special place, visualize yourself at a special meditation spot. This meditation typically takes place after the D1 and D2 designate parts.

There will be times when relations between you and someone else will not be at their best. You must be able to leave any feelings of hurt or animosity outside the sacred space. If you are unable to separate yourself from negative feelings, then for the good of the Grove, excuse yourself from the ritual.

## Site Preparation

It is the Grove Tender’s responsibility to ensure that the space is ready for ritual. Outdoors, this includes clearing the site of any branches, rocks, or other encumbrances. The fire pit should be properly laid with a bed of sacred wood (preferably), constructed in a “teepee” fashion over a triangular base. In order to assist the fire starting and staying lit, we recommend using “fire starters.” You can purchase these at camping supply retailers. To create your own fire starters, mix shredded wax and small wood chip, about 40-60 by volume, and form into a block. When lighting the fire during the ritual, light the fire starters and your fire should be able to stay lit and grow easily.

The altar is prepared by placing tools in their proper locations. Mead and water are poured into the chalices and should be covered with patens. The Grove Tender may wish to physically tune into the site energies to determine if there is a need to dispel any technological influences. The space should be restored to a natural energy state. If machinery has been in the area recently, especially chain saws, brush cutters, or ATVs, the tree spirits nearby may be nervous and need calming and reassurance. Just before the ritual start, either D1 or D2 joins the Grove Tender and verifies that all is ready for the ritual. Typically the altar candles and the charcoal block for the incense are lit, then the Grove Tender rings the gong three times, signaling the beginning of the processional.

For indoor rituals, the Grove Tender should likewise prepare the space. A candle or a cauldron with Sterno may

## Outline

The following is the basic outline of a Keltrian seasonal rite:

1. Designating Parts
2. Individual Preparation
3. Site Preparation
4. Processional
5. Marking Sacred Space
6. Announcement
  - a. Unite Song (Optional)
7. Tree Meditation
8. Parting the Veil
9. Triad Invocations
  - a. Ancestors
  - b. Nature Spirits
  - c. Gods
10. Explanation of Rite
11. Calling the Principals
12. Lighting the Sacred Fire
13. Devotionals
14. Offerings
15. Divination –Message from the Gods
16. Grove’s Choice
17. Remembrances
18. Consecration of the Blessing
19. Passing the Blessing
20. Closing Announcement and Thanks.
21. Returning the Principals
22. Thanking the Triads
23. Closing the Veil
24. Reversal of Tree Meditation
25. Parting Message
26. Recessional.



## Designating Parts

Prior to the ritual, the D1 and D2 should assemble the celebrants attending, designate parts, and give a brief description of what will occur. This benefits any visitors or first-time attendees. The D1 and D2 should use their knowledge, background, and experience of the celebrants to provide a good ritual experience for all. Keltrian Druid ritual is a participatory experience and most of the parts of the ritual should be shared among those attending. Depending on the size of your Grove and the experience level of your attendees, some rituals may require some people to perform multiple parts, other rituals may require that some parts be split between multiple people. For example, “marking the space” could be done by one person (who is also doing other parts) or it could be done by as many as eight individuals: Past, Present, Future, East, South, West, North, and Center.



represent the central fire. Clocks should be either removed or covered so that celebrants will not be able to watch them. The addition of greenery or other natural materials can help establish a well-prepared site.

## The Processional

Before the ritual begins, the participants assemble and walk to the ritual site. The processional may be silent, it may be punctuated with the beat of percussion instrument, or it may vibrate with song. Processional songs can range from the dirge-like tones of Gregorian chants to effervescent, joyful cadences. The type of processional song a Grove uses will be determined by the season of the year and personal preference. The D1 may choose to lead the processional with the D2 bringing up the rear. In this way the D1 can direct the others within the space. The Grove Tender anoints the D1 on the brow with the appropriate sacred oil for the seasonal or other rite. The Grove Tender marks the forehead of each celebrant with the ancient tri-line pattern (T) while saying,

**May you be blessed in Mind, Body, and Spirit.**

The Grove tender anoints the rest of the processional as they enter single file. After the D2 has been anointed, he or she takes the oil and anoints the Grove Tender in the same fashion. The D2 and Grove Tender are last to enter the space. The D1 approaches the altar, and the D2 then leaves the assemblage to stand at his or her side. Once there, both face the altar and offer a salute to those it represents by tracing the Keltrian Druid Sigil in the air. D1 and D2 then turn and face the assemblage.

## Consecrating the Space

The designated person approaches the altar and receives the bell branch. Then he or she goes to the Southwestern side of the ritual space and says:

**Out of Tir Andomain, I call the Bards, the Seers and the Druids of the past to hear these bells and join with us in this, our sacred rite.**

*Rings the Bell Branch three times.*

Traveling sunwise, he or she goes to the northern perimeter of the circle and says,

**Out of Mide, in the days of [Your grove's name], I call the Seers, the Druids, and the Bards of today to hear these bells and join with us in this, our sacred rite.**

*Rings the Bell Branch three times.*

Continues traveling sunwise to the South East and says,

**Out of Magh Mor, I call upon the Druids, the Bards, and the Seers of the future to hear these bells and join with us in this, our sacred rite.**

*Rings the Bell Branch three times.*

Continues traveling sunwise to complete the circle, passing inside of the place where the circle began in the Southwest.

Next either the same person or another person takes the Bell Branch and continues walking to the eastern portion of the circle, passing inside of the place where the Present was called (continuing the spiral motion), just before reaching the East says,

**I walk to the East...**

Stopping in the East and facing the East, the person says,

**I stand in the Light of the mythical city of Finias. The East, from which the Sword of Nuada came. I call upon the East to join with us and enter into the Otherworldly Tree.**

*Rings the Bell Branch three times.*

He or she moves sunwise around the circle, continuing the spiral, passing inside of the place where the Future was called,

**I walk to the South..**

Arriving at the South and says,

**I stand in the Light of the mythical city of Gorias. Gorias, from which the Spear of Lugh did come. I call upon the South to join with us and enter into the Otherworldly Tree.**

*Rings the Bell Branch three times.*

He or she continues the spiral,

**I walk to the West...**

Arriving at the West and says,

**I stand in the Shadow of the mythical city of Murias. Murias, from which the Cauldron of the Dagda came. I call upon the West to join with us and enter into the Otherworldly Tree.**

*Rings the Bell Branch three times.*

He or she continues onward.

**I walk to the North...**

Arriving at the North and says,

**I stand in the Shadow of the mythical city of Falias. Falias, from which the Lia Fail did come. I call upon the North to join with us and enter into the Otherworldly Tree.**

*Rings the Bell Branch three times.*

Upon completion, he or she walks around the circle once again, spiraling in to finally reach the center of the circle entering from the North and says,

**I walk to the center; I stand at Uisneach – The center of time and space. Here I plant the Otherworldly Tree. All time is now. All places are here. We are at the center of time and space.**

*Rings the Bell Branch three times.*

Then places the Bell Branch in the center of the circle (next to the fire area or candle as appropriate).

**So be it!**

## Announcement of Rite

The primary clergy person (D1) tells the celebrants why they have come. For instance; “We are here to celebrate Beltane, feast of the greening, and to honor the patrons thereof.”

The announcement is a short, simple statement of why the Druids have come together for worship.



## Unity Song (Optional)

At this point, the Bard leads all in a song of Grove identity. Our Grove uses the song, "People of the Oak" (see appendix 5).

We are the People of the Oak  
Gathered at the sacred well.  
Joined here the Old Ones to invoke  
So to weave our magick spell.

We are the children of the wood  
Standing in the faerie ring.  
Here, where the mighty ones have stood  
Praises to the Gods we bring.

## Tree Meditation

This meditation, using the symbology of a growing tree, allows all in the space to relax, ground and center, and establish a group mind. It is also the vehicle through which we recharge our energies for magickal working. The Tree Meditation can be led by anyone with the skill and desire to do so. A sample Tree Meditation is provided in Appendix 1.

## Parting the Veil

The designated Seer approaches the altar and receives the seashell or other object appropriate for Parting the Veil. While facing the center, the Seer uses the shell to invoke Manannan, the Guardian of the Gate to the Astral, to "Part the Veil" or "Open the Gate" so that those of the spirit may pass freely to the ritual space. A simple invocation to Manannan might go like this:

**O' Manannan, Lord of the Headlands, Son of the Sea, Patron of Merchants and Sailors, guardian of the Veil between our world and Magh Mor, I, [magickal name] call to you. You, who commands Wavesweeper; Manannan of the red beard, I beseech you let the mists between the worlds dissolve that the Old Ones may commune with us. So be it!**

Seer replaces shell on altar.

All sing a chant to Manannan (See Appendix 5). We use the following:

O' Son of Sea to you we pray – Manannan Mac Lir  
To part the Veil so that we may – Call the Wise Ones here  
Open now the watery Veil – To the spirits' domain  
In your coracle may they sail – to our hearts again.

## The Triad Invocations

### Ancestors

Carrier One approaches the altar and facing the center, receives the cauldron or bowl of water from D1. Holding the cauldron, he or she invokes the spirits of the Ancestors into the water in the bowl;

**Ancestors, Old ones, Mothers and fathers of our people, I [Magickal Name] reach across the Veil with my words and call to you. You who have anchored our faith, you of times long ago, I call you with the water. I call you with water that is the might oceans, with water that is the gentle rains. I call you with the water of this sacred**

**vessel, and bid you enter into this water that we, your children, may be blessed by our communion with you. So be it.**

The carrier announces;

**With this water, I give you the blessings of the ancestors.**

The carrier proceeds sunwise, starting with D1, anointing each person on the brow with a few drops of the water while all sing a chant to the Ancestors. Our grove uses the following chant;

From far across this mortal plane,  
Mothers and Fathers of Old.  
We pray that ye return again,  
Mothers and Fathers of Old.  
To share with us the mysteries  
And secrets long untold,  
Of the ancient ways we seek to reclaim,  
Mothers and Fathers of Old.

The carrier finishes with D2, who takes the cauldron and blesses the carrier. The D2 returns the cauldron to the altar.

### Nature Spirits

Carrier Two approaches the altar, receives the cauldron of earth from D1, and invokes the Nature Spirits into the cauldron. Here is a sample invocation to the Nature Spirits:

**I, [Magickal Name] call you, Nature Spirits: spirit of the bear and of the deer, spirit of the fox and of the hawk. I call the spirits of vegetation: spirit of the oak and of the mistletoe, spirit of the wildflowers and the grasses of the field. I call, too, the mountains and the caves. I call the hidden ones: sprites and faeries, gnomes and dwarves. All spirits of this time, of the present, rooted on this earth with us, I call you to your element of earth, and bid you enter into this vessel of earth, that we, your brothers and sisters, may be blessed by our communion with you. So be it.**

The carrier announces:

**With this earth, I give you the blessings of the Nature Spirits.**

The carrier then proceeds to anoint the Grove in the same fashion as Carrier One, while all sing a song to the Nature Spirits. Our Grove uses the "Fur and Feather" chant.

Fur and feather and scale and skin,  
Different without, but the same within.  
Man of body, but one of soul,  
Through all creatures are the Gods made whole.

### Gods

Carrier Three approaches the altar, receives the cauldron of incense from D1, and invokes the Gods.

**O' Gods, the preservers, the timekeepers: I, [Magickal Name], send my voice across the waves to you. I beckon you from the ancient Sidhes and stone circles. Hear my words! I call you, Tuatha de Danaan, tribe of our Mother, Danu. Come, ride the air to this sacred place and become one with the air of this cauldron, that we, your tribe, may be blessed by our communion with you. So be it.**

The carrier announces:

**With the sky, I give you the blessings of the Gods.**

The carrier then proceeds sunwise, using a feather or his or her hand to waft the incense smoke toward each person's brow while all sing a chant to the Gods. Us use "Be With Us."

Be with us anew  
Sacred Gods of ancient lore,  
As we have been with you  
And will be with you once more.

## Explanation of Rite

The explanation describes why we celebrate the feast and what these times mean to us. It is handled as a dialogue between D1 and D2. The D1 asks questions and the D2 answers. In this way, the participants are educated in the meaning and purpose of the rite. The following explanation comes from an Imbolc rite. The questions are standard. The answers can be simple or elegant. The manner of response is up to the discretion of the secondary clergy.

**D1: Wherefore have we come to the Grove upon this day (night)?**

**D2: We come to celebrate Imbolc, feast of the waxing light and time of the stirring.**

**D1: And why do we celebrate?**

**D2: As the light increases, our Mother, the Earth, stirs from her sleep, portending the dawn of a new summer.**

**D1: And whom do we honor upon this new feast?**

**D2: We honor Brigid, Bringer of the Light; we honor Aonghus Og, God of Youth and Love.**

**D1: Why have we chosen these Deities to honor on this occasion?**

**D2: We honor Brigid for the light that warms the Earth; we honor Aonghus Og for the love that warms the heart.**

**D1: And what does this time mean to the Druids?**

**D2: The seeds of your yearly goals, sown at Samhain, stir within the sod. Soon they will sprout, so that our plans can manifest into action.**

**D1: Then let us call the Patron and Matron (Or "Matron and Patron" depending upon which deity the D1 and D2 will be calling) of this feast.**

## Calling the Principals

At this point in the ritual, the Patron and Matron, who are the primary Deities honored at the rite, are called to separate from the pantheon and assume their places of honor within the altar candles. Each clergy person calls one of the principals. The D2 faces the altar, takes the altar candle closest to him/her, and hold it up and invokes the deity into the candle. A sample invocation follows:

**O' Brigid, daughter of the Dagda, Goddess of Fire, of Poetry, of the Forge. O' ye bringer of the light, I, [Magickal Name], call you forth from those gathered here and bid you to join the fire of your spirit with this flame, that your countenance may shine upon us during this, your rite. So be it.**

The D1 then invokes the remaining Principal in a similar fashion.

## Lighting the Sacred Fire

D1 and D2 take their respective candles and approach the fire pit, which has already been prepared. The D1 and D2 stand on either side of the pit and say:

**D2: O' Brigid...**

**D1: O' Aonghus Og...**

**Both: With the flames of your spirits, we kindle the sacred flame.**

Then D1 and D2 ignite the wood bed with their candles and replace them on the altar.

In an indoor ritual, the D1 and D2 may choose to light a representation in the center of the Druid Sigil.

## Lighting the Sacred Fire

At this point within ritual, any of the Grove may devote something of their own creation to the service of the principals of the feast. Some examples of devotionals would be: A handmade or hand-embroidered ritual garment, a ritual tool, a poem or song, a dance, or a divination tool. The devotional is presented to the principals by performance or by laying it at the foot of the altar and making a proclamation concerning it.

## The Offerings

Unlike the Devotionals which are items dedicated in service to the principals, the offerings are actual gifts to the Gods. Offerings may consist of grain, bread, herbs, sachets, charged stones, crystals, incense, or small trinkets. The D1 removes the wicker offertory from the altar and passes it sunwise. Each person places his or her offering inside the basket. Those who have not brought physical offerings are encourage to direct their energies into the offertory. When the offertory returns to the D2 he or she holds it above the ritual fire. The D1 takes the ritual branch and sickle from the altar, holding one in each hand over the offertory. The D1 then slowly brings the sickle blade to the branch while asking the principals to accept the gifts that have been presented.

[Patron], [Matron], accept these gifts presented in your honor. Be strengthened from the energy that we, the children of your tribe, send to you. So be it.

The offertory is placed in the fire, where it is consumed. This is the time for ecstatic release; the grove is encourage to sing, dance, and otherwise express their joy. If the ritual is being held indoors and the offering cannot be burned, wrap it in a clean, white cloth of natural material, preferably linen. It may be stored and burnt at a later ritual.

## The Divination

Now that the channel to the Gods has been opened, the Seer divines any messages that the Gods may wish to send to the Grove. The manner of divination is up to the acting Seer. He or she may use cards, runes, Ogham sticks, a scrying ball, or whatever else he or she prefers. Once the message has been received and interpreted, the Seer shares it with the Grove.

## Grove's Choice

This is the "open" part of the ritual. During this portion of the rite, the Grove may do what it feels is most appropriate. This may be drumming, dancing, free-form chanting, performing a pageant, or other theatrical presentation representative of the season. Some groups may wish to work on a project, such as charging crystals or planting seeds. It would even be acceptable (though probably not popular) for the clergy to deliver a sermon during the open portion of ritual. This portion of the rite is not mandatory. We advise it be kept to a reasonable time lime, probably not to exceed twenty minutes.

Note: Healings or spells should not be done at the seasonal feasts unless there is an emergency. Healings and spells should be reserved for the Mistletoe or Vervain rites.

## Remembrances

During this portion of the ritual, the clergy distributes small tokens to the participants that in some way represent the two principals of the feast. The remembrances are everyday objects that, because of their association with a particular deity, evoke thoughts of that deity when we encounter these objects in our everyday lives. Our thoughts give energy to the Gods; thus, the associations with everyday objects constantly deliver strength to our Gods. The remembrances that our Grove have used include:

- Small candles for Brigid.
- Candy hearts for Aonghus Og.
- Hazelnuts for Boann.
- Wildflowers for Bile.
- Grapes for Danu.
- Sunflower seeds for Lugh.
- Black feathers (or raisins) for Morrigan.
- Beef Jerky (or granola) for The Dagda.

Keep in mind that the remembrances are only limited by your imagination and knowledge of the Gods and Goddesses you wish to honor.

The D1 or D2 who invoked the Principal deity typically passes the remembrances for that deity. This may also be done by another designated person.

Method: (Taken from the Imbolc ritual.)

*D1: Takes the bowl of candles from the altar; removes one candle, and lights it with Brigid's altar candle, and says;*

**Brigid, Goddess of Fire, we remember thee through the flame.**

The bowl is passed sunwise. Each participant takes a candle and lights it from the previous candle until all are lit. The candles may then be blown out.

*D2: Takes the bowl of candy hearts from the altar; removes one heart and says,*

**Aonghus Og, God of Youth and Love, we remember thee through the tokens of young love.**

The bowl is passed sunwise. Each person takes one heart. When the bowl returns to the D2, all partake of the candy.

## The Blessing

We ask the principals to impart their blessings into the communal chalices. Our Grove sometimes adds a single drop of sacred plant extract to the contents of each chalice. The extract we use depends on the celebration.

The D2 removes both chalices, one of mead and one of water, from the altar. The D1 takes the sickle and the ritual branch from the altar. D1 and D2 face each other standing in front of the altar. The D2 holds forth both chalices and the D1 hold the branch and sickle above the chalices, slowly bringing the sickle blade to the branch while asking for the blessing.

**O' [Patron], O' [Matron]; we the Children of Danu have given you our praise; give us \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. Bless us, O' Gods, through this, our communion with you. So be it.**

Examples of Patron/Matron & Blessing Received:

- Dagda – Bounty
- Brigid – Inspiration
- Aonghus Og – Love
- Boann – Fertility
- Bile – Strength
- Danu – Abundance
- Lugh – Skill
- Morrigan – Wisdom

Other blessings or Deities may be used as your individual Grove decided.

**Behold the Waters of \_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_! One is water, one is of mead. Drink of that which you will, both are equally consecrated.**

The chalices are passed sunwise. The Bard leads all in a song or chant while the chalices are being circulated. We use the "Mead Chant." (See Appendix 5)

Pass the cup and share the bounty  
Of this golden mead.  
O' milk of clover, yeast and bee  
Unite us in our creed.  
Pass the horn and share the blessings  
Of this sacred brew,  
That all may know the joy to be  
The Children of Danu.

## Closing

The D1 announces:

**We have shared in the blessings of the Gods, but now has come the time to depart.**

## Returning The Patrons

The D1 and D2 each return their respective patrons back to their vessel of sky. Example:

**[Name], we thank you for your blessings. The time has come to return to the air with your brethren. I bid you, let your spirit return to the cauldron of sky. So be it.**

The Druid touches the flame to the incense in the cauldron, then snuffs out the candle. The process is repeated by the other clergy person with the second candle.

Caution: When wax drips onto a charcoal block and is then touched by the candle, the block will burst into flame. The theatrical effect is impressive, but poses some danger. Proceed cautiously.

## Thanking the Triads

Carrier One holds the water cauldron and, facing center, thanks the Ancestors and bids them good-bye. The carrier might say:

**We thank thee, Ancestors for your presence at this rite. Through our communion you are strengthened as are we. Now has come the time to close this rite, so depart across the Veil if you must, or stay if you will. In love we bid you farewell. So be it.**

The Carrier replaces the cauldron on the altar.

Carrier Two and Three thank their respective correspondences[Nature Spirits & Gods] in the same fashion.

## Closing the Veil

The Seer thanks Manannan for Parting the Veil and bids it be closed again.

An example of Closing the Veil:

**O' Manannan Mac Lir, Lord of the Headlands, Keeper of the Veil, I [Magickal Name] give you thanks for Parting the Veil during this rite so that the spirits of the Ancestors, the Nature Spirits, and the Gods could pass more freely between the worlds. But now is the time for this ritual to end, so, if you must, allow the Veil to thicken again. So be it.**

## Reversing the Tree Meditation

The Tree Meditation is reversed, allowing excess energies to be drained into the earth, which brings the participants back to a human mind-set.

## Parting Message

This is a statement of ending from the clergy. It reaffirms the ritual's success and officially closes the rite. The clergy might say:

**We have received the blessings of (Name) and (Name), patron and matron of this feast. Now let us go forth, refreshed by our communion and strengthened in our knowledge. We walk with the blessings of the Gods. We walk with wisdom.**

## Recessional

The participants depart from the sacred space. Our Grove uses the recessional song, "Walk with Wisdom."

Walk with wisdom  
From this hallowed place,  
Walk not in sorrow  
Our roots shall e'er embrace.  
May strength be your brother  
And honor be your friend  
And luck be your lover  
Until we meet again.

After the song, it is traditional for all celebrants to hug each other and generally share their good feelings concerning the ritual.

The Grove Tender takes care of the libation bowls (if used), offering the libations to the Earth.



**Figure 4 Isaac Bonewits & Tony Taylor meeting at Carleton College, 4/23/1994.**

## Solitary Keltrian Ritual

Adapted by C. Leigh McGinley  
From Henge Happenings #61

Although Keltrian ritual is designed for a group of people and is most often performed by a Grove, one person can just as easily perform the rituals in a Keltrian way. Many Keltrians are solitary, by choice or by chance. Some current Keltrian Grove Leaders were solitary for many years, and performed these rituals alone with just a little alteration to make them appropriate for a "Grove of One." Below you will find a basic ritual walk-through for a Solitary Keltrian Ritual that can be used for your own personal practice. It will also aid you in making an easy transition from a solitary ritual to a group ritual, should the opportunity arise.

In solitary ritual, the timing and flow of the rite will be different than in a larger group ritual, so the songs included in group ritual are not really required or necessary. However, if you want to sing (or simply chant the words to the songs), feel free to do so! After all, you are the leader of this rite. (It will, however, help to know the songs should you ever get the opportunity to join other Keltrians in ritual, or lead a Grove of your own.)

References to page numbers in this ritual indicate pages from the Keltrian Book of Ritual.

Preparation as in Group Ritual (see pg. 23, "Individual Preparation")

Altar setup as in Group Ritual (see pg. 5, "Ritual Tools" and photo pg. 8)

What follows is the standard opening and definition of sacred space for each and every Keltrian ritual.

## Blessing:

In group ritual, there is a processional to the ritual site that begins the ritual. A solitary will most likely not process to his/her chosen ritual area. However, you can begin your ritual and announce your intent to the universe by anointing your own brow with the tri-line pattern at the altar while saying:

**May I be blessed in Body, Mind, and Spirit.**

Next, face your altar and offer a salute to those it represents by drawing the Keltrian Druid Sigil in the air (see pg. 25 for a graphic of the sigil). We have seen the sigil drawn very powerfully with two hands, the index fingers simultaneously drawing each half of the circle wreath, and then each staff. The center Awen symbol can then be drawn with three fingers of the right hand.

## Time and Space:

Pick up your bell branch, walk to the Southwestern side of your ritual space and say:

**Out of Tír Andomain, I call the Bards, Seers, and Druids of the past to hear these bells and join with me in this, my sacred rite.**

Ring the bell branch three times.

Traveling sunwise, walk to the Northern perimeter of your sacred space and say:

**Out of Midé, in the days of the Henge of Keltria, I call the Seers, Bards, and Druids of the present to hear these bells and join with me in this, my sacred rite.**

Ring Bell Branch three times.

Continue traveling sunwise to the Southeast and say:

**Out of Magh Mór, I call upon the Druids, Bards, and Seers of the future to hear these bells and join with me in this, my sacred rite.**

Next, continue walking sunwise to the East, traveling inside the circle you have just completed (continuing a spiral motion) and say:

**I walk to the East...**

Stop at the East, face East and say:

**I stand in the light of the mythical city of Finias. Finias, from which the Sword of Nuada came. I call upon the East to join with me and enter into the Otherworldly Tree.**

Ring Bell Branch three times.

Continue moving sunwise around the circle, passing inside the place where the Future was called, continuing the spiral, while saying:

**I walk to the South...**

Arrive at the South and say:

**I stand in the Light of the mythical city of Gorias. Gorias, from which the Spear of Lugh did come. I call upon the South to join with me and enter into the Otherworldly Tree.**

Ring Bell Branch three times.

Continue the spiral:

**I walk to the West...**

Arrive at the West and say:

**I stand in the shadow of the mythical city of Murias. Murias, from which the cauldron of the Dagda did come. I call upon the West to join with me and enter into the Otherworldly Tree.**

Ring Bell Branch three times.

Continue to the North, saying:

**I walk to the North...**

Arrive at the North and say:

**I stand in the shadow of the mythical city of Falias. Falias, from which the Lia Fáil did come. I call upon the North to join with me and enter into the Otherworldly Tree.**

Ring Bell Branch three times.

Upon completion, walk around the circle once again, spiraling in to finally reach the center of the circle and say:

**I walk to the Center; I stand at Uisneach. Here I plant the Otherworldly Tree. All time is now. All places are here. I am at the center of time and space.**

Ring Bell Branch three times.

Then place the Bell Branch in the center of the circle, next to the fire area or candle as appropriate. (In the case of indoor ritual or hard ground, some Keltrians find it useful to use a pot of earth, such as a small flowerpot, to "plant" the Branch upright.)

Say:

**So be it!**

Next, you will want to mention to the spirits around you (and to the Gods) why you are performing this ritual at this time. This is a short, simple statement, for example:

**I have come to the grove on this day (night) to celebrate Samhain, the Feast of Death.**

## Tree Meditation:

A standard Tree Meditation can be found on page 40 of the Book of Ritual.

The purpose of the Tree Meditation is to allow you to relax, ground and center, and help you get into a frame of mind for ritual. In solitary ritual, the Tree Meditation does not have to be a guided meditation, as it is in group ritual. Rather, the solitary Keltrian can learn the basics of the standard Tree Meditation, and then simply close his/her eyes at this point in the rite and walk through it in his/her mind. Even silently reading the guided meditation from this ritual book in an active way can bring you to the proper frame of mind (and help you learn the meditation as well). If you feel the need for a guided meditation, you might consider making a tape of your own voice guiding the meditation that you can play at the appropriate time in the ritual. With practice, the Tree Meditation becomes second-nature, and you may find that eventually it takes no time at all to become your "tree self" once you set your mind to the task.

Of course, as a Solitary, you would end the meditation just before the part that is intended to establish a group mind. You would eliminate the 9<sup>th</sup> paragraph, and simply open your eyes as a tree. In the reversal, you would simply eliminate any reference to others, and at the end, open your eyes again as a person.

As you become more adept at the Tree Meditation through practice, you may want to try another popular method of achieving tree-consciousness, which can be found on page 41, paragraph 3 of the Book of Ritual.

## Parting the Veil:

Pick up your seashell from the altar and use it to invoke Manannan mac Lir, the Guardian of the Gate to the Otherworld. This is to ask him to "Part the Veil" or "Open the Gate" so that those of the spirit world might pass freely to the ritual space. Hold the shell before you in both hands and say these words or something similar:

**O Manannan, Lord of the Headlands, Son of the Sea, Patron of Merchants and Sailors, guardian of the Veil between our world and the Otherworld, I, [magickal name], call to you. You, who commands Wavesweeper; Manannan of the Red Beard, I beseech you, let the mists between the worlds dissolve so that the Old Ones may commune with me.**

**So be it!**

Return the shell to the altar.

## The Triad Invocations:

Pick up the cauldron of water from the altar, and, holding it before you in both hands, say the following words or something similar:

**Ancestors, Old Ones, mothers and fathers of my people, I, [magickal name], reach across the Veil with my words and call to you. You who have anchored my faith, you of times long ago, I call you with the water. I call you with water that is the mighty oceans, with water that is gentle rains. I call you with the water of this sacred vessel, and bid you enter into this water, so that I may be blessed by my communion with you. So be it!**

Anoint yourself on the brow with the water from the cauldron of the Ancestors, saying:

**With this water, I am given the blessings of the Ancestors.**

Return the cauldron to the altar.

(Note: Many Keltrians use three fingers on the brow all at once to represent the tri-line, while others use one finger and draw the tri-line on the brow one line at a time. Use the method that feels right to you.)

Pick up the cauldron of earth and invoke the Nature Spirits into the cauldron, holding the cauldron before you in both hands and saying these words or something similar:

**I, [Magickal Name], call you, Nature Spirits: spirit of the bear and of the deer, spirit of the fox and of the hawk. I call the spirits of vegetation: spirit of the oak and of the mistletoe, spirit of the wildflowers and the grasses of the field. I call, too, the mountains and the caves. I call the Hidden Ones: sprites and fairies, dwarves and gnomes. All spirits of this time, of the present, rooted on this earth with me, I call you into this vessel of earth, so that I, your brother/sister, may be blessed by your presence here. So be it!**

Anoint yourself on the brow with the earth from the cauldron of the Nature Spirits, saying:

**With this earth, I am given the blessings of the Nature Spirits.**

Return the cauldron to the altar.

Pick up the cauldron of incense (be extremely careful; this cauldron can get very HOT), hold the cauldron in both hands before you, and say these words or something similar:

**O Gods, the preservers, the timekeepers, I, [Magickal Name], send my voice across the waves to you. I beckon you from the ancient Sidhes and stone circles. Hear my words! I call you, Tuatha de Danaan, tribe of the Mother, Danu. Come, ride the air to this sacred place and become one with the air of this cauldron, so that I, a member of your tribe, may be blessed by my communion with you. So be it!**

Pick up the feather and waft the smoke from the cauldron of the Gods toward your brow, saying:

**With the air of the sky, I am given the blessings of the Gods.**

Return the cauldron to the altar.

*This ends the standard defining of sacred space that is used at every ritual.*

What follows now is an example of a solitary Samhain rite, which is formulaic and can be used in proper alteration to fit any Feast. See the group ritual examples for ideas for each Feast. Tools: Standard ritual tools; black candle, white candle (see Grove's Choice)

You can decorate your altar with autumn leaves, gourds and pumpkins, Indian corn, "Hallowe'en" – style decorations – whatever feels right to give you a sense of the Feast of Samhain. (For Imbolc, you might choose to decorate the altar with a Brighid's Cross or another symbol of the returning sun. For Lughnasadh you could decorate with products of the harvest, such as a sheave of wheat or fruits of the season. Be creative! It all helps you to achieve a ritual mindset.)

## Explanation of Rite:

Once you have defined sacred space, as above, you may begin the body of the rite by speaking aloud your reason for being in that sacred space at this time. (Remember that, although you may feel like you are alone, there are many beings around you that you can't see who are drawn to your rite and might be listening for your intent, so speaking it aloud is a good practice.) A good example would be:

**I have come to the Grove this day (night) to celebrate Samhain, the season of endings. At this time, I prepare for transformation; death to rebirth as reflected in this season. On this feast, I honor The Morrigan, Battle Goddess of Chaos and Death. And I honor The Dagda, the Good God. I have chosen to honor The Morrigan on this occasion because she is the embodiment of death and chaos. I have chosen to honor The Dagda on this occasion because, as "All-Father," he portends a return to order, and sustains me through the dark time with his Cauldron of Undry. To the Druids, this is a time to celebrate the Gods within us: the Dagda as the wise grandfather, the Morrigan as the crone. We set places for our ancestors at our tables. We make goals for the new year.**

The idea of this is to spend a few moments considering the implications of the season and the God and Goddess to be honored. Then say:

**I will now call the God and Goddess to be honored at this feast.**

## Calling the Principals and Lighting the Sacred Fire:

Take one altar candle and invoke the Morrigan from the incense cauldron into the candle flame. Say:

**O Morrigan ...**

Take the other altar candle in the other hand, and invoke the Dagda into the candle flame. Say:

**O Dagda...**

Bring the candles together, and kindle the center fire (or center candle) with the God and Goddess candle flames, saying:

**...with the flames of your spirits, I kindle the sacred fire.**

Return the candles to their respective places on the altar.

## Devotional:

Now is the time for a devotional, if you have one. See page 32 of the Book of Ritual for ideas. These are items dedicated in service to the principle God and/or Goddess invoked at the feast. There will be times when you don't have a devotional, and that's okay. It is not a requirement for ritual.

## The Offering:

The offering is an actual gift to the Gods. See page 32 of the Book of Ritual for an explanation of the Offerings.

You may place your basket on the altar plate with your offering inside for the blessing. Take the sickle in your right hand and the sacrificial branch in your left hand (or the other way around if you are left-handed). Hold them over the offertory. Say:

**Morrigan, Dagda, be strengthened by the energies of these gifts I send to you. So be it!**

Touch the sickle to the branch while holding them over the offertory. This is properly performed by bringing the cutting edge of the sickle straight down from above the extended branch until they touch.

Once the blessing is done, you may place the offertory in the sacred fire, if outdoors. If indoors, you may wrap the offertory in white linen to be burned at a more convenient time...perhaps at your next outdoor ritual.

## The Divination:

Say aloud:

**I will now see what messages the Gods have for me.**

As a Solitary, you must perform every role in the ritual, including acting as your own Seer. Some people find this difficult, but there are several relatively easy ways to divine for oneself. Take your time. Use cards, a scrying mirror, ogham – if you're outside, you can simply look around you for omens – use anything that speaks to you, anything with which you are comfortable. You may want to write down your impressions or your reading for later examination. At a later time, you may even want to share what you received during ritual with a trusted friend, especially if you feel the need for an impartial interpretation.

## Grove's Choice:

This is the place in group ritual where the Groves can be creative, and it is no different for a Solitary practitioner. It should be something that is appropriate for the season, of course. For our example, we will use the Grove's Choice from the Group Samhain ritual of this ritual book, adapting it for your solitary use.

Pick up the black candle and light it from the Morrigan's candle. Meditate on this candle a moment and the qualities of the Morrigan, then say:

**This candle represents the Morrigan, dark crone of death.**

Project into the candle any negative qualities you wish to rid yourself of in the coming year. Once that is done, say:

**O Morrigan, at this season of endings, bring an end to the negativity within my life. So be it!**

Blow out the black candle.

Pick up the white candle, light it from the Dagda's candle. Meditate on this candle a moment and the qualities of the Dagda, then say:

**This candle represents the Dagda.**

Call upon the Dagda's wisdom and generosity and ask him to instill you with positive qualities in the coming year. Project your wishes into the white candle. When that is done, say:

**O Dagda, at this season of beginnings, bring new beginnings to my life with these wishes. So be it!**

Blow out the white candle.

## Remembrances:

These small tokens in some way represent the two Principals of the Feast. For Samhain, we use a black feather (or raisin) for the Morrigan and beef jerky (or granola) for the Dagda. Remembrances for other Feasts and Patrons can be found on page 33 of the Book of Ritual.

Using raisins and granola, we will walk through the remembrance portion of the rite.

Pick up the bowl of raisins from the altar. Say:

**Morrigan, goddess of endings and beginnings, I remember thee through the raisin.**

Before eating the raisins, set a few aside as a libation, either onto the ground or into a libation bowl on the altar. Then eat the remaining raisins. Over the coming year, think of the Morrigan anytime you see raisins.

Pick up the bowl of granola from the altar. Say:

**Dagda, I remember thee through the bounty of your Cauldron that sustains me through these dark times.**

Before eating the granola, set some aside as a libation, either onto the ground or into a libation bowl on the altar. Then eat the remaining granola. Over the coming year, think of the Dagda anytime you see granola.

## The Blessing:

The chalices, one of mead and one of water, may be placed on the altar plate for the blessing.

(Note: There are two schools of thought on the chalices for Solitary ritual. In group ritual, Keltrians use two chalices for the blessings of the principals; however, some Keltrians feel that only one chalice is necessary for a Solitary ritual, filled with the practitioner's choice of either water or mead, into which the blessings of the principals are then combined. Others feel that there is a balance to be maintained with two chalices, even for Solitary ritual, and so use both the water and the mead. This ritual walk-through will use two chalices, but, as a Solitary, it is your choice as to whether you use one chalice or two in your own Solitary ritual.)

Hold forth the sickle and the branch as before, now over the chalices. Slowly bring the sickle blade to the branch while asking for the blessing of the cups. Say:

**O Morrigan ...O Dagda...I have given you my adoration and praise. Now I ask that you give me your blessings. Morrigan, bring to me your transformation. Dagda, bring to me your bounty. So be it!**

Touch blade to branch. Pour a small amount of each chalice on the ground, or, if indoors, into a libation bowl – to be taken outside after ritual and then poured on the ground.



(You may use the same libation bowl as you did for the remembrances.) Indicate the cups and say:

**Behold, the waters of transformation and bounty!**

Drink from both or either chalice to receive the blessings of the Principals.

### The Closing:

Remember to announce your intent to close the rite to those spirits who have joined you. Say:

**I have shared in the blessings of the Gods, but now it is time to depart.**

### Returning the Patrons:

Take the Goddess altar candle and say:

**Morrigan, I thank you for your blessings. The time has come to return to the air with your brethren. Let your spirit return to the Cauldron of Sky. So be it!**

Touch the flame to the incense cauldron, then snuff out the candle.

Take the God altar candle and say:

**Dagda, I thank you for your blessings. The time has come to return to the air with your brethren. Let your spirit return to the Cauldron of Sky. So be it!**

Touch the flame to the incense cauldron as before, then snuff out the candle.

From this point in this example, the following is standard closing technique and order for every Keltrian ritual.

### Thanking the Triads:

The Triads are dismissed in the reverse order of the way they were called.

Pick up the Cauldron of Sky as before. Say something similar to:

**I thank you, Gods of my People, for your presence at this rite. Through our communion you are strengthened as I am. Now has come the time to close this rite, so go if you must or stay if you will. In love I bid you farewell. So be it!**

Replace the cauldron on the altar. Thank the remaining of the Triads in the same fashion – the Nature Spirits, and then the Ancestors.

### Closing the Veil:

Pick up the shell and hold it out as before. Say, for example:

**O Manannan mac Lir, Lord of the Headlands, Keeper of the Veil, I, [Magickal Name], give you thanks for Parting the Veil during this rite so that the spirits of the Ancestors, the Nature Spirits, and the Gods could pass more freely between the worlds. But now it is time for this ritual to end, so, if you must, allow the Veil to thicken again. So be it.**

Replace the shell on the altar.

## Reversing the Tree Meditation:

Reversal on page 41 of the Book of Ritual. Reconnect with your tree-self, and eliminate references to groups as you reverse the meditation. This is a time to drain off any excess energy you might be retaining from the ritual. Give it back to the earth and sky.

### Parting Statement:

This statement, said aloud, will help you return to a mundane state of consciousness and will allow any lingering spirits to understand that the ritual is truly over. Say:

**I have received the blessings of [Goddess name] and [God name], patron and matron of this Feast. Now let me go forth, refreshed by our communion and strengthened in my knowledge. I walk with the blessings of the Gods. I walk with wisdom.**

\* \* \*

It is our hope that, by this example, you will understand how simple it is to convert a group Keltrian ritual into a solitary Keltrian ritual.

Though there are some disadvantages to being solitary, there are sometimes great advantages as well. One of the advantages that we can see is that you will be trained in all aspects of Keltrian ritual, and so have no trouble taking any role that may be requested of you should you have the opportunity to join other Keltrians for ritual in future. Happy learning!



Figure 5 Keltrian Druid Sigil.

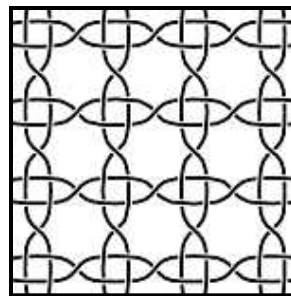


Figure 6 Conservative Druid Sigil Pattern.

# Cauldron Online Druid Ritual Variations 1998-1999

While doing a random search of the internet for posted RDNA liturgies, I ran across a website for a group called Cauldron which had borrowed a number of elements from the RDNA Order of Worship, and ran them in real-time on the internet. I'm not sure who Randall is though, but would appreciate getting in touch with him. I liked the idea, a little, and collected as many as I could, with some minor editing and present them here as a framework for possible use with members unable to physically meet. -Mike 2003.

## 1999 Online Spring Equinox

By Randall  
On-Line Log for Cauldron

### Introduction:

Randall: I want to welcome everyone to The Cauldron's Ostara Ritual. For the sake of any who may have never attended one of our online rituals, I will mention a few things: This is not a particularly Wiccan ritual, although like most modern Pagan rituals, there are many common elements. This ritual has many elements taken from "Reformed Druid" ritual. We will be grounding and centering, casting a circle, calling the quarters, and deities, celebrating spring, and charging the Waters of Life. Finally we will eat and be merry.

### Meditation:

Randall: [Leads a meditation]

I want all of you to relax.... leaving your fingers lightly on the keyboard.

Take a deep breath... Hold it... Let it out slowly....

Do it again, taking in a calm, peaceful feeling....

Letting out the cares and distractions of everyday life.

Another breath and you feel the mundane world drawing away...

Another breath and you smell the first breath of spring borne on the wings of the March winds

Continue to breath and relax...

Until you feel yourself enter that place that exists between the worlds, not in this world and not in the next.

This is the Place between Worlds....

You are very welcome here.

### Invocation:

Randall: I draw this circle to contain and protect our ritual. From Keyboard to Keyboard, I connect us. We come here in friendship and desire to reach beyond ourselves and touch the Gods. By our will, the circle is now cast.

MIRIAT: Living spirit of the East, we call to you. Airy Sylphs, Powers of Intellect, Strength of the Whirlwind and pleasant scents of the dawning. Spring come join us, be witness to this rite help our minds to think as one. Welcome and Blessed Be

Ann: Guardians of the South, Lords of Fire, bless us with your presence and join our Circle, if You will. Bless and guard our rite! <>

Solstice: From the womb of the seas, Spirits of the West, powers of water and inspiration, we ask that you would join us and let us taste of your sweet rejuvenating flow, as we gather together, circled in spirit, and intent <>

Sieglinde: Powers of the North, of the Earth, be with us here, bless us with the spirit of the green growing things of earth. Bless us with the living things that crawl upon the earth, be with us here today and give us the strength that we need. Blessed Be.

Randall: This is the appointed place. Now is the appointed time.

We come to worship the Gods.

The Gods are everywhere...but we worship Them here.

The Gods are without form...but worship them in these forms.

We offer them our prayers, sacrifices, and worship. Each of us in our own way.

Randall: I call upon the Lady of the Moon, of the Earth and of the mysterious waters from which life began and to which all must return. Be among us now as Maiden of the forest, the fair one who brings joy and new life, to break the winter's stillness and silence.

Randall: Mighty Lord of Day, the Shining One, the spark of the Sun now renewing life in the fields, I call you forth as the laughing God of the green woods with your pipes and cloven hooves, please join us here, and with your warmth let life be born anew.

Randall: If you wish to invite another deity into our circle, please do so now.

Ann: My Prince, I ask your presence here and welcome you with joy!

Sieglinde: I call upon Ostara, Lady of the Spring, bring your soft breezes.

YANNELL: I invite Madame Pele and Lono, God of Plenty.

MIRIAT: I call upon, Ra, Lord of the Sun.

Randall: I call upon mighty Athena, lend us your wisdom.

Gypsydove: I invite Aine...Goddess of the fairies.

Randall: [Anyone else...?]

Solstice: I call upon my Lady to join with us today, and bless us with her gifts of fertility and creation. With the birth and renewal of not only flesh, but of spirit, and of mind.

### Purpose:

Randall: Today we celebrate the awakening of Mother Earth from her winter slumbers. With the return of the Maiden from the underworld, life returns throughout the lands.

The nights were long, the trees had shed,  
The days were short, and life had fled.  
The winds were cold, the land seemed dead,  
But the Sun now returns from Southern Lands  
Plants spring up on every hand,  
"Let life return!" is the Maiden's command.  
The Sun grows stronger every day.  
The world goes lush and life holds sway.  
The Day will conquer the Night.

## Candle Lighting:

Randall: If you have a candle, light it now. See the light of the returning Sun in the flame of your candle. Feel the warmth of the reborn world flow into your body and spirit.

Randall: Join with me as we celebrate Spring.

(Repeat after Randall)

We call forth the Gentle Rains!

We call forth the Fertile Earth!

We call forth the Warm Sun!

We call forth the Soft Breezes!

Come forth, Maiden of the Forest!

O Lord! O Lady!

For this renewal of life and light, we thank you.

## Waters of Life:

Randall: [We are about to create the Waters of Life. During this part of the ritual hold your open power hand (probably the one you write with), palm down, over your glass of water. As I speak and type the words that follow this description, imagine the warmth and power of the reborn Earth coming from the ground beneath your feet and flowing throughout your body to radiate from the palm of your open hand into your glass of water. See the brilliant light charging the water with Earth energy. If you have a specific need (e.g. health, knowledge, etc.) you will have a chance to ask the Gods for their aid (either publicly or privately as you choose) during this ritual.]

Randall: O Mighty Ones, all ye Gods and Goddesses around us and within us, we have called upon you and you have heard us. We have offered of ourselves and you have accepted. Each of us has needs for guidance and for aid, without which we cannot fulfill our ways. Hear now your children and help us to help ourselves as you will.

If you have a request or need, please state it now, either publicly by typing it or silently as you prefer. When you have done so and are ready to continue.

Randall: O Earth Mother,  
We thank thee that seed springeth,  
that flower openeth,  
that grass waveth.

We thank thee for winds that whisper  
through the graceful elm,  
through the shapely maple,  
through the lively pine,  
through the shining birch,  
through the mighty oak.

We thank thee for all things  
O Earth Mother,  
who giveth life.

Randall: [To charge your water, Please type the following six lines as I do.]

Randall: Lord and Lady,  
hallow these waters by thy sevenfold powers,  
and by the three ways of day

and one of night.

Let Earth power flow through us and into  
the Waters of Life.

Randall: Feel the power finish flowing through you. When it has and you are ready to continue, type <>.

Randall: Take a small sip of the Waters of Life. Feel the energies that have been hidden deep in the Earth during the cold, dark winter flow into your body with that sip, feel that which you most need flow into you.

Take another sip and feel the love of the Gods empower you.

Take a third small sip and feel the light of truth and knowledge shining within you.

Randall: Type <> when you are ready to continue.

## Libation:

Randall: Now, with a small portion of your Waters of Life, water the plant beside you. See the Earth energies concentrated in the waters enter into the plant and begin its own transformation to Spring. Say (don't type) the following as you do this: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, may Spring burst forth around us.

Randall: When this ritual is finished, take the rest of your Waters of Life outside and pour the waters back into the Earth, repeating the above phase as you do. If you wish, you may pour the Waters a little bit at a time near your favorite plants. If you are in an area where drought is expected this year, you can fling the Waters from your fingertips to encourage rain instead of pouring.

## Benediction:

Randall: Now we come to the last part of the ritual. Ghost would love if she were here.  
Hold your food before you in front of the monitor screen.

We do ask, O Earth Maiden,  
That your blessings may surround us.  
We thank you for the plentiful food,  
The bounty of the Earth, Sky and Sea.  
Cast Your blessing upon this bounty,  
So we will be strengthened in Your love  
And enter the new season with joy.

(:sketching the druid symbol in blue fire:)

Randall: Sample your food and refresh your energies before we close the circle. When you are ready to continue, type "<>".

## Devocation:

Randall: Miria, please thank and dismiss East (Type <> when done)

MIRIAT: Living Spirit of the East, We thank you for joining in our circle. May there always be peace between us. Go if you must, stay if you will. Farewell and Blessed be. <>

Randall: Ann, please thank and dismiss South (Type <> when done)

Ann: Guardians of the South, Lords of Fire, we thank you for your presence and blessing. :)

Stay if you will, go if you must, and be welcome always. <>

Randall: Solstice, please thank and dismiss West (Type <> when done)  
 Solstice: Spirits of the West, we invite you to stay on with us, as your presence is welcome, but if you must depart, go with our thanks. <>  
 Randall: Sieglinde, please thank and dismiss North (Type <> when done)  
 Sieglinde: Powers of the North, thank you for being with us here today.  
 Thank you for your bounty.  
 Go if you must, stay if you will Blessed Be. <>

### Partings:

Randall: If you called another deity here, please thank and bid them farewell now. (Type <> when finished)  
 Ann: Thank you for coming, my Prince. Stick around if you want, or go back to work if you gotta. <>  
 Sieglinde: Thank you Lady Spring, Ostara for your presence at this rite. Stay if you will Go if you must. Blessed Be. <>  
 Randall: Athena, we thank thee for thy wisdom. Go if you must, stay if you will. <>  
 MIRIAT: Thank you Ra, Lord of the Sun, Shining One, for your presence here today. Go if you must, stay if you will, farewell and Blessed Be.  
 Gypsydove: Aine...Goddess of the fairies...thank you for being here with us. Stay if you will Go if you must. Soft Winds and Blessed Be.  
 Solstice: My Lady, I give you my thanks for joining with us this day. I thank you for the blessings that you have so generously bestowed onto those present. I bid you farewell, if part you must, but stay and be with us further, if it should please you. <>  
 YANNELL: Thank you Pele, thank you Lono for your presence and Blessing. Go if you must, stay if you will. Blessed Be!  
 Randall: Lord and Lady, Honored Guests gathered here with us... We are grateful for the support and wisdom you have shared with us as life renews this Spring. Go if you must, but know that you are always welcome to remain.

### Closure:

Randall: This Circle is now ended. But what we have shared here will never end... only grow. Go in peace and fellowship. Merry Meet, Merry Part, Merry Meet Again!



Figure 7 Class of 1888 Stone in front of Library.

## 1999 Online Beltane

By Randall  
 On-Line Log for Cauldron

This is the log of our online Beltane ritual of May 9, 1999. This log has been edited to remove extraneous comments.

### Introduction:

Randall: I want to welcome everyone to The Cauldron's Beltane Ritual. For the sake of any who may have never attended one of our online rituals, I will mention a few things: This is not a particularly Wiccan ritual, although like most modern Pagan rituals, there are many common elements. This ritual has many elements taken from "Reformed Druid" ritual. We will be grounding and centering, casting a circle, calling the quarters, and deities, celebrating spring, and charging the Waters of Life. Finally we will eat and be merry.

### Meditation:

Randall: [Leads a meditation]

I want all of you to relax.... leaving your fingers lightly on the keyboard.  
 Take a deep breath... Hold it... Let it out slowly....  
 Do it again, taking in a calm, peaceful feeling....  
 Letting out the cares and distractions of everyday life.  
 Another breath and you feel the mundane world drawing away...  
 Another breath and you smell the first breath of spring borne on the wings of the March winds  
 Continue to breath and relax...  
 Until you feel yourself enter that place that exists between the worlds, not in this world and not in the next.  
 This is the Place between Worlds....  
 You are very welcome here.

### Invocation:

Randall: I draw this circle to contain and protect our ritual. From Keyboard to Keyboard, I connect us. We come here in friendship and desire to reach beyond ourselves and touch the Gods. By our will, the circle is now cast.

Randall: Teleri, please call the spirits of the East<>

Teleri: By her breath I call her <>

Randall: Ann, south

Ann: Lords of the South, Guardians of Fire, we ask that you join us and lend your energies and protection to this Circle! <>

Randall: Jade, West please

JADEGRAY: Powers of the West, Spirits of Water, of the Ocean from whence we all came. We invite you to our Beltane rite, be with us now <>

Randall: Sieglinde, North

Sieglinde: Spirits of the North, guardians of the mountain fastness, guardians of the earth, be here now. <>

Randall: This is the appointed place. Now is the appointed time.

We come to worship the Gods.

The Gods are everywhere....but we worship Them here.  
The Gods are without form....but worship them in these forms.  
We offer them our prayers, sacrifices, and worship. Each of us  
in our own way.

Randall: Mighty Lord of the Hunt, the Shining One, the spark  
of the Sun now quickening the fields, I call you forth.  
Young Sun King, Horned One, Stag Spirit wild and free.  
Come dance and sing with the Maid of Spring. We come  
to celebrate thy joining with our Lady. We ask thee to  
attend our rite.

Randall: I call upon the Lady of the Moon, of the Earth and of  
the mysterious waters from which life began and to  
which all must return. Lovely Maiden, Mother, Wise  
One be a flame within our hearts today that grows in  
energy as we come to celebrate thy joining with our  
Lord, we ask thee to attend our rite.

Randall: If you wish to invite another into our circle, please do  
so. Type < when you are finished.

Teleri: My children <

Ann: My Fire-winged Prince, join us if you will! <

Randall: Wise Athena, lend us your wisdom, guard us with  
your spear. <

Ginny: Bridget and Joan, please come <

### Purpose:

Randall: The Lord has reached the end of his journey through  
the cold and darkness, to find the Lady awaiting him with  
warm and comfort. This is a time for joy and a time for  
sharing. Now is the time that seeds should be spilled.  
Togetherness brings bliss and fills the Earth with abundance.

### Candle Lighting:

Randall: If you have a candle, light it now. See the blinding  
light of joy in the flame of your candle. Feel the afterglow of  
our Lord and Lady's mating flow into your body and spirit and  
renew your life as it renews nature. Type < When you are  
ready to continue.

### Waters of Life:

Randall: [We are about to create the Waters of Life. During  
part this ritual (I'll tell you when) hold your wand or  
athame in power hand (probably the one you write with)  
and insert the wand or athame into the liquid in your  
glass of fruit juice or water. As I speak and type the  
words that follow the instruction to do this, imagine the  
light and power of the Sun shining on the crown of your  
head and flowing throughout your body to radiate from  
your magickal tool into your glass of juice or water. See  
the brilliant light charging the water with bright solar  
energy, the seed of the Lord. If you have a specific need  
e.g. health, knowledge, etc.) you will have a chance to  
ask the Gods for their aid (either publicly or privately as  
you choose) during this ritual. Please type < when you  
are ready to begin.]

Randall: O Might Ones, all ye Gods and Goddesses around us  
and within us, we have called upon you and you have  
heard us. We have offered of ourselves and you have  
accepted. Each of us has needs for guidance and for aid,

without which we cannot fulfill your ways. Hear now  
your children and help us to help ourselves as you will.

If you have a request or need, please state it now, either  
publicly by typing it or silently as you prefer. Type <  
when you have done so and are ready to continue.

Randall: Please join with me in giving thanks to the Lady [Just  
type the words I do.]

Randall: O Earth Mother,  
We thank thee that seed springeth,  
that flower openeth,  
that grass waveth.

We thank thee for winds that whisper  
through the graceful elm,  
through the shapely maple,  
through the lively pine,  
through the shining birch,  
through the mighty oak.

We thank thee for all things  
O Earth Mother,  
who giveth life.

Randall: [Stop repeating what I type and insert your athame or  
wand into your glass of water. SAY (not type) the  
following words as I type them.]

Randall: Lord and Lady, hallow these waters by thy sevenfold  
powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night.  
Let thy power flow through us and into the Waters of  
Life. [Type < when you are ready to continue]

Randall: Feel the power finish flowing through you. When it  
has, you may set your wand or athame down. When you  
are ready to continue, type <.

Randall: Take a small sip of the Waters of Life. Feel the  
warmth of the Beltane Sun and the strength of the Earth  
flow into your body with that sip. Take another and feel  
the love of the Gods empower you. Take a third small sip  
and feel the light of truth and knowledge shining within  
you.

### Libation:

Randall: Now drink all but a small portion of the Waters and  
feel that which your need most flow into you. After the  
ritual is concluded, pour the remainder of the Waters  
onto the earth as a libation to the Gods. [Type < when  
you are ready to continue]

### Benediction:

Randall: Set your food before you and hold your power hand  
over it.

We do ask, O Lord and Lady, Newly wed,  
That your blessings may surround us.  
We thank you for the plentiful food,  
The bounty of the Earth, Sky and Sea.  
Cast Your blessing upon this bounty,  
So we will be strengthened in Your love  
(::sketching the druid symbol in blue fire::)

Randall: Sample your food and refresh your energies before  
we close the circle. When you are ready to continue, type  
<

## Partings:

Randall: If you called anyone special, please give them leave to depart if they wish now.

Ann: My Prince, thank you for your presence. Stay if you will, leave if you must.

Randall: Mighty Athena, with thank you for your wisdom sublime and your guardian spear. Go if you must, stay if you will. <

Ginny: Thank you Bridget and Joan, go if you must, stay if you will <

Teleri: my children go as you came. <

Randall: Lord and Lady, Honored Guests gathered here with us.... We are grateful for the support and wisdom you have shared with us at this time. Go if you must, but know that you are always welcome to remain.

## Devocation:

Randall: Teleri, if you will thank the Spirits of the East, please.

Teleri: Spirits of the East, go if you must, stay if you will <

Randall: Ann, the south?

Ann: Lords of the South, guardians of Flame, we thank you for your presence. Go if you must, stay if you will. <

Randall: Jade, the West

JADEGRAY: Powers of the West, of feeling and emotion, thank you for joining our rite today. Go if you must, stay if you will. <

Randall: Sieglinde, North.

Sieglinde: Spirits of the North, the earth, than you for your presence here, Go if you must, stay if you will. <

## Closure:

Randall: This Circle is now ended. But what we have shared here will never end... only grow. Go in peace and fellowship. Merry Meet, Merry Part, Merry Meet Again!



**Figure 8 The Hill of Three Oaks, Lughnasadh 1993**

# 1998 Online Midsummer

By Randall  
On-Line Log for Cauldron

This is the log of our online Midsummer ritual of June 21, 1998. This log has been edited to remove extraneous comments.

## Introduction:

Randall: I think we'll go ahead and start now. It's 10 after. I want to welcome everyone to the Grove's Midsummer Ritual. For the sake of any who may have never attended one of our online rituals, I will mention a few things: This is not a particularly Wiccan Ritual, although like most modern Pagan rituals, there are many common elements. This ritual has many elements taken from my "Eclectic Druid" ritual. We will be grounding and centering, casting a circle, calling the quarters and deities, celebrating the Solstice and charging the Waters of Life.

Randall: If you don't have something I call for, then imagine yourself having the item and doing the action called for. Any questions or comments before the ritual starts?

## Meditation:

Randall: [Leads a meditation]

I want all of you to relax.... leaving your fingers lightly on the keyboard.

Take a deep breath... Hold it... Let it out slowly....

Do it again, taking in a calm, peaceful feeling....

Letting out the cares and distractions of everyday life.

Another breath and you feel the mundane world drawing away...

Another breath and you smell the first breath of spring borne on the wings of the March winds

Continue to breath and relax...

Until you feel yourself enter that place that exists between the worlds, not in this world and not in the next.

This is the Place between Worlds....

You are very welcome here.

Type < when you are grounded and centered, and ready to go on.

## Invocation:

Randall: I draw this circle to contain and protect our ritual. From Keyboard to Keyboard, I connect us. We come here in friendship and desire to reach beyond ourselves and touch the Gods. By our will, the circle is now cast.

Randall: Spirits of the East, South, West, and North, Slyphs of Air, Salamanders of Fire, Undines of Water, and Gnomes of Earth, I ask you to be present to witness and aid our rite.

Randall: This is the appointed place. Now is the appointed time.

We come to worship the Gods.

The Gods are everywhere....but we worship Them here.

The Gods are without form....but worship them in these forms.

We offer them our prayers, sacrifices, and worship. Each of us in our own way.

Randall: I call upon the Lady, the Earth Mother, the spirit of all that lives upon the Earth, swims beneath the waters, and flies through the air. With joy in our hearts and a song on our lips, we ask thee to attend our rite.

Randall: I call upon the Lord, the Shining One, the spirit of truth and light, the spark of the sun, and the flame within the heart of the sun. On this longest day of the year, we ask thee to attend our rite.

Randall: If you wish to invite another into our circle, please do so. Type ◊ when you are finished.

Ann: My Prince, join us and be welcome! :) ◊

D&P: We invite Pele, Lono, Dianna, Isis and Herne ◊

Randall: Athena, Freya, Frigga, and other who watch over me, be welcome here.◊

### Purpose:

Randall: Join with me as welcome the Summer Sun. (Just type the words I do)

Hail the Sun of Summer!

Golden One, Brightest, Warmth of the Green Earth

Hail the Sun of Summer!

Crown of Striving, Gem of the Heavens, First among Daylights

Hail the Sun of Summer!

Eye of Burning, Fire of Noontide, Heat of the Forge

Hail the Sun of Summer!

### Candle Lighting:

Randall: If you have a candle, light it now. See the light of Sun in the flame of your candle. Feel the light of the Summer Sun flow into your body and spirit, giving you the energy to face the darkening half of the year before us with a light heart. Type ◊ when you are ready to continue.

### Waters of Life:

Randall: [Long explanation, please wait for the entire paragraph ;)] We are about to create the Waters of Life. Hold your open power hand (probably the one you write with), palm down, over your glass of fruit juice or water. As I speak and type the words that follow this description, imagine the light and power of the Sun shining on the crown of your head and flowing throughout your body to radiate from the palm of your open hand into your glass of juice or water. See the brilliant light charging the water with bright solar energy, the bounty of the Summer to come. If you have a specific need (e.g. health, knowledge, etc.) you may ask the Gods for their aid as you do this. Please type ◊ when you are ready to begin.

Randall: O Earth Mother,  
We thank thee that seed springeth,  
that flower openeth,  
that grass waveth.

We thank thee for winds that whisper  
through the graceful elm,

through the shapely maple,  
through the lively pine,  
through the shining birch,  
through the mighty oak.

We thank thee for all things  
O Earth Mother,  
who giveth life.

Randall: Lord and Lady,  
hallow these waters by thy sevenfold powers,  
and by the three ways of day  
and one of night.

Let Earth power flow through us and into  
the Waters of Life.

Randall: Feel the power finish flowing through you. When it has and you are ready to continue, type ◊.

Randall: Take a small sip of the Waters of Life. Feel the love of the Gods empower you. Take a third small sip and feel the light of truth and knowledge shining within you. When you are ready to continue, type ◊

### Libation:

Randall: Now drink all but a small portion of the Waters and feel that which your need most flow into you. After the ritual is concluded, pour the remainder of the Waters onto the earth as a libation to the Gods. When you are ready to continue, type ◊

### Commentary:

Randall: If anyone has any comments or words they'd like to add before we close the circle, now is the time. ;)

### Devocation:

Randall: Okay, In that case, we'll close things down.

Randall: Spirits of the East, South, West, and North, Slyphs of Air, Salamanders of Fire, Undines of Water, and Gnomes of Earth, we thank you for your presence and your aid at our ritual. Go if you must, stay if you will.

Randall: Lord and Lady, Honored Guests gathered here with us.... We are grateful for the support and wisdom You have shared with us at this time. Go if you must, but know that You are always welcome to remain.

### Closure:

Randall: This Circle is now ended. But what we have shared here will never end... only grow. Go in peace and fellowship. Merry Meet, Merry Part, Merry Meet Again!

Randall: Thank you all for attending and participating!



Figure 9 Beware the entanglements of red tape and red ribbons!

# 1998 Online Lughnasadh

By Randall  
On-Line Log for Cauldron

This is the log of our online Lughnasadh ritual of August 9, 1998. This log has been edited to remove extraneous comments.

## Introduction:

Randall: I want to welcome everyone to the Grove's Lughnasadh Ritual. For the sake of any who may have never attended one of our online rituals, I will mention a few things: This is not a particularly Wiccan ritual, although like most modern Pagan rituals, there are many common elements. This ritual has many elements taken from "Reformed Druid" ritual. We will be grounding and centering, casting a circle, calling the quarters, and deities, celebrating the harvest, and charging the Waters of Life. Finally we will eat and be merry.

Randall: If you don't have something I call for, then imagine yourself having the item and doing the action called for. Any questions or comments before the ritual starts?

## Meditation:

Randall: [Leads a meditation]

I want all of you to relax.... leaving your fingers lightly on the keyboard.  
Take a deep breath... Hold it... Let it out slowly....  
Do it again, taking in a calm, peaceful feeling....  
Letting out the cares and distractions of everyday life.  
Another breath and you feel the mundane world drawing away...  
Another breath and you smell the first breath of spring borne on the wings of the March winds  
Continue to breath and relax...  
Until you feel yourself enter that place that exists between the worlds, not in this world and not in the next.  
This is the Place between Worlds....  
You are very welcome here.  
Type <> when you are grounded and centered, and ready to go on.

## Invocation:

Randall: I draw this circle to contain and protect our ritual. From Keyboard to Keyboard, I connect us. We come here in friendship and desire to reach beyond ourselves and touch the Gods. By our will, the circle is now cast.

Randall: Spirits of the East, South, West, and North, Slyphs of Air, Salamanders of Fire, Undines of Water, and Gnomes of Earth, I ask you to be present to witness and aid our rite.

Randall: This is the appointed place. Now is the appointed time.

We come to worship the Gods.  
The Gods are everywhere....but we worship Them here.  
The Gods are without form....but worship them in these forms.

We offer them our prayers, sacrifices, and worship. Each of us in our own way.

Randall: I call upon the Lady of the Moon, of the Earth and of the mysterious waters from which life began and to which all must return. At this time of harvest, we ask thee to attend our rite.

Randall: Mighty Lord of Day, the Shining One, the spark of the Sun now gone into the fields, I call you forth at this harvestide, we ask thee to attend our rite.

Randall: If you wish to invite another into our circle, please do so. Type <> when you are finished.

Randall: Athena, be present and lend us your wisdom. <>  
Phyllis: I invite my Lady Tonan/Guadalupe to join and attend our rite. <>

## Purpose:

Randall: Today We honor Lugh, the Shining Young Hero, the Sacred King. He is the Master of All Skills, the Holy Champion who turns aside drought and storm, protecting the earth.

May the strength of Lugh be over us,  
May the beauty of Lugh delight us,  
May the skill of Lugh be upon us.

Randall: Join with me as we celebrate the Harvest. (Just type the words I do)

[Here the screen scrolled a lot as Phyllis' cat decided to join the ritual at the last minute. :>]

Randall: The rivers flow and give us drink,  
The thunder cracks and heralds rain,  
The Earth is fertile and full of Life,  
The sun is still bright and  
Its light shines on us today.  
The plants give fruits and then do die.  
We eat the fruits and they give us life.  
Thy life is here in us today.  
O Lord! O Lady!  
For this harvest bounty we thank thee.

## Candle Lighting:

Randall: [Stop typing what I do now.] If you have a candle, light it now. See the blinding light of Lugh in the flame of your candle. Feel the light of the Harvest Sun flow into your body and spirit. Type <> when you are ready to continue.

## Bounty of Life:

Randall: Cup your hands over your bread or fruit and feel the energy of life stored in this fruit of the harvest radiate into your hands. [Please repeat the following three lines as I type them.]

Randall: Behold the bounty of the Lady  
Formed with the energy of the Lord  
The fruit and grain of life



Randall: Take a bite of your bread or fruit, accepting the bounty of the harvest into your life. After the ritual, offer the rest to the birds and small animals outside. [Please type <> where you are ready to continue]

## Waters of Life:

Randall: [We are about to create the Waters of Life. During this part of the ritual hold your open power hand (probably the one you write with), palm down, over your glass of fruit juice or water. As I speak and type the words that follow this description, imagine the light and power of the Sun

Randall: Shining on the crown of your head and flowing throughout your body to radiate from the palm of your open hand into your glass of juice or water. See the brilliant light charging the water with bright solar energy, the bounty of the Summer has provided us. If you have a specific need (e.g. health, knowledge, etc.) you will have a chance to ask the Gods for their aid (either publicly or privately as you choose) during this ritual. Please type <> when you are ready to begin.]

Randall: O Mighty Ones, all ye Gods and Goddesses around us and within us, we have called upon you and you have heard us. We have offered of ourselves and you have accepted. Each of us has needs for guidance and for aid, without which we cannot fulfill your ways. Hear now your children and help us to help ourselves as you will.

Randall: If you have a request or need, please state it now, either publicly by typing it or silently as you prefer. Type <> when you have done so and are ready to continue.

Randall: [Place your hand over your glass]

Randall: O Earth Mother,  
We thank thee that seed springeth,  
that flower openeth,  
that grass waveth.

We thank thee for winds that whisper  
through the graceful elm,  
through the shapely maple,  
through the lively pine,  
through the shining birch,  
through the mighty oak.

We thank thee for all things  
O Earth Mother,  
who giveth life.

Randall: [Please type the following 6 lines as I do.]

Randall: Lord and Lady,  
hallow these waters by thy sevenfold powers,  
and by the three ways of day  
and one of night.  
Let Earth power flow through us and into  
the Waters of Life.

Randall: Feel the power finish flowing through you. When it has and you are ready to continue, type <>.

Randall: Take a small sip of the Waters of Life. Feel the warmth of the Harvest Sun and the strength of the Earth flow into your body with that sip. Take another and feel the love of the Gods empower you. Take a third small sip and feel the light of truth and knowledge shining within you.

## Libation:

Randall: Now drink all but a small portion of the Waters and feel that which your need most flow into you. After the ritual is concluded, pour the remainder of the Waters onto the earth as a libation to the Gods.

## Commentary:

Randall: [If anyone feels moved to add anything before we close the circle, now is the time. :)]

## Devocation:

Randall: Spirits of the East, South, West, and North, Slyphs of Air, Salamanders of Fire, Undines of Water, and Gnomes of Earth, we thank you for your presence and your aid at our ritual. Go if you must, stay if you will.

Randall: Lord and Lady, Honored Guests gathered here with us... We are grateful for the support and wisdom you have shared with us at this first harvest. Go if you must, but know that you are always welcome to remain.

## Closure:

Randall: This Circle is now ended. But what we have shared here will never end... only grow. Go in peace and fellowship. Merry Meet, Merry Part, Merry Meet Again!



Figure 10 Sticks and Stones, next to the Chapel, 2004.

# 1999 Online Lughnasadh

By Randall  
On-Line Log for Cauldron

This is the log of our online Lughnasadh ritual of August 8, 1999. This log has been edited to remove extraneous comments.

All the contents are more or less the same as 1998 Lughnasadh Ritual Log except, after the candle lighting, the following poem is read from "A Pagan Carmina Gadelica" by Mike Nichols:

On the feast day of Tailltiu the bountiful,  
Foster-mother of Lugh of the fields,  
I cut me a handful of the new corn,  
I dried it gently in the sun,  
I rubbed it sharply from the husk  
With mine own palms.

I ground it in a quern on Friday,  
I baked it on a fan of sheepskin,  
I toasted it to a fire of rowan,  
And I shared it round my people.

I went deosil round my dwelling,  
Calling upon the Great Mother,  
Who promised abundance in my need,  
In peace, in honour,  
In lightness of heart,  
In labour, in love,  
In wisdom, in passion,  
In mirth, in reverence,  
For the sake of thy love.  
Thou Mother of blessings,  
Who will ever be about me,  
Who will ever be within me,  
Until the end of desire.  
So mote it be.



Figure 11 The Grove of Grove's stone, 2004.

# Order of Common Worship

For the Order of Mithril Star  
By Iopanus, Sybok, Ceridwen, and the Mother Grove  
(Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd)  
Circa 2001

Finding a place is in itself a ritual sometimes. Usually a grove of trees is the best place, but anywhere that is a natural setting with plenty of privacy will do. Indoor spaces are all right also, but weather permitting; I feel that the best rites take place outdoors.

If the Grove can afford it, it's nice to own ten or more acres of woods, within which is a natural circular space. Within that space it's nice to have permanent altars set up in each of the horizontal quarters, with items appropriate to their correspondences on each (see the "Table of Correspondences" at the end of this lesson). For large outdoor rites I favor those "Tiki torches" for illumination at those locations as well. Make sure the fuel used has a high flash-point (needs high heat to ignite). White gas is too dangerous, but a fuel that will only burn with a floating wick should be safe. There are also propane fueled torches that burn for several hours and give off plenty of light. They also feature safety switches that shut off if toppled. They just don't have that natural flame ambiance.

Just south of the center of the circle space should be your fire ring (if it's a night time rite) and a small blaze should be well under way as people arrive for the rite. Fire safety is a major concern, or should be for Druids. Keep fire fighting equipment handy whenever there is any bare flame (meaning non-bulb/electric lighting), even lanterns and lamps, being used. The US Forest Service has a class on safe camping that is a valuable resource.

Just north of the center of the circle should be the main altar upon which should be everything needed for the rite, as well as any decorative items appropriate to the work planned. One of those portable canopies is really nice for daytime rites. This is again, a general format. You wouldn't have any altars for a Beltane rite involving a May pole, since the pole would be the central thing.

You can do the same type of thing on property you do not own, but the altars and such must then be portable.

Depending upon the weather and climate, the Grove may wish to either be robed (Clothed) for the rites, or "Skyclad" (unclothed – naked – nude, except for ritual jewelry and accoutrements such as the HP's antlers or the HPS's crescent and moon headpiece, and each Druid's Mithril Star pendant). If weather and climate are agreeable, then "Skyclad" is best, since it illustrates the "perfect love and perfect trust" that should be present among waterkin.

If using Robes, the hooded type is best, usually in earth tones or black or green. (Some Druid groups insist on White – we feel this is a) impractical – white is hard to clean once it gets dirty, b) a stupid attempt to emulate our ancestors (In Pliny's notes about the Druids, he says they all wore white robes. He also says they were barbarians who practiced human sacrifice. Who wants to believe the enemy anyway?)

The Grove would be robed in the procession, and would disrobe once in circle (weather, other circumstances, permitting). Either robed or skyclad, you are usually skyclad (an exception would be a physical condition that would make it impractical) under the robe.

Shoes: This business of ALWAYS being barefoot which some traditions practice is I believe, impractical and

dangerous. Wear sandals, or wear dark colored sneakers. Being barefoot out of doors in the woods (especially at night) is just asking for trouble.

**THE SACRIFICE:** Any small cutting from any vegetation will do. When harvesting the sacrifice, take a moment thank the plant for it's offering, and pray for the plant to heal over.

**ROLES:** It the ritual format to follow, the Grove must pick those who will fulfill the following rolls:

Preceptor:

Server: Serves the Water of Life

HP: High Priest – Co-Officiate with the HPs (Usually the Arch-Druid (if a male)

HPs: High Priestess – Co-Officiate with the HP (Usually the Arch-Druid (if a female)

All rituals follow a formula or script. The Mithril Star, for the most part, follows the following Order of Common Worship:

## Preparatory Details

*The chalice is filled with the Waters-of-Life.*

*The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess (HP/HPs) who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Arch-Druid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The HP may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.*

*(Note: This invocation is "suggested" – you can substitute your own if you like. Also, though Be'al and Dalon Ap Landu are traditional to RDNA groups, you may wish to pick from deities from your own favorite pantheon, whether Celtic, Greek, Hindi, Egyptian, Buddhist, Shintoist, Daoist, etc., ALL are acceptable in the big family of OMS)*

## The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee here;

Thou art without form, but we worship thee in these forms;

Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;

O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

## The Procession

*Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn, Sequoia Sempervivans. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their fions to mark the Mithril Star upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The HP & HPs step into this Sigil, which is then closed by the two fions.*

## The Pledge

*Led by the Preceptor, the group recites the OMS Pledge:*

"In dedication to the celebration of Life in its many forms, I hereby declare my commitment to a way of life that is ethical, benevolent, humanistic, life-affirming, ecstatic and ecologically sane. I subscribe to means and methods that are creative rather than destructive, tolerant rather than authoritarian, gentle rather than violent, inclusive rather than exclusive, egalitarian rather than hierarchal. I pledge myself to harmonious eco-psychic awareness with the total biosphere of holy Mother Earth."

"Like an ancient Redwood, I would have my roots deep in the Earth and my branches reaching for the stars, the stars not only above but around me, my fellow humans, for "every man and woman is a star," and "the good of the many outweighs the good of the few," "from each according to his/her abilities, to each according to his/her needs."

"I acknowledge my personal responsibility for myself, to my fellow humans, and to the whole of Nature; and I recognize this total responsibility, in each of us, as the source of our infinite freedom to become who we are and do what we will. I dedicate myself to my own inner growth and development that I may be of greater service to myself and the world around me. For these reasons I recognize Divinity both within and without, and I say to myself and to all those gathered with me here: THOU ART GOD/DESS."

## The Sacrifice

*The HPs holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:*

HPs: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds.

Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

*\*The "quarters" are guardian spirits who bring the energy or quality of the elements into the magick of the circle. The Mithril Star is different than most traditions in this regard because we recognize seven elements rather than the usual four. This is a melding of Celtic tradition (which has three) and the Western ceremonial magickal tradition. Here is a table of the elements which shows how they correspond with the directions and the Celtic tradition:*

Direction	Color	Element	Day	Planet	Celtic
East	Gold	Air	Fri	Venus	Sky
South	Red	Fire	Tues	Mars	Sky/ Sea Earth
West	Blue	Water	Mon	Moon	Sea
North	Green	Earth	Wed	Mercury	Earth
Above	Royal Blue	Ether	Thur	Jupiter	Sky
Below	Red	Darkness	Sat	Saturn	Sea
Within	Silver	Light	Sun	Sol	Sky

*You may also note that some of these correspondences differ from other traditions. They are unique to the Mithril Star. Note: It's ok for us to do that, because "we're making it up as we go," just like the other traditions did.*

*\*In the southern hemisphere, invoke widdershins, devoke deosil.*

*(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the quarters is questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)*

HP: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the East to give answer... of the South...of the West.... of the North.... of the Above....of the Below.....and of the Within.

## The Reply

*(If the sacrifice is accepted, and it almost always is accepted, then continue. If bad omen, the service ends at this point.)*

HPs: Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted!

## The Rite of The Waters-of-Life

*(The preceptor holds the Waters-of-life while the HPs asks the interrogatories. The local custom may or may not replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)*

HPs: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

DRUIDS: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

HPs: From whence do these Waters flow?

DRUIDS: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

HPs: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

DRUIDS: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

HPs: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

DRUIDS: SHE HAS!

HPs: Then give me the Waters!

## The Consecration

*(The HPs takes the caregl from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The HPs then consecrates its contents with the following:)*

O Dalon Ap Landu, Hallow these waters by thy seven-fold powers and by the three ways of day and one of night,.  
Cleanse our hearts and join us together as we take and drink of they secret essence!

*(The HPs then holds the caregl in both hands, while the HP holds the Cyllell above the caregl, and intones the words:)*

HP: "As the Cyllell is to the God..."

*(To which the HPs replies:)*

HPs: "...so the cup is to the Goddess.."

*(Here the HP dips the Cyllell into the caregl three times, and then both reply:)*

BOTH: "...and so the two are made one."

## Optional Ordinations

*First Degree consecrations can be done at this time, but it's not necessary to enter into the first degree for a person to drink Waters. If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Degree (in which case the HPs will have consecrated an additional caregl, filled with the Waters-of-Life) the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.*

## The Communion

*(The HP holds up the caregl so that all can see it and intones the words:)*

HP: This is the Water of Life! Happy are those who are called to Drink Deep of it. May those who do so never thirst."

*The HP & HPs drink from the caregl and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "Thou art God/dess," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.*

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the caregl from the HP. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the caregl. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the caregl, letting them drink, being blessed in and exchanging the words "Thou art God/dess," "Drink Deep," or "May you never thirst," return and taking the caregl to the next person. The Server does not drink more than once.*

*In some Groves, the HP may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the caregl be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove. In either method, the last person in the circle should not finish the contents of the caregl. This is returned to the HP with a last ex-change of blessings. Then the HPs takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

HPs: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee. May we perform this rite next year in Imladris.

## The Meditation

*(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the HP OR HPs may choose, read by the HP OR HPs or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the HPs and a period of silence and private mediation (usually 2 or 3 minutes in length—though longer with some Groves) by all.*

*Eventually, the HP signals the end of the Service with:)*

## The Benediction

"Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with her blessing."

## Drawing the Sigil in the Air

*The HP blesses the Grove with three Mithril Stars in the air, left to right, saying:*

Peace! Peace! Peace

*Then the Grove joins hands, and say:*

"Thou art God/dess and I am God and all that Groks is God. Keep coming back it works!"

*Group hug.*

## Pot Luck

Lastly, there is the traditional "Pot Luck." (If the rite was held "sky-clad" you may want to decide whether or not the grove should get dressed before the "pot luck.") This actually can mean anything, but usually it means that each person attending has brought along a food item to share with the whole group. It's really very, very, impolite to attend a ritual / pot luck without bringing along anything. People who do this habitually need to "get a clue."

## Waters of Life

Traditionally, the "Waters of Life" is Whisky (which in the Scots-Gaelic, means "Waters of life). However, most OMS Groves use bottled spring water instead.

## Etiquette

Politeness and ritual protocol are extremely important elements. Good manners seem to be almost passé amongst Pagans in general, but we in the Mithril Star are interested in promoting the highest behavioral standards. This is only befitting those of us who are "Gods." The following are some general guidelines for behavior in ritual (applicable for both Mithril Star events and events sponsored by other traditions):

- 1.) Always RSVP. This means that you let your host know whether or not you are coming to an event you are invited to. This rule applies whether the invitation is formal or not. If you are not coming, it is usually customary to apologize for your absence.
- 2.) Always show up on time. Lots of folks follow what is jokingly referred to as "Pagan Standard Time." Those who follow PST in Mithril Star circles may find the door locked when they arrive late. If you really can't be on time, let your host know in advance that you'll be late.
- 3.) Once the ritual begins, you must not leave. This dissipates the energy of the rite. If you absolutely must leave, find the designated person (called the Gatekeeper) to cut open a door for you. When you return you must seek admission of the Gatekeeper again. This rule has two exceptions: Children and small animals can enter and leave at will without disturbing the energies.
- 4.) Never touch or handle someone else's tools unless invited to do so.
- 5.) Refrain from small talk during the ritual. Keep your attention focused on what is going on in the rite.
- 6.) Bring whatever is asked of you. This applies to the ritual itself and to the potluck portion.
- 7.) Make it a point to greet everyone in attendance either before or after the rite. At the end of the evening be sure to say good-bye to everyone, and to thank your hosts.
- 8.) Always volunteer to help clean up. Again, we try to follow the simple rule of leaving things as they were found, or (in the case of someone's home) leaving things better than they were before.

# Section Five: Liturgies of the Last Twenty Years

## Introduction:

Since Isaac left the RDNA in 1983, there haven't been many great liturgists in the movement; or at least people who preserved their work for archival purposes. As a result, people have tended to use already printed liturgies (as in the California & Seattle branches) or just worked free-form with experimental services (as at Carleton), or with loose scripts that weren't preserved (found to some extent at all groves). Therefore, the next collection is a bit of a patchwork assortment from different groves over a 20 year period, at different times, often in isolation from each other, with little or no connective thread running between the various sets. It is a grab-bag, if you will, of surviving liturgical records.



**Figure 12 The New Stone Circle viewed from behind a Burr Oak Tree, c. 1998.**

# 1987 Fall Equinox

Carleton Grove by Heiko and Jan

## I. The Processional

"Sage and Spirit".....Garcia

## II. The Opening Invocation to the Earth Mother

## III. Readings

## IV. The Sharing of the Waters of Life

### A. Responsive Reading

Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

THE WATERS OF LIFE

From whence do these Waters flow?

FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH MOTHER, THE EVER-CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

And how do we honour this gift that causes life in all that lives?

BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS OF LIFE.

Has the Earth Mother given forth of her bounty?

SHE HAS!

Then give me the Waters!

### B. Consecrating the Waters

C. An Invitation to Join the CARLETON GROVE of RDNA (Reformed Druids of North America)

D. Partaking of the Waters of Life!

## V. The Dance for the Earth Mother

## VI. The Heartbeat of the Earth and the Dance of the Harvest

*(Jumping the Sacred Fire promotes the fertility of the Earth)*

## VII. The Spiral Dance

## VIII Dismissing the Four Directions

Isis, Astarte, Diana, Hecate

Demeter, Kali, Innana.

Pan, Pan, Magic Man.

Pan, Dionysius,

Be'al, Woden, Baphomet.

# 1987 Samhain Version

Carleton Grove by Heiko and Jan

## Group Preparation -Heiko

- Give Order of Events
- Participation: be in circle to create good energy, but don't need to speak and believe, just need to believe in nature and the force of people together.
- Our beliefs are always changing and shaping and what happens here is factor of what people believed and what worked for people before and what Jan and I felt might be right for tonight and what we believe.
- There is a formal structure. But it is only a tool to feel forces and create energy. Anyone is free to speak a prayer. Do any gestures anytime, to add to what Jan and I say or just to interrupt to ask a question. Let the force move you.

## Invocation:

O Earth-Mother

We praise Thee that

seed springeth

that flower openeth

that grass waveth

We praise Thee for winds that whisper

through the graceful elm

through the shapely maple

through the lively pine

through the shining birch

through the mighty oak

We praise Thee for all things

O Earth-Mother

Who givest Life

## Jan's Samhain Reading

Riding the Big Earth

Let you be dead then

Lying in an open field of dry grass

Wind blows through your clothes

You are falling into the earth

The horizon has your head

Jet planes roar through the sky

Wires strung from every household

Ticker tape hangs out of pressrooms

But the earth is warm and deep

It swallows you like a coke

Your arms spread over the ground

sailing down stratum after stratum

You can feel the weight of cities

Railroad tracks stretching over the plains

Hear the billions of footsteps, the rumble of tanks

Down below

With the centipedes, carcasses, husks and worms

The earth is humming

It hums in your chest like a wooden guitar

Drumming deeper into the well

Roots wrap around entire civilizations

The tombs are humming

Your head hums

Centuries fly through your fingers

Skeletons of birds weave through your hair

Lying in an open field of dry grass  
Wind blowing through your clothes  
Sun on your face  
Riding the big earth  
---Boulder 1983

## Tree of Life -Jan

{missing}

### Speaking of Beliefs -Heiko

We're here to celebrate the creative powers of the Earth-Mother, of nature. To celebrate the wonder of nature. To think of any sunset any, any rock, any river whose beauty and symbolic power have existed in your past. Feel the force of those experiences with nature and let it become a force to help build and sustain you. The force of nature is represented to us here in this fire.

We're here to celebrate and feel the power of a group. There is true power in a circle. Circle is unbroken, is continuous. We are all equal here and able to send energy in a complete way to each other in this unbroken circle. We are not in rows or in single file and I am not speaking to you from a pulpit, but from within the circle. An essential force of this circle is human love. Without love, support, understanding, and giving our ritual here though and our existence here at Carleton would be empty. Let us keep this always in mind in our daily lives and during our ritual that love and support is essential to our humanness and to our survival.

We are here to celebrate not just the nature outside of us, but also the nature within us. We all have tremendous forces and power which are not let out in daily life. They are physical forces of motion, we find them in dance and making love. They are mystical forces of intrigue, we find them in deep, searching eyes, in beautiful faces. They are our natural feelings of power, of helplessness. We all have tremendous psychic powers of change and tremendous helplessness and vulnerability and we have to admit this.

In the same vein let us not idolize one thing over another. Rather let us celebrate the unique beauty of each season; weather, tree, mountain, and mood. This extends to religion. To regard each religion as unique and wonderful in its own right. Especially to practice tolerance, tolerance of all peoples, all objects, all religions.

We are also here to celebrate the masculine and feminine natures of the universe to recognize their dual presence in each of us, their cosmic interplay, their equality and interconnectedness. To think of the yin and the yang.

Finally, we are here to celebrate the cycles of life. To celebrate the circle in all we see, the cycles of seasons, the cycles of childhood, youth and old age, and to celebrate each in its own right.

## Responsive Reading

[perhaps Fisher's Samhain Chant ?]

### Personal Readings

[insert as appropriate]

## Sacrifice

[probably calling four quarters]

## Face Painting

## Tree Procession -Jan

[missing]

### Sharing of Waters of Life -Heiko

[the editor doesn't know which type of Catechism of the waters was used]

Dear Mother Earth, oh spirits of the four directions, oh bael, male aspect of the Earth Mother, consecrate and enter this water so that we may share of it and become strong. (hold up chalice)

These are truly the Waters of Life, the life that gives force, beauty, and strength to our live. The water has sprung from the earth and will return to her again just as we will. By drinking let us feel this power and celebrate the God and Goddess within each of us.

Let us also nourish each other by sharing this and help each other drink. Hold the chalice...

\* To Thee we return this portion O mother, hoping that you will accept it graciously.

## Prayers Join Circle

## Closing the Circle for Leavers

## Dance



**Figure 13 Carleton Druids 1988 at Hill of 3 Oaks.**  
**Back Row: Dimitry Goufman, Carron Perry, Liz Mindel, Sarah Van Orman & Gina Cambell.**  
**Two on left: Branden Schield & Unknown.**  
**Three on right: Heather Grunberg (hiding), Fitz Bushnell (obscured) and Curtis Lum.**  
**Front Row: Alice Cascorbi, Joe Walser (picking nose) and Heiko Koester (with horns).**

# 1992 Midsummer

By Scharding, Carleton

## The Invocation

O Lord around us, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**  
Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**  
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**

O Lord around us, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

**O Mother under and within us, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.**

## Optional Procession

*A dance around the altar stone. Doing a double bounce stomp on each leg, right behind left. Opposite arm flexes up on each step. One pair of right, lefts for every year of the Reform.*

## Drawing the Sigil

*The sigil is traced on the altar stone, and then inscribed on the ground beneath the celebrant. Then with two arms, all members make big sigils, starting with both hands clapping above their hands, circling down and clapping below their waists, and then two parallel lines are inscribed in the air from the top-down.*

## The Incantation The Sacrifice

*An agile member is sent up the tree to gather the highest leaf they feel comfortable with. Adequate safety precautions of course. The congregants hold hand and dance around the tree singing:*

What do you see?  
Way up in a tree,  
It's a mystery  
Drop it to me

From the green bower  
Send a leafy shower  
Show us its power  
Even just a flower.

**Repeat as necessary.**

*A willing perfect leaf or branch is found. The Sacrifice is dropped and must be caught by some members in a white cloth stretched out by the members (like a bed sheet). If it is missed, another must be gathered after the climber returns to the earth and a new climber must ascend again, as it was their fault. If caught, all cheer and a song is sung.*

O Earth Mother!  
We praise Thee that seed springeth,  
That flower openeth, that grass waveth.

We praise Thee for winds that whisper  
through the graceful elm,  
through the shapely maple,  
through the lively pine,  
through the shining birch,  
through the mighty oak.

We praise Thee for all things,  
O Earth Mother,  
Who givest Life.

**Priest:** Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

*The priest blesses the sacrifice with a sigil in the air and bows and then places the sacrifice on the altar*

**Priest:** Hast thou accepted our humble sacrifice, O our Mother?

I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer, the spirit of the cold north wind that collects the dead in winter....

I call upon the spirit of the South, the spirit of the balmy winds that allow youthful sporting in the summer woods...

I call upon the spirit of the East, the rising sun and departing winds....

I call upon the spirit of the West, the setting sun and approaching winds...

*Priest turns to each direction when asking. Winds, sounds and movements of birds and insects are observed.*

**Priest:** Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted!

## The Waters-of-Life

**PRIEST:** Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

**PRECEPTOR:** THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PRIEST:** From whence do these Waters flow?

**PRECEPTOR:** FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

**PRIEST:** And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

**PRECEPTOR:** BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PRIEST:** Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty from what you can see and feel around you?

**PRECEPTOR:** SHE HAS!

**PRIEST:** Then give me the Waters!

## The Consecration

**Priest:** O Dalon Ap Landu, Hallow these waters by thy seven-fold powers and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together as we take and drink of thy secret essence!

## The Communion

*The waters are shared with all present.*

## Optional Ordinations



**Priest:** Does anyone wish to enter the service of the Earth-Mother? If so, please step forward.

## Libation

**Priest:** To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

## The Meditation

Winter scoffed tauntingly at Spring. 'When you appear,' he said, 'no one stays still a moment longer. Some are off to meadows or woods: they must needs be picking lilies and other flowers, twiddling rose round their fingers to examine them, or sticking them in their hair. Other go on board ship and cross the wide ocean, maybe, to visit men of other lands; and not a man troubles himself anymore about gales or downpours of rain. Now I am like a ruler or dictator. I bid men look not up to the sky but down to the earth with fear and trembling, and sometime they have to resign themselves to staying indoors all day.' 'Yes,' replied Spring, 'and therefore men would gladly be rid of you. But with me it is different. They think my name very lovely – yes, by Zeus, the loveliest name of all names. When I am absent they cherish my memory, and when I reappear they are full of rejoicing.'

*Long pause.*

Midsummer –  
I walk about with my staff.  
Old farmers spot me  
And call me over for a drink.  
We sit in the fields  
using leaves for plates.  
Pleasantly drunk and so happy  
I drift off peacefully  
Sprawled out on a paddy bank.

*Two minutes of silence then Priest picks up the wheel.*

## The Divination

**Priest:** Awaken for we must now gauge our fate for the half of the year, from this day til Midwinter the Sun will rise less every day. How will we fare? Oh Spirits of this hill, give us a sign.

*A large wheel of woven branches with inset flowers, herbs and leaves and lots of kindling is lit and pushed down the hill. It should be well balanced and each side marked; one for good and one for bad. The Priest places it in the fire until it is burning well, then quickly grasps it and spins it down the hill. People watch which side lands up and respond appropriately.*

## The Benediction

**Priest:** Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with her blessing (*if successful or "and we will again seek her blessing soon" if the divination is not good.*)

*All members make big sigils in the air again saying:*

Peace! Peace! Peace!

*All member grab hands and go to put out the burning wheel.*

# 1994 Candlemas (Oimele)

By Scharding & Curtis  
Carleton Grove

## Preparatory Details

*The altar is set with a cookie to the north, a penknife to the east, a glass of water to the west and a candle to the south. A glass of milk and a sprig of spruce are placed on the east and a box of lightbulbs, candles, incense and other luminous objects are on the west.*

*Two candles are lit and a procession around the interior of the Skinner Chapel is made singing "We All Come From the Goddess".*

## The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**

Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**

Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**

O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

**O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.**

## The Praise

Feb. 1, 1977

By Dale Fierbe

Salutations on this day of Oimele!

The Magnolias stand serenely in this winter wind.

The pines shrug their branches

Snow drops to the ground

Unable to smother the spirit

Of Evergreen.

The Cedar whispers its valiance

The quiet sentinel while other

Creatures and Flora

Wait for the name of Spring to

Brush past them, awakening them

From their sleep.

– Peace, Peace, Peace.

*Then Mike says:*

**Pr:** We are gathered to celebrate the first stirrings of Spring.

Many are the signs of growing life that was conceived in the Winter Solstice and given birth on this Oimele. Great will the strength of the Sun Ruler be on the Equinox and happy the marriage on Beltane.

*All then sing the Praise of the Earth Mother:*

O Earth-Mother

We praise thee that seed springeth,

that flower openeth,

that grass waveth.

We praise thee for winds that whisper  
through the graceful elm,  
through the shapely maple,  
through the lively pine,  
through the shining birch,  
through the mighty oak.  
We praise thee for all things,  
O Earth-Mother, who givest life.

## The Sacrifice

*The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:*

**Pr:** Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

*(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, a member is stationed at each of the four walls, peering out of an open window.)*

**Pr:** Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

*Reports are gathered from the stationed Druids.*

## The Reply

**Pr:** Praise be, although the Earth-Mother is still slumbering, our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, although not fully appreciated, has been acknowledged!

## The Catechism of The Waters-of-Life

*(The Waters of Milk are readied..)*

**PR:** Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

**PREC:** THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PR:** From whence do these Waters flow?

**PREC:** FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE EVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER EARTH.

**PR:** And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

**PREC:** BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

**PR:** Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

**PREC:** SHE STILL SLEEPS, BUT STIRS A BIT!

**PR:** So what do we offer instead of the Waters of Life on this great day of Oimelc?

**PREC:** The Waters of Milk.

**PR:** Then give me the Waters of Milk!

## The Consecration

*(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)*

**PR:** O Dalon, we know you and the Earth Mother are asleep right now, but please acknowledge us in your dreams, descend and join us together with these Waters of Milk!

## The Communion

*The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Milk," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.*

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

*In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.*

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings.*

## Candle Blessing

*The sacrifice is picked up and dipped in the remaining milk and asperged on the collection of light bulbs, candles and incense gathered by grove members.*

**PR:** O Taranis bless these light bulbs and may they last a long time, enlightening us, as you do also. O Brigid, may your wisdom burn bright in us as these candles do your work of lighting up the dark corners of our rooms and hearts.

*Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

**PR:** To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

## The Meditation

*All members sit down for a reading.*

Stopping By Woods On A Snowy Evening

Whose woods these are I think I know.  
His house is in the village though;  
He will not see me stopping here  
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer  
To stop without a farmhouse near  
Between the woods and frozen lake  
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake  
To ask if there is some mistake.  
The only other sound's the sweep  
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep.  
But I have promises to keep,  
And miles to go before I sleep,  
And miles to go before I sleep.

*Short Pause and Then Proceed to Next Poem*

A Haiku by Dick Smiley '66

When the wind blows cold  
on the Hill of Three Oaks  
the hearth fire is warm.

*Short Pause then final reading*

Winter's Ending

-Jeffrey Andrew Young

Come the goat-man, man of Springtime,  
Savior of the Winter's ending.  
Come from mountains, come and enter  
This, the sad, stiff human figure,  
For his mind is numbed with Winter,  
Lain neglected since remembering,  
And his hands are stiffened branches,  
Frozen bones that have no feeling.  
Strike the fire deep within him,  
Fire to melt this icy thinking.  
Passion sings within him somewhere,  
Laughter lies awake, awaiting  
Some necessity inside him:  
To awaken him from slumber.  
Now the dead man's mind grows restless,  
Fingers yearn for warmer flesh,  
Remembering souls that once had touched him,  
Breathing bodies he was near to.  
Goat-man draw him ever onward  
Through the slush of dying Winter  
Where his memories await him  
In Spring's gentle restlessness.

*After another pause, motion to the people to stand.*

## The Benediction

**PR:** Go forth into the world, taking courage in the buds of the pussy-willow, the returned sounds of birds outside our window, the reappearance of squirrels and the melting of the Upper Lyman lake. We know she still sleeps, yet our sacrifice was acknowledged and we go forth with her blessing.

## Drawing the Sigil in the Air

*The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying: **PR:** Peace! Peace! Peace!*

*The people may leave after cleaning up, but the priest will remain and watch as the lit candles are allowed to burn down and are not snuffed out.*



**Figure 14** Farmhouse, home of Carleton Druids from 1985-1990. Picture taken 1998.

## 1997 Beltane

Reformed Druids of North Asia

By Scharding & Haneke

Akita Grove, Japan

The festival begins with people going out with their sweethearts for long, long walks in the woods. The un-matched members of the grove have a different task. Going to a tree that has been asked several months in advance (Bamboo is fine too), they climb up the mountain, and bring back a maypole with all proper respect and jubilation. The pole will be brought in during the procession and inserted into a hole by the altar and all will admire the decoration.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.

## The Procession

*Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing:*

Sakura, sakura  
noyamamo satomo  
Miwatasu kagiri  
Kasumi-ka kumo-ka  
asahi-ni niou  
Sakura, sakura hanazakari

Sakura, Sakura  
Yayoi no sora wa.  
Miwatasu kagiri  
Kasumi ka? Kumo ka?  
Nioi zo izuru;  
Iza ya! Iza ya!  
Mi ni yukan.

*Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess step into this Sigil, which is then close by the two staves.*

Cherry Blossoms, cherry blossoms.  
On mountains, in villages.  
As far as you can see.  
They look like fog or clouds.  
They are fragrant in the morning sun.  
Cherry blossoms, cherry blossoms. In full bloom.

Cherry blossoms, cherry blossoms  
under the April sky  
as far as you can see,  
like mists or clouds  
blooming fragrantly.  
Let us go! Let us go! Let us go to see them.

## The Invocation

O Cherry Trees, forgive these human limitations:  
Thou art ever here; **but we praise thee only in spring.**  
Thou art a living creature, **but we partake of your fruit and wood;**  
Thou hast no need of music and dance, **yet we offer thee these songs and dances;**  
O Cherry Trees, forgive our human limitations.  
**O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for dancing.**

## Praise

**PR:** Let the dancing begin

*The maypole is danced once or twice, accompanied by bagpipe music and drum. The last one still able to dance with extra ribbon is considered the May Queen/King and will act as preceptor for this service.*

## The Sacrifice

**PR:** Like our maypole here, each time it is woven together, no two journeys or sacrifices are the same, so we must check them for their acceptability.

*The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice (a shock of cherry blossoms) to the sky, while saying:*

**Pr:** Our shouts of praise have mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, the sound of our prancing steps has been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

*(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)*

**Pr:** Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

*Winds, birds, bugs and clouds are judged for this.*

## The Reply

*(If the sacrifice is accepted, and it almost always is accepted, then continue. If bad omen, the service ends at this point.)*

**Pr:** Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted!

## The Catechism of The Waters-of-Life

*(The preceptor holds the Waters-of-life while the priest ask the Catechism of the Waters-of-Life. The local custom may or may not replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)*

**PR:** Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

**PREC:** THE WATERS-OF-LIFE AND THE JUICE OF THE CHERRY.

**PR:** From whence do these Waters flow?

**PREC:** FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE EVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

**PR:** And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

**PREC:** BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS.

**PR:** Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

**PREC:** SHE CERTAINLY HAS!

**PR:** Then give me the Waters!

## The Consecration

*(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full, half cherry juice and half whiskey. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)*

**PR:** O Dalon Ap Landu, behold the fruit of last year's cherries, grain and sparkling rivers. Hallow these waters by thy seven-fold powers and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together as we take and drink of thy secret essence!

## Optional Ordinations

*First Order consecrations can be done at this time, but it's not necessary to enter into the first order for a person to drink Waters. If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Order (in which case the Priest/ess will have consecrated an additional chalice, filled with the Waters-of-Life) the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.*

## The Communion

*The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Life," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.*

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

*In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.*

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

**PR:** To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee, and as new life returns all around us.



**Figure 15 The Carleton Farm with a lady and Dan "Farm Boy" Fehler taken Aug 1993.**

## The Meditation

PR: Three poems by Basho

The Oak Tree stands  
Noble on the hill even in  
Cherry Blossom time.

A lovely spring night  
suddenly vanished while we  
viewed cherry blossoms

From all these trees  
in salads, soups, everywhere  
cherry blossoms fall

*Pause for a minute.*

Last night I thought to cherry trees and my search. Cherry blossoms are like the blush of a new discovered pathway, at first devastatingly beautiful but requiring some cross-fertilization with other trees, much as a discovery must be shared to be enjoyed. Soon thereafter, the flashy petals fall, and hardy green leaves must support the growth of the tree, with each few leaves working towards supporting the tree, and perhaps a cherry. The fruits are then gathered from that discovery after long nurturing study, only to realize that yet new lessons need to be learned. The leaves too are destined to fall and, after the tree has endured a wintry break, relying on its buried resources, a promising new flower will appear signaling the start of a new cycle of discovery and learning. So it is.

*Pause and then the priest secretly reaches into his sleeve and throws a huge handful of cherry flowers into the air to rain down in this silent message, followed by another pause.*

## The Benediction

PR: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, that the trees are beautiful to us, as all of you are to her, and that we go forth with her blessing.

### Drawing the Sigil in the Air

*The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying: Peace! Peace! Peace!*



**Figure 16 40th Anniversary procession from Monument Hill to the Hill of Three Oaks. 2003 Ross Wilke, Ian Hill (?), Steve Crimmins, Stacey Weinberger, Richard Shelton, David Franguist, Larry Press, Norman Nelson**

## 1999 Order of Common Worship

Samhradh and Foghamhar (Summer)  
Donated by Weinberger  
Baccharis Grove, CA

This is the basic Order of Common Worship from which all others are adapted, and is to be used during the Summer Half of the year (i.e. from *Beltane* to *Samhain*.) The chalice will be filled with the *Waters-of-Life*.

### invocation

O Earth Mother!  
We praise Thee that seed springeth,  
That flower openeth, that grass waveth.

We praise Thee for winds that whisper  
through the graceful elm,  
through the shapely maple,  
through the lively pine,  
through the shining birch,  
through the mighty oak.

We praise Thee for all things,  
O Earth Mother,  
Who givest Life.

- D: O Beal, forgive these three errors that are upon us due to our mortal limitations: Thou art everywhere,  
E: *Yet we worship Thee here.*  
D: Thou art without form,  
E: *Yet we worship Thee in these forms.*  
D: Thou has no need of our prayers and sacrifices,  
E: *Yet we offer Thee these prayers and sacrifices.*  
D: O Beal, forgive these three errors that are upon us due to our mortal limitations.  
All: *O Mother, calm our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation.*

Procession to the Grove. Upon arrival near the altar the Druid/ess and Preceptor use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground around the altar. After the Druid/ess steps around to the front of the altar, the members divide to form a semi-circle around the front of it.

### praise

D: Does anyone have any praise or requests of the Gods?

At this time people may give thanks, make requests, and/or bring any gifts they may have for the Deities of their choice to the altar. There follows a silent time in which each person asks for the fulfillment of material/external or spiritual needs.

### sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

D: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray Thee, O our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray Thee, granting us Thy peace, and life.

The sacrifice is laid upon the altar or in the fire. The Druid/ess then turns to the Four Quarters and asks:

D: Hast Thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call now upon the Spirits of the Winds to give answer, to tell us whether and how our sacrifice has been accepted, and to tell us the will of the Gods for the coming period.

D: I call upon the Spirit of the North...of the South...of the East...of the West...

### reply

If the sacrifice is accepted, the Service continues; otherwise the Service is ended immediately

D: Praise be! Our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life is accepted!

### catechism

D: Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

P: *The waters-of-life.*

D: From whence do these Waters flow?

P: *From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the never-changing All Mother.*

D: And how do we honor this give that causes life?

P: *By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.*

D: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?

P: *She has*

D: Then give me the Waters!

### consecration

The Druid/ess takes the chalice from the Preceptor, who fills it if it is not already full. The Druid/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:

D: O Dalon Ap Landu, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by Thy power as we take and drink of Thy secret essences!

### ordination?

If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Order (in which case the Druid/ess will have consecrated an additional chalice, filled with the *Waters-of-Life*) the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.

### communion

The Druid/ess drinks from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "*the Waters of Life,*" and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air. The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Druid/ess. The Preceptor drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return, and taking the chalice to the next person. The Preceptor does NOT drink more than once.

The last person should NOT finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Druid/ess with the last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip, pouring the remainder upon the altar and down the offering shaft, saying:

D: To Thee we return this portion of our bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return unto Thee.

### offering

At this point, at the Orinda Grove site, the Druid/ess pours out the offering to the trees.

### meditation

Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture the Druid/ess may choose for that purpose. After this comes a few brief words of meditation from the Druid/ess and a period of silence and private meditation (usually two to three minutes—though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually the Druid/ess signals the end of the Service with:

### benediction

D: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-mother's sight, that She has answered our prayers, and that we go forth with Her blessing:

The Druid/ess blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

The Sigil is taken up by the Druid/ess and Preceptor. An offering is made to the Big Oak.

## END OF THE ORDER OF COMMON WORSHIP FOR SAMRADH AND FOGHAMHAR



Figure 17 Stacey Weinberger at the 40th Reunion, New Stone Circle 2003

# 1999 Order of Common Worship

Geimredh and Earrach (Winter)  
Donated by Weinberger  
Baccharis Grove, CA

This is the Order of Common Worship for the Winter Half of the year (i.e. from *Samhain* to *Beltane*.) The chalice will be filled with the *Waters-of-Sleep*.

## invocation

O Earth Mother!  
We praise Thee that seed springeth,  
That flower openeth, that grass waveth.

We praise Thee for winds that whisper  
through the graceful elm,  
through the shapely maple,  
through the lively pine,  
through the shining birch,  
through the mighty oak.  
We praise Thee for all things,  
O Earth Mother,  
Who givest Life.

- D: O Beal, forgive these three errors that are upon us due to our mortal limitations: Thou art everywhere,  
E: *Yet we worship Thee here.*  
D: Thou art without form,  
E: *Yet we worship Thee in these forms.*  
D: Thou has no need of our prayers and sacrifices,  
E: *Yet we offer Thee these prayers and sacrifices.*  
D: O Beal, forgive these three errors that are upon us due to our mortal limitations.  
All: *O Mother, calm our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation.*

Procession to the Grove. Upon arrival near the altar the Druid/ess and Preceptor use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground around the altar. After the Druid/ess steps around to the front of the altar, the members divide to form a semi-circle around the front of it.

## praise

- D: Does anyone have any praise or requests of the Gods?

At this time people may give thanks, make requests, and/or bring any gifts they may have for the Deities of their choice to the altar. There follows a silent time in which each person asks for the fulfillment of material/external or spiritual needs.

## sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

- D: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray Thee, O our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray Thee, granting us Thy peace, and life.

The sacrifice is laid upon the altar or in the fire. The Druid/ess then turns to the Four Quarters and asks:

- D: Hast Thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call now upon the Spirits of the Winds to give answer, to tell us whether and how our sacrifice has been accepted, and to tell us the will of the Gods for the coming period.  
D: I call upon the Spirit of the North...of the South...of the East...of the West...

## reply

The sacrifice is not accepted!  
Or  
The sacrifice is acknowledged!

- D: The four winds are silent; the Earth Mother sleeps.

## catechism

- D: Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?  
P: *The Waters-of-Life.*  
D: From whence do these Waters flow?  
P: *From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the never-changing All Mother.*  
D: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?  
P: *She has not! The waters are there, but the spirit has gone out of them.*  
D: Of what then, do we partake?  
P: *The Waters-of-Sleep!*  
D: Then give me the Waters-of-Sleep.

## consecration

The Druid/ess takes the chalice from the Preceptor, who fills it if it is not already full. The Druid/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:

- D: O Dalon Ap Landu, descend into these waters and hallow them. Give us to know Thy Power and the promise of life that is to return.

## communion

The Druid/ess drinks from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "*the Waters of Sleep,*" and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air. The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Druid/ess. The Preceptor drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return, and taking the chalice to the next person. The Preceptor does NOT drink more than once.

The last person should NOT finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Druid/ess with the last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip, pouring the remainder upon the altar and down the offering shaft, saying:

- D: To Thee we return this portion of our bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return unto Thee.

## offering

At this point, at the Orinda Grove site, the Druid/ess pours out the offering to the trees.

## meditation

Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture the Druid/ess may choose for that purpose. After this comes a few brief words of meditation from the Druid/ess and a period of silence and private meditation (usually two to three minutes—though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually the Druid/ess signals the end of the Service with:

## benediction

D: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth Mother shower Her blessings upon you.

The Druid/ess blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace!                      Peace!                      Peace!

The Sigil is taken up by the Druid/ess and Preceptor.

An offering is made to the Big Oak.

## END OF THE ORDER OF COMMON WORSHIP FOR GEIMREDH AND EARRACH



Figure 18 Sue & Larry Press with Weinberger,  
Lughnasadh 1984 at the Live Oak Grove.

## 1999 Samhain

Donated by Weinberger  
Baccharis Grove, CA

The following is a Special Order of Worship for Samhain. The chalice will be filled with ordinary spring water (the *Waters-of-Sleep*). The sacrifice should be of bare branches. All Third Order Druids and Druidesses, including the Grove's Archdruid/ess, should be wearing their red ribbons-of-office around their necks at the beginning of the service, but carry their white ribbons-of-office in an easily accessible place.

The service starts some distance from the altar.

## invocation

O Earth Mother!  
We praise Thee that seed springeth,  
That flower openeth, that grass waveth.

We praise Thee for winds that whisper  
through the graceful elm,  
through the shapely maple,  
through the lively pine,  
through the shining birch,  
through the mighty oak.

We praise Thee for all things,  
O Earth Mother,  
Who givest Life.

D: O Beal, forgive these three errors that are upon us due to our mortal limitations: Thou art everywhere,  
E: *Yet we worship Thee here.*  
D: Thou art without form,  
E: *Yet we worship Thee in these forms.*  
D: Thou has no need of our prayers and sacrifices,  
E: *Yet we offer Thee these prayers and sacrifices.*  
D: O Beal, forgive these three errors that are upon us due to our mortal limitations.  
All: *O Mother, calm our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation.*

Procession to the Grove. Upon arrival near the altar the Druid/ess and Preceptor use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground around the altar. After the Druid/ess steps around to the front of the altar, the members divide to form a semi-circle around the front of it.

## praise

D: Does anyone have any praise or requests of the Gods?

At this time people may give thanks, make requests, and/or bring any gifts they may have for the Deities of their choice to the altar. There follows a silent time in which each person asks for the fulfillment of material/external or spiritual needs.



## sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

D: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray Thee, O our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray Thee, granting us Thy peace, and life.

The sacrifice is laid upon the altar or in the fire. The Druid/ess then turns to the Four Quarters and asks:

D: Hast Thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call now upon the Spirits of the Winds to give answer, to tell us whether and how our sacrifice has been accepted, and to tell us the will of the Gods for the coming period.

D: I call upon the Spirit of the North...of the South...of the East...and of the West...

## reply

The sacrifice is not accepted!

D: The four winds are silent; the Earth Mother sleeps.  
chant

D: Ea, Lord, Ea, Mother, Thou with uncounted names and faces, Thou of the many-faceted Nature in and above all, to Thee we sing our chants of praise.

E: GO THOU NOT FROM US.

D: Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and all Groves, mover by night and by day, turn not Thy pleasing face from us.

E: GO THOU NOT FROM US.

D: The leaves wither, the trees and fields are barren, on what can we depend? Where is Thy order, where is Thy strength?

E: DEPART NOT FROM OUR MIDST, SLEEP NOT, O MOST HIGH.

D: The Sun, the bright fire of day, withdraws His chariot; His face is veiled with clouds, and the breath of the North Wind walks the land.

E: RETURN TO US HIS WARMTH.

## second sacrifice

D: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray Thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray Thee, granting us Thy peace, and life.

The sacrifice is laid upon the altar or in the fire. The Druid/ess then turns to the Four Quarters and asks:

D: Hast Thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call now upon the Spirits of the Winds to give answer, to tell us whether and how our sacrifice has been accepted, and to tell us the will of the Gods for the coming period.

D: I call upon the Spirit of the North...of the South...of the East...and of the West...

## second reply

The sacrifice is not accepted!

D: The four winds are silent; the Earth Mother sleeps.

The Archdruid/ess and all other members if the Third Order present remove their red ribbons and replace them with their white ones. Then follows the Mourning and the Declaration of Faith.

D: Lo, we are as wraiths, our fire is turned to ashes and darkness walks the land.

E: PRESERVE US, O SPIRIT OF DAY. KEEP US IN THY MIND, O SPIRIT OF POWER.

D: Lo, the Season of Sleep has come, and darkness prevails. Let us then lie down, in the good and covering dark, and rest, and contemplate, and renew ourselves with this gift of sleep.

E: REST AND HEAL US, O OUR MOTHER.

D: O Earth Mother, guide our paths. If Thou wilt leave us, save us through the time of Silence, keep bright within our hearts 'till Spring.

E: SO LET IT BE, O OUR MOTHER, FOR WE ARE FAITHFUL, AND WOULD KEEP THY WAYS.

## catechism

D: Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

P: *The waters-of-life.*

D: From whence do these Waters flow?

P: *From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the never-changing All Mother.*

D: And how do we honor this gift that causes life?

P: *By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.*

D: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of Her bounty?

P: *She has not! The waters are here, but the spirit has gone out of them.*

D: So be it. Now is the Time of Life ended. Now shall we need our faith to keep us strong, for the Time of Sleep is begun in truth and in deed. Of what then do we partake?

P: *The Waters-of-Sleep!*

D: Then give me the Waters-of-Sleep.

## consecration

The Druid/ess takes the chalice from the Server. The Druid/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:

D: O Dalon Ap Landu, descend once again into these waters, and hallow them. Give us to know Thy power and the promise of life that is to return.

## communion

The Druid/ess drinks from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "*the Waters of Sleep,*" and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Druid/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return, and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does NOT drink more than once.

The last person should NOT finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Druid/ess with the last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip, pouring the remainder upon the altar and down the offering shaft, saying:

D: To Thee we return this portion of our bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return unto Thee.

### offering

At this point, at the Orinda Grove site, the Druid/ess pours out the offering to the trees.

### meditation

Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture the Druid/ess may choose for that purpose. After this comes a few brief words of meditation from the Druid/ess and a period of silence and private meditation (usually two to three minutes—though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually the Druid/ess signals the end of the Service with:

### benediction

D: Let us go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth Mother shower Her blessings upon you.

The Druid/ess blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace!                      Peace!                      Peace!

The Sigil is taken up by the Druid/ess and Preceptor. An offering is made to the Big Oak.

## END OF A SPECIAL ORDER OF WORSHIP FOR SAMHAIN



**Figure 19 Raphael and Leslie at Live Oak Grove in Emmon's Cabin, Beltane 1984**

## Fall Equinox Ritual 2001:

D.C. Grove's Patriotic Version  
By Mike Scharding, with inspiration from Sine Ceolbhinn

No insult is intended, we're just a little wild. We'll report how it works.

The Sunday before the Monday service will be spent under the Washington Monuments shadow from dawn to dusk, followed by a party on Sunday night.

### THE INVOCATION

*Underline parts are spoken by the congregation*

O Lord, forgive these errors that our due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee here.

Thou art without set form, but we worship thee in these forms.

Thou art beyond name, but we call thee by these names.

Thine presence is ever with you, but we worship thee now.

Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, but we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices.

O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for mediations.

O Washington & Jefferson, overlook this use of public land for private worship.

### PROCESSION

*Circle the Washington Monument, beyond the Jersey Barriers, stopping at the cardinal points, at which to do a spin each. Afterwards form a circle, with Archdruid, preceptor and server inside. All members scuff a sigil below them with their feet.*

### INCANTATION

I am a Washington in revolution.

I am a Franklin in wit.

I am a Jefferson in wisdom.

I am a Monroe towards neighbors.

I am a Lincoln in debate.

I am a Bull Moose in the wilderness.

I am a Taft at dinner.

I am a Wilson in study.

I am a Roosevelt in hard times.

I am an Eisenhower in battle.

I am a Kennedy in charisma.

I am a Carter on the farm.

I am a Clinton in virility.

I am a Bush in having smart friends.

I am a Gore to the environment.

Who is it who leads the people?

Who comforts us in our crises?

Who takes the credit for success and failure?

If not I?

### SONG: Dalon's Daily Ditty

*With appropriate side step rock-shuffle and clapping.*

I am nothing special just a simple Druid,  
Seeking my awareness though the Earth Mother,  
And life's lessons.

But, I'm filled with doubts, and deep confusion  
What can I do to release these chains?  
Make a journey!

*CHORUS after each following verse:*

*Take me on up., Lord (i.e. Dalon), take me on down.  
Take me on over to the holy groves  
Of Carleton!*

The road is hard, black, long and winding  
With Bright-eyed Dragons spitting fire and smoke.  
Lord guide me.

I'm goin' down to the Cannon River,  
Gonna wash away all my ignorance  
And dogma's blight.

Through lonesome prairie and swamps of passion  
In the uncertain floodplain I learn a lesson  
The Lower Arb

Matriculate past the dean of admission,  
To enter the ranks of those holy students  
And faculty.

It's the Land of Youth on an ancient mission  
Lifting the torch of inquiry both wide and far  
Through long study.

The price of learning is a high tuition  
One that must be paid back for many years;  
To my pupils.

Drink at the twin lakes of knowledge and wisdom  
Filled by the creek of experience  
That's Lyman Lakes.

Proceed on to the tower of inspiration  
Whose fair white walls call out to me  
That's Goodhue Hall.

On seldom trod paths of contemplation  
with barbed sarcasm and rocks of Irony  
The Upper Arb

I'll climb up that steep, green, holy mountain  
Where so many before have found Awareness  
Hill of Three Oaks

There I'll pray & vigil in jubilation  
Between my green mother Earth and starry Pa  
And go on home.

The world will've changed with those revelations  
The simple will be hard and the hard simple.  
Can I teach this?

But questions will arise despite my education  
So, what can I do to solve them all?  
Make a new trip!

*Sacrifice is placed on the altar. Perhaps some a twig from a  
cherry tree?*

## THE SACRIFICE

**Priest:** Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our clap have echoed off the trees and our dancing feet have pounded the earth. Hear now, we pray thee, O our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. (All drop their sacrifice on the altar.) Accept it we pray thee, and cleanse our minds and hearts, granting us thy peace an life.

**Preceptor:** Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our mother? I call upon the spirit of the East (i.e. Congress & Supreme Court) to give answer. (Congregation notes omens) ...of the West (Lincoln & Teddy Roosevelt Memorial) ... of the North (White House) ...and of the South (Jefferson & FDR Memorials). Fellow Druids, who says the omens are favorable? (Hands raise, majority rules)

## THE REPLY

(if favorable)

Preceptor: All is well.

Priest: Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted.

*Go to Catechism.*

## THE REPLY (if unfavorable)

Preceptor: All is not well.

Priest: All is not for naught. Approval is not to be expected. We continue to celebrate this joyous occasion, but without the fire in the water. It is now appropriate to pause and reflect on this season.

*(Skip to meditation)*

## THE CATECHISM

### of the WATERS OF LIFE

**Priest** (In evocatory enthusiasm): Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?!

**Preceptor** (in plain-song, followed by crowd): The Waters of Life!

**Priest:** From whence do these Waters flow?!

**Preceptor & All:** From the Bosom of the Earth-Mother, the Ever-changing All-mother.

**Priest:** And HOW! Do we honor this gift that causes life in us?!

**Preceptor & All:** By partaking of the Waters of Life!

**Priest:** Has the Earth-Mother given FORTH of her bounty?!

**Preceptor & All:** O she has!

**Priest:** Then give me the Waters!

*(Preceptor with the whiskey and Server with the water, pour equal portions simultaneously into the chalice of the Priest)*

## THE CONSECRATION

Priest: O Dalon Ap Landu, hallow these waters by thy sevenfold-powers and by the three ways of days and one of night. O Presidents, please also bless these waters by thy 43 ways. Cleanse our minds and hearts and join us together as we take and drink of thy secret essences.

## THE COMMUNION & OPTIONAL ORDINATIONS LIBATION

To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee. O Presidents, including those who disapproved of alcohol, please accept this blessing of drink.

## THE MEDITATION

### Here is the historic anecdote:

"When George was about 6 years old, he was made the wealthy owner of a hatchet! of which, like most little boys, he was immoderately fond; and was constantly going about chopping every thing which came in his way. One day, in the garden, where he often amused himself by hacking his mother's pea-sticks, he unluckily tried the edge of his hatchet on the body of a beautiful young English cherry tree, which he de-barked so terribly, that I don't believe the tree ever got the better of it. The next morning, the old gentleman, finding out what had befallen his tree, which, by the by, was a great favorite, came into the house; and with much warmth asked for the mischievous author, declaring at the same time, that he would not have taken 5 guineas for his tree. Nobody would tell him anything about it. Presently George and his hatchet made their appearance. 'George,' said his father, 'do you know who killed that beautiful little cherry tree yonder in the garden?'"

"This was a tough question; and George staggered under it for a moment; but quickly recovered himself; and looking at his father, with the sweet face of youth brightened with the inexpressible charm of all-conquering truth, he bravely cried out, 'I can't tell a lie, Pa; you know I can't tell a lie. I did cut it with my hatchet.'--Run to my arms, you dearest boy, cried his father in transports, run to my arms; glad am I, George, that you killed my tree, for you have paid me for it a thousand fold. Such an act of heroism in my son is worth more than a thousand trees, though blossomed with silver and their fruits of purest gold."

Many years ago, at the signing of the Constitution, Benjamin Franklin noticed the engraved sun on the Chairman's chair. By looking at it, one could not be sure whether it was a rising or setting sun, but he believed it was a rising sun, by the patriotism and courage of those around us. We are in another time of balance both in the cycle of the sun and in the hearts of American. We Druids seek young Washington's courage to harmonize with these cycles; perhaps accentuating the good and reducing the baneful. I wish you luck this autumn.

## THE BENEDICTION

Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with her blessing and that of our presidents.

### Parting Chorus:

I'm a Yankee Doodle Druid.  
Here In Washington D.C.  
A real strange Druid with a loud bagpipe  
Playing tricks and full of whiskey.  
I love my dear sweet Earth-Mother,  
She's my Yankee Doodle joy.

Yankee Doodle went to Wiltshire  
Just to view that Stonehenge!  
I am a Yankee Doodle boy.

I laugh at all those silly Druids,  
Tied up in red-tape, they don't need.  
Give me a one page constitution, PLEASE!  
So I don't go blind, trying to read.  
I love our simple, clever humor,  
I'll follow it till the day I die.

Yankee Doodle went to Wiltshire  
Just to view that Stonehenge!  
I am a Yankee Doodle guy.



# 2002 Fall Equinox Peace Service

Reformed Druids of North America, D.C. Grove  
By Mike Scharding with Help by Eric Powers  
See Shelton's Exorcism of War in Section 8.

## Extensive Preparatory Details

Against my own tradition of simple liturgies, this has become a ritual with extensive stage requirements and fore-planning only possible in a large grove. The Priest, Preceptor and Server should walk through the ceremony once or twice a few hours before, in a quiet place while other grove members collect firewood and dig the necessary holes. This was repeated at the Spring Equinox in 2003 with a few alterations.

The service site should have a young sapling (preferably oak or cherry), and the tree should be within reach of the priest's standing point at the site. A stone altar next to a small bonfire with mostly medium logs (arm diameter) should be prepared in the late afternoon, and the service begins ten minutes before sunset. The bigger the wars at that time, the bigger the fire should be. If the participants are few, more water should be already at the site, tucked away. Fire tongs or tools to be used to remove the logs from the fire should be readied and leaning against the altar. Two holes should be dug near the altar on fertile ground, one shallow and one quite big (maybe 1 foot wide, 2 feet deep and 3 feet long). One large bucket or basin with fine sand or dry ashes from the last fire should be placed near the altar. During the liturgy, the grove members will prop up their candles into the ashes.

The Priest has an acorn in their pocket also bears a very long red ribbon maybe 6 feet or more in length. The priest has also two small envelopes, one with 12 meditations and another envelope with three songs, all cut onto small pieces of paper.

The Preceptor will bear a small hatchet, small enough to be buried, or loosen the blade such that it is removable from the haft.

The Server bears a full bottle of whiskey and another full bottle of water should be borne (who also stashes a candle in their belt or pocket).

Each member of the grove should bear a similar candle and one or two buckets of water or a large gallon jug or two. They also have a small song sheet of the three potential songs to be sung at the end.

The service starts with all participants standing twenty or more yards distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the underlined words of the Invocation. If the grove will speak, make sure sheets of responses have been prepared for them.

## The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors and all others that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, but thy manifestations are beclouded by the hatred of men;

Thou art without form, but men have forgotten that thou pervadest all form;

Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, and we offer none, yet we offer praise from our lips, but with great fear in our hearts.

O Lord, forgive us these three errors and all others that are due to our human limitations.

O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and guide us for meditations.

## The Procession to the fire.

AD: On this Equinox, between day and night, we are in a period of balance poised between peace and war. Too far in either direction would be our downfall. We now approach the growing fires of war, each of us bearing a potential blaze with us, yet we also bear the tools to smother that blaze. Let us praise the forces of life!

Hymn to the Earth-Mother

O Earth-Mother!

We praise thee,

Who seed springeth,

Who flower openeth,

Who grass waveth.

We praise thee for winds that whisper

Through the graceful elm,

Through the shapely maple,

Through the lively pine,

Through the shining birch,

Through the mighty oak.

We praise thee for all things.

O Earth-Mother!

Who givest life.

*While singing this song they approach the fire.*

## The Inscription

*The Grove circle around the fire and come to a halt, still bearing their buckets. The Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar by the fire (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess step into this Sigil, which is then close by the two staves. For the remainder of the service, he should face the bonfire and thereby present a fearsome fire-lit visage.*

## The Sacrifice

AD: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. We offer up this sacrifice....

*The server hands the hatchet to the Priest/ess, and then the Druid/ess dramatically pushes up their sleeves and lifts up the axe and begins to swing toward the tree with the hatchet as if to cut off a branch, or even to chop down the tree. But stops.*

AD: O dear Mother, too many of your children have been taken or mutilated in these recent days, we cannot bear to do further harm, today. We will not feed the flames of war with the carcasses of your children, but instead we will plant an acorn here, and will nurture its growth. Is this your wish, and should we battle against these flames?

*(Here the priest plants the acorn in the ground and covers it. The Grove begins to sing and during the three minute song the Priest/ess will slowly continue to consult the four directions as below:)*

## Blowing in the Wind:

How many roads must a man walk down  
Before you call him a man?  
Yes, 'n' how many seas must a white dove sail  
Before she sleeps in the sand?  
Yes, 'n' how many times must the cannon balls fly  
Before they're forever banned?  
The answer, my friend, is blowing' in the wind,  
The answer is blowing' in the wind.

How many times must a man look up  
Before he can see the sky?  
Yes, 'n' how many ears must one man have  
Before he can hear people cry?  
Yes, 'n' how many deaths will it take till he knows  
That too many people have died?  
The answer, my friend, is blowing' in the wind,  
The answer is blowing' in the wind.

How many years can a mountain exist  
Before it's washed to the sea?  
Yes, 'n' how many years can some people exist  
Before they're allowed to be free?  
Yes, 'n' how many times can a man turn his head,  
Pretending he just doesn't see?  
The answer, my friend, is blowing' in the wind,  
The answer is blowing' in the wind.

AD: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I will ask the winds of change. I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer, of the South, of the East, and of the West.

## The Reply

*(If the sacrifice is accepted with winds, birds or sounds from the directions, and it almost always is accepted, then you continue. If it is not accepted then go straight to the meditation..)*

AD: Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted! She encourages us to work in the efforts of peace!

*(AD flings the hatchet into the larger of the two holes, the Preceptor and Server bury it, and begin to jump up and down on the dirt to tamp it down firmly.)*

AD: We need ye not, we need ye no longer. We must turn toward life. May it be so everywhere.

## The Catechism of The Waters-of-Life

*(The preceptor holds the whiskey bottle and chalice as yet unmixed while the priest asks the Catechism of the Waters-of-Life. The local custom may or may not replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)*

AD: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?  
PREC: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

AD: From whence do these Waters flow?  
PREC: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER,  
THE EVER CHANGING, YET NEVER CHANGING,  
ALL-MOTHER.

AD: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?  
PREC: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

AD: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?  
PREC: SHE HAS, THOUGH MUCH HAS BEEN LOST!

AD: Then give me the Waters! All of them! Every bucket that you bear! Make a perfect ring.

## The Consecration

*(Each member places their bucket in a circle at the foot of the Priest/ess, places a candle in the ash basin, and then returns to the circle, going clockwise. The Priest/ess runs their long red ribbon through the handles and hold the ends in his hand. The Preceptor takes the bottle from the Server, and fills the chalice completely with whiskey.)*

AD: The fiery spirits of the Waters of Life in their pure state can enliven our lives, or be used to fan the flames of violence for impure goals.

*(The Priest tastes the waters, and with a fiery look in his eyes, dashes the whiskey onto the fire, which should roar up, consuming the whiskey. The Server takes a candle and lights it. The preceptor fills the chalice with pure water.)*

AD: And so life is consumed in the process. If we rely upon the cool waters of reason alone, and the flames can be doused.

*(The Priest pours out half of the water on the candle's flame, dousing it. He then drinks the remainder with a most unsatisfied look on his face.)*

AD: And yet, we have become cold, and it is hard to motivate the spirit to opposition in true times of need. As in all dangerous ventures, moderation is the key to survival; a mixture of courage, emotion and intellect, in the correct balance required by the situation.

*(The Preceptor fills the chalice with one part whiskey and two parts water. Then the preceptor puts one shot of whiskey into each bucket or container of water and the handle of the basin of ashes and candles. The Priest/ess then consecrates the contents with the following, in a larger voice than usual, because hallowing thirty gallons is hard work.)*

AD: O Dalon Ap Landu, Hallow these waters by thy seven-fold powers and by the three ways of day and one of night, Cleanse our hearts and join us together as we take and drink of they secret essence and do thy work!

## The Community Work

*The Priest/ess taps the chalice on every bucket and candle. The Priest/ess drinks from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Life," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.*

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice.*

*The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise, the grove faces away from the fire with their backs to the flames) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does not drink more than once.*

*In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.*

*In either method, the last person in the circle should not finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings.*

AD: We are now balanced and strengthened together for a purpose that she has sanctified. We are not done yet. Much waters remain around me, prepared for a great task. We will begin this work by removing the foundation of this monstrous fire, that is beyond our control, and tame it back for its intended purposes. I can stand by no longer, and watch it burn! The time of reaction has come!

*The AD picks up two buckets and hands them to the Preceptor and Server who pass them to both sides of the circle, and deliberately steps out of the Sigil. The Server and Preceptor will hand out the implements of destruction to some of the more hardy members.*

AD: This is not a holy fire that gushes before us. Ahoy, \_\_\_\_\_!  
(Calls one grove member) Remove the log of ignorance!

*The grove member removes a log from the bed of coals.*

AD: Ahoy, \_\_\_\_\_! (Call another member) Extinguish it!

*The grove member drenches the log slowly and surely rolls it to the side.*

*Repeat these two steps with the following logs:*

The log of hatred.

The log of fear.

The log of pride.

The log of indifference.

The log of greed.

The log of prejudice.

The log of injustice.

The log of hypocrisy.

The log of revenge.

And continue as needed until only coals remain.

AD: The logs are gone, and yet the coals are small and beyond number and can not be easily named. They cannot be completely erased from the world, for their spark remains within us.

*Server lights her candle from a coal and lights all the pre-arranged candles in the basin of ashes.*

AD: Now, all of you together, drench this conflagration!  
Drench it now!

*The remaining buckets are poured upon the fires, which should be adequately snuffed.*

AD: It has been done well.

## Optional Ordinations

AD: Does anyone wish to be ordained into the first order of the Reformed Druids of North America? If so, step forward!

*(if any does the following is said.)*

AD: Do you believe in the two basic tenets of Druidism?

Member: Yes.

AD: I see by the ashes and wet stains on your dress that you are already drenched in the graces of the Earth-Mother. Welcome.

*(Marks the sigil on their forehead with fingers dipped in Waters-of-Life.)*

## The Libation

*After ordinations, the Priest/ess takes a last sip.*

AD: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee. Grow, little seed of peace, into a mighty tree of prosperity and love. We ask all the wounded spirits out there to drink deep and may your desire for justice be quenched in some other ways without so many more lives being snuffed out.

*Priest pours the remaining waters on the buried acorn.*

AD: Please rest from your labors and sit. Wisdom must guide our next deeds. Now, with the light of reason, the warmth of reflection and our passions put to directed uses, let us enter into meditation.

## The Meditation

*Preceptor and Server bear the basin around the circle, and the seated members take a candle while the AD is reading various prayers. It is suggested that the priest randomly draw at least three of the prayers that follow this service, with members concluding each with "So be it."*

*Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end of the Service with:*

## The Benediction

AD: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with her blessing to do her work. If you should have later doubts, relight your candle and meditate upon it.

Preceptor: Lend your voices, as we leave this grove in a final song, guided by the words we have heard tonight.

*AD randomly pulls a song from song envelope and the group sings as they walk with lit candles away into the night.*

Server: The song is \_\_\_\_\_.

## Drawing the Sigil in the Air

*The sigil on the ground is brushed away and the Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:*

AD: Peace! Peace! Peace!

## 12 Meditations to Draw From:

### Hindu Prayer for Peace

Oh God, lead us from the unreal to the Real.  
Oh God, lead us from darkness to light.  
Oh God, lead us from death to immortality.  
Shanti, Shanti, Shanti unto all.  
Oh Lord God almighty, may there be peace in celestial regions.  
May there be peace on Earth.  
May the waters be appeasing.  
May herbs be wholesome, and may trees and plants bring  
peace to all. May all beneficent beings bring peace to us.  
May thy Vedic Law propagate peace all through the world.  
May all things be a source of peace to us.  
And may thy peace itself, bestow peace on all  
and may that peace come to me also.

### Baha'i Prayer for Peace

Be generous in prosperity, and thankful in adversity.  
Be fair in thy judgment, and guarded in thy speech.  
Be a lamp unto those who walk in darkness, and a home to the  
stranger.  
Be eyes to the blind, and a guiding light unto the feet of the  
erring.  
Be a breath of life to the body of humankind, a dew to the soil  
of the human heart,  
and a fruit upon the tree of humility.

### Buddhist Prayer for Peace

May all beings everywhere plagued  
with sufferings of body and mind  
quickly be freed from their illnesses.  
May those frightened cease to be afraid,  
and may those bound be free.  
May the powerless find power,  
and may people think of befriending one another.  
May those who find themselves in trackless, fearful wilderness  
—  
the children, the aged, the unprotected —  
be guarded by beneficent celestials,  
and may they swiftly attain Buddhahood.

### Jewish Prayer for Peace

Come, let us go up to the mountain of  
the Lord, that we may walk the  
paths of the Most High.  
And we shall beat our swords into plowshares,  
and our spears into pruning hooks.  
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation —  
neither shall they learn war any more.  
And none shall be afraid, for the mouth of the  
Lord of Hosts has spoken.

### Jainist Prayer for Peace

Peace and Universal Love is the essence  
of the Gospel preached by all Enlightened Ones.  
The Lord has preached that equanimity is the Dharma  
Forgive do I creatures all, and let all creatures forgive me.  
Unto all have I amity, and unto none enmity.

Know that violence is the root cause of all miseries in the  
world.

Violence, in fact, is the knot of bondage.

"Do not injure any living being."

This is the eternal, perennial, and unalterable way of spiritual  
life.

A weapon, howsoever powerful it may be,  
can always be superseded by a superior one;  
but no weapon can, however,  
be superior to nonviolence and love.

### Muslim Prayer for Peace

In the name of Allah,  
the beneficent, the merciful.  
Praise be to the Lord of the  
Universe who has created us and  
made us into tribes and nations  
That we may know each other, not that  
we may despise each other.  
If the enemy incline towards peace, do  
thou also incline towards peace, and  
trust God, for the Lord is the one that  
heareth and knoweth all things.  
And the servants of God,  
Most gracious are those who walk on  
the Earth in humility, and when we  
address them, we say "PEACE."

### Native African Prayer for Peace

Almighty God, the Great  
Thumb we cannot evade to tie any knot;  
the Roaring Thunder that splits mighty trees:  
the all-seeing Lord up on high who sees  
even the footprints of an antelope on  
a rock mass here on Earth.  
You are the one who does  
not hesitate to respond to our call.  
You are the cornerstone of peace.

### Native American Prayer for Peace

Oh Great Spirit of our  
Ancestors, I raise my pipe to you.  
To your messengers the four winds, and  
to Mother Earth who provides  
for your children.  
Give us the wisdom to teach our children  
to love, to respect, and to be kind  
to each other so that they may grow  
with peace of mind  
Let us learn to share all good things that  
you provide for us on this Earth.

### Shinto Prayer for Peace

Although the people living across the ocean  
surrounding us, I believe,  
are all our brothers and sisters,  
why are there constant troubles in this world?  
Why do winds and waves rise in the ocean surrounding us?  
I only earnestly wish that the wind will  
soon puff away all the clouds which are  
hanging over the tops of mountains.



## Zoroastrian Prayer for Peace

We pray to God to eradicate all the  
misery in the world:  
that understanding triumph  
over ignorance,  
that generosity triumph over indifference,  
that trust triumph over contempt, and  
that truth triumph over falsehood.

## Sikh Prayer for Peace

God adjudges us according  
to our deeds,  
not the coat that we wear:  
that Truth is above everything,  
but higher still is truthful living.  
Know that we attaineth God when we loveth,  
and only that victory  
endures in consequences of which no  
one is defeated.

## Christian Prayer for Peace

Blessed are the PEACEMAKERS,  
for they shall be known as  
the Children of God.  
But I say to you that hear, love your enemies.  
Do good to those who hate you,  
bless those who curse you  
pray for those who abuse you  
To those that strike you on the cheek,  
offer the other one also,  
and from those who take away your cloak,  
do not withhold your coat as well.

Give to everyone who begs from you,  
and of those who take away your goods,  
do not ask for them again.  
And as you wish that others would do to you,  
do so to them.

## Three Songs to Choose From:

### Prayer of St. Francis

Make me a channel of your peace  
Where there is hatred, let me bring your love  
Where there is injury your pardon, Lord  
And where there's doubt, true faith in you  
D---/--A-/----/- DA D-

Make me a channel of your peace  
Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope  
Where there is darkness, only light  
And where there's sadness ever joy

(Bridge) O master grant that I may never seek  
So much to be consoled as to console  
To be understood as to understand  
To be loved as to love with all my soul  
G-D-/A-D-/G-D-/E-A-

Make me a channel of your peace  
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned  
In giving to all men that we receive  
And in dying that we're born to eternal life  
-rewritten by Sebastian Temple

## Let There Be Peace On Earth –

Sy Miller & Bill Jackson, Modified by Mike

Let there be peace on earth  
And let it begin with me.  
Let there be peace on earth  
The peace that was meant to be.

With the Earth as our Mother,  
Siblings all are we.  
Let me walk with my Sibling  
In perfect harmony.

Let peace begin with me,  
Let this be the moment now.  
With every step I take  
Let this be my solemn vow;

To take each moment and live  
Each moment in peace eternally.  
Let there be peace on earth  
And let it begin with me.

## I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing

I'd like to build the world a home  
And furnish it with love  
Grow apple trees and honey bees  
and snow-white turtle doves

I'd like to teach the world to sing  
In perfect harmony  
I'd like to hold it in my arms and keep it company

I'd like to see the world for once  
All standing hand in hand  
And hear them echo through the hills  
"Ah, peace throughout the land"

I'd like to build the world a home  
And furnish it with love  
Grow apple trees and honey bees  
And snow-white turtle doves



# Calling Ritual Addendum

(Druidic Free Association)

By Corwin Troost, 2004

Recently the Carleton Druids have started a calling ritual. This has developed, in part, from the opening and closing of Carleton's sweat lodge rituals when the four directions are called to guide the lodge and then dispersed once the task is finished.

This is a free form ritual. The first person, normally the Arch Druid calls upon the spirits of a particular aspect, often but not always of nature. They list the attributes and what they think about it and at the end call upon it as a guide.

Then this continues going clockwise or counter clockwise (depending on who is nearby and whether they are familiar with the ritual. This continues until a set number of circles go by, or either time or ideas run out.

## An example:

Arch Druid: I call upon the spirits of the sky, spirits of blue, spirits of beauty. Spirits of keeping the atmosphere in, spirits of upness. Spirits of things not always noticed even if they're always present. Spirits of the sky, guide us in our wanderings.

(Next person): I call upon spirits of the snow spirits (falling backwards into the snow). Spirits of fun, spirits of cold. Spirits that remind us that even in the middle of winter, when we might get tired of the cold, the winter can still be very enjoyable, spirits of I'm getting snow in my gloves and so I'm getting up, spirits of the snow spirits, guide us to day.

(Next person): (et cetera)

Note, this can be a ritual of it's own or incorporated into other parts of the liturgy.



**Figure 20 Mike & Mark upon discovering the Stone Circle on the Hill of 3 Oaks, 1997.**



**Figure 21 The mysterious Hadzi sculpture in front of the Gould Library, 2004.**



**Figure 22 The Entrance to the Burial Mound of Carleton's first chaplain, 2004.**

# Section Six:

## International Liturgies



### 2004 Introduction

It may come as a great surprise to the Founders that there are now overseas branches of Reformed Druidism, seeing as how the RDNA was not thought to extend past Carleton in the early years. And yet, due to more frequent overseas studies and job opportunities of RDNA Druids, we are starting to get more internet inquiries for establishing groves in foreign lands.

As a result, we are also receiving more translations of the basic liturgy format, a trend that I am encouraging at present. The following are various attempts that I have collected or requested from multi-lingual members. I'm hoping a Welsh and Korean version are in the works for ARDA 3 Edition.

### Greek Order of Worship

By Richard Shelton, 2004  
Transliterated into Latin Letters  
See Historiography for pronunciation tips.

#### The Invocation

Ὁ Κύριε, ἀφες τὰςδε τρεῖς ἁμαρτίαις:  
Sy men pantachê ei, hêmeis de hierourgoûmen soi entaútha.  
Sy men acidês ei, hêmeis de hierourgoûmen soi toisde eidesin.  
Sy men ou chrêdzeis litôn te hêmetêrôn kai thysiôn,  
hêmeis de didomen soi tâsde litâs kai thysiâs.  
Ὁ Κύριε, ἀφες τὰςδε τρεῖς ἁμαρτίαις.

#### The Return

Soi apodidomen tôde tâs aphthoniâs méros,  
hôs hêmâs chrê apelthein soi.

#### The Libation

Prôtôn men Diós patrós te spéndomen,  
hôs ton bíon hêmín didôsin:  
Athênês te, hê tèn sophían.  
☉ ☽

Kai de Aphrodites spéndomen,  
hê ton éron didôsin.  
☉ ☽

Kai de Dionýsou spéndomen,  
tou philtátou,  
chármatos brotôn,  
tô hêmeis didomen tēnde autês dósion — oínon.  
☉ ☽

### Greek Order of Worship

By Richard Shelton, c.1969  
Notice that many sections are missing, see historiography  
Actual text in Palantino Linotype will be in appendix.

#### The Invocation

Ω Κύριε, ἀφες τὰςδε τρεῖς ἁμαρτίαις:  
Σὺ μὲν πανταχῆ εἶ, ἡμεῖς δὲ ἱερουργοῦμεν σοὶ ἐνταῦθα.  
Σὺ μὲν ἀειδῆς εἶ, ἡμεῖς δὲ ἱερουργοῦμεν σοὶ τοῖσδε εἶδεσιν.  
Σὺ μὲν οὐ χρήζεις λιτῶν τε ἡμετέρων καὶ θυσιῶν,  
ἡμεῖς δὲ δίδομεν σοὶ τὰςδε λίτας καὶ θυσίας.  
Ω Κύριε, ἀφες τὰςδε τρεῖς ἁμαρτίαις.

#### The Return

Σοὶ ἀποδίδομεν τόδε τᾶς ἀφθονίας μέρος,  
ὡς ἡμᾶς χρῆ ἀπελθεῖν σοὶ.

#### The Libation

Πρῶτον μὲν Διὸς πατρός τε σπένδομεν,  
ὡς τὸν βίον ἡμῖν δίδωσιν:  
Ἀθήνης τε, ἢ τὴν σοφίαν.  
☉ ☽  
Καὶ δὲ Ἀφροδίτης σπένδομεν,  
ἢ τὸν ἔρον ἡμῖν δίδωσιν.  
☉ ☽  
Καὶ δὲ Διονύσου σπένδομεν,  
τοῦ φίλτατου,  
χάρματος βροτῶν,  
τῷ ἡμεῖς δίδομεν τῆνδε αὐτῆς δόσιν — οἶνον.  
☉ ☽

## Greek Order of Worship

By Richard Shelton, 2004  
Translated into English

### The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three sins:  
Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee here.  
Thou art without form, but we worship thee in these forms.  
Thou needest not our prayers and sacrifices,  
But we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices.  
O Lord, forgive these three sins.

### The Return

To thee we return this portion of thy bounty,  
As we must return to thee.

### The Libation

First to Zeus the Father do we pour out [a libation],  
Who gives us life;  
And to Athena, who gives us knowledge.

Then to Aphrodite do we pour out,  
Who gives us love.

Then to Dionysus do we pour out,  
The best beloved,  
The joy of mortals,  
To whom we give of his own gift — wine.

## Translation of Greek Order

(by Katie Hines, 1996)

O Lord, permit these three faults/sins/grievances:  
You (on the one hand) are everywhere; we (on the other hand)  
perform sacred rights (continually) to you here.  
You (on the one hand) are incorporeal; we (on the other hand)  
perform sacred rights (continually) to you as being of  
such a sort.  
You (on the one hand) don't need of prayers, both from us and  
of sacrifices/offerings; we (on the other hand) give  
(continually) to you prayers and sacrifices/offerings.  
O Lord, permit these three faults/sins/grievances.  
To you we render this the abundant share, since it is necessary  
for us to depart to/from you.

## 3 Greek Supplements

Added by Mike the Fool, 2004

### Some Greek Links

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/Texts.html>  
<http://classics.mit.edu/>  
<http://www.ecauldron.com/recongreek.php>  
<http://www.cs.utk.edu/~mclennan/OM/grk-lat.html>  
<http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/Lofts/2938/linkspagan1.html>

## Notes on Greek Offerings

It is recommended that offerings be either first fruits or libations such as honey, oil, water or wine. A carved loaf of bread is commonly substituted for the animals so commonly given in ancient times. Usually Greek Gods are thought to take the in-edible portions of an offering due to a long standing agreement.

## Useful Greek Phrases

<http://www.cs.utk.edu/~mclennan/BA/UAGP.html>

Blessed be! Maka'rios e'soio (sg) / Maka'rioi e'soisthe (pl)!  
Ma'kar e'soio (sg) / Ma'kares e'soisthe (pl)!  
Come! I'thi, ei'a! Deu'ro (sg) / Deu'te (pl)! Bas'ke! Fe're!  
Hu'page!  
Come along! He'peo prote'rô!  
Come,... Ei d' a'ge (sg) / a'gete (pl) [usually with nun (now), dê  
(indeed), moi (me), etc. and a following imperative].  
Excuse me. Sungignô'ske moi.  
Go! Bask' i'thi!  
Good-bye! Khai're (sg) / Khai'rete (pl)! E'rrosô!  
Health! Hugi'eia!  
I drink health (to you)! Filotêsi'an propi'nô [soi (sg) / humin'  
(pl)]! Or simply: Propi'nô [soi (sg) / humin' (pl)]!  
Go to Hell! Es Hai'dou bas'ke.  
Hello! Ou'le (sg) / Ou'lete (pl)! Khai're (sg) / Khai'rete (pl)!  
Me'ga khai're (sg) / khai'rete (pl)!  
How can I help? Ti d' ou me'llô?  
Hurry! Speu'de (sg) / Speu'dete (pl)!  
In haste. Spoudê'.  
In all haste. Pansoudi'a. Pansoudi'ên. Pansoudei'.

### Interjections

Ha! (surprise or suffering) Papai'!  
Oh Ye Gods! Ô sunte'leia!  
I entreat you by Olympian Zeus,... Lis'somai Zênos'  
Olumpi'ou,...  
Be kindly disposed to me! Prophilôs' moi e'khe (sg) / e'khetē  
(pl)!  
Ah! (grief, anger, surprise, admiration) Feu!  
Enough! Pax!  
So be it! Es'tô!  
I wish you joy! Kharan' le'gô soi (sg) / humin' (pl)!  
Luck. Tu'khê. (usually good)  
Good luck to you! E'khe (sg) / E'khetē (pl) tu'khê agathê'!  
Oh! My ill luck! Tês tu'khês!  
Never! Ou'pote!  
No. Ou. Hê'kista.  
No indeed, no truly. Ou men'toi. Ou dê'ta. Ou men. Ou men dê.  
No thank you. Ma'llista. Epainô'. Genai'os ei. Kalôs'. Kal'llista.  
Pa'nu kalôs'.  
Thank you. Eukha'ristos eimi'. Kha'ris soi (sg) / humin' (pl).  
Woe's me! Oi moi! Ta'las! Tlê'môn!  
Yes. Nai. Naikhi'. Ma'llista. Kai ma'llista. Tau'ta. Tau'ta dê.  
By all means, of course. Pan'tôs gar. Dê'pou. Pa'nu ge. Pa'nu  
men oun. Pôs gar ou.



# ORD ADHARTHA

Ar feadh an tSamhraidh agus an Fhómhair  
Summer/Fall By Robert Larson, c. 1975

Céil úraith: An Árd-draoi, an Teagascóir, agus an Fríotha'lai

## AN ACHAINÍ:

**AD:** A thiarna, maith dhuinn trí pheaca, atá orainn as siocair lochtanna daonna: Tá tú I ngach aon bhall, ach adhramid anso thú. Tá tú gan riocht, ach adhramid insna riochta so thú. Níl call agat lenár n-urnaith agus ár n-íobairtí, ach ofráilimid na h-urnaithe agus na híobairtí so chúit.

Athiarna, maith dhúinn trípheaca, atá orainn as siocair lochtanna daonna; A Mháthair, glan ár n'anama 'is ár gcroithe agus ullmhaigh le smaoinéadh sinn.

## AN MÓR-SHIÚL:

### OFRÁIL NA HÍOBARTHA:

**AD:** Téann ár moladh suas duit ar na sciatháin iolair; beirtéar ár nglórtha suas duit ar ghuailne na ngaoth. Clis anois, a Mháthair, más é do thoil é, agus sinn ag ofráil an íobairt so bheatha. Glac léi más é do thoil é, agus glan ár gcroithe, ag tabhairt dhúinn cuid do shíochána 'is do bheatha.

An nglacair lenár n-íobairt, a Mháthair? Iarraim ar anam an Tuaiscirt freagra a thabhairt.... an Deiscirt... an Oirthir... an Iarthair.

Moladh leis na déithe! Glactar ár n-íobairt tiomnaithe don torthúlacht 'is athnuachan bheatha, agus don ghlandadh ár gcroithe 's ár n-anama.

### AN CAITCEASMA NA N-UISCI:

**AD:** Cad é a bheireann an Domhain-Mháthair, go, raibh fios againn ar an sní 's athnuachan shíorá bheatha?

**T:** Na huiscí beatha.

**AD:** Cá as go sníonn na huiscí seo?

**T:** As brollach na Domhain-Mháthair, Uile Mháthair gan athrú.

**AD:** Agus conas onóirimid an tabhartas so, a bheireann an bheatha dosna fir?

**T:** Ólaimid na huiscí beatha!

**AD:** An dtugann an Mháthair cuid a féile?

**T:** Bheireann sí!

**AD:** Mar sin de, tabhair dhom na huiscí!

### COISREACHAN NA N-UISCÍ:

**AD:** A Dhalon ap Landu, naomhaigh na huiscí seo le do chumhactaí seacht-fhillte 'is leis na trí chaoi lae 'is leis an aon chaoi amháin oíche. Glan ár gcroithe agus cuir le chéile sinn le

### AN DEOCH OFRÁLA:

**AD:** Bheirimid an chuid seo d'fhéile thar n-ais dhuit, a Mháthair, mar atá orainn dul thar n-ais dhuit.

### AN SMAOINEADH:

### AN BHEANNACHT:

**AD:** Téigidh amach isteach sa domhan fear, cinnte leis an bhfios, gur thug an Domhain-Mháthair taitneamh dár n-íobairt, gur fhreagraigh sí ár n-urnaí, agus go bhfágaimid lena beannacht:

Siócháin! Siócháin! Siócháin!

do chumhacht, agus sinn ag tógaint 's ag ól cuid d'uscráí runda

# ORDER OF WORSHIP

During Summer and Autumn  
Translated from Irish by Robert Larson, c. 1975

Celebrants: The Arch-Druid, the Preceptor and the Server

## THE INVOCATION

**AD:** O Lord, forgive us three sins, that are on us because of human limitations: Thou art everywhere, but we worship you here. Thou art without form, but we worship you in these forms. Thou hast no need for our prayers and sacrifices, but we offer these prayers and sacrifices to thee.

O lord, forgive us three sins that are on us because of human limitations; O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation.

## THE PROCESSION

### OFFERING OF THE SACRIFICE

**AD:** Our praise goes up to thee on the wings of eagles; our voices are carried up to thee on the shoulders of the wind. Hear now, O Mother, we pray thee, as we offer (u) this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our heart, giving to us of your peace and life.

Do you accept our sacrifice, O Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South.. of the East... of the West.

Praise be (to the Gods)! Our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our hearts and minds, is accepted.

### CATECHISM OF THE WATERS

**AD:** What is it that the Earth-Mother gives, that we may have knowledge of the continual flow and renewal of life?

**P:** The Waters of Life.

**AD:** From where do these Waters flow?

**P:** From the breast of the Earth-Mother, the All-Mother without change.

**AD:** And how do we honor this gift, which gives life to men?

**P:** We drink the Waters of Life!

**AD:** Does the Mother give of her bounty?

**T:** She does!

**AD:** Then, give me the Waters!

### CONSECRATION OF THE WATERS

**AD:** O Dalon Ap Landu, hallow these waters with your sevenfold powers, and with the three ways of day and one way of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together with your power, as we take and drink of your secret essences.

### THE LIBATION

**AD:** We return this portion of thy bounty of thee, O Mother, even as it is on us to return to thee.

### THE MEDITATION

### THE BENEDICTION

**AD:** Go out into the world of men, being secure with the knowledge, that our sacrifice pleased the Earth-Mother, that She answered our prayers, and that we leave with her blessing:

Peace!, Peace!, Peace!

## ORD ADHARTHA

Ar feadh an Gheimridh agus an Earraigh  
Winter/Spring By Robert Larson, c. 1975  
Céil'uraith: An Ard-draoi, an Teagascóir, agus an Friothálai

### AN ACHAINÍ:

**AD:** A thiarna, maith dhuinn trí pheaca, atá orainn as siocair lochtanna daonna: Tá tú I ngach aon bhall, ach adhráimid anso thú. Tá tú gan riocht, ach adhráimid insna riochta so thú. Níl call agat lenár n-urnaith agus ár n-íobairtí, ach ofráilimid na h-urnaith agus na híobairtí so chúit.

Athiarna, maith dhúinn trípheaca, atá orainn as siocair lochtanna daonna; A Mháthair, glan ár n-anama 'is ár gcroithe agus ullmhaigh le smaoinadh sinn.

### AN MÓR-SHIÚL:

#### OFRÁIL NA HÍOBARTHA:

**AD:** Téann ár moladh suas duit ar na sciatháin iolair; beirtear ár nglórtha suas duit ar ghuailne na ngaoth. Clis anois, a Mháthair, más é do thoil é, agus sinn ag ofrail an íobairt so bheatha. Glac léi más é do thoil é, agus glan ár gcroithe, ag tabhairt dhúinn cuid do shíochána 'is do bheatha.

An nglacair lenár n-íobairt, a Mháthair? Iarraim ar anam an Tuaiscirt freagra a thabhairt... an Deiscirt... an Oirthir... an Iarthair.

Tá na ceithre ghaoth ina dtost; tá an Domhain-Mháthair ina codladh.

#### AN CAITCEASMA NA N-UISCI:

**AD:** Cad é a bheireann an Domhain-Mháthair, go, raibh fios againn ar an sní 's athnuachan shíorá bheatha?

**T:** Na huiscí beatha.

**AD:** Cá as go sníonn na huiscí seo?

**T:** As brollach na Domhain-Mháthair, Uile Mháthair gan athrú.

**AD:** Agus conas onóirimid an tabhartas so, a bheireann an bheatha dosna fir?

**T:** Ólaimid na huiscí beatha!

**AD:** An dtugann an Mháthair cuid a féile?

**T:** Ní thugann sí; tá na huiscí anso, ach níl aon bheatha iontu.

**AD:** Mar sin de, cad é a ólaimid?

**T:** Na huiscí codlata.

**AD:** Tabhair dhom na huiscí codlata!

#### COISREACHAN NA N-UISCÍ:

**AD:** A Dhalon ap Landu, tair arís anuas isteach isna huiscí seo agus maomhaigh iad. Tabhair fios dúinn ar do chumhacht 'is ar an ngealltanais beatha, a thiocfaidh thar n-ais.

#### AN DEOCH OFRÁLA:

**AD:** Bheirimid an chuid seo thar n-ais dhuit, a Mháthair, mar atá orainn dul thar n-ais dhuit.

#### AN SMAOINEADH:

#### AN BHEANNACHT:

**AD:** Téigidh amach isteach sa domhan fear, cinnte leis an bhfios, go bhfreagróidh an Domhain-Mháthair ar n-urnaith, go dtiocfaidh an féile bheatha thar náis don domhan, agus go bhéarfadh an Domhain-Mháthair ag an am san a beannachtaí go leor daoibh.

Síocháin! Síocháin! Síocháin!

## ORDER OF WORSHIP

During winter and spring  
Translated from Irish by Robert Larson, c. 1975  
Celebrants: The Archdruid, the Preceptor and the Server

### THE INVOCATION:

**AD:** O Lord, forgive us three sins, that are on us because of human limitations: Thou art everywhere, but we worship you here. Thou art without form, but we worship you in these forms. Thou hast no need for our prayers and sacrifices, but we offer these prayers and sacrifices to thee.

O lord, forgive us three sins that are on us because of human limitations; O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation.

### THE PROCESSION

#### OFFERING OF THE SACRIFICE

**AD:** Our praise goes up to thee on the wings of eagles; our voices are carried up to thee on the shoulders of the wind. Hear now, O Mother, we pray thee, as we offer (u) this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our heart, giving to us of your peace and life.

Do you accept our sacrifice, O Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South... of the East... of the West.

The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother is sleeping.

#### THE CATECHISM OF THE WATERS:

**AD:** What is it that the Earth-Mother gives, that we may have knowledge of the continual flow and renewal of life?

**P:** The Waters of Life.

**AD:** From where do these Waters flow?

**P:** From the breast of the Earth-Mother, the All-Mother without change.

**AD:** And how do we honor this gift, which gives life to men?

**P:** We drink the Waters of Life!

**AD:** Does the Mother give of her bounty?

**P:** She does not; the Waters are here, but there is no life in them.

**AD:** Then, what is it which we drink?

**P:** The Waters of Sleep.

**AD:** Then, give me the Waters of Sleep!

#### CONSECRATION OF THE WATERS:

**AD:** O Dalon Ap Landu, come down again into these waters and hallow them. Give us knowledge of your power and of the promise of life, which will return.

#### THE LIBATION:

**AD:** We return this portion of thy bounty of thee, O Mother, even as it is on us to return to thee.

#### THE MEDITATION:

#### THE BENEDICTION:

**AD:** Go out into the world of men, being secure with the knowledge that the Earth-Mother will answer our prayers, that the bounty of life will return to the world, and that the Earth-Mother then will give her blessings in plenty to you: Peace!, Peace!, Peace!

# OIRNIÚ DRAOITHE AN DARA ORD

By Robert Larson, c. 1975

Céiliúraithe: Árd-Draoi agus an Iarrthóir

## AN ACHAINÍ:

**AD:** A Dhomhain-Mháthair fhlaithiúil shníte go deo, guíonn do pháistí do bheannacht ar an n-iarrthóir seo, gur mhian leis bheith fé do réir.

## AN CAITICESMA:

**AD:** An ngeallan tusa, le fíon iomlán, an Domhain-Mháthair a riaradh go dílis, ag friotháil ar lucht a leanta 's ag déanamh do churamaí mar Draoi an Dara Ord chomh maith is féidir leat? An ngeallann tusa?

**I:** Geallaim-se.

**AD:** An dtuigeann tusa nádúr an bhúin bheatha go léir agus cad as go dtagann sé? An dtuigeann tusa?

**I:** Tuigim-se.

**AD:** An dtuigeann tusa ól na n-uiscí beatha 's an íobairt bheatha, a ofráilimid chun ár Máthar? An dtuigeann tusa?

**I:** Tuigim-se.

**AD:** Mar sin de, an bhfuil tusa ullamh beith coisricthe do réir na Domhain-Mháthar?

**I:** Táim-se.

## AN COISREACAN:

**AD:** I n-ainm na Domhain-Mháthar, coisricim dá réir I dtigh anam an Deiscirt thú.

Coisricim dá réir I dtigh anam an Tuaiscirt thú.

Coisricim dá réir I dtigh anam an Iarthair thú

Coisricim dá réir I dtigh anam an Oirthir thú

Fé dheireadh, coisricim do réir na Domhain-Mháthar neartmhaire beannaithe uile-chumhactaí torthúla thú, ag coisreacan do shaoil le cúis na hUile-Mháthar, an Domhan.

Tóg 'is ól; gach aon bhraon!

# IRISH ORDINATION OF SECOND ORDER DRUIDS

By Robert Larson, c. 1975

*Celebrants: Archdruid and Aspirant*

## THE INVOCATION

**AD:** O Earth-Mother and ever flowing, thy children invoke your blessing on this aspirant, who wishes to be in your service.

## THE CATECHISM:

**AD:** Do you promise, with full knowledge, to serve the Earth-Mother faithfully, ministering to her followers and doing your duties as a Druid of the Second Order as well as you can? Do you (promise)?

**A:** I do (promise).

**AD:** Do you understand the nature of the source of all life and from what it comes? Do you (understand)?

**A:** I do (understand).

**AD:** Do you understand the drinking of the Waters of Life and the sacrifice of life which we offer to our Mother? Do you (understand)?

**A:** I do (understand).

**AD:** Then, are you ready to be consecrated to the service of the Earth-Mother?

**A:** I am.

## THE CONSECRATION

**AD:** In the name of the Earth-Mother, I consecrate you to her service in the house of the Spirit of the South.

I consecrate you to her service in the house of the Spirit of the North.

I consecrate you to her service in the house of the Spirit of the West.

I consecrate you to her service in the house of the Spirit of the East.

Finally, I consecrate you to the service of the mighty, blessed, all-powerful, and fertile Earth-Mother, consecrating your life to the cause of the All-Mother, the Earth.

Take and drink; every drop!

## Japanese Order of Worship (Summer Version)

### 北米国の新樫人の 一般的な崇拜の順番

5月1日から11月1日前日までのためのもの  
(Summer Version)  
(Bylkari Segawa 2002)

#### 召喚文

おお、主よ、我らの人間としての限界による3しつの間違いを許したまえ  
汝はどこにでも在り、しかし我らは汝をここに崇拜する  
汝には形はなし、しかし我らは汝をこれらが形にて崇拜する  
汝は祈りも犠牲も必要とせず、しかし我らはこれらの祈りと犠牲を捧げる  
おお、主よ、我らの人間としての限界による3しつの間違いを許したまえ  
おお、母なる者よ、我らの精神と心を洗い清め、瞑想のために準備させたまえ

#### 捧物

司祭：我らが賞賛はイーグルの翼に乗り汝に向けて昇り、我らが声は風の肩に乗り汝まで運ばれた。今こそ我らが祈りを聞き届けたまえ、我らが母なる者よ、我らは生命の捧物を捧げる。これを受け入れたまえ、そして我ら祈らん、我らの心を清め、汝の平和と生命を授けたまえ。

司祭：おお、我らが母なる者よ、我らが捧物は受け入れられたか？我は答えを求め北の精霊を呼びださん・・・そして南の、西の、東の精霊を。

(ここで司祭は、植物の供物を「祭壇」または、もし祭壇がないなら地面に置く。四方向に向けての質問の間、参加者たちはその方向を向いても良い)

#### 返事

司祭：喜べ、豊穡と生命の刷新のために、そして我らの精神と心を清めるために捧げられた物は受け入れられた！

#### 生命の水の教義問答

司祭：母なる大地が与えし何を通じて、我らは生命が常に続き刷新することを知るか？

教示者：生命の水なり。

司祭：どこからそれらの水は流れるか？

教示者：常に変わらぬ万物の母、大地の母の胸からなり。

司祭：しからば、いかにして我らの内なる生命を起こすこれらの贈り物を称えるべきか？

教示者：生命の水を共に飲むことによって。

司祭：大地の母はその豊かさを与えてくれたか？

教示者：与えてくれた！

司祭：ならば、我にその水を与えたまえ！！

#### 聖別

おお、ダロン・アプ・ランドゥ、これらの水を七重の力と、昼の3つの神秘の道と夜の1つの神秘の道によって清めたまえ。我らの心を清め、我らがその秘密のエッセンスを飲むのに参加したまえ！

#### 司祭認定式 (オプション)

#### 聖餐式

司祭：おお我らが母よ、我らも汝に戻らねばならぬとはいえ、汝の与える恵みの一部を汝に返そう。

#### 瞑想

#### 感謝の祈り

我らが供物が大地の母の見守るもとに受け入れ

られ、返答がなされ、我らはその祝福と共にあることを確信し、世界を進もう。

#### 大気中に印形を描く

司祭は左から右へ、「平和あれ！平和あれ！平和あれ」言いながら大気中に3つの印形を描き、参加者たちと周囲を祝福する。



# NRDNA

## Common Order of Worship

(Japanese Summer Version from May 1<sup>st</sup> to Nov 1<sup>st</sup>)

By Ikari Segawa, c. 2002.

### Shoukan

Ooo Shuu yo, warera no ningen to shite no genkai ni yoru  
mitsu no machigai wo yurushitamae  
Nanji wa doko ni demo ari, shikashi warera wa nanji wo koko  
ni te suuhai suru.  
Nanji ni wa katachi wa nashi, shikashi, warera ha nanji wo  
korera ka katachi ni te suuhai suru.  
Nanji wa inori mo gisei mo hitsuyou to sezu, shikashi warera  
wa korera no inori to gisei wo ageru.  
Ooo Shuu yo, warera no ningen to shite no genkai ni yoru  
mitsu no machigai wo yurushitamae.  
Ooo haha naru mono yo, warera no seishin to kokoro wo aria-  
kiyome, mokuzou no tame ni junbi sasetamae.

### Sasagemono

Shisai: Warera ga shogae wa “eagle” no tsubasa ni nori, nanji  
ni mukete-nori, warera ga koe wa kaze no kata ni nori,  
nanji made hokobareta. Ima koso warera ga inori wo  
kiki-todoketamae, warera ga haha naru mono yo, warera  
wa seimei no houbutus wo ageru. Kore wo uke-ireta  
mae, soshite warera kiran, warera no kokoro wo kyome,  
nanji no heiwa to seimei wo uketamae.

Shisai: Ooo, warera ga haha naru mono yo, warera no  
houbutsu wa uke-irerareta ka? Ware wa kotae wo  
motome, kita no seirei wo yobidasan... soshite minami  
no seirei... nishi no seirei... higashi no seirei wo....

*(Koko de Shisai wa shokubutsu no kyoubutusu wo “saidan”  
mata ha, moshi saidan ga nai nara chimen ni oku. Yoppomuki  
ni mukete no shitsumon no aida, sankashatachi ha so no  
houkou wo muite mo yoi.)*

### Henji (Reply)

Shisai: Yorokobe, houjou to seimei no sasshin no tame ni,  
soshite warera no seishin to kokoro wo kiyomeru tame ni  
agerereta mono wa uke-irerareta.

### Seimei no Mizu no Kyougimondo (Catechism)

Shisai: Haha nara daichi ga ataeshi nani wo tsujite, warera wa  
seimei ga jou ni tsuzuki-sasshin suru koto wo shiru ka?  
Kyujisha: Seimei no mizu nari.

Shisai: Doko kara sorera no mizu wa nagareru ka?  
Kyujisha: Jou ni kwaranu manbutsu no haha, taichi no haha  
no mune kara nari.

Shisai: Shikaraba, ika ni shite warera no uchi naru seimei wo  
okosu korera no okurimono wo tataeru beki ka?  
Kyujisha: Seimei no mizu wo tomo ni nomu koto ni yotte.

Shisai: Daichi no haha wa sono yutakasa wo ataete kureta ka?

Kyujisha: Ataete kureta!

Shisai: Naraba, ware ni sono mizu wo ataetamae!!

### Seibetsu (Consecration)

Oooo, Dalon ap Landu, korera no mizu wo nanae no chikara to  
, hiru no mitsu no shimpi no michi to yoru no hitotsu no  
shimpi no michi ni yotte, kiyometamae. Warera no  
kokoro wo kiyome, warera ga sono shimpi no essence  
wo nomu no ni sanku shitamae!

### Shisai-nintei-shiki (Optional Ordination)

### Seisanshiki (Libation parting)

Shisai: Ooo warera ga haha yo, warera mo nanji ni  
modoraneba naranu to wa ie, nanji no ataeru no megumi  
no ichibu wo nanji ni kaesou.

### Mokuzou (Meditation)

### Kansha no Inori (Benediction)

Warera ga kyoubutsu ga taichi no haha no mimamoru moto ni  
uke-irerare, hentou ga nasare, warera wa sono shukufuku  
to tomo ni aru koto wo kakushin shi, sekai wo susumou.

### Taiki-chu ni Enkei wo Kaku

*Shisai wa hidari kara migi he, “Heiwa are! Heiwa are! Heiwa  
are!” to inagara taikichuu ni mitsu no enkei wo kaki,  
sankashatachi to shuui wo shukuhaku suru.*



Figure 21 Steps into Japanese Garden, c.1997

## Japanese Order of Worship (Winter Version)

### 北米国の新樫人の 一般的な崇拝の順番

冬用：11月1日から、5月1日前日までのための  
もの(Winter Version)  
(By Ikari Segawa 2002)

#### 召喚文

おお、主よ、我らの人間としての限界による  
3つの間違いを許したまえ  
汝はどこにでも在り、しかし我らは汝をここ  
にて崇拝する  
汝には形はなし、しかし我らは汝をこれらが  
形にて崇拝する  
汝は祈りも犠牲も必要とせず、しかし我らは  
これらの祈りと犠牲を捧げる  
おお、主よ、我らの人間としての限界による  
3つの間違いを許したまえ  
おお、母なる者よ、我らの精神と心を洗い清  
め、瞑想のために準備させたまえ

#### 行列祈祷

#### 供物

司祭：我らが賞賛はイーグルの翼に乗り汝に  
向けて昇り、我らが声は風の肩に乗り汝  
まで運ばれた。今こそ我らが祈りを聞き  
届けたまえ、我らの大地の母よ、我らは  
生命の捧物を捧げる。これを受け入れた  
まえ、そして我ら祈らん、我らの心を清  
め、汝の平和と生命を授けたまえ。

(ここで司祭は、植物の供物を「祭壇」また  
は、もし  
祭壇がないなら地面に置く。四方向に向けて  
の質問の  
間、参加者たちはその方向を向いても良い  
。

司祭：おお、我ら母なる者よ、我らが捧物は  
受け入れられたか？我は答えを求め北の  
精霊を呼びださん・・・そして南の、西  
の、東の精霊を。

#### 返事待ち

(捧物は、緊急の場合を除き、受け入れられ  
ない)。

司祭：4つの風は静かなり、大地の母は眠り  
についているなり。

#### 生命の水についての教義問答

司祭：母なる大地が与えし何を通じて、我ら  
は生命が常に続き刷新することを知るか  
？

教示者：生命の水なり。

司祭：どこからそれらの水は流れるか？

教示者：常に変わらぬ万物の母、大地の母の  
胸からなり。

司祭：しからば、いかにして我らの内なる生  
命を起こすこれらの贈り物を称えるべき  
か？

教示者：生命の水を共に飲むことによって。

司祭：大地の母はその豊かさを与えてくれた  
か？

教示者：与えて下さっていない！水はここに  
あり、しかしその精はそこから出ていっ  
てしまった。

司祭：では、我々が飲むのは何か？

教示者：眠りの水なり。

司祭：では、眠りの水を我に与えたまえ。

#### 聖別

おお、ダロン・アップ・ランドゥよ、再びこれ  
らの水に降臨し、清めたまえ。我らに汝  
の力と、やがて戻るべき生命の約束を知  
らしめたまえ。

#### 聖餐式

#### 瞑想

#### 感謝の祈り

司祭：我らが祈りは答えられ、生命の恵みは  
大地の表面に戻り、そして大地の母がそ  
の祝福を我らに降り注いでくれることを  
確信し、世界を進もう。

#### 大気中に印形を描く

司祭は左から右へ、「平和あれ！平和あれ！  
平和あれ」言いながら大気中に3つの印形を  
描き、参加者たちと周囲を祝福する。

# NRDNA

## Common Order of Worship

(Japanese Winter Version from Nov 1<sup>st</sup> to May 1<sup>st</sup>)

By Ikari Segawa, c. 2002.

### Shoukan

Ooo Shuu yo, warera no ningen to shite no genkai ni yoru mitsu no machigai wo yurushitamae  
Nanji wa doko ni demo ari, shikashi warera wa nanji wo koko ni te suuhai suru.  
Nanji ni wa katachi wa nashi, shikashi, warera ha nanji wo korera ka katachi ni te suuhai suru.  
Nanji wa inori mo gisei mo hitsuyou to sezu, shikashi warera wa korera no inori to gisei wo ageru.  
Ooo Shuu yo, warera to ningen to shite no genkai ni yoru mitsu no machigai wo yurushitamae.  
Ooo Daichi -no-haha yo, warera no seishin to kokoro wo aria-kiyome, mokuzou no tame ni junbi sasetamae.

### Sasagemono

Shisai: Warera ga shogae wa “eagle” no tsubasa ni nori, nanji ni mukete-nori, warera ga koe wa kaze no kata ni nori, nanji made hokobareta. Ima koso warera ga inori wo kiki-todoketamae, warera ga haha naru daichi yo, warera wa seimei no houbutus wo ageru. Kore wo uke-ireta mae, soshite warera kiran, warera no kokoro wo kyome, nanji no heiwa to seimei wo uketamae.

Shisai: Ooo, warera ga haha naru mono yo, warera no houbutsu wa uke-irerareta ka? Ware wa kotae wo motome, kita no seirei wo yobidasan... soshite minami no seirei... nishi no seirei... higashi no seirei wo....

*(Koko de Shisai wa shokubutsu no kyoubutusu wo “saidan” mata ha, moshi saidan ga nai nara chimen ni oku. Yoppomuki ni mukete no shitsumon no aida, sankashatachi ha so no houkou wo muite mo yoi.)*

### Henji (Reply)

*(Houmono wa, kinkyuu no baai wo nuki, uke-irerarenai.)*

Shisai: Yotsu no kaze wa shizuka nari, daichi no haha wa nemuri ni tsuite iru nari.

### Seimei no Mizu no Kyougimondo (Catechism)

Shisai: Haha nara mono ga ataesh nani wo tsujite, warera wa seimei ga jou ni tsuzuki-sasshin suru koto wo shiru ka?  
Kyoujisha: Seimei no mizu nari.

Shisai: Doko kara sorera no mizu wa nagareru ka?  
Kyoujisha: Jou ni kawaranu manbutsu no haha, daichi no haha no mune kara nari.

Shisai: Shikaraba, ika ni shite warera no uchi naru seimei wo okosu korera no okurimono wo tataeru beki ka?  
Kyoujisha: Seimei no mizu wo tomo ni nomu koto ni yotte.

Shisai: Daichi no haha wa sono yutakasa wo ataete kureta ka?  
Kyoujisha: Atatete kudasatte inai! Mizu wa koko ni ari, shikashi sono sei wa soko kara dete-itte-shimatta.

Shisai: De wa, ware-ware ga nomu no wa nani ka?  
Kyoujisha: Nemuri no mizu nari.

Shisai: De wa, nemuri no mizu wo ware ni ataetamae!!

### Seibetsu (Consecration)

Oooo, Dalon ap Landu yo, futatabi korera no mizu ni kourin shi, kiyometamae. Warera ni nanji no chikara to yagate modoru beki seimei no yakusoku wo shirashimetamae.

### Shisai-nintei-shiki (Optional Ordination)

### Seisanshiki (Libation parting)

Shisai: Ooo warera ga haha yo, warera mo nanji ni modoraneba naranu to wa ie, nanji no ataeru no megumi no ichibu wo nanji ni kaesou.

### Mokuzou (Meditation)

### Kansha no Inori (Benediction)

Warera ga inori wa kotaerare, seimei no megumi wa daichi no hyoumen ni modori, soshite daichi no haha ga sono shukuhaku wo warera ni ori-sosode kureru koto wo kakushin shi, sekai wo susumou.

### Taiki-chu ni Enkei wo Kaku

*Shisai wa hidari kara migi he, “Heiwa are! Heiwa are! Heiwa are!” to iinagara taikichuu ni mitsu no enkei wo kaki, sankashatachi to shuui wo shukuhaku suru.*

### \*The translator's afterwords\*

Translating a language into another is always difficult. One of the difficulties I had was the overall \*religious\* and \*old-style\* tones of the ritual languages. I wanted to make the translation sound like as authentic as possible, but to do this, I needed a professional linguist, who was not available.

Another difficulty was that an English word can have many different meanings and it was sometimes difficult to know which Japanese word matches best. For example, \*way\* as in \*the three ways of the day\* part. To translate this, the translator(me) needed to know the exact meanings of this word in this context, but knowing this itself can be difficult!(It's a Mystery). I thank Mike Scharding for answering some of my questions.

I would like to say that although this translation may not be perfect, I am happy with the result. I hope this translation shall be of use to someone, some day, somewhere.

# Ablauf der Liturgie

FUER SOMMER UND HERBST  
German Order of Worship, Summer & Fall  
By Stacey Weinberger, April 2003

*Dies ist der Ablauf der allgemeinen Feier fuer das Sommerhalbjahr (von Beltane bis Samhain), von welcher sich alle anderen ableiten. Der Einfachheit halber ist hier nur von einer Druidin die Rede, jedoch kommt natuerlich auch ein maennlicher in Frage. Der Kelch wird mit den Wassern-des-Lebens gefuellt.*

## Anrufung

O Erdenmutter, wir loben Dich!  
Dass der Samen keimet,  
Dass die Blume bluehet,  
Dass die Graeser wehen.

Wir loben Dich fuer Winde die fluestern,  
Durch der Ulme Anmut,  
Durch des Ahorn Wohlgestalt,  
Durch der Foehre Lebenskraft  
Durch der Birken Glimmer,  
Durch der Eiche Macht.

Wir loben Dich fuer alles  
O Erdenmutter,  
die Du uns Leben schenkst.

## Bittgebet

D: O Bel, vergib uns diese drei Fehler, welche uns begrenzen in unsrer Sterblichkeit:  
Du bist ueberall,  
P: Doch wir verehren Dich hier.  
D: Du bist ohne Form,  
P: Doch wir verehren Dich in diesen Formen.  
D: Du brauchst uns're Gebete und Opfertgaben nicht,  
P: Doch bieten wir Dir diese Gebete und Opfertgaben dar.  
D: O Bel, vergib uns diese drei Fehler, welche uns begrenzen in unsrer Sterblichkeit.  
Alle: O Mutter, schenk Ruh' fuer Herz und Gedanken und sei mit uns in Innigkeit.

*Prozession zum Hain. Nach Ankunft beim Altar zeichnen Druidin und Prezeptor mit ihren Staeben das Druidensiegel auf den Boden um den Altar herum. Nachdem sich die Druidin vor dem Altar in Position gestellt hat, bilden die Anwesenden einen Halbkreis davor.*

## Lobpreisung

D: Hat jemand Lob oder Fuerbitte an die Goetter auszusprechen?

*An dieser Stelle koennen die Anwesenden Danksagungen aussprechen, Fuerbitten vorbringen und/oder eventuelle Opfertgaben auf dem Altar darbringen, welche sie fuer eine Gottheit ihrer Wahl mitgebracht haben. Darauf folgt eine kurze Zeit der Andacht, worin jede/r der Anwesenden um die Erfuellung von materiellen/externen oder spirituellen Wuenschen und Beduerfnissen bitten kann.*

## Opfer

*Die Druidin erhebt das Opfer gen Himmel, mit den Worten:*

D: Unser Lob steigt empor zu Dir auf den Fluegeln des Adlers; unsre Stimmen getragen auf den Schultern des Winds; Hoer' uns nun an, O unsre Mutter, da wir Dir bieten dies Opfer des Lebens. Nimm' es an, wir bitten Dich; gewaehr' uns Deinen Frieden, und Leben.

*Die Opfertgabe wird auf den Altar gelegt, oder ins Feuer. Die Druidin wendet sich nacheinander den vier Himmelsrichtungen zu, waehrend sie fragt:*

D: Nimmst Du unser Opfer an, O unsre Mutter? Ich rufe nun die Geister der Winde; uns Antwort zu geben. Lasset uns wissen vom Willen der Goetter fuer die kommende Zeit und vom Empfang unserer Opfertgabe. Ich rufe den Geist des Nordens...des Suedens...des Ostens...des Westens...

## Antwort

*Ist das Opfer angenommen, wird die Feier fortgesetzt; andernfalls wird die Feier sofort beendet.*

D: Lob sei mit Dir! Unser Opfer, gewidmet der Fruchtbarkeit und Erneuerung des Lebens ist angenommen!

## Katechismus

D: Wovon gibt uns die Erdmutter, auf dass wir erfahren den ewigen Fluss von Leben und Erneuerung?  
P: Von den Wassern-des-Lebens.  
D: Woraus entspringen diese Wasser?  
P: Von der Brust der Erdenmutter; Allmutter ewig unveraendert.  
D: Und wie ehren wir dies' Geschenk, das Leben spendet?  
P: Durch teilen der Wasser-des-Lebens.  
D: Hat die Erdenmutter ihre Gabe gebracht?  
P: Sie hat!  
D: Dann gebe mir die Wasser!

## Weihe

*Druide/Druidin nimmt den Kelch vom Prezeptor, welcher ihn fuellt, falls er nicht schon vorher gefuellt wurde. Druiden/Druidin weiht den Inhalt wie folgt:*

D: O Dalon Ap Landu, heilige diese Wasser durch Deine siebenfache Kraft; durch die drei Wege des Tages und den einen der Nacht. Reinige unsre Herzen und verbinde uns durch Deine Macht, so wir Deine geheimen Essenzen annehmen und von ihnen trinken.

## Priesterweihe?

*Wenn ein Mitglied des Hains die Weihe in den zweiten Grad empfangen soll, wird diese Zeremonie an dieser Stelle vor der Kommunion eingefuegt. Die Druidin stellt dafür einen zweiten geweihten Kelch bereit, welcher mit den Wassern-des-Lebens gefuellt wurde.*

## Kommunion

*Die Druidin trinkt vom Kelch und segnet den Prezeptor mit den Worten "Die Wasser des Lebens" und dem Zeichnen des Druidensiegels in die Luft. Der Prezeptor erwidert die Segnung und nimmt den Kelch wieder an sich. Der Prezeptor trinkt erst selbst und geht dann um den Hain herum (normalerweise im Uhrzeigersinn), segnet jede Person, gibt ihr den Kelch, laesst sie trinken, wird im Gegenzug gesegnet und uebergibt den Kelch der naechsten Person. Der Perzeptor trinkt NICHT mehr als einmal.*

*Die letzte Person sollte etwas im Kelch übrig lassen. Dieser Rest wird an Druide/Druidin mit einem letzten Austausch von Segenswunschen zurueckgegeben Diese/r nimmt einen letzten Schluck und giesst den Rest auf den Altar und in den Opferschacht mit den Worten:*

D: An Dich, O unsere Mutter, geben wir diesen Teil der Gabe zurueck, so wie wir dereinst zu Dir zurueckkehren muessen.

## Meditation

*Hier folgt eine Lesung aus irgend einem angemessenen naturorientierten Werk nach Wahl des Druiden oder der Druidin. Darauf folgen ein paar wenige meditative Worte des Druiden/Druidin und ein Moment Ruhe fuer private Meditation (normalerweise zwei bis drei Minuten oder laenger, je nach Beduerfnis der Gemeinschaft) Schlussendlich verkuendet Druide/Druidin den Abschluss der Feier mit:*

## Segensspruch

D: Gehet hin in die Welt in Sicherheit; in der Gewissheit um den Empfang unseres Opfers in der Gnade der Erdenmutter, die Erhoerung unserer Gebete und Ihr Segen auf unseren Wegen.

*Die Druidin segnet den Hain mit drei Siegeln in die Luft, von links nach rechts, mit dem Ausruf:*

D: Friede! Friede! Friede!

*Das Siegel wird von Druide/Druidin und Prezeptor aufgehoben.*

*Ein Opfer wird der grossen Eiche dargebracht.*

## ENDE DER LITURGIE FUER DIE ALLGEMEINE FEIER IM SOMMER UND HERBST



## Ablauf der Liturgie

FUER WINTER UND FRUEHLING  
German Order of Worship, Winter and Spring  
By Stacey Weinberger, April 2003

*Dies ist der Ablauf der allgemeinen Feier fuer das Winterhalbjahr (von Samhain bis Beltane.) Der Einfachheit halber ist hier nur von einer Druidin die Rede, jedoch kommt natuerlich auch ein maennlicher in Frage. Der Kelch wird mit den Wassern-des-Schlafs gefuellt.*

## Anrufung

O Erdenmutter, wir loben Dich!  
Dass der Samen keimet,  
Dass die Blume bluehet,  
Dass die Graeser wehen.

Wir loben Dich fuer Winde die fluestern,  
Durch der Ulme Anmut,  
Durch des Ahorn Wohlgestalt,  
Durch der Foehre Lebenskraft  
Durch der Birken Glimmer,  
Durch der Eiche Macht.

Wir loben Dich fuer alles  
O Erdenmutter,  
die Du uns Leben schenkst.

## Bittgebet

D: O Bel, vergib uns diese drei Fehler, welche uns begrenzen in unsrer Sterblichkeit:

Du bist ueberall,

P: Doch wir verehren Dich hier.

D: Du bist ohne Form,

P: Doch wir verehren Dich in diesen Formen.

D: Du brauchst uns're Gebete und Opfergaben nicht,

P: Doch bieten wir Dir diese Gebete und Opfergaben dar.

D: O Bel, vergib uns diese drei Fehler, welche uns begrenzen in unsrer Sterblichkeit.

Alle: O Mutter, schenk Ruh' fuer Herz und Gedanken und sei mit uns in Innigkeit.

*Prozession zum Hain. Nach Ankunft beim Altar zeichnen Druidin und Prezeptor mit ihren Staeben das Druidensiegel auf den Boden um den Altar herum. Nachdem sich die Druidin vor dem Altar in Position gestellt hat, bilden die Anwesenden einen Halbkreis davor.*

## Lobpreisung

D: Hat jemand Lob oder Fuerbitte an die Goetter auszusprechen?

*An dieser Stelle koennen die Anwesenden Danksagungen aussprechen, Fuerbitten vorbringen und/oder eventuelle Opfergaben auf dem Altar darbringen, welche sie fuer eine Gottheit ihrer Wahl mitgebracht haben. Darauf folgt eine kurze Zeit der Andacht, worin jede/r der Anwesenden um die Erfuellung von materiellen/externen oder spirituellen Wuenschen und Beduerfnissen bitten kann.*

## Opfer

*Die Druidin erhebt das Opfer gen Himmel, mit den Worten:*

- D: Unser Lob steigt empor zu Dir auf den Fluegeln des Adlers; unsre Stimmen getragen auf den Schultern des Winds; Hoer' uns nun an, O unsre Mutter, da wir Dir bieten dies Opfer des Lebens. Nimm' es an, wir bitten Dich; reinige unsre Herzen, und gewaehr' uns Deinen Frieden und das Geschenk Deines Lebens.

*Die Opfertgabe wird auf den Altar gelegt, oder ins Feuer. Die Druidin wendet sich nacheinander den vier Himmelsrichtungen zu, waehrend sie fragt:*

- D: Nimmst Du unser Opfer an, O unsre Mutter? Ich rufe die Geister der Winde; uns Antwort zu geben. Lasset uns wissen vom Willen der Goetter fuer die kommende Zeit und vom Empfang unserer Opfertgabe. Ich rufe den Geist des Nordens...des Suedens...des Ostens...des Westens...

## Antwort

“Das Opfer ist nicht angenommen!”

*oder*

“Das Opfer ist angenommen!”

- D: Die vier Winde verharren in Stille; die Erdmutter schlaeft.

## Katechismus

- D: Wovon gibt uns die Erdmutter, auf dass wir erfahren den ewigen Fluss von Leben und Erneuerung?  
P: Von den Wassern-des-Lebens.  
D: Woraus entspringen diese Wasser?  
P: Von der Brust der Erdenmutter; Allmutter ewig unveraendert.  
D: Hat uns die Erdmutter ihre Gabe gewaehrt?  
P: Sie hat es nicht! Die Wasser sind hier, doch verlassen vom Geist.  
D: Was bleibt uns jetzt zu teilen, da es so ist?  
P: Die Wasser-des-Schlafs!  
D: Dann gebe mir die Wasser-des-Schlafes.

## Weihe

*Druide/Druidin nimmt den Kelch vom Prezeptor, welcher ihn fuellt, falls er nicht schon vorher gefuellt wurde. Druiden/Druidin weiht den Inhalt wie folgt:*

- D: O Dalon Ap Landu, komm' hernieder in diese Wasser und heilige sie. Lass' uns Deine Macht erleben und die Verheissung des wiederkehrenden Lebens.

## Kommunion

*Druide/Druidin trinkt vom Kelch und segnet den Prezeptor mit den Worten “Die Wasser des Schlafs” und dem Zeichen des Druidensiegels in die Luft. Der Prezeptor erwidert die Segnung und nimmt den Kelch wieder an sich. Der Prezeptor trinkt erst selbst und geht dann um den Hain herum (normalerweise im Uhrzeigersinn), segnet jede Person, gibt ihr den Kelch, laesst sie trinken, wird im Gegenzug gesegnet und uebergibt den Kelch der naechsten Person. Der Prezeptor trinkt NICHT mehr als einmal.*

*Die letzte Person sollte etwas im Kelch uebrig lassen. Dieser Rest wird an Druiden/Druidin mit einem letzten Austausch von Segenswuenschen zurueckgegeben Diese/r nimmt einen letzten Schluck und giesst den Rest auf den Altar und in den Opferschacht mit den Worten:*

- D: An Dich, O unsere Mutter, geben wir diesen Teil der Gabe zurueck, so wie wir dereinst zu Dir zurueckkehren muessen.

## Meditation

*Hier folgt eine Lesung aus irgend einem angemessenen naturorientierten Werk nach Wahl des Druiden oder der Druidin. Darauf folgen ein paar wenige meditative Worte des Druiden/Druidin und ein Moment Ruhe fuer private Meditation (normalerweise zwei bis drei Minuten oder laenger, je nach Beduerfnis der Gemeinschaft) Schlussendlich verkuendet Druiden/Druidin den Abschluss der Feier mit:*

## Segensspruch

- D: Gehet hin in die Welt in Sicherheit; in der Gewissheit um die Erhoerung unserer Gebete und um die Wiederkehr der Gabe des Lebens auf die Erde, denn auf diese Weise wird die Erdenmutter ihren Segen ueber Euch hernieder regnen lassen.

*Druide/Druidin segnet den Hain mit drei Siegeln in die Luft, von links nach rechts, mit dem Ausruf:*

- D: Friede! Friede! Friede!

*Das Siegel wird von Druiden/Druidin und Prezeptor aufgehoben.*

*Ein Opfer wird der grossen Eiche dargebracht.*

## ENDE DER LITURGIE FUER DIE ALLGEMEINE FEIER IN WINTER UND FRUEHLING



# Structure Liturgique Générale

## Version simple pour Été

À partir du 1er Mai au 1er novembre  
French Order of Worship (Summer)  
By Celtic Oak, 2004

### LES ÉVOCATIONS

Ô Père, pardonnez ces trois erreurs dû à nos conditions humaines;  
Vous qui existes partout et à qui nous offrons nos louanges ici en moment;  
Vous qui n'avez pas de forme physique, mais dont on vous louange en cette forme et image;  
Vous qui n'avez pas besoin de prières ni de charités, mais à qui nous prions et donnons nos offrandes;  
Ô Père, pardonnez nous ces trois erreurs causés par nos conditions humaines

Ô Mère, purifiez nos pensées et nos âmes et préparez nous à la méditation.

**Optionnel: Procession, Exécuter le sigle, effectuer l'incantation.**

### L'OFFRANDE

Prêtre: Nos prières se sont levées sur les ails de l'aigle, nos voies sont emportées sur ses épaules à travers le vent. Ô Mère entendez nos prières, recevez et acceptées nos offrandes, en échange de purifier nos âmes et de remplir nos vie de paix. Mettre offrande sur l'autel.

Prêtre: Ô Mère, en recevant nos offrandes, J'appel l'esprit de l'Est à se prononcer, également je demande à l'Esprit du Sud, de l'Ouest et celui du Nord à faire de même.

### LA RÉPONSE

Prêtre: En offrant nos prières et nos offrandes à la fertilité, à l'immortalité de la vie et à la purification de nos âmes, il est assuré qu'elles ont tous été acceptées !

### LE CATÉCHISME DE L'EAU VIE

Prêtre: De quoi dont notre Mère Nature nous offre dont nous connaissons son flot et son renouvellement continuel de la vie.

Maître: L'eau de vie

Prêtre: D'où vient cette eau?

Maître: De sa poitrine, notre Mère toute puissante et interchangeable.

Prêtre: Comment devons nous honorer ça générosité?

Maître: En participant à cette célébration qui lui rend honneur.

Prêtre: Nous as-t-elle été généreuse?

Maître: OUI, elle l'a été!

Prêtre: Donné moi cette eau dormante.

### CONSÉCRATION

Ô Dalon Ap Landu vide cette eau par avec les 7 grands pouvoirs et par les trois manières du jour et de la nuit, Purifiez nos âmes et rejoignez nous en concert avec nous lorsque nous buvons cette mystérieuse essence!

### COMMUNION ET VIN (ORDINATIONS OPTIONNELLES)

À celle que nous retournons cette portion de cette générosité, Ô notre Mère, même si nous devons retourner à vous.

### MÉDITATION SUIVIT PAR BÉNÉDICTION

Allez dans ce monde, dans la certitude que nos offrandes ont trouvés leur places au ceins de notre Mère Nature et qu'elle a répondu à nos prières. Avec sa bénédictions, nous pouvons poursuivre notre chemin.

Paix, Paix, Paix!



**Figure 22 Two shots of the Grotto of the Unknown Student by Laird, 2004.**



# Structure Liturgique Générale

## Version simple pour Hiver

À partir du 1er novembre au 1er Mai.  
French Order of Worship (Winter)  
By Celtic Oak, 2004

### LES ÉVOCATIONS

Ô Père, pardonnez ces trois erreurs dû à nos conditions humaines;  
Vous qui existes partout et à qui nous offrons nos louanges ici en moment;  
Vous qui n'avez pas de forme physique, mais dont on vous louange en cette forme et image;  
Vous qui n'avez pas besoin de prières ni de charités, mais à qui nous prions et donnons nos offrandes;  
Ô Père, pardonnez nous ces trois erreurs causés par nos conditions humaines

Ô Mère, purifiez nos pensées et nos âmes et préparez nous à la méditation.

Optionnel: Procession, Exécuter le sigle, effectuer l'incantation.

### L'OFFRANDE

Prêtre: Nos prières se sont levées sur les ails de l'aigle, nos voies sont emportées sur ses épaules à travers le vent. Ô Mère entendez nos prières, recevez et acceptées nos offrandes, en échange de purifier nos âmes et de remplir nos vie de paix. Mettre offrande sur l'autel.

Prêtre: Ô Mère, en recevant nos offrandes, J'appel l'esprit de l'Est à se prononcer, également je demande à l'Esprit du Sud, de l'Ouest et celui du Nord à faire de même.

### LA RÉPONSE

Prêtre: Les quatre vents son discrets, Mère Nature se repose.

### LE CATÉCHISME DE L'EAU DORMANTE

Prêtre: De quoi dont notre Mère Nature nous offre dont nous connaissons son flot et son renouvellement continuel de la vie.

Maître: L'eau de vie

Prêtre: D'où vient cette eau?

Maître: De sa poitrine, notre Mère toute puissante et interchangeable.

Prêtre: Comment devons nous honorer ça générosité?

Maître: En participant à cette célébration qui lui rend honneur.

Prêtre: Nous as-t-elle été généreuse?

Maître: Non, elle ne l'a pas été car l'Esprit de l'eau est absent!

Prêtre: De quoi assistons nous?

Maître: À de L'Eau dormante

Prêtre: Donné moi cette eau dormante.

### CONSÉCRATION

Ô Dalon Ap Landu, descend encore une fois dans ces eaux vides. Donne nous ta connaissance de tes pouvoirs et assure nous que la vie va revenir.

### COMMUNION ET VIN

À celle que nous retournons cette portion de cette générosité, Ô notre Mère, même si nous devons retourner à vous.

### MÉDITATION SUIVIT PAR BÉNÉDICTION

Allez dans ce monde, dans la certitude que nos prières seront exaucées, que la générosité de la vie va retourner sur cette terre et alors Mère Nature va versez ses bénédictions sur vous.

Paix, Paix, Paix!



Figure 23 New Stone Circle in winter 1999.



Figure 24 Cannon River running through the Carleton Arboretum 1999



# Ordination du Deuxième Ordre des Druides

French Ordination of Second Order Druids  
By Celtic Oak, 2004

*D'être inséré après la consécration et avant la méditation dans l'ordre de liturgie. Liturgie peut devenir uniquement l'objet de l'ordination ou encore l'ordination peu faire partie de liturgie générale. Il est aussi généralement prévue de faire l'ordination durant la moitié de l'année correspondant à l'été. Car celle-ci demande l'utilisation de l'alcool ou d'un mélange concentré de sucré et d'eau. Normalement, c'est le Prêtre qui officie le service et qui sollicite l'aspirant à rentrer dans le Deuxième Ordre après avoir consacré l'Eau.*

*Une autre alternative est d'inviter l'aspirant de venir en avant juste avant l'ÉVOCATION. Après avoir demandé les questions mentionnées ci-dessous, l'aspirant doit prendre part au CATÉCHISME DE L'EAU. Après la Consécration de l'eau, procédé à l'assermentation au Deuxième Ordre.*

*(NOTE: Faire tous le monde boire une gorgée avant l'initié, mais en laissant suffisamment pour qu'il ou elle peut en boire. Souvent, il est essentiel d'avoir un deuxième calice de prêt pour s'assurer d'en avoir suffisamment pour l'épreuve de l'aspirant.)*

## INVOCATION

Ô Mère nature, flot éternelle et généreuse, en temps que tes enfants nous te demandons d'offrir à cet aspirant vos bénédictions.

## QUESTIONS

Prête: Étant pleinement conscient, promets -tu de servir la sources de toute vie, notre Mère Nature, t'engages-tu de servir ses fidèles avec tes meilleures habilités en temps que Druide du Second Ordre.

Aspirant: Oui, je le veux!

Prête: Sais-tu d'où vient la source de toute vie?

Aspirant: OUI, je le sais!

Prête: En adhérant, comprends-tu que nous dévouons nos vie à Mère Nature et au flot de toute de toute vie?

Aspirant: OUI, je comprend!

Prête: Es-tu prêt, maintenant, officiellement, à servir Mère Nature?

Aspirant: Oui, je suis prêt!



Figure 25 Autumn fields at Carleton, 2001.

## ASSERMENTATION AU DEUXIÈME ORDRE

Le Prête trempe son doigt (préférable l'Index ou le pouce) dans l'eau consacré et imite le sigle sur le front du candidat à chaque fois qu'il prononce: "je t'assermente" dans l'ordre ci-dessous:

Au nom de notre Mère Nature:

Je t'assermente à ta tâche auprès de L'esprit du Sud;

Je t'assermente à ta tâche auprès de L'esprit du Nord;

Je t'assermente à ta tâche auprès de L'esprit du l'Ouest;

Je t'assermente à ta tâche auprès de L'esprit du l'Est;

Et pour terminer, je t'assermente aux tâches de la grande, glorifiante, divine et nourrissante Mère Nature. Ta vie est maintenant assignée à sa cause.

## L'ÉPREUVE

*(Donne au Candidat le reste de l'Eau-de-Vie)*

Prête: Boit le toute!

*(Retournez à liturgie, habituellement à la Méditation, qui risque d'être perturbé par l'initié devenue ivre).*



Figure 26 Meditative benches of Japanese Garden Fall 1999



Figure 27 The Druid Bridge over the Cannon River in downtown Northfield with over 165 Druid Sigils on its railings, Summer 2004.

# Section Seven: Orderly Chaos

## Order of Investiture for Archdruids

By Savitzky, 1969

First used at the investiture of Richard Shelton.

*(This Order of Investiture for Archdruids should follow the Incantation of a regular service. Following the Investiture, the newly-invested Archdruid should continue with the Sacrifice. The responses ordinarily give by the Preceptor should be given by the outgoing Archdruid. This is **not** the only, fixed way to consecrate an Archdruid.)*

O Earth-Mother, forever fertile and bountiful, we sing to thee our praise and ask that thy blessing and understanding be granted unto this person who is chosen to serve thee.

Are you, \_\_\_\_\_, who have been duly chosen, ready to enter this office of service to the Earth-Mother and to lead others to her worship and service? Are you?

Have you been sealed to the service of the most mighty and powerful and fertile Dalon Ap Landu and to the service of the great All-Mother? Have you?

Hear, then, these charges that are laid upon them who enter this office:

- \* That you shall direct in this grove the worship of the Earth-Mother, offering to her the sacrifice of life, consecrating in her name and in the name of Dalon Ap Landu the Water-of-Life and of Sleep.
- \* That you shall guide people's thought to the praise of the Mother, and minister to her children who have need of your aid.
- \* That you shall observe the feast days of the Druids and mark the periods of the moon.
- \* That you shall determine that the secular affairs of the grove are attended.

*[This next passage is used only at Carleton]*

That as Archdruid of Carleton, you shall head the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, discharging such duties as it may delegate unto you.

Hear finally that to you is given the right to consecrate people to the Order of Dalon Ap Landu, and upon you is laid this solemn charge: that this office shall not falter through your neglect.

This do you hear?

**Response:** This I do hear.

This do you affirm?

**Response:** This I do affirm.

I therefore, (first name only), Archdruid of \_\_\_\_\_, do relinquish unto you this office and the rights and charges thereof. May the Earth-Mother grant unto you her light and understanding as you discharge your office. I have hereby discharged mine.

# Unofficial Ordination of Zero Order Druids Order of the Acorn

By Scharding, 2002

*For people who wish to become Reformed Druids, yet due to age, distance, handicap or some other hardship, are unable to meet with a grove. The Book of Maccabees says, "Don't make a long introduction to a short story", so let's keep it simple, but feel free to elaborate if you wish.*

*The Acorn ordination should ideally be done outdoors between Beltane and Samhain. Perhaps you'd wish to reaffirm this status annually to yourself ("Next year in Carleton!" or some sort of deadline)? It is basically, the affirmation of the two basic tenets, bringing you into the organizational body of the Druids. In a way this is fulfilling half of the 1<sup>st</sup> Order requirements (Druid Chronicles, the Book of Customs, Chapter 1). Someday, if fate arranges it, you will meet a Druid who can take you into other Orders, if you wish. There are many activities you can do, because, you know (secretly between you and me) the Founders also made up things too.*

## Praise:

Insert whatever warm ups you think necessary. Perhaps a song.

## Invocation:

O Dalon Ap Landu and Earth-Mother,  
I know not the ways of the Druids, yet I wish to become one.  
I cannot join their activities, yet I wish to act.  
I know not when I'll enter Orders, but I wish to start now.  
Please bless my search, and fill me with wisdom and Awareness.

## Offering of seeds, preferably acorns:

I wish to be a Reformed Druid, I believe that:

- The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.
- And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it we do live, yea, even as we do struggle through life are we come face to face with it.
- It is an unclear path that I begin today, but I will learn by doing. I offer you my activities in the time to come, as a sacrifice, whether it be for a few days or many years.

During this upcoming year, I intend to do the following.....

Please show me your favor, by bringing the path of the proper Druid across mine, in the proper way, at the proper time, at the proper place. If I am to follow this course by myself, so be it with great wisdom and small discoveries from your lessons around me.

## Meditation:

Think on the signs that may appear during this ceremony.

## Conclusion:

Be there with me through these trying times. Thank you.

# Ordination of First Order Druids

By Founders, 1963  
Written up by Scharding 1996

Unlike the other Orders of Reformed Druidism, there is no fixed liturgy of ordination, and at least during the first year 1963-1964, anyone who partook of the waters or claimed to be a Druid was considered one; which is a quiet tradition among many Druids to this day.

There is a general custom which can be elaborated upon as the Priest sees fit, derived from the Book of Customs in the Druid Chronicles that they must believe the two basic tenets and partake of the Waters of Life. Usually the Priest will ask for aspirants to the First Order, just before the waters are about to be passed around. The Priest will then go to the aspirant and ask if the aspirant believes in the two Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism:

- 1) The object of the search for religious truth, which is universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.
- 2) And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it do people live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face-to-face with it.

If the aspirant replies affirmatively, the Priest takes the chalice and dips their fingers in the Waters and draws the Druid Sigil on the forehead of the aspirant. Then the aspirant drinks some of the Waters. The Priest then declares them to be a First Order Druid.

If there are several aspirants to the First Order, say a half-dozen or more, instead of going through each separately, they may be asked the basic tenets as a group, followed by separate head-anointing.

Another custom has developed at Carleton College. There, anyone of the first or second orders being able to ordain another person into their own orders, in the absence of an existing Priest. This tradition kept the Carleton Druids going from 1985 to 1992.



Figure 1 "Twigonometry" sculpture, Spring 2003.

# Addendum to First Order By Duir De Danu Grove

By Martin Victor, 2004 but much older.

From: martin victor  
To: RDNtalk  
Sent: Friday, August 22, 2003 1:10 AM  
Subject: Re: [RDNAtalk] Tenets

Okay, here is how it [the First Ordination] goes:

Are there any here today who deem to partake of ordination to the First Order of the New Reformed Druids of North America. If so, then please present yourself to the center of the circle.

State your name.  
Petitioner states name

And why do you will to walk the Druid path and join the ranks of the Reformed Druids of North America whose roots stem from the ancient ones of the Oaken Brotherhood.

Petitioner states reason(s)

And now I must ask you the first of three questions "do you believe nature is good?"  
And second question is like unto the first, " do you believe nature is very good?"  
And lastly, the third question is like unto the previous "do you believe nature is very, very good?"

Petitioner answers each question (hopefully in the affirmative)

Then step forward and be sealed by the Four Winds and the Sacred Center.

\*The Archdruid now takes the Waters of Life and begins to seal the candidate with them to the Four Winds and the Sacred Center.\*

Archdruid: From the Winds of the North, the realm of Earth, I seal you in the names of Dagda and Modron.  
From the Winds of the South; the realm of Fire; I seal you in the names of Brigit, Lugh.  
From the Winds of the East, the realm of Air, I seal you in the names of Arianrhod, Camulos.  
From the Winds of the West, the realm of Water, I seal you in the names of Overridden and Manannan Mac Lir.  
And from the Sacred Center, the realm of Spirit, I seal you in the names of Tailtiu and Tethra.  
Hail and welcome to you, new druid!

\*that's pretty much it. I do recall a couple of other minor changes to it, such as stating that "nature is good" not in a moral sense, but more in a practical sense type of thing.

Also of note, starting with me, it has been a tradition for us to bestow a name upon the new druid should (s)he wish a new name.

# Ordination of Second Order Druids

By Founders, 1964

*To be inserted after the **consecration** and before the **meditation** in the Order or Worship. It can of course be the sole purpose of the Order of Worship, or an incidental part. It is generally only done in the Summer Half of the Year as it requires Alcohol or Potent Sugar-water. Usually the Priest of the service asks if anyone wishes to enter the Second Order, after having consecrated the Waters..*

*Another alternative is to bring the aspirant forward during the Order of Worship's **invocation** and after asking the **Questions, shown below**, have the aspirant respond to the normal **Catechism of the Waters**. After the **Consecration of the Waters**, proceed to the **Sealing to the Second Order**.*

*(NOTE Have everybody sip the Waters before the initiate, but leave plenty for her/him to drink. It is often a good idea to consecrate a second chalice to ensure there's enough)*

## Invocation

**PRIEST:** O Earth-Mother, bountiful and ever flowing forth, we Thy children, invoke Thy blessing upon this aspirant to serve thee.

## Questions

**PRIEST:** Do you, in full consciousness, promise to serve faithfully the Earth-Mother, ministering to Her followers, and following you duties as a Druid of the Second Order to the best of your ability? Do you?

**Aspirant:** I do. *(or close enough)*

**PRIEST:** Do you understand from whence comes the source of all life, and the nature of the source of all life? Do you?

**Aspirant:** I do.

**PRIEST:** Do you understand the partaking of the Waters-of-Life, and the sacrifice of life that we offer-up to our Mother? Do you?

**Aspirant:** I do.

**PRIEST:** Are you ready, then, to be sealed up to the service of the Earth-Mother? Are you?

**Aspirant:** I am.

## Sealing to the Second Order

*(Priest dips fingers in consecrated waters and makes a Sigil on forehead of the candidate every time the word "seal" is spoken in the following:)*

In the name of the Earth-Mother;

I **seal** you to Her service in the house of the spirit of the South.

I **seal** you to Her service in the house of the Spirit of the North.

I **seal** you to Her service in the house of the Spirit of the West.

I **seal** you to Her service in the house of the Spirit of the East.

Finally, I **seal** you to the service of the mighty, the blessed, all powerful and fertile All-Mother Earth, thus consecrating your life to Her cause.

## The Ordeal

*(Hand the candidate all the remaining Waters-of-Life)*

**PRIEST:** Take and drink, all of it!

*(Return to the Order of Worship, usually at the Meditation)*

# Addendum to Second Order By Hazelnut Grove, 1993

*After finishing the chalice, the candidate goes off for a period of isolated meditation in which they assemble an altar or sacred space, and meditates upon the five-fold Powers of the Mother. When they return, the AD asks the following five questions in order to determine what has been discovered in their meditation.*

**AD:** Of what did you meditate upon the Power of the Mother? (Fire of Earth)

**C:** Gives an extemporaneous reply.

**AD:** Of what did you meditate upon the Beauty of the Mother? (Water of Earth)

**C:** Gives a reply.

**AD:** Of what did you meditate upon the Understanding of the Mother? (Earth of Earth)

**C:** Reply.

**AD:** Of what did you meditate upon the Wisdom of the Mother? (Air of Earth)

**C:** (pause for reply from C)

**AD:** Of what did you meditate upon the Magick of the Mother? (Spirit of Earth)

**C:** (pause for reply from C)

*(Return to the Order of Worship, usually at the Meditation)*

# Addendum to Second Order By Akita Grove

By Pat Haneke, Akita Grove 1998

This is not so much a liturgy as an activity to precede the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ordination. I was a bit inspired by the phrase "Three Ways of Day and One of Night." And I figured since the Third Order deals with the night during the Vigil, why not add some type of testing procedure dealing with Daytime for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ordination? It is optional, of course, and the initiate should choose the level of intensity commensurate with their own stamina and environment, carefully acquiring the necessary skills in advance, with some method of calling for help if things go bad.

This should be ideally performed on a three day weekend. The initiate should set up a camping spot with a tent and campfire for use in the evening after each day's excursions, during a warm month in mid-summer, in a location with some water resource and possible natural food sources. A forested lake with fish, berries and hunting possibilities would be ideal. Special prayers should be assigned for Dawn, Noon and Dusk. During these three days, the initiate should be left alone.

## DAY ONE: FOOD

From the first rays of dawn until the first star at night, you may not eat anything, except that which is found in Nature and not produced by the hands of man. If nothing is available to be found the first day, one ball of rice may be eaten in the evening. Drink bottled water in moderation during the day, meditate, understand the resources of your region.

## DAY TWO: WATER

From the first rays of dawn until the first star at night, you may not drink any liquid, except that it comes from a natural source with no tampering by the hand of man. Food prohibitions continue. If no water can be found, 2 cups of water may be drunk in the evening. If still no food can be obtained, another rice ball may be eaten in the evening.

## DAY THREE: SHELTER

From the first rays of dawn until the first star at night, you may not wear any clothing, rest under or in any prefabricated shelter, except using natural materials constructed by hand from the area around you. Previous food and water prohibitions remain in effect. Any fires must be made by rubbing or other natural methods, including the evening fire.

### Ordination

As the third day draws to an end, if they have been successful, the ordaining AD will meet the initiate with a new robe of office, a hearty meal and lots of water. A regular Order of Worship will be held, and a 2<sup>nd</sup> Ordination inserted in the traditional place, with the sacrifice being selected by the initiate.

\*Note if it is cloudy, you can determine when day begins and ends by being able to see the lines on your palm with natural light.

## Addendum to Second Order By Carleton Grove

By MerriBeth Weber, Carleton Grove, c. 1999-2001

Carleton recently now often asks extra questions of the initiate, but has requested they not be printed here, to retain their potency. Inquiries should be made to Mike Scharding if you'd like a copy.

## Addendum to Second Order By Poison Oak Grove

By Stacey Weinberger, Poison Oak Grove, c. 2001

- 1) The Second Order candidate was required to read the Druid Chronicles (now contained in ARDA) and ask questions from the reading. I have added asking questions of the candidate.
- 2) The Second Order candidate is to find an amber colored version of the ruby red Ben Franklin chalice to be used in the ordination service as the second chalice. The candidate keeps this chalice to do his/her own proto-grove services and receives a copy of the proto-grove service after the ordination.
- 3) The Second Order candidate was required to learn about or become familiar with another religion of his/her choice. Mine was Zen Buddhism.
- 4) Any grove member may have a robe. However upon ordination the Second Order candidate can have a tabard to wear with the robe. After the ordination the presiding druid might wish to place it over the ordained druid's head as a nifty gesture marking the achievement. I wear mine under my robe.

## Addendum to Second Order By Digitalis Grove

By Mike the Fool, c. 2004

In addition to the standard practices of the second order, I've decided to make a few adjustments in my grove.

I encourage aspirants to this order perform a quest of some type, research a topic or go on a daytime vigil from sunrise to sunset to better understand the three ways of day and one of night.

At the end of the daytime vigil, I ask what they thought about and whether they are still interested in entering the second order, and if they are, I do the ordination as part of an early evening service.

# Ordination of Third Order Druids Order of Dalon Ap Landu

By David Fisher, 1964

This ceremony has been left out because I had to promise not to release it, and because we feel that candidates should not have an opportunity to see the words until after the vigil. We apologize to the curious.. Read the Historiography for interesting details.

Researchers should contact Mike Scharding at mikerdna@hotmail.com or another Third Order member if you need more information concerning the contents, although I cannot release the text



**Figure 2** Mike and Sam wearing their Arch Druid's hats, Goodhue Hall, 1992.



**Figure 3** David Frangquist inducting Nikki Lambert into the 4th Order, Hill of 3 Oaks, Samhain Nov 1, 1993.

# Ordination Of Fourth Order Druids Order of Grannos

By David Fisher, 1964

O Mother, we thy servants praise thee. Grant us thy presence now, as we worship thee in the form of Grannos, the healing springs. Fill this person with thy power., that they may be made fit to serve.

Hear now these words, found in a hymn to the Waters, form the Rig-Veda:

Forth from the middle of the flood the waters  
Their chief the sea, flow cleansing, never sleeping  
Indra, the bull, the thunderer, dug their channels:  
Her let those waters, Goddesses, protect me.  
Waters which came from heaven,  
of those that wander dug from the earth,  
or flowing free by Nature,  
Bright, purifying, spreading to the ocean,  
Here let those waters, Goddesses protect me.  
Those amid whom goes Varuna, the sovereign,  
He who discriminates men's truth from falsehood,  
Distilling mead, the bright, the purifying,  
Here let those waters, Goddesses, protect me.  
They from whom Varuna the King, and Soma,  
and all the deities drink strength and vigor.  
They unto whom the universal Agni entered,  
Here let those waters, Goddesses, protect me.

Understand that these words as a sing of the power in the waters that flow beneath the Earth.

I, (in the name of) the Patriarch of the Fourth Order, the Order of Grannos, the healing springs, because you have served faithfully and well the pursuit of truth, and because you have earnestly sought to know what is to be found in the bosom of the Earth, ask you to join in the fellowship of the Order of Grannos.

Know that we find the Mother's pleasure to extend her power to men in the form of a spring as it rushes forth from the Earth. Even as the Waters-of-Life of the Answer, so the healing springs minister to the needs of men, cleansing the weary and lifting up the weak in the body and in spirit.

As you follow the Mother in Grannos, you must be ready to life up in like manner. If any man comes to you for aid, you must not refuse him your counsel and help. You must visit the weak and weary in body, encouraging them and giving of your strength to their aid. This is the path of a follower of the Mother in Grannos: to lift up those who are fallen. Think now upon this life, and when you are ready, answer if you would follow.

(PAUSE)

**ASPIRANT:** I am ready to follow the Mother in Grannos.

Then in the sign of the most mighty and powerful Mother Earth, I seal you to the service of Grannos, the healing springs. Let your life be a life of service to all men, that you may accomplish this end.

Descend now into this person,  
 O Mother, with thy power of healing!  
 Take now this chalice as a sign and badge of your office. Fill it  
 with the Waters-of-Life, and give it to the weak and to the  
 needy, remembering always the source of all gifts and all  
 strength.  
 Go forth now and heal and strengthen, in the name of Grannos,  
 the healing spring.  
 Peace! Peace! Peace!



**Figure 4 David Frangquist binding the maniple of the 5<sup>th</sup> Order onto Paul Schmidt while Becky Hrobak looks on at the Hill of 3 Oaks, Samhain 1993.**



**Figure 5 Sam receiving the Order of Belenos from Mike Scharding on the Hill of 3 Oaks, Samhain 1993.**



**Figure 6 Two onlookers observe Frangquist's induction of Gary Zempel (on the right) into the 7<sup>th</sup> Order at Mai Fete Island 1966.**

## Ordination of Fifth Order Druids Order of Braciaca

By Norman Nelson, 1964

O our Mother the Earth, who hast taken the form of malt, which men name Braciaca, the grain that sustains thy servants and gladdens their hearts, we ask thee to look upon this thy servant and to bless their life. As the germinating grain, let them grow in thy service; as the sprouting grain doth change to sweetness, let them increase in grace and favor in thine eyes in the eyes of all mankind.

*(Portions of malt or grain shall be distributed. The officiant shall cast small amounts five times upon the altar.)*

Our praise has mounted up to thee like the leaves of the sprouting grain. O Braciaca, accept now this sacrifice offered to thee, accepting the sacrifice of the candidate here before thee, and also their life into thy service.

*(Like wise the candidate throws grain five times on the altar saying:)*

Accept, O Braciaca, this sacrifice and my life, and grant thy blessing.

*(Return to the officiant)*

Hast thou accepted this dual sacrifice, O Braciaca? I call upon the spirits of the growing fields and fresh waters to make answer.

Praise be, our sacrifice has been accepted and the dedication of our lives has found favor in the sight of the Mother of all.

*(Sprinkling the fresh water from the earth on the altar, the officiant says:)*

O Braciaca, lord of malt and the goodness, thereof, look with favor upon this thy servant; consecrate, seal, and dedicate that person to a life of goodness that shall be an example to all men, and bestow thy blessings upon that person as they go through a life dedicated to thy service.

O Druid, your sacrifice has been offered and accepted; your life has been offered and received. Do you accept the call to serve, to be an example to all men, that your life may be a guide to those who shall come after, and pledge that you will do nothing to disgrace the life bestowed upon you in the service of the Earth-Mother?

**Aspirant:** I do.

Then by the authority in me vested, I seal you yet again, and bind you to the service of all mankind.

*(Remaining water shall be poured on the altar in a moment of silent meditation.)*

Rise, servant of Braciaca and of mankind, and go forth into the world of men, knowing that your sacrifice and your life have found acceptance, that our prayers have been answered, and that you go forth with the blessing of the lord of all.

Peace! Peace! Peace!

# Ordination of Sixth Order Druids Order of Belenos

By David Frangquist, 1964

O Belenos, lord of day, let now thy radiant goodness descend upon us as we who would be faithful unto thee seek fulfillment in thy glory.

I now call upon \_\_\_\_\_ to come and kneel before me.

Long has been your search: longer still it shall be; but may you be guided in the light of the sun as you continue. Hear now the charge of the Order of Belenos, which is the Sixth Order, the Order of the Sun.

Know that we have seen the smile of Belenos, bright, radiant, raining glory and warmth down upon the bosom of the earth from his seat on high in the midst of the blue heaven.

Know that all things owe him their strength and power; for his gift is the glorious gift of the energy of life, which is in all things which do grow and live upon the face of the earth.

Know therefore that you, as a priest of Belenos, shall be charged with the observance of his festivals of midsummer and midwinter, for on those days does the sun reach its highest points in its course through the sky.

Know also that the color of the Sixth Order is the color of Belenos, and the golden ribbon which I shall present to you shall you wear on the days of midsummer and midwinter and at such other time as you may wish, for they are it is the symbol of Belenos.

Now I would ask of you this one question:  
"What is the nature of the sun at night?"

*(At this point, the candidate answers the question in their own way; they have already been given the chance to meditate upon the question. If they give a suitable answer (which may be in the style of Zen) the ceremony proceeds.)*

The arise, and hear these words of institution: Even as I am powerless to control the rising and the setting of the sun, but bow before the power of Belenos, so also am I powerless to consecrate you to his service. Only at his hands shall you be ordained, in a process that you yourself have now begun. When the sun has set, and then risen again, and shone down upon you, then if your heart is pure shall you be truly Druid of the Order of Belenos.

Lift now your eyes toward the sky; and raise your arms in adoration to Belenos; as I now present you with the token of your Order.

*(Here the candidate is presented with their gold ribbon.)*

Go now, and bring into the hearts of men the warmth and cheer of Belenos, that the light of truth might shine for them even as does the light of the sun.

Peace! Peace! Peace!

# Ordination of Seventh Order Druids Order of Sirona

By Gary Zempel, 1966

O Sirona, we invoke thy presence now. Rise out of thy murky depths, and receive this, thy humble servant.

May you now receive the blessings of all the Gods and Patriarchs:

May you have:

The strength of Dalon Ap Landu

The mercy of Grannos

The sweetness of Braciaca

The radiance of Belenos

The Power of Taranis.

May your wisdom be as vast as Llyr.

And may you be at home with the mystery of Danu.

Strengthen now your spirit with this charm from Atharva-Veda,

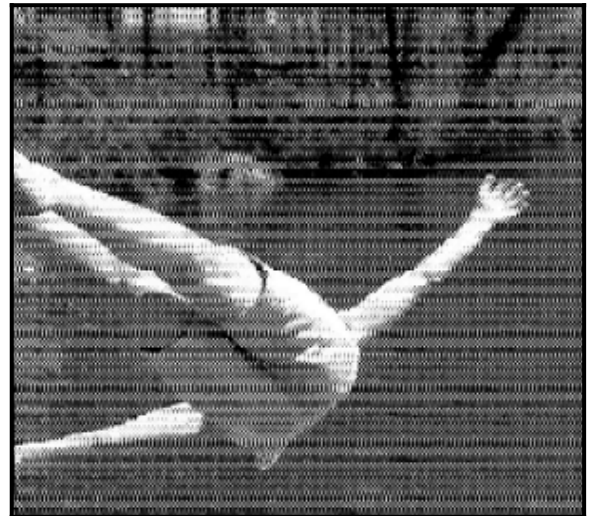
O Sirona, Queen of the Seven great floodwaters, Princess of the seventy times seven rivers, Mistress even of the Cannon [a river], accept this sacrifice as a token of our devotion, and grant us Peace. We pray that this, thy servant, may be found acceptable in thy sight as unto thee we commend his spirit.

*SPLASH!*

*(The Candidate is thrown in water)*

Now by the authority vested in me, I proclaim you Patriarch. Join now the college of your distinguished Brothers.

Go forth into the world of men, serving the Earth-Mother, and ministering to her followers in the name of Sirona.



**Figure 7 Gary Zempel entering the  
Order of Sirona, Lyman Lakes 1966.**



# Ordination of Eighth Order Druids Order of Taranis

Unofficially proposed by Nozomi Kibo, 1998  
Officially adopted by Michael Scharding, who was  
elected as Patriarch by the Council of Sirona 2004

## Conditions Necessary for Ordination:

0. Due to the difficulty of finding an Ordainer and ordainee in the same place during the storm, it is self-ordained with permission from the Patriarch or other member of the council.
1. Service should be during the rainy season, if there is one.
2. Candidate priests must have shown divine selection by Taranis by being struck by lightning, caught in a tornado, lost in a blizzard, hit by a meteor or almost drowned in a flood. Accidental electrocution or receiving a degree in meteorology or electrician might also be accepted as an omen of invitation.
3. Candidate must perform the ritual during a terrific storm, outside, unprotected from the elements, from the storm's beginning to its end. They are encouraged to go outdoors at least once in every future storm.
4. Candidate must be bearing triple knotted yellow & black ribbon maniple and holding the symbol of office, a golf iron, or fly a kite during the vigil of at least 3 to 8 hours.
5. Site must be an open field or hill top without any tall structures nearby if possible.
6. Sacrifice must be a top-tree oak-twigg or rowan-twigg or any wood of an actual lightning-struck tree; and a chalice of freshly collected rain water.

## The Ceremony:

### The Invocation:

O Taranis, ruler of weather, we look upon thy presence around us in awe and worship. Give your attention, O Earth-Mother, as we worship you in the form of Taranis.

*[Here the candidate sings a weather related song.]*

Our praise has come forth but we are drowned by your own song. You have selected me in the following way.

*[Here the candidate relates how they were selected.]*

If I am to be accepted, I will perform the following acts:

*[Here the candidate details the duties of the order, which might include a serious study of meteorology and climatic studies.]*

### Offering of the Sacrifice:

I offer you this dedication of life. Accept it, we pray thee, in token of the dedication of my heart, grant us a sign of thy acceptance.

*[Here shall the Druid lay the sacrifice on the altar next to a chalice of fresh rain water, gathered during the storm.]*

Hast thou accepted our sacrifice? Do you look with favor on my course? Show us a sign, O Taranis! I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South... of the East.... and of the West.

*[A lightning bolt or thundering or serious blast of wind from the appropriate direction is sufficient. In normal RDNA rituals such a sign would cancel the ceremony. If successful, continue.]*

Praise be, our sacrifice, offered to Taranis and the vitality of the world, has been accepted. Taranis has approved this lowly candidate. I thank you.

## Consecration of the Water:

O Taranis, by whose power and might the very heavens do ring and peal forth, and replenish our rivers with fresh water, come to us now as we celebrate your eternal majestic drama.

I, [insert name and titles] thank you for choosing me to enter your hallowed order. Give unto me more knowledge of your ways and methods. Listen to my appeals when I call you, and if acceptable, please grant them. I pledge myself to your service, from watching fluffy cloud shapes to the study of meteorology and observation of the cycle of water distribution over this planet that I might tell them to others. Teach me the wisdom of these symbols that I bear. As a token, I now ask you to descend into these waters as they have already descended from you!

*[Here the priest holds up the chalice, filled with 1 part whiskey and 3 parts rainwater from the storm. The priest then serves anyone else silly enough to be standing around with them. The priest then returns to the normal service.]*

## The Libation:

I return these waters to you as all water eventually return through you and come again.

## The Meditation:

*[Pick one as seems appropriate.]*

## The Benediction:

O Taranis, my first wish unto you is this; that none present here will feel your same power as keenly as I have felt it. May they be blessed by you wherever they go, with sufficient rain and only the rarest of weather disasters. Of this I beg your peaceful blessing.

Peace. Peace. Peace.

*[Here the priest now waits out the storm, lightning rod in hand, such as a golf club, until the storm ceases, at their own peril, but we officially don't encourage you to do this. If Taranis loves them, they will survive.]*



# Unofficial Ordination of Ninth Order Druids Order of Llyr

by Nozomi Kibo  
Translation by Michael Scharding, 1998

## Conditions Necessary for Ordination

1. Rite held between Beltane and Samhain at a beach.
2. Candidate must have spent the great part of a year and a day in near-daily communion with the ocean, deriving their livelihood in some way from the ocean and in general never being away from the ocean for more than a few days.
3. Having completed this period, the candidate must make a trip of divinely decided duration, on a boat of their own construction.
4. The candidate should be familiar with marine navigation, fish and sea life and be an adept swimmer.
5. Before the Order, the candidate must vigil in the ocean, say, waist deep, for about 7 hours. (By ocean we also include tidal-affected freshwaters such as the Great Lakes and Lake Victoria). A wet suit may be worn during this period.
6. The Order is performed in the ocean, not having left it since the beginning of the night vigil, promptly at dawn, or vigiling from low tide to high tide and holding the service at high tide. Kibo suggests stripping down before beginning, because she says it promotes a more intimate contact with the ocean spirits. Perhaps being held underwater with scuba gear?
7. The offering may be a sea plant, or the releasing of a live creature back to the ocean.

## The Ceremony:

### The Invocation:

O Grandmother, O Llyr, we thy children do invoke you from the surrounding rolling oceans to witness my dedication to your service. I have spent a year in communion with you and a night embraced by your waves. I have studied your ways and those of your children and I ask you to bless this service with your attention.

### Chanting of Hymns:

*[Here the candidate may use this chant or one of their own choosing.]*

### Amergin's Song

I am the wind upon the sea,  
I am a wave upon the ocean,  
I am the sound of the sea,  
I am a stag of seven points,  
I am a bull of seven fights,  
I am a hawk on a cliff,  
I am a teardrop of the sun,  
I am the fairest of blossoms,  
I am a boar of boldness,  
I am a salmon in the pool,  
I am a lake on the plain,  
I am a word of skill,  
I am a battle-waging spear of spoil,  
I am a God who fashion fire in the mind,

Who but I knows the secret of the stone door?  
Who has seven times sought the Places of Peace?  
Who, save I, knows the ages of the moon,  
The place and time the sun sets?  
Who calls the kine from Tethra's house,  
And sees them dance in the bright heavens?  
Who shapes weapons in a fort of glass,  
In a fort that harbors satirists?  
Who put the poet, the singer of praises,  
Who but I divides the Ogham letters,  
Separates combatants, approaches the Faery Mound?  
I, who am a wind upon the sea.

## The Offering of the Sacrifice:

Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of sea gulls and descended to you on the fins of your fish. Hear now, we pray thee, O mother Sea, as we offer up this sacrifice to thee. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy presence yet.

*[Here the candidate release the creature or sea-plant.]*

Has thou accepted our sacrifice, O Llyr, our Grandmother? I call upon the spirit of the House of the North to give answer... of the South... of the East... of the West.

*[Wait for signs.]*

Praise be, the sacrifice has been accepted!

*[The sea-green ribbon is donned and an aquatic dance may be performed here if desired.]*

## Ordination and the Consecration of Waters

*[Candidate raises the chalice of sea water.]*

O Grandmother Llyr, from thy bosom all life has come forth. There is no need to bless your holy waters, yet I praise of thy holiness. I dedicate myself to the study of your mysteries, the strengths and weaknesses of water. Teach me, help me, protect me and encourage me. May we never be parted for long, may I instruct others in your care. With that I welcome your presence outside as well as within me.

*[Here the candidate takes a healthy portion of waters and passes the cup to other present. Afterwards return the waters to the ocean. Then the initiate walks out into the ocean until they pass out of sight, pause, turn around and emerge from the ocean, perhaps surfing on a clamshell if they can manage it.]*

## The Libation

O Llyr, we return these waters to you, as all waters flow to you, as we must one day return to you on our final journey across your waters to the Blessed Isles.

## The Meditation

*[An appropriate sea-oriented reading. Perhaps "Prayer of the Sea" at the end of the Great Druish Books in Part Five of ARDA by the Hasidic Druids? A copy is here provided:]*

## Prayer of the Sea

How wondrous are the works of the Earth-Mother!  
Consider the oceans and their inhabitants.  
Consider the waves that swell and fall afar from any human land, never seen by human eye.

# Unofficial Ordination of Tenth Order Druids Order of Danu

By Nozomi Kibo  
Translation by Michael Scharding, 1999

## An Explanation:

This, the final order of the RDNA, has but one requirement for entrance to the Order of Danu, and that is for the candidate to have died. As such, the candidate will be initiated by Danu herself and no ordination service is required to be printed here. We do not encourage members to hasten into this order, as it one will all join eventually at a natural time.

We recommend a funeral service for the departed Druid, but that is more for the bereaved than the deceased.

Some have considered this order to that of fertility. Why have I made it the order of death? Without death, there would be little need for fertility. The threat and embrace of death is a constant inspiration to struggle, improve the lives of others and bring more life to replace the life that must soon depart again. The other orders are sufficient to celebrate the fertility of this world.

As the first departed Druid was Dannie Hotz, first priestess of the Reform, I call her the current Matriarch of the Order in our opinion, and I refer you to her if you have further questions on this Order.

With that said, we await your entry to this Order, but pray that it will not come too soon or in an unwelcome way.

Peace. Peace. Peace.

## Historiography of the New Higher Orders

The 8th, 9th, 10th orders were written by Nozomi Kibo, a very talented young woman in my Akita Grove. She wanted to complete the higher orders, but their legality is very contestable, of course, as they did not emerge from the standard procedure of the 7<sup>th</sup> Order Council electing the Eight Order Patriarch, and so on. When I explained the ambivalence of many to the self-initiatory aspect of her Orders, she replied, "The Gods do all the work anyway. We are just following them." Which is true, I doubt an Ordination ceremony without divine influence would be a hollow ordination. Besides Nozomi's requirements make the Orders very difficult to attain, which should mute some of the criticism.

8th Order: Black ribbon with yellow zig-zag & three knots. Patriarch bears a golf club or umbrella over the left shoulder.

9th Order: Sea-green ribbon

10th Order: Brown ribbon.

See historiography notes for more details.

Consider the waves born far out to sea, traveling many leagues to crash at last upon the rocks of some barren shore; spraying their white frustration high into the air; or which softly creep across furlongs of glistening sand, sending spies far inland, scouting new territory for the sea to reclaim.

Consider that for ever grain of sand, every chip of rock, every cliff and promontory slipping into the waters; for each is another deposited elsewhere.

Consider the plants of the Sea; the mighty beds of mile-long kelp, the mosses growing upon the shore, the vast fields of algae and plankton, giving unto us the breath of life.

Consider the animals of the Sea; the horses of the sea and the lions of the sea, clam and barracuda, whale and kraken, and the dolphin- beloved of the Mother and friend to humans.

Consider as well the inhabitants of the depths where light is never seen, where waters never stir, where monstrous pressures crush all who would dare invade the realm; and also the dwellers of the reefs, the angels and anglers, octopus and starfish, and the deadly man-o-war.

Consider the monsters and the beauties, and wonder at the bounty of the Earth-Mother and wonder more at Her power.

Consider the seas of our ancestry, screaming in white, foaming frenzy against the barren rocks; while somewhere in a quiet tidal pool, one atom links with another, one molecule with another, one chain with another. And behold the miracle as the sky impregnates the waters and the Earth-Mother cries out "Let there be Life!" – and there is Life!

Consider thou that, as surely as we did come from the Sea, so shall we as surely return unto Her. Though we be buried beneath the soil of the driest land, it matters not – for all the world has been once covered by the Sea, and shall be covered again in days to come.

For the Mother Who rules the waters and the rocks, the skies and the pits, will have Her own, and none shall gainsay Her.

For the Earth-Mother is the Sea-Mother, Who arose from the waters to become the Goddess of Love and Life, and Who therefore bids us to Love and Live.

Ea Leukothea, Ea Yemanja, White Goddess of the Waters!  
Hail to Thee, Sedna and Nerivek!

And when our loving and our living is at an end, we shall return to the Sea, our Mother; where for every weakness there is a power, for every hurt a cure, for every sorrow a joy.

Long and live and consider: How wondrous are the works of the Earth-Mother!

## THE BENEDICTION

O Grandmother, we carry your blessing with us daily in our very blood and body which imitates your composition. Be in our thoughts and let us be in yours as we go forth back to the realm of your daughter, the Earth. We long to return to you again and play in your waves. This service is over and mine has begun. Peace. Peace. Peace.

*[The candidate may choose to remain near the ocean to the end of the tidal sequence.]*

# Preemptive Ordination of Tenth Order Druids Order of Danu

By Stephen Crimmins, Carleton 2004

## The Invocation

O Danu, come forth too us and guide this service. O Danu, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:  
Thou art everywhere, yet we worship thee in the grove of the Earth;  
Thou art without form, yet we worship thee as Danu;  
Thou hast already consecrated our brother to your service, yet we insist on ordaining him to your service again;  
O Danu, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.  
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

## The Sacrifice

**Priest:** O Danu, we have given forth of one your children who has sacrificed himself to preach your name in all of it's forms. Yet our praise has *still* mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have *still* been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up yet another sacrifice in name of our **Brother Robert**. Accept it, we pray thee. *Place sacrifice on Altar, if possible it should be something of the candidates or significance to the candidate.*  
**Priest:** We ask the O Danu, do you accept this sacrifice for our **Brother?** Will you guide him in death as you have guided him in life? And will you welcome him into your arms as a priest of your order? Hast thou accepted our sacrifices, O Danu? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East...and of the West. (If it's a quiet day a lack of a response can also be a sign of acceptance)

## The Reply

**Priest:** Praise be, our sacrifice has been accepted!

## The Meditation (Eulogy)

(Written by Isaac Bonewits)

As many of you may know, Robert was the graduate of Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota who first introduced me to the Reformed Druids of North America and who eventually ordained me as a priest of the Earthmother in 1968.  
It was his (accidental?) omission of early non-Pagan materials in the RDNA teachings (in his copy of *The Green Book*) that led me to believe that Druidism was and should be a Neopagan path; which belief I made into a self-fulfilling prophecy, much to the annoyance, amusement, and/or approval of various other Reformed Druids.  
Robert was the priest who showed me how powerful invoking Celtic deities in a Celtic language could be and whose love of trees influenced my environmental concerns.  
He was the one who encouraged me to edit, write parts of, and typeset *The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*, which eventually

became *A Reformed Druid Anthology* under Br. Scharding's care.

Although health problems have erased many personal memories of my younger days, I still have an image of the two of us burning hundreds of printing plates and offset printing *The DCE* day after day, working at his printing job after hours, then collating it and shipping it off to as many Reformed Druids as we could find.

If Robert had not thought of doing this project, who knows what would have happened to the Reform? The new *Apocrypha*, rituals, and the unforgettable *Great Druidish Books* raised a ruckus and got people back in touch with each other, if only to argue!

The Carleton Grove was revived—twice!—because students found copies of *TDCE* in the college library, which ultimately became home to what may be the world's largest Druid Archives.

To this very day, the pages Robert Larson printed are still there in the library, a legacy to future generations of Carleton students.

But his legacy is greater than this, even if by accident.

If I am the father of a few Branches of the Reform, including *Ár nDraíocht Féin: A Druid Fellowship*, then Robert Larson was the unknown grandfather.

Without him, there would have been no New Reformed Druids of North America, no Orthodox Druids of North America, no ADF, no Henge of Keltria, and none of the other Neopagan Druid offshoots of the Reform.

His humor, his laid-back attitudes about religious orthodoxy, and his teachings live on in hundreds (perhaps thousands) of people he never knew.

Another memory of him that survives is of the day I asked him about Druid holidays. "Robert," I said to him, "today's the fall Equinox. Aren't we supposed to observe it or something?"

He put his banjo down, got up and went to the balcony of our apartment and looked at the setting sun.

"Yep, looks like an equinox to me!" he said and went back to his chair and resumed his playing.

Though I was mildly annoyed at the time, years later this incident was a source of much fruitful meditation for me.

I thank you all, living and passed over, for the joy and beauty you created, accidentally or deliberately.

And this Samhain and every Samhain thereafter, let us raise a glass of the Waters to Robert Larson, priest of the Earth Mother and now one of the Mighty Dead.

## The Catechism of The Waters-of-Life

**PRIEST:** Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may remember our fallen comrade?

**PRECEPTOR:** THE WATERS-OF-SLEEP.

**PRIEST:** From whence do these Waters flow?

**PRECEPTOR:** FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH, OF DANU, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

**PRIEST:** And how do we honor this gift that of memory, this gift that mirrors our **Brother's** sacrifices?

**PRECEPTOR:** BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-SLEEP.

**PRIEST:** Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

**PRECEPTOR:** SHE HAS!

**PRIEST:** Then give me the Waters!

## The Consecration

O Danu, Hallow these waters of sleep that pour forth from thy three fold ways, from the earth and from the sky and from the seas, constantly and inconstantly but always despite the power of the day or the night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together as we take and drink of thy secret essence!  
(The Celebrants should only take a small sip in commemoration. The majority should be left for the initiate, additionally the priest should not take a sip when the waters return, but hold onto the glass. The initiate should also not drink of the waters yet)

## The Reading of the Description of the Order

The Name Danu might be closely tied to the Earth-Mother who gives for of the bounties of life. She is yet also a goddess of fertility. But without death there may be no fertility. For as a parting may take away life it also returns one to the cycle of life. The name Danu is the earth, and the candidate has been cast already into the earth, tied with Danu. We now seek to tie the two spiritually as well as physically.

## The Questioning

**Priest:** Do you **Brother Robert** understand the nature of the order?

**Candidate:** (Normally silence. However any answer that does not come from the living is acceptable)

**Priest:** This is very wise. And do you **Brother Robert** accept the call to care for our mother, for Danu, in death as you have in life?

**Candidate:** (Normally silence. However any answer that does not come from the living is acceptable)

**Priest:** This again is very wise. And do you **Brother Robert** agree also to carry for your sisters and brothers in the mother in death, as you have cared for them and they have cared for you in life?

**Candidate:** (Normally silence. However any answer that does not come from the living is acceptable)

**Priest:** This is also very wise. And now **Brother Robert**, there is but one task left of you. Please tell us what this order means to you.

**Candidate:** (Normally silence, but longer silence. However any answer that does not come from the living is acceptable)

**Priest:** This is the wisest thing I have heard all day. Let us take a minute to contemplate this wisdom.

## Sealing to the Order of Danu

O our mother Danu, long had Our **Brother, Robert Larson**, served you in your many forms. Long had he toiled to spread the word of Druidism and to enrich the lives of Druids.

O our mother Danu, long had Our **Brother, Robert Larson**, followed the many forms of your many guises. Long had he heard the word of Druidism and knew that it was ok and much did he listen to other Druids and thus enrich his own life.

O our mother Danu, Our **Brother, Robert Larson**, was a priest of the order of Dalon ap Landu, lord of the groves, in one form your servant and in another form your self, Danu. Long may he serve you still.

O our mother Danu, I may not make our **Brother, Robert Larson**, a priest of your order, for no living person may ever enter your order. I may but ask you to consecrate him to your own order.

*Here the priest turns to the celebrants.* Friends in the mother, though we may not consecrate **Brother Larson**, we may bind his spirit to Danu. Others have already buried him physically, we may bury him spiritually. Look around you and take a small gift of the fertility of Danu, of leave, of branch or of whatever else, and put it upon the sacrifice of our **Brother Robert**. *The celebrants quickly find something and solemnly deposit it upon the altar. Alternatively they may already have found something.*

O our mother Danu, you have given forth of your bounty, of the waters of sleep. I now return it to you by returning it to our brother who has now been bonded with you. *The priest takes the remaining waters and pours them upon the sacrifice.*

## The Benediction

Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that Danu has consecrated our late **brother** to her service as a priest of the tenth order.

Peace! Peace! Peace!



**Figure 8** Another view of the inexplicable Hadzi Arch, by the library, 2004.

# Unofficial Danu Sermon

By Mike the Fool, 2004

To be read aloud sometime annually at Samhain's campfires during or after the actual service, hopefully bearing a torch in one hand and the words in the other.

Listen to me, for I would speak to you, and the departed this night, while the worlds are separated by but a thin diaphanous veil.

We at Samhain hereby remember those who have passed on, and especially those who have entered the Order of Danu. Perhaps a few more have recently joined those ranks, such as \_\_\_\_\_. We know not where you have gone, but we appreciate where you have been. You needed not our help to enter that Order, but we wish we could have aided you better in your transition, and your parting perhaps has been more difficult for us left behind.

What is the Order of Danu you might ask? It is the tenth and final order of Druidism. It is not for every Druid to pass through each of the ten orders, as each will have a different path and role in the journey through this world. However, we all began by going from zero to one in the first order, and yet we all finish by going from one to zero in the tenth order of Danu. Perhaps you of the Order of Danu will move on to some other realm, or return to oneness or nothingness again, but you are one to remember and none of your wondrous words and deeds, which will fertilize our growth, will be easily forgotten. We bear those in our heart and minds until it is our own turn to turn through the cycles. Indeed, it is those ones and zeroes which, when brought together, make up the Druid Sigil that we all bear in a sacred and fertile mystery of life and death without ends.

[We know not what further mysteries you will learn in that Order of Danu, but we hope you will take notes, for I am sure that we will have many questions. For our own mortality is what inspires our arts, and our quest to know of immortality guides many of our religious paths. And whatever feasting or celebrations you might enjoy with your invited guests, we hope you will save us some whisky, for I'm sure I will need a stiff shot of the waters-of-life when I too become a stiff and my life-waters cease to flow here.]

Yes, many assume Danu was a fertility goddess of the earth, but she was known best by the flowing rivers named after her, the Don, the Dnieper and Danube. Indeed, her mighty rivers bore the waters from the land, for no drop could remain there forever lest the land be stagnant and soaked beyond use, and her rivers were fed by many named and unnamed streams from different paths. Yet even her powerful rivers paled in comparison to the mighty sea and ocean to which she inevitably emptied, only to have her sources be replenished by fresh rain clouds filled with that ocean's salty waters. Never ending, always changing, same – yet different, Danu's life-blood runs through both ancient channels and newly carved rivulets of the last storm.

Now, your storm has passed, and you have left your mark, dear departed friends. You have entered the ranks of the honorable Council of Danu, which is a thing to celebrate, yet we miss your presence and trusted counsel by our sides in our walks in the woods and at our campfires. But perhaps you are still here, as Druidry and daily life would not have been the same without your contributions to our observation of the passing pageant of the seasons of the year.

Here, now, we observe at the passing of one year and emergence of the next, that as your remains have descended into the embrace of the Earth-Mother, so your past example has raised us to new possibilities in the future. In case you have forgotten, your responsibilities are finished here, while ours are briefly heavier without your strong shoulders' support. But tonight, at least, we enjoy a brief respite from our labors and gladly welcome your visit on Samhain. There is so much we yet wish to know from you, and the wait may be long before we join you fully in Danu's Order. Now I order you my living friends, that we raise a glass to honor them, to honor what we have already done and to honor what we still dream to do. (*Throws the script into the fire.*) Slainte! (*All drink deeply or applaud.*)

And to you dear, dear brothers and sisters of Danu;  
REST in peace. Rest IN peace. Rest in PEACE.

(As the three druid sigils are inscribed in the dirt with these word, not in the air, members may toss handfuls of dirt or rocks on them.)



**Figure 9 Monument Hill, 1993.**



**Figure 10 New Circle, 2001.**

# The New Order of Diancecht

a.k.a. the replacement of the Order of Grannos  
By Joan Carruth, 1976

To All Members of the Order of Dalon Ap Landu of the Reformed Druids of North America; Peace

This is to announce the re-formation of the 4th Order in Reformed Druidism, the Order of Grannos, Lord of Healing Springs. This Order is open to 3rd Order Druids of any Branch of the Reform who are interested in healing, whether psychic, magickal, psychological or medical.

The badge of the Order is the green ribbon and, the green chalice. The Waters are Chartreuse. The Order will be organized along the lines of the decisions of Autumn Equinox, 19 Y.R. of the Coalition Council of Dalon Ap Landu.

There are two Degrees within the Order which a member may apply for, depending upon their specialty and achievement in healing. They are:

The Degree of Miach, named after the son of Dian Cecht, the Irish God of Healing, who healed with magick. This Degree is primarily for magickal & psychic healers, counselors, etc. The badge of the Degree is a silver border or stripe across the end of the ribbon.

The Degree of Airmed, named after Dian Cecht's daughter, who healed with herbs. It is for herbal & chemotherapeutic healers, medical workers, and body manipulators. Its badge is a gold border or stripe.

No one except the Matriarch can hold both Degrees, and her ribbon-of-office is distinguished by having both the gold and the silver stripe.

The Ordination involves obtaining a book of anatomy, preferably Gray's, some spring water, a spring of herb, and pricking the finger. I trust the last doesn't sound heretical. It is done as a sign of the life of the body, and as a remembrance of every time a healer must cause pain in order to heal. Members are expected to have a valid first aid & CPR card, or their equivalent, and to carry a small kit to Services for cut fingers, etc. It need not be large. Mine has a bandana, a tampon, some band-aids, and antiseptic in it, and fits in an old band-aid box. Members are encouraged to start a Healer Conclave in their Grove, but need not do so. Members are expected to be in touch with the Matriarch at least once in a while.

Ordinations can only be confirmed by the Matriarch (i.e. Joan Carruth), and performed by her or by someone authorized by her, such as another member of the Order, or the candidate's Arch Druid. A solitary Third may be authorized to be Ordained by any other member of the Third Order.

The Matriarch is anxious to hear from any interested Third Order Druid, or any Arch Druid who can suggest a member of their Grove for the Order of Grannos.

May the Earth Mother grant success to this endeavor.

Joan Carruth. DAL. OG  
Matriarch of the Order of Grannos  
November 1981 c.e.

# The New Order of Oberon

A.K.A. Order of Bards  
Originally by Brian Geller, 1976  
Later by Leslie Harger-Craig

## Ordination to the Order Of Oberon

KNEEL HERE, \_\_\_\_\_ (singer, poet, musician, storyteller) – you have come, as singer, poet, fool, and prophet to seal yourself up to the way of those who sang ere ever human voice was heard upon the earth.

And those who still have ears to hear  
The leaping flames, the rushing waters,  
Breath of laughter, dropping tear,  
Questing dream and heart's own answer,  
May know these visions free of falsehood  
All unbound by space and time –  
Truth of Gods and Faerie laughter,  
Songs of Nature, and the Mind.

DO YOU SEAL YOURSELF AS BARD, IN SERVICE  
TO OUR LORD AND LADY? DO YOU?

AND WILL YOU GO TO WOODS AND FIELDS, TO  
LEARN THEIR HIDDEN WAYS OF FREEDOM, BRINGING  
BACK TO HUMAN EARS THE SACRED SONGS OF  
NATURE'S WISDOM? WIL YOU?

(hall the waters as per W.O.L. for services) (Trad. –Irish  
Mist)

NOW DRINK DEEP OF THESE WATERS, THAT  
YOUR VOICE BE CLEAR AND STRONG.

These are the waters of life and of vision, so hallowed by Dalon ap Landu, in the three ways of day and the one way of night. Now as you drink, be of good cheer, for these shall be your ways of life, in which to dwell forevermore.

(apply honey to aspirant's lips)

I charge you thus, may your songs be sweet, beyond the ways of humankind. King Oberon and Queen Titania, grant you laughter without fear among the creatures of all worlds, so all may understand who hear.

(apply honey to aspirant's hands)

Thus do I charge you: that your hands shall play the branches and the winds. Sweet the service of the Gods, with all the world your instrument!

RISE NOW, BARD, AND MAY YOUR SING THE  
THREEFOLD SONG: STRENGTH, TRUTH, AND LOVE,  
AND BE THIS EVERMORE YOUR WAY, IN ALL THE  
WORLDS.

PEACE, PEACE, PEACE

(invest with blue ribbon; congratulate)

## Oberon Epistle

TO: ORDER OF OBERON, 1980  
(wherever you are, out there!)  
FROM: MATRIARCH

Hi.

Attached please find a copy of a ritual, which most of you will recognize as a Bardic ordination. I have sent it to the membership at large, because the Bards are a special, non-hierarchical Order, and there is nothing secret in their ordination or ordeal. However, you may note that there is a consecration of waters involved, which should probably be done by the Arch of your Grove, (who may be doing the ordination anyway, if your Grove does not have a Chief Bard.) I do the whole ritual myself, being 3<sup>rd</sup>, but your group may have quirks, customs, etc. that are unknown to me.

I am going to take advantage of this space to run off at the mouth for a while (a weakness of our set) about just what this organization means to me. First of all, I repeat that we are a Special Order, with no hierarchical rank. It has been suggested by other Bards, and even kicked around for a while, that we should perhaps set up a hierarchy within our own group, in order to reward exceptional achievement and set up incentives for others. My carefully considered, and oft-debated, reaction to this idea is as follows: PHOOEY.

These are my reasons: Throughout history, poesy has been the mixed blessing of a motley assortment of characters, but one thing that seems to distinguish all of them is a high degree of individuality, and a great love of freedom. Official State Versions of any type of music, literature, art, or dance, have almost invariably shat. Now one unfortunate characteristic of hierarchical organization is that the bestowal of Feathers in the Hat is usually accompanied by a corresponding accrual of Authority. There doesn't even have to be a function for it; it just happens. The recipients of honor become an elite. And it is IMPOSSIBLE to bestow honors with absolute fairness. Elective leadership is subject to political pressure, while appointed leadership gets their pressure from above. I feel that the lot of you will operate better if we are all regarded as equals.

Contrary to popular opinion, this gets borne out in the few Revels that I host at my house. Valid critiques come from almost every quarter on almost any subject, and if the critic is just One of the Gang, the object of their observation is more likely to take the criticism with a reasonable degree of perspective, neither writing it off as sour grapes or treating it as a Papal Bull. Also, nobody has to fear stepping out of their speciality for a while, or trying something new. And loudmouthed Matriarchs can be told to shut up if they get tipsy and obnoxious.

I have two projects with which I would like all of your assistance. The first is the compilation of a book of all your major works. Number of entries is not to be limited by anything but your own ability to handle postage, although I may edit a little to keep copy costs down, if somebody decides to be funny and sends me a New York Telephone Directory. THERE WILL BE NO EDITING ON THE BASIS OF QUALITY. All Bards may contribute, and I will assume that if I, or my forbears, have ordained you, you must know what you are doing. Sign your stuff, as I will print it as copyrighted in your name.

My second project is that I want to quit. Do I hear any volunteers out there? Investiture is offered to someone who is flexible, basically apolitical, and competent in any two of the following: Music, Poetry, Drama, Prose, Archive Collecting and Organizing (paleo-works, rituals by other groups, pagan references in current literature, etc.) and Dance. Competence means you can do it and people don't cringe and turn green. I'm no star myself, just a sort of Jill-of-all-trades. Perspiration accounts for more than inspiration, and I would ask of my replacement the same thing that I ask of people who come to my revels; DO SOMETHING. Keep the blood pumping. If we can stay alive, we may progress by accident. Experience has led me to doubt that we'll ever do it any other way.

Send entries for the Book and nomination for the Matriarchy to: 1280 61<sup>st</sup> Street Downstairs, Emeryville, CA 94608

Leslie Craig-Harger, DAL, MOO  
EVERYTHING I SAY IS OPEN TO QUESTION AND/OR ARGUMENT. Responses to the above address are more than welcome.

## Later Oberon News

*Druid Missal-Any, Summer 1984:*

Leslie Craig-Harger, Matriarch of the Order of Oberon, Bards, wants to retire and suggest these revisions in the process of instating Bards, archivists etc. In Order of Oberon.

Comments and acceptance or rejection are requested from all Third Order bards before this is written into the Apocrypha. Reply before Samhain of 1984.

Not only does my remote location and lack of leadership ability make me a stunningly inappropriate Matriarch of bards, I also have a strong feeling that the Bards are better off un-led. Art for Art's sake is a pretty anarchistic concept, and Art for the Gods' sake requires direct communication with the Gods; i.e., inspiration. I would like to propose to the ODAL that:

- A) I resign as MOO, leaving no successor.
- B) Anyone wishing investiture as a bard should be recognized and invested by the local AD
- C) Anyone who wants to be so recognized has to put their youth where their mouth is, by presenting some original work to the local grove, and that a text or tape of this work should then be presented to a central Archives.

Love, Leslie.



**Figure 11 Leslie Harger at Live Oak, Beltane 1984**



# The New Order of Lugh

By Katya Luomala, 1978

Dear fellow Druids: The forest have their order and the waters have their order; the light has its order and the rivers have their order. The heavens, the oceans and the earth have an order. The original ten orders are a cycle of knowledge of nature. The later orders, for bards, magicians and healers, are ways of praise. Siblings, some have praise to give who cannot speak poetry, and cannot heal, and as yet cannot work magic. We are like the Zen monk Enku, wanting to carve ten thousand images of the deity. We praise the Mother with the work of our hands. So, for slightly inarticulate craftspeople such as myself, I have successfully begun an Order of Lugh.

"Lugh (Ludd, Nudd) was a very popular deity in his day, and the patron of all crafts. There is a story of how he demanded entrance to the hall of the Tuatha De Danann and was told he must have some skill they needed; he rattled off every craft known to the Celts, but they already had representatives of each. He got in by winning a chess game in some books, and by being a jack-of-all trades in others. He is also connected with light and kingship, and has been called "the Gaulish Mercury".

"Anyone of second order or higher is welcome to join the Order. There is no real need for an identifying sign, for the people of Lugh will forever be making them. Initiation consists of the candidate making a small 'image of the Mother' (any aspect) of/on some flammable material and casting it into the fire at services. If accepted (I faced the four directions), the candidate then stammers something before the congregation, about each act of craft being an act of faith or something. It would be nice if the congregation would then congratulate him/her.

"Creation is not the making of the unique but the combination and rediscovery of what already is. It is therefore both a meditation and a praise of nature. Many of us have already dedicated a landscape or a batch of bread in our hearts, now this power can be manifest with the name Lugh. Natural materials nice, not essential.

"As to organization: I am not greedy for the title of Matriarch. Since I'm the first member, I'll collect comments, new, etc. until someone volunteers to replace me; no need to stress the leadership aspect of the deity. I happen to be RDNA, but you could all please show this announcement to your Groves anyway? Peace!" Katya Luomala, DAL 1978

*Highly simplified procedures for joining the order of Lugh, Reformed Druids of North America, as related to Stephen McCaully, ArchDruid of Hazelnut Grove, January 1979.*

- One: Decide to create worshipfully, or worship creatively
  - Two: Construct a flammable offering of a suitably Druidic nature.
  - Three: Tell your Archdruid you would like to cast it into the service fire, so he/she can choreograph.
  - Four: Do it.
  - Five: Tell the grove, and Matriarch of your deed.
- Prerequisites: status as a second order Druid or higher. Some sincerity and initiative

## 1993 Addendum from Luomala to Scharding

Founded 1978 – Matriarch, Katya Luomala – for the creative, especially those who use their hands.

Dedication ceremony: The ceremony is inserted into the regular Order of worship, or done separately at a sacred fire with witnesses. The aspirant, understanding that the sacrifice symbolizes his/her individual process of creation in service of the Earth Mother and son Be'al, consigns to the flames a flammable product of his/her creative activity. When this is accepted, it would be well for the assembled congregation or witnesses to heartily congratulate the new member of the Order. (Usually before passing of Waters of Life)

Aspirants should be of the Second Order or higher, of either sex. They should sincerely desire the patronage and guidance of the guardians of craftspeople symbolized by the Celtic God Lugh, the Ingenious, of the Long Hand. The Matriarch or Patriarch, similarly inspired, will eagerly surrender stewardship of the Order to those other members inspired to shepherd it.

Example: To become Matriarch of Lugh I made a goodly copy of the original document on the formation of the Order of Lugh and consigned it, immediately after the sacrifice acceptance of the regular Saturday service, to the service fire. It was accepted and so was I... the assembled congregation congratulated me with good cheer. I am matriarch by default, as the only member so far, that I know of.

## The New Order of the Earth Mother

A Druid Missal-Any, Summer 1986

LIVE OAK GROVE NEWS: New Religious Order Formed

At sunrise on Beltane, Grove members Emmon and Willowoak performed the founding ritual of a new contemplative order, the Peaceful Order of the Earth mother.

Designed to meet needs not covered by the usual RDNA activities, the order imposes dietary and other restrictions on members and provides meditative training and experiences not other wise available.

With this rite, the pair made formal commitments to their new order, and to one another as members of it, then took an oath of secrecy and obedience to the laws of the order, something that will be required of all members. Vows of Celibacy and poverty, however, will be optional.

# New Order of the Phoenix

By Sam & Mike the Fools, 1993

## Introduction

Originally entitled the "Order of Cuchulain," until 1996, this self-initiated order is open to all, alumni and friends, who bear a concern about the continued survival of the Carleton Grove. Members of other prestigious groves are welcome to adapt it to their own grove. There is no Patriarch or Matriarch. The symbol is but a drawn Druid sigil on the palms or earlobes and a singed crimson ribbon.

## Preparation

In the dying rays of sunset, a fire is prepared in advance by the person wishing to undertake the responsibilities, or it may be prepared by a current member of the Carleton Grove, if available. It is lit by some means, preferably by friction or flint, as the sun sets and the Charge is read when it is blazing.

## The Charge of the Phoenix

My responsibilities to the Carleton Grove ended with graduation, yet a sense of obligation remains with me.

Like the mythical bird, the phoenix, Carleton has its own pyrrhic oscillating cycles of intense heat and crackling coals. I know this is normal and not to be dreaded, but I will watch from the forest's edge, to note if the coals become only ashes again. For then I will act in consultation with my other fellow Phoenixians.

I know that the short nature of turnover at Carleton means that the various logs are quick burning, while a few of us keep a piece of that flame burning on thick logs, long after Carleton.

When there are naught but ashes at Carleton, I will raise that slumbering phoenix from its egg shell and let it blaze forth again, coaxing its flames with but the minimum kindling, and not interfering as its newest young caretakers resume feeding the flames.

I will make my presence and availability known to the future Archdruids of Carleton, should they need to ask advice. If so, I will not smother them with my own ways, but encourage them to unearth their own buried answers.

This night I begin my guardianship of Carleton Grove, may I never need be called into service, and may my services be quickly finished and long enjoyed.

And, I will watch for others to join this council, that I might not be the last guardian.

This night, I will let the fire become coals three times and build it back up again, but let it rest on the fourth time, so to I will abandon my efforts after three failures at Carleton, for I believe that even if none go by the name or ways of the Druids, many will appear again in the spirit of Druidism, and the Earth mother will be satisfied with that.

## The Vigil

After reading the charge, and rebuilding the fire three times from coals, the fire is do die naturally, preferably around dawn, and the cool ashes thrown into the wind and chunks of remaining wood laid in a Druid Sigil. Repeat this vigil of fire building each time before a serious revival effort is attempted.

# The New Order of Puck

A Chaos for Mischief-makers and Pranksters

First transmitted by

Grand Bonnerizian-Pkah-Pkah-Whooseheeee

Michael Seamas Anthony "Ping" Ulhail Scharding, 1994

I am gathered here today to induct \_\_\_\_\_ into the mischievous order of Puck. For far too long, the aspect of fun has been left out of our lives. Some may ask, why we have created this order, my answer is: "To get to the other side." Some may ask, why have I brought others to this order, my answer is "Because it's there".

Remember our motto in your lightest hour:

"How ask Why?"

Your solemn duty, should you choose to accept it, is to keep profane the special days of April 1st, the Midsummer Solar Solstice and Friday the 13th. On these days you to goeth forth and prey upon especially serious persons and cause them grievous confusion, yea verily!, up to the point of annoyance. And the number of tricks shall be at least four amongst at least three people; one these people must be someone whom you have never met. Also, one really great hoax per year is required of the candidate. You are also required to induct one other person each year to this Order, if possible, in order to perpetuate this crime.

You will know our members by our secret handshake and password as first demonstrated by Grand Bonnerizian-Pkah-Pkah-Whooseheeee:

*(Perform the Super Secret Handshake and say the first password which happen to be an ordinary handshake and saying "Hi there.")*

Whenever you meet someone who knows this handshake or calls out this password; there you have found a potential recruit to the Order. Use caprice when choosing other to enter this Order. IF you feel the person is a violable candidate, then follow with the second password: "Puck you? Puck me?" If they respond favorably, in your opinion, they are ready to enter the order. Take them aside someplace private and inform them of the existence of the Order and ask if they wish to enter. If they agree to enter, relate to them what our inspiring theological author once said:

Now that you don't understand the duties and irresponsibilities of this order, know that this Ceremony cannot be changed except to make it far more sillier without deleting any of the previous words. It must become bulkier and more confusing with each new addition; but it is not to be transmitted or published by any electronic means or to be revealed to non-members; but to be kept secret to ensure it's impotency. Upon ordination, all future candidates must receive an updated copy of the Order of Puck ceremony and the correct insignia; the aforesaid object of which I will now presently present unto your physical embodiment and carriage for your mental though processes and nerve endings.

Question: Do You Accept This Office?

*(Present the sacred insignia of the Hockey Puck and the black ribbon of office.)*

As you now bear the sacred insignia of the order, remember that even as our dearest hopes and dreams are contemptuously treated by the Hockey Players upon the cold, slippery, "Ice-rink of Life", remember the Joy of the Goal and the wondrous Zamboni machine that smoothes the rough spots. There are many spectators who are watching you and hoping that you'll fly into the teeth of society's primness. Yet other slogans for our Order are: "So Mote in Eye be" and "I love the Sprite in You" and for further wisdom on our Order, read "A Midsummer's Night Dream" by Billy Shakespeare.

On each of the aforementioned special days, you will slyly or openly wear this, you Puck and Ribbon of office, around your neck (or appropriate body part(s)) to attract possible candidates. Only if they pass the aforementioned tests of membership are you ever to tell them of the existence of the Order of Puck. Otherwise let them stew in confusion and grin evilly and wink at their inquiries of your strangeness. Remember the holy question of the Grand Bonnerizian(etc): "How do you keep a Turkey in suspense?"

### Special Charge for first-day initiate:

I as, a Puckster, do say unto ye, new sibling, that your first-day "ordeal/sign of new office" is to do this until sunrise tomorrow: Think of something not too embarrassing, but sufficiently odd to make that the day very special.

Go now and do the deeds and duties of your office, treacherous-sibling-in-Puck, I hereby ordain you Here there everywhere – Oh Macdon... what was I saying? Kaaa! Oh forget it. Begone you!

(Perform the closing Three Stooges eye-poke and block)  
(Start acting silly)  
The End

### Puck Permit Business Card

I carry this around in my wallet, as do the other eight members.

Grand Order of Puck (est. 1994)

This permit allows the bearer to escape retribution for all pranks and jokes because she/he is a registered mischief-maker (RMM). Disgruntled parties and recipients of practical jokes should present their grievances to our headquarters. Our number is: 507-663-1221.

Lighten up!



Figure 12 Order of Puck, April 1993, Hill 3 Oaks.

## The New Order of Suzuki

An Order for Promoting Meditation & Martial Arts

By Mike Scharding, 1996

**Description:** Established in honor of Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki who brought Zen to the West. Like all the Higher and Special Orders, this order is to stimulate Druids to continued spiritual inquiry. The Order of Suzuki is dedicated to a particular skill, to Meditation and/or self-knowledge through a mature martial arts training program. The symbol of the Order of Suzuki, when needed, is a simple cord with a few plain paper pendants hanging from it, worn about the waist. There is no leader and it is open to any 1st Order Druids or higher. It can be administered by oneself when one feels ready or by any teacher of one's choice. There are no obligations except what one places on oneself. The basic rite may be elaborated as one sees fit, the following is only a recommendation.

### Rite of the Order of Suzuki:

Overnight quiet vigils are permitted, but unnecessary. Winter vigils may be indoors. At dawn, light a candle and perform your morning exercises or stretching. Pour three pints of a liquid into a shot glass on the ground, and **never** stop pouring. Occasionally, remove the shot glass from the stream of liquid and swallow contents. Return the cup to the stream of liquid. Repeat until the liquid is exhausted. Meditate on this exercise.

Read this story: A Japanese Zen master received a university professor who came to inquire about Zen. It was obvious to the master from the start of the conversation that the professor was not so much interested in learning about Zen as he was in impressing the master with his own opinions and knowledge. The master listened patiently and finally suggested they have tea. The master poured his visitor's cup full and then kept on pouring. The professor watched the cup overflowing until he could no longer restrain himself. The professor cried, "The cup is overfull, no more will go in!" "Like this cup," the master said, "you are full of your own opinions and speculations. How can I show you Zen unless you first empty your cup?"

Now, Feel the wet ground and know that the liquid you did not drink is not entirely gone. Meditate.



Figure 13 Japanese Garden's hut, 2000.

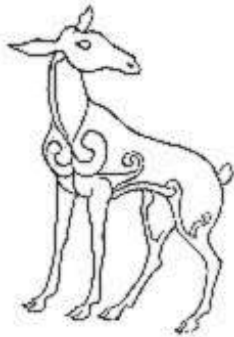
# The New Order of Bambi

An Order for Animals, Hikers  
and Responsible camping  
By Mike Scharding, 1996

**Description:** This is an order to encourage people to go hiking or walking outdoors in a responsible manner. It is dedicated to the Bambi of Walt Disney fame, who was terribly frightened by the forest fire caused by irresponsible outdoorsmen. This Order may be entered by any 1st Order Druid or higher, and may be administered by themselves when they feel ready. The Founder, Michael Scharding, will be Patriarch until someone requests the office, but he will not care for any organizational activities in the Order. The symbol of the Order is a buck-brown ribbon with white spots (like a fawn) and is worn on the neck.

## Rite of the Order of Bambi:

1. If possible, a trip to state park or a large natural area should be attempted. Hike in and camp there overnight. Build a responsible fire. Sleep as much as you wish. Hike out.
2. If you spot any of Bambi's friends (a rabbit, a skunk, a bear, a raccoon, or an owl) that is sufficient, but spotting a deer is considered best. Judge for yourself, based on the behavior of the animal. Good spots to look are in transitions from field to forest or at river banks.



**Figure 14 Above, a Scottish inscription of a deer.  
Below, the labyrinth on Stewsie Island  
in Lyman Lakes, c. 2001.**



# The New Order of Hermes

AN DUAL ORDER FOR ITINERANT DRUIDS  
(open to all who wish to enter, regardless of orders)  
By Mike Scharding, 1997

This self-initiated order, of which Q is the current Patriarch, is marked by the triple-woven ribbon-belt (gray for Hermes, blue for Amerghin, white for Basho, of which Norman Nelson is the current appointed Patriarch, for his constant travel between North Dakota Grove and Carleton Grove.)

This order recognizes those Druids who have traveled or moved to new locations and restarted their Druidic life-style, often in isolation. There are two parts to the order, those of land-based travel, are patronized by Basho, a famous 17th century itinerant Haiku poet who observed and wrote about nature. (See also Green Book 4's Chinese and Japanese traveling poets section.) The other part is sea/air based travel, which is patronized by Amerghin, who was Druid for the Milesians on their entry into Ireland in the Book of Invasions. (See DC(R) customs 9,10,11; Part 6 Green Book 2 Thirteen fold Mystery; Pt 6 Book 7 Book of Bards.)

## SUB-ORDER OF BASHO:

Go to a temporary grove site and mediate and talk about your hopes and dreams for your journey. Read a poem or two and write a haiku.

- 1st line: 5 syllables, usually a seasonal reference.
- 2nd line: 7 syllables, descriptive sentence
- 3rd line: 5 syllable, unusual ending

Your new life as a Druid of the Order of Basho is completed by a simple meal (esp. rice/ramen) and a little bit of spirits.

## SUB-ORDER OF AMERGIN

Go to new grove site, talk to it about future plans and dreams. Read a poem by Amerghin, then write a poem of any type (esp. in Irish) and then have an Irish meal. (whiskey, cheese, meat, vegetables, but not potatoes)

There is no Patriarch or Matriarch of this order.

# The New Order of Brigit

An Order for Published Druids  
By Mike Scharding, 1998  
(Open to 0th Order Druids and Up)

Although the old Druids never published, the new ones do. And of recently, perhaps too much! To enter, simply, upon publication of a Druid work (at least 3 copies or more) you must take a copy to the next service, read your favorite portion, and throw the work into the altar fire to be read by the Brigit. This is also to remind us of a few things:

1. The impermanence of the written word.
2. The recognition of the fire in the head that makes ideas.
3. A lack of attachment to your completed work.
4. Praise to Brigit.

You may add such words as you feel are necessary at that moment.

The symbol of this Order is a neck ribbon or printed words from your published work.

The duties of this Order:

1. To encourage other Druids to study the work of wise people.
2. To encourage the publication of Druid works if necessary.
3. To ensure that book-bound Druids get outside and see Nature first hand, lest their studies be in vain.

The appointed Patriarch of this order is David Frangquist, the first published Druid.



Figure 15 Anvil of Brigit in the Lower Arb, 2004.

# New Order of the Evening Mystic

By Chris Middleton, Carleton c. 1999

It's odd to think that the religion I'm practicing, the religion I'm creating, is already dying because I'm its only member. I started writing my religion a year and a half ago, I'm by no means finished with writing it all down, or even coming up with all of it, but what I have makes sense to me. But, what I've created I've created alone, I practice alone and I alone believe in my religion. I believe that when I die I'll find the book I've written my religion in again, possibly because no one else has use for it.

But enough wallowing in loneliness. Here, at Carleton, I found the druids, been a druid and been part of a group. True we druids all come from different places and traditions, but the druids here have strength by their being together. So, that's why I wanted to create this order, to help other Druids like me who are making their own religion yet want the power and strength of a group. I hope to find others like me, and see for myself and show others that there are people trying the same thing. So I've created the Order of the Evening Mystic.

This order is for people who will or once did believe in anything. Before I made my own religion I believed any religion presented to me, at least until I was introduced to another. This is an order for people that feel there are no right answers to religious questions. This order is for people who are tired of only dealing with religious questions, and so have made up their own answers. This order is for people who find making their own religion makes the most sense, or is at least the most fun, but regardless of fun they still realize that there's power in a group. This order is to form a bond and a group with the druids, the Arb and past, present and future Evening Mystics who are going on the same seemingly solitary quest.

## Requirements for the order:

I found that I sacrificed a lot before I felt like a member of this order, but there were four events that were the strongest determinants in making me an Evening Mystic.

- First there was a mask that represented a negative part of me that I destroyed to destroy that part of me and to begin again and move on.
- Second, a watch slowly broke down as I wore it. It was worn everyday and used so much that it's breaking down seemed to be a sign that it was giving itself up for me
- Early on, when I arrived here, I lost a ring in the Arb. I figured that the Arb wanted it and also wanted to start a connection between us, and so took the ring.
- Tonight I gave playing cards to the Arb as a sign of our connectedness and to try and strengthen the bond between the Arb and me.

## To become and Evening Mystic follow these footsteps

There are four types of items that were lost or destroyed four different ways. Someone wishing to join the order may decide what type of item should be used at each stage, but the stages need to be completed in the same order. The events may be spaced out over a long time; months or years and I would even suggest some spacing between each step. The steps are ordered thusly:

1. The first item is destroyed to show you are willing to start this search
2. The second must be worn down through your use or it's being used to show that you or the environment is ready.
3. The Arb must be willing to take the third object to show that it is willing to be a part of you
4. You must give the fourth object to the Arb to show that you are willing to be and are part of something larger than you are.

The items given each have a special significance.

- Masks: masks represent how you wish to appear to others. Fairly obviously they represent how people present themselves
- Watches/clocks: they are a symbol of how the "true, real or natural" aspects of the world are taken and interpreted by the individual. Time is a real concept but we each have our own interpretation of it.
- Rings: these represent the true aspects of self or how a person wants to change themselves (they may want to become more spiritual or stronger for instance, and embody that wish in a ring)
- Playing Cards: these represent how a person acts upon what things from the world (real or constructed) are thrown at them; much like how you must decide what to do when given a hand of cards in a game.

The first three steps can probably be completed on your own, the fourth probably in the presence of other Druids. Before completing the final step, recount what you have done before, what you have given and why. Then, offer up the last item (I offered mine by burning the cards, I suspect it's far easier to offer things by leaving them in a secluded place in the Arb, or you may come up with your own way) preferably with a verbal explanation "I offer this \_\_\_\_\_ to the Arb, to the Earth Mother, to the slowly growing bond between us because..." At that point I'd say you have become a member of the Order of the Evening Mystic. The current Archdruid may request some small extra feat (consent by other members for instance) but nothing that would take longer than five minutes to complete. You are then ready to be an Evening Mystic and continue your search with the aid of this group.



## New Dis-Order of the MITHRIL STAR

by Ellis "Sybok" Arseneau / \, AD – c. late 1990s  
Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd Grove, OMS-RDNA  
"A non-prophet, *irreligious*, *disorganization*."

Although some have argued against this Order's inclusion, I have decided to include it for the present edition.

"Non-prophet."

We don't have a central head, or Guru whom we all linger near to pine over his every word. We do have a spokesperson, who is known by the title, "Arch-Druid of the Mother Grove," who is basically the mouthpiece, or figure head of the Order. Mostly he is to be ignored.

"Ir-religious."

We are the antithesis of most religions. We have very few rules, most of which are not spiritual, and we expect nothing more or less than that our members behave like Gods. Who do the Gods worship? What religion do the Gods practice?

"Dis-organization."

We have no hierarchy and few leaders (those we do have are there for practical purposes, not spiritual). We have no subordinate bodies. You might say we are a "dis-Order."

The **Mother Grove** is the central authority for the teaching of the OMS tradition. They own the written materials you have just studied. They own the Druidcraft101 Yahoo list, the Mithril Star list, and Imladris. The first two are bodies that exist in cyberspace; the latter is an as yet non-physical piece of real property, where we hope someday to establish our worldwide headquarters.

The Druids who are members of the Mother Grove decide how and in what form the teaching materials of the Order will be disseminated. They also take care of the mundane business of the Order and they judiciously keep records (there's an overdose of Virgo energy in the MG). Decisions of the MG are made by consensus, excluding the Arch-Druid, who has no vote. The CEO of the MG (and therefore the Order) is the "Clerk of the Mother Grove."

**Groves** are the main manifestation of the Order. A Grove consists of a minimum of three OMS Druids, at least one of which holds the 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree. Each Grove has an Arch-Druid and a Clerk. Both of these are elected by consensus from Druids in each Grove. The A-D serves as public spokesperson for the Grove. The Clerk functions as "CEO" of the Grove. Other officers may be elected as required, or not. All decisions are made by consensus.

**Proto-Groves** are fledgling Groves. They consist of a minimum of three human beings, at least one of which is a Druid of the 1<sup>st</sup> Degree. Usually the founding Druid takes on the title of Arch-Druid and the functions of the Clerk. A proto-grove becomes a full-fledged Grove once at least one member has attained the 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree and two others have attained 1<sup>st</sup>.

Groves and Proto-Groves are wholly autonomous and owned by their own members. The Groves look to the Mother Grove only on matters concerning the teaching of the basic tradition. Well, ideally they do. The fact is, many Groves haven't contacted the MG in so many years that we've lost track of them. The MG is not responsible for the behavior of the OMS Groves. Although we like the Groves to stay in touch with us,

that is strictly voluntary. We also accept monetary donations from the Groves (and these too are voluntary).

In both Groves and Proto-Groves, voting is done by consensus. The entire grove must be unanimous before any business can be transacted. Since the grove operates as a family unit, in perfect love and perfect trust, this system works quite well. If an agreement cannot be reached by consensus, then that item is tabled until the grove meets for business reasons again (usually about once a month, near the full moon). Note: business is never conducted when the moon is "void of course."

A very special, unique body within OMS is the Mithril Star list. This email list is a virtual 'Grove' that emulates the functions of a real time grove. It is a sacred space where new members, initiates, and friends of the Order may gather to grow closer, discuss the Order (or any topic of interest to Pagans in general), and network. It serves as a sounding board for new ideas and changes within the Order. It therefore takes on a special importance, as the Mother Grove takes seriously the matters discussed thereon. The Arch-Druid of the Mother Grove is an active member and moderator of the Mithril Star List. The Mithril Star list is owned and controlled by the Mother Grove. It is the ONLY subordinate body in the Order. Due to its uniqueness in cyberspace, the MG has developed special rules governing behavior on the list.

## Druids.

Once you take the Pledge, which affirms that you agree with our three tenets, you are a Druid of the 1<sup>st</sup> Degree, and a member of the Order. You are also a member of the Reformed Druids of North America, and in that body, a Druid of the 1<sup>st</sup> Order. Non-members may participate in the ritual and social functions of Groves, but only members have a vote or may hold office.

## Degrees.

In the Mithril Star, there are seven degrees (or in RDNA terminology, 'orders'):

§ The **first** Degree Druid is a person who has subscribed to the members pledge (also called "pledged"), affirming their agreement to our three tenets: "Nature is Good," "Nature is Good," and "Thou art God." They should also have partaken of the Waters of Life (see "Water sharing"). This person is a '1<sup>st</sup> Degree' or '1<sup>st</sup> Order Druid.'

§ The **second** level is "Initiate," one who has finished the basic course, affirms his/her dedication to the Order has been initiated into the tradition. This person is a '2<sup>nd</sup> Degree' or '2<sup>nd</sup> Order Druid.'

§ The **third** degree (or Order) is given to those Druids undergo a vigil, and who further demonstrate their commitment to the OMS by paying dues (3 hours pay per year). This is the degree of Priesthood, dedicated to Dalon Ap Landu. The Third degree supplies the Order with clergy, and with officiating (High) Priest/Priestesses. Those who have attained the Third degree may wear a red ribbon on their robe or cloak. This person is a "3<sup>rd</sup> Degree" or "3<sup>rd</sup> Order Druid."

§ The **fourth** Degree is granted those who have founded, or participated in the founding, of an OMS 'proto-grove.' The 4<sup>th</sup>

degree is dedicated to Grannos, the patron of Springs. Those who have attained the 4<sup>th</sup> Degree may wear a green ribbon. This person is a "4<sup>th</sup> Degree" or "4<sup>th</sup> Order Druid."

§ **Fifth** Degree Druids are those who teach the D101 course (either online or in real time). Moderating the D101 class for 6 sessions, or the Mithril Star List for three years also counts toward 5<sup>th</sup>). The 5<sup>th</sup> degree is dedicated to Braciaca, patron of Malt. Those who have attained the 5<sup>th</sup> degree may wear a yellow wrist maniple. This person is a "4<sup>th</sup> Degree" or "4<sup>th</sup> Order Druid."

§ Those Druids who wish to obtain the **sixth** Order (or degree) have taught the D101 course at least three times and their 'proto-grove' is now fully sanctioned. Participation in the development of a Proto-Grove counts equally. The 6<sup>th</sup> degree is dedicated to Belenos, patron of the Sun. Those who have attained the Sixth degree may wear a yellow ribbon around their neck.

§ Lastly, the **seventh** is given to those who make a pilgrimage every three years to the redwood forests in California, or a visit to the Mother Grove (for international members, a trip once in their lifetime to the MG AND the redwoods will suffice). The 7<sup>th</sup> degree is dedicated to Sirona, patron of rivers. Those who have attained the 7<sup>th</sup> degree may wear a sky-blue ribbon.

With the exception of the 1<sup>st</sup> Degree (obtained by pledging to the Order) all other degrees can be acquired randomly. This means that a 1<sup>st</sup> degree Druid can teach D101 once, and get their 2<sup>nd</sup>. Likewise, they could then visit the Redwoods and obtain their 3<sup>rd</sup>. However, they can do everything listed above, and if they have not pledged themselves, they are not a Druid.

All OMS degrees are exactly equivalent to their corresponding RDNA Orders. This is to say that if you are an OMS Druid of the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree, you are also an RDNA Druid of the 3<sup>rd</sup> order.

## The Pledge:

Some of you taking this class have already become members by executing the pledge (see [www.MithrilStar.org/PLEDGE.HTM](http://www.MithrilStar.org/PLEDGE.HTM)) [defunct]]

"In dedication to the celebration of Life in its many forms, I hereby declare my commitment to a way of life that is ethical, benevolent, humanistic, life-affirming, ecstatic and ecologically sane. I subscribe to means and methods that are creative rather than destructive, tolerant rather than authoritarian, gentle rather than violent, inclusive rather than exclusive, egalitarian rather than hierarchal. I pledge myself to harmonious eco-psychic awareness with the total biosphere of holy Mother Earth."

"Like an ancient Redwood, I would have my roots deep in the Earth and my branches reaching for the stars, the stars not only above but around me, my fellow humans, for "every man and woman is a star," and "the good of the many outweighs the good of the few," "from each according to his/her abilities, to each according to his/her needs." "

"I acknowledge my personal responsibility for myself, to my fellow humans, and to the whole of Nature; and I recognize this total responsibility, in each of us, as the source of our infinite freedom to become who we are and do what we will. I dedicate myself to my own inner growth and development that I may be

of greater service to myself and the world around me. For these reasons I recognize Divinity both within and without, and I say to myself and others: THOU ART GOD."

"I wish to unite with others upon a spiritual path that encompasses the whole of the universe, and hereby make application to join the pantheon of The Order of The Mithril Star, RDNA, in order that we may learn together and teach each other ways to bring about these ends."

"So mote it be!"

By signing that pledge, and mailing it to the Order, you enter the Order and the RDNA in the 1<sup>st</sup> Degree (order).

We also ask, but do not compel, our members to pay dues. Solitary members send their dues to the Mother Grove. Funds received by the Mother Grove go into three accounts. The first is for payment of administrative expenses. The second is a slush fund for members who need help, and last is a savings account for the purchase of land to be used as a Pagan clothing optional retreat/conference center, Order headquarters and an intentional community (which will run the thing) (aka "Imladris"). Dues are equivalent to three hours wages and are paid once per year on the anniversary of your joining the Order.

Druids belonging to a local Grove pay their dues to their own Grove. Funds collected by local Groves are dispersed at their own discretion.

Once again, let me stress that dues are completely voluntary.

## Symbolism:

The Mithril Star:

Most revered of our symbols is the Mithril Star, named for the elvish metal of the Tolkien mythology. It consists of the 'septagram' (seven pointed star) with an 'ouroboros' wrapped around it, making it a 'Seren saith pigfain.' The snake swallowing it's own tale is an ancient symbol of the World and of the continuity of time ' infinity. The seven-pointed star is also known as the 'elven' or 'faery' star. It is considered to be the gateway into the Elven realms. The seven points symbolize various things including: 1) The seven visible planets, 2) the seven days of the week, 3) the seven 'quarters' (directions, elements, spirits), the seven chakras, 4) the seven 'rays' (see D201), 5) the seven musical notes, 6) the seven 'planes' or dimensions (see D201), and 7) the seven OMS degrees (RDNA Orders).

(Note: There is talk in the Mother Grove of combining the two symbols by placing two upright redwood trees, one behind and one in front of the Mithril Star.)

The '**AWEN**' /\: 'Awen (Welsh) or '**Imbas** (Gaelic) means 'inspiration' and in Celtic spirituality refers to inspiration from the three realms (or kingdoms), 'sky,' 'earth', and 'sea.' Or, in other words 'nature.'

## Customs:

Throughout our 10-year history, the OMS has developed various inter-Order customs, most for no particular or good reason:

'Thou art God/dess,' is the standard greeting from one to another. We also begin our written correspondence thusly, or with the abbreviation: 'TAG.' Likewise, we generally end our written correspondence with 'May you never thirst,' or with the abbreviation, 'MYNT.' We sign off our correspondence with 'In the Mother,' and sign our names with 'First name' Druid 'Surname' /\ (the 'Awen' is made by typing 'forward slash', 'pipe', 'back slash').

Some OMS Druids have taken to putting a number, 1-7 after the word 'Druid' to indicate their order (or degree). This practice is discouraged as it takes away from the egalitarianism of the Order. Many OMS Druids wear black or hunter (dark) green on a daily basis, and/or choose those colors for ritual wear. We're not sure where this began, except that the two founders were fond of those colors. Another apparel custom is the wearing of black or dark green 'touring caps' backwards (they then look like a beret, at least from the front). This began as a way of recognizing each other at gatherings in public places. Some OMS Druids are fond of tie die and even choose it for ritual wear as well (assuming they choose to wear anything for ritual). OMS campouts, weekend retreats, and conventions are generally 'clothing optional.'

Some Groves get together weekly to watch Star Trek (any derivation) and eat hot buttered popcorn with Parmesan or cheddar cheese sprinkled on it. Usually, these meetings adjourn in the nearest hot tub, where water sharing (sometimes followed by growing closer) usually occurs. The water may be a Chardonnay. :)

The Coastal Redwood (Sequoia Sempervirons):

Just as the Oak was sacred to our Druid ancestors of old, so now the Coastal Redwood is sacred to the Druids of the Mithril Star. It was in such a redwood grove near Boulder Creek CA that the two founders first conceived of the Order, after drinking of much Guinness Stout and smoking much Humboldt Gold. One of the many myths of the Order is that Adam was tripping on LSD and walked through a redwood tree, stumbling over Penderwydd, but this has never been confirmed (or denied). It is said that one of them exclaimed 'We are the Redwood Druids!' but this too has never been confirmed.



Figure 16 Mother Grove of OMS



## The Official Hymn of the OMS:

Recently, the Mother Grove has declared 'Sequoia Sempervivens' a 'filk' by Leslie Fish, to be our 'official hymn.' Found as the 16th track of the CD, 'Smoked Fish and Friends' (available from Random Factors) the words are as follows:

If the oak is king of trees'  
What then can our redwood be'  
Lord above all greenery  
Everlasting tree

Named for him who first could see  
The letters of the Cherokee  
Still you sigh remember me  
Everlasting tree

Tall beyond the reach of eye  
Spearing silent to the sky  
Watch the ages rolling by  
Everlasting tree

Sprouted long before the Sphinx  
Where the mountain's lion slinks  
Shading time in wooden links  
Everlasting tree

Pledges made upon thy bark  
Hold the memory in the mark  
A million turns of light and dark  
Everlasting tree

Triad's castle, Titan's spear  
Living book of year on year  
Spread thy welcome seedlings here  
Everlasting tree

The song is written in the key of Dm ('Dorian' mode). An mp3 is available in the files of both the D101 class and the Mithril Star List.



## New Order of the Volcano

September 17th, 2000  
(Day 48 of Foghamhar, Year 38 of the Reform)  
Submitted by Irony Sade

The higher Order of the RDNA are varied and interesting. Their ostensible purpose is to explore a deepening relationship with Nature. Some of them are very difficult, like the newest order below.

**Name:** Order of the Volcano

**Founder:** Irony Sade

**Patron:** ?

**Prerequisites:** faith

**Initiation:** Find an active volcano, ascend to the crater, strip naked, jump in.

**Powers:** Yet to be explored.

**Restrictions:** Surrogate jumpers are not acceptable. Membership (in this life) limited to survivors. All others relegated to the Order of the Suicidal Martyr.

**Current Members:** Patriarch Irony Sade, Archdruid of Tonga

I applaud the goal of doing twenty hours of druidic work a week from here on out. I have been considering something similar – starting with a physical tour of the groves beginning sometime next Fall. It would be highly educational, not to mention fun, to actually visit all the RDNA and related groves I could find contacts for. I am curious how many different directions folks have taken, how many different responses they have developed to the problems of being a druid...Also, I intend to be traveling within the states for a longish period, visiting all my scattered friends and relatives. How odd is it to come this far around the globe while knowing so little about ones own country?

## Lower Order of Pele

Representatives of the Volcano Grove recently undertook a pilgrimage to the island of Tofua. There they were witness to no fewer than five simultaneous thunderstorms, spied several rare species of birds, bathed in a pool sheltered in the rainforest, and were blessed with the opportunity to behold real live lava. The Archfool himself undertook to climb over the lip of the cinder-cone to get a better look at the fire. (Tied to a firmly anchored rope – he is learning a few things!) Others were then able to scramble up the same rope and hold onto him while gazing a hundred meters straight down to the place where rocks are melted up and born again. Some days later he made a solo trip back up the cone without the rope (Goddess watching is dangerously addictive) and was blessed with a double lung-full of sulfuric acid and a badly lacerated leg while fleeing the cloud of vapors that emerged to punish his precocious-ness.

Brigid is known in these parts as "Pele." Tongan being what it is, the word has several other meanings too – Dolphins, card playing, and Spinach-like trees all share the name of the Goddess of Fire. In such a heavily contextual language invocation becomes a dangerous and haphazard art.

# New Order of Hephaestus

By Stephen Crimmins, 2001

The Order of Hephaestus was started in 2001 on the morning of Beltane. It is an order of Fire tenders, though it may also be used for those who like to work creatively with fire. The symbol of the order is a yellow ribbon tied around the right ankle. It should be only worn for ceremonies, not for tending of fires.

*Before the ceremony the applicant should have built a fire near the location of the service. There should be a pot (of some sort) with water of life (of some sort. Something liable to catch on fire is good, though plain old water is always acceptable) being heated by the fire.*

## Calling of Hephaestus

Priest: O Brother/Sister \_\_\_\_\_, you have asked to join the service of Hephaestus, our lord fire. It is our duty to keep the sacred fires on the high days, to tend the fire especially on Beltane and on Samhain. It is our job always to watch all the fires we see and take care that they are not mistreated and so in indulging Hephaestus the rest of the Earth-Mother is not mistreated. Many times this means to actively build the fire, though other times it may be your call to learn to watch patiently so that the fire is not smothered. I would call upon Hephaestus to join us but this is your ordination. Call upon this form of the mother in your own way.

Applicant: (The applicant should call upon Hephaestus to be present. This may take a form similar to that of Carleton's Calling Ritual, though it need not)

Pr: O Hephaestus, do you here my brother/sister's call? O Hephaestus, do you come burning along the winds of the North, along the winds of the South, along the winds of the East, along the winds of the West?

*(If the winds answer skip to the sacrifice)*

Pr: The winds have not carried our lord Hephaestus here. But fear not, for you are not yet a Priest/ess of Hephaestus. O Lord Hephaestus, answer my call and join us here today!

## The Sacrifice

Pr: Hephaestus is a fiery lord and demands a sacrifice. Have you one ready?

A: Yes *(The applicant should have a piece of wood to feed the fire)*

PR: Then throw it in! *(The Applicant does so and adds enough wood to have a descent fire, but not so large as to make the next part dangerous)* This is a proper sacrifice, but there is one more that must be offered. Hephaestus will not accept a priest/ess to his order that has not been properly purified. Therefore, you must jump three times thrice across the fire, each time repeating 'Oh Hephaestus, please accept this sacrifice.'

*The applicant should then jump over the fire nine times saying 'Oh Hephaestus, please accept this sacrifice.' Despite that, nothing of them should be sacrificed except perhaps exterior worries and perhaps a couple of leg hairs. If anything goes wrong it may well be a sign that the ceremony should be stopped*

*for the present. However, the fire shouldn't be so large as to be a danger to the applicant as they pass through.*

PR: Oh Hephaestus! Lord of Fire! Today \_\_\_\_\_ (name), has asked to be a Priest/ess of your order. (S)he has invoked your name and sacrificed to you precious lumber *(if leg hairs were singed, that can be mentioned here as well)* and jumped across thy manifestation. O Hephaestus, do you accept these sacrifices dedicated to continuing your ever burning fires? Oh spirits of the north, I call upon you to give answer, spirits of the south, spirits of the east, spirits of the west? *If there is no answer the service should not continue. Of course there is more than one way a response might come and the fire especially should be listened to.*

## The Catechism

Priest: Of what does Hephaestus give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

Applicant: The Waters-of-Fire!

Priest: From whence do these Waters flow?

Applicant: From the bosom of Hephaestus, the ever burning all father!

Priest: And how do we honor this gift that causes our lives to burn with intensity?

Applicant: By partaking of the Waters-Of-Fire

Priest: Has Hephaestus given forth of her bounty?

Applicant: *The Applicant should first check to make sure the waters have been properly heated. If they are too hot or too cold the pot should be adjusted to cool the waters or heat them up and about ten minutes of ceremony should be added at this point by the Applicant while still staying within the Catechism section. He Has!*

Priest: Then take the Waters and consecrate them! Hephaestus allows you to join his order, but you must enter it by yourself

## The Consecration

Applicant: *The Applicant should fill the chalice with the heated waters* O Hephaestus! Hallow these waters by thy ever burning ways, by the rainbow of flames. By thy brightness during the night and your heat during cold winter days and by all else that you do. Join us together as we take and drink of thy secret essence!

## The Communion

*If the Applicant succeeded in consecrating the waters then all should be fine with the communion. If there was a problem Hephaestus may have done something to the waters to make them dangerous to drink. Hence the Applicant should sip first and then wait a short time before acting as server and handing the chalice to each celebrant in turn. This may include celebrants who aren't of the Order of Hephaestus as they are allowed to watch and gain a little by drinking of the waters-of-fire.*

Applicant: To thee, O Hephaestus, we return a portion of your bounty, as we must eventually return (our leg hairs) unto thee!

*The rest of the waters from the chalice are returned to the fire. The fire should not go out.*

## The Affirmation and Benediction

Priest: Hephaestus has accepted your entry into this Order, Hephaestus be praised! Go out into the world confident in the knowledge that our Brother/Sister has been joined with Hephaestus. And Brother/Sister \_\_\_\_\_ you too may rejoin the world once you have cared for the fire and seen to its proper end



**Figure 17 One Christmas tree super-dried since New Year's lit for Beltane 2003.**



**Figure 18 The Dark Obelisk along the Cannon River of the Lower Arb, 2004**

## new order of druids minor

by Ric Knight, 2001

The order of druids minor (odm) [and yes it's all lower case] is a particular expression of the Reform as it occurs to me. I come to the Reform at a time when three threads of thought have woven together a way at looking at the universe which owes a debt of gratitude to the following individuals, Marcus Aurelius (121-180) [played incidentally by Richard Harris in the movie *Gladiator*], Pelagius (354-418) and Giovanni di Bernadone (1181-1226 a.k.a. St. Francis of Assisi). Perhaps only in the Reform could a Roman Emperor, a 4<sup>th</sup> Century Heretic, and a Canonized Saint offer a fusion of inspiration.

1. From Marcus we receive the Stoic doctrine of justice, free will and the innate goodness of nature.
2. From Pelagius we learn a strict teaching of self-reliance. Pelagius phrased it as: *homo libero arbitrio emancipatus a deo*: "man, created free, is with his whole sphere independent of God and the Church, the Living Body of Christ—though Christ, Church, and sacraments mightily teach and help.
3. From Francis we learn humility, and the false hope that materialism offers the world, and his hope is our hope;

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.  
Where there is hatred, let me sow love.  
Where there is injury, pardon.  
Where there is discord, vision.  
Where there is doubt, faith.  
Where there is despair, hope.  
Where there is darkness, light.  
Where there is sadness, joy.  
Oh divine Master,  
grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;  
to be understood as to understand;  
to be loved, as to love;  
for it is in giving that we receive,  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
and it is in dying that we are born again to eternal life.

## This is our Rule

### I – Adherence to the Two Tenets

We affirm and adhere to the two tenets of the Reformed Druids of North America

1. The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never ending search, may be found through the Earth Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.
2. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it we do live, yea, even as we do struggle through life are we come face to face with it.

### II – Membership the Order

To be a member of the order a Druid must enter one year as a novice to examine their thoughts and hearts. At the end of the novice year the Druid may take the vow and will be welcomed to the order as a full member. Activities during the year are to be determined by the members of the order within the Grove. Druids need not be of any belief other than the Two Tenets to become a member of the order.

There is no requirement to be a member of the order in order to be a Member of the Grove.

No remuneration of any kind, direct, indirect, or otherwise may ever be requested of a Member by the order for any purpose. We'd just rather not talk about money at all. Ever.

### III – The Vow

Members of the order of druids minor take three vows;

Humility – knowing that we might be wrong, being open to others.

Humanity – knowing that we are all together, even those opposed to us.

Observance – performing our duties as Druids through our daily lives.



## New Order of the Pack Rat

By Mike the Fool, 2004

This self-initiated order is for all Druids concerned with collecting archival material regarding Druids. The symbol of the order is some three feet of twine with various objects tangled in the knots. Mike is the administrator of the order, but the current archivist of Carleton is designated the honorary Patriarch or Matriarch.

### Service Oath

I hereby swear to hold on to any interesting document, photo or keepsake of the Druidism that goes around me.

I will keep it in two different folders; the white folders for materials that have had copies sent to the Carleton Archives, and red folders for the materials that I have not.

If I hear something interesting I will write it down or get a copy, for my collection.

I will pester other people to keep archives, even if they won't share it now.

I will date everything, sequester them in a place that is both safe and dry.

I will not change the materials after they are in my folder without noting that.

At least once every five years, I will print out or send a disk with the material from the red folders to Carleton.

When I visit Carleton, I will always pay a visit bearing materials and dairy products to the Archivist of Carleton, the big cheese himself!

When I die, my will shall bequeath all these originals to Carleton Archives.

I thus swear my best efforts.

*(Ordainee eats a big slice of cheese.)*

# Section Eight: Unusual Services

## Exorcism in Time of War

By Shelton, 1970

### The Invocation

O Dalon Ap Landu, I invoke thee!

Thou art everywhere, yet thy manifestations are beclouded by the hatred of men.

Thou art without form, yet men have forgotten that thou pervadest all form.

Thou has no need of our sacrifices, and we offer thee none, for we come with thy praise upon our lips, but with great fear in our hearts.

O Dalon Ap Landu, hear us!

### The Reading & The Charge

These are the times of darkness and confusion. We have seen men deliberately spread the fires of pestilence and death, yet that fire brings only more dark.

We have seen men take up the sword and spread dissension between nations, between races, between brethren, between father and son.

We have seen the blood shed until the green forests and fields are turned red.

We have seen men countenance this that their pride might be assuaged.

And we have cried out in agony that this might not be, for this is directly repugnant to the law of God, to the law of Nature, and to the Conscience of Man.

Therefore, I, \_\_\_\_\_, a priest of Dalon Ap Landu, do solemnly adjure and charge all men of true and contrite heart and spirit to take up this cause, this cause to end this wanton strife, bloodshed, killing, and destruction.

And yet, I adjure all to observe that charge previously laid upon us: that, in our wrath we not take up the sword, nor yet the burning brand, lest we ourselves be guilty of that violence that we decry.

### The Exorcism

O Dalon Ap Landu, hear us!

We who are beset by the fires of darkness have sworn ourselves to smother them. Yet the awesome magnitude of the darkness misgives us, and we humbly beseech thee thine aid and comfort in the task whereunto we are set.

Wherefore, I, \_\_\_\_\_, a priest of Dalon Ap Landu, do solemnly pronounce the Curse of the Druids upon him who willfully harbors this spirit of Dark, who willingly urges the trammels of war upon us,

And I, \_\_\_\_\_, a priest of Dalon Ap Landu, do exorcise this malevolent specter from the ways of the waking world; I do unloose all forces of the Mother against Darkness, that these fires might be extinguished.

And we do pledge that we will not stand idle, lest our very souls be likewise extinguished.

### Prayer and Benediction

O our Mother, grant us thy peace and life; Go, and peace attend you in your work.

# Order of Consecration

(Usually of altars)

By David Fisher, 1963

## The Exorcism

*(The Archdruid shall walk about the altar to be consecrated saying all the while "Dalon Ap Landu", three times)*

## The Invocation

Mighty and blessed, fertile and powerful, to thee, Earth Mother, we sing our praise, asking that what we offer up to thee will be accepted, and thy blessing of life granted to us.

## The Petition

Mighty are thy works, O Our Mother. Mighty are the rocks which thou has turned out of thy side, and which we gather together here as a sacrifice of praise to thee.

**X: Grant us thy blessing.**

We, thy worshipers, have raised this altar that thy power might be praised.

**X: Grant us thy blessing**

Attend us now, o Spirits, as we light this fire of consecration.

*{Originally "as we offer this sacrifice"}*

**X: Grant us thy blessing**

Here the fire shall be lit upon the altar

**X: Grant us thy blessing**

Accept this, consecrate it.

**X: Grant us thy blessing**

As we now hallow this altar with thy Water of Life, Thou, Dalon Ap Landu, descend and dwell within this altar. Sanctify it, protect it from the defilers and fill it with thy power.

*(During the above, the Archdruid shall sprinkle the Water of Life on the four corners of the altars.)*

## The Chant (the Congregation)

Hallow this altar, Hallow this altar, Hallow this altar, Hallow this altar, Hallow this altar, Hallow this altar, Hallow this altar, Hallow this altar,

## The Answer

I call upon the four Spirits to give answer if this sacrifice is not accepted in the Earth-Mother's sight. I call on the Spirit of the North, of the South, of the East, of the West.

Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the renewal of life, has been accepted.

*(Here the Catechism of the Waters and the Consecration of the Waters will be done)*

## The Benediction

Go forth into the world of men, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that she has answered our prayers and that you go with her blessing. Peace. Peace. Peace.

# A King's Wedding

By Robert Larson, 1975

The following wedding service was composed by Adr. Robert Larson and was used to join the king (or Rí) of his clan, herein referred to as Cody, and a woman of lesser rank in the clan, herein referred to as Janie. The wedding was performed on Lá Lúnasa (Lughnasadh), 13 y.r. and contains references to this holiday, (there is also an amusing Gaelic pun connected with this choice of a wedding day).

**Archdruid:** Let the couple to be joined together be brought forward.

*[Processional. Cody should be on Janie's right at the altar.]*

**Archdruid:** Ye have come before me today to have your lives joined. It is a most auspicious day for this act, for today, Lá Lúnasa, is a day of rejoicing over the coming fruition of all the gifts of the Mother, the two greatest being Life and Love. Now does the flowering of your love for each other bear fruit as ye become one.

*[AD picks up aspergillum.]*

**AD:** *[To Cody]* I ask thee, a Rí, if thou wilt be joined to this woman.

**Cody:** Aye.

**AD:** *[To Janie]* I ask thee, Janie, if thou wilt be joined to this man.

**Janie:** Aye.

**AD:** *[To both]* I ask ye together if ye will be joined to each other.

**Both:** Aye.

*[AD sprinkles both.]*

**AD:** *[Handing a piece of bread to Cody]* As food itself, so art thou to her.

*[Handing piece of bread to Janie]* As food itself, so art thou to him.

*[Handing piece of bread to each]* As food itself, so are ye to each other.

*[Handing cup to Cody]* As drink itself, so art thou to her.

*[Handing cup to Janie]* As drink itself, so art thou to him.

*[Handing cup to each]* As drink itself, so are ye to each other.

*[Cody and Janie extend arms. AD binds them, starting from underneath, behind thumbs.]*

**AD:** *[To Cody]* With this arm shalt thou hold her, with the other shalt thou protect & comfort her.

*[To Janie]* With this arm shalt thou hold him, with the other shalt thou protect & comfort him.

*[AD picks up aspergillum.]*

**AD:** As life itself, so art thou to her. *[AD sprinkles Cody.]*

As life itself, so art thou to him. *[AD sprinkles Janie.]*

As life itself, so art ye to each other. *[AD sprinkles both.]*

**AD:** Thou art now one in the sight of the Gods. When They look upon the one, They see the other, however distant. When they look upon the twain, they see but one.

May the Mother shower Her blessings upon thee throughout thy life, may Danu smile upon thee and make thy life fruitful, and may Lugh light thy path through brightest day and darkest night and shine in thee always.

Siocháin! Siocháin! Siocháin!

# A Marriage Ceremony

By Robert Larson, 1975

*Note: If possible, the Chant should be intoned during the processional.*

*Archdruid and Preceptor advance to the altar, inscribing the sign on the ground. The Archdruid steps into the sign, closing it after him. He turns toward the gathering and says:*

**AD:** I call upon the couple to be joined to come to the altar.

*(During the couple's processional, any music desired or an appropriate reading may be inserted.) (Wagner is not suggested.)*

*The couple having arrived, the Archdruid invokes:*

**AD:** Oh, Earth-Mother, we call upon thee to bless these people gathered upon thy bosom for this joyful occasion. We ask thee to smile upon thy bosom for this joyful occasion. We ask thee to smile upon this couple who have decided to become one.

*Archdruid turns to the couple.*

**AD:** Have you brought sacrifices with which to invoke the Mother's pleasure?

**Both:** We have.

**AD:** Give me then your sacrifices.

*The Archdruid receives the sacrifices and binds them with a green ribbon. He offers them to the Mother:*

**AD:** Oh, Earth-Mother, the two sacrifices of thy children unto thee are become one. Receive them, I pray thee, in the spirit in which they are given, and permit me to join these two as man and wife in thy name! Hast thou accepted their sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer.. of the South... Of the East... Of the West.

**AD:** Praise be, your sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, has been accepted!

**AD:** I ask you now, (man's name), wilt thou have this woman, (name) as thy wife? Wilt thou be like unto an oak with her, giving her strength and shelter? Wilt thou provide for her as the Mother permits and protects her come fair or foul? Wilt thou have her above all others?

**Man:** I will.

**AD:** I ask you now, (woman's name), wilt thou have this man, (name), as thy husband? Wilt thou be as the grass of the field unto him, comforting him and sustaining him in his need? Wilt thou be his Waters-of-Life, refreshing him and making him joyful, as well as thou canst, come fair or foul?

**Woman:** I will.

**AD:** Kneel please.

\*\*\*\*\*

*(At this point, any tokens the couple may wish to give each other should be exchanged.)*

**AD:** Have you any token of your love which you wish to exchange?

**Couple:** We do.

**AD:** I ask you then, to give them one to the other.

*(If there are no tokens, this part should be deleted.)*

\*\*\*\*\*

*The Archdruid ties the right hand of the man and the left hand of the woman together with green ribbon, saying:*

**AD:** As I join you with this ribbon, so may the Mother join you with her might.

*The Archdruid turns to the preceptor.*

**AD:** Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

**P:** The Waters of Life.

**AD:** From whence do these Waters flow?

**P:** From the bosom of the Earth-Mother, the never-changing all-mother.

**AD:** Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

**P:** She has!

**AD:** Then give me the Waters! (He is given the waters.)

O Dalon Ap Landu, hallow these waters by thy seven-fold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by thy power, as we take and drink of thy secret essences!

*(He sips, and turns to the couple.)*

I, in the name of the Earth-Mother, marry you in the house of the spirit of the South (With fingers dipped in the waters, sign is made on the foreheads of the couple.)

I marry you in the house of the spirit of the North. (Sign)

I marry you in the house of the spirit of the West. (Sign)

I marry you in the house of the spirit of the East. (Sign)

Finally, I marry you in the name of the mighty, the blessed, all-powerful, and fertile Earth-Mother, consecrating your joining in the name of the all-mother Earth!

*(Sign. Then drinks of the waters)*

*(Note: from now on, the couple is addressed in the singular, for they are now one in the sight of the Mother.)*

**AD:** I ask thee now to share with each other the partaking of these Waters-of-Life, which the Earth-Mother, in her bounty, gives unto thee.

*(The drink all and return the chalice to the Archdruid.)*

Then I, as a priest of the Reformed Druids of North America, as a priest of the Lord of the Groves, Dalon Ap Landu, (Here insert any other titles which pertain.), say you are most truly joined together as man and wife.

You two are now one in the sight of the Earth-Mother. When she looks upon the one, she will see the other, however distant. When she looks upon the twain, she sees but the one. I ask Danu to bless this fruitful, but I myself cannot give unto thee the blessing of Danu. Go thou forth and earn it in the time-honored way.

Peace.... Peace... Peace....

## An Old Fashioned Wedding

By Isaac Bonewits, 1976

This ceremony is based upon Paleo-Pagan and Neo-Pagan elements taken from Slavic, Baltic, Celtic and other sources. It is similar in many ways to those used by modern underground Paleo-Pagans in Europe, but has been rewritten for use by Schismatic Druids. Its use is, of course, entirely optional. It's racy for me (Scharding), but others liked it.

Either the Priest ("P") or the Priestess ("Ps"), if not both, should belong to the Third Order. Traditionally, they should be wearing robes of gold, silver, white, red and blue. The Bride ("B") and Groom ("G") traditionally should wear brown or white or green or be skyclad. There must be a fire on the altar at all times during the rites, though the P & Ps should make an effort to avoid setting their hair on fire. Ritual tools upon the altar should include: a sword, a broom, a knife or sickle, a cup of water, a chalice, a container of whiskey, candles, a dish of earth, incense and thin green ribbons.

During most of the rites, the Bride faces the Priest and the Groom faces the Priestess. The ceremony should start early in the day, outdoors, in the Summer Half of the Year. Beltane or Midsummer is nice.

Portions of this ritual were used for the famous/infamous wedding of Morning Glory and Tim Zell, who composed the "All that I ask" poem.

*[Priest and Priestess (P & Ps) process to the altar, followed by the Bride and Groom (B & G). The members of the Grove and guests may stand or sit in a large circle around the altar and the main participants. The Grove's Bards should be singing or leading an appropriate song.]*

**P:** I am the God.

**Ps:** I am the Goddess.

**P&Ps:** Together we are Eternity. In the sight of our Parents, we consecrate these elements of Earth [*earth is blessed and sprinkled on B&G*], Air [*incense is blessed and blown upon B&G*], Fire [*candle is blessed and flame is run swiftly and carefully under the throats of B&G*], and Water [*water is blessed and sprinkled on B&G*]. In Their sight and the sight of our sisters and brothers, we consecrate you with love and joy.

**P&Ps:** Do you understand, fully and completely, your duty to love, defend, honor, protect, fulfill and give joy to your mate and your sisters and brothers?

**B&G:** We do.

**P:** Have you conformed to those just laws of the land concerning the establishment of matings?

**B&G:** [*Had better say*] We have.

**Ps:** Is there anyone here with a just reason why these two should not be mated? If so, speak now, or forever be silent, for their sake and yours!

*[If any objections are made, the ritual stops long enough for a duel between the disputing parties; Groom with objecting men, Bride with objecting women. The duel may be symbolic or real. The Bride's father, for example might hold a ritual duel with the Groom, or his mother fight with the Bride. Or a mock battle may be held between the clans of the Bride and Groom. If the duel is serious, however, and any major injury or death occurs, it is best to stop the wedding entirely and begin on another day from scratch.]*



**P:** Have you brought sacrifices to the Mother?

**B&G:** We are ready to bring them.

*[B&G are handed knife or sickle, go to tree, ask permission, cut two sacrifices and bless the cuts on the tree. They then return with their sacrifices to the altar, where the twigs are blessed by the P&Ps, and laid separately upon the altar.]*

**P&Ps:** What do you ask?

**B&G:** All that I ask is thy desire

All that I seek is for thy care.

My earth is thine, and thine my fire

Our waters one, my breath thine air.

**P:** Have you, \_\_\_\_\_, chosen consorts for your sanctification?

**B:** I have. They are \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

**P:** Who is the eldest and who the youngest?

*[Male consorts give ages and line up behind Bride; first the eldest, then the youngest, then the one in between.]*

**Ps:** Have you, \_\_\_\_\_, chosen consorts for your sanctification?

**G:** I have. They are \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

**Ps:** Who is the eldest and who the youngest?

*[Female consorts give ages and line up behind Bride; first the eldest, then the youngest, then the one in between.]*

**P&Ps:** The choices have been made and well. Let the feasting begin!

*[The Groom goes off to a private place with the Priestess for half an hour or so, while the Bride goes off with the Priest. What they do there is their business, but ritual intercourse is emphatically expected. Meanwhile, the Consorts and the rest of the guests begin feasting and carousing. When the Bride comes back, she goes to the Eldest Male Consort and takes him off for half an hour, while the Groom does the same with the Eldest Female Consort. The Bride and Groom spend at least a half hour with each of the Consorts; Elders first, then Youngest, then Middle. Only after being sanctified by the Clergy and all three Consorts do the Bride and Groom have intercourse with each other, preferably in public. Since there is usually an orgy going on by this time, the public intercourse is easily managed. While the B&G are thus engaged, the P&Ps should also be having intercourse, as representatives of the God and Goddess.]*

*Several hours later, all return to the ritual circle. The B&G again face the P&Ps. The sacrifices on the altar are bound together with green ribbons. The right hand of the Bride is bound to the left hand of the Groom.]*

**P:** O Earth-Mother, the two sacrifices of thy children unto Thee are become one. Receive them, we pray Thee, in the spirit in which they are given, and permit us to join these two as mates in Thy name.

*[The sacrifice is placed in the bound hands of the B&G, who lift it to the sky, as the Ps asks:]*

**Ps:** Hast thou accepted their sacrifice, O our Mother? We call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East...of the West... of the Zenith...of the Nadir... of the Holy Center!

*[Assuming that no drastically large omens indicating the Mother's displeasure occur.]*

**P&Ps:** Praise be! Your sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the consecration and sanctification of your mating, has been accepted!

*[The Bards should sing another song here.]*

**P:** Do you, \_\_\_\_\_, understand exactly what it is you are doing?

**B:** Yes, I am promising...*[Bride reads her half of the mating contract].*

**Ps:** Do you, \_\_\_\_\_, understand exactly what it is you are doing?

**G:** Yes, I am promising...*[Groom reads his half of the mating contract].*

*[The mating contract should be complete and explicit. It should state the rights, duties, privileges and responsibilities of each partner. It should state whether the mating is monogamous, polygamous, polyandrous, polygynous, etc. It should state the amount of freedom or limitation (physical, mental, emotional, creative and sexual) each is placing upon the other. It should state the expected duration of the mating and grounds for separation. It should be in writing, with a copy for the Bride, a copy for the Groom, a copy for the Grove records, and a copy for the ritual.]*

**P&Ps:** Are the witnesses here and ready?

**W:** We are!

*[Witnesses (usually the Consorts) step forward. B&G, P&Ps, and all official Witnesses sign the mating contract (all four copies) as well as any forms required by Civil Law.]*

**P&Ps:** The contract of the mating has been signed and sealed. Now take this copy and send it to the Gods, that it may be in Their memories forever.

*[B&G take fourth copy of mating contract and burn it in the altar fire.]*

**P:** Have you any further tokens of your love to exchange?

**B&G:** Yes/No. *[If yes, the rings or other items should be exchanged].*

**Ps:** *[Touching the ribbons binding their wrists]* As you are joined by this ribbon, so may the Gods join you as one, for so long as your love shall last.

**B&G:** So be it.

**P&Ps:** Let us raise the Power!

*[The guests join hands in a ring, singing an appropriate song and perhaps dancing. The P&Ps take the energy raised and shape it to form a psychic bond between the couple and a shield around them, while the B&G kiss or are otherwise intimately engaged.]*

**P&Ps:** Let the words be said!

**B&G:** All that I ask is thy desire

All that I seek is for thy care

My earth is thine, and thine my fire

Our waters one, my breath thine air.

*[Note: the consecration of the Waters-of-Life is reserved to the Third Order Druids and Druidesses. In the following, it is assumed that this is the Priestess. It could of course be the Priest, in which case the dialogue would be reversed. If both are of the Third Order, they should decide ahead of time which will perform the consecration.]*

**Ps:** Of what does the Earth-Mother give, that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

**P:** The Waters-of-Life.



# A Wedding Contract

By Isaac Bonewits 1978

**Ps:** From whence do these Waters flow?

**P:** From the bosom of the Earth-Mother, the never-changing All-Mother.

**Ps:** And how do we honor this gift that causes life?

**P:** By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.

**Ps:** Has the Earth-Mother given forth of Her bounty?

**P:** She has! Mightily have the sacred fluids come forth on this day, and greatly pleased are the Gods of Love and Joy!

**Ps:** Then give me the Waters!

*[The Ps holds the chalice of whiskey and water, and consecrates it with the following:]*

**Ps:** O Dalon Ap Landu, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join these together by Thy power as we take and drink of Thy secret essences.

*[Ps drinks of the waters, then hands the chalice to the P. He drinks and the chalice is passed on to the B&G. They hold it while the P&Ps dip their fingers in it and make the Signs of the Mother and the Father on the couple's foreheads (both on both) during the following:]*

**P&Ps:** In the name of the Mother and of the Father and of Their Holy Child: We seal you as mates in the house of the Spirit of the North *[signs are made on B&G's foreheads]*. We seal you as mates in the house of the Spirit of the South *[signs]*. We seal you as mates in the house of the Spirit of the East *[signs]*. We seal you as mates in the house of the Spirit of the West *[signs]*. We seal you as mates in the house of the Spirit of the Zenith *[signs]*. We seal you as mates in the house of the Spirit of the Nadir *[signs]*. And we seal you as mates in the house of the Spirit of the Holy Center *[signs]*.

**Ps:** Take now and share with each other the Waters-of-Life, which the Mother in Her bounty has given unto you. *[B&G drink and empty chalice.]*

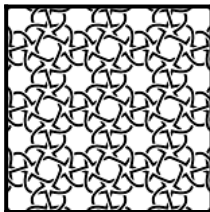
**P:** Now I, a Priest of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, *[insert proper titles]* do make this declaration:

**Ps:** Now I, a Priestess of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, *[insert proper titles]* do make this declaration.

**P&Ps:** In the sight of our Parents, these two before us are joined in mating and in love, in this world and all worlds to come, for as long as their love shall last. Blessed remain forever.

**ALL:** Blessed remain forever!

*[Bards may sing a closing song. At this point the couple are completely mated. The feasting and carousing continue until the food and intoxicants run out. The Consorts (both male and female) traditionally act as servers to the Priestess, Priest, Bride and Groom for the rest of the party.]*



The following Wedding Contract was read aloud during the wedding of Isaac and Selene Bonewits last August 6<sup>th</sup>, 1978. We have had so many requests for copies of it that we are reproducing it here for others to use as they wish.

This marriage bond shall be a link, but not a chain.

Our marriage shall, for the time being, consist of the two of us.

Others, upon mutual consent, may be added to our family.

Our primary affections and commitments as individuals shall be to each other, however, both of us shall be free to share love and affection with others whom both would deem not unworthy.

Both of us shall make our best efforts to earn our daily bread, and both shall share the work of creating and maintaining a felicitous environment. When children arrive in our household, both of us shall share responsibility and authority in raising them.

Both of us shall strive to maintain open communication between us while respecting each other's right to privacy and occasional isolation.

Each of us shall be supportive of the other's growth in body, mind and spirit, and accept that this will sometimes be inconvenient.

This contract may be renegotiated at any time upon a month's notice, to provide time for thought. No decision to terminate this contract will be made by either without at least three months of joint counseling with a mutually agreed-upon counselor.

This marriage shall be built upon a foundation of sensitivity and mutual consideration for each other's needs and desires



**Figure 19** Larry Press marrying Susan at Live Oak Grove Lughnasadh 1983.

# Invocation to the Elements

By Arlynde D'Loughlan, 1978

This is an invocation written by Arlynde D'Loughlan for the wedding of Isaac and Selene Bonewits last August. Symbols for the elements: Earth – a well-shaped stone with a pentacle chalked on it, Air – rose incense, Water – a chalice filled with Amaretto liqueur, Fire – a cauldron filled with alcohol and lighted.

The altar is the symbol of the spirit of life which lives in all of us, and we consecrate it and ourselves to the Force that sustains all life.

Spirit of Earth, from whom we are birthed and in whom we shall all sleep, cradle us in your love and strength that we may grow like your peaceful green children, nurtured by your breast and fed on your peace.

Spirit of Air, breath and breather, come and fill us with your wisdom, singing love to us as the oaks sing in your gentle caress 'til we soar like eagles in your summer morning.

Spirit of Water, flowing unity, come quench our thirst for joy and harmony, washing us clean of the strife that surrounds us that we may clearly see the divinity in everything, reflected in your living mirror.

Spirit of Fire, warmth and life, come fill us with the flame of love for the Godhood in ourselves and in our kin, and light the beauty of creation that we may more clearly see the infinite gifts that we are given and which we give.

We consecrate this altar, symbol of the living altar of all creation, to the elements that give and sustain all life and joy, and we sing in harmony with the melody of unity that is creation, giving praise to the Love which is Life.

# An Invocation Poem

By Julia Vinograd, 1978

Use praise of the Goddess for the God  
Use praise of the God for the Goddess  
Only the Goddess can invoke the God  
Only the God can invoke the Goddess  
If they both come at once the worshippers get drenched  
There is only one God  
and He is whoever the Goddess is in love with at the moment  
There is only one Goddess  
and She is whoever the God is in love with at the moment  
Eternity has a lot of moments.

# Wedding Ceremony

Plan A 1992 (Rev. 1996)

By Andrea Davis, 1992

This is final version of the ceremony, I think we're pretty happy with it now, I think. Give it a look-see and let us know what you think. Would have gotten this to you sooner, but I was not using the correct address.... I can't believe I was misspelling Carleton.

Outline the circle beforehand with yarn, placing some sort of marker at each of the four compass points of the circle. Leave a gap in the yarn for everyone to enter through. There will be a small table at the West, it will already have the unity candle and anything else on it that will not be carried in. Just prior to the ceremony, all involved parties will leave the hall and go downstairs, just out of sight. This will permit a processional. Once everyone is seated, everyone will move upstairs and stand just outside the door. Andrea will enter first. After Andrea, the compass callers will enter in twos, holding unlit candles as they walk down the "aisle" and to their places in the circle. Joe will enter, followed by Steve accompanied by Kathy.

When they enter the circle, Joe will move to the North and Kathy will move to the South. Steve will stand in the center of the circle. Mary will enter next, followed by Shari, accompanied by Sheldon. When they reach the circle, Mary and Sheldon will stand to the East and Shari will join Steve in the center of the circle.

Andrea: We stand outside of time, in a place not of earth. As our ancestors before us bade, we join together and are one.

Compass points should now face outward as Andrea walks the outside of the circle. When she reaches the eastern compass point, she will pause to light the candle with her own.

Sondra: I call the guardian of the East. Sondra: I call the guardian of the East. Some name you Archangel Raphael, and in the old days you were Shu, to others still, you are the Great Healer, come guardian of wind and tempest, guard this company and witness the oaths that will be sworn.

Andrea: Heed our call and come to us, all things harmful cast away.

Sondra may then turn inward, facing the center of the circle. Andrea will continue to the southern compass point, pausing to light the candle with her own.

Kari: I call the guardian of the South. Named Archangel Michael to some, in days gone by you were Shamash, called the Great Defender by others still, come guardian of the fiery sword, guard this company and give due witness to the oaths that will be sworn.

Andrea: Heed our call and come to us, all things harmful cast away.

Kari may turn inward, facing the center of the circle. Andrea will continue to the western compass point, pausing to light the candle with her own.

Rob: I call the guardian of the West. Some name you Archangel Gabriel, but before that you were Enki, to others you are the Great Herald, come guardian of waters flow, may this company be guarded and our oaths witnessed.

Andrea: Heed our call and come to us, all things harmful cast away

Rob may turn inward, facing the center of the circle. Andrea will continue to the north, pausing to light the candle with her own.

Anita: I call the guardian of the North. Named Archangel Uriel to some, and called Geb in days long past, the Great Companion to those who sacrifice themselves in defense of another, come dark guardian of the earth, guard this company and witness our oaths.

Andrea: Heed our call and come to us, all things harmful cast away

Andrea will return to the East and close the circle:

Andrea: Mother Earth, Father Sky,  
may we always walk between you.  
You are our roots and our wings.  
We are between worlds,  
beyond the bounds of time,  
where night and day,  
birth and death,  
joy and sorrow,  
meet as one.

Andrea will return to her place in the west.: "We have come together here in celebration of the joining together of Shari and Steve. There are many things to say about marriage. Much wisdom concerning the joining together of two souls has come our way through all paths of belief, and from many cultures. With each union, more knowledge is gained and more wisdom gathered. Though we are unable to give all this knowledge to these two who stand before us, we can hope to leave with them the knowledge of love and its stand before us, we can hope to leave with them the knowledge of love and its strengths and the anticipation of the wisdom that comes with time.

"The law of life is love unto all beings. Without love, life is nothing. Marriage is a bond and is not to be entered into lightly, nor frivolously, for it is a public agreement between two people to live, love and work together. As with any aspect of life, it has its cycles, its ups and its downs, its trials and its triumphs. With full understanding of this, Steve and Shari have come here today to be joined as one in marriage.

"All here are asked to witness the promises made."

Andrea: "Thus I invoke the Lady White  
To come to us this sacred night.  
By Fin and Feather, Leaf and Tree,  
I show you a Mystery!"

Shari moves to the East. Steve moves to the North.

Andrea: "Cunning and art she did not lack  
But aye his whistle would fetch her back!"

Shari: "Oh, I shall go into a hare  
with sorrow, sighing and mickle care  
And I shall go in the Lady's Name  
Aye, until I be fetched hame!"

Steve: "Hare, take heed of the fox abound  
Will harry thee all these fields around  
For here come I in the Lady's Name  
All but for to fetch thee hame!"

Shari moves to the South. Steve moves to the East.

Andrea: "Cunning and art she did not lack  
But aye his whistle would fetch her back!"

Shari: "Yet I shall go into a bee  
With mickle fear and dread of thee  
And flit to hive in the Lady's Name  
Ere that I be fetch-ed hame!"

Steve: "Bee, take heed of a red, red cock  
Will harry thee close thru door and lock  
For here come I in the Lady's Name  
All but for to fetch thee hame!"

Shari: "Yet I shall go into a trout.  
With sorrow and sighing and mickle doubt  
And show thee many a merry game  
Ere that I be fetch-ed hame!"

Steve: "Trout, take heed of an otter lank  
Will harry thee close from bank to bank  
For here come I in the Lady's Name  
All but for to fetch thee hame!"

Shari moves to the North. Steve moves to the West.

Andrea: "Cunning and art she did not lack  
But aye his whistle would fetch her back!"

Shari: "Yet I shall go into a mouse  
And haste me unto the Miller's House  
There in his corn to have good game  
Ere that I be fetch-ed hame!"

Steve: "Mouse, take heed of a white tom-cat  
That never was baulked of mouse nor rat  
For here come I in the Lady's Name  
And -thus- it is I fetch thee hame!"

Steve walks to Shari and takes her hand. They both move to the center of the Circle, and then to the West, and face Andrea.

Andrea: "Cunning and art she did not lack  
But aye his Love has fetched her back!"

Andrea: "Shari, is it true that you come of your own free will and accord?"

Shari: "Yes, it is true."

Andrea: "With whom do you come, and whose blessings accompany you."

Mary steps forward "She comes with me, and is accompanied by all of her family's blessings." Then she steps back in place.

Steve and Shari turn to face each other in front of Andrea

Steve: I, Stephen James Fox, take you, Shareen Eileen Mann to my hand, my heart, and my spirit, to be my chosen one. To desire you and be desired by you, to support you, and be supported by you, without sin or shame. I promise to love you wholly and completely without restraint, in sickness and in health, in plenty and in poverty, in life and beyond. I shall not seek to change you in any way. I shall

respect you, your beliefs, your people, and your ways as I respect myself.

Shari: I, Shareen Eileen Mann, take you, Stephen James Fox to my hand, my heart, and my spirit to be my chosen one. To desire and be desired by you, to support you, and be supported by you, without sin or shame. I promise to love you wholly and completely without restraint, in sickness and in health, in plenty and in poverty, in life and beyond. I shall not seek to change you in any way. I shall respect you, your beliefs, your people, and your ways as I respect myself.

Andrea: "Through the ages, the flame of the candle has been used as a metaphor for the spirit. Following this tradition, Steve and Shari, you will now create a symbol of your new life by joining your spirits in the flame of the candle."

Lighting the unity candle will be assisted by Mary and Sheldon. Shari and Steve take a taper from each, and light them off the north and south cardinal points (using separate points). The candle will remain on the table for the duration of the ceremony

Steve and Shari remove the cords around their necks, their wedding rings are hung.

Andrea: "Steve and Shari I understand that you have some appropriate tokens to exchange at this point."

Steve: "Yes. 24 days ago, on the eve of the fifth anniversary of our first date we performed the first ceremonial rite of our union today by placing our wedding bands around each others necks whilst standing in the same spot where we shared our first kiss."

Shari: Holding Steve's ring. "I give thee this token as a sign of my love and hereto I plight thee my troth." Place ring on his finger.

Steve: Holding Shari's ring. Steve says something suitable. Place ring on her finger

Andrea: "Let these rings represent the circle of life. All things of this universe move in circles as do we. Please join your hands."

Steve and Shari join hands, left to left and right to right (from above they make the symbol of infinity). Kathy wraps a long strip of cloth around their crossed and overlapping hands.

Kathy: "As you have sworn before each other, these witnesses, and the powers that be, you are now bound, one to the other forever and a day." This is where the kiss can come in, if it will happen at all. Kiss over bound hands. Then, Kathy will unbind Steve and Shari's hands and step back to her place.

She can continue to hold the cloth or she may place it on the table beside the unity candle.

Sheldon: "Drawing on an ancient custom from the East., where the family was immensely important, let us begin the integration of our families by exchanging family trees."

Joe holds a goblet of juice and a plate with bread and salt. "Drink from the cup of love, that you may never thirst." Hands goblet to Steve. Steve holds the cup for Shari as she drinks and Shari takes the cup to hold it when Steve drinks. Shari hands the goblet back to Joe. "May your life be flavored with love, and may you never hunger." Hands plate out to Shari. Shari breaks

off some bread, dips it into the salt and feeds it to Steve. Steve then does the same.

Turn again to Andrea. "You entered this circle as two people. You leave it now as one."

**Andrea** releases the circle:  
Thus I release the East and West  
Thanks to them from Host to Guest  
Thus I release the South and North  
With "Blessed Be" I send them forth!  
The Circle's open, dance we so  
Out and homeward we shall go.  
Earth and Water, Air and Fire  
Celebrated our desire.  
The Sun's returned to banish dark  
The Earth awakes to sunlight's spark.  
By Fin and Feather, Leaf and Tree,  
Our circle's done; and Blessed Be!

On "be" the compass callers can blow out their candles. Andrea presents Steve and Shari then leads the bridal party out to the bar where the receiving line will be. Parents will follow Steve and Shari, then the compass points. At this time, anyone assisting us in the floor move, will replace chairs to their original locations.

## Notes:

We will have chairs from the back moved up so that more people can see. The chairs we move will go around the circle as much as possible, making it easier for more people to see. Make sure to keep an aisle wide enough for us all to walk through. Also keep chairs far enough away from the circle for our comfort.

North = earth/green West = water/blue

South = fire/red East = air/yellow

During most of the ceremony, particularly the vows rings, etc. Andrea should stand to the West.

Well, I'm conducting it (thus the Andrea does this, Andrea does that), and I am Minister of the Church of Universal Life, which is what makes it legal in the eyes of the state. I basically view it as free license to perform Pagan weddings. The couple wrote their vows drawing from old Celtic traditions (with some suggestions from Moi). I don't think they have any set date from the engagement (they've been engaged a long time). I personally would not get married from Samhain to Beltane, and probably not in may either, but that is a personal choice. I would try to marry on a waxing moon. The wedding happens in two weeks. I will see if they are planning to record it.



**Figure 20 Merri Weber presiding over a Star-Trek wedding 2003.**

# Suggestions for a Druid Funeral

By Isaac Bonewits 1976

Thanks be to the Gods that we have not yet had any need for performing a funeral or other memorial service for a member of any Reformed Druid movement (Not true as of 1995 – Michael Scharding) But sooner or later we will have need of doing this and it is well that such matters should be considered ahead of time.

Rather than attempting to write out a service, let us instead consider various ideas that will help an Arch-Druid/ess or solitary Druid/ess to construct a ritual service that will have full meaning for all parties concerned.

Reformed Druids have a variety of beliefs and nonbeliefs concerning the matter of Death and an afterlife. It is best to attempt to find out what the deceased's attitudes were, so as to make the service coincide with his or her death, someone in the Grove should have made it a point to inquire about the person's wishes and beliefs. If, however, the death was sudden, indirect and compassionate inquiries should be made of the deceased's family and friends.

Any attempt to perform a Druid funeral services for a person whose family disapproves of Druidism will be met with disaster. In such cases, it is best to hold a memorial service without the presence of the deceased or the surviving family.

If, however, the family is willing to let the wishes of the deceased be followed, and allow Druid services to be performed, a number of customs may be practiced.

Perhaps the oldest of these is a Wake. The members of the Grove, as well as any other family and friends who wish, gather together and hold a party. All present get intoxicated, cry, talk about the deceased and share their sorrow. The life story of the deceased is told and appreciated. His or her habits, tastes, accomplishments and goals are recounted and his or her role in the Grove reconsidered. If possible, the coffin within which the deceased is to be buried should be placed in a position of honour during the wake.

The deceased may be buried in the middle of a grove of trees and an oak sapling planted above the gravesite. This may be done with ashes as well, should the body have been cremated.

If the deceased shall have expressed a wish to recycle properly, an attempt should be made to prevent embalming, as this process makes it very difficult for the body to return to the soil. About the only way to escape universal embalming laws is for your Grove to become a legal religious body of some sort, buy land out in the country and build a small temple. That way, you may then have, in most cases the right to run a "church cemetery" for your members right next to your temple or church building. Private church cemeteries are frequently exempt from the state laws pushed through by the funeral industry. You will then have to arrange your own transportation for the body and see that it is buried within twenty-four hours.

If you do buy land for a Grove cemetery, it might be nice to plant your first Druid/ess at the top of a hill and subsequent Druids in a circle around the spot, thus creating an oak grove, each tree of which shares the essence of a past member of the Grove. If bodies are buried, it is necessary to make sure that local wells and streams will be in no danger of contamination.

The deceased may wish to be buried along with his or her Druid robes and tools. Even if you are unaware of the

deceased's feelings in the matter, it may be taken for granted that any Druid/ess who was also an occultist will wish to be buried with his or her favorite magical tools.

If a stone monument is to be put up instead of a tree being planted, a menhir carved with the deceased's name, rank and most salient characteristic would be appropriate.

Some Druids may wish to be cremated and have their ashes scattered over the soil in the woods or local fields. In most states, this would have to be done surreptitiously, since it has a tendency to be illegal.

If an actual religious ceremony is held, it should follow the wishes of the deceased as far as they may be known. Probably the Libation prayer from the Order of Common Worship would be the most appropriate as a theme: "To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to Thee."

If the deceased expressed an intention of returning as soon as possible in a new body, all newborn children conceived after the date of the death should be watched closely for the next several years, to see if any give evidence of being the party in question. They should not, however, be given the deceased's name (though all the children in the Grove should be familiar with it) unless they specifically ask for it to be given them.

At the next Samhain celebration, a plate might be laid out for the spirit of the deceased. The deceased should be specifically mentioned in the day's service and his or her memory honored.

One year from the date of the death, a memorial party could be held. This should be as cheery as possible and mark the end of the mourning period.

Ideas on at least one Druidic attitude towards Death and dying may be found in The Epistle to the Myopians. But all Druids should meditate upon the subject of Death (especially their own) from time to time, especially at Samhain, and should endeavor to see to it that the other members of the Grove know their wishes in these matters.

Third Order Druids and Druidesses who write funeral services are encouraged to send them to the other members of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu and to the Editor of The Druid Chronicles, so that others may be inspired with ideas when it becomes their turn for this somber task.



**Figure 21 The central altar stone of  
the New Circle, c. 1999.**

# Further Suggestions for a Druid Funeral

By Emmon Bodfish, 1989  
A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 1989

The basic outline of the ceremony is as follows. It can be added to, to fit the needs of the people for whom the service is being done.

The grave is prepared and a means of replacing the soil is read at hand.

The ceremony begins with the processions up to the grave.

The pall bearers carrying the body of the deceased proceed first.

They are followed by the Third Order Druid who will be conducting the ceremony. (\*1) S/He will recite the funeral chant as they approach the grave. People carrying the grave goods follow immediately behind the Druid, the one carrying the food offering walking first, just in back of the Druid.

When they arrive at the grave, the Druid continues the chant while the body is lowered, and the participants form a circle around the grave, with the person carrying the food offering stopping first, just at the Druid's left, and the person walking behind him, stopping at his left, and so on.

The food offering, traditionally a joint of meat and a glass of mead, but in modern practice, the deceased's favorite food and drink, is then placed in the grave to the right of the body.

Next all those carrying grave goods come forward in order, deosil, (Sun-wise) around the circle, and place their goods in the grave.

A hymn or some favorite music of the deceased's may be played at this point.

Then in the central and most important part of the ceremony, the Druid steps forward and puts the handful of "releasing earth" onto the body and says, "With this soil I do release thy earthly bonds." (\*2).

The grave is then refilled with the earth removed from it. When this is done, the Druid consecrates a chalice full of the Waters of Life, using the "Charging of the Waters" from the regular R.D.N.A. Service, for Summer half of the year. S/He drinks a sip of them, makes the Druid Sigil and Says "The Waters of Life," if S/He confirms them to be such. The chalice is then passed sunwise around the circle with each member making the sign of the Druid Sigil and stating "The Waters of Life," as s/he passes the chalice to the next person.. When the chalice returns, it should not be totally empty. The Druid tastes of it again, and if s/he again confirms that it is the Waters of Life, s/he again makes the sign of the Sigil and then pours the remainder over the grave, saying "For thee, (name of the deceased,) we return this portion of the Earth-Mother's bounty, even as we must return with thee."

Lastly, a pine spring or bough, as the pine is the gateway to the otherworld, is placed on the grave.

Then the participants file sunwise around the grave, back to the path on which they processed toward it, and then each backs away nine steps, as it is traditionally very bad to turn one's back on a new made grave.

## Footnotes:

1. Third Order Druid is one who is ordained in the R.D.N.A. or N.R.D.N.A. systems, need not be the Arch Druid of a Grove. If an ordained Third Order is not available, the funeral ceremony can be done without the section of the charging of the Waters of Life, as only a Third Order can consecrate the Waters of Life.

2. The putting on of the releasing of earth, is the core and necessary part of the Druid ceremony. It can be done by anyone and is quick and unobtrusive enough to be done most anywhere. If you know that your fellow Druid wants this to be her/his journey to the Other World, it can be done with a pinch or handful or any earth, in a home or hospital where a person has just died, and it should be done before the casket is closed in a modern closed casket funeral, even if it is to be done again at the Druid ceremony itself at the grave as described above. Every Neo-Druid and friends of Druids should know to do this and memorize the one, brief line: "With this soil I do release thy earthly bonds."

\*\*\*\*\*

Copies of this are being sent to all R.D.N.A. and N.R.D.N.A. Third Order (Ordained) Druids, and it therefore becomes part of the official R.D.N.A. Apocrypha. Reactions, additions, and objections should be sent to the Druid Missal-Any, P.O. Box 142, Orinda, California, 94563

**2003 Note by Stacey:** Without this as a guide, I was able to put a small bag of food in Emmon's coffin: oats, quinoa, barley, and a "spooky fruit". He especially love spooky fruits, which were the oddest most alien looking fruit he could find. For this little bag it was a lychee nut in the shell.



**Figure 22 Emmon Bodfish cutting the grass at Live Oak, Summer Solstice 1986.**

# A Sample Druid Funeral Service

By Steve Savitzky (CL68:Peck)  
AD Carleton '68-'69  
Written c. 1998

This was picked off the internet in 2001 and is based upon the common Winter Order of Service that can be found in ARDA. As usual, Steve only speaks for himself, and there is no official RDNA funeral service. For that matter, there is no official RDNA service at all. –Mike

\*\*\*\*\*

"Well," Steve says, "we held a memorial service for Strypes over the weekend. I presided, in my capacity as a Druid. I'm told it came off OK; as for me I've never had to do that before. Pretty scary. I hope it worked. Afterwards we had a wake and jam session."

He raises his glass (now empty of Lamproaig). "To Life – it's bad sometimes but it's better than the alternative." Throws the cup. <\*CRASH\*> "See you tomorrow."

As he leaves, he says, "Oh; some of you might be interested in this stuff." Out of his belt pouch he pulls several folded-up sheets of paper, apparently his notes from the memorial service, and leaves them on the bar.

..... tear on dotted line.....

## DRUID SERVICE

[Processional: bagpipe medley.]

O Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, yet we worship thee here;  
Thou art without form, yet we worship thee in these forms;  
Thou hast no need of prayers or sacrifices; yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices.

O Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations.

[Drawing of circle.]

Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried aloft to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, O our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

## The Sacrifice

[Offer sacrifice: an evergreen bough]

Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer – of the South – of the East – and of the West.

The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

## The Catechism of the Waters of Life

Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

### THE WATERS OF LIFE

From whence do these Waters flow?

FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER; THE NEVER-CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

And how do we honor this gift that causes life in men?

BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS OF LIFE.

Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

SHE HAS NOT! THE WATERS ARE HERE, BUT THE SPIRIT HAS GONE OUT OF THEM.

Of what, then, do we partake?

### THE WATERS OF SLEEP.

Give me the Waters of Sleep.

## Consecration

O Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and all groves, descend once again into these waters and hallow them. Give us to know thy power and the promise of life that is to return.

[The waters are distributed to the assembly.]

To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

## Meditation

Welcome. We are gathered here to remember the life and celebrate the memory of Aaron Becker, also known as Strypes. I'm not here to deliver a set of religious platitudes about what happens to you after you're dead – that's none of my business. About all I'm sure of is that I can't picture Strypes playing a harp – can you? In any case, this service isn't for Strypes' benefit, but for ours.

Reformed Druidism is probably the least organized religion there is: its basic teaching is that what you find in your religious search – call it awareness, illumination, salvation, whatever – is your own affair, between you and whatever it is. About the only other thing the Druids teach is that Nature is one of the good places to look when you're searching.

And nature is a particularly good place to look now, because it teaches us about the great cycle of life on Earth, which never ends. When a creature dies, it goes back into the Earth to rejoin the cycle. Little bits of it may turn up anywhere – in a tree, a bird, a deer, or in the little critters that turn malted barley into beer. Parts of it may be turned into stone under the roots of the mountains, perhaps to be quarried up and built into some un-dreamed-of temple in a distant future we can't even imagine.

But we humans have something else besides. We have our minds and our memories. And when we die, little bits of those keep turning up, too, in the memories of those who knew us. So now, whenever we hear someone sing "Tennessee Bird Walk", or we hear a fiddle tune, or go to the Renaissance Faire, a little bit of Strypes will pop up out of our memories and get woven back into our lives. Eventually, who knows? A new song, a dance tune, a story, or some un-dreamed-of creation in a distant future we still can't imagine.

Strypes will live on in our memories for a long time, because he was a memorable person. He touched a lot of lives,

made a lot of friends, did a lot of things. He performed, he taught; a lot of us learned from him, even if we never took formal music lessons from him. I know I did. I was somewhat surprised to discover that he was particularly proud of being an Eagle Scout. His scouting friends may well be surprised that he's best known in these parts as a fiddler at the Renaissance Faire.

Anyway, I don't have a lot more to say. I think it would be appropriate at this point to share some of our memories of Strypes. I'll start with one – a joke Strypes told me that seems particularly apropos:

Three people died and went wherever people go when that happens, and Saint Peter met them at the gate. He asked the first "How much money did you make in your life?"

"Oh, about 10 Billion."

"OK, you must be a corporate raider. Down that corridor, second door to the left. Watch the first step. How about you?"

"Oh, about 10 Million."

"OK, the other doctors are down there, third door on the right. Next?"

"Hmm, maybe 10 Thousand."

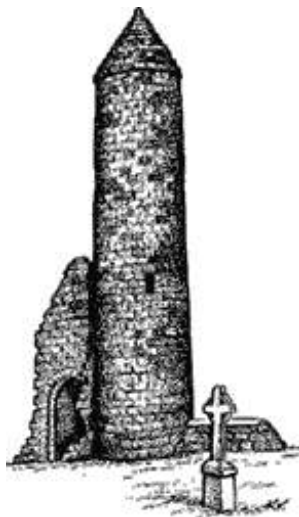
"Oh, and what instrument did you play?"

[turn it over to the musical group]  
 [Denise has a song that would work very well at the end.]  
 [Signal piper for Flowers of the Forest as recessional.]

## Benediction

Go forth into the world of men, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower her blessings upon us.

PEACE; PEACE; PEACE!



## Memorial for Beth Harlow

This was completed by Patrick Haneke,  
 of the Akita Grove on Feb 21<sup>st</sup>, 1998  
 for the funeral of Elizabeth C. Harlow.

As Brother Mortus explained last year, Death is an area where few religious workers dare go without quickly leap-frogging to the subject of the afterlife to try and comfort people. For the Akita Grove, death is the accepted end of an organism, but we believe that it is community continuance that comforts us. We should withhold our conclusions of an afterworld until we conclude this life. We believe that there are mysteries before and after our existence, and take hope that the existence of Gods and supernatural activity indicates a hidden dimension in reality. Recently, one of our members has engaged in the (in-?)activity of death.

Beth had been an active member of the Akita Grove from its inception in Fall 1996 and left in the summer of 1997 to study to be a nurse, with plans of volunteering in SE Asia. She died, Feb 13, 1998 in an accident while working part-time for a pizza company. This speech was ready by her sister, Josephine Harlow at the funeral on Feb 22, 1998 in Washington State.

\*\*\*\*\*

I will now read a short eulogy by Patrick Haneke, a dear friend of hers, and religious mentor, who was not able to attend this funeral, as he says, "due to insufficient funds and not due to insufficient love." Please listen to his words.

\*\*\*\*\*

We have gathered around the remains of Elizabeth Harlow. We realize that something very precious has ceased to animate them. We now consign them back to the Earth-Mother, to whom she was a beloved child.

This was a body that she was very comfortable with. This body was wrought and raised by the love of her parent Alex and Samantha. Elizabeth had little patience with the misogyny and Puritanism around her. She shared herself in meaningful relationships and made no excuse for her existence. She took it to many places in the world to see the variety of lifestyle possibilities. She excelled at the humanities and material sciences. She sought to understand the way the material world functioned around and through her. Her poems, songs and dance were a delight and insight to those who shared them. Although she did not receive a diploma, she knew the degrees of the world. She was a child of nature and a sibling of our respected Order of Dalon Ap Landu. Yes, for a long time, she had one foot firmly planted in the realm of the spiritual, and now has brought over her second foot for further study in those realms. She not only knew the many visages of the Divine, but looked deeply into each one. She believed in the power, sustenance, and recycling of Life. She died bringing nourishment to others.



We must now consign her body back to the elements from which they came.  
 The elements with which she interacted with over these few years she was allotted.  
 On the warp and woof on the loom of Fate,  
 One knows not what color, nor brightness, nor even the length of your own life-thread.  
 All you can be certain about, is that you've added to larger piece of cloth.  
 That without your presence, the picture would be less clear and complete.  
 It matters little whether you were just in a border pattern or in the eye of the dragon.  
 The strings that neighbored you, partook of your nature and grew to resemble you in some way.  
 They were not whole without your gifts.  
 Few will be able to fully comprehend this greater image into which she was woven, but we appreciate her contribution.

We don't pretend to know for certain where her soul has gone to, where it came from, or if it is still amidst us in some way.  
 We do not even know if the term "soul" is sufficient for what once animated this body.  
 All we do know is that we appreciated the time that soul spent with us.  
 For a while, yes, its apparent absence will be keenly missed.  
 And as other influences and needs of maintaining our community and relations (that process of Life) will press on us, such that pain will slowly retreat further from our heart.

A friend described this process to me as the way the neighboring trees recover from their wounds when a mighty tree falls over from a windstorm.  
 The old trees will stretch to fill the canopy while long neglected and overlooked plants will quickly grow around and upon the fallen giant reaching for the sun.  
 Her memory will resound occasionally other the long years until we also make that same journey, perchance to meet with her again.

She brought us together, but now we must depart.  
 Look around at all the faces that she once loved.  
 You shall probably not see them gathered again.  
 What stories do these people possess of her?  
 Why were they considered so dear by Beth?  
 I hope you will get a chance to talk with each other afterwards.  
 I ask you to realize your hopes and dreams in the time set for your life.  
 Do not let Death catch you off-guard and unprepared.  
 Do not let Life slip you by without notice of its passage and opportunities  
 While Beth's life has shed light on many parts of our own soul, there is still much territory left to be explored and appreciated.  
 May you achieve as much (and more) as Beth did in her short time with us.  
 Thank you for coming.  
 Bless you all, where ever you go.

## Memorial for Robert Larson

By Stephen Warren McCauley Abbott, 2004  
 AD Hazelnut MotherGrove (in abeyance)  
 Transmitted with notes by Tegwedd to ARDA 2

### Ritual Structure

I set up the ritual in phases, trying to give it some form of structure.

Phase 1: I performed a ritual bath to cleanse myself mentally, psychically, and physically. The bath was also helping me become more alert and awake. Now I was ready to perform the rite.

Phase 2: I set aside a ritual space in one of the vacant rooms. In this room, I already had some of my wooden furniture. I placed my two spears, my two staves, and my altar in the room. I set up my Tibetan shaman's drum, my three sickles, and a bronze candlestick with a single black candle. The candle, of course, was new. I placed the Druid books from Michael Scharding on one of the wooden shelves on the right side of the room. I then placed my Stonehenge pieces on either side of the Druid books. On the Altar, I placed my magickal teddy bear, which I identified to a degree with Terlach as a big teddy bear. For those who did not know him, he was a very large and tall man with long dark hair. [He was also a very gentle sweet man. -te]

I placed my divination board on the floor in front of my altar. On the altar I placed my wizard's head, which bore an uncanny resemblance to Robert. Tegwedd called him Terlach, but I always just called him Robert. [I called him Terlach because that was his Druid name -te] I wore my ritual robe which Tegwedd had made for me years earlier. This robe has the symbol [if you can, Mike, insert the Druid sigil here. I have no way of doing so here. -te] the shield and two spears on the front and back. I also wore my Druid ribbons. I placed my two tap lights [?] on either side of my divination board.

Phase 3: The Ritual: The ritual itself was quite simple. I started it out by ritually lighting the black candle. In this ritual, the black candle represented death and the dark realm. Next, I called upon the four quarter and the four elements, plus Spirit in the Sacred Center. Then I called upon the Earth Mother and Dalon ap Landu to join the rite. Afterwards, I sang the "Earth Mother" song. Badly, I'm afraid, since I was a little rusty. As we all know, our gods and goddesses have a sense of humor. Next I consecrated and shared the Waters of Life. I transformed the Waters of Sleep into the Waters of Life [because of certain metabolic peculiarities, Stephen cannot have alcohol. -te] Because of the move, I did not have access to any true Waters of Life. I used the wooden chalice which had been used in my rituals for the Hazelnut Mother Grove.

Next I got rather personal and simply talked to Robert as if he were in the room with me. I related to him my memories of him and the many rituals that he and I had participated in together. I related to him about going to his apartment to play war games. Robert had been an avid war game player. I told him that I still had all the games he had given me such as *Winter War Soldiers*, and *Franco Prussian War*. All of these games had been published by SPI (Simulations Publications Inc.).

I related to him the time when he had given Gaelic classes to members of the Grove. I told him I still possessed the Gaelic handouts he had given to us after every class. I had put those handouts together and put them into a Druid notebook. I related to him all the funny things that had happened when he and I

were together. I told him I would miss him and how bad I had felt when I lost contact with him after moving to Sacramento now some 10 years ago. [has it really been 10 years? -te]

Phase 4: I sang the "Lady's Bransle" and "The Lughnasadh Song", after which I had a period of silence. I commented afterwards about his passing on Lughnasadh and that he would return from the Otherworld with many stories and tales about his adventures there.

Phase 5: I called on the Earth Mother and Dalon ap Landu to bless his path to the Otherworld and to guide and protect him while he resided there. Then there was another moment of silence. I performed a divination with cards from the following

1. was the "Celtic Tarot", which oddly enough is an Italian deck.
2. "Tarot of the Druids"
3. "The Faery Wicca Tarot"

The first card was from the Druid Tarot. It was the King of Swords. (upright) I felt Robert's presence strongly in this card. Like Robert, the King of Swords depicts a king of great intellect and in this deck he is none other than King Arthur in middle age. The card depicts a man of great intellect and wisdom, which fits Robert to a T. This card gave to the reading the element of Air and the quarter of the east. A card of pure intellect and wisdom.

The next card came from the Faery Wicca deck. The card was the four of Fire. The card's title was Lord of Completion. This seems appropriate as well. It is also known as the Lord of Perfected Work. This seemed to fit. Robert always tried to do his best and make things look good. This card brings to the reading the element of Fire and the quarter of the south.

The next card came from the Italian "Celtic" deck. The 6 of Cups. This card's title is the "Lady of Pleasure". Robert loved to have a good time. He seemed to love being alive. This card gave the reading the element of Water and the quarter of the west.

The last card was from the Italian Druid deck. The 9 of Pentacles. The card's title is the "Lady of Material Gain". Robert was concerned about money and all things earthy when I knew him. He wasn't rich, but I believed he lived comfortably. That card gave the reading the element of earth and the quarter of the north. That completed the Tarot layout. All the four elements were represented.

The next card would be the Ogham card from "The Celtic Oracle." This card was the Spindle OIR. This is one of the vowel sounds after the basic 20. This Ogham card relates to the concepts of lighting and beauty. I read the passage assigned to this card.

I ended this phase by saying my final goodbyes to my friend and fellow Druid Robert. I thanked the Earth Mother and Dalon ap Landu for attending the rite. I then drew the Druid sigil three times and spoke the words "Peace, Peace" and "Peace." I then returned the waters to the Mother by pouring them into the fish pond in the back yard. This concluded the Druid sendoff of AD Robert Larson. May he stay in our memories forever. May his passing not be in vain and may the Earth guide and protect his spirit till he returns to this world again.

*Use this in the normal service's invocation.*

- O Lord, forgive us these three errors of parenthood that are due to human limitations.  
Thy child has no end of needs, yet we have only these resources and time.  
Thy child's path is uncertain, yet we seek to guide them.  
Thy child's choices will be their own, yet we seek to assist them.  
O Lord, forgive us these errors of parenthood that are due to our human limitations.  
O Mother, you have blessed us with this child, yet we further ask your peace and comfort in the years to come. Nurture us as we nurture this babe.

*Continue as usual, then Insert this next bit into an RDNA service after the waters are consecrated. If the sacrifice is accepted, then use Waters of Life, if not, use Waters of Sleep for the blessing. With previously blessed waters:*

- AD: I call upon the parents or guardians of this child to step forward to make their pledges of support.  
Father: I am your father, dear child. Your protector, teacher and advisor.  
Mother: I am your mother, dear child. Your protector, teacher and advisor too.  
Father: You will reside at our home and that of our relatives until you reach maturity, learning from both sides of your parents relatives.  
Mother: Aye, and we will teach of the ways of the Gods, not only our own, but of those of other faiths you will likely encounter.  
Father: We seek to assist, but not too interfere, in your life's journeys.  
Mother: You are dearly beloved by us and many you do not know yet.  
Father: You will grow strong and brave.  
Mother: You will grow wise and caring.  
Father: You will live close to the Earth  
Mother: You will understand the ways of water.  
Father: And when the wind speaks, you will understand.  
Mother: You are blessed indeed, as we are by your choice to join us.  
Father: We name you (), which means (). This is the name people will call you as an individual. Your last name will be () which means ().  
Mother: But your true name will only be known by you when you hear it called by Fate.  
Father: Grow in moderation of all virtues.  
Mother: Tarry not long in vices.  
Father: There is much more we wish to say, but these are our first promises to you.  
Mother: And we wish to spend many years with you adding to them.  
AD: Let all bear the baby, as we will all be enmeshed in his future.

*Baby's blanket is held taunt by all participating relatives. Baby is asperged with the Waters by the AD who walks around, sprinkling from all four directions, also dousing the parents and participants for good measure too.*

## Baby Blessing

By Patrick Haneke, Akita Grove, Japan  
March 1, 2003

AD: By the power of Dalon Ap Landu, all the Gods of this Land, and those who will direct this child's course, I bless this child. May it live a full, long life blessed with success, love, and accomplishment.

AD: And blessed be all of you by the love that you bear for this babe and for each other. Band together to be a stout palisade in times of defense, a horn of plenty in his time of need, stern teacher in his time of learning, and grateful recipient in his time of production.

*The baby is returned to the parent and waters are shared as usual among the participants.*

## Fertility Cycle of the Druid Year

By Nozomi Kibou  
Archdruidess of Akita Grove  
A Druid Missal-Any, Oimelc 2002

I apologize for the poor quality of this essay, but I hope you like it. You know, my father's grove is a fertility shrine (people, plants, animals too) so it is important subject for me. I have thought on Paganism and big four holidays and I think they are fertility holidays. Here are the reasons.

Beltane: It is warm. Young people date and have sex (Pat says "It's a festival of muddy knees and grass-stained dresses.") Planting season. Lughnasadh: We know if we have a baby. People marry. Family starts. Samhain: Baby gets big. Spirits move in baby. Baby kicks. Hard to work in fields, but okay, that work is done, we can relax, start new plans of life. Oimelc: Baby is born. Sheep are born. Not much food, which is hard for mothers. Use sheep milk for babies? By equinox, can work in fields again. Grow baby plants! Beltane: Ready again for more babies? Maybe wait one more year, no?

Sister Tegwedd says we don't need more babies now, "Zero Growth Population," so instead we are mind-creative. Yes, but there is no cycle for that. Most Japanese babies are also born in spring around Feb 1st. April's when school and government and business start a new year in Japan. Very convenient. Birth time of the year, April is. Old Europe started the New Year around Easter, but then changed to Roman Julian calendar. But now most people are not farmers in Wales or Ireland now, so the baby-schedule doesn't work well. Probably more babies in late summer with constant year-round food, long winters, and Fall school starts.

In modern Ireland there are good luck rules for the wedding, which was often before baby-making. A good wedding will help fertility. See <http://www.ireland-information.com/irishweddingtraditions.htm> for many fertility rites of "The Traditional Irish Wedding" by Brian Haggerty.

Old Ireland has no records of "before-birth" advice for women. There were warnings in 11th century that women should have purity of heart and mind and not "heat the womb" during sex; but church didn't like recreational sex back then. Saints took over from Druids in blessing women with fertility, in many unusual ways, including potions. Some babies were born from swallowing live bugs, worms or fish, unusual water plants, sex with giant otters or bird-monsters or night-dreams. There was mystery in how it happened. The best modern advice for all (including men) is to exercise and eat only health food for six

months before starting baby/getting married. No drugs, tobacco, alcohol, fatty foods, chocolates, coffee, allergenic foods, meat, gambling and horse racing, avoid rabbits, and corpses. Choose foods with special traits to direct babies personality. In Japan, we were special belly-belt to keep belly warm. Stay that way until milking is done. Of course this is not easy.

Once with baby, a blessing from priest and soon grandparents is good. Some make a special bow/knot for the house. When birth comes, untie it and open all windows, doors, cabinets, knots in house and clothes. The baby comes quicker this way. Sometimes a special bird or animal will visit the house during pregnancy, give it honor, and a name to baby. Going to a forge and pushing the bellows would help the birthing later and make a strong baby. But the most important thing is of course strong love from both parents, no fighting and excitement in the house, peace and tranquility. With this, baby will grow well. If the baby did not go well, abortion by potion and self-abuse was also known. There is evidence of infanticide, too. Unfortunately, modern Ireland has worst rate for "caesarian" births (near 25% for first time,) a weak midwife system, and no birth-centers as yet. Yet, this is because of the modern medical monopoly. In the past midwives were common. This describes a 19th century Co. Mayo birth:

"After she went into labour, the woman was transferred from her usual bed, which was in the kitchen by the fire, to the floor, which was covered with straw. She put on her husband's jacket, an outsize flannel garment with sleeves, made of homespun wool, or bainin. As the great event drew near, the husband stood at his wife's back, and placed his hands on her shoulders while she was in a kneeling position on the floor. With words of faith, hope, and encouragement, he supported her morally and physically in her trial, while the midwife got on with the great task of bringing a new human life into the world."

Celtic sources have much more on the raising of children after birth than before birth. The most important fear was bansidhe (faery women) stealing the children and leaving a "changeling," an old faery who never got bigger and shrank. Sometimes the mother would be took and go to fairy hill to raise fairy-babies. This may have been due to emotional stress and mother running away or hurting the child (like that Texas case) in tight society with small support for mother's need. In famous case of Ard Macha, treating pregnant wife rude like the animal (making her race the horses) caused a weak-body curse on all men of North Ireland for many generations. The point is, let pregnant women do what they want!



Figure 23 The Akita Grove, c. 1998.

# Section Eight: Solitary Services & Miscellaneous Rites

## 2004 Introduction

It is with some hesitation that I include several of the services and activities here in ARDA 2. Perhaps it is my innate distrust of magical activities, as being too addictive to keeping up a sense of distrust of liturgy in our lives.

All of these activities can be practiced by a Druid of any Order, or by complete outsiders to Reformed Druidism, if there are any. They may enrich the breadth of possibilities for Druids wishing to diversify their portfolio, especially when unwillingly alone, or not feeling in the mood for group activities.

Indeed many Druids do not feel the need to hold services with groves and prefer to study and celebrate nature on their own, for them this section has been accumulated to give them activities to pursue outside the traditional framework of the liturgies.

They have been culled from the Druid Missal-Any and various other sources, by Druids of varying degrees of ritual skill, and a few are a bit tongue-in-cheek from their outward appearance. I make no guarantees that they will actually work or that other Druids will recognize them, but here they are.

Of course, there is not requirement that Druids should pursue these, or limit themselves only to these activities. You're more than welcome to come up with more on your own if you think it is necessary.



Figure 24 The Japanese Garden, c. 2000.

# Ordination of Zero Order Druids

(Order of the Acorn)  
By Scharding, 2002

For people who wish to become Reformed Druids, yet due to age, distance, handicap or some other hardship, are unable to meet with a grove. The Book of Maccabees says, "Don't make a long introduction to a short story", so let's keep it simple, but feel free to elaborate if you wish.

The Acorn ordination should ideally be done outdoors between Beltane and Samhain. Perhaps you'd wish to reaffirm this status annually to yourself ("Next year in Carleton!" or some sort of deadline)? It is basically, the affirmation of the two basic tenets, bringing you into the organizational body of the Druids. In a way this is fulfilling half of the 1<sup>st</sup> Order requirements (Druid Chronicles, the Book of Customs, Chapter 1), Someday, if fate arranges it, you will meet a Druid who can take you into other Orders, if you wish.

## Praise:

*Insert whatever warm ups you think necessary. Perhaps a song.*

## Invocation:

O Dalon Ap Landu and Earth-Mother,  
I know not the ways of the Druids, yet I wish to become one.  
I cannot join their activities, yet I wish to act.  
I know not when I'll enter Orders, but I wish to start now.  
Please bless my search, and fill me with wisdom and Awareness.

*Offering of some seeds, preferably acorns:*

I wish to be a Reformed Druid, I believe that:  
The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.  
And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it we do live, yea, even as we do struggle through life are we come face to face with it.  
It is an unclear path that I begin today, but I will learn by doing.  
I offer you my activities in the time to come, as a sacrifice, whether it be for a few days or many years.  
During this upcoming year, I intend to do the following.....

Please show me your favor, by bringing the path of the proper Druid across mine, in the proper way, at the proper time, at the proper place. If I am to follow this course by myself, so be it with great wisdom and small discoveries from your lessons around me.

## Meditation:

*Think on the signs that may appear during this ceremony.*

## Conclusion:

Be there with me through these trying times. Thank you.

# Order of Common Worship for a Protogrove.

By Isaac Bonewits, 1976

*This SDNA service is designed for a Protogrove, i.e., one without a true Arch Druid (a member of the Order of Dalon Ap Landu). It is designed for 4 Speakers. If there are fewer, they may reassign the parts. P=People. Service starts with all some distance away from the altar, which is usually a rock at the foot of a tree, or any other place of natural beauty.*

## Invocation

**SP 1:** O lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations; Thou art everywhere,

**P:** But we worship Thee here;

**SP 2:** Thou are without form,

**P:** but we worship Thee in these forms;

**SP 3:** Thou has no need of prayers and sacrifices.

**P:** Yet we offer Thee these prayers and sacrifices.

**SP 4:** O Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations.

**P:** O, Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation.

## Procession

*Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, all divide to form a circle around it.*

## Praise

*Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by any.*

## Offertory

**SP 1:** From the Earth-Mother comes the gift of Life, and it brings us together here. In thanks we bring these gifts, wrought of Her bounty and our effort. O Mighty Eagle, bear these gifts of love aloft as bread for the Gods, that they may bless our works.

*(People bring any gifts they may have for the Gods to the altar. There follows a brief silence, in which each person asks for the fulfillment of material or external needs.)*

**SP2:** From Be'al comes the gift of awareness, and it brings us together here. In wonder we bring this praise, wrought of His light and of our effort. O Flowing Winds, carry our songs of love on high as wine to the Gods, that they may guide our sight.



**Figure 25 Typical Oimec Procession,  
Lower Arboretum, c. 1998.**

*(People offer songs, poetry, etc, if they have them, individually or as a group. There follows a brief silence, in which each person asks for the fulfillment of spiritual or internal needs.)*

## Sharing

**SP 3:** Places filled chalice of Waters (Summer-alcoholic, Winter-plain water) on the altar and speaks:

**SP 3:** O Earth-Mother, bountiful and ever flowing forth, we ask your blessings on these Waters. In them, help us to find strength and enlightenment, like a circle of trees on the top of a hill. With them, make us one with each other, and with all thy children, like a ring of trees in the heart of the forest. Through them, bring us one consecrated in Dalon Ap Landu, and make of us a Grove in the midst of the world. O Be'al, who dwelleth in every heart, lead us on the path to awareness.

**SP 3:** retrieves the Chalice and sips from it, passing it to the one on their (Summer-left, Winter-right). Each person sips and passes it on. When it returns to SP 3, a small amount should be left. SP 3 pours the remains onto the altar, saying:

**SP 3:** To thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to Thee.

## Meditation

## Benediction

**SP 4:** Let us go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that the Gods have heard us, that Be'al will answer our prayers and that we go forth with the blessings of the Earth-Mother.

*The Druid/ess blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:*

Peace! Peace! Peace!

# Another Protogrove Service

This service is designed for a Protogrove, i.e.,  
one without a true Archdruid  
(ordained in the Order of Dalon Ap Landu).  
By Weinberger, 2002

The service starts some distance from the altar.  
D: Druid E: Everybody

## Invocation

O Earth Mother!  
We praise Thee that seed springeth,  
That flower openeth, that grass waveth.

We praise Thee for winds that whisper  
through the graceful elm,  
through the shapely maple,  
through the lively pine,  
through the shining birch,  
through the mighty oak.

We praise Thee for all things,  
O Earth Mother,  
Who givest Life.

D: O Beal, forgive these three errors that are upon us due to our mortal limitations:  
Thou art everywhere,  
E: Yet we worship Thee here.  
D: Thou art without form,  
E: Yet we worship Thee in these forms.  
D: Thou has no need of our prayers and sacrifices,  
E: Yet we offer Thee these prayers and sacrifices.  
D: O Be'al, forgive these three errors that are upon us due to our mortal limitations.  
All: O Mother, calm our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation.

## Procession to the Grove.

*Upon arrival near the altar the Druid/ess uses a stave to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground around the altar. After the Druid/ess steps around to the front of the altar, the members divide to form a semi-circle around the front of it.*

## Praise

D: Does anyone have any praise or requests of the Gods?

*At this time people may give thanks, make requests, and/or bring any gifts. They may have for the Deities of their choice to the altar. There follows a silent time in which each person asks for the fulfillment of their material/external or spiritual needs.*

## Offertory

*The Druid/ess holds up the offering to the sky, while saying:*

D: From the Earth Mother comes the gift of life. In thanks, I offer up this gift, wrought of Her bounty and of my effort and dedication. Oh, Mighty Eagle, bear this gift of love aloft as bread for the Gods, that they might bless my works.

D: From Beal comes the gift of awareness. In wonder I bring this praise, wrought of His light and of my effort and dedication. Oh flowing Winds, carry my songs of love on high as wine for the Gods, that they may guide my sight.

## Sharing

*Druid/ess takes up the chalice filled with plain spring water.*

D: O Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, bless these waters that are held in Thy Name. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by Thy power.  
D: O Earth Mother, bountiful and ever flowing forth, in these waters help us to find strength and light. O Be'al, who dwells in every heart, lead us unto the path of awareness.

*The last person should NOT finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Presiding Druid/ess with the last exchange of blessings. Then the Presiding Druid/ess takes the last sip, pouring the remainder upon the altar and down the offering shaft, saying:*

D: To Thee we return this portion of our bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return unto Thee.

## Offering

*At this point, at the Orinda Grove site, the Druid/ess pours out the offering to the trees.*

## Meditation

*Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture the Druid/ess may choose for that purpose. After this comes a few brief words of meditation from the Druid/ess and a period of silence and private meditation (usually two to three minutes-though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually the Druid/ess signals the end of the Service with:*

## Benediction

D: Let us go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that Be'al will answer our prayers, that our offering has found acceptance in the Earth Mother's sight, and that we go forth with Her blessing.

*The Presiding Druid/ess blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:*

Peace! Peace! Peace!

*The Sigil is taken up by the Druid/ess.*

*An offering is made to the Big Oak.*

END OF THE ORDER OF COMMON PROTOGROVE  
WORSHIP  
FOR SAMRADH AND FOGHAMHAR

# The Quick Order Liturgy

By Pat Haneke, June 2001  
A Druid Missal-Any, Summer Solstice 2001

Patrick Haneke has produced the ultimate quick and easy ritual for those tired of schlepping baskets of materials, scripts, and such to the site. This can be performed anywhere, even in the middle of Wall Street without drawing too much attention. Pat calls it the "Quick Order", (but other members of the Grove, call it "Lugh's Loogie Liturgy," "Manannan's Mucus Mass," "Sirona's Spit Service," etc.) and it is best done solitarily (as you'll see).

1. Scratch a sigil at your feet.
2. Whistle or hum something.
- 2.5 Take a lighter, burn a leaf or light a cigarette.
3. Ask, "How was that?" Look around you for signs.
4. Say, "Not bad, huh?"
5. Ask, "What is precious to us?"
6. Answer, "Waters."
7. Ask, "Where is the waters?"
8. Answer, "Right here." Pour something (or spit) into your hand.
9. Raise your hand.
10. Say, "Bless these and all waters that give us life."
11. Drink the waters.
12. Say, "Here's the extra." Return the extra to the ground.
13. Think of something clever, or ordain people.
14. Say, "Good bye"
15. Rub away the sigil.

(Estimated time for completion: 2 minutes 12 seconds)



Figure 26 Twin Towers of the Lower Arb, 2004.

# Daily Druid Devotional

By Pat Haneke, Akita Grove, August 2002  
A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh, 2002

I do this (almost) every day, and it is my incremental regimen, beginning with a cup of steaming coffee. No too much at any time, but like a snowball rolling down the hill (or Milo of Crotona carrying a calf up the stairs everyday) it strengthens your wits and brings you into a greater communion with the world of Nature and profusion of ideas around you. Most of it is stuff we do everyday, but taken one step further in Awareness. It becomes rather difficult to continue finding new examples after a hundred days, and it thus would be an excellent journal activity during the 180 days in the Time of Sleep between Samhain and Beltane. It's as easy as 1, 2, 3. Every day, when possible:

## The Triples:

- Take one idea of whose veracity you're sure of, and think of three counter arguments against it or three people who would object to it.
- Take one idea you think is wrong, and think of three supportive arguments or people who would support it.
- Now, take one idea that you're unsure of and bring it up in conversation with three people.

## The Doubles:

- Notice one parallel or lesson between Nature and human society; such as nesting and mortgages.
- Resist one urge and give into another urge every day; until you are master of them.
- Notice an opposite in the world; and see if you can find a "gray" example.

## The Singles:

- Touch a new and different organism every day. If you don't know the real name, give it a temporary name.
- Read one page that you don't have to, on a topic you don't know much about.
- Greet or salute one person you've never acknowledged before.

## The Zeroes:

- Listen to someone without a preconception of them.
- Do nothing for a moment in the midst of your busiest time.
- Purposely skip one of the previous activities.



# Some Optional Activities for Voluntary Simplicity

By Alex Strongbow  
A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 2002

Looking back on earlier Missal-Any articles it seems that Samhain and Yule activities are well covered. Besides if you can't think of things to do on those two holidays, then you probably couldn't find your butt with both hands. So, instead, I'd like to write for a few issues about volunteering and simplicity, a different type of activity, one that involves you with others.

Winter is one of the harshest time in the year, when the Earth-Mother, withdraws much of her nourishment from the northern temperate areas. Bird, animals and people are hard put to survive outdoors in our towns and cities. We've all seen those Thanksgiving soup-kitchens and Christmas toy charities, but these are just the apexes of the daily, continual efforts to assist our fellow citizens who haven't been able to meet all their needs.

The greatest obstacle to the joys of volunteering is finding some time to do it in. Who wouldn't gladly lend their energy and expertise to serving our community, pro bono, if we could just solve those little technicalities-making a living, for example, or getting enough sleep? You've heard about the 5% rule, spending about 30 minutes a day or three hours a week on something meaningful? To assist a cause, you have to build up reserves of money, time, and inspiration.

One way, yea, one way among many, to acquiring more discretionary time is the path of voluntary simplicity. That has been defined as "living purposefully, with a minimum of needless distraction." Cut out the junk. Most people find that when they carefully coordinate their use of money and time with their deepest held values, the less important things fade away. This opens up more time and inner space for more discretionary activities, including volunteer services.

How to direct our money and time is a question that requires careful reflection and planning. You don't just throw all you possessions in a trash can and run out to save the world (although that might work). Some of the best ideas on this subject came from Steven Covey's classic *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. This is more than a book for just econometricians, it could also be called *The Seven Habits of an Aware Life*. It is chock full of good tips.

We all need "time off," a sabbatical to marshal our forces. Some tips for building space for solitude is in *Shelter for the Spirit: Creating Your Own Haven in a Hectic World* by Harper Perennial, 1997. A quick Druidic paraphrasing of this will now follow:

- 1. Say No.** Save your time and stamina for what truly speaks to your heart. Don't chase every rabbit that you see.
- 2. Tithe Your Time.** Tithing was a time-honored tradition of giving money to charities in a planned, orderly way. Time can also be tithed, giving to something that really speaks and tugs at your heart. You say "no" without guilt to the rest, and things that are beyond achievement.
- 3. Put Things with Feelings First.** Put more importance to the condition of sentient beings than the quality of your stereo sound. This is not to deny the effect that a healthier environment has on living creatures. One hour helping the environment, might be helping hundreds of critters and people in small ways.
- 4. Allow More Time.** We often waste time by cutting things close, by rushing about and forgetting and making mistakes. If you always budget in an extra 5-10% of time for a task, then you

will usually have time to finish things in a careful controlled manner. No more half-ass mules, my mom would say. If all things go well, then you can read or chat or just breathe. What a gift! You might also be able to notice things that need fixing.

**5. Prioritize with the ABC method.** Label your daily task sheet with A for "priority-must be done today," B for "important – needs to be done soon," and C for "necessary-should be done sometime." That way, even if only the A list gets done that day, at least everything that really needs to be done will be done. As time passes, the Bs and Cs will rise in importance or drop off the list.

**6. Stay Well.** There is nothing more time-consuming than being sick. You're little use to anyone, stuck in bed. Time spent preserving health-nutrition, exercise, spiritual practice, sleep-is a no-risk, high-return investment. Think twice before running to catch the bus in the rain, on what a slip and sprained ankle would do to your weekly schedule.

**7. Let the machine get it.** There is no requirement to drop everything and run to the phone if it rings. Let your answering machine and e-mail be your secretary, and check in every few hours, and you can return your calls at your convenience.

**8. Turn off the TV.** It takes up time. Choose consciously how much time you wish to spend with your electronic friends (TV, VCR, computer) and don't use them when you're just feeling bored.

**9. Put off Procrastination.** Some goldbricks spend twice the effort to avoid work. Do the things on your list or drop them. Your list will shrink quickly.

**10. Schedule in Fun.** Recreation is nourishment for the soul. It is a necessity not an option. Keep it high on the list, and you'll realize what motivates you keep plugging away through a dull job.

By the way, volunteering can be a fun way to spend time with the family, and build up their civic responsibility. For more on "voluntary simplicity," go to Northwest Earth Institute's site ([www.nwei.org](http://www.nwei.org)) or look for more on a web search.





# Prayer and the Workplace: "It's Not Just for Ashcroft Anymore"<sup>TM</sup>

By an Anonymous Druid in Antarctica, 2001  
A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 2001

Sure! Why if Ashcroft can hold a bible-study and prayer meetings in his governmental office in the Department of Justice before starting work, why not me!

I was also inspired by my research on Islam where people pray at least five times a day, and a religious man blesses Allah 100 times a day. The Hassidic Druids of North America in the 70s advocated that their members be able to write a blessing for any occasion. I'm not to be outdone on anything, so I devised an ambitious schedule to fill the day with prayer. Before coming here, I also had to navigate the daily rat-race. Turning into a sacred activity will require a new outlook. The possibilities of hexes, prayers, blessings, spell casting are endless, so charge up your nondescript wand (i.e. PowerPoint collapsible pointer rod or a pencil) at night, you'll need it.

Now, rather than make a really long article, I defer to the Reformed Druidic tradition of challenging you to come up with your own appropriate words. As they say, "Prayers need not be long, when the heart is sincere." Just a few words or a sentence will suffice, and you'll soon become really insightful and poetic with practice (i.e. your Bardic skills). Let each time, be as the first. Perhaps if you don't feel like praising at those times, you should just say, "Not now, sorry." You don't have to selfishly wish for personal gain in these situation, I find it's rather nice just to acknowledge the joy of participating in life's abundant activities.

The first week sucked. They may be whispered, shouted, signed or silently thought; "The Gods know our hearts, even when we don't know the words." We in the RDNA are after awareness right? Besides you've heard that people who are married, those who pray, and vegetarians tend to live longer; why? Because they must carefully think about what they're doing, take a concern in those around them, and abstain from most unhealthy activities.

Here are some recommended situations to try some praying, most are obvious, and you can think of more:

- Waking up
- Cooking and Partaking of Food (all meals)
- Partaking of Waters (all times)
- Dressing (wards of protection, attracting love and respect)
- On seeing the sun, moon or sky
- On leaving the house: (invoke protection)
- On first touching the ground
- On first sight of a living creature
- On meeting a friend
- On exercise/sports
- Commuting (all times)
- Restraining Road Rage
- On hearing a wise thing
- On hearing good news
- On avoiding disaster
- On entering and leaving your workplace (very Japanese)

## Other Special Situations

Office relations  
Administrative problems  
Restructuring  
Hostile Merger  
Office Dating  
Random curses:

## Work Situations

Photocopier (apology for paper wastage)  
Computer Wards (no crashes)  
Impromptu blessing for good health (sneezing)  
Word Processing (make me glib)  
Handing in reports (be impressed)  
Undertaking new projects  
Modifying office moods  
Completing assignments  
Office betting pool  
Gossip (protect me, get him)  
Recycling (return, to come again)  
Meetings (anti-boredom/pressure, speakership)  
Mid-day yoga (energy-raiser)  
Late afternoon fatigue (focus)  
Returning home  
Dealing with children and spouse  
Going to Sleep

## Office Magic Equipment

Computer for divining weather and unknown knowledge.  
Paper-weight for storing energy.  
Staple for binding power "So staple it be."  
PowerPoint pointer rod.



Figure 27 The Great Boulder of Lower Arb, 2004.

# Sigil Construction 101

By Mike, Order of Lugh  
A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 2002

For 40 years, the RDNA, ADF, and Keltria have been flashing those Druid Sigils with a circle and two parallel lines. We don't know where it came from, except possibly from Fisher's feverish mind (see <http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/sigil.html> for more on sigils), but people have been asking me to sell them one, and I get this wonderful idea. Why don't we just make them? We make up everything else in this group, so why not? Revolt against pre-fab, mass-made religious articles!

Being inspired by Lugh, and being a cubicle-bound secretary, I open the drawer to actualize my words. All the materials I need are in there. First take a book ring (see illustration to right) which will form the ring base of the sigil, and they come in many sizes. A side benefit is that you can clip your final sigil on to a button hold, hand it from one of your pierced body-parts, use it to remove ticks and chiggers, or to pick-up and turn-over bacon (large model recommended).

Now to lay the bars onto the circle, balanced on either side of the joint-hinge and the snap-close. These bars can come from snipped coat hangers, paper clips, wire stocks at a bead and jewelry store, or hardware store by the foot. To avoid a sigil that is heavy on the front side, and looks funny when it inevitably flips over, you may wish to in-set the bars. If you have access to a metal shop with a fine-quality metal file (or a simple nail file and lots of patience) you can gouge the four grooves into the book ring. I like to divide the circle into three sections of equal horizontal width, but perhaps you like each section to contain equal amounts of area (remember your geometry classes?), follow your muse here. The bars or rods can then be either welded, set with epoxy, or tied on with clear fishing line (if you're skillful). Don't have the bars extend past the circle too far, or they'll catch on things and poke you (round and polishing the edges is advisable). Golden bars on a silvery ring make a nice contrast. A weight of about one ounce (four ounces is the same as a quarter-pounder patty) will make it hang well, any lighter and it will flop about. I caution against soldering, since the lead prevents you from dipping your sigil into the Waters (if you're into that custom).

The final step is getting the string. You can use yarn (if you're daring), leather, waxed cotton cord (found at bead and craft stores in various colors, I like black), ribbon, parachute cord, fishing line, or twine. Just remember if you catch your necklace on something, you'll get garroted! For the knot to close the string, I like to tie a double-fisherman's knot, which has the added advantage of allowing you to adjust the length while you're wearing it, by pulling the knots closer or farther apart.

Attaching the pendant. The following is one way, yea, one way among many. I detest running the cord simply through the book ring, as it never lies flat, the knot closing the string always works its way around to the pendant, and the book ring might open (unless you solder it shut) and you lose the pendant (life is about giving up possessions too, I suppose). I like to hide the joint of the book ring by binding a "prussic knot" over the hinge, between the two bars on the top of the sigil. That way the knot closing the loop of the necklace will lie at the nape of your neck, and can be lengthened and shortened easily.

Cost of the materials, with borrowed tools and free labor, about \$2 each. You're welcome to mass-produce them with this design and process. They're not copyrighted. Enjoy.



## Ritual Vestments for Druid Services

By Isaac Bonewits, 1978

One of the things that makes a ceremony dramatically effective is the sort of clothing being worn by the participants. Among the Reformed Druids a white robe for Second and Third Order members has been customary, with the priestesses and priests wearing their red or white ribbons-of-office. The following suggestions have recently been made about vestment customs and local Groves are free to use, change or ignore them as they see fit:

The system used by the Masonic-Rosicrucian Druids in the British Isles could be modified thusly: First Order Druids would wear green robes; Second Order Druids would wear green-and-white robes; Third Order Druids would wear white robes; Bards would wear blue tabards over their regular robes; Guards would wear dark red or brown tabards, etc.

AND/OR everyone not wearing robes could wear Paleopagan styles of clothing, usually of the Celtic or Germanic sort. This would ease some of the trans-temporal clashes so common at Druid rites and would add greatly to the ritual gestalt.

AND/OR special seasonal tabards could be worn by the Archdruid (and other officers?) presiding over ceremonies. Simple rectangles (about 18"x36") of cotton or linen could be carefully embroidered, then sewn together at two corners. These would be worn over the head and belted. Each tabard would have a large tree on the front piece and a large Druid Sigil (II) on the back piece, both in the appropriate seasonal foliage. One set of possibilities runs thusly:

- From Samhain to Midwinter: Rowan tree with bare branches, mistletoe and light snow.
- From Midwinter to Oimelc: Holly tree with berries/mistletoe and heavy snow.
- From Oimelc to Spring: Fir tree with new needles and light snow.
- From Spring to Beltane: Fruit tree in bloom, with budding branches.
- From Beltane to Midsummer: Oak tree in full green.
- From Midsummer to Lughnasadh: Sequoia tree in full green.
- From Lughnasadh to Fall: Fruit tree with fruit, some leaves starting to turn.
- From Fall to Samhain: Sugar maple tree turning gold and scarlet, dropping.

# A Druid Staff

By Albion  
Yule 1988, A Druid Missal-Any

Druids have always been connected with trees, through practicing their rites in groves of trees, to at least one of their Gods (Esus) having to do with trees. Let me share some tree magic with the readers of “A Druid Missal-Any” – a look at the making and using of a magical staff. We don’t know how the historical Druids made their staves, but here is one modern method for making your own Druid staff.

I would like to say that this article will be influenced by my own beliefs (of course) and by some personal correspondence that I did several years ago with a Welsh craftsman, Bel Bucca, as well as an article by Edward J. Fian in a Canadian newsletter called “Standing Stone.”

The southeastern part of the United States where I grew up is heavily forested and in spring and summer, is very green. When I was about 19 or 20 years old, I first read about the “Green Man” or Lord of the Forest. I prefer to think of him as a counterpart to Cernunnos, whose time is fall and winter. The “Green Man” rules spring and summer, or so, in my personal mythology, it is.

There are two personal “rules” that I try to observe when taking a piece of wood from the forest. The first is to ask the collective Spirit of the Forest (as I see it, the “Green Man”) for permission and for harmony of spirit (in culling, or cutting of this wood). The second is to slow way down, as trees seem to live at a much slower pace than we humans do. Approach the tree slowly. Quiet the mental chatter of your mind and gently let your aura and the tree’s aura merge. Then “talk” to the tree’s spirit. (Some call tree spirits “Dryads,” a Greek word). As you feel your spirit and the tree’s spirit align themselves, gently reach out, touch the tree, and feel it respond. Ask the tree if it wishes to be used for a magical staff, to become a partner with you in your magical workings. Listen for the answer. It will be either a very definite “yes” or a very definite “no,” nothing in between. Again the thing to do is to go into a meditative state, quite the mind down and listen. Trees talk “differently” than humans do, and hence, one must listen “differently.” If the tree in question says “no,” simply move on to another area and try again. Never try to force a tree to cooperate that doesn’t wish to be used. There can be spiritual enemies as well as spiritual allies.

In the old days when culling “live wood” (or wood where the tree’s spirit still resides within), blood was spilled as a gift or offering to the tree. However, a piece of red cloth given as an offering (from your spirit to the spirit of the tree) is an effective modern version of this ancient rite. (Emmon notes “We at Orinda Grove Site use blood meal, a fertilizer which can be purchased at any nursery.”)

I have also heard some long detailed instructions on where or how to get trees, but some simple instructions will suffice I think. If a tree is cut during the waning of the moon, it “feels” the actual cutting less. If the cutting is done when the tree is not being touched by the sun’s direct rays, say at dawn or dusk, it also will be more effective magically. Also, always say “thank you,” as you would to a human who helped you.

The spot from where you take your wood may also be important to you. Remember, trees take in their reality and history (and even “outlook”) from the place. They are born and have a life and die in a single place. Their view is from that single vantage point. Some feel that trees from a mountainside

or a high place are also more magically potent for that very reason.

But also think of what our friends the trees have to offer us who live in what has become a terribly mobile society – stability, knowing the reality of one place, being rooted, and being grounded. These are tremendously important elements of living. As you work with tree spirits, they show a sort of love.

As the Dryads give their gifts to you, you give them an ability that they never had – the ability of movement, of being mobile and of having many views of the world instead of just one – and here lies the true magical partnership and real wizardry.

Some of the more magically potent woods are oak, ash or yew. There are more of course, and in the United States, there are many, many kinds of trees that could be used. There are also “female” kinds of trees –rowan, (mountain ash) or willow, for example, and “male” kinds of trees – oak or ash, for example. I know someone who has a wonderful staff made out of black cherry. It all depends on your needs and the sorts of woods available, of course.

The uses of a magical staff are also varied. In Reformed Druidism I know that there is a beautiful meditation done using a staff on the “Four Pillars of the Day.” In some of the older family or hereditary groups, the staff is considered to be a direct link with the Energy of the forest, and is used to form a “ring” (in modern language, a circle) to keep out unwanted or harmful spirits or influences. It could also be used to “charge” (with power) a ring, or circle. It could also be used to banish negative influences from the four quarters of the ring or circle. Of course, an inventive mind could find more magical uses for a staff.

I would say that those with a Druidic inclination could put their name in Ogham letters on their staff, and this too would personalize the staff more. Since we don’t know how the historical Druids used their staves, we can only experiment and perhaps learn anew some ancient techniques. Good luck in your experiments!

Footnote: As an afterthought for newcomers to all of this, magic requires common sense. As I write this, it is the end of November. Trees prepare for winter, just as we do. Spring and summer are the times for “tree talking.” In winter, as we all know, trees withdraw their life force to deep within themselves. But when spring rolls around again, make a new friend, and meet an excellent magical ally. “Talk” to a tree.



**Figure 28 Becky Hrobak receiving Archdruidy from Mike Scharding at Carleton, Beltane1994 at 3 Bird Grove (New Circle Site).**

# The Staff

By Emmon Bodfish  
Samhain 1990, A Druid Missal-Any

To become a Druid in the R.D.N.A. mode, the first quest you must fulfill is the search for your staff. This is the first wrung of the ladder. If you own land, a staff can best be found on that. If not, a friend's acreage, roadsides, a Druid Grove or sanctuary, even deserts or wasteland can be explored. There, you must walk through the woods or wild, natural areas, not a garden or a farm. Look for a fairly straight, fir staff of waist to shoulder height. It should be at least as thick as your thumb and no thicker than your wrist. Saunter with relaxed vision, open to what may catch your attention: a wind-fallen bough or deceased and seasoned sapling trunk that appeals or "calls" to you. Or, as another Druid once put it: "Silently as the question: 'Who wishes to come? Who will help me?' Your staff is your basic tool, your compass point and anchor in the Work, your ground, your guide, your identity-piece, and magically speaking, your best friend. It must come to you of its own volition." It should feel ready and right. For this reason, on NO ACCOUNT CUT A LIVING PLANT! And it should not be oak. Firm, seasoned wood that has aged and ripened is best.

When you have found a potential staff, sitting with it for a while, cross-legged, but not lotus position, is good. Sit as Cernunnos is portrayed sitting on the panel of the Gundestrup cauldron. Hold it vertically, pressing the foot into the ground and lean on it. Will it support you on the mundane as well as spiritual plane? If it is the right staff, you should get a feeling of "Yes" and the longer you sit with it, the more it should please you. As another phrases it: "Sit with it. Drink in its presence. Let your energy flow into it. If it's right, it will become yours."

If you were here, or at another R.D.N.A. Grove, then you would bring your staff and present it at the next regular Service. If you are currently unaffiliated, you should instead, when you have found your staff, write back to us and tell about your quest, how you found your staff, what wood it is, and what you experienced sitting in contemplation with it. If you have been doing the Proto-Grove Service for yourself or with other unaffiliated druids, present it at your next new or full moon service. When you have thus found your staff, then you will be ready to start doing the Four Salutations of the Day.

The more you meditate with your staff, or use it in the Salutations, contemplative exercises and "magic workings" (I don't like to use that phraseology; it has been over used in the wrong contexts and debased, but there is no other as widely understood.) the more you will charge it with your energy, and build up a good set of associations around it. It will then act as a reservoir of these, and will help you get into the proper mind-state for sacred work, even when your energy is low. These hours of meditations, workings, or repetitions of the Salutations of the Day are, to use a mundane analogy, your deposits in your supernal bank account. You build it up with your good energy. It has also been compared to practice put into learning a skill, or a language, or to building up muscle, to wit supernal weight lifting. Take whichever of these analogies helps you or none if that suits. The staff is one of the basic R.D.N.A. objects, (robe will come later), the basic tool, symbolic of all possessions and tools, and probably the first too that humanity picked up and thereby separated ourselves from the animal kingdom. (Yes, I know other animals use tools but no other creatures carry a possession with them, identify it as "mine," through they make pick up a stick to pry or poke something.) It is your "bag-of-

gold-for-the-passage," the "ball of thread you unwind in the labyrinth", your anchor in this World and your tester and touchstone in Others, and some day when you are lost and panicked on a journey in the Nether World, it may find you. This is an important quest.

Begin it now.

## The Four Salutations of the Day

Circa 1986 by Emmon Bodfish

Many readers who have been doing the Proto-Grove ritual on their own for awhile write to us asking "What is the next step?" and "Is there a Druid training program?" There is no Druid Training program yet for those not involved in active Groves. We are working on it. But meanwhile a fruitful place to start your training is with the Four Salutations to the Day. If you have been at one of the regular bi-monthly Summer Services of an R.D.N.A. Grove, you have heard the invocation of the "three ways of day and one of night." IN this contemplative exercise you will be marking these four turning points of the day with a short, specific ritual, an active meditation in which you will be learning several basic essentials of all psychic or meditative work. It will keep you mindful of your intention to train and of your specifically Druidic vocation and heritage.

These four times, "trathan" in the old Gaidhlig, are noted in Welsh and Irish folklore as magical times when the "other world" is especially close to ours and communication or passage between the two is easiest. The old epic and Bardic poems speak of these times as power-times when spell working was done and an adept person might receive a vision or message from an ancestor or a patron Deity, a moment when a bard, inspired, might speak a prophecy. These are DAWN, NOON, SUNSET, and STARS. STARS is usually interpreted to be midnight.

One of our former Archdruids recounts that when an acquaintance of his was traveling through rural Ireland recently he found that the cottagers stayed indoors or stayed quiet around the noon point of the day. When he rose to go out, or to move on about some mundane business, they would say, "Oh, sit a while. Have another cup of tea." When asked, they would say something vague to the effect that it is a tricky time, unlucky to be bustling about. He did not ascertain whether they did not know why this was so, or if they were just cautious in talking about such matters to a stranger. Most, he felt, did not know why, and this taboo on activity is the last little remainder in folk memory of the old custom of observing the trathan.

The first purpose of the four Salutations is to put you in tune with the natural, celestial rhythms of the day and the changing seasons. The second purpose of the Salutations is a meditative practice, to practice entering an altered state of consciousness at will. The third purpose is to remind you of your Druidic commitment and to organize your day around the four natural turning points of Earth's time clock, providing stop-points in which you take stock of your day, of the passage of time, of nature and your own existence in it.

You will begin by learning to achieve mental silence, to stop thought, and to hold your mind silent for the time it takes the Sun to rise or set. In the temperate latitudes this is about 2 ½ to 4 minutes counted from the Sun disk's first contact with the horizon to its last contact, assuming a flat horizon for averaging's sake.



The first skill to be mastered in the Salutations is the ability to hold the mind silent. You must learn to stop thought. By thought I mean the sentences that are normally running through your mind all day and in your dreams at night. I do not mean becoming unconscious, hypnotized, nor losing awareness of yourself or your surroundings. In the Silence you will in fact become more aware than usual of your immediate surroundings. Some Eastern sects consider this the only “true” form of meditation. This is “outward directed” mediation, as contrasted with inner contemplation, “astral travel,” or hypnotic trance. It is harder than it sounds, at first, though most people can do it for a few seconds right off. That’s enough to start you. Here are some techniques to help you get further into that state and to help you learn to use it. In this wordless state, your consciousness may be turned by your will either inward or outward. In the Salutations it is turned outward. It surprises many people to find that they can perceive, in acute detail, without any thoughts or words going through their minds. You will progress through this silent space to other states of consciousness. As you are able to hold the Silence longer you will learn from it and be able to explore with it.

1. Repeat a simple phrase, silently in your mind until all other thoughts cease, then let the phrase grow fainter and fainter and fade out. For the solar Salutations, “Hail Belenos!” This is a crutch; drop it as soon as you can.
2. Enter the Silence. Listen to your breath. Listen as though it were the most important instructions you were ever to hear, and which you must memorize. This will stop your mental sentences.
3. Listen to all the ambient sounds as if they were music.
4. Think to yourself down in to the heels of your feet and the heels of your hands. Feel yourself exist.

In doing the Salutations four times a day, you are learning to enter a different state of consciousness at will, regularly and often. These three: will, consistency, and practice are the keys to meditative and psychic progress. The goal is to be able to enter, at will, the state of consciousness that you will need in order to do a particular psychic or spiritual work. Small amounts of frequent practice achieve more than an occasional long session.

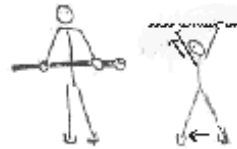
Do the four Salutations by the celestial clock, at Dawn, Noon, Sunset and Stars whether you are “in the mood” or not. This way you will become capable of entering this clear, silent state at any time, regardless of moods and circumstances, “to find a refuge outside the passions” of the moment, as an old book says. This practice builds and furnishes that refuge, a base-of-operations, for your further work. When you can hold silence for twelve to thirty seconds at a time, alert, eyes open, taking in perceptions as far around toward the corners of your peripheral field as you can, you will notice that things look different from the way that they do in your normal, “mundane” state of consciousness. I won’t list the changes because I do not want to bias your perceptions, the self-fulfilling prop. Not everyone gets all the different changes, but you will discover yours. (Write to the Missal-Any when you do, we like feedback, and we can answer questions individually.) These changes will be your signal that you are in a meditative state, at the Silent Place, rung

one of the metaphorical ladder of meditative training. When you have completed the Salutation, the, in line with the third purpose, take some time to consider from this higher perspective what you have been occupied with since the last Salutation. It is a step in getting control of your time, your habits and your life.

Stand, waiting for the first bit of the sun’s disk to appear over the horizon. Hold your staff in front of you, your hands in front of your breast bone. Your left hand is above your right hand and the staff is not touching the ground.



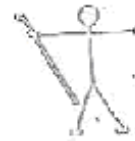
When the first bit of the sun’s disk clears the horizon, turn your staff horizontal and raise it over your head in one motion. Breathe in a full breath as you raise the staff, and at the same time step to the right with your right foot. Hold the breath; silence your mind. Your arms and your legs now form two triangles and you are looking at the first sun through a “trilithon” formed by your arms and staff.



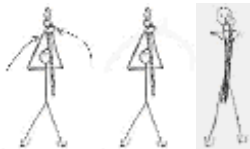
Holding the breath, turn your staff back vertical, and, holding it at arm’s length, exhale slowly as you lower the staff between your gaze and the morning sun, momentarily blocking it out, until it seems to rise again over the top of the staff.



Let go your left hand from the staff and holding it in your right, sweep both of your arms up and outward, breathing in until you reach full extension. Your head, arms, and legs form a pentagram, your lungs are filled with the new air and you are fully open to the morning light. This is true even when there is rain falling in your face in the winter. Then you are open to that truth, that dawn and that aspect of Nature. You hold mental silence here in the open position until the sun’s disk clears the horizon.



When it is free of the last horizon (horizon is trees, buildings, mountains, freeway “on” ramps, whatever is between you and the setting or rising sun) sweep your hands up and together over your right hand, as you inhale. Hold the breath for an instant, then begin slowly exhaling as you turn the staff back to vertical again and lower it again with your line of sight and the risen sun.



Continue on down, touching your staff to the ground, arms fully extended and your head bowed between them. Concentrate on the ground and your staff and feel the earth energy move up the staff, through your arms and to your lungs as you inhale another full breath. Raise your head and pull your staff in toward your heart as you straighten up and inhale fully.



Your hands on your staff, touch your breastbone. Hold silence. Perceive the dawning light all around you. Take several (three to nine) calm breaths. Then as you exhale, lower your staff and step right bringing your feet together and the staff to rest on the ground between your two big toes. Press it down. “Ground down” mentally; return to the mundane mental level and worldly functioning. The day has begun.



At NOON you face due south. At solar noon, as opposed to clock noon, the sun will be at the highest pint in the sky that it will reach that day, and it will also be directly South. The movements and the breathing for the NOON Salutation are the same as for the DAWN, however do not look directly at the noon sun. Look at the southern horizon directly below it. Feel the rays and the warmth. Hold silence in the open position for twenty four breaths. Finish the Salutations as at DAWN.



Open Position

At evening, when the sun is about to set over whatever is your local western horizon, take your stance facing it. When the sun’s disk touches tangent to the first bit of the horizon, inhale and raise your staff over your head in the first movement of the Salutation. Holding silence, draw it down between yourself and the setting sun until the sun reappears over the top of the staff. Breathe out as you do this. Move to the open position as before and hold it out as you do this. Move to the open position as before and hold it in silence until the last bit of the solar disk is about to sink below the horizon. At that moment, inhaling, bring your arms up and together with the staff between you and the sun. Then as in the other Salutations, exhale as you bring the staff down to ground at arm’s length in front of you, bowing

forward as the last gleam disappears under the horizon. Feel yourself “bowing down the sun” in synchronization with it. When you feel the ground energy move up along the staff, through your arms, and body, inhale, mind silent, eyes totally perceiving. Hold your staff and hands at heart level as before. See the night begin around you. One day is over; a new day has begun. Press your staff down to the ground again at your feet. “Ground down” mentally. Come back to the mundane world, refreshed. Recall what has happened since NOON.

At celestial midnight, STARS, the sun is on the other side of the world directly below your feet. At this midnight or just before you go to sleep, do the Salutation to the STARS. Face the North Star. Calm your mind. Recall what you have been doing since the last Salutation. When you have achieved mental silence once more, then raise your staff over your head and inhale. View the North Star then raise your staff over your head and inhale. View the North Star through the “trilithon” of your arms and staff. The rest of the Salutation proceeds like the NOON Salutation. Here you will draw your staff down until the North Star seems to rise over the tip of it. You hold silence in the open position for twenty four breaths, then complete the movements as at NOON. Ground down. Retire. Sleep.



Figure 29 Emmon Bodfish, Fall, 1982.

# The Fire Ceremony

Big Ash Grove: News from Michigan  
A Druid Missal-Any, Oimecl 2002

First you walk through the jungle looking for sticks. Gather as many as possible. When you get back to your village hut begin stacking them in a square (leave out like ten or so for later) so that it looks like a squished box with no top. Remember fire safety rules; like building a pit outside and doing it there, and have a bucket of water ready, just in case. Ok so now you set the pile on fire. Now you have to make friends with the fire; this consists of talking to it, sharing concerns and problems, and also feeding it a few drops of oil. I find patchouli or moldavite oil works good. Now that you have a new best friend you begin taking the other sticks, one by one, and put your problems into the stick. Such as financial problems, love problems, a healing need, a fear, etc. Feed the problems to the fire watching them being transformed

Then take some of the energy out of the fire with your hands...don't worry it's a friendly fire. And put the energy into your stomach, heart and brain; so that you make the right actions, have the right emotions and the right mental abilities to take care of the problem. After you've done this with all but one of your sticks, place the final stick into the fire with the prayer that the Earth Mother is healed. Don't take that energy out of the fire, let Momma E take that energy. Let the fire die out, while vigiling and meditating.

That's it. Pretty cool huh?! It works nicely too.

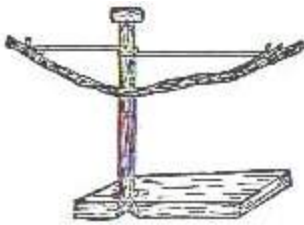


Figure 30 You're crazy if you expect me to wash all those white robes, if you get them dirty!

# Fire Building Fun

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I've just come back from a 3 hour firewood piling exercise. I have roughly 30 armloads of woods stacked to dry. This wood is on a recently widened trail near the 'little grove'. Andrea and I can show you a map if you need directions.

## Notes on fire making. (what little I know)

1. Best not make NEW fire rings. There are at least 8 in the upper Arb and at least 2 in the lower Arb plus the fireplace at the Cabin.
2. Tradition in the druids is not to break or cut down living wood. Most druids don't usually use axes on deadwood, too much work. Using 'cut-down' wood from brush clearing operations is acceptable, but not as desirable as fallen wood. Green saplings for sweat lodges were necessary. There is now a 'permanent' and portable 6-pagan sweat lodge pole frame hidden in the forest near the hill of oaks. Ask Andrea or myself for its whereabouts. The old sweat lodge by Farmhouse is no longer serviceable or permitted by the Farmies.
3. Matches and lighters are acceptable fire starters. You can be fancy if you are an expert at stick-rubbing, but also bring matches. Lighter fluid and gasoline has been used on particularly stubborn fires.
4. Follow the age-old rule of start with smallest, driest stuff and GRADUALLY get larger. Ask Andrea for a demo sometimes.
5. Never leave a fire still going after a ritual, unless you tend to use it further. Follow boy scout rules on this. Sand and water are often used to extinguish.
6. Always be kind and invite smoky-eyed people to move out of its way 24 more lines...
7. Fires don't always produce as much heat as you hope it will. Bring something warm to insulate your butt and back. Hats that cover the ears are enjoyed.
8. Age-old tradition: It ain't a real fire until someone burn his/her beard/hair.
9. Measurements:
  - Armload= 8-12 pounds of wood, or what can be carried under one arm.
  - Simple fire= 2 armloads of wrist-thick wood
  - big fire= 3-7 armloads
  - bonfire= 8+ armloads
  - sweat lodge fire= 5-7 armloads per heating
  - all night fire= 9-14 armloads? maybe more.and for the curious:
  - English buttload of wood=4 armloads
  - metric buttload of wood= 5 armloads
  - pagan buttload of wood= 8 armloads
  - (I'm guessing on the last part)



# Sweat Lodge Traditions

By Mike the Fool, 2004

Of all the Carleton practices, the sweat lodge is perhaps the most flexible, changing and mutable set of activities, which means that it is very difficult to lay out on paper. And yet I must lay out a few aspects of the design. Every phase may be altered due to personal preferences, the preconceived goals, size of group, and the unique circumstances that arise inside the lodge that require a new course of improvisation for attaining the proper path. In this sense it may seem more chaotic, but it also seems that there is an order to each and every sweat lodge, that you merely have to be sensitive to and to which you must adapt your plans. Every Druid will also develop their own signature style or approach.

Carleton sweat lodges began in 1985 or 1986, and have been one of the most powerful tools in the bag of tricks for Archdruids and other Druids. Originally a blend of Scandinavian and Native American traditions, it has proved an eclectic evocative experience that has been a nice alternative to firm liturgies and sober Druid teas. There are several stages, and while a sweat lodge is a lot of work, any Druid with a bit of courage and an open heart can manage one, although I'd recommend attending one before trying to lead one, but if that's not possible, I'd still encourage you to wing it and see what happens.

I recommend reading these two books as good background material: *The Sacred Pipe* by Black Elk, *Native American Sweat Lodge History and Legends* by Joseph Bruhac, and *Lakota Ritual of the Sweat Lodge* by Raymond Buckland, which will give you a better understanding of the types of sweat lodges, controversy in usage, and the reverence in which they are prepared and performed. Examination of Scandinavian, Greek, Turkish and Irish sweat baths would also be of great interest.

## Preparation

The preparation phase is extremely long, and spiritually perhaps more powerful in my view. People differ on how to purify and prepare one's spirit in the days before the sweat lodge. Some will fast, avoid certain activities, or practice strict moderation for 1 to 3 days ahead of time. I usually avoid meat, sexual activity, extreme exertion and strong emotional display as a form of ascetics.

Usually during this period, I will visit the sweat lodge site in advance and announce the upcoming sweat lodge, so that the site will be ready for our arrival; and to ascertain how much wood, stones and other materials will be necessary. I often walk the surroundings every few weeks to set aside and stack wood to dry ahead of time. After a weather check, I announce the site and time to my fellow Druids so that they can prepare themselves also, and to check to see if any feel inspired to lead a round in advance and to assay what the most pressing purposes of the group are, as that will affect the style of sweat lodge. I will prepare. Usually we recommend that no alcohol, unnecessary medicine, large amounts of meat or dairy products be consumed within 12 hours of the service, and that the person be well-rested, well-hydrated, and at peace. Carleton does not deny the sweat lodge to women in their moon period, but some women may opt out due to reasons of comfort.

The site should be reserved with the necessary authorities, who should be informed what type of event will be held, to avoid unpleasant confusion. Tools are checked in advance to ensure there is no last minute confusion. Usually a shovel, a

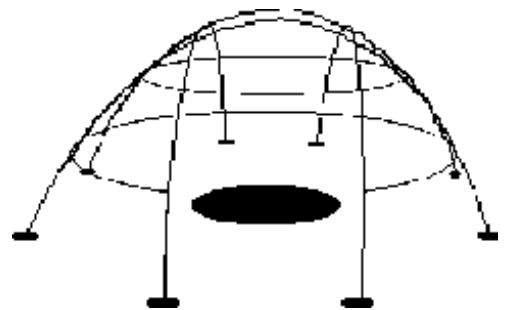
pitchfork, tent poles, lots of over blankets, perhaps a ground cloth, plastic tarps to seal moisture in, string or twine, a knife, scissors, buckets, flashlight, sage-sticks, lighters are usually all that you need, stored in easy-to-carry plastic crates. Some will buy light foods to eat after all is done. All these will have to be logistically prepared in advance from a place of storage and then cleaned, dried and stored after the service.

The nights before the sweat lodge, I will usually pay close attention to my dreams and thoughts to see if an inspiring vision will strike me to provide a theme for the sweat lodge. This requires extreme sensitivity and awareness.

## The Assembly

Assembly usually takes about 2 hours. Usually a few days to a few hours before the sweat lodge, a group of volunteers will collect fallen branches, dry logs and standing wood for the fire. This is done without harm to local trees, usually at least 50 feet away from the site. Ten to thirty fist-sized stones should be collected. For safety reasons, do not use river-rocks, sedimentary, porous or quartz rocks which tend to fracture easily under stress. Volcanic or metamorphic rocks are the most secure, but hard to locate in Minnesota. Eight to twenty pliable 4-12 foot long saplings (no wider than your thumb) are collected and stripped of branches. Willow, ash and rowan work well. Materials should be collected in a humble spirit, asking them whether they wish to be part of the service. These processes are often punctuated with spoken mini-prayers of thanks and announcing to the spirits what you will do so that they will not be startled. Let the words roll out without concern for propriety or hesitation, they need to be said.

Some traditions are specific about the fire being to the east of the entrance of the sweat lodge, which also faces east. Carleton has fixed fire rings, so we usually practically point the sweat lodge towards the fire ring, regardless of what direction that may be. The sweat lodge should be between 10 and 30 feet of the fire ring, not too close to catch fire, and not too far to make carrying the stones difficult. Small stuff in the center, bigger stuff lain over it, and big stuff in reserve. About 10 to 24 arm loads should be sufficient for 2 to 5 sessions respectively. If a person wishes to assist but doesn't wish to be in the sweat lodge, they are designated the fire-tender and provide stones and water to the sweaters and ensure the lodge is well sealed. They also greet late visitors and prepare the stones for the next session.





A hole about 18 inches deep and 18 inches wide is dug in the center of the sweat lodge, and the dirt is carefully put on some newspapers or other object so as to be easily returned later. Usually the removed dirt is crowned with some type of activity. A spring of sage might be laid in the hole while other work is done and removed before the stones are placed in the hole later.

The number of poles is determined by resources and size of the group. 2-4 people require a diameter of about 8 feet, 4-8 people about 12 feet. Clear the ground of any roots, rocks, dirt or glass. It should be at least four feet high in the center, and high enough that members do not have to stoop when sitting cross-legged around the hole, with at least four inches between them and the fire hole. Before putting on the tarp, actually sit inside to make sure there is sufficient room. Some people use flexible tent poles or thick wire in place of saplings, others see this as less authentic. Stick the end of the poles into the ground and bend them and bind them. Remove any poky branch stubs. Put a vapor-lock layer of sailor canvas or plastic sheeting over the poles. Place three layers of blankets to retain warmth over the tarp, with an easy to open and shut flap for the entrance. Go inside and look for light or draft leaking under the edges and weigh those down with rocks or logs. Bless the lodge with some puffs of sage smoke, a dance, circumambulation or other means.

The fire is lit about 30 minutes before the first session, with a prayer, and is treated with great deference. One tradition is to never cut the line between the fire and the sweat lodge entrance, at least without an apology. Light chat, banter and a simple outline of the sweat lodge ceremony, purpose and decorum are discussed with the fellow Druids in advance, especially when there are newcomers present. Questions are encouraged and answered as best as possible.

### **General rules are:**

Follow the lead of the officiant.

Leave your ego at the door.

Ask for water when you need it, always sharing some with the fire.

You can wear a swimsuit or clothes if you wish, but most don't.

Be respectful of your fellow sweaters and the materials.

Friends are welcome if they are respectful too.

Apologize quickly for any possible mistake to either. Some use a set phrase like Oyatake Miyasin, "all my cousins".

Let the spirits speak freely through you, and speak without lies.

Nothing spoken in the sweat lodge is later revealed to someone not participating, and is often not even mentioned again in most cases. What comes out in the sweat lodge, stays in the sweat lodge.

If the experience becomes overwhelming, announce that you need to take a break and shuffle clockwise until the afflicted member can reach the entrance and leave, with an apology.

You do as many sessions as you are comfortable with, and can sit out one if you need a break.

When the rocks are red-hot and the mood is right, bring about 9 rocks into the hole. Sometimes someone strips down, is purified, and enters the sweat lodge with some sticks to help guide the rocks into the hole while someone uses the pitchfork to bring the stones (without attached embers) into the sweat lodge entrance. For a long sweat, some room is left in the sweat lodge for more stones to be added. A water jug/bucket is placed one space counter-clockwise from the entrance.

Some words will be said by the fire before entering, people strip down, are purified by sage smoke and enter the sweat lodge, crawling clockwise around the stones. The officiant is usually the last to enter, and the sweat lodge is shut and the service begins, while the fire-tender prepares the stones for the next session.

## **The Service**

At this point it becomes very difficult to give an outline of activities. There are so many ways to hold the actual service, and you have a lot of liturgical freedom here. Some people divide sweats into healing sweats, union sweats, wishing sweats and divinatory sweats. Some officiants will do a little of each in a single session, or each session will be different purpose.

Usually you begin by four members calling out the directions in turn, and handed the water. They choose their own words and pick their own associations with that direction. The spirits are thus called with a splash of water onto the hot rocks. Usually then the officiant invokes father sky and mother earth and encourages all these spirits to aid them in their quest. The officiant will usually announce each stage as it begins.

Some chanting follows, and usually is done in between each stage of a sweat lodge. They may be short songs, rounds, simple phrases or wordless tunes, moans, clapping, slapping or hooting. I may feel disconnected from my body, extremely aware of my body, or both. I sometimes do not know where the words come from, except that they resonate with my soul, and they are right for the occasion. The first time it might be a bit embarrassing, but with experience, they come forth wiser and more sure. Some Scandinavian types might strike or rub themselves with branches to improve blood flow if there is sufficient room. It's hard to predict what will feel right. Sometimes it's a single chant, sometimes it will lead off to another, or as many as four or five. Hard to tell.

In healing sweats, the afflicted person or their representative announces the problem, all emote with the problem, and then energy is summoned by chants or other methods to assist that person or "shot" off towards the ill person.

In union sweats, the water is passed around, and each person talks about something that has been on their mind, either good, bad or confusing. The water is then splashed on the stones and the next person proceeds.

In wishing sweats, the person says what they want, why they want it, and asks that it become so. Chants follow and energy raised and sent for that purpose.

In divinatory sweats, knowledge or vision is sought. The vision is requested and chants follow, then some words are shared.

After about 30 minutes, it's usually time to end a sweat session, since the rocks are losing their heat and people need a break. Each session closes by thanking the four directions in reverse order, and the last session has an especially ornate version. People are told to be especially attentive to their dreams that night and drink lots of water. After some final thanks, the members rotate clockwise around and exit. They might wrap a

blanket around themselves, drink water, or sit by the fire. If there is no room in the hole, some of the stones are removed to make space for the next stones, which are then inserted. After a short break, the next officiant announces the start of the next session, purifies everyone, and the process starts again, with a simplified invocation of the directions inside the sweat lodge. People may attend 1-4 sweat sessions in an evening, being an ascetic test of their limits for some people, others might be satisfied with just one, especially their first time.

## Activities After the Sweat lodge

Some people disassemble the sweat lodge immediately, other do it later when convenient. I recommend the former. Sometimes during the last session, the members will grab the poles and lift together to raise the lodge, in which case, make sure the rocks are not weighing down the edges! Others will carefully remove one layer at a time with small prayers of thanks, like peeling an onion. The materials are folded and put away to be dried the next day. The stones are either buried in the original dirt or moved to a site in the woods and stacked for the next sweat lodge. The hole is filled in and site cleaned up. All the materials are thanked in a final service and the mood of the sweat lodge lightens up and the after-party will start.

Some people may wander off to meditate or vigil. Usually people will hang around late into the night around the now sanctified fire and discuss further what they saw or heard, chat about life, perhaps do some cooking or singing. Naturally, the fire must be completely extinguished before the last person goes home. It is tradition that it dies by slowly fading from lack of combustibles, rather than dousing them rudely. Remaining wood and stone are stored away for the next sweat lodge and the area is cleaned up. I usually follow up by visiting the site the next morning to check for garbage and to give further thanks to the site.

And that is a short summary of the techniques and practices of Carleton sweat lodges. May you find your own path and methods.



**Figure 31 The Druid's Den, site of many sweat lodges, c. 2004.**

# Norse Ritual Experimentation

by Hal Moe.

DC Vol 2 Iss 1 Nov. 1978

Hal Moe, Co-Archdruid of the Hazel Nut Grove, sends us this report about the first performance of a Pagan Norse ritual written by him for *Vetrdag* ("Winter's Day") and celebrated by the Grove: "Vetrdag is the first day of Winter in the Norse calendar and was celebrated on October 14th by myself and the members of the Grove. After I had taken a length of white cord and marked off a ritual circle among the trees surrounding us, the rite began with a formal invitation to the Norse deities to join us for our feast (most Norse rituals seem to consist of feasts). I had chosen *Kvasir*, the Norse God of Mead, Inspiration and Enlightenment, as the deity thru Whom we would communicate with the Gods. Kvasir was created from the spittle of all the Gods and Goddesses of both the Vanir and the Aesir, and thus makes a good channel to work through. After the invitation was presented, the *godi* or presiding priest (myself) passed the *Hlautbollar* or "blood bowl" (which actually contained mead) thru the flames of the fire, in order to infuse the vital spark into the fluid. After this, I looked into the bowl to see if Kvasir had joined us. He-had, so I continued the ceremony by dipping nine *Hlauteinarr* ("blood twigs") into the bowl and sprinkling the congregation with the mead, thus forming a physical bond between the members of the Grove and the deities. After this, the bowl was raised in a salute to Odin, Freyja and Thor, and toasts were drunk by all. The members were encouraged to offer their own toasts to their favorite deities, heroes, etc. Then a portion of the remaining mead was poured out over the altar, as a symbol of the Grove's willingness to sacrifice a portion of their lives and hearts to the Norse deities. This was followed by a period of silent meditation and a benediction. The service was well received by the Grove and there were Signs that the deities were also pleased."

Vol. 2 Iss 2 Dec. 1978

Notes on A Norse Neopagan Ceremony:

This is a metaphysical follow-up to last issue's description by Harold Moe of a Norse Neopagan ceremony he created and led for the Hazel Nut Grove.

My Norse Neopaganism is built around metaphysical concepts related to the Hindu system. The Norse Ritual that I wrote about in the last issue of PJ & DC presents a nice structure by which to explain those metaphysical concepts. (Please note that the explanation that follows is probably not the ancient Pagan explanation).

The primary symbol of Norse Paganism is the ring, which represents both the cycles that are all around us and infinity. The ring is manifested in the ritual as the ring of worshippers, the ring of string or stones and the ring (which is the formal manifestation of the symbol) that the Godi (presiding priest/ess) wears on his or her arm. At the center of the circle is the altar which represents Asgard, the home of the Gods and Goddesses, center of the universe and the point from which all things flow.

The humans in the circle's boundary wish to communicate with the Deities and to gain knowledge in this way. The method by which this is accomplished consists of Consecrating the Mead as the blood Of Kvasir the God of Inspiration and enlightenment. Kvasir is a being made from all the Deities. (At one time in

Norse Mythology the Aesir and Vanir – Sky and Earth – Deities were fighting. They made peace and pledged it by exchanging hostages and by all spitting into a cauldron and creating Kvasir from it.) Thus He can be represented as the union of Fire, Air, Water and Earth and therefore can be looked on as the element Spirit and/or as Man.

Once the mead has been consecrated as Kvasir, it becomes the gate through which people can communicate with the Deities. In the ritual the usual communication consists of toasts to express our admiration for the Deities and the powers they control."

The next event is the blessing. This process takes the holy mead from the altar to the people, from the center to the edge, thus giving the center's power to the edge. Here follow more toasts, but now the direction of the flow is reversed. We must maintain the balance of people and Deities, and we therefore offer up a part of ourselves to the perpetuation of the Gods' **power** by using the mead as our "blood" being given to the Deities and return to Midgard, having renewed ourselves at the center of the universe.

## Vol 2 Iss 3 Feb. 1979

### Nordic Ritual No. 2

Harold Moe has as been experimenting with various forms and poetry for Norse rituals. This is a current work- in -progress that he has been using for services.

*Group forms a circle around altar within which is the Godi, who salutes the Altar.*

Hear O High Ones Of Heaven and Hillock, Our Words of welcome.

We get together In Grove with gifts To the kin of Kvasir.  
We drink and declare Your dauntless dignity In friendship and freedom.

*Then all speak:*

Hail to the Gods! Ye Goddesses hail! And all the generous Earth!

Hail to the Day! Hail to the sons of Day! Hail to the Night and her daughter Now!

*The Godi speaks:*

Gaze on us gently, Granting us gathered here Your blessings on our battles.

*All hold up their beakers and call on Kvasir.*

Hail Kvasir, son of Aesir and Vanir! Inspiration bringer, All answerer!

*Godi passes bowl over flame and all say:*

Let Life enter you, Come join our rejoicing!

*The Godi then lowers the bowl and looks into it. If Kvasir has joined us the Godi then says:*

Rejoice! Kvasir has joined us!

*The Godi then picks up and dips the nine Hlauteinarr into the bowl and sprinkles mead over the group saying:*

O Gods and Goddesses  
Givers of, Greatness  
Nurture nobility

Learning and lore  
Lease us lifelong  
And healing hands

*The Godi then replaces the Hlauteinarr and raises the bowl to the Sky saying:*

Hail Odin!

*and drinks*

Hail Freyja!

*and drinks*

Hail Thor!

*Now each person in the circle from right to left makes a toast to his or her favorite deity. All may join in. A bit of mead is left in the beakers for the sacrifice. The Godi now gives the bowl to the outer circle and each person pours a little into the bowl from his beaker. The Godi then takes the bowl and pours the contents on the altar saying:*

As Kvasir gave his life and blood to bring us inspiration and the knowledge of the Gods and Goddesses, Let each of us give this portion of our lives and hearts.

*Here follows an appropriate meditation.*

*The Godi concludes with:*

Life has entered into the Mead, And we have partaken of it. The Aesir and Vanir have accepted our Sacrifice. Hail to them!  
Hail to the Gods and Goddesses! Hail to the Generous Earth!

Return to Midgard and know that they have smiled on us!

PEACE WISDOM HEALTH



**Figure 32 The White Boulder of Boliou, 2004.**

# Sirona's Shower Shugyo Sacrament

By Patrick Haneke & Nozomi Kibou  
A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 2001

**WARNING:** I recommend that you practice in your bath's shower (which works fine, just less scenic and powerful) for a few weeks before trying the real thing to gauge your body's strength and reaction to cold. Each time, go a step colder. Be careful of hazards at natural waterfalls. Large ones can really club you with their force, logs & junk may flow over the edge and strike you, some falls have large, DEEP pools directly beneath them, strong undercurrents, have slippery DANGEROUS rocks nearby and are often located far from medical care. You should probably start off with a group or shuggy-buddy as I call them. An appropriate choice is Sirona, a Celtic God of rivers, quite popular throughout Europe it seems and Patron of the 7<sup>th</sup> order, but if you know the particular God of that river or falls, it would be best to use that one of course.

## PROCESS:

Eat a simple diet for a week before the shugyo (low spices, little meat, no salt, no alcohol, no sex).  
Either in light-weight, white cotton suit or sky-clad, go to a waterfall. Starting downstream on the approach is respectful, if starting up stream toss in coins with a prayer, the river will carry your message to the falls of your approach. It can be done solo, or as a group (see above), chanting out loud in unison.  
Start by purifying yourself and 5-10 minutes of mediation on your goal.  
Bow, Clap Twice, Bow, ask to enter the waterfall.  
If omens are good, step into the waterfall. Drench yourself thoroughly.  
Turn your back to the waterfall and have the main force of the water hit you between seventh vertebra of the neck and the shoulders. If you douse your head, it's hard to open your mouth to chant and it strains your neck.  
Clasp hands together, forming a mudra if you like.  
Chant your invocation. (like the one below)



Figure 33 Proper Shugyo pose.

## SIRONA'S SUPPLICATION

I can't release the one used by Nozomi (trade-secret of her father's, but here is one I made) One of the problems you'll realize is that breathing is difficult when cold, so it often comes out in staccato syllables. Keep a rhythm. The verses are A chorus B chorus C chorus B chorus A in a "Stepladder format" (i.e. ABCBABCBA is possible). Perhaps you'll come up with your own words and send me a copy?

Waters over.  
Waters under.  
Waters around.  
Waters through me.

O si-ro-na!  
o **SI**-ro-na!  
o si **RO** na!  
o si ro **NA**!

Waters cleanse me.  
Waters love me.  
Waters guide me.  
Waters bless me.

O si-ro-na!  
o **SI**-ro-na!  
o si **RO** na!  
o si ro **NA**!

Change in motion.  
Adaptation.  
Down to ocean.  
My salvation.

AND REVERSE IT BACK TO THE BEGINNING



Figure 34 Pat at Akita Grove's waterfall, c. 1998.

# Hot Tub Healing

By Pat Haneke & Nozomi Kibo  
A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 2001

Well, last time, we gave you our Shugyo service, which relies on cold pounding water to purify from above; so we'd like to balance that by stressing the warm waters bubbling to heal you from below. Japan is well known for its plentiful (over 14,000) natural onsens (i.e. thermal spas) due to the volcanic nature of the islands. Many were discovered by shivering hunters during the winter in the mountains, where they had melted through the heavy snows, providing a refuge for wild animals (especially snow-monkeys). Myths often state that the hunter was led there by an injured animal seeking to have their wounds healed by the waters.

According to my research, many onsens are located in nearly-inaccessible rustic locations of great scenic beauty, often requiring hours-long hikes from nearby roads. Most of these have been deepened and lined with natural stones, bamboo screens, hand-built changing areas. The best are open to the sky year round ("rotenburos") and sometimes are mixed bathing, especially late at night (if you're lucky). Many romantic movies pivot on a humorous rendezvous that occurs there. Onsens are still one of the top 5 destinations for travel-crazy Japanese, indeed dozens of books and studies have been written on their bathing customs. After all, "cleanliness is next to Godliness", which is why the Japanese are such a sacred people? Their public bathing houses ("sentos") yet remain in the poorer sections of the cities, and artificially heated "onsens" (with bowling alleys & recreational sports) are built in the midst of sprawling urban centers. Nozomi says that entire offices or companies will stay at the traditional inns for weekend retreats; drinking, eating, bathing, rough-housing, drinking, singing, having a short business meeting, more drinking, etc.

Now, the Celts were also big fans of spas, springs and natural wells, when they could find them. Specific deities (e.g. Grannos, Suliva), were assigned to each one, and offerings were thrown into the pool for those seeking healing or similar blessings. These holy wells of "Saints", who offering healing & good fortune, continue to attract Catholic pilgrims to this day, and this phenomenon is well documented in bookstores. Many famous springs, such as Baths, were expanded and commercially developed by the Roman conquerors.

According to Mike, back in the misty 70s, the NRDNA Berkeley Grove's very own Order of Dian Cecht (apparently, a substitution for the Order of Grannos) would hold regular healing seminars and workshops followed by, you guessed it, hot-tub healing. So, to revive an older custom, I give you our version in simplistic format; which of course may be done in a warm bathtub. I defer to those women out there, who have raised functional bathing to aromatic tactilely pleasurable ritualistic experience, and ask that each expand it in their own way. It could be an hour-long and suitably womb-like.

- Disconnect phone and turn-off all annoyances.
- Stretch thoroughly
- Open windows and let in cool fresh air & sun/moonlight
- Take a short shower and then clean tub.
- Dim the lights.
- Fill with piping hot water. Welcome it.
- Allowing a little water to drain and keeping the tap or shower open.
- Add accessories (candles, salts, herbs, oils, mineral supplements, etc.)
- (Some add Waters-of-life blessed for the occasion.)
- Place a guardian statue in the waters to address (i.e. rubber-ducky)
- Let water cool down to just above tolerable.
- Bless your self & the tub
- Ask to enter, and then slowly enter the tub.
- Assume desired position or perform mudras.
- List current ailments. Remember the healthier days' feelings.
- Internally focus on feeling the afflicted areas.
- Humming mantras is particularly pleasant when half submerged.
- Channel the heat and such to those parts, melting and smoothing them, making things flow where they have stopped.
- Ask for advice, wait and listen. This part takes a while.
- Contemplate life-style and diet changes or divine requests that come to your mind.
- Thank the Gods or guardians involved and ask to finish.
- Pull the drain and bid farewell to the waters.
- Ask the healing spirits to remain with you as the waters slowly drain away.
- Let the waters pull away illness as they drain.
- Quick rinse & dry.
- Wrap in something warm and take a nap in a dark, quiet place.



Figure 35 Lyman Lake at dawn, c 2001.

# The Great Cailleach Search

Devised by Patrick Haneke, Akita Grove  
Collaborated with Brother Alex on his "Great Snogle Beast Hunt"

Plentiful Advice from Brother Mike  
Researched & Transcribed by Sister Nozomi  
A Druid Missal-Any, Oimeic 2002

A few years ago, when Brother Mike was in Japan, we went with him to a lot of the local pagan festivals. Mike suggested that we start our own, blending Irish and Shinto traditions. Like our Winter-Solstice service, here is our version of an Oimeic festival, with more focus on activity than liturgy; which the Japanese are famous for. Neo-Pagan rituals can be so dull, whereas the Celtic commoner was likewise more interested in the associated activities of the season. We'll still have an Oimeic service, but it will pale next to the Great Cailleach Search. Please enjoy.

## The Straight Dope on the Cailleach Bhuer: The primary figure in this action-drama.

Cailleach (Call y' ach) is the common Gaelic word for old woman, "carlin" in the Lowlands, "Black Annis" in England (Annis being a Celtic Water Goddess), "Cailleach ny Groamch" on the Isle of Man Cailleach Bhuer (Blue Women) or Hag of Beare is her name in the Highlands. Interestingly enough, an owl is called Cailleach n'Oidhche (very difficult to pronounce) meaning "old woman of the night".

I slapped a few half-remembered legends together and divined the rest. In the old days, old women were respected for the life-power and wisdom that naturally should accrue to the elderly. This particular old lady was a giant in Scottish tales who also represented winter. She could shape shift, either to a serpent or a comely lass and was considered quite wise. She could also become stone at will, indeed, remaining as a stone throughout the Time of Life (May 1<sup>st</sup> to Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>). Thus, she is a natural choice for residing in a stone circle, I think, especially in a stone used for judging the Winter Solstice alignment.

She is reborn on Samhain and reigns throughout the Time of Sleep (Nov 1<sup>st</sup> to May 1<sup>st</sup>). After reviving, she washes her tattered plaid in the famous whirlpool off the coast of Jura, "Corryvreckan" ("Coire Bhreacain" is the cauldron of the plaid), and the plaid emerges repaired & pure-white and she drapes it over the land. She bore a staff which could kill any plant and would freeze the ground if tapped. The young God of Spring, born on the Winter Solstice, (no name as yet) wanted to play with his forest friends, but they were too tired, and the Goddess refused to end the winter so early. She recommended that he should be in Galicia or Galetia, not the Gaeltacht, if he wanted some warmth. She complained that she wasn't finished freezing Loch Ness and was still perfecting her snowcap on Ben Mor and Mt. Snowdon, and the skiers would be most unhappy if she didn't finish that job. If she had time, she'd get around to freezing the Irish sea too.

Undeterred, he asked Cailleach Bhuer if she was tired, and she admitted that she was getting a bit of a tension headache from concentrating so much on her work. She agreed to take a short break and play a short game of stickball. Spring God tossed stones and nuts, and she batted first. Many valleys and lakes were created by the impact from the stones she hit. She played a marvelous first round and then he asked to have a turn at bat. The staff was thus captured by the young God of Spring, who flung it into the holly bushes, because the staff would kill any other plant, and the holly would prevent her from retrieving it by guarding it with its fierce thorns.

He then ran off, unpenned, and gleaned a few of her seven Arkan Sonney (red, lucky, hairy pigs), whose hot little footsteps melted the snow. The Cailleach dispatched a squadron of her ravens to retrieve the piggies, but the Spring God eluded most of them. The little piggies ran all over the place with the young God, ruining her white blanket of snow. She forgave him later, after he explained the animals were getting thin and needed to eat new plants, but she required him to bring her a flower wreath at Beltane and return her staff next fall.

Not being able to freeze things anymore, she started her new job on Feb 1<sup>st</sup>. She went to the deep forest of the Isle of Youth and drinks a cup to return her to a more vigorous appearance. Then she works on weaving a new plaid for the next year's vegetation, which she will hand over to her sister at Beltane before transforming into stone for a long rest in the shape of a rock, under a flower wreath, who takes a pause in his morning activities that day to payback the old lady. He, of course, returned the staff at Samhain.

She was the patroness of deer and boar, protecting animals during the winter. She is sometimes depicted as riding a gray stallion with ravens and crows. The Book of Lecan, says she has been through seven life cycles, deaths and rebirth, and has had seven mates. Thus seven is a sacred number of perfection. There are numerous hills named after her, such as Ben Nevis and Schiehallon.

## For more on her see:

<http://www.paganvillages.com/Magick/archivesev/NovGoddess.html>

## The Fun Part: The Great Hunt

Now that you know the background, here is the activity we're planning. A similar one can be done for Beltane, which much nicer rewards...

**Location:** A forest with lots of trees or places to hide things. It should be smaller than one square mile, and with definable boundaries (roads, fire breaks, fences) to keep members from really getting lost. The smaller the vegetation cover, the smaller the Cailleach will be naturally. Distributing maps and cell-phones & GPS equipment is standard for the over-anxious. A finish line with an evergreen tree, a box, a campfire and a long rope is chosen. Games start and end there.

**Number of Participants:** As many as feasible.

**Duration:** The hunt should last about an hour or two. Older members will wait at the finish line in a suitably warm place (like a van).

## Overview:

1. At winter solstice, the AD tells the tale of Cailleach Bheur, to burrow it into their psyches. Then the AD begins preparations for making a hunting package (whistle, secret envelope, hunting stick, tennis ball, piece of elastic, protection amulet, blindfolds, search flares) for each future participant. Train your bagpiper, get a bullhorn or air horn, or super whistle, etc. Prepare major amounts of hot chocolate and a feast for the returning hunters, preferably at the nearby onsen/hot spa! One long rope is also necessary and a campfire.
2. The Archdruid, or her accomplice, hides a statue or mannequin or doll with a 3 foot long stick and hangs a piggy in the nearby area before the first snow fall, or before a predicted great snow fall, thereby covering the tracks and adding a sense of mystery. Caution should be made whereby, notable features are noted down, and the statue will not be completely covered by snowfall (tying it at chest high to a tree is a good idea).
3. A few weeks or months later, the hunters (who've been hopefully training) gather at the starting point, in their best outdoors gear. The rules are explained and the hunting packets are distributed. The player's duty to bring winter to a quick end should be stressed, if the Gods will help. Players are crowned with short antlers, blindfolded and spun around. Bagpipes sounds and they rush off into the woods to find the Cailleach Bheur and her little piggy (Arkan Sonney).
4. The first person who finds her statue/manikin places his amulet around the neck of the statue, he or she will grab her staff and use it to knock down the piggy from his cage (always set a few inches out of reach of the stick, to tease them into clever ploys to reach it.)
5. The lucky fellow now grabs the piggy and immediately sounds her/his hunting horn (a shrill whistle) 7 times. The pig rustler will get seven blessings if he can make it back to the finish line and toss the stick into the holly/evergreen tree and put the piggy in a box filled with straw and carrots.
6. After hearing the whistle, everyone tries to tag the pig rustler. If they tag the person, they take away one of the blessings for themselves, and the rustler will get symbolically spanked for each time they are tagged by the officiant. (If you like playing rough, you can have them try to take away the piggy and finish it themselves, but avoid bloody noses.)
7. The winner gets a kiss from the AD, and will hide the piggy for the next year and oversee the preparations and is publicly blessed 7 times (her choice of which blessings to grant) with the staff. All the players are recalled. Players who tagged him/her (in order) may deduct one of the blessings as they see fit for their own use.
8. The piggy is then tied to the middle of a long rope and placed over a fire (or a cauldron in non-fire-possible zones) and the grove splits into two sides (perhaps by Nov 1<sup>st</sup> to May 1<sup>st</sup> birthdays and May 1<sup>st</sup> to Nov 1<sup>st</sup> birthdays) to divine, by a "tug of war", whether winter or summer is stronger. The side to pull, the (quite possibly burning) piggy over 15 feet from the fire is declared the winner and all its teammates get three blessings, losers get one blessing each.
9. After one hour, if no one has returned, sound the bagpipe's "Warning song" (or sound the siren in 2 blasts) and the players can open the sealed envelope with a description of the location of the statue. However, they lose 4 of the blessings if they do so. They can choose to not open the envelope and keep searching and thus lose only 2 of the blessings.
10. If they haven't returned in 2 hours, play the bagpipes' "retreat song", shoot the flares into the skies and call out the National Guard to return the players. Winter will be longer than usual this year!



Figure 36 Lyman Creek in Upper Arb, c.2002.



Figure 37 Ancient megalith at Akita, c. 1998.

# Prayer for Sleep

By Robin Goodfellow  
Modified for the RDNA with permission.  
Summer Solstice, A Druid Missal-Any 2004

Earth Mother, rock me in your arms; Be'al, guard my rest from fear, regret, doubt and anxiety. Refresh me in soul, mind and body. Bestow this blessing; I offer my prayer. Sustain me in that perfect peace and awareness promised us who have you in our minds and hearts.

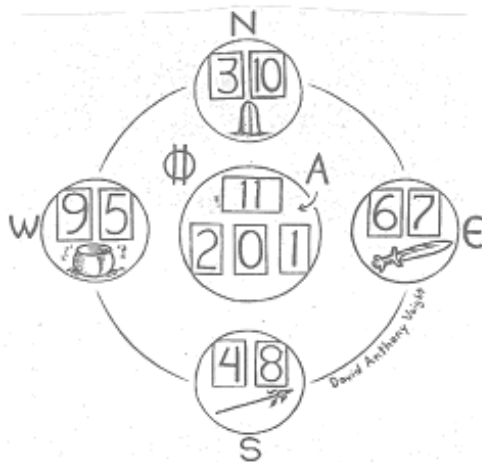
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Let me never forget You. Let me feel your warm embrace that comforts me in my troubles, that reminds me that all is not as fearsome as it seems at times, and that I am never alone and without You. Your loving presence gives my heart the reassurance and my mind the courage to carry on peacefully this night and in the days to follow after and after again. In your presence am I safely held secure.

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Through the divine connection we share, You and I, this is so, and I am at peace.

Peace, Peace, Peace!



# The Druidic Cross Tarot

By Stephen Abbot McCauley and Steven Goldstone  
-Summer 1980

This Tarot layout is the second of a series planned for publication. It first appeared in *Gnostica News* issue number 45 and was called the Pentacle Layout. The present article should be considered as only a bare outline of the Druidic Cross Layout. It has been developed in conjunction with the: Celtic Pagan Tarot Deck, a set of designs soon, hopefully, to be published. They are beautiful cards, designed by David Weiss, a Los Angeles artist, and myself, using Celtic divinities as archetypes.

The Pentacle Layout was designed to be used for questions dealing with deeply personal and spiritual matters. As most of you are aware, the pentacle symbolizes the microcosm—a mini-universe – a personal frame of reference which extends from within us all as individuals. The Druidic Cross layout is a logical progression from this: it represents five manifested, exteriorized spheres of Being which emanate from the microcosm of the Self.

These five circles correspond to the five traditional elements: fire, air, earth, water, and spirit. And, as in our Druid tradition – they also represent the five directions: north, south, east, west, and the Center. The relationships of Element to Direction are those of the Golden Dawn System familiar to most students of occultism. Fire is South, Air is East, Water is West, Earth is North, and Spirit, or Akasha, is the Center.

In our layout, each circle is given a letter. The center circle is Letter A, and is considered to be the first sphere of influence – the realm of Spirit. Letter B, the second circle, represents Earth; Letter C, the third circle, is Fire. Letters D and E are Air and Water, respectively. This completes the basic circle of the elements. Much can be inferred from this pattern about the nature of energy-flow being shown.

In addition to the Elements, certain ancient Celtic deities hold sway over the Five Circles. These can be invoked as guides by the diviner, or their spheres of influence seen as centers of how their energies influence a manifestation. The object is to develop a personal relationship with the elemental divinities of the Celtic pantheon, to get close to them, and to listen for their prophetic voices as did the ancient Bards. This guidance from the Gods is the essence of divination.

This list given of Celtic divinities is not intended to be complete, however, it is a suggestion, an outline, of what might be possible. Many other implicit concepts will present themselves to the serious student.

A final set of corresponding images for the outer circles are the Four Magical Treasures of Celtic Tradition, as shown in the diagram.

Some ideas for this layout came from an excellent book by Virginia Moore entitled The Unicorn. In it is given some material from unpublished diaries of W. B. Yeats, written at the time when he was still a member of the Golden Dawn. (After his death, it is believed that most of his diaries work was burnt by his fanatical widow, who considered magic to be of the Devil. A similar fate befell the diaries of Sir Richard Burton, much to our loss.)

Other ideas come from a multitude of books of Celtic Mythology; and still others, from personal experience. Complete bibliography will accompany the Celtic Deck when it is published.



Special thanks are due to David Voight for his fine artwork on the Layout.

This Layout is especially designed for Tarot students who wish to explore the influence of divinities of the ancient Gaels in their lives, and to communicate with them. It can bring more scope and dimension, however, to anyone seriously interested in Paganism and Magic.

Gods	Cir	Element	The Legend	Treasure
Tailltiu & Tethra	A	Spirit	Center/Indigo	Symbol of the Triple Goddess
Danu & Dagda	B	Earth	North Brown	Stone Lia Fail
Brighid & Lugh	C	Fire	South Red	Spear of Lugh
Cendwen & Manannan Mac Lir	D	Water	West Silver	Cauldron of Inspiration
Rhiannon & Camulos	E	Air	East   Blue	Sword of Nuada, Fragarach

Table 1 summarizes the five circles of being. Only Circle A will be treated in detail here.

At ancient Teltown was held the annual celebration Lughnasadh for here Lang the (God of fire, married the land of Erin (Ireland). Watching over this sacred spot is Tailltiu, or Telta, who had her palace here. Also, a great battle for the control of Ireland was fought here.

In Celtic religion the center of a particular province was considered the most magical and sacred place in that province. All of the most important Druidic and magical rites were performed and celebrated at the sacred center point. It is appropriate for Tailltiu, who watched over such a central and important point in Erin, to be honored here.

Beneath the sea the Fomoir, whose king was Tethra, plotted to take Erin by force and bring her under the sea. After years of preparation, a great battle was fought at Teltown in which the Fomoir were defeated. Tethra has also been a major force in Stephan's personal work and is honored in the center here.

The Gods do not guard their own treasures, but assign the task to their priests. In this case, the priests are called Druids, and their worship is of the deities of nature and the ways of nature. This particular guardian is called the Druid of the Center, the Druid of the Mystic Center, the Keeper of the Mysteries of the Spirit. The guardian wears a robe the color of indigo, the elemental color of Spirit.

If his guardian is to be called upon when you wish to perform a reading which deals with the weighty or deeply spiritual matters. Being a priest, the guardian can contact the deity forms of this (the spirit) plane of awareness if the question is dire enough.

The magical treasure of this centre circle is the symbol of the triple Goddess, the circle of spirit with two lines crossing it. The circle is a symbol for the concept of "peace," for only with peace of mind and the calm feelings which it brings can anything be done successfully of a spiritual nature.

Comments and criticisms of the Druidic Cross Layout are welcomed. Please send all correspondence to the authors at 3215 Brookdale Avenue, Oakland, CA 94602. We do not know when the Celtic Pagan Tarot deck will be completed (hopefully during 1980), but we will gladly answer correspondence on it when we find out more precisely.

## Creating a Wizard's Light

By Emmon Bodfish  
A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 1983

A Wizard-Lite is a phenomenon you'll often come across in fantasy and occult literature in these post-Illuminati (Trilogy) years. The following is a distillation of my experience with one method of creating one.

Sit straight up, on a sturdy seat, feet flat on the floor, in a dark room. It is never quite dark enough outdoors for this. Lean a little forward, and look into the darkest part of the room. Focus your eyes as if you were looking into the farther distance. The room must be dark enough that you cannot see the wall in front of you. The correct eye focus is nine-tenths of it. Some people describe it as "looking left with the left eye and right with the right eye." I didn't think of it this way, but if it helps...

You'll see flecks of light, blue or violet, which move in curved paths, then wink out. Don't try to look AT or follow them. You'll lose the critical distance focus and not be able to see them at all. You are focusing out beyond them; they appear as five to ten feet away from your chair. The longer you can hold this focus, and your attention on the dark in front of you, the more sparks of light you will see. At a certain point you get the feeling of seeing past the darkness, into a space speckled with many, many of these sparks. It looked to me like the Milky Way, the first time I saw it. The tendency at this point is to look away, or close your eyes. If you do that, you will lose it and have to start over again. Of course willingness to start over again, and I mean many times, is necessary to the development of any "psychic" skill.

When you can get the focus right and see the sparks fairly easily, you can get to the "Starry sky" stage in about 15 to 20 minutes per practice session.. Next, you try to form the sparks into a ball by herding them together. There is no better verbal way to describe this. To me it feels like pushing the with my eyeballs. You may feel you are herding them into a close cluster with your willpower. As more sparks are crowded together, the glow will get brighter. It will look something like this;

[Ed. Picture of a black square with a white spot surrounded by specks.]

As it brightens, you can see the floor and the room, but not in detail or color. While it looks like the room, alright, it looks not quite the same as the room looked before. And definitely different from the way the room looks in dim light with your eyes well dark adapted.

I plan to try this in a strange location, which I have not seen in daylight to see if it is a matter of running on memory.

This eye focus is the same one that has been described in the literature as the one to use to see auras.



Figure 38 Skinner Chapel, c. 2002.

# Back to the Shadows Again

[Ed. Calligraphy by Valerie Voight]

By Emmon Bodfish

Spring Equinox 1983, A Druid Missal-Any

And Now, by popular demand, another see-and-do article.

The Druids of folktales were imputed with the power to create a magical mist, the "Cleo Trom" in which to hide themselves or to obscure the field of battle and aid their chieftains' armies. In fact, according to one source, ability to raise the Druid Mist was a test of anyone claiming to be a Fear-droi or a Wizard. This ability is also remembered in fragments of the Ossanic poems and in folklore from the Continent. In his book on magic, Steven Richards remarks that this "Invisibility is the peculiar mark of the Western magician as levitation is of the Oriental one."

In practice, there are different levels of making oneself invisible. At the first level is the crass psychological technique of diverting attention to something else while you quietly walk away, or perform the slight-of-the-hand that completes the trick. Stage magicians, thieves and Sherlock Holmes are adepts at this one.

On the second level is the method actor's strategy of changing his emotional state, manner and gait such that he seems to turn into (or out to be) someone or something other than who he was, and so to "disappear" into the role. Crowley, working at this level of transformation, tells of the following incident that happened to him in London. When he was walking down a lane, he saw, coming toward him, a group of students who knew him and who were not particularly friendly to him or his ideas. Wishing to avoid their ridicule or worse, he ducked down a side street, but they followed him. The street proved to be a blind end. After stepping into a shop doorway, he rushed back out, having changed his gait and demeanor utterly, and hustled past them in a businesslike way. They did not recognize him and he escaped.

At the third level is something between this technique and that of thought projection or active telepathy.. Mrs. Alexander-David Neil describes the first few signs of this level in her book of observations of mystics in India and Tibet. Basically it involves the ability to control your output of emotional energy, your projection of your "presence" in the situation. "If you walk through a crowd shouting, bumping against people, and otherwise calling attention to yourself, you will make yourself quite visible. However, if you steal along noiselessly, you may be able to pass without being seen. Animals know this instinctively, and use it to catch their prey. As J.H. Brennan points out, merely sitting motionless cuts down on your visibility. Beast of prey avoid this difficulty by bobbing their heads, creating the illusion of motion. However quiet you are, though, there is still the unquietness generated by your mind. The work of the mind generates an energy which spreads all around the one who produces it, and it is energy which is felt in various ways by those who come into touch with it. If you can stop even that source of noise, you become as silent as one could be.

You maybe seen in the way that a camera "sees" things, but you will not be noticed. NO knowledge consciousness, (nampar shespa) follows the visual contact; we do not remember that this contact has occurred. When the mind inhibits emanation of its radiative energy says Evans-Wentz, it ceases to be a source of mental stimuli o others, so that they become unconscious of the presence of the Adept of the Art just as they are unconscious

of invisible beings living in a rate of vibration unlike their own." It is like the ostrich burying his head in the sand. One draws his attention into himself, instead of directing it outward, and by stopping the flow of the mind, turns off the noise. In the most elementary sense, this form of invisibility is just moving along quietly. "The real secret of invisibility is not concerned with the laws of optics at all," writes Crowley. "The trick is to prevent people from noticing you when they normally would do so." As the test of his power, Crowley took a walk in the street in a golden crown and a scarlet robe without attracting attention. Eliphaz Levi makes the same point in several of his manuscripts. This non-projection technique of un-noticeability/invisibility is described by this author's friend, who is considerably good at it, as "pull in your vibe". The Druid Mist cannot hide you if you continue to project a strong emotional presence. Some people say this feels like a drawing in of their personal energy, pulling it back in through the area just above the solar plexus.

Begin, then, by becoming mentally silent, calming your emotions until you reach emotional neutrality, having withdrawn your presence into yourself. Being able to stop the sentences flowing through your head is essential to any success in spiritual or psychic endeavors. It is the first rung of the ladder. This is mentioned in so many different religious and magical traditions that it must be accepted as one of the essential ingredients. Second, you must learn to stop, or put aside, the mood of the moment. This means sorting the flow of emotional energy surging up and down the body. We can all do this, if for only a moment. Take for example the experience of waiting for an important phone call. It is important to you to make a good impression. But while you are waiting by the phone, you become involved in a heated argument with another person in the room. Emotion is surging up and down through your body. Then the phone rings; this is it; you must be personable. You stop. The moment of suspension when you have left the argument and before you turn your attention to the phone, is it, the emotional neutral-point. You can learn to prolong that minute of emotional silence.

When you have silenced your mental verbalizations and are holding a neutral emotional stance, pull in your social, interactive energy, and your presence will seem to fade into the background. You have become a shadow. A camera will "see" you sitting there, but you will not be noticed, not will you register on the consciousness or in the memories of other people. As a secondary benefit, this mental state allows you to see the world quite objectively, in increased detail and dimensionality.

To this state of un-noticeability you add the fourth level by forming the Druid Mist. While it is the least understood part of the art of invisibility, it has been used and described for millennia, just as our ancestors could throw a missile accurately without understanding gravity or trajectory. Forming the Cleo Trom may involve the ability to control either light, or matter or perception. The Mist seems to absorb light; it is dull colored, gray, and visually uninteresting, as well as hard for the eye to focus on; it does not make itself noticeable. Forming it requires preparation and practice. First, you must train yourself to be able to concentrate on one thing for a fairly long time, ten to twenty minutes. Training the attention and developing the will are basics in all magical traditions. It makes the difference between magic as psychic phenomena and magic as wishful thinking. In learning these skills, small amounts of practice daily works better than long sessions, infrequently. The learning may take anywhere from two weeks to two years, but there are interesting experiences along the way.

# Candle Staring

By Emmon Bodfish  
Samhain 1984, A Druid Missal-Any

## How to invoke your first image.

A good method to use for starters, it is partly mundane, making use of a nerve cell refractory period phenomenon, and partly psychic, making use of willed control of a mentally formed object. This image/object is different from the images in visions which come about spontaneously and require no effort on the seer's part to sustain them. These cannot generally be controlled and manipulated by those who witness them. Nor can hallucination be. The purpose here is to create a controllable phantom. This is a magical exercise, as contrasted with a visionary, contemplative, or meditative one, magic being defined here as psychic power and perception under the control of the will. (Somebody once said the difference between a magician and a madman is control.)

Warning: Any of this takes practice; no instant wizardry. It's like learning to play a musical instrument. You will have to start over from the top line umpteen times. Practice for about twenty minutes at a time; then forget about it for a while. Twenty minutes uses up about the amount of high level mental energy most people have on tap. It takes a few hours of quiet, or even a day or so of regular living, to re-accumulate this energy.

## Instructions:

1. Get alone.
  - A. Make sure you are not going to be disturbed for half an hour.
  - B. Silence helps. Even music distracts. It takes up part of your mental energy to listen to and comprehend it, albeit at the unconscious level.
2. Darkness helps
  - A. A dark room or after sunset.
  - B. No drafts; the candle must not flicker
3. Sit comfortably about arm's length back from your candle with the flame a little below eye level.
  - A. Set the candle against a black background, black felt is good.
  - B. The flame must extend above the top of the candle, not be down in a bowl or a hole.
  - C. Some people find it helps to draw a circle around themselves, indicating to themselves that for the next half hour nothing outside this circle concerns them.
  - D. In some way, mentally calm and ground yourself, letting go worries and plans, and all mental flotsam and jetsam that is normally flowing by.
4. Stare at the candle flame with a relaxed, not a pointed, kind of attention.
  - A. The first visual change you will notice is that you will see the circle of light around the flame, the phenomenon so often portrayed on Yule Season cards. Good, you've got your vision relaxed.
  - B. The second change you will see is in the flame's image on your retinas. It will seem to waiver or move to one side, leaving a dark shadow or image of itself behind it.

Begin by getting mentally silent and emotionally calm. Staring at a dark, plain background, relax your vision, focusing in the middle distance. Concentrate your will and energy on a point in mid-air four or five feet in front of you. Madame Blavatsky found it helped to think of willing the matter making up the air to gather and concentrate at this point. This may require a number of practice sessions of ten to twenty minutes each. When the Mist starts to form, it is grayish and almost invisible. You may only notice that you can no longer see the texture of the dark backdrop. For some reason there is a tendency at first for the eyes to cross while practicing this, so privacy is recommended. ("Just what we need... a gonzo wizard." Cf. Bored of the Rings) After you have produced some of the Mist, you can counter it's tendency to disperse by willing it to spin counter clockwise and contract. When you have gathered a mass of the Mist, a good amount which you can definitely see, the final step is to place it where you want it to be, between yourself and noxious stimuli or yourself and other persons. My consultant describes the technique as holding the Cleo Trom with your eyes and pulling it along with your gaze. A woman mystic whom Madame Blavatsky interviewed during her oriental travels, collected and controlled the Mist by moving her hands as though gathering something together and guiding it. This would be the mudra approach. It is a technique widely used by Western mediums. When you think you can form the Mist reliably, success is always sporadic at first, try practicing with a full length mirror, placed eight or ten feet away from you. This way you can see how much of your reflection is blotted out by what looks like a grayish film on the surface of the mirror. Until you are very adept, be cautious of inviting friends to watch. The phenomena requires all of your concentration, and because friends are more disturbing to it than strangers. Anything that evokes an emotional response from you dissipates the effect.

When you are well practiced, it is possible to get up, wrapping the Cleo Trom around you like a circular curtain and move about unobtrusively, unnoticed by those around you. But you must maintain the psychological silence and physical unobtrusiveness described as Level Three, or people will become aware of your presence, though not of the details of your physical appearance. H.S. Lewis tells an interesting account of this in one of his autobiographical essays. He was practicing forming the mist in a cafeteria, in order to shut out the noise of the people around him and be undisturbed. When he finished his meal, and went to pay, he recognized the owner of the establishment, an old acquaintance of his, working the cash register. He spoke to the man in a friendly way, but his friend treated him coldly, like a peculiar stranger and would give him no indication of recognition. On his way out of the restaurant, Lewis realized that he still had some of the Cleo Trom wrapped about him, not having dispersed it. This is usually done by dismissing it with your mind, willing it to disperse outward and upward, or in counter-clockwise swirls away from you. Some people find it is only necessary to "let go of it from the will."

"The Mist begin to gently lift. The air begin to clear."

The Mist will disperse naturally as you put your attention on immediate matters and become re-involved with the business of the day and the emotions of the moment.

Photographs I have seen of people practicing holding the Cleo Trom around themselves, show an unfocused area, or streaked appearance in the place of the person's image.

This may seem small stuff compared to descriptions in the old sagas, but even in the Iron Age, it required a fair number of Druids to obscure a battlefield.



Congratulations: You are already seeing little things that aren't there!

5. Now, you're going to make this dark image come to you.

A. Look steadily at the dark image without re-focusing on nearer or farther away objects and without turning your head.

B. When you've gotten the right focus, for long enough, the dark image will pull off of the candle flame and move toward you. When it does this, it may no longer be in the shape of the candle flame. It may change to a shape like this.



or some other shape.

6. The usual reaction is to startle, blink, and look away, at which the image disappears and you see a lot of bubbles of light and after-images of the candle.

A. Start again.

B. The first time I got this to work, it pulled free of the candle flame and then came toward me very fast. As if responding to any solid looking object coming fast at my face, I dodged to the side and ducked. The image went on past me and through the space where my head had been. This is not a visual after-image, which follows your field of view as you turn.

7. When you get past the startle reflex and are able to continue to stare in a relaxed way at the image as it approaches you, it will

A. "Pop" a la soap bubble a few inches from your face.

B. Or, if you can hold very still, physically and mentally, and continue keeping your attention on it, it will come to you and seem to enter your head at the spot between and above your eyes. The location is known in the East as the "Third Eye" and in the West as the "Unicorn's Horn". There is no tactile sensation and nothing physical happens.

8. Now, you can learn to control this image. By willing it to do so, you can make it stop at any point between you and the candle, hover for a while, get bigger, and then come to you.

A. It is very slippery and will keep getting away from you at first.

B. A method of doing this which use has the feeling of projecting my energy out to the image, in midair, and moving it by pushing or pulling. Those are the subjective sensations of it.

## Conclusi

The purpose of this exercise, into a wizard-like head state, is controlling visually manifested n Starting with one that is close to the yourse4lf that these manifest by mea you can control that facet of the amusing and confidence building, bu on further mental journeys.



Contents thanks to my Teacher

Organization thanks to Chilton's Auto Repair Manuals.



**Figure 39 Emmon Bodfish at Maypole, Beltane 1983.**

# Why Another Article on Scrying?

By Emmon Bodfish

Samhain 1988, A Druid Missal-Any

Despite the existence of numerous books on crystal gazing, and my pointing of inquirers toward them, this does not seem to be working as a feint. They keep asking. They say they want something “quick”, “short”, the “ready-Mart” of scrying. “What works.” Here goes.

First, I have had better results with a straight sided solid piece of natural crystal than with a polished ball. This was especially true in the beginning. And secondly, as with so many psychic skills, practice does it.

Set up a room where you will not be disturbed. You must be able to be absolutely unself-conscious. A gentle light, coming from one small source, a candle or a low watt bulb, is best. Sit lightly, comfortably, with your back fairly straight, in a position in which you can forget your body. Breathe easily and deeply; “ground down.” Put aside your worries and plans; tell them you will hold court for them later. Later, of course, you must do so and give these thoughts a short audience. This way they will learn to leave you alone while you are practicing your magic.

Eyes open and relaxed, take in the scene around you. Compose your emotions about the neutral point, alert and calm. Listen to the sound of your breathing and slowly stop the sentences running through your head. Become mentally silent, alert, and unbiased; anticipate. Feel the pause at the top of the in-breath. The practice of mental silence, being able to sop the verbal stream of thoughts running through your mind, is essential to the success of any meditative or psychic endeavor. It is the first rung of the ladder. This has been independently discovered by numerous religious and magical traditions and by individuals who have found their own way. It is one of the essentials for progressing in either meditative or thaumaturgical work.

Here are two methods of scrying I have used to get good results. One involves putting the light in front of you. In the other, the light is behind your right shoulder.

In the first, hold the piece of crystal in your right hand between yourself and the light source at the distance at which it is easy for you to focus your eyes on a fleck or a spot in the center of the crystal. At first it will be easier to scry while holding the stone in your hand rather than by gazing at it while it rests on a stand in front of you.

Pick a bright spot, a different looking spot, a flaw or a sparkle in the crystal and watch it. Don't anticipate or try to push for an image. Or, in another way of putting it, “Just watch it like it was television.” Turn the rock slowly. Find an interesting angle.

What will come first are eidetic images. These are like the “faces” you see in clouds or the little scenes you can see in the embers. Your eye is seeing pure shapes, unnamed images, and your brain is saying, “oh, that looks like...” Don't scoff at this or try to stop it. It is one gateway to visions and one of the closest. And, some people would add, one of the safest. Relax your eyes the way you did when you were day dreaming as a kid and just watch. If you can prevent yourself from dismissing it with the “Oh, that's only...” response, the eidetic image will become a scene. Small, very distant figures of people moving about at some unknown task, or geometric mask-like faces that

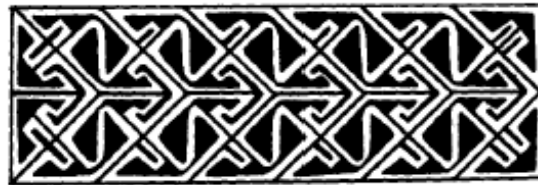
appear, change and disappear are common first sightings. Keep your mind calm and silent and watch. The scene may draw nearer and begin to mean something; a mask may become a face or a person. Two negative skills are needed here; not scoffing and not pushing for something better. Watch, remember, get the feel of it. Sometimes the scene will fade back into being flaws in the crystal; sometimes it will just disappear and you will realize how tired your eyes and mind are. You have come to the end of your concentration energy. With meditation practice, you can increase the length of time that you can hold these contemplative states of mind. Look away. Now you can analyze what meaning you what you saw may have for you. As with all psychic skills it gets easier and more refined with practice. Again, remember the metaphor of learning to play a musical instrument.

When you succeed, try to remember to remember how you were focusing your eyes, and the “feel” of your state of mind. These are helpful guideposts in learning to get back to that state.

Scrying with the light behind you, coming over your right shoulder, is similar as to method, the same eye focus, the same relaxed attention, but here reflections are more important and the scenes are more likely to be in multiple colors. Sunlight can be used, but it is difficult. It is important to have the light coming over your shoulder from the right. This is the positive direction in Celtic lore and does make a difference in mood and mental state. This I know from empirical observation and testing as well. (Yes, we test things here at the Missal-Any. Question everything. It's an old R.D.N.A. tradition not to write or teach about a psychic phenomenon unless you have personal experience of it.) The “light from the right” rule is also corroborated in many other traditions as well. Does it stimulate the left hemisphere? I don't know. Energy, messages, and even thought sentences that seem to originate from the left are often untrustworthy and nonconstructive and sometimes even harmful. This is not a prejudice; it comes of long observation. But this does not mean that anything from the right hand side is “TRUTH.” I'd like to invoke here a former Archdruid's safety tip for psychic experimenters: “Be as cautious about accepting or trusting any entity or “message” which you may encounter in the course of your psychic workings as you would about trusting a person whom you had just met at a party.” Common sense, repeated practice, and long acquaintance are good guides. Check your gut feeling. But this moves into the related problem of ethics, judgment, and veracity testing on the non-material planes, another and vaster subject than simple scrying, which was the subject that I was asked to boil down and put in this nutshell.\*

-Emmon Bodfish

\* And thanks be to the Gods for that! Holy wars have been waged and volumes written on these matters, and I can refer the interested reader thither.



# On Divination: A Short Talk and Dialogue

By Larry Press, Arch Druid, Baccharis Grove  
A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 2001

I had in mind to lead off with the perfect, most appropriate quote; that meant, of course, finding the book containing it. Having found the book, I see that the full quote runs about a page and a half, extravagantly violating all principles of fair use (and necessitating a great deal of typing). Rather than quote in full, I paraphrase; this is appropriate, since the full quote is itself a paraphrase. Here I paraphrase Xenophon paraphrasing Socrates:

"It is not given to man to know all things; that is the province of the Gods. But as the Gods have given us our limited rational faculty, so have they also given us the oracles. Some questions are suitable to our rationality, and those we must answer rationally; other questions must be put to the oracles. It is arrogant and impious to attempt rational answers for questions that are beyond our rational understanding; likewise it is impious to ask of the Gods answers that we can perfectly well find ourselves."

Thus far my paraphrase. An over-simplification perhaps, but otherwise (I trust) a reasonably accurate account of what the translator said Xenophon said Socrates said.

Now let me go back and restate the whole thing (putting words in everyone else's mouths):

1. There are several reasons why a question might not be rationally answerable
  - a. We may lack information.
  - b. There might be a rational answer, but we might be too limited intellectually to find it, or to understand it once found.
  - c. It may be in the nature of the question itself that there is no rationally-attainable answer.

In any of these cases, there could still be an answer (or at any rate, an APPROXIMATE answer) which is attainable IRRATIONALLY (or at any rate, not WHOLLY RATIONALLY).

2. In some important ways, the different divination systems are more-or-less equivalent; which one(s) you choose may be a matter of taste and temperament, or just an accident (though some would say it's no "accident") of which you are exposed to first. The important thing as I see it is that
  - a. You have a way of answering questions rationally.
  - b. You have another way of answering questions that you can't answer rationally.
  - c. You know which is which.

4. In other ways, divination systems are all quite different. Each imposes its own view on the world, and tends to answer all questions in the context of that view. (To a hammer, the world is nothing but nails; to a saw, it's nothing but boards.) In fact, each system is best suited to certain sorts of question; nonetheless, it does NOT do to second-guess the oracle – IT knows better than you do which sorts of question it can answer (personal experience speaking here).

Querent: How do I find the information needed to answer a question? And how do I know when I have found that information – does a little "ah ha!" go off in the brain?

**Augur.** Oops! I think you're assuming one does a divination to find missing information, and then uses that information to (rationally) answer the question. That's not how it usually works.

True, information alone can be the difference between being able or unable to answer a question rationally. And in fact, we CAN use divination to (try to) discover missing information, but I don't know that it works very well. Rather, we may use divination not so much to find the information needed to answer a question rationally, but precisely because we lack that information, and so cannot answer the question rationally.

As for how we know we've "got it right", I think we can only know we have the right information when it gives us the right answer. And how do we know we have the right answer? How do we EVER know? Same sort of tests we apply to any purported answer to any question.

Speaking from experience (not of divination per se but of trying to understand things in general, such as why something happened in a certain way, etc.): sometimes part of understanding is waiting to understand.

**querent:** How do I answer questions that I can't answer rationally? Blind faith?

**Augur:** Blind faith? That may work for some (maybe – I'm unconvinced), but not for me. Of course, there's no guarantee you can answer those questions at all – but the oracles give you additional tools. ALSO, the oracles let you see additional facets of questions that you CAN answer rationally.

**querent:** Tools? Let you see? Oh this is beyond me, at least right now! And how else would you know other than faith?

**Augur:** You're looking at a thing – might not be a physical thing; it might be a social situation, an ethical question, or whatever.

You can look at it from a variety of viewpoints (psychological stances, assumption sets, modes of investigation, etc.), and the thing is so complex that no single viewpoint gives a complete picture of it. Rational investigation gives you some of those views of the thing; divination might give you other views of it. The more different directions you view the thing from, the more you know about it. (Though perhaps, not the more sense you can make of it.)

But blind faith? Perhaps you're faith-oriented, whereas I'm unfaith-oriented. As I said, I approach divination as a rational exercise, even though I'm working in a non-rational realm. Of course, your mileage may vary.

**Querent:** Then it seems to be one of those gut feeling things, like you know when you know, hence the "ah ha!" although knowing and feeling come from two different places – they would seem to be related – oh, but they are both senses! The message comes from or through the senses? How can you test a sense?

**Augur:** It may be that a highly developed gut perception is the ideal. I'm not sure I'd call that "divination"; it may go beyond divination i.e. it may be a direct perception of that of which divination gives indirect hints. Alternatively, it may be just another mode of divination (depending on how you care to categorize things).

When I think of divination I generally have in mind some system that lets you use your rational faculty (to whatever extent possible) to get information from non-rational sources.

At any rate, I'm head-oriented, rather than gut-oriented, and so I use head-oriented divination systems. I'm sure there are

legitimate gut-oriented approaches, but that's terra incognita to me.

**querent:** Does divination then come from the head, as it is trying use our RATIONAL faculty?

**Augur:** For me, it does; for you, maybe not.

**querent:** In Tarot readings when there was no answer to be found YET, I've noticed that the cards would be ill-dignified and say something about being selfish or out for gain, etc.

**Augur:** The oracles do that. Not only do you get answers to the questions you ask, but you get answers to questions you didn't ask, and comments on the state of your act in general.

**querent:** I've learned that means I'm not meant to know yet – is this the "there is no answer?"

**Augur:** Not necessarily. It could also mean you're asking the wrong question, or asking the wrong oracle (i.e. using the wrong method of divination), or whatever.

It could even be that the oracle really is giving you an answer, but that you can't see it.

**querent:** The kinds of questions I asked most recently when I got the ill-dignified cards were job related ones.

Sometimes it just wasn't the time for an answer (maybe I was pestering or impatient or disparate) or I discovered I didn't phrase the question right.

**Augur:** Yeah. It can depend a LOT on your current psychological state. It also helps to practice a lot (says one who doesn't).

**querent:** How do I find my divinatory method?

**Augur:** Trial and error. You need to cast about, to see which methods are most congenial to you.

**querent:** How do I find out what the methods are?

**Augur:** Read a lot. Talk to other people. Note also that you don't have to use somebody ELSE'S method; you can modify an existing method to suit your taste (that's what's usually done), or create your own out of whole cloth (that's also done surprisingly often).

I think that practice with any method will give insight you can use in learning, modifying, or creating another method.

**querent:** How do I become familiar with a method's view so that I know how the answers are colored and adjust accordingly?

**Augur:** By working with that method A LOT. But don't pay too much mind to the differences between the method's views, at least at first.

Remember, it's not wise to second-guess an oracle.

**querent:** Should I do a web search for methods? If so, should I search on the keyword "divination?"

**Augur:** I haven't tried. I'm sure you'd get some hits that way.

I've merely learned about numerous systems (generally only a token amount about them) over the years through reading and discussion. I've followed up on the ones that seemed interesting and congenial, and ignored the rest.

**querent:** Why would I use divination? The augury for the sacrifice? Any other instances?

**Augur:** The augury for the sacrifice is one of the traditional instances; it's really just a special case of the augury for ANY important public function.

I think you should do divinations over ANY important question that doesn't have a really obvious rational answer (and many that do). However, I admit right up front that I don't follow my own advice here as much as I should.

Note though that I don't mean you should ever base an important decision solely on divination – or even primarily on divination-that's just silly.

**querent:** Is an oracle a deity?

**Augur:** You can treat them as such, if that's your bent. I generally don't personify them, except sometimes when talking about them to others.

I use the term "oracle" as shorthand for "divination system", with the understanding that such a system is far more complex than it appears at first – so much so, that we might well treat it as sentient, with its own (inscrutable) will – though, as I've said, I generally don't.

**querent:** Do or can the Celtic deities play a part in the divination in any case?

**Augur:** They may have for Emmon; they could for you, if you want them to. And it WAS the old Indo-European tradition that

1. The Gods spoke through oracles
2. We don't dare do anything important without first checking whether it's OK with the Gods



**Figure 40 Larry Press calling the members to Beltane Service, Live Oak, Beltane1984.**

# Divination Techniques

Compiled from various internet encyclopedia  
by Mike the Fool, 2004

I have little actual practice in divination relative to others I know, but I have a number of thoughts and recommendations, nonetheless, for those curious to explore this range of activities. Divination is the attempt to produce answers to difficult decisions about things we're not sure of, by manipulation or observation of various tools, movements or contemplations. There is not one of us who hasn't flipped a coin, drawn lots or rolled a set of dice to try and inquire about a course of action.

Some of us, myself included, are hesitant that this area is too similar to "magic", and rationalize the process as probing the sub-conscious by ritualized activities that occupy our conscious thoughts and let deeper thoughts slip out with powerful archetypal images and half-digested thoughts and feelings on a subject matter. If divination frightens you or offends some notion in your religion, then after inquiring with wise people, don't do it, but I think your practice will be the poorer without one or two of these tools.

Divination is different from sacrifice in some ways. Divination seeks only knowledge that can't be obtained in conventional ways about the past, present or future. Sacrifice is usually to either thank or encourage the deities for past or future blessings. Often, however, sacrifice is also offered in divination to encourage the gods to release that information, in gratitude for having done so, or to prevent unfortunate outcomes. Others feel that mere activity will bring about revelation, without need of a sacrifice, and is merely a form of meditation and creative speaking.

The base belief of many practices in ancient times was that the will of the Gods was somehow reflected in the composition and activities of the physical universe or locked deep in our soul, and could be revealed by those who knew the right techniques. Some people believe that the information is irreversibly fated to happen, others that it is one possible but likely path that can be avoided with carefully focused activities. Some feel that prophecy is often self-fulfilling.

Getting 51% on a yes/no basis is considered pretty good and 34% on a multiple choice is pretty good. Even if your answers are mostly off target, the whole contemplation of the possibilities is sure to better prepare you when a choice has to be made.

One subclass of Druids, the Ovates or *filidhe*, were charged with divination in ancient times, and the practice continues to this day in many forms. There are hundreds of ways in which divination is practiced, but each practitioner has the forms they feel most comfortable with. I am quite sure that you can creatively devise new techniques with different objects or methods.

People in practice may use a combination of various methods, such as dancing first, blaring loud music in their ears while casting lots on the ground. Or they may fast for many days, sit in a dark quiet room, and speak without restraint in non-sense to brainstorm. Others may simply flip a coin for yes/no questions. Skill and seriousness of the request also play into that calculation. There is no limit of possibilities here.

Most divination is solitary in nature, but others may assist the diviner by supplying materials, singing, dancing or tending to their needs while in a trance. Sometimes, as in the case of drawing lots to determine fortuitous leaders, many people might

be necessary. Often a really talented diviner will build a fan club, and few will have a perfect batting average.

Some people are so good at divinatory activities that they make it a profession or feel obligated to share their gift. I have little compunction about sharing it, but hesitate to do so for compensation, but that is a personal preference. In some states, divination and psychic activities are for "entertainment purposes" only, and is prosecuted when done expressly for material gain. You should definitely understand the local rules. Most forms of gambling are thought to have derived from various divination techniques, are a good example of abuse of the method.

Interestingly enough, most divination methods require a form of trance of specialized concentration, which easily lends itself to mediation techniques. Meditation is more about acquiring inside knowledge, and the same techniques may be applied, along with various types of yoga, martial arts, breathing exercises and austerities. Divination also requires explanation and clarification of the results to another person, which can often resemble counseling techniques.

I have listed the divinatory techniques alphabetically within their subclasses. I should strongly assert that as Reformed Druids, the purposeful harm of animals or people (perhaps even plants) for religious purposes is strongly discouraged, and I can hardly imagine any Reformed Druid doing so. However, historically, many cultures from the Romans, Greeks, Hebrews, Babylonians, Egyptians, etc. have killed or injured animals over the centuries, and this list will include them merely for informational purposes.

## Natural Phenomenon

From the movement of winds, waterfalls or snowfall, the senses are evoked by natural patterns over a period of time. This is particularly common in traditional Reformed Druid liturgies where the winds are evoked after the sacrifice.

Aeromancy is the study of air conditions, cloud formations and other atmospheric phenomena are observed for omens and prognostications. The Star of Bethlehem that herald the birth of Jesus is one such example and weather forecasting is another. Today we have machines to do the observations i.e., barometer and computers.

Astrology is an extremely popular form of divination that uses the celestial bodies: the sun, moon, planets, and stars. In the Kabbalah this practice is called *Monen*.

Austromancy is a type of aeromancy divination where predictions are made from wind's behavior. Many of these prophecies still live in our sayings today, "North winds blowing, which means cold is coming".

Bletonism is the ability to perceive subterranean springs and currents by sensation and is supposedly named after Bleton of France.

Botanomancy is a general term for divination using plants and herbs. One method is to use the leaves from a particular tree and throw them into the wind.

Brontomancy is divination using thunder

Ceraunoscopy seeks to draw omens from the study of thunder and lightning.

Chaomancy is a sub-category of aeromancy that interprets clouds and their shapes or figments in the air like comets.

Cromniomancy is a form of divination where omens are read from onion sprouts. Besides omens, cromniomancy was used to make decisions between two alternatives. A person would write the alternatives on two onions and plant them



at the same time and under the same conditions. The first one to sprout was the "correct" answer or choice.

Dendromancy is a specific form of botanomancy where either oak or mistletoe is used in the divination.

Genethliology is a form of divination that determines someone's future from the position of the stars and planets at the time of his/her birth.

Geomancy is a system of divination that uses the earth's components to make patterns that are then deciphered. An individual will draw a vertical line intersected by three horizontal lines in the dirt; a set of 12 pebbles is then thrown on this pictograph. The stones are then read in relation to the lines in the earth. The vertical line represents you and the three horizontal lines represent time.

Horoscopy is an Astrological forecast of a person's future based on the aspect of the planet and stars either at a given moment, at birth or by his/her zodiac.

Hydatoscopy is a specific form of hydromancy where rainwater is used.

Hydromancy is a general term for divination methods that use water. The variations of hydromancy are as prolific as the substance itself. However they seem to fall into one of three categories. The diviner will either examine the effect of water on matter, examine the water's action on it, or he/she uses the water's properties for scrying or gazing. crystalomancy, eromancy

Meteroromancy is a divination from meteors.

Pegomancy is a specific form of hydromancy that uses spring water.

Phyllorhodomancy is divination where a floral leaf or petal associated to the question is clapped between the hands. The loudness of the sound indicated the success of the outcome. In most cases the rose leaf was used, especially in cases of love. Perhaps this is where we get the practice of pulling flower petals to determine someone's interest. Each petal is pulled while reciting the phrase "he loves me... he loves me not..." until the last petal is pulled. You answer is the last verse that corresponded to the last petal.

Psychometry is the ability to perceive circumstances surrounding an object or place. In the majority of cases the psychics must hold the object but they can also get impression from their surroundings. It is not quite clear how it works. There is one theory that states the object themselves are sentient (animism) and transmit the information and the psychic just tunes-in. The second theory states that living things especially humans radiate auras and energies that are left on objects they have come into contact with and the psychic will pick on this energy residue.

Roadomancy is divination by stars.

Stareomancy is divining by the elements.

Sycomancy is a form of botanomancy where messages are written on leaves. In the West Indies, there is variation where the name of your love is written on a leaf from a particular plant called, amazingly enough, "the love plant". The leaves of this plant have roots that sprout from the leaf itself. If the inscribed leaf takes root -so shall your love and if it doesn't -the love will wither away.

Tidalmancy is the observation of the debris left behind by the last tide and it's height on the beach, especially after a storm or hurricane.

Uranomancy is divination by studying the heavens

Xylomancy is divination by examining wood or leaves found in one's path

## Animals

Most of these allow animals to pick a course by the direction they move, the object they pick up, or the sounds they make. All too often in the ancient past, the inner parts of animals butchered for religious feasts were also examined for unusual defects. Injury to animals is highly frowned upon in Druidism and Neo-paganism, although it continues in a muted form through butchering and food preparation techniques of several world religions.

Ailuromancy is divination by watching cats' movements

Alepouomancy is the prediction of the future based on a fox's paw prints.

alectromancy is a form of divination similar to the Ouija board where messages are spelt out. In this form the cock is the planchette. He pecks at grains that are placed on a circle of letters and the message is spelt out by the grains consumed. As this is going on, the questioner chants an incantation.

Apantomancy is read from chance meetings with animals or objects. It is considered to be a bad omen for a black cat to cross your path. While in ancient Rome, it was a good omen for a she-goat to cross your path. Mexico City is said to have been founded where Aztec soothsayers saw an eagle flying from a cactus carrying a live snake

Augury is used as a synonym for divination but in ancient times it was a Greek-Roman divination where birds' flight patterns or singing were interpreted to foretell future events. Some of these practices are still used today; for example, birds' migration patterns are good indicators of seasonal changes.

Batraquomancy is divination using frogs

Bronchiomancy is divination by interpreting the lungs of sacrificed animals

Cephalomancy is when the skull or head of a donkey or goat is used to perform divination. Kephonomancy

ceranoscopy A sub-category of aeromancy divination that pertains mainly to air and in particular thunder and lightning.

Epatosocomancy Divination by examining the entrails of animals.

Extispicy extispicium is a general term for the inspection of entrails, for the purpose of divination. It can be either animal or human. Disaster was indicated if the entrails were excessively bloody or they were a livid color. Should the priest drop the entrails, disaster was imminent. The Romans would perform this divination in a ritual that consisted of four stages; first they would examine the sacrifice, then they would open it up and examine its entrails. The offering would then be put into the fire where the flames were examined as they burned the sacrifice and finally the food offerings were consumed.

Haruspicy is the examination of the livers and entrails of sacrificed animals. See extispicy for details on the entrails' method and hepatoscopy for the liver.

Hepatoscopy hepatomancy is a specific form of haruspicy divination where the liver of sacrificed animals is examined. In Babylon this practice was very popular, so much so, that they had a specialized priest called a 'bara' to perform the service. The Babylonians thought the liver was a "vehicle" by which the gods revealed their intentions.

Hieromancy hierscopy is the overall term for divination involving sacrificed animals.

Hippomancy is a divination that observes horse's movements and actions.

Ichthyomancy is a specific form of haruspicy where a fish's entrails and head are read for predications.

Kephalomancy is a system of predicting someone's guilt by burning charcoal on the head of a donkey while reciting the names of suspected criminals; a crackling sound is heard when the guilty person is named.

Myomancy is a method of divination that uses mice and rats. Throughout history these rodents have been considered bad or evil omens.

Myrmomancy is divination using ants. For example, when large amounts of ants are seen moving about, it is an indication of a coming storm.

Ologyomancy is fortune-telling by the howling of dogs.

Oomancy oomantia ooscopy ovomancy is a divination system where eggs are used to predict the future. Method one is to break an egg in some water and read the patterns. Method two is to read the external shell of the egg. Method three is an ancient way to determine the gender of an expectant mother's child. She incubates a chicken egg in her bosom and when the chick is hatched its gender will determine the gender of her child.

Onomancy is divination using a donkey or ass.

Ophiomancy is divination by observing the behavior of snakes.

Orniscopy orinthomancy is the study of omens associated with birds, particularly birds in flight.

Ovomancy oomancy ooscopy is when a divination is performed by breaking an egg into a container and interpreting the shape of the egg white.

Scapulomancy is a particular form of pyroscopy where the shoulder blades of the burnt victims are inspected and interpreted.

Scatostopy is a type of divination that examines excrement.

Splanchnomancy is a variation of hepatostopy where readings are made from cut sections of a goat liver.

Theriomancy is by beasts

Zoomancy A broad term for the practice of divination that observes the behavior of animals.

## Humans

Things about people are often thought to be deducible from close observation of certain aspects of them. The various ascetic or physical activities are just about limitless, but most disengage the critical mind by distraction and sensory overload so that the subconscious can be evoked and entertained. Naturally any divination that would harm a person is both illegal and probably immoral.

Alcomancy is the imbibing of large amounts of alcohol and then rambling about matters until it makes sense.

Amniomancy analyzes the membrane that surrounds a newborn's head (caul) was used to determine the baby's future. If the color was red this indicated then good fortunes ahead but if the color was lead there was misfortune instead. If the membrane was whole and intact, the child would not die by drowning. It is said that even seafarers would try to buy caul's to prevent against this fate.

Anthropomancy is an ancient form divination where the internal organs of sacrificed humans are interpreted. There are many recorded cases through out history and in most of these cases the victims were women and children.

Anthropostopy is the art of discovering or evaluating a person's character, desires and inclinations from studying their visible features. Similar to anthropometry, which is the study of actual physical measurements of the body's features. The Italian criminologist, Cesare Lombroso claimed that certain craniofacial features could identify certain criminal types; i.e., murderers have prominent jaws. He based this on numerous measurement analysis of criminals. Later, a French police officer named Eugene Vidocq took these findings and started the documentation of facial characteristics of criminals for identification purposes, which are still used today.

Armomancy is supposedly divination by inspecting shoulders.

Biorhythm is foretelling the future by observing the body's natural rhythms evolving the emotional, physical and intellectual phases.

Cartopedy is a Persian divination using feet much like palmistry uses the hands. The size, shape and form of the entire foot are taken into consideration in addition to the lines. This is still a serious science in India and Pakistan. Cartopedist are sought in matters of marriage, jobs and even solving crimes.

Chirognomy cheiromancy is when all aspects of the hand are studied. The shape, form, lines, palms, finger and fingernails are interpreted. This is commonly known as palmistry. It is said that a hand with square fingers and proportionately wide palm indicates a logical, pragmatic person who can be over-skeptical.

Competomancy is the ritualistic dueling of two or more people in games of sport as divination.

Crowdomancy is the observation of large numbers of people in motion in public places.

Erotomancy is the divination by sexual intercourse, a practice that could easily be abused by the nefarious.

Fetomancy is the practice of observing birth defects both in animals and humans.

Gastromancy is an ancient method of divination where a low guttural voice is heard but does not appear to come from the seer who is making them. Some speculate that the diviner throws his voice similar to ventriloquism. Within these guttural sounds the prophecy is revealed.

Gelostopy is divination that analyzes a person's laughter to determine their character.

Graphology is when a person's handwriting is analyzed to establish their character and personality traits. This practice dates back to ancient times, probably when writing was in its infancy. Aristotle went as far to say that he could define a person's soul from his handwriting.

Gyromancy is a divination method that combines the planchette and cyclomancy. A person twirls around within a circle of letters and as the individual stumbles about and makes contact with the letters, the omen is spelt out. The end of the message comes when the person falls. This method can be simplified further by leaving out the letters and just read the position that person fell in relation to a the circle.

Hypnomancy is divination using sleep.

Ichnomancy is divination using footprints.

Idiomancy is divination by listening to idiots prattle. Best used during election years.

Metagnomy is the divination using "visions" received in a trance state.

Metopostopy is the practice of interpreting a person's character and destiny from the individual's lines on their forehead.

Metopostopy is a specific form of physiognomy.

## Judging Ordeals

Before the introduction of prisoner rights and better interrogation techniques, the truth of the matter might be determined by resorting to divination. Often these forms of ordeals in courts involved dangerous or painful "proofs" of innocent, where the likely result was guilty (i.e. weighing you versus a bible, dunking, holding fiery metal, walking coals, drinking poison, etc.) fortunately most of these have disappeared. Here are a few other uncommon ones.

Moleosophy is a method determines a person's character and health by using the moles on their body. In the Middle Ages this form of divination was used to help identify witches and determine their guilt. This particular divination has a special place in medical science. We are often advised to report to our doctors if we have mole that changes shape, size and color because it could be cancerous.

Narcomancy is a divination using sleep.

Oculomancy is a form of scrying where the diviner gazes into the questioners' eyes and reads the reflections. Perhaps this is not so strange considering the saying – "The eyes are the windows to the soul".

Odontomancy is divination using teeth.

Onimancy is a Kabbalic divination where the oil of olives is placed on the palm or nails of an innocent child. Depending on the divinatory subject the child would either face east for money, south for matters of love, west for theft and south for murder. The child would then recite a Psalms and when finished she would see the answers.

Omphalomancy omphalomancy comes from the word omphaloskepsis meaning to reflect over ones' belly button. It was an ancient form of divination practiced on newborn girls to determined the number of children they would have in their future. The amount was determined by the number of knots in her umbilical cord.

Omphalopsychic is a person who practices omphalopsychic stares at the navel as a way of inducing a hypnotic state in order to obtain a divination. Or the study of navel lint.

Oneiromancy is the form of divination by which dreams are interpreted either to aid in the understanding of the unconscious or to foretell the future. The psychologist Carl G. Jung thought that dreams were a method by which the collective unconscious talked to us. However, in ancient times it was thought that dreams were portals by which the gods spoke to person.

Onychomancy is a form of divination that uses the human fingernail. One way to do this is to observe and read the shapes formed by the sun reflecting on a young child's fingernail. Another way is to read the markings on a person's nails to predict his/her future much like palmistry. Then there is the medical way. The human fingernail can provide clues to the cause of a person's ill health. Health problems, like lupus, diabetes, scleroderma, kidney and liver disorders, all leave distinctive marks on the nails.

Palmistry is a divination that is done by reading the lines and characteristics of the palm. This divination is an aspect of chiromancy.

Phrenology is a divination that uses the contours of head and scalp to determines information about the person.

Physiognomy is a divination by the face; the study of character analysis through physical features.

Stolisomancy is a method where omens are determined by the person's dress or appearance.

Podomancy is done by studying the feet.

Retromancy is divination by looking over one's shoulder.

Schematomancy is divination using the human form

Spasmatomancy is divination by twitching or convulsions of the body.

Sternomancy is a study from the breast to the belly.

Thumomancy is divination by means of one's own soul.

Uromancy is divination that is performed by reading bubbles made by urinating in a pot.

Xenomancy is divination using strangers.

Alphitomancy is form of divination is used in determining guilt and innocence. Each "suspect" eats a barley-cake and the one who gets indigestion is the guilty party. To ensure success, there was a special recipe used to aid in the participants' indigestion.

Cleidomancy clidomancy is a divination for interpreting guilt that uses the movements of a suspended key. There are various methods to this practice. One method is to take a house key and enclose it inside a Bible on the 50th Psalm. The bible is then sealed shut and suspended on a nail. Guilt is established when Bible turns as the suspect's name is mentioned.

Coscinomancy coskiomancy A Greek divination where a sieve, tong or shears are balance or suspended to determine guilt. The method was either to balance the "tool" on the thumb or middle fingernail of two individuals facing each other or to tie the "tool" on a thread and suspended it. The suspect's names are spoken and when the guilty person's name was mentioned the item moved. It was also used to discover secret admirers.

Margaritomancy is a form of divination that uses a pearl to determine guilt. A pearl is covered by an upside-down vase, and placed near a fire while the names of suspects are read aloud. When the name of the guilty person is read the pearl would shoot up and pierce the bottom of the vase.

Skatharomancy is insect divination where the tracks of a beetle crawling over the grave of a murder victim are interpreted.

## Composition & Manipulation

From a swinging pendulum or staring at a candle, this methods absorbs one of the major sensory inputs through overload, causing either hallucination, daydreaming or hypnotism.

From rohrschach ink blots to tea leaves, the way things clump together may evoke powerful images or associations by their shape, texture or interaction. Sometimes One object of many is picked, usually without seeing, and then examined closely, evincing thoughts based on it's physical characteristics. If the object is associated with some person or place, the feelings may be stronger.

Acuto-manzia is a method of divination using thirteen pins (10 straight and 3 bent). They are shaken in the hand and dropped on a surface sprinkled with powder. The patterns in the powder as well as the pins are read.

Ambulomancy is divination by taking a walk.

Alveromancy is divination using sounds.

Axiomancy is divination through the observation of how an saw, ax or hatchet quivers or points when driven into post.

Belomancy is an ancient Babylonian practice where arrows are tossed in the air and as they fell the direction was determined.

- Cattabomancy – by vessels of brass or other metal.
- Captromancy enoptromancy A form of divination that uses a mirror. A mirror is placed so that it catches a reflection of another substance. Usually this is something that is hard to hold, for example moonbeams or water reflections. Then the reflections in the mirror are interpreted. Mirror divination is similar to crystal gazing.
- Ceromancy ceremancy ceroscopy is divination using wax from candles. Wax is melted into liquid form then it was poured into a bowl containing cold water. The resulting shapes, which are usually circular, are then read.
- Chartomancy by writing in papers.
- Chronomancy is divination by means of time.
- Clacking is divining by 'clacking' two stones, blocks or pipes together.
- Crystalomancy is a mode of divination practiced since ancient times that uses objects or substances with a reflective surface such as crystals, water, ink, treacle and mirrors. The purpose of reflective surface is to aid the diviner into a meditative state where the visions are received. In ancient times this practiced was aided by the invocation of spirits.
- Critomancy is a divination which determines omens from food that has been offered in sacrificial rituals.
- Cyclomancy is the practice of divination from a turning wheel.
- Dactyliomancy cleromancy is a very ancient technique of divination of throwing lots using small objects like beans, stones, sticks, shells, dice, bones, or pottery shards. These objects are read either by inscriptions they may be on them or by the patterns they make.
- Dextromancy is the divination by juggling objects.
- Dowsing is an ancient form divination that is still used today. It uses a forked stick (or divining rod) to locate water or precious minerals; also known as water-witching.
- Enoptromancy is foretelling the health of a person by use of a mirror submerged in water.
- Eraomancy is a Persian divination that uses air and water. A vessel, filled with water, is exposed to the air (often by breath) while the diviner with a low voice chants his/her desire. If bubbles appeared on the surface of the water, it is a good sign that your desire will come to fruition.
- Eromancy is divination using water vessels.
- Feng-shui is the application practiced in China concerning the placement of structures. The practice is based upon the belief that a structure should not be situated where it interferes with the flow of the earth's energies known as "dragon lines". This is accomplished by keeping the structures complementary. For example, a (sharp) corner of one house should not face the (smooth) side of a neighboring house, if it does, the occupant of the neighboring house believes that a great misfortune will befall him. However, to destroy and rebuild a house is costly. The common solution is to place a magical icon of dragon or monster facing the threat to protect against the evil influence.
- Flavomancy is divination by the flavor of one object selected amongst many of the same kind.
- Gematria is an ancient system where truths and meanings are hidden within words. Each letter of an alphabet corresponds to a number. Numerical values of words are totaled up and then these words are said to correspond with other words sharing the same numerical value.
- Geomancy is divination by casting earth onto a surface.
- Getamancy is divination by kicking off your geta or wooden shoes and if the sole is facing up it will rain the next day or the answer is "no".
- Harpomancy is divination by listening to a harp resonate with the winds blowing through the strings.
- Idolomancy is by idols.
- Icthyomancy is by idols, images, figures.
- Lecanomancy is a specific branch of crystalomancy and hydromancy that uses to images on water. These images can be reflections or actual physical substances. In most cases when it is a physical substance the substance is non-homogenous with the water, like wax, lead or oil.
- Macharomancy is by knives or swords.
- Macromancy is divination using large objects.
- Maculomancy is divination using spots.
- Margaritomancy is the procedure of using bouncing pearls.
- Molybdomancy draws mystic inferences from the hissing of molten lead.
- Musicomancy is divination by the observation of the first notes played by a novice on a strange instrument.
- Oenomancy oinomancy is when first the object is either boiled or soaked in wine and then the wine stains are read.
- Oenomancy is divination by the appearance of wine poured in libation.
- Oryctomancy is divination using excavated objects.
- Ossomancy is divination using bones.
- Osteomancy is divination using bones.
- Papyromancy is the practiced of studying the characteristic of folded paper or the observation of one folding it.
- Pessomancy psephomancy is a definitive form of cleromancy where small objects like pebbles and beans are marked with symbols or colors relating to health, success, travel, money and so forth. The objects are placed in a bag and shuffled and then they are either thrown out, or randomly drawn.
- Psychography is a form of divination where mysterious writing has an oracle nature.
- Rhabdomancy is an overall term used for divination with a rod, stick, wand or of similar shape.
- Scrying is a general term for the divinatory method whereby the individual stares or gazes at an object or substance with a reflective surface; i.e., crystals, mirrors, water, ink, even flames. The answer or fortune is then revealed to the scryer. An updated method is to fill a cauldron with its interior painted black with water and gaze into its depth on a moonlit night. The well-known seer, Nostradamus made his prediction using a bowl full of water placed on a brass tripod.
- Sycomancy is divination by wrinkled figs.
- Tasseography tasseomancy is divination by reading of tea leaves or coffee ground patterns. Tea is poured into a cup without using a strainer; after the tea is consumed by inquirer the pattern left behind on the bottom of the cup is read. Alternatively, place the saucer on top of the cup and flip the cup upside down. The pattern is then read off the saucer (this only works if there is some moisture left in the cup). The shapes are read as symbolism and the time constraints are determined by proximity to rim of the cup. The bottom of the cup is the past and the rim is the immediate future.
- Tring-ba works by asking a question. Holding a rosary consisting of 108 beads, randomly select a bead in each hand, making sure to leave sufficient beads between them. Then with the fingers of each hand move four to right and four to the left towards the center until either 1, 2, 3 or 4

remains in the center. The procedure is repeated four times each having a specific purpose. The outcome of the divination depends on the number of beads left. One is good luck; two is bad luck; three is whatever the current situation is, it will happen rapidly; and finally four, good luck but with some problems.

Urim and Thumum is a reading of oracles from the twelve sacred stones that were attached to the breastplate of the high priest in ancient Judaism. (Exodus 28:30)

Tiromancy is a divination that use cheese by interpreting their holes or mold.

## Randomness & Math

Divination is sometimes defined as analyzing unpredictable actions to understand unpredictable actions. From dice to lots, objects whose fallen or spinned position cannot be guessed are used to pick from lists of prepared results or to give a clue or association associated with each resulting possibility.

Aleuromancy aleuromancy is a divination where answers to questions are rolled into balls of dough and cooked. The balls are mixed nine times then chosen at random. A modern day version would be the Chinese fortune cookie.

Arithmancy is a divination using numerical values. Letters are converted into numeric value through various methods and then added. In ancient Greece, the combatant whose name had the greatest value was predicted to win in a fight. The Kabbalah, which is the basis of many occult philosophies, is filled with numeric divination. Numerology.

Alomancy is when the diviner interprets future events by throwing salt crystals and analyzing the patterns, either after it is thrown or as it is airborne.

Ashagalomancy is a divination system of casting small bones each with a particular meaning. This method is considered the early form of dice divination where the numbers on the dice have corresponding letters.

Astragalomancy astragyromancy is a form of divination that uses dice marked with letters of the alphabet. The dice can be any shape or form.

Axinomancy is a divination that is accomplished by means of a hatchet or ax. There are two known methods; both are for determining direction. (1) Direction for an item: The ax head was heated and held perpendicular in the air. A round agate is place on the rim of the ax. If the agate remained, the item you were searching is lost and cannot be found. In the case where the agate rolled off the action was then repeated three times. If the agate rolled in the same direction every time that was the direction where the item lay but if it didn't you had to look farther afield. (2) Direction for finding a person: An ax is cast into the ground so that the handle is perpendicular in the air. Those involve in the search would dance around the ax until the handle fell to the ground. The handle pointed to the direction that the person took.

Bibliomancy is a popular divinatory method that is still used today. A book is chosen for the purpose often related to your question. The book is randomly opened and a finger is arbitrarily placed on the page. The sentence, passage or even picture is the prophecy or answer. During the Middle Ages, to find out if someone was guilty of sorcery- they were weighed against the Church Bible. If the person outweighed the Bible (which was often the case) the person was guilty.

Cartomancy is a method of telling someone's fortune by using a deck of cards. Although many decks can be used a specific one has developed over time called tarot.

Cledomancy is by examining words linked in random association, like some psychological tests. One example is to say a word and the person says the first thing on their mind or a word that begins with the last letter of the previous word.

Cledonomancy is divination by chance remarks or events.

Cleromancy is divination by "casting lots", similar to dice but with objects such as pebbles or sea shells.

Cyclomancy is a practice of divination where one consults a spinning object like a wheel or bottle. One form of consultation is direction. When at a crossroad, take a bottle and lay it horizontally on the ground and spin. When it stops spinning, the neck of the bottle will point to the road where your destiny lies. The popular game, "spin the bottle", is based on this concept.

Dactyliomancy dactylomancy is thought to be one of the earliest forms of radiesthesia. This divination uses a ring primarily as a pendulum. In another method, the ring is dropped into bowl of water and its position at the bottom determines the outcome. The inside bottom of the bowl may contain a special pattern to aid in the prediction. A variation to this would be to suspend a ring by a thread in a vessel filled with water and shake; the amount of times it hits the vessel's wall determines the prediction.

Fractomancy is a modern form of pattern divination: in this case the structures of fractal geometric patterns are interpreted.

I Ching or Book of Changes is an ancient Chinese system of divination. An oracle is cast by flipping coins or more traditionally yarrow stalks. The pattern is then compared to 64 hexagrams found in the I Ching, each with a special meaning.

[Limyra](#) is a Greek oracle divination using a magic alphabet engraved on stones similar to runes. A detailed look into this form divination can be found at the link provided.

Lithomancy is a specific form of geomancy that uses stones. Divination is accomplished either by tossing the stones and interpreting their patterns or using the stone's actual properties and correspondences. One method is to use 13 stones each being unique type and relatively the same size. The 13 stones will have designated meaning according to their geological classification. Another method is to inscribe symbols onto stones, which is often made in a uniformed shape – i.e. Runes, Limyra.

Logarithmancy is divination by logarithms.

Notarikon is a Kabbalic form of divination where words from the Bible are used to interpret the book itself. It is accomplished by combing the first and last letters of acronyms appearing in the Old Testament to form new words. The Kabbalists believe the God has encoded secret messages in the Bible. They believe that "Amen" is the acronym for "Adonai Melekh Namen" meaning "the Lord and faithful King.

Numerology is a popular form of divination that uses numerical interpretation of numbers, dates, and the numeric value of letters to reveal all sorts of information. This is an extensive field of divination with many methods. Example: In Hebrew, consonants are used as number signs, but by providing them with vowels, one can often read the numbers as words and can read words as numbers – so YHWH becomes Yahweh.

Ogham is an Irish form of cleromancy. Stick(s) are made from a nut bearing tree onto which Ogham letters are inscribed.

The sticks are tossed on a white cloth and the diviner would randomly choose three sticks and read the fortune. An alternative form is to have one stick with four sides on which the four groups of Ogham letters are carved.

Onomancy onomancy is a divination based on the theory that there is a link between a person's name and their character and fate. The simplest of the methods is to look at what the name means to glean the person's character – i.e. Cara means friend. Another method is to look at the amount of vowels in the name. If there is an even amount the person will have problems with his left side and if there is an odd amount the problem is on the right side. The last method is to convert the individual's name into a numeric value. Then, taking this number determines the person's future.

Radiesthesia is a general term for divining the location of an object or person by using a particular pointing device. The device is used to increase the radiesthesist's sensitivity and can be either a rod or a pendulum. A rod is normally something long and thin like a stick, wand, or arrow while the pendulum is anything small that can be tied at the end of a string. Sometimes, the radiesthesist will combine the two by tying the pendulum on the end of the rod. In both cases the indicators will move when it is over the object. One example is to use a pendulum over a map in hopes of locating a missing person.

Rhapsodmancy is a specific form of bibliomancy where a poetry book is used. The book is open randomly to a poem or verse to answer the individual's question.

Runes are a type of pessomancy where an ancient alphabet is inscribed on small objects like pebbles or sticks. These "runes" are either randomly selected or cast and their secrets read. The runic alphabet can represent letters, qualities, events, oracles and deities. Two examples of runic systems are the Teutonic FUTHARK and the Greek Limyra.

Sortilege is a term used for the portents or omens resulting from the drawing or casting of lots.

Tarot is a specific type of cartomancy where a deck of seventy eight cards, each representing a specific concept, are laid out in a pattern and "read".

Stichomancy is another form of throwing open a book and selecting a random passage for the purpose of divination.

Vehiculomancy is the observation of traffic patterns.

Zodiac is an aspect to divination where the apparent circular path of the sun, as it traverses the heavens, is recorded as symbols. These symbols are then used in horoscopes and astrology. Two common zodiac forms are the Western zodiac, which uses twelve pictographs, known as signs and the Eastern (Chinese) zodiac, which uses 12 animals.

## Fire & Transformation

Anthracomancy is a divination using burning coals.

Capnomancy is a term used for smoke and fume divination. The smoke that read is specifically produced for the purpose of the divination. For example, branches of vervain and briar, on which the questions have been carved, are burned. The smoke produced from this element indicates the answer.

Causimomancy is a divination derived from an object's behaviors when placed in fire. It is a good omen when something combustible doesn't ignite. Common items that have been used in this method are animals, humans, salt, leaves, sticks and incense.

Daphnomancy dappnomancy is an ancient form of divination where laurel branches are burned. During the burning of

the laurel, if crackling is heard this is a good sign but if it is absent the opposite is true.

Dissolvoscopy is observation of objects dissolving in hot water.

Empyromancy is smoke divination from burning laurel leaves.

Halolmancy is a causimomancy method of fire divination that involves throwing salt into the flames. The resulting flames are then interpreted.

Lampadomancy is a divination system whereby omens and predictions are read from the flame of a candle or oil lamp. If the flames have a single point this indicates a good fortune and if it has two points this means bad luck. If the flame is dim one must postpone any plans for the time being and if the flame is bright all things are right. If the flames should become small luck is temporary and should it spark this indicates forthcoming news. If the flame has a halo it indicates a storm is coming and if the flame goes out serious trouble or danger is ahead.

Libanomancy libranomancy is a popular system of divination where incense and prayers are used. Incense is burned while the individual prays. It is said that the smoke carries the prayers to heaven and if the incense is consumed the prayers will be answered. Choice of incense depends on which deity you wish to pray to or the subject of your prays.

Pyromancy is a generic term for divination that uses fire. The good omen is when the flames are brisk and the fire is healthy and robust. If offerings are made, like kindling, incense, sacrifices and so forth, they must be consumed quickly within the flames. A bad presage is when the flames are dark and the fire is difficult to kindle and offerings do not ignite.

Pyroscopy is a specified form of pyromancy where the results are read after the fire is extinguished.

Sideromancy is a divination of a straw's reaction as it is placed on a red hot iron.

Spodomancy is a form of divination that examines ashes.

Tephromancy is divination by ashes obtained from the burning of tree bark.

Tephromancy is divination by ashes of burned sacrifices.

Xylomancy is divination from pieces of wood, either from their shape or their appearance while they burn.

## Oracular

This is when the person, perhaps in a shamanic manner, invites wise spirits to enter his body and speak or perform the actions that will be divinational. This is an area that deeply disturbs some people who fear it will be irreversible, yet I feel that no spirit can unwillingly control my body any longer than I desire it; but that might be a matter of will power or personal difference.

Demonomancy is divination with the aid of demons, not recommended.

Necromancy is the practice of conjuring up the spirits of the dead for divination. In Voodoo, necromancy is practiced in one of two ways either summoning the body (the infamous zombie) or summoning the spirit. A famous story, of spirits revealing truths and foretelling the future, is the "Christmas Carol" with Ebenezer Scrooge.

Sciomancy is a form of divination where shadows or ghosts or alternatively a spirit guide is used. This practice is common in shamanism.

Theomancy is found in every religion; it is divination by oracles (god's messengers).

## Conclusion to Divination

There are about 300 types of divination listed so far in this article. It is up to you if you choose to use them, hopefully in moderation, with a concern that whatever knowledge you do gain from the practice is sometimes considered also to be an obligation. Perhaps you'll even find other ways to meditate and reflect on the world and yourself.

May you grow in wisdom through reflection.



**Figure 41 Another view of Sticks & Stones by the Chapel, 2004.**



**Figure 42 The Boulder of Cowling in the Lower Arb, next to the Cannon river flats, 2004.**

# The Book of Ultimate Answers

Written by  
Rev. Michael Scharding, D.D.  
in June 1994 c.e.

No part of this book may be printed, reproduced or stored by any means presently known, or to be created in the future, without express written permission of the author; except short quotations for scholarly studies or for book reviews. The following people that I'll list are granted exceptions and are allowed to print 10 issues a year. An exception to this restriction is extended to all past, present & future Reformed Druids of North America for raising grove-funds. Another exception is made to anybody who is fluent in Ge'ez *and* Scots-Gaelic. Another exception is made for anybody with two noses and a third ear. I also, graciously, will make an exception for the government officials of Malawi; who have been inspiringly helpful in writing this book. Finally, I would make an exception for Fillard.

Another Fine Product of the Drynemeton Press

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## Disclaimer

The author accepts no responsibility for the actions or decisions that are made by the reader as a result of reading this book. If you are actually using this book, then something is loose in your head. Similarly the reader bears no responsibility for the actions of the author for having written this book. If you're using this book, you should always seek loads of advice from people more knowledgeable than I (and this book) about the issues for which this book is being consulted (i.e. try your friends, relatives, priests, employers, children, plants, pets, crystals, etc.).

If this product doesn't work (and I don't mean if it works well) then please feel free to shred it or give it to your friend (or enemy) as a present.

When I call this a Reformed Druid publication, I mean it is a publication by a Reformed Druid. I hope that most other Reformed Druids disagree with my views.

## Dedication

I would like to dedicate this book to Rev. Jewelnel Davis, who has inspired the Carleton Campus with her wisdom during her years here. I hope that this book will likewise provided needed answers to those faced with the inscrutability of the universe, or at least get them to give up using similar books and go back to talking with real people (which is a much wiser thing to do).

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## Other Thanks

There are a number of people I would like to thank for making this enormously difficult work possible. First I would like to thank my ancestors and all the past populace of the world which have made my culture(s), philosophy(s), religion(s), environment, language(s) and genetic code what they are today (you know who you are!).

I'd also like to thank the Carleton Academic Computing and Networking Center for the use of their computers while formatting this book for publication while I attended school there. Carleton's faculty, staff and students also deserve my thanks for instilling the knowledge, moral teachings and education that made this book possible.

Not to forget you, are all the many plant, animal & microbial creatures I've ingested to sustain my biological processes. I'm also very thankful that I can breathe the oxygenated air and that the sun comes up in the morning. For all these myriads of interlacing cycles and miraculous events (including hormones) I would like to thank the Creator(s). You're doing a fine job, keep up the good work!

I would also like to thank the Sheltons, the Frangquists, Isaac Bonewits, Glenn McDavid, Sam Adams, Norman Nelson and the many Druids who have enlightened me on "the mysteries" of Druidism (whatever they are...).

To conclude, I'd like to thank whoever (or whatever) else I'm forgotten to include.



## Preface: Why this book was written.

I was once sitting under a large oak tree on a sunny day when I came to the realization that there are a lot of unanswered questions in the world. Think about it, do you know the names of all the people in Ghana; or why do English speakers often put the adjectives before the nouns? We live in world awash with doubt and distressed with uncertainty. Will we ever know the right answers to every question? Probably not. However, we live in a society that demands answers. To not provide answers is to show incompetence or lack of education. Would you want to look incompetent or uneducated? I wouldn't, but it would seem fated that we will have to continue to live with that persistent embarrassment.

I decided that someone had to take care of all these loose ends, even at the risk of giving the wrong answers. I mean, isn't it better to have an answer, even if it is not THE answer, especially one that works; rather than to stand there and sheepishly say that you don't have an answer? Once I accepted this monumental task I was faced with a more daunting undertaking than passing my Senior Comprehensive exercise at Carleton while retaining a social life; providing viable answers to all the possible questions that can be posed in the English language. It was a toughie, but I managed to complete it in a few hours. Drawing upon my extraordinary ability to pull answers out of a baseball cap, I wrote this book. I have intended it to be a quick handbook to use whenever you are confronted with a perplexing problem or question.

While divinatory purposes are probably not a very effective use of the book, your use of the book is not my concern. Like the disclaimer says, you can do what you want with the book, that's your decision. This book has worked many times for myself and I hope it proves so for you. Enjoy!

Rev. Michael Scharding

June 20th, 1994 c.e.

## Third Edition Update:

Due to the overwhelming desire for more answers, I've massively expanded the chapters of answers to provide more customized answers.

## Recommendations

1. If you are not competent in the English language, have a friend help you use this book.
2. Similarly if you are blind, have them read this book to you or type it in Braille so that you can scan it.
3. If no one answer works, try combinations and permutations.

## Reminders

1. If you are not using the book properly, then you perhaps don't deserve an answer.
2. Be persistent, it will work if you don't give up.
3. There's an answer in this book that works for your question!



## Introduction: How to use this book

There are three chapters to the Book of Ultimate Answers, one each for affirmative, negative and mixed answers. I have found that the Book of Ultimate Answers works best for me when used as outlined in the following flow-chart:

- I. Get comfortable.
- II. Pray and/or meditate for the recommended time (see below) on how to best formulate the question in the English languages.
- III. Open to the first chapter.
  - A. If an appropriate answer is there, you're done.
  - B. No luck? Try chapter two.
    - i. If you find an appropriate answer, cool.
    - ii. If that doesn't work, try chapter three.
      - a. If it worked, you're done.
      - b. If it you couldn't find a usable answer then return to chapter one.

## How Long to Prepare Beforehand

Now depending on how difficult or important the question is, you'll have to formulate the question and ready your mind to spot a useable answer in your search. Imagine you're going to be asking this to Mahatma Gandhi at a press conference. You want to be very clear. This is because your mind is often running many sub-processes at the same time and it might be actually more concerned with finding an answer to another problem. The result? You get the right answer to a sub-conscious question instead of the one you asked. Remember, the answer may not be the one you want to find, so don't force it.

To help remedy this frequent problem, I'm providing the handy-dandy scale that I recommend to meditate and/or pray before using this book. It's roughly:

## Difficulty to Time List

- Inconsequential: 5 seconds
- Simple: 1 minute
- Pesky: 1 hour
- Important: 1 day
- Life-Changing: 1 month to a Year
- Earth-Shattering: 2 years
- Universe-Shattering: 15 years
- Future Career/Marriage: 20 years and a day

## Clarifying Examples for the Scale Categories:

- Inconsequential: What color is a tomato?
- Simple: What should I watch on TV tonight?
- Pesky: Should I change brands of shampoo?
- Important: Do I wish to learn Gaelic?
- Life-Changing: Do I get a nose-job?
- Earth-Shattering: Shall I reveal my divinity to CNN?
- Universe-Shattering: Shall I bestow warp-engine capability to mere mortal Earthlings?
- Future Career/Marriage: Do I want to marry Alex?

## Other important notes:

Feel encouraged to modify the words in any answer (i.e. the tense, conjugation, plurality, gender, inflection, punctuation, cultural understanding, order, grammatical purpose, spelling or definition) in order to make it a more suitable answer. Remember, you only need an answer that works, not the best answer!

## Chapter One: Affirmative Answers

Could be a positive answer to your question:

- Afraid so.
- Yes.
- Of course!
- Probably.
- Because.
- Easily.
- With difficulty.
- Perhaps so.
- Go with it.
- Definitely.
- I said so.
- Once and a while.
- Why not?
- Partially so.
- Some of the world's greatest people have thought so.
- Occasionally.
- It bodes well.
- In a twisted way, yeah.
- I wish so to.
- I have it on good authority.
- So a rumor has it. Next question please.
- Uh, huh.
- In a mytho-poetic sense.
- In some situations.
- That would be nice.
- Few have ever doubted it.
- When you are ready.
- Only if you do it the right way.
- Some would think so.
- Yeah!
- If you can accept the risks.
- At the appropriate time.
- If things favor it.
- Do what's best.
- Trust in yourself.
- It has always been so.
- If you trust them.
- Couldn't agree with you more.
- I'd say go with it, but ask someone for a second opinion.
- True.
- If you're lucky.
- If Gandhi would do it, so should you.
- You'll win.
- When one truly loves someone.
- You are ready and skillful enough to do it.
- No problem.
- Cautiously.
- Oh, I've got the answer, but you must try that again in a "yes-no" format.

**Didn't find a suitable answer? Try chapters two and three.**

## Chapter Two: Negative Answers

Oh, it might be a negative on this one. An answer could be one of the following:

No.  
Never.  
Because.  
Couldn't be.  
Unlikely.  
Don't.  
You'll lose.  
Mustn't  
When the "hot-motifed-culture's interpretation of Hell" freezes over!  
Can't.  
Give up.  
Not often.  
Won't.  
Not worth the bother.  
Not with your resources.  
Try not to.  
Shouldn't.  
Impossible.  
Not in my book!  
Might not.  
Don't you dare!  
If your friend jumped off a cliff, would you also jump off a cliff?  
Think about it, it wouldn't work.  
Cautiously.  
Most likely not.  
In your dreams!  
If you do, you'll be sorry.  
Not now.  
Later.  
Too late.  
Not here.  
Not there.  
That isn't legal, is it?  
Forget it.  
It's unprecedented.  
Someone else can do it.  
That's morally reprehensible!  
Not soon.  
Not ever.  
When clams sing Beethoven from mountain-tops!  
Best to wait.  
Try a different alternative or approach.  
You know that I've got the answer, but you must phrase it in a "yes-no" format.

**Didn't find a suitable answer? Try chapters one and three.**

## Chapter Three: Mixed Answers

You asking a complicated question or one requiring an overly specific answer. I think the answer would be one of the following:

Maybe.  
Answer unclear, ask later.  
Do more meditating or praying.  
You're not ready to use this book. I'd recommend that you talk with your friend, relative, superior/inferiors.  
Tricky.  
That's a matter of faith, isn't.  
You're not intelligent enough to understand the fine mechanics of the solution.  
I bet the word(s) you're looking for are in a dictionary.  
Wait.  
It's hard to express the answer with written words, try waving this book around.  
There is no clear answer.  
There are no clear answers.  
I would offend somebody if I answered that one.  
What would you say?  
42.  
That's a toughie, send oodles of money to the Mayo Clinic and perhaps they'll tell you.  
Look it up.  
Could be.  
That's a fact, this book deals with slippery issues!  
If you only knew....  
You cannot make the decision by yourself.  
We tried that one before, inconclusive.  
No one knows.  
Nothing knows.  
Whenever.  
Whatever.  
Whoever.  
Whyever.  
However.  
Because.  
Whenceever.  
Rephrase the question.  
It's unlike anything we've ever seen before, Cap'n.  
Why bother?  
In time, you will come to know.  
That is a question not tending towards edification.  
Wait a minute, at what time?  
Wait a minute, who?  
Wait a minute, which?  
Wait a minute, why?  
Wait a minute, how exactly?  
Only if she/he/it/them/I/you/we/you-all does it first.  
Are you sure you got the facts straight?  
That really depends.  
Ask an expert.  
Pay stricter attention.  
I'll get back to you on that one.  
Ha! Ha! That's a good one.  
Well, now!...  
If I could walk that way, I wouldn't....  
Best to do more research first.  
I've already answered that one.  
That question has been outdated, try a newer one.  
That's a secret.  
The answers definitely a real number.

Could be an imaginary number.  
 Too many possible answers.  
 If you were paying attention...  
 You're not asking the right question.  
 There are better books on the subject, check the library.  
 If there aren't better books... write them.  
 Could you make that a bit more clear.  
 Only if they don't find out.  
 A thousand years from now, who'll care?  
 It wouldn't make sense, even if I explained it to you.  
 Consider it from their point of view.  
 The first.  
 The latter.  
 Both.  
 Neither.  
 One of the middle ones.  
 One (or more) but not the other(s)  
 D.  
 All of the above.  
 None of the above.  
 One of the above.  
 You're not using English, this only works for English.  
 Is something green stuck between your teeth?  
 Is that a rhetorical question?  
 If I told you that, I would have to shoot you.  
 Not even Nixon knew that.  
 Slower. Slower.  
 I don't know.  
 I don't care.  
 Sleep on it.  
 Isn't there something else you should be doing right now?  
 Time to make the donuts.  
 It's interesting you should ask that, I was thinking the same thing.  
 It doesn't matter.  
 It would be a lot easier if you could ask that again, but as a "yes-no" question.  
**Didn't find a suitable answer? Try chapters one and two.**

## Conclusion:

### Why this book was really written.

Actually, I did write this book for most of the pre-said reasons, in a way. As a Reformed Druid, and a North American one at that, I have a right to say what I believe and other Reformed Druids won't claim that I'm a heretical Druid. The RDNA lacks recognizably official dogma and its customs or traditions are very mutable. The RDNA's official doctrine is summed up in the two Basic Tenets:

1. The object of the search for religious truth, which is a never-ending and spiritual search, can be found through Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; but this is one way, yea!, one way among many.

2. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it people do live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face to face with it.

This is the only statement that all Reformed Druids agree with (and possibly most Druids...). Anything more or less than this is your own variant, and we all bring our own stuff willingly

or unwillingly. None of us are "pure" Reformed Druids, we are all possessors of differing beliefs, but share a stated agreement with those two identically worded beliefs; irregardless of our own interpretation. Can one have unity through difference? Richard Shelton said "Reformed Druidism is compatible with all religions, even if they deny it." The way I've looked at it, most religions that I'm familiar with use images from Nature at least once to demonstrate or symbolize a theological point; say, a bird building a nest in the spring time. If this is so, then people of all religions should be able to gather and hear the same story of a bird building a nest, and come away with a personal gain of spiritual understanding. This is what the RDNA is about.

One of the unstated purposes of the RDNA is to deepen our critical awareness of the foundations underlying our personal, individual beliefs and/or to understand the roots of our religion(s) or philosophy. In a way, I've pursued this goal by writing & publishing my thoughts as a focusing tool for this exploration, because knowing someone will read your musings makes you work harder. But truth seems to be a thing that changes with new facts reveal an unseen twist in your understandings. God is guiding me on a strange path of mysticism to find Her spiritual truths. Nothing that I've published is necessarily what I currently believe, at the time that you are reading this. Ha!

Another side-effect of Reformed Druidism is a desire to pull people's legs. David Frangquist once stated "The role of the Third Order is keep people guessing....Druidism has its tongue planted firmly in its cheek." I wished to poke fun at a book called "Dianetics" and other self-help books that purported to have answers for your personal problems. I think these books cater to those folk who are unwilling to talk with real live people and those who consider any book to be true as gospel if it is published by someone with loads of letters behind their name (esp. Ph.D.).

In the Reformed Druid fashion, I have endeavored to bring you to a deeper realization of the inconsistencies inherent in being an expert on other people's problems, especially about people you don't even know. The Book of Ultimate Answers actually works, but it may be the wrong way to come to answers. Sometimes the most flawless systems can also be the most devious if they are inappropriate. Just because it works doesn't mean it should be used.

Sarah: "I've got a splitting pain in my head."

Jean: "Have you considered amputation?"

Imagine how many leaders and experts daily make decisions based on blind reliance upon long-accepted collections of official answers (i.e. files, dossiers, scriptures). It's not that written sources do not contain truths, they do!, but one cannot always use the same answer to the same question. Abiding by precedents can be a problematic habit, as the expression goes: "give a child a hammer and soon everything looks like a nail."

One of my other gripes with the self-help genre is that they often have only a very short section of practical answers and advice. What seems to take a great deal of those books (and, incidentally, this one) is a lot of bibble-babble (or Bible-Babel as a friend of mine calls it). The author usually has their own personal philosophy which they would be delighted if everyone else shared. The people easiest to "convert" are those with weak self-images whose insecurity draws them to powerful, charismatic "know-it-alls." If you are still reading this and are one of those people, you won't find the answer through Reformed Druidism either ("Druidism is a faith, if not in answering, then in questioning"). You'll find your answer, if it's to be found, by your own efforts (possibly divinely aided).

The last rumor I'd like to share is that people do not always lie, sometimes they are just misinformed and don't realize it or (more likely) won't admit it. I am, myself, greatly "uneducated" in accredited forms of theological training. I am merely winging it, which so many "experts" are also secretly doing. I hope this book has jolted you into a deeper speculation of the purpose, motives and capabilities of the "self-help book" genre.

## Space for your notes:



## Planting Your Own Grove

By Stacey Weinberger  
A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 2000

The Live Oak acorns that have fallen over the course of this past Fall at the Grove site are already showing signs of sprouting. Our Server has collected some in the hopes of growing them at her new house. This has given me the inspiration and impetus to post the first in a series of see and do articles. My teacher always told me that Druidism is a "See and do" religion versus Judaism or Christianity which are talk-think religions. And so we bring to you a plan for planting your own grove.

Do you have a reverence for trees, particularly oaks? You can grow these mighty trees yourself, from seed.

Start by gathering acorns. Let your favorite kids help or find acorns at the foot of an oak that has a special meaning for you. Make sure the tree is healthy. Use a fishing pole or other long pole to shake them from the tree. Your best chances of successful acorns are those picked directly from the oak.

Gently twist the acorn's hat. If it comes off easily, you're got a candidate for your project. Toss out any cracked, rotten, or hole-y acorns as well as those that seem very light by comparison. As a final test, place the acorns in a bucket of water and get rid of the floaters.

Don't keep acorns too long before you plant them! Once they dry out, they probably won't germinate.

Using plastic bags, mix a handful of acorns with a handful of perlite. (Vermiculite can be added to the mix, if you like.) Seal the bag, date it, and place it in your refrigerator. It may take as much as three cycles of the moon for the acorns to germinate or as little as one cycle, depending on the type of oak. At the full moon and the new moon, check your acorns to see if they are starting to sprout. When several have sprouted, it's time to plant all the acorns in the bag.

To plant the acorns, use large plastic pots (this is one time I actually like plastic anything!). I tend to use the large black ones left over from the previous spring's azalea purchase. Use one-gallon size at a minimum. The little oaks will develop long tap roots, so they'll need plenty of depth. Make sure the pots drain well, too, with holes in the bottom.

Fill the pots with potting soil almost to the top. Leave about one inch. Place a single acorn on its side and cover it with half an inch of potting soil. Then water, taking care not to wash the soil away from the acorn.

Place your pots in a protected area so the cold won't freeze them or dry them out. Water them whenever the soil dries on top.

Now sit back and wait! Hopefully in the spring, you'll see the first signs of growth. When the little oaks are growing nicely, you can move the pots to an Eastern sunny spot and fertilize them every Sabbath. At Mabon or Samhain when the little oaks are one to two years old, plant them in a permanent spot.

The thing I really like about having these small oaks in pots is that I can arrange the pots in a circle for special workings. In the side yard, on the back deck, or even in a pasture, I can let them grow (almost) naturally and feel the power of this magickal tree. As they grow, I can move them out, away from the center of the circle, to make room for their future growth. Once a lot of rituals have taken place in this circle of

young trees, the place becomes sacred, and its a good spot to plant the trees in a special ceremony.

## Winter Tree Care and Planting Tips

By Stacey Weinberger, Baccharis Grove  
A Druid Missal-Any, Spring Equinox 2002

From the February edition of Leaf Lines, Newsletter of The National Arbor Day Foundation. Though Spring officially begins on March 20 this year, in many places it is still cold and there is still snow on the ground. These are excellent recommendations until the weather warms.

### 1. Watching Your Trees In Winter

Take a walk outside to observe the buds and stems of your trees. Look at your mature trees and any new plantings from last fall or spring. What will you find?

Carefully remove a sealed bud and gently open it. Inside you will find tiny immature leaves and perhaps the beginnings of a flower. The buds are triggered to life each spring by day length. Temperature changes hasten or slow down the development of the buds.

Select several trees in your yard and tie a piece of string to their branches. Take just a moment each day, or once a week, to carefully inspect the tightly closed buds on the branches. Plant breeders use this very technique to search for ways to develop cold-hardy trees, particularly for the fruit industry.

Watching the buds awake and noting the date of the event is called phenology\* an ancient forerunner of ecology. Mark on your calendar the exact dates the buds actually emerge on each tree. You can also record when your trees blossom and leaf out. Each year you will begin to learn more about the characteristics of your trees. This process of keeping yearly records will prove to be very useful – especially if you are raising fruit trees.

### 2. Wabbits and Other Wascals In Winter

While you are on your winter walks you may encounter other signs of life in your orchards or gardens besides simple bud development. Check your trees for signs of rodent damage. It is common for mice or rabbits to chew the tender bark of a young tree right down to the heartwood. Don't worry...if you find a girdled tree, the damage can usually be repaired by a technique known as "bridge grafting." Bridge grafting literally bridges the gap in the living tissues so they can continue the tree's growth as well as transport needed nutrients to and from the leaves and roots.

Mark the site of the damaged tree and return with a sharp knife. Remove all frayed or loose bark from around the wound. Next, remove a sucker or a slender, long, branchlet from the tree and cut it into lengths just a little bit longer than the wound, measured from top to bottom. Sharpen these sticks into wedges at both ends and insert them under the bark at the top and bottom of the wound. Several of these "bridges" will be needed, spaced at intervals around the tree.

Finally, protect the wound by covering the entire area with grafting wax. In a few years, the wound will be healed and the tree will grow normally. If you can't find grafting wax at your local nursery, try searching for it on the web.

### 3. Consider Your Planting Site

While the act of planting a tree may only involve a few hours, proper care and maintenance may last a lifetime. This winter, care for your new trees by simply taking the time to study the future site upon which they will be planted. Consider the environment in which you'll be working – whether you are planting on your property or planning an Arbor Day tree-planting event at a local park.

In selecting a tree, your first consideration must be what the tree needs. In other words, what environmental factors limit the ability of a particular species to live a healthy life? One indication is to look at the native species in your area. Some non-native species and horticulturally-developed cultivars may also do well on your site. Remember to always select the right tree for the right place.

### 4. Buy your trees now for spring planting

While you are on those winter walks, consider how your trees define the scenery. Now is the time to create plans for your desired landscape. What would you like to see when you take this same walk in future years? Imagine planting trees and shrubs to create a beautiful, productive, "edible landscape" surrounding your home with delicious fruits and nuts to benefit your family and the wildlife outside your back door.

Consider planting some of our fruit trees...a Stayman Winesap Apple, an Early Richmond Cherry, or perhaps a delicious Belle Of Georgia Peach. If you like nut trees, you might choose the beautiful Hall's Hardy Almond, American Hazelnut, Shell bark Hickory, or Black Walnut. The Sourwood is an excellent honey tree for beekeepers.

To brighten up future winter scenes around your home, select trees for their bright colorful fruit, unique branch structure, or peeling bark. Our online Tree Store offers many possibilities. Some of our favorites are the Prairie fire Flowering Crab, River Birch, Lacebark Elm, Northern Catalpa, or the Kousa Dogwood.

Make a large photocopy of your property plat. Here you can create an inventory of all the trees on your property and position them on the map. Include the botanical names of the trees for your reference. As you select trees for later plantings, you can share this map with friends, nursery growers, or use it to consult with your local County Cooperative Extension Agent.

As you plant trees, work to shape your landscape with a diverse selection of strategically placed plantings to create a landscape of beautiful, useful, edible trees for all four seasons.

### 5. Forcing Spring To Arrive

Now that the coldest days of winter are behind us, you can slip outside on a mild day to take care of some dormant winter pruning. Remove any crossing limbs that might rub together, sucker shoots, and any broken or dead branches. From the cuttings you remove, save a few heavily budded branches for forcing indoors to brighten up your home with colorful blooms and leaves. Good candidates for successful forcing are hazelnuts, redbuds, willows, forsythias, apple and crabapples, magnolias, and red maples.

Bring your cuttings (up to 1/2 inch diameter or smaller) inside and place them in a bucket of tepid water (about 100 degrees) with a floral preservative. The preservative will increase hydration and control any bacterial growth. Fill up a vase with warm water and preservative as well. The water in

your vase will need to be changed in your container about once a week too.

Now, fill up your sink with very warm water and place the ends of the branches into the sink. Cut the stems of the branches off under the warm water. Size the branches so they fit into your vase and then proceed to create an arrangement. When you are finished, set the vase away from bright sunlight in a cool location. It will take anywhere from 1 to 6 weeks for the blooms and/or leaves to burst from their buds.

We encourage you to forward these Winter Tree Care and Planting Tips on to your friends and family around the country.

Thank you for planting and caring for America's Trees!

\*Phenology looks at the relationship between climate or seasons and periods of biological activity. Phenologists study and record the changes and movements of animals and plants in relation to weather and seasonal changes taking place in their surrounding environment.



**Figure 43 Maypole at Live Oak, c. 1983  
Joan Carruth and Larry Press.**



**Figure 44 Bearing the littlest Grove member,  
Live Oak Grove, Beltane 1984.**

## The Creation of a Druid's Nemeton

This is an article by Rhiannon Hawk Fugatt,  
of the Druid Heart Spirit Grove/Nemeton Awenyddion  
O How She Set up Her Grove Site.  
A Druid Missalany, Summer 2002

While Sister Rhiannon uses Welsh deities, the deities invoked can be adapted to the Celtic pantheon of your affinity and their attributes and roles.

Nemeton means "Sacred Space." The Druids of old and Druids of today prefer our sacred space outdoors in a place where we feel or sense Nature Spirit activity. Many Nemetons are located in a grove of trees. Natural places can add a lot to a ritual, especially if you can find a spot that exists along a ley-line or high energy center along the Earth's magnetic grid. Our Druid Grove's Nemeton is in the middle of a forest of silver-firs, oaks, pines, cedars, and dogwoods, twenty to thirty feet behind our home. Before we created the standing stones Nemeton I searched the property by spending time in different locations attuning to Earth's energy there and paid special care of natural vibrational frequencies.

The circle of our Grove is about twenty-five feet across, and around the edges stand twelve stones in the eight directions of the wheel of the year. We spent considerable time creating this sacred space, but it is nothing compared to the hard work that went into the ancient's creation of Stonehenge or other ancient sacred places. These stone monuments, or circles, express the way Druids perceive the universe and we connect with the universe in this circle that has no beginning and no end. These standing stones will stay here to remind future people of our existence and sacred connection with the land.

I found most of the stones in our stone circle by digging them out of the ground near the Nemeton's location. Some of them were very large, weighing up to two thousand pounds. For the larger and heaviest stones we used a come-along, a hand operated wench for pulling them. The largest stone that now stands in the East was the heaviest. I dug it out of the hard clay soil just fifteen feet away from the Nemeton in the ground. After three days of cranking the come-along we finally had him close enough to the East so we started to prepare his spot in the Grove, next we stood him up and lodged him into the dig out. Now I'm sure it would have taken a lot less time if we had a tractor to move it, but we decided to do it by hand. The rest of the stones in our Nemeton weighed less than a thousand pounds. I moved them by my self with a refrigerator dolly.

If you were to put as much effort into your sacred space, it might be good to get a work party together to help. While not all of us are blessed to have land, sometimes it is necessary to seek out Pagan friendly land owners. Druids who live in cities can create sacred space in your homes but, please be sure you have a fire source such as a candle, for that is where the spirits dance.

The Nemeton is circular, but Druids stand or sit in a horse shoe pattern during ritual. The opening in the horseshoe is where the spirits enter our Nemeton that is in the South. The South is also where we have our altar. The altar is used to create an open doorway for the kindred spirits to enter during ritual. The reason for the altar's location being in the South is that the South side of any clearing has the most sun through out the day. The altar I created in our Nemeton is a trilithon — three standing stones in close proximity capped with a flat sandstone. The altar is a bridge between the worlds. The lay out of the ritual tools on our

altar are symbol. How they are placed on top of the altar stone reflects how we relate those symbols with our own inner spirit, and our connection with the world tree cosmology. On our altar we place the symbols of Land, Sea, and Sky, and of the balance between the moon and sun. During ritual we do not step behind the altar out of our deep respect for the Shining Ones or good spirits who may be passing through the opening into the Grove.

A Grove is what Druids call their act of gathering for rituals, magic and meditation. We are the Druid's Grove. We join with others and do the tree meditation at the beginning of our ritual to feel that the peace within trees, also exists within us, and to experience the interconnectedness of our roots growing together. The rituals take place in the Nemeton.

These rituals are celebrated during the solstices, the equinoxes, the four fire festivals, and the healing rites we do every month. The Nemeton has a fire pit dug out of its center. Before all rituals we prepare for the spirit fire by placing oak twigs and logs in a cone shape. Oak represents durability and strength and is associated with the Welsh sun God Llew. We light the spirit fire in ritual during the moment the God and Goddess who preside over the ritual are arriving. When we are in the Nemeton all is quiet except for the sounds of nature, the four winds in the trees, and our voices raised in song. We keep a peace around us that allows our senses to awaken and our minds to be open for contact with the invisible world. The invisible world exists all through out this middle earthly plane.

When we had finished building our stone circle I did a ritual to welcome the new stones. This is done by consecrating the stones with offerings that have been blessed by the spirits. First we invite a patron God and matron Goddess from the Welsh pantheon into our Nemeton. We call on the Goddess Brúd. She brings with her the flame of inspiration and the creation of fiery spirit energy that dances in the center fire. We call on the God Manawyddan, he is the voyager who sails on the ocean, and over the land. He goes between our world and the other worlds and assists us to lift the veils between the worlds. I invoke Brúg and Manawyddan into two white candles. These represent the brightness of the God and Goddess and reminds us to keep alive our own inner spark of the divine. The invocation is done with songs and poetry. Then we take the candles and we light the center fire to connect the spirits and us with the Celtic world tree.

The center fire of our Nemeton represents the center of the world tree and the center of the world tree is the Middleworld or Earth. We invite the God and Goddess of the rite to dance there in the spirit fires. Then we call the Celtic triad spirits to bless us with their presence. The triad spirits are our Ancestors of the sea, the Nature Spirits of the earth, and the Shining Ones of the sky. The triad spirits we invite into the Grove each have an earthen bowl that contains an element that is attributed to the realm they come from. A bowl of water is placed to the left on the altar for the Underworld and the Ancestors. A bowl of earth for the Middleworld and the Nature Spirits is placed in the center. The Shining Ones have a feather and an incense bowl on the right side. We invoke these spirits with poetic verse to imbue their spirit into the water, the earth, and the incense.

The poetry we use is written by our Grove's Bard. Then we take the two candles around to each stone and pour a small amount of melted wax onto the ground in front of each stone. This is done to awaken each stone to the spirits of the God and Goddess we have invoked into the candles, that their energy may vibrate from the Earth that is within the newly created Nemeton. A Druid then takes each bowl starting with the water of the Ancestors, and pours a small amount on top of each stone

while invoking the energy of the Ancestor's realm of the Underworld to pulsate through all of the stones in the circle. The Underworld is more distant from our world than the Otherworld, and is usually found through water. The world tree's roots are in the Underworld, so are the past, our ancestors, and our minds. This the Druid says during invocation to each stone while pouring the waters, "May the vibrations of the Underworld, through this stone, pulsate with the luminous light of the Anwyn." The name for the Underworld in the Welsh lore is Anwyn. Then the Druid goes to each new stone member repeating this same process then returns the bowl to the altar giving thanks by words of prayer.

The same process is done to awaken the stones to the energetic activity of Nature Spirits, who's world comes next on the way up the world tree. Nature spirits are part of the creative energy flow in nature, they exist in plants, streams, mountains, trees, animals, and in this Middleworld earthly plane. They can be any size. They work together in a synchronized harmonious flow to keep balance present in the Nemeton. The trunk of the world tree exists on Earth. It is the Middleworld, it is our nature and earthly relations, our physical body's connection to Earth. The spirit fire in the center of our Nemeton is the very center of the world tree and is also in the trunk. To synchronize the stones with nature's energy a Druid takes the bowl of Earth and walks towards the first stone to the right of the altar and says,

"May the rhythmic vibrations of our Earth Mother pulsate with you, and through you, as it does in us. Help us amplify the healing powers of Abred in our Nemeton. Make this a place that will awaken our ability to be more attentive to the forces of Abred."

Abred is the Welsh name for this Middleworld. The Druid then pours a small amount of earth from the bowl over the stone, and repeats the same process with the other stones. The bowl then gets returned to the altar.

Next, we bring to the circle of stones the presence of the Otherworld. We do this by asking assistance from the Shining Ones who have come to us from the Otherworld. In The world tree cosmology, the Otherworld and the Underworld are not the same. The Otherworld is above and more celestial. It is the canopy of branches and leaves on the world tree. Access to the Otherworld is usually through portals on Middleworld (Earth) in areas where there is energy concentrated, such as ley-lines and power spots, sacred hills, stone circles and the like. The Shining Ones that live in the Otherworld are the Gods and Goddesses from old Celtic lore and legends. We honor them in our rituals with offerings of herbs, songs, and prayers. To merge the light energy of the Shining Ones with the stones, an active Druid takes the bowl of incense and feather and approaches the stone starting with the one to the right of the altar. Sain is the Gaelic term we use for wafting the smoke. The Druid starts to Sain the stone while saying,

"Oh Shining Ones, hear our prayers and accept our offerings. For today with your help, we consecrate our new stone members to make them wholly in the realms of Anwyn, Abred, and Gwynvyd at the edges of our Nemeton!"

"May the higher frequencies of Gwynvyd illuminate through you, within and without, let the messages of the Gods and Goddesses speak through you to us clearly, that we may hear the truth and feel their hearts nobility brought to this Nemeton."

The Welsh name for the Otherworld is Gwynvyd. When the Druid returns the bowl of Gwynvyd to the altar all raise their hands to the South, above the altar and say,

"Let the powers of Land, Sea, and Sky live within and on the edge of this Nemeton. Let the spirit fire and world tree connect the stones to the center of our Nemeton."

To end this rite a Druid approaches the fire and takes some ashes from the spirit fire and first enters the South saying,

"Voices from the ocean of the four winds! Come! Rush through the stones and spiral into the center of the world tree."

The Druid then sprinkles some ash on the ground in front of the stone, and on the stone, and does this for each of the stones in every direction. The Druid does this while chanting,

"Let the spirit fire and world tree connect the stone people to the center of our Nemeton. By the blessing of all spirits, dance together our ancestors, our nature spirits, and the Shining Ones, we welcome these new stone members into our Nemeton."

All say, "Gadael hi bhod!" Rituals are always followed by a song of peace, and a fellowship feast.

## Tree Meditation

A Meditation from the Druid Heart Spirited Grove:

By Rhiannon Hawk

A Druid Missal-Any, Beltane 2001

Meditation is the key to trance when it is done correctly. Breathing techniques help induce these states of trance and also awaken the electric governing vessel and the magnetic conception vessel which helps our outward journey to succeed. Meditation and trance are a pathways between the conscious and sub-conscious for inner therapy, reprogramming, recreating our pasts, healing our core self, etc. We use trance and meditation for all of these plus journeying. Journeying is similar to astral projection except that you are safe and still in your mind, body, and spirit. When you journey into the underworld (Anwyn), you journey into the sea, deep parts of your self where your Ancestral memories exist, genetic and spiritual, past lives also.

There are different levels of trance. We like to use medium trance because you are safe there. Deep trance should only be done by those with much experience or by a guide who leads you by voice.



Figure 45 Marriage with Donut Grabbing.

## The Tree Meditation

By Rhiannon Hawk

A Druid Missal-Any, Beltane 2001

The tree meditation does many things. It grounds your entire being. It runs Nyvwyres (Sacred Spirit) energy through the governing vessel which runs down through the crown of your head to a spot called the core-star, and the conception vessel which runs up (from the earth) from the bottom of your spine or feet to the core-star. The core-star looks just like it sounds like a small white sun located between your solar-plexus and your navel. Thus uniting the earth and the sky, and filling the channel with Nyvwyre. The tree meditation is also a medium trance state. So instead of ending your meditation when it is done you can slide right into a journey.

Start by finding a quiet place where you will be undisturbed. Unplug your phone. Put a sign on your door "DO NOT DISTURB." Do your meditation outside if you can find a place and the weather is willing. Have a pillow ready because you are going to sit cross legged. When you are comfortable you may begin. Take a few deep breaths slowly. First filling your stomach then your lungs. Fill completely. Do this a few times. Focus on letting go of any tension that may have built up during the day. Keep deep breathing as you take your mind and body off any distracting thoughts. THINK NOTHING!

At the bottom of your spine imagine pushing and growing a large tap root down into the earth and feel other roots pushing down. Feel your roots pushing down through rock breaking them apart. Feel your roots feeling water, minerals, and nutrients. Now just take some time to allow them to grow further down until you feel warmth. Feel them reach water.

After you have a strong root system well grounded, feel that earth energy moving up to your lower body (belly area) and developing a wide base trunk. Grow up quickly. Feel the trunk growing up your entire body, and when you get to just above your chest feel branches push their way out. Keep moving up and out. Take some time to do this. Make sure that branches grow out of the crown of your head. Reach those branches for the light of the sun. Feel the warming rays giving you energy. Grow new sprigs and lots of leaves and don't forget to take a deep breath and live. Be a tree for a moment. Notice if there are any animals living in your branches?

Pause...

Now I want you to focus on the earth energy coming up to your core-star, that is directly above your navel. Feel how strong Mother Earth's energy is flowing through you!

Take a moment...

Now feel Father Sky's energy coming down through your branches, down to your core-star at the same time you still feel the earth's energy coming up.

Take a moment...

Now send the Earth's energy up to the sky, out your branches, and send the skies energy down into the earth through your roots. As soon as both are united you see a bright light that is gold-white. It is coming from your core-star. Back in that light. Feel the love. Let that light burst throughout your entire being. You are meant to be here now. To continue with journey

Now stay within and visualize that gold-white light filling you up trying to burst out of your bark. All the way out to the ends of your branches, and all the way down to the tips of your roots, especially your tap root. Once you have done this imagine that you as your human self are smaller than normal and inside



this tree that is filled with light. You are floating around as if there is no gravity. Now turn yourself upside down and look at the opening of the taproot that looks far into the underworld. It looks like it goes forever, all you see are its sides and the light. You decide to investigate. But first you find that there is a small white pouch tied around your waist, and you realize that it must have a purpose so you open it, and inside there are three golden seeds. You put them back in the pouch and continue on your journey. You grab a hold of the bark and pull yourself into the tunnel, as you are small inside this great tree and you are light energy you find it very easy to move along.

As you keep looking ahead it seems as though it will take forever but as you continue to move you see the bottom of the root and it looks like it is open at the end. As you get closer you see a beautiful luminous light that is tranquil to see. Upon reaching the opening you see a reflection, you grow more aware of the object that the reflection is coming from, and you see that it is a cauldron. A very large cauldron that could hold one to two hundred gallons. It appears to be water. Looking into that water it's dark at first just reflecting that luminous light, then you notice that an image appears, some kind of writing. Some ancient symbol that may have belonged to your ancestors. Look very closely. Memorize it, you may know it, it may even be unfamiliar to you, but remember it well...

The experience has made you feel somehow, special, like you were given a gift. Then you realize that you must also leave an offering so you reach for your pouch and open it, allowing the golden seeds to fall freely to the sacred waters. You will receive a sign that the offering was received. After you have received this you may return back up the root to your core self.

Once you are back in the trunk of the tree, expand your body to fill the tree and return to the earthly plane, remember to keep your core self intact.

It may be helpful to record this reading it aloud into a tape deck allowing for the amount of space you will need in different places during the meditation and journey.

## Seed Planting Ceremony.

Collected by Stephen Crimmins

This ceremony has been used a number of times at Carleton's Fall Equinox Celebration though in some ways it might be more fitting for earlier in the year when seeds are being planted more widely. This ceremony, I believe, was created by Chris Middleton during his time as an Arch Druid of Carleton.

Every one is given a seed (in the past this has been Chestnuts one year and Acorns another. I find it best to use something that you can go out and find yourself before the ceremony).

Each person in turn says "I plant this seed (Chestnut/Acorn, whatever) and with it I plant a memory." The person goes onto share a memory about wildlife, nature, or whatever seems applicable to them. Of course, the person may ask that a memory not be passed on outside the group, or this could be a general rule for all memories.

Once everyone has shared a memory they take their seed out and find what feels like a good place to plant it. In some cases the presiding Druid may have a particular place in mind or it may be best to let each person find their own location.

# Michelle's Meditation

By Michelle Hajder, Feb 3, 1997  
On Carleton Vaxnotes Druid Conference

## Part One

Yes, that's grounding...but I also have this meditation/personal ritual for on-the-spot energy focus, which I also call grounding.

This is not something I invented, but is a general purpose thing I have seen different forms of in many books...

One sits on the floor/ground with good posture and a nice straight spine, taking a couple deep breaths and calming the mind and body.

Concentrate on your spine, feel it, be aware of it, and be aware of its energy. Now slowly feel and visualize your "spine" slowly extending downwards past the tailbone and descending out of your body. (It's probably gross and distracting to visualize actual vertebrae poking out your butt...the common image/feeling is a column of energy that flows from your spine. And remember, it's extending, not leaving your body, just getting longer and still keeping you connected).

So feel and visualize your "spine" descend straight down through the floor, then the floor below, or the foundations of the house, down into the Earth. Be sure to take it slow enough that you \*really\* do feel this happening. Do not try to send your spine deeper until you are secure at the level you are on.

Send it down through topsoil, past water mains, layers of clay, etc, until you hit bedrock. Feel it continue for miles and miles downward, yet connected to your body.

Send it to the point at the center of the earth. secure it there. feel the link between you and the center. feel your spine securely rooted to the spot. You are so strongly connected that not even a tornado could move you.

Now, practice feeling and drawing energy up from out of the depths of the earth up your spine and into your body. Draw energy, draw peace. Send energy back to the earth. Feel the flow.

## Part Two

Now, If you want to continue the exercise, feel how your spine is connected to the center of the earth. follow it up back through the dirt and rock, back up your body, and now extend your spine-energy-column out the top of your head, extending slowly as before so you really feel it move out the top of your head, up above you, through the ceiling, through the roof, through the levels of atmosphere, up into the heavens as far as you can imagine.

You are now connected to both earth and sky, a powerful column joining two powerful forces. Pull energy down from sky. Send some back. Pull sky energy and send it into the earth. Raise earth energy to the sky. Do both at once. As you inhale, pull energy from above and below, and as you exhale, breathe the energies out. Pull positive energies in, send negative out.

Play with exercise of this sort and see what works for you.

# Section Ten

## Non-Liturgical

### Festival Activities

All too often, festivals have over-emphasized the liturgy at the expense of the celebration. The following articles are mostly drawn from the Druid Missal-Any and should give you some ideas on how to draw the more activity-oriented members of your Grove into attending your rites, by appealing to their lower instincts to have a good time.

### Uncommon Activities for Samhain

By Mortus

A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 2001

1. Visit & tidy-up the graves of family, friends and respected people.
1. Séances are popular at this time of year, but book in advance!
2. Hold a “dumb feast” with no talking and plates for ancestors.
3. Contemplate your own funeral arrangements, especially if you want to fight “The Industry” and have a natural funeral free of chemical and air-tight sealed caskets.
4. Include the dead in your thoughts during the daily grind.
5. Begin a custom of thanking the things we kill and eat.
6. Visit an abattoir or kill your own dinner (fish is the least unpleasant), which will open your eyes & heart to some cold facts.
7. Work on your will, living-will, powers-of-attorney, and insurances.
8. “Sacrifice” some fun, for retirement planning.
9. Discuss deeper issues of after-life with your children & spouse.
10. Research genealogy and visit elderly relatives (research for Eulogies).
11. Get a health-check-up and other medical appointments. Quit smoking.
12. Rake leaves, plan a composting heap (done properly, they don’t stink)
13. Plant acorns, salt meat & jerky, pickle things.
14. Go hunting or fishing [or “camera-stalking” of prominent politicians...]
15. Volunteer to escort children for Halloween (you get candy, too!)
16. Adopt an overseas child or assist a charity.
17. At Carleton, we’d pour molten-lead or wax into cold water and divine things.
18. Protest the most recent prejudiced horror-flick of the season.
19. Lobby against the funeral industry.
20. Make a list of 100 things you’ve done, and 100 more you want to do.
21. Contemplate capital punishment, war, crime, sanitation & vegetarianism.

22. Bless your pets with smoke (yes, jumping through a fiery hoop is okay...)
23. Clean your home, extinguish your oven/furnace’s pilot-light and relight it.
24. Replace the batteries in your smoke detector, buy a fire extinguisher, etc.
25. Write long-winded, disconnected rambles & lists about Samhain & Sacrifice.

### Various Winter Customs to Try Out

By Eric, ex-Akita Grove, now in NYC.

A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 2001

I enjoyed the Samhain activities, and spent four hours searching for good customs to complement the next issue. It’s a simple list of what I plan to do, because I’m not much of a writer.

- Nov 23 Divining the best presents after a hearty Thanksgiving meal by asking relatives and the Gods..
- Dec 1<sup>st</sup> Cleaning out the house thoroughly- Any remaining dust is “Not mine, please ignore it.”
- Dec 2<sup>nd</sup> Light “advent candles” or Yule Candles marking down the Solstice Sun’s arrival.
- Dec 15<sup>th</sup> Decorating the House- Holly, Mistletoe, tree setup, bunting, Yule-logs, front lawn décor. Mail out blessings (Christmas cards) to friends & curses to enemies.
- Dec 19<sup>th</sup> Donate 10% of December Paycheck to charities closest to my house. And carry small presents to distribute to beggars & muggers in NYC.
- Dec 20<sup>th</sup> Wassailing and Caroling.- Nothing more than Trick or Treating for the winter, fun to do with the Christians.
- Dec 21<sup>st</sup> Vigiling in the Grove- Spend the longest night of the year in the grove with a fire, several blankets and some friends to encourage the sun to make a come back.
- Dec 21st Mari Lwyd in Wales (Lair Bhan in Ireland)- The Welsh visited houses with a draped horse skull, interrogated their neighbors with strange questions, and got free booze if the homeowner couldn’t come up with decent answers. I think Barney’s head on a stick would be fine & appreciated.
- Dec 22nd Namahage- In Akita, drunken barefoot men in demon masks, straw clothing, flaming torches (my that’s dangerous sounding) would burst into pre-decided homes “surprising” a family at dinner and terrorizing the bejzus out of small kids. The father would ransom their children’s lives with more booze, and the demons would bless the house to protect it from fires and further burglar intrusions. Very similar to German house visits by Father Christmas (Weihnachtsmann or Julknep) & his point man, the “Black Moor” (Knecht Ruprecht Don’t you pity my neighbors?)
- Dec 23<sup>rd</sup> Celebrate the Emperor of Japan’s Birthday (he is the descendent of the Sun Goddess after all)
- Dec 24<sup>th</sup>. Presents and Party

- Dec 25<sup>th</sup> Hanging out sheafs of corn or bird seed AFTER Christmas for the all-winter birds.
- Dec 26<sup>th</sup>, Divination- by dropping a handful of pine-needles into a bowl and rohrscharching
- Dec 26<sup>th</sup> Boxing. Put away boxes and decorations. As for the Tree: Put the tree in a safe spot in the yard (needles still on) away from the house. Allow to thoroughly dry and use it to light Beltane fire. WHOOSH! What a sight!
- Dec 27<sup>th</sup> Return presents and Buy discounted goods at stores for next year!. A gift of the Gods!
- Dec 30<sup>th</sup> New Year Resolutions- Adding thanks for last year's completed ones and a tweak from everyone in the room for not finishing the last ones.
- Dec 31<sup>st</sup> Fireworks, all-night parties are fine to continue.
- Jan 1<sup>st</sup>, Sleep to Noon. Pray to Braciaca for forgiveness and mercy.
- Jan 6<sup>th</sup>, "Epiphany". Credit card bills arrive. Holidays are officially over.



Figure 46 Winter processions, c. 2002.



Figure 47 Entrance to the Tomb of First Carleton Chaplain, c 1994.

## Yule Time Caroling

By Sine Ceolbhinn  
A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 2001

Strangely enough, Christmas is one of the few times of the year that we feel like singing with our neighbors outside of a karaoke bar. Easter songs? A few. Groundhog Day songs? Not likely. We all want to sing, but trip over the uncomfortable lyrics, right? I decided to but together a little list of songs that a pagan could use in company with their monotheistic friends.

A few hours of scanning the internet has given me a collection of popular songs that didn't dwell on babies in food troughs, righteous crowns, deceased people with bird wings, and ecstatic shepherds hearing voices in the dark (won't even go there). I prefer my own improbable stories (grin). Just change "Christmas" to "Yule time" and most are okay. Santa Claus is rather unavoidable, but he's nearly pagan, and so I let him slide. Many of the songs on the list below have on-line free music-files and lyrics at: <http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/~ai251/xcarol.html>

- Auld Lang Syne
- Christmas Song (Chestnuts roasting)
- Deck the Halls
- Do they know it's Christmastime at all?
- Frosty the Snowman
- Grandma Got Hit by a Reindeer
- The Grinch's Theme Song
- Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas
- Here Comes Santa Claus
- Holly Jolly Christmas
- Home For The Holidays
- I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus
- Jingle Bells
- Jingle Bell Rock
- I'll Be Home For Christmas
- It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas
- It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year
- Jolly Old Saint Nicholas
- Let It Snow
- O Christmas Tree
- Rocking Around the Christmas Tree
- Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer
- Silver and Gold Silver Bells
- Sleigh Ride
- That Christmas Feeling
- Up on the Rooftop
- We Wish You a Merry Christmas
- White Christmas
- Winter Wonderland

Now, I was going to make a list of filkable songs, but surprise, somebody's gone ahead and re-done most of the Christmas songs in a Neo-Pagan flavor. Isn't it great that people do all the work for us? You could spent weeks studying the solstice. Enjoy!!

# Winter Solstice Drama of Akita Grove

By Nozomi Kibou and Patrick Haneke  
December 2001

Japan has a very old story recorded in the Kojiki Scrolls (700 AD) about the Sun-Goddess, Amaterasu which we will incorporate into the Grove's drama. Rituals can get dull after a while, so we're going to improvise. We got the idea from Merri's Beltane service Mummery Drama at Carleton that Mike told us in 1999. But first the basic story:

## Part One, The Story:

AMATERASU (Japanese: "Great Divinity Illuminating Heaven"), the celestial sun Goddess from whom the Japanese imperial family claims descent, is the most important Shinto deity. She was born from the left eye of her father, Izanagi, as he was performing shugyo. Izanagi bestowed upon her a necklace of jewels and placed her in charge of Takamagahara ("High Celestial Plain"), the abode of all the kami. One of her brothers, the storm God Susanoo, was to be sent away to rule the sea plain. Together the sky and ocean would encircle and protect Japan. Before going, Susanoo went to take leave of his sister. As an act of good faith, they produced many children together, she by chewing and spitting out pieces of the sword he gave her, and he by doing the same with her jewels.

However, Susanoo soon began to behave very rudely—such as breaking down the divisions in the rice fields, defiled his sister's dwelling place, and finally threw a flayed horse into her weaving hall. Indignant, Amaterasu withdrew in protest into a cave, sealed the door with a rock, and darkness fell upon the world. Many demons appeared to plague the people with snow and lightning. Not only people, but the Gods were at a loss. Amaterasu's brother, the Moon, did his best to take over her job, but couldn't keep the plants from wilting nor could he stop the cold winds from chilling the livestock.

Because no one was able to open the door of the cave, many Takamaga-hara Gods were at a loss as to what to do and conferred on how to lure the sun Goddess out. The wise God Omoikane decided at the meeting that Amenouzume would perform an amusing dance to attract Amaterasu attention. They collected cocks, whose crowing precedes the dawn, and hung a mirror and jewels on a sacred sakaki tree in front of the cave.

The Goddess Amenouzume began a very suggestive dance on an upturned tub, partially disrobing herself, and bumping about comically, which so delighted the assembled Gods that they roared with laughter. Amaterasu became curious how the Gods could make merry while the world was plunged into darkness.

"Why you are laughing?" She asked through the rock door of refuge.

The most beautiful Goddess has appeared. She is a most skillful dancer!" One of the Gods responded.

Hearing this, Amaterasu, who was a proud Goddess and said, "This is a performance I must, by all means, see." And opened the door just a crack. The God conversing with Amaterasu then took out a mirror and placed it in front of her.

Amaterasu saw her face in the mirror and exclaimed, "My! What a beautiful Goddess!"

Wondered by her own beauty, she open the door wider to see better. A strong God, named Amenotadikarao, didn't miss

that chance. He grabbed the slit, and pulled it wide open. Still bedazzled by her reflection, she heard the cock's crow, and was thus drawn out from the cave. The kami (Gods) then quickly threw a shimenawa, or sacred rope of rice straw, before the entrance of the cave (now in Kyushu Island) to prevent her return to hiding. No choice, the sun Goddess Amaterasu returned to the world. After that, Susanoo behaved better, well...., most of the time.

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Amaterasu's chief place of worship is the Grand Shrine of Ise, the foremost Shinto shrine in Japan. She is manifested there in a mirror that is one of the three Imperial Treasures of Japan (the other two being a jeweled necklace and a sword). The genders of Amaterasu and her brother the moon God Tsukiyomi no Mikato are remarkable exceptions in worldwide mythology of the sun and the moon.

Amenouzume is happy and sexy dancing God whose dance make spectators dazzled or entertained or raises spirits. Much of her followers are strippers, comedians, sandwich men and such artists and entertainers. Her lesson is that even in the most dire times, there is a place and role for joy, hope, love and entertainment.

## Solstice Drama Part Two:

### Props & Staging

It will follow almost the same process and language (with improvisation) as the story.

Mayumi will play the role of Amaterasu, the Sun. Nozomi will play the role of Amenouzume, the Dancer. Pat will play the role of Susanoo & Amenotadikarao (bad boy & strong guy). Little Naomi will be the impish winter sprite, armed with snowballs.

Other grove members & guests will play the audience of the Gods (about 5 people), maybe even Father will attend.

We'll hold it near the Shrine in a small open area on the Emperor's birthday (Dec 23<sup>rd</sup>) which is appropriate and a holiday. We'll make a mini rice field, set aside a square area for the sun's house, some hand-made straw ropes, and a little dance stage, stage decorations, plus put together a horse puppet (later used for piñata), collect some mirrors, kids jewelry, and some tiaras. Caves are hard to find in Akita, so we'll make a stout wicker hut (bigger than a sweat lodge) and roll rock in front of it. We'll use tiki-torches for dramatic lighting in the evening and set up a portable searchlight in the cave, for her dramatic exit. Nozomi has begun practicing her dance, which is going to be quite the eye-opener for such a shy one! Perhaps Susanoo & Amaterasu will have more children?!



Figure 48 Brining in the Yule Log.

# Christmas Plants & Picking the Yule Log

By Mairi Ceolbhinn, D.C. Grove  
A Druid Missal-Any, Yule 2001

Druids love and respect their plants and truly wish them to return to full vitality in the spring. Without plants, how'd we do our sacrifices? What we'd eat? What'd we wear? It's nice to know that in the depths of winter, when the days are shortest, that some plants are doing rather well. We wish to celebrate this with Christmas trees and such and bring their blessings into our homes. See also the site. <http://www.cirelesanctuary.org/pholidays/SolsticePlanningGuide.html>

Mistletoe, as we all know, was considered sacred, by our ancient Siblings and has remained such throughout the years. Its Gaelic name still means "all healing," although I'm not sure how to use it safely, since it is rather poisonous. Perhaps, it is by its poison, that it fends off winter's blight, and manages to bloom around the solstice? Its persistent fertility is therefore an established trait that gives us that great custom of "kissing under the sprig of mistletoe" which would happen in a night of partying and debauchery. That age-old theme of commemorating the death of the "old Sun" and birth of the "new Sun" is now popularly incorporated into the images of "Old Man Time and Baby New Year" doing a tag-team on January 1st every year.

Holly berries, like Mistletoe, bloom amidst the snow as if to defy winter and encourage the return to life. Its green boughs were of course common decorations on buildings, holy places and public buildings during the winter festival, and this tradition has fortunately continued to this very day. Even the Japanese, Mike Scharding says, have a "kadamatsu" placed in front of the door at New Year's Eve.

## Yule Log Tradition:

Not to be morbid, but a sacrifice is necessary to rekindle the life of the dying sun (no, I'm not pro-Aztec, which sounds like a marketable drug), and it seems the Yule Log has filled that role for several centuries. "Yule" comes from "hweol," meaning "wheel," which is a frequent European symbol for the Sun. So you're basically giving the Sun a good-needed torching to warm it up.

According to various sources, it is widely agreed that the hearth of the Celtic House was the home of a protective spirit, and (for practical and symbolic reasons) the fire was rarely allowed to die out except once or twice a year during the big fire holidays. Special prayers were and are still spoken before leaving the banked fire of turf for the night in rural areas. Much magic also went on around the fire during cooking, story telling, and entertaining of guests. The hearth was basically the pre-modern "Home Entertainment Center." If you've ever noticed, televisions also send comforting relaxing flickers of light into a darkened room while you stare blankly?

Now, back in those days, people had access to common forests surrounding their village. The choice of the wood varied greatly among locales, but one good size tree would provide several logs for a neighborhood. But under no circumstances, should you steal one from a neighbor's private land (and no buying one at a parking lot, good religion is do-it-yourself). I've

not heard of any special methods of cutting a tree down, but a short ceremony, and posting a few days advance notice for malevolent or uninterested spirits to depart, would certainly be in order. (No, that Golden Sickle is no more effective than a haddock, get a good steel axe.) Angry spirits will make the tree conk you on the head; so be forewarned.

Once cut down, a goodly size log was the festooned and regally dragged back to town through the streets. As the Log entered the house, some cultures would give it a hearty drink of oil, salt and mulled wine, with a song perhaps. In more recent times, it was burned on Christmas Eve (which is close enough to the Solstice), with music, activities and frolicking. To kindle the fire, splinters from last year's logs (saved by the eldest daughter) were used to get the substrate of dry logs going, since those Yule-logs are hard to burn by themselves. Guests were encouraged to toss sprigs of holly on the fire to take away bad luck. The way it burned would prognosticate the future.

Splinters of the log and cinders were taken home to protect against fires, lightning and tax-collectors at their home. Now the Yule Log tradition, widespread since the 12th century, nearly died out with the change to pot-belly stoves and grills in the late 19th Century. The tradition still survives in sizable pockets today in the country-side today. For fire sensitive areas, a smaller log-shaped cake now decorates the dining room table. I've tried this custom for a few years in my little BBQ next to my house (sneaking one from the River Creek National Park), and saved some ashes, and no disasters have yet befallen my home (well, except the Pentagon in Virginian Commonwealth, but that's the workplace, perhaps the White House and the "Mystic District" of Washington, D.C. were spared because of their National Yule Log?).

For me a Christmas tree is just another elaboration on "bringing the greenery in," and it certainly is a younger tradition than the Yule Log, perhaps a merger of pagan Nordic tree worship and perhaps the 13th century morality plays' "Tree of Life" (from the Garden of Eden) which was often the only stage prop, and conveniently performed around the Solstice. Perhaps, the inability to have a Yule Log burning and urbanization led to the soaring popularity of the Christmas tree in the 19th century? So go get your plants!



Figure 49 Minnesota in early summer.

# Some Optional Things for Oimele

By Alex Strongbow, ex-Carleton  
A Druid Missal-Any, Oimele 2002

Well, here's my list of things to do for Oimele, Imbolc, Candlemas, Ostara or whatever you wish to call it. It's a multi-faceted festival reflecting Bridget's diverse talents. If you were to combine them all you'd be "writing poems by candlelight about flaming metallic sheep." Sounds strange, but where do you think "steel wool" is from? Do not put it in the microwave, though, unless you want to see visions of Pikachu!

- Banana-Split candles (Cherry, banana, pineapple ring; possible imagery...)
- Make decorated candlestick holders.
- Try to Predict (e.g. candle divining) whether winter will end soon and what day the last snow will be gone in the grove or some other spot.
- Start planting seeds in little pots.
- Get a candle-making kit at an art store.
- Spring Cleaning Party
- Make homemade butter or ice-cream (try goat's milk)
- Fireworks (if legal, secretly if illegal...)
- Make a contest to find first flowers or awakened hibernators
- Decorate the house: Bridget's Straw Crosses, ironwork, stained glass, candelabras, lava lamps, anything that's bright,
- Melt lead and pour into molds to make items.
- Sharpen knife, repair or replace tool collection
- Rent "Lambchop's Funniest Songs"
- Write poems together (perhaps within 5 minutes on a theme)
- Rent "Babe" or "Ground Hog Day" with Bill Murray
- Rent "Bell, Book, Candle" with James Stewart or "Silence of the Lambs"...
- Rent "Wallace and Gromit" (Perhaps "A Close Shave" is best episode)
- Decorate chair by fireplace.
- Burn the dried up Christmas tree (watch it go fuuumph!)
- Have a sheep day
- <http://www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Hills/9609/sheeptxt.html>
- Call up a farmer and have the kids come down for a sheep birthing.
- Do some knitting with wool.

## Also see:

<http://pages.ivillage.com/paganparent/imbolic.html> packed with stuff  
<http://www.web-holidays.com/candle/> fun  
<http://www.circlesanctuary.org/pholidays/CandlemasCustomsLore.html> overview  
<http://www.partytown.com/menus/imbolc.htm> for a meal  
[http://www.education-world.com/a\\_lesson/lesson048.shtml](http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson048.shtml) about Groundhog Day  
<http://orderofthecauldron.homestead.com/candlemas.html> nice discussion on Candlemas  
<http://www.ghostdragon.net/sabbats/imbolcactivities.html> more activities.  
<http://members.tripod.com/acorns3/archives.html> pagan kids activities back issues (look also under Ostara)

# Things to Do for Spring Equinox

By Alex Strongbow  
A Druid Missal-Any, Spring Equinox 2002

Well, that's a really hard question. We know that most sowing in the fields would be done by now and it was time to change to spring clothes and spend more time outdoors. When it comes down to, we're talking about eggs and sunlight, right?

1. Break down, and enjoy the Easter egg decoration party. Especially the Ukrainian style wax and decoration. If you're an overachiever, go into Faberge.
2. Have half an omelet, sunny side up, of course.
3. Hide treasures in the forest or park. Tall grasses equals stepped-on eggs.
4. Be early for April Fool's day.
5. Go out to the pub for Saint Patrick's day and live it up.
6. Spend the whole day with a watch and see if day REALLY equals night.
7. Set up and synchronize your solar-calendar (that rock-henge in your back yard. A great site, for setting up your stones in a parking lot or a field is [www.efn.org/~jack\\_v/AstronomicalCalendar.html](http://www.efn.org/~jack_v/AstronomicalCalendar.html) Strangely, the design looks like a basketball courts lines! Could there be a connection?!
8. Get your garden planted, if you haven't started. Try old-fashioned "heirloom seeds" at [www.seedsavers.org](http://www.seedsavers.org) or Seed Savers Exchange (SSE) at 3076 North Winn Road, Decorah Iowa 52101 at 319-382-5990.
9. Make waffles Write "Clinton" with maple syrup. Hehe. Enjoy taking half-way opinions on important subjects and carefully study both sides of issues.
10. Change your wardrobe to summer-style suits, sandals and wear a flower. I've been thinking. Many religions have strange headgear or hair-styles, and we haven't since that weird "bald-forehead" style in the 450s AD, so let's go out for straw hats?!



# 10 Things to Do for Beltane

By Alex Strongbow  
A Druid Missal-Any, Beltane 2002

1. Sex. Of course!
2. Wake up early, greet the sun, wash your face in the morning dew. Collect flowers and make garlands for those you care about.
3. An Oak King can be selected by various athletic competitions such as: races, wrestling, archery, stone tossing, sit-ups in one minute, fire kindling contest (first to boil cup of water), greased pole climbing, rodeo riding, or a combination of foolish macho things.
4. A maypole dance for the women (men too if not enough people). Last woman holding the ribbon will become the May Queen The May Queen and Oak King should symbolically (or actually) consummate their "marriage" in a symbolic gesture. <http://altreligion.about.com/library/howto/htmypole.htm>
5. Picnic, leaving a symbolic offering of one piece of everything. Possibly foods are oatmeal, dairy, berries, greens, wine, barley, honey, eggs, sweets. <http://www.keirle.freeseerve.co.uk/page18.htm>
6. Drama or play of Persephone returning from the underworld or a story of a woman returning from the fairy lands. Divination is a possibility.
7. Enjoy the Waters of Life (i.e. whiskey). If you're solitary, do some self-nurturing type of activity, like a walk in the woods of a state park and camp out or vigil.
8. Raise stones. Its always a good time to bring the community together to haul rocks around and make a memorial of some type to the event. I recommend using car hoods from a junk yard, long levers, and 15 ropes and a pulley.

## Build a Bonfire.

This might be hard for those of you in fire-prone areas like California, but a cauldron fire might be possible, or just use a barbeque/hibachi for the job. Some of you are girl-scouts, but here's some advice for the rest of you.

Apparently, the traditional wood to burn is oak, ash, thorn, rowan, apple, birch, alder, maple, elm, gorse, holly, hawthorn, and others from a story about the Battle of the Trees. I'd add a piece from any other tree in your forest. Collecting the woods and maypole would be a nice combination activity, and give time for certain members to "dally".

Be sure to remove all the dry materials in the vicinity and dampen the area. Now you can just pile a lot of logs if you'd like, or you can stack them. A pyramid shape or tipi shape is considered ideal, as boxy shapes tend to fall to the side rather than collapse inward (1999 Texas A&M disaster, anyone?). I recommend that you don't get too close to the fire, just in case a log rolls out. Leave spaces between the logs to allow air to circulate. Old Christmas trees make great center pieces (whoosh!). Put the kindling and ever large pieces in the center.

There are many ways to make the initial flame. Magnifying glass, parabolic mirror, iron & flint, rubbing two sticks (use a bow to spin faster), magma, lightning, natural forest fires, and matches. As always, the key is to start small with shaved wood, dried grass, lint, cotton (yes, toilet paper is good

and add that to small sticks than keep adding bigger stick until the logs reach the magic temperature of 451F. If all else fails, CAREFULLY throw a cup of gasoline onto it.

Dance around it, watch it, talk to your friends. Throw negativity away into the fire. Or send up prayers with the fire. Young couples may wish to jump over the fire together after it burns down.

As always, stay with the fire until you are able to handle all the ashes with your bare hand. If you can, you take a candle home and relight your furnace, like the ancient Celts did.

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Oracle/6992/bonfires.html>

Or you can do something no one else has thought that you really like! See these sites for ideas:

<http://altreligion.about.com/c/ht/00/07/>

[How Celebrate Beltane0962933966.htm](http://www.circlesanctuary.org/pholidays/Beltane.html) Fun.

<http://www.circlesanctuary.org/pholidays/Beltane.html> Good customs.

<http://paganwiccan.about.com/cs/beltanemayday/>

[www.cyberwitch.com/wychwood/Temple/beltane.htm](http://www.cyberwitch.com/wychwood/Temple/beltane.htm) good history

## Summer Solstice Activities

By Alex Strongbow, ex-Carleton Grove  
A Druid Missal-Any, Summer Solstice 2002

It is not a major holiday, but here are some activities to surround the holiday.

Short and simple, the list looks like this:

- Picnics, beach parties, and fireworks
- Bonfire (It's always a good time)
- Fire-Fly searching, bug collecting (and release?)
- College or family reunions
- Charging magical tools
- Hardest work on a long-term project or making a journey
- Eating a super-big sundae
- Hauling rocks and attuning your megalithic calendar
- Baseball, soccer, hurling, outdoor games.
- Searching for St. John's Wort
- Backyard volcano building (see familyeducation.com site)



Figure 50 Bright Mirage, Bard of the Reform 2001-2

# Some Possible Lughnasadh Activities

By Alex Strongbow, a Druid Lost in the Woods  
A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 2002

Basically, early August is a "hey, the farming is turning out alright!" agricultural festival and horse race time. Because it is a rather warm time of the year, and like other parts of the Northern Hemisphere, it is also a good time for big crowds of people to travel and have some constructive fun. Tailltiu, Lugh's mom, is commemorated in funeral games that last a week or so. I've put together a list of some events that might be done throughout August.

- Food was scarce before the harvest, so you might consider fasting before the festival begins, eating only seasonal foods that you can research as being available before world-grocerying began. Perhaps combined with a camping trip, to test your rigor.
- Brehon Wedding/Handfasting: A young couple will put their hand through a hole in a stone and pledge to officiant and public their intention to try living together for a year before deciding on a permanent marriage.
- Settling of Legal Disputes: Advice or mediation in long-term disputes could be sought from other members of the grove (perhaps on slips of paper pulled from an anonymous box). Alliances with other organizations may be approved now.
- Horse racing: Well, few of us have horses, but a trip to a derby, dog track, or Nascar race would be appropriate, as would attending a summer track and field meet. Gambling is encouraged. If you do have a few horses (or can rent them), it is traditional to race along a river or ford a river mid-race.
- Bonfire: Not associated with hearth-fires, but just for fun and illumination of nocturnal partying. Sacrifice bad habits and unwanted things from your life by throwing symbols of them into the fire, this is good anytime. Perhaps, a competition between teams to build the biggest/oddest Lammastower?
- Prearrange to collect the last sheaf of wheat from a farmer and make it a Cailleach doll (old woman), much like the Bride-og at Oimele in February. It should be placed on the mantle over the winter and destroyed in the spring, perhaps plowed into the ground.
- ☐ Celtic Olympics: Yes the games of Tailltiu, were held until the time of the Norman invasions in the 12th century. Perhaps modeling them on a highland games, which are frequent this time of year, would be apt. Events could include:
  - Sword dancing, country dancing, interpretive dance etc.
  - Long jump, high jump, pole-vaulting with walking sticks
  - Boffer-sword/Quarter-staff bouts, preferably on a log over a river.
  - Massive tug-a-wars, wacky relays, tag, human pyramids, or egg-toss contests.
  - Archery, fire-arms, catapulting, slinging or spear toss contest
  - Have a "Rhibo," a welsh game where people line up facing each other, making a bed of arms and then fling them up in the air. It is advisable to catch them on the way down.
  - Mental contests for the less physically-gifted: Chess, poetry, story-telling, lying contests, geometry jousts and math matches (bring out old SAT prep sheets), joke-telling, banjo-dueling, scavenging hunts.
  - Large elaborate parades or activities to test the strength and endurance of young folk, usually through a forest, to a special spring or well or curving up and around a hill.
  - Make plans for the winterization preparations.
  - Feasting!: Foodstuffs include Beef, broccoli, cherries, spinach, any type of early berry, corn, potatoes, homemade bread (particularly wheat, oat, and especially corn bread), berry pies, barley cakes, nuts, apples, rice, roast lamb, acorns, crab apples, summer squash, turnips, oats, and all grains. Drinks: Elderberry Wine, Mead, Ale, Meadowsweet Tea, and Cider
  - If you live near an abattoir, you could attempt a Tarbh Feis (cattle meditation) by wrapping yourself in a freshly killed bull's hide after eating 10 pounds of beef at a crossroads and sleeping overnight while Druids sing around you. You could then prophesy the 2002 elections by this method, perhaps, or the fertility of the harvest might be gauged from your dreams.
  - Offer first-fruits from your garden and plant all the seed of fruits eaten at festival. Bake a loaf of bread in the guise of a man and tear him apart by wild-cats. Include bilberries or blueberries in your feast; these were a traditional fruit, whose abundance was seen as an indicator of the harvest to come. Make a cornwheel of ripe grains.
  - Gather and make acorn bread.
- Wrestling in either Greco-Roman fashion (pinning shoulders to the ground), Sumo (no touching ground except feet or leaving circle) or WWF smackdown rules.
- Hurley, Cricket, Soccer, or Rugby matches.
- Foot races, wheelbarrow races, bicycle, piggy-back, sack-races, obstacle courses
- Hammer Toss, Shot put, heavy rock lifting or caber toss



**Figure 51 Another View of Druid Bridge in Northfield over Cannon river with 165+ Druid Sigils.**



# Some Optional Activities for Fall Equinox

By Alex Strongbow, a Druid Lost in the Woods  
A Druid Missal-Any, Fall Equinox 2002

Fall Equinox is the opposite twin of Spring Equinox, only that life is now giving fruit and dying at this point in the year's cycles, sometimes known as Michaelmas in the Catholic calendar; when contracts and rents were collected (as at Easter). What harvesting began in Lughnasadh should be about finished by the Equinox. In times past, autumn was a dreaded season, as people scrambled to prepare food for the long, deadly winter. Only in recent centuries, with assured food supplies, have we begun to romanticize the season. For modern society it is a time for starting school and the end of summer vacations.

- It's possibly the last chance to have the types of fun summer outdoor group activities that characterize Beltane, Mid-summer and Lughnasadh. So it offers an opportunity to repeat previous ones, or try out one that you didn't have time for.
- A picnic is definitely in order or participation in final harvesting. Traditional choices would be grapes, acorns, wheat bread, goat, Indian corn, horn of plenty, cornbread, corn, root crops (i.e. onions, carrots, potatoes, etc.), pomegranates, nuts, goose, mutton, dried fruits, apples, beans, and squash.
- Prayers towards protection, balance, and success in life are auspicious.
- Building a doll of grains to be burnt in the spring or fed to animals.
- Sitting under trees with nets to catch falling nuts and leaves, perhaps saving a leaf from each year in a collection. The rest should be made into a leaf pile for the kids.
- The changing leaves can also be dipped in paraffin and put on wax paper. After the leaves dry, they may be placed around the house or in large jars with sigils of protection and/or abundance
- Take notes on which trees turn color first, which fall soonest, and into which colors.
- Follow the migration of birds.
- String nuts into a necklace.
- Plan a trip to see the fall colors in the mountains.
- Do the Halloween farm-visit early and beat the crowds.
- Make a grapevine wreath for the door.
- Deer season opens. Contemplate it and find some deer. Vegetarians can protest the sporting elements of it.
- A good time to give to local charities to feed the poor.
- When do certain animals begin to disappear?
- Bake bread from scratch (i.e. grind the grains into flour).
- Note the date of the first frost and its effects on plant life.
- Put up storm windows, check insulation and pack away the air conditioner.
- Start notice the location and time of sunrise, noon and sunset and continue through winter.
- Plant acorns and other nuts and wait for spring growth.

# Suggested Topics for OMS Grove Meetings

By Sybok, 2003

## Introduction from Mike:

Just as Carleton Grove may have its weekly tea meetings and events, so we recommend that Groves diversify their activities outside the usual liturgical service. You don't have to be all things entertaining, but it's nice to try letting member's talents shine out in different situations. Therefore, I'm also including these suggestions from Sybok which he posted to RDNAtalk once with advice from OMS.

1. Introductory meeting (repeat as necessary): "How I came to be here, and where I wish to go." (Begin with song, "Sequoia Sempervivens.")
2. Ethics vs. morals: If you don't believe in a judging deity, or heaven and hell, what makes you be an ethical person? Issues of freedom and responsibility.
3. Ethics of Spell casting: Love spells; weather working; protection, etc.. Manipulative magic?
4. Bardic Circle: everyone bring songs and/or poetry to share in turn.
5. Pagan parenting: Bringing up our kids to make a free and informed choice of religion; fun and seasonal activities; children blowing our covers; cowan relatives and co-parents. How can we pass on our values? The ethics and politics of teaching children, especially kids of non Pagans.
6. Reincarnation: Types of reincarnation from different cultures; transmigration to different species; the ecological view of "material animism." Soul survival: intact, fragmented, or no personal soul at all. Ethnic identities. Experiences with the dying and the dead.
7. New mythologies: Science fiction & fantasy. Movies, comics, music, art.
8. Building Pagan communities: Urban? Rural? How to maximize the feeling of community and individual choice in lifestyle? Business, living arrangements, aesthetics.
9. Paganism & Druidism: In and out of the broom closet. Handling the Craft at work and with relatives. Sharing experiences.
10. Sacrifice & the seasonal round: Is the continual reenactment of the yearly sacrifice a viable mythic model for us? What mythological alternatives might we consider? How about seasonal celebrations in differing climatic zones, or different hemispheres?
11. Sexual polarities: The metaphysics of sex and heterosexism. What would gay or straight or bisexual magic be like? Do the different rhythms of the year call for different sexualities? Theories of love and magnetism, erotic and mystic ecstasy, eternal love. Sexuality, polarity, androgyny.
12. Sexuality & Relationships: Open relationships; monogamy vs. polyamory. Different models; polyfidelity. Dealing with jealousy. Rules for inclusive relationships.
13. Living a nature religion in an urban/technological world: Gremlins and machines; recycling; deep ecology; seasonal awareness in an urbanized setting; worshipping the moon through glass!

14. Magic & money: Our relationship to having and to generosity. How we relate to prosperity and how we manifest it.
15. Pagans & community responsibility: The burnout cycle and group motivation. Resistance to our visions; how to change the world if we can't get ourselves moving? Varieties of Pagan experience, from itinerant partier to persons motivated by strong political or ethical principles.
16. Paganism & politics: Pagan response to anti-choice lobby, Helms Amendment, anti-Satanic hysteria, etc. Preparing position statements, letter-writing campaigns, petitions, etc.
17. Skills exchange on a variety of topics: massage, Tarot, geomancy, dowsing, astrology, divination, etc.
18. Book of Shadows "swap party."
19. Song & chant swap (bring tape recorders!)
20. Trance techniques.
21. Videos. Rent a video that has a Pagan theme. Discussion follows.
22. Relationship of myth to reality.
23. Purpose of existence: Who are we? Where are we going? How will we get there? Personal salvation/ enlightenment vs. larger mission...
24. Practicing magical techniques: Sensing auras, using pendulums, dowsing, etc. Survey of divination methods.
25. Guest lecturers: Invite presentations from individual group members or outside sources.
26. Book study & discussion. Select a book from the Basic Bibliography or other; everybody read it and discuss at next meeting.
27. Comparative religions: Invite representatives from different religions to present their views to Grove; then have the Grove attend their next services.
28. Special events: Sponsoring and participating in public events; debriefings from distant journeys to attend Pagan Festivals, magical mystery tours, etc..
29. Group outings: Picnics, camp outs, dinners, movies. trips to sacred sites, such as hot springs, the ocean, mountains, caves, etc.
30. Full Moon and/or New Moon rituals: Wiccan or other.
31. Men's and Women's Mystery Circles.
32. Pirate Parties or other special theme costume parties.
33. Other topics? Send suggestions from your group to OMS-RDNA; 557 Winona Road; Grants Pass OR 97526 USA

Don't forget to pass around Sign-Up sheet for new people.  
 Decide next meetings: dates, places and topics.  
 Potluck dinner or munchies?  
 Prepare a calendar of events.  
 Arrange to contact absent members by phone or letter.



## Section Eleven: Final Things To Think About

### Dave's final Meditation at Carleton (1966)

Three years ago  
 Gone now  
 They found something  
 had a good time  
 could laugh.

Restrictions now gone  
 still must laugh  
 If you can't laugh  
 you are dead, and  
 your religion dying.

Your spirit is your own  
 Find what you will  
 but together good  
 yuks.

If A-D can't laugh,  
 or sermonizes,  
 Kill him!

I leave you....

(Announce meetings)



Figure 52 Japanese Gardens river of rocks, c. 2002

# Original Introduction to the Book of Liturgy

Praise to the Mother!! This book contains the weekly Order or Worship of the Earth-Mother, the Orders of Worship for the Greater and Lesser Festivals of the Druid year, and for the sealing and consecration of Second and Third Order Druids.

No part of this book is to be kept secret from any member of the secular association of the Reformed Druids, nor from any called to be Druids, but it is not to be kept in the hands of any but a Third Order Druid.

Further, all of these Orders are to be celebrated only by a Third Order Druid called to be an Archdruid of the Carleton Chapter, or designated by the Archdruid of the Chapter specifically to conduct the service.

All of these Orders are the work of Archdruid David Fisher, Second Order Druids Howard Cherniack, Norman E. Nelson and David A. Frangquist and Second Order Peter Basquin. Until such time as a Council of the Priest of Dalon Ap Landu shall so affirm, they shall be the sole Orders valid for Reformed Druid worship at Carleton.

Declared by  
David H. Fisher  
Archdruid

on the 91st Day of Geimredh in the First Year of the Worship of the Mother.  
(January 31st, 1964)

## Printing History of the Liturgies

What is the Order of Worship? Much of this is well discussed in my General History of Reformed Druidism; but basically it was originally devised by David H. Fisher in April 1963. We don't exactly know where he got the material, but it bears a strong similarity to the Episcopalian service and to some fraternal Druidic rites.

The generic Order of Worship was originally devised for the use of holding regular Saturday Noon services at Carleton. After the mandatory Chapel Requirement was rescinded, the Saturday services became gradually less important, and the 8 festivals rose in importance. By the late 1970s, Saturday services had fallen out of use at Carleton. Some of the missionary groves continued to have Saturday services up until the 70s, but most found it a bit too frequent for their schedules. The Order of Worship remains as a good generic, non-dogmatic ritual whenever you want to hold a service outside of a festival-setting. The basic Order of Worship essentially has become a working template for designing rituals for the eight festivals, marriages, funerals, consecrations, ordinations to various special Orders and other sundry purposes.

Where did the Liturgies of ARDA come from? The following historiography section will discuss more on individual liturgies. I drew upon four sources to compile Part Three:

1. The Black Book of the Liturgy.
2. Frangquist's Prayer Book
3. The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)
4. The International Druid Archives
5. On-line Searching for liturgical keywords
6. From Private Collections

## The Black Book of Liturgy

Just as the Green Book of Meditations (Volume 1) in Part Five was designed as an aid for Archdruids too lazy to look up meditations for their services, so has the Book of Liturgy been designed to offer prepackaged rituals for the Priest too lazy to design their own rites. The rites offered were examples of what you can do, not restrictions. There never were any official printings of the Black Book, everybody made copies when they need it, until Michael Scharding did an official printing in 1993. Isaac used several entries from the Black Book to include in the Urtext section of DC(E). The title comes from the Black binder cover that contained it. The Black book was essentially a convenient subdivision of the Blue Book of the Archives. The contents of the Black Book were added to over the years. At the end of Morrison's Archdruidcy, it's contents were:

1. Introduction of David Fisher (The Imprimatur)
2. Common Order of Worship (summer version)
3. Oimelc #1, #2, #3
4. Service for Beltaine (with Stage directions)
5. A Service for Midsummer (half of it)
6. A Service for Lughnasadh
7. A Reading for Lughnasadh
8. Samhain #1, a responsive reading, Samhain#2
9. Service at the Winter Solstice
10. A Chant for Midwinter
11. A meditation for Midwinter
12. Ceremony of Consecration
13. Order of Investiture
14. Exorcism in Time of War
15. Greek Order of Worship

## Frangquist's Prayerbook

Frangquist had a small address book in which he had typed services. He gave me a copy while visiting in October of 1993. It was the first time that I had seen the 4th to 7th order services appear in the record books (well, the 5th was printed in DCE). All were of 1965 vintage. The contents of the prayer book was:

1. Order of Common Worship (Summer and Winter Version)
2. Ordination of Druids first through seventh
3. David's Final Meditation at Carleton
4. Incantation to Midsummer by Frangquist

## The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)

By Isaac Bonewits published once August 1976.

Almost everything from the first half of the “Liturgies of the Druids” in DC(E) has been reprinted in ARDA. The historiographies can tell you more about the different pieces. Basically everything in the first half of DC(E)’s section was brand new to the eyes of the Carleton RDNA and of Californian Druidical origins. The second half of the collection, called “Ur text” came from the Black Book of Liturgy” There was one unusual item in Isaac’s “Ur-text” that wasn’t in the Black Book, Fisher’s original Summer Order of Worship version. I have no idea how Isaac got his hands on that. DC(E)’s original contents were:

1. Order of Common Worship (Summer and Winter Versions)
2. Ordination to the Second Order
3. Oimeic, Beltane, Lughnasadh, Samhain
4. Winter Solstice, Spring Equinox, Summer Solstice, Fall Equinox
5. A King’s Wedding
6. An OLD fashioned Wedding
7. Suggestions for A Druid Funeral
8. The Gaelic Rituals (Summer, Winter, 2nd Order)
9. May Day, Season Surpassing Poem
10. Cold, Cold Poem

### URTEXT RITUALS

11. Ceremony of Consecration
12. Oimeic Service of Worship #2
13. Original Order of Common Worship: Summer Half of the Year
14. A Service at the Winter Solstice
15. A Service of Sealing to the Service of Braciaca and of Man (fifth order)
16. A Service for Midsummer (only half of it)

## International Druid Archives

Collected by Michael Scharding, Up to 1996

Over the years, I collected several pieces of liturgy from various sources. The last three items below were printed in the Druid Chronicle at some point. But we have originals.

1. Late 70s Berkeley Orders Of Worship (Summer and Winter Versions)
2. Samhain #3 and Fall Equinox of Carleton
3. Order of Worship for Protogroves
4. A Marriage Ceremony
5. Order of Puck
6. A Wedding Contract
7. Order of Diancecht
8. Order of Lugh



# Historiography of the Liturgies

## Section One:

### The Simple Package of Generic Liturgies

#### **Simple Order of Common Worship (Summer & Winter Version) 1993:**

Easy-to-read arrangements by Michael Scharding, 1993.

#### **Ordination of Second Order Druids 1963:**

Arranged by Michael Scharding 1993. Again, except for the section titles and directions, identical to Fisher’s 1963.

#### **Ordination of First Order Druids 1963:**

Arranged in 1993 and discussed by Michael Scharding based on oral history.

#### **Various Traditional Invocations 1963:**

The first three were translated from the original ancient Irish by Prof. John Messenger, the RDNA’s original faculty advisor, in 1963. For more details see their endnote entries in the Book of Customs of the Chronicles. The fourth invocation is the “Hymn of the Earth-Mother” composed by Kathryn Courtice and put to music by Peter Basquin during the first months of the starting RDNA in spring 1963.

#### **Detailed Order of Common Worship (Summer & Winter Version) 1976:**

These are identical to Isaac’s version in DC(E). Except for the section titles of each section and the directions, these are identical to David Frangquist’s version between 1964-1966. I suspect this because of the lines in the Invocation “Forgive us these three errors” I suspect that David Fisher originally used “Forgive us these three Sins” Otherwise little difference between Frangquist and Fisher.

## Section Two: Old

### Carleton Seasonal Versions

#### **1964 Samhain, Version #1:**

This was probably written by Fisher in fall of 1964. Noteworthy is the Welsh addition to the invocation, invoking Be’al. This is the only known use of a god’s name in place of the generic “Lord” Most of the time the identity and interpretation of “Lord” is left up to the congregant’s imagination. Also noteworthy is the absence of an invocation of the Earth-Mother.

#### **Samhain Chant by David Fisher:**

Although found labeled as “Midwinter Chant” of pre 1966 origin, the original text was by Fisher for Samhain of 1964 as is proven by examining Chapter seven of Customs in the Druid Chronicles. Not part of Black Book.

### **1970s Samhain. Version #2:**

Not present in the original Black Book of Liturgy as given to Shelton. This is probably from Shelton's typewriter between 1969 and 1976.

### **Cold! Cold!:**

Was included with the Irish rituals in DC(E). Acquired by Larson from Cross & Slover's works. This is a spell poem and make a good Samhain reading.

### **1963/4 Service at Winter Solstice:**

Although not originally in the Black Book of Liturgy as given to Shelton, it was written by Norman Nelson, probably in December 1965 at the Vermillion Grove of South Dakota, but possibly from a Dec 1963 or 1964 service also. The Winter Solstice is not popular at Carleton because it is cold, and everybody has gone home for the academic Winter Break. It was chosen for inclusion in the Urtext of DC(E).

### **1964 A Call to Mother Nature:**

Used on the 1964 Winter Solstice. Probably collected by David Frangquist, his source was from the Harley Manuscript 1585, FF. 12 v. -13r.

### **1963 A Chant for Midwinter:**

Similar to the Samhain chant by David Fisher above. It could be by Norman Nelson or by David Fisher, more likely the former since he wrote the service for that year; but possibly by Fisher as a personal touch to Norman's service. Dec. 1963?

### **1964 A Meditation for Midwinter:**

(From Ecclesiastes 7:8-10, 14) Most likely from Frangquist or Fisher, who had scoured biblical literature for Druidic phrases. Probably discovered by them before Dec. 1965.

### **1964/5 Oimelc Service of Worship:**

Written before 1966, probably by Fisher during 1964 or 1965.

### **1964 Festival of Oimelc Mediation \***

Found in the Archives in 1999 stuck to another sheet, so as to be hidden.

### **1966/7 A Service for Oimelc:**

Written by Gary Zempel during 1966 or 1967. It was the one chosen for the Urtext Oimelc service in DC(E).

### **1970-4 Yet Another Service for Oimelc:**

Not Present in the Original Black Book of Liturgy as given to Shelton. It was probably written between 1969 to 1974, by Shelton.

### **1963 Beltane(?) Original Order of Worship for Summer Half of the Year:**

I suspect that this is the earliest version of the Order of Worship, possibly from the Spring of 1963 and written by David Fisher. Arrangement is just like he did it. First printed in DC(E).

### **May Day Surpassing:**

Was included with the Irish rituals in DC(E). Finn Mac Cumhaill supposedly wrote this in order to prove his poetic ability and makes a good reading for Beltane. Acquired by Larson from Cross & Slover's works.

### **1970s A Service for Beltane:**

Not present in the original Black Book of Liturgy. It was probably inserted by Richard Shelton and it is probably of his authorship between 1969-1976. The stage directions were taken from a letter from Shelton to Morrison in 1976, explaining the customs of Beltane as Shelton knew them.

### **1976 Beltane Tips**

This letter was to assist Don Morrison, who had just returned from a term abroad in France, in getting the Grove at Carleton back in shape before the arrival of Isaac that summer and the big Mid-Summer reunion.

### **1964 Midsummer Service**

I ran across this fragment in the Archives while checking for more liturgical material. It's just a small piece. But shows that the early Grove was busy during the summer vacation also.

### **1963-64 A Chant for Midsummer:**

Written in the summer of 1963, probably by Fisher. The DC(E) urtext version has only the first half as does the Black Book and it has only the first entry of the ritual that contained it: with the same text as the generic summer order of worship, except that it uses "sins" instead of "errors" in the invocation.

### **1964 Incantation to Midsummer:**

Written by Frangquist in the Summer of 1964 at Camp Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Grove in Wisconsin, near Chicago.

### **1970-74 A Service for Lughnasadh:**

Not present in the original Black Book of Liturgy as given to Shelton. It is therefore probably also from Shelton's typewriter, especially since it is accompanied by a reading, with proper footnoting (a trademark of Shelton). Lughnasadh was not popular at Carleton since it took place during the summer vacation when everybody was away from the Grove.

### **1978 Service for Lughnasadh**

A rare service from the post-Shelton era at Carleton, no longer before the Grove went into omission for a few years after her Archdruidy. She apparently was building on the early service in some ways.

## Section Three: Early Berkeley

### Seasonal Versions

I believe these versions were made by Robert Larson, with occasional revision by Isaac Bonewits and by members of the Berkeley and the Twin Cities Groves. It should be emphasized once again that the use of these rituals is entirely optional. And they were printed in DC(E). They were probably written almost at the same time, giving a cyclical feeling of a whole year through slight transitions. They were composed between 1975 and August of 1976, most likely. These provided a full rotation of the year and were essentially followed by many of the NRDNA groves up to and including today, with small variation and different readings. Special notes by Isaac follow for these Orders:

### **1975 Samhain:**

The Chant was written by David Fisher, in 1963 c.e., and appears both in the Chronicles, and the custom of repeating the Sacrifice and the Reply was started by Robert Larson. Numerous poems and songs suitable for this holiday may be found in the Book of Bards.

### **1975 Winter Solstice:**

Larson notes that he usually uses special “sun waters” for this rite: mead, whiskey, Irish Mist, etc. The last part of the Chant may be sung by the entire Grove, to the tune of “Tannenbaum” with the final line as an “Amen”

### **1975 Oimeic:**

There is a special Communion Hymn written for this service by Robert Larson, which can be found in The Book of Bards.

### **1975 Spring Equinox:**

This holiday is not celebrated by some orthodox members of the RDNA. Larson uses special “sun waters” here as well.

### **1975 Beltane:**

Numerous songs and poems for this holiday are found in The Book of Bards.

### **1975 Summer Solstice:**

The suggestion of the use of mistletoe as the sacrifice may be startling to those who did not realize that Midsummer, like winter, was considered one of the best days of the year to gather mistletoe, because it was sacred to the Sun-fir-storm Gods. The use of “sun waters” is also appropriate to this holiday.

### **1975 Lughnasadh:**

Larson wishes to point out that the Chant, which gives so much emphasis to the Sun God, was written that way for two major reasons; firstly, because Lugh is a Sun God and secondly, because Larson is a member of the Order of Belenos. He suggests that other Druids may wish to add or change verses to fit their personal preferences in deities. The fact that Larson is a Sun Priest may explain one reason why he wrote the ceremonies for the Solstices & Equinoxes.

### **1975 Fall Equinox:**

This holiday is not celebrated by some orthodox members of the RDNA (as with the Spring). The “Sun waters” may be used. Some Groves may wish to add an additional Chant to the Gods of the Hunt and the Harvest.

## **Section Four:**

### **Later Berkeley Seasonal Variations**

I added these to ARDA, because they are special. These are unusual versions of the Order of Worship because they were written in the last years of the 70s for the Berkeley Grove by Isaac Bonewits, with possible other liturgists. This period was one of great tension for Isaac Bonewits, as he became more and more convinced of the necessity of a neo-pagan Druid religion; and he was beginning to suspect that the NRDNA wasn't close enough to this goal. During this time he was involved with several other neo-pagan religious organizations and studying many types of liturgies. Isaac was also trying to come up with a powerful ritual for his new image of Druidism, and this shows in his careful arrangement of this service. Isaac told me that he was

heavily inspired by the Star Wars movies when he composed the original version of this ritual in 1978. The “Thou art God” line is from Heinlein's “Stranger in a Strange Land” adopted by The Church of All Worlds” which Isaac was very interested in as a potential neo-pagan structure to build a Druid group with in the future ADF.

There appears to be three distinct phases in the liturgical development of this section, growing more complicated with each step as the liturgical design. Isaac in 1978 began Pentalpha organization, not longer after marrying Selene, which was an innovative umbrella group for pagan organizations. Class B's major change was the replacement of the Invocation “forgive these three errors” with “swirling stars” invocation, which apparently occurred during 1978 at the Beltane service.

With the publishing of “Authentic Thaumaturgy”, a role-playing supplement explaining the laws of magic in 1978/9, perhaps we saw a reason for the shift to Class C, which occurred possibly around the Mid-Summer of 1979, although we don't have a copy of that service. Possibly because he was too intensely re-writing the liturgy at that point or experimenting? Class C added several items that are now found in the ADF liturgical outline, namely; Centering, Statement of Beliefs, Group Goals and Dedication, Offering & Praise, Declaration of Faith, Sharing, Group Bonding, Thanking the Gods, Absorption & Grounding. Isaac considered the result a more powerful psychic drama with greater magical possibilities for public rituals.

#### **CLASS A:**

1977 Beltane  
1977 Lughnasadh  
1978 Spring Equinox

#### **CLASS B:**

1978 Beltane  
1978 Lughnasadh  
1978 Fall Equinox  
1978 Samhain  
1979 Oimeic  
1979 Beltane

#### **CLASS C**

1979 Lughnasadh  
1979 Order of Common Worship for Foghamhar Season  
1979 Fall Equinox Service  
1979 Samhain  
1980 Oimeic  
1980 Spring Equinox  
1980 Order of Common Worship for Earrach Season  
1980 Beltane  
1981 A Chant for Spring Equinox

With Beltane 1980 (Variant #2) being an odd-ball exception, but the introductory notes mention that this was used during a visit to Santa Cruz Gathering, at which perhaps Isaac felt withheld from introducing the new features for some reason?

Specific points to notice is the heavy involvement of the group with choruses; far beyond the involvement of any other ritual on record. There is also a great many more beliefs expressed by the group than most RDNA grove would ever agree upon. The ritual is very much a binding ritual, to bring about like-minds, with very specific spoken goals. They give the reader a good version of what Isaac wanted the RDNA rituals to become, as he talks about in his Epistle of the Apocrypha.

I would highly caution the reader from assuming that the contents of these rituals would be agreed with by Carleton Druids; especially the older ones. These rituals are far more in the realm of purely religious in a Neo-Pagan sense than most older RDNA members might tolerate. But they are very interesting.

### **1979 Order of General Common Worship: Summer**

The Summer version was written probably between Feb and May 1980.

### **1979 Order of General Common Worship: Winter**

The Winter version between August and November 1979. A rather touching way to address the rejection of the sacrifice, by noting seasonal changes for hope when divinational responses prove insufficient.

### **1978 Samhain**

Nothing too unusual in this liturgy.

### **1979 Samhain**

Quite a bit more complicated than the 1978 version. But nothing unusually new regarding Samhain about this one.

### **1979 Oimele**

Just a note that I like the group chant.

### **1979 Pentalpha Oimele**

Isaac was involved in several different covens and lodges at this time, and Pentalpha was one such avenue for his expression to form a legally recognized church and experiment with such issues of organization that were proving too difficult in the RDNA and NRDNA. Selene is his wife.

### **1979 Oimele Poem**

From the Pentalpha Journal.

### **1980 Oimele**

Again very complicated elements in here are mostly the same in this era of lots of response readings, but nothing new here regarding Oimele, but this might be raised in the Meditation.

### **1978 Spring Equinox Fragment \***

This is the last known service by Isaac to use the "Forgive these three mistakes" invocation. After this is the swirling stars motif for the invocation, by Geller. Perhaps the fragmentary nature indicated that Isaac was tired of the traditional format because after this one, they begin to swell in size and complexity, indicating some liturgical inspiration over the next few months.

### **1980 Spring Equinox**

Basic format again with common elements for this series.

### **1981 A Chant for Spring Equinox**

The only really interesting part of the 1980 Equinox service, minus possible meditation choices.

### **1980 Order of Common Worship, Earrach Season**

According to Isaac, this was the last new service he produced before closing down liturgical innovation with the NRDNA. Not too long after this, there was a bit of a breakdown in the Berkeley Grove and a short sabbatical by Isaac.

### **1977 Beltane**

Not too different from the 1975 version.

### **1978 Beltane**

Has some nice chants and the oatcakes are an unusual borrowing from Wiccan services.

### **1979 Beltane**

Musically powerful performance, indeed, with the heavy elements common for this year.

### **1980 Beltane**

Isaac claimed he stopped writing liturgies in the Earrach season, yet this service exists. Odd.

### **1980 Beltane (Variant #2)**

A simplified version for a shorter period? Or perhaps from another Druid? A bit of a mystery.

### **1977 Lughnasadh Fragment**

I like the Catechism alternative wording.

### **1978 Lughnasadh**

The invocation of the Patrons of the various Druid high orders is interesting. Gwydion before his accident, was quite the popular bard in California circles, where he founded Forever Forest, I believe. His poems, songs and tapes inspired a generation of pagan songwriters.

### **1979 Lughnasadh**

Again more ornate chant-responses with that unusual Lughnasadh chant.

### **1979 Order of Common Worship, Foghamhar**

It's hard to imagine Isaac had time for weekly services, much less make a liturgy for the service between the big 8 festivals, but here one is for the period between Lughnasadh and Samhain.

### **1978 Fall Equinox**

Again, nice chant, but without the later accoutrements of the 1979 liturgies.

### **1979 Autumn Equinox Service**

Again, more complicated than the 1978 one, with a nice chant.

\* \* \* \* \*

### **1983 ADF Liturgical Outline**

Published in *Druid's Progress* #2. Not much to discuss here since, the 1984 Step by Step Guide will explain much of this. ARDA Pt 8 discusses some of the reasons why ADF was founded.

Many of these areas of development are preceded and foreshadowed in Isaac's liturgies of the 1978-1981 period in the NRDNA and the only real note of interest was the use of the three worlds model of land, sea and sky which is a departure from the four direction of the RDNA.

### **1984 Step By Step Guide to the ADF Liturgy**

Published in *Druid's Progress*, issue #4. Issue #3 talked in great deal about the magical underpinnings of liturgical design.

### **1987 A Druid Worship Ceremony, Mean Samhradh.**

This was held at the Pagan Spirit Gathering of the Circle Sanctuary Group in Wisconsin, which incidentally was attended by several Carleton Grove members on vacation. Isaac has graciously given me this copy. We can see Isaac's nostalgia for various RDNA elements, but should note that most other ADFers do not share the RDNA background, and have gone off on other tangents. Dozens of their variations are available at [www.adf.org](http://www.adf.org) and can be viewed there.

### **1991 A Full ADF Liturgy**

Included to show how the ADF has innovated greatly since the 80s, with many interested liturgists devising alternative scripts with Baltic, Germanic and Greek themes. Ian Corrigan is one of the most prolific writers in the ADF field and is the current Arch Druid of ADF.

### **1993 & 1998 Keltrian Rituals**

As you can see from these texts, although the land-sky-sea imagery is still existent, there is a greater focus on the four directions, and a very strong emphasis on the invocation and bridging to the Otherworld in Keltria services. The original Book of Liturgy for Keltria was more or less finalized in 1991 and published in 1993. No significant changes have been made since then. Any Druid from any background is welcome to use this service in their lives without special permission.

### **Cauldron Online Ritual Variation 1998-1999**

As is written in the section, this is an innovative idea that I ran across in 2002. I have heard of on-line Wiccan services being done by Carleton Grove members from 1992, but not of Druid Services, although the idea was occasionally bandied about. I believe the main drawback, is that Druidism is so much more nature-oriented than Wicca, which seems to prefer indoor locations often, that most on-line people are likely secluded from the beauty and inspiration of Nature that usually surrounds one in an outdoor live service.

What happened in the ritual is that people would type in many of the words after each line by Randall (which I have omitted for brevity). The meditation, invocation of the four directions and various deities, and "Merry Meet" are Wiccan liturgical elements common in the 80s at Carleton. The candle lighting however is a new concept, very appropriate for indoor services, where a campfire is impractical. Interestingly, the Hymn of the Earth-Mother has been moved way back and used during the

consecration, with the Lord and Lady replacing Dalon Ap Landu, and I believe this was common at Carleton!

Thus, unless it is mere coincidence and parallel evolution, I am trying to figure out the identity of Randall, but it is quite possible that he had some Carleton connection from the 80s or perhaps had run across DC(E) over the years. I also experimented with long-distance ordinations over the phone with pre-blessed materials sent by mail, but I have dropped that recently and moved back in preference to live ordinations; however, I think on-line services remain a possibility for reaching distant druids; especially with more portable wire-less lap-tops, PDAs and streaming voice coming up soon. When that age comes, I'll be certain to add it to the collection.

### **1999 Online Spring Equinox**

Nothing too unusual in this variation, except that the Waters of Life are used during the Season of Sleep which is not common.

### **1999 Online Beltane**

Nothing uncommon here.

### **1998 Online Midsummer**

Lots of nice Summer imagery throughout.

### **1998 Online Lughnasadh**

Bountiful language included.

### **1999 Online Lughnasadh**

This was the only part that was different, rest was rigidly identical and deleted by me.

### **2001 Order of Common Worship – OMS Version**

This was taken from one of the Druidism 101 lessons of the Order of Mithril Star – RDNA. The full text of that series is found in the Green Books, Volume 8 of ARDA 2, including greater liturgical descriptions. I was given the text of these materials in Feb. 2002 by Sybok, one of OMS' founders.

Now, the Order of the Mithril Star began with some rather disgruntled members from Church of All Worlds, who felt it had strayed too far from the book "Stranger in a Strange Land", and sought to return to that format. CAW and SiaSL both shared the concept of "sharing waters" between close members, but to a greater deal of brotherhood and co-responsibility than any Reformed Druid I have known. Also of interest would be the Dune Series, for another water brotherhood developing from a society in the desert. OMS has been active in a parallel sense to the RDNA since we appeared on the internet in 2000 and sometimes contributes their thoughts, borrows elements from us, and ran the Druidism 202 (A Walk through ARDA) in 2003.

The interesting additions are their environmental and ethical pledge, a complicated directional orientation when addressing the winds, the sexual symbolism after the consecration (common in Wicca), the addition of "May you never thirst" (the slogan of the group, derived from the book's hero from the dry planet of Mars). The extra phrases at the end of the service are also from SiaSL, the concept of God/dess living within everything, therefore we are all God/dess. "Grok" is a complicated word meaning to completely, fully encompass and understand a concept and a feeling of communion with the listener/speaker.



## Section Five: Liturgies from the Later Years

### **1987 Samhain, Carleton:**

I found this ritual in a binder that Andrea gave me in 1992. It is the only ritual of the 1986 to 1990 period that survives in its near entirety. It comes from the early days of this revival, 1987, when a great deal of attention was paid to DC(E). Over the years the Wiccan elements would tend to become dominant. Heiko Koester and Jan Schlamp were the most active Druid leaders at the time in Carleton. Members at this time were mostly interested in general Neo-Paganism and Native American spirituality until 1992.

### **1987 Fall Equinox, Carleton:**

As indicated, this is from the 1986-1990 revival period of Druidism at Carleton and was probably written by Heiko Koester and Jan Schlamp in Fall 1987. Noteworthy is its use of the Spiral Dance and "Isis, Astarte" chant which are common Wiccan ritual elements. It is interesting that RDNA needs to be explained.

### **1992 Midsummer, Carleton**

My 1992 Beltane service was much more Wiccan/Shamanic oriented. But gradually as I began to dig deeper into the Archives, I began to cultivate a taste for the more austere form of the Order of Common Worship. Most services at this time (1992-1994) were sparsely attended usually 2 to 6 people, outside of Samhain and Beltane and the popular Sweat lodges. That summer, only two other people joined in the service, with one watcher. My innovation was to add a tree pruning ceremony for getting the sacrifice, similar to that referred to in Pliny the Elder back around 30 AD in Gaul. The elaborate calling of the winds was a continuation of the Wiccan four towers calling. I vaguely recall using these meditations, and choosing one is always quite difficult. The wheel down the hill was something I found in researching old Scottish customs. It landed "good" side up.

### **1994 Candlemas (Oimele), Carleton**

Michelle was definitely Wiccan oriented, but had a soft tender spirit, and I thought we put together a nice service. It was too cold that year to be held at the Hill of Three Oaks, so we held it in the Skinner Chapel on campus. The chapel's limestone walls are filled with fossils. We incorporated the traditional blessing of candles into this service, and I added light bulbs, since they are so important. My room-mate was a little disgruntled to return that afternoon and find all the bulbs missing for a few hours. "Waters of Milk" was Michelle's idea for a phrase. This was one of the last services that I held before resigning my Arch-Druidcy, comfortable that it would be well handled by my successors.

### **1997 Beltane, Akita Grove, Japan**

I exiled myself to Japan in the Fall of 1996 to a small northern prefecture in Japan, very traditional location, and attend Minnesota State University of Akita, where I started a small Grove of poets, drinkers and outdoor enthusiasts. In the summer of 1997, I became an assistant English teacher on the JET Program for the very same village and stayed until the summer of 2000, spending four years in total in this place. I met Nozomi, Pat and Charles there, and they continued the grove after I

started my job. The theme was Cherry Trees, a national obsession in Japan, and while Spring Equinox is standard Cherry Viewing season in most of Japan, Akita is so far north, that it doesn't occur until late April. The use of Cherry Juice and throwing Cherry Blossoms was my idea. I believe Nozomi and Pat felt in love around this time, and they married not too long afterwards, as did I and my wife Hachi.

### **1999 Order of Common Worship, Summer, Live Oak**

Live Oak Grove began under Joan Carruth, due to a fall-out with Isaac in 1981, but the driving force in the Grove was Larry Press who took over, and undoubtedly propped up by Emmon Bodfish, who also published the Druid Missal-Any newsletter until 1993. Stacey was Emmon's disciple and re-established the Live-Oak Grove not long after Emmon's death under Larry Press' auspices. The service that Live Oak Grove uses is not too different from that used in the Druid Chronicles (Evolved) from 1976, even to this day. One noteworthy addition is the offering to the trees during the service, instead of giving the libation directly to the Earth as is more common.

### **1999 Order of Common Worship, Winter, Live Oak**

Note that there is an option that the sacrifice might be accepted in the Season of Sleep.

### **1999 Samhain, Live Oak**

Not too different from the 1975 example in DC(E).

### **2001 Yankee Doodle Fall Liturgy, DC Grove**

Not long after my return to America after the Jet Program in Summer 2000, I founded the Monumental Grove at George Washington University, which only lasted a few services, followed by the DC Grove, and then became the Digitalis Grove, existing mostly on the internet. Well, after the September 11<sup>th</sup> event, for which I was basically held at the Embassy of Japan for several days, manning the phone, I came up with this little patriotic service, partly to show my concern over the over-the-top out pouring of sentiment that ensued. It was held at the now fortified Washington Monument on the National Mall in DC, Eric and Mairi and perhaps Clarice attended.

I added an apologetic line to the Invocation for use of public land, reworked Amergin's invocation by substituting some presidents' names, added my recent rocking chorus of Dalon's Daily Ditty, used well known monuments for the four directions that radiate from the Washington Monument, adjusted the Consecration words to get the blessings of our royal succession of president's, added a traditional story about Washington's cherry-chopping tendencies, and another song of my own invention. Very clever, as a whole, if I do say so myself.

### **2002 Fall Equinox Peace Liturgy, DC Grove**

Things were getting out of hand by the next year, with President Bush ready to take on everybody, and Eric and I decided we'd like to delay the inevitable to give people more time to think about it before the issue was bulldozed over by the Hawks in town, inspired a bit by some rumors of Wiccan's averting Hitler's invasion and my memory of Shelton's Exorcism of War service in 1970.

This service was performed at Green Belt National Park about 10 miles NE of Washington DC, and it required extensive preparation. Two other Druids from the area also attended. The image of Fall Equinox is of a daily relentless, noticeable descent into darkness; which was the feeling of DC about the inevitability of presidential aggression. I reworked the invocation, with much inspiration from Shelton's service. In a rather unusual case, I decided to abstain from a sacrifice, to hinder the sending of forces to the Middle East, and to recall that saving life can be as important as sending out tokens to gain great rewards; something I dislike in politically motivated wars. The choice of "Blowing in the Wind" was a natural selection for the praise. The approval of the buried seed (and it was accepted) was an affirmation that the Earth-Mother approved of our desire to build a peaceful resolution.

The Buckets of Waters of Life, was Eric's inspiration from watching all those advertisements of Smokey the Bear, and the affirmation of personal responsibility to douse conflagrations of all types in our lives around us. It was quite intense in spirit and I think well remember it for a long time. The Meditation was another inspiration of Mairi before she left the grove a few years ago, to introduce another random element of surprise in the service, and allow divine choice. I picked up the readings from various inter-faith sites on the internet, as I did also with the three songs, that I remembered as very peaceful back in the 1970s.

The result, well, we're not officially at war by the Spring Equinox, and I'm thinking of doing a service incorporating the growing power of the sun and feeding that symbolically to the growing voices of protest against the war. What to do once the war starts? Not sure, I wouldn't want to harm American's fighting ability, but would wish to give greater focus and divert munitions from civilian centers; and encourage a quick resolution at minimal loss of life on both sides.

### **2004 Calling Liturgies Addendum, Carleton Grove**

Corwin Troost wrote this up in the early winter of 2004 for Oimeic, and it was written up and sent to me by Corwin Troost, his co-Archdruid. Both members are trying to come up with alternative services for Reformed Druid activity at Carleton.

## **Section Six: International Liturgies**

### **1969 Greek Order of Worship**

Written by Richard Shelton between May 1969 and May 1971. He primarily used this for the Classic Department field trips and picnics in the Arb, where any current Druid would hold a service. The site was known as "Faculty Hill", now the site of the Stone Circle constructed by Irony in 1999. He had taken a class in Greek, and put his studies to good work.

### **Shelton's Notes on the Greek Liturgy (2004)**

The Greek Liturgy was composed by Richard Shelton and Kathy Floerke, classics students at Carleton, in the spring of 1969, for use at the Classics Department Picnic that year, at which Richard presided as Arch-Druid and Honorary Classical Priest.

The Invocation and Return are translations of portions of the Reformed Druid Order of Worship. The Libation is an

offering of wine poured to the ground in honor of various Greek gods (written in a style that we hoped would be appropriate and find favor). One pours the wine three times, once after each stanza (where the decorative symbols are).

Conventions in the transcription:

The vowels should be pronounced more or less as in Italian. "Y" transcribes ypsilon, pronounced as French "u" or German "ü". "Ou" should be pronounced "oo" as in "moon". (Modern Greek pronunciation is rather different; if you know modern Greek and want to pronounce it that way, we won't object. The ritual will probably be as efficacious.)

The consonants are more or less as in English. "Ph" transcribes phi; "ch" transcribes chi (usually pronounced as in "anchor"); "th" transcribes theta.

No attempt has been made to transcribe the tonal accents or the iota subscripts.

But the acute accent (´) has been used to indicate stress (in multisyllabic words), while the circumflex accent (˘) indicates length. If a word is marked *only* with a circumflex accent, that vowel is both long and stressed.

If only the second of a pair of vowels is accented, the pair is a stressed diphthong; stress both vowels, not just the second one.

### **2004 Greek Supplements**

Written by Mike in 2004 while preparing the ARDA for publication and needing to pad out the Greek section so that the Irish section would fit together better. I collected the information during the Athens Olympic in August, and the Alphabet Epistle and Arch Epistle reflect this "All things Greek" period of intensity in the Reform.

### **1976 Irish Order of Worship (Summer & Winter)**

These were translated by Robert Larsen into Irish for use of the Berkeley Grove and published in DC(E) in 1976. There was some debate in the late 70s over whether the NRDNA liturgy should be done in Irish, since it was more Celtic. Most declined. This version was mostly used by Robert Larson during his stint as ArchDruid of the ODNA grove of the Clann na Brocheta with the Irish performers.

### **1976 Irish Ordination of Second Order Druids:**

See entry above. An Irish version of the Third Order also existed, but not as widely distributed, but included as an insert for the DC(E) on red paper.

### **2002 Japanese Order of Worship (Summer):**

Ikari Segawa met me in 1998 at Kobe after a long period of correspondence on Druidical matters, and I brought him into the Third Order that summer after an eventful Vigil. At my request in 2002, he translated the service for me into Japanese script, for which I have also provided an Romanized pronunciation for each. The original English service used as a template were the Simple Order of Common Worship and Detailed Order of Common Worship from the ARDA collection.

### **2002 Japanese Order of Worship (Winter)**

As in the traditional service, the only real difference is in the Catechism being altered to indicated that Waters of Sleep will be used instead, and other standard changes throughout in accordance with this fact. The Akita Grove usually uses the

English services from ARDA, although they have said they might look into using Segawa's translation after Beltane 2003.

### **2003 German Order of Worship (Summer & Winter Versions)**

Written by Stacey Weinberger, who studied German extensively in college and graduate school before being attracted to the ways of the Celts. She is now studying Scottish Gaelic, much like her mentor, Emmon Bodfish, had once done back in the 1980s. Perhaps being from a more linguistically diverse culture, the California Druids seem more interested in translating things. Perhaps it's their missionary zeal?

### **2004 French Order of Worship (Summer, Winter & 2<sup>nd</sup> Ordination).**

Written by Sebastien Beaudoin in the summer of 2004 for Mike Scharding at my special request. He lives in Quebec and is considering starting a grove soon.

## **Section Seven: Orderly Chaos**

### **1969 Order of Investiture for Arch-Druids:**

First performed by Steve Savitzky unto Shelton in spring 1969. Used fitfully since then. It was primarily designed for Carleton usage, but could be used by other groves.

### **2002 Ordination of Zero Order (Acorn) Druids**

With the growth of Protogroves and RDNA members in distant parts of the world, most of them far away from an existing Grove, I felt the need to give them some way of "getting their foot in the door" liturgically; something they could perform themselves to feel that they were a Druid. It's basically the spiritual half of the First Order without the Waters of Life to complete the First Ordination.

### **1963 Ordination of First Order Druids:**

Arranged in 1993 and discussed by Michael Scharding based on oral history.

### **2004 Addendum to First Order by Duir De Danu Grove**

Written by Martin Victor who was a Third Order by Tegwedd of Hazelnut Grove. Martin was a semi-regular poster of NRDNA background, and a bit conservative in his Druidism. This is actually the first case of formalizing the First Order service that I have seen.

### **1963 Ordination of Second Order Druids:**

Arranged by Michael Scharding 1993. Again, except for the section titles and directions, identical to Fisher's 1963. For more on first order Druids see the Druid Chronicles under the Book of Law and Customs -Chapter 1. I wrote this section.

### **1993 Addendum to 2<sup>nd</sup> Order by Hazelnut Grove:**

A copy of this was presented to me in 1993 when Tezra mailed me a copy of the "Dead Bay Scrolls" The five fold system is indicative of a strong Wiccan background. It is not binding on other groves, of course.

### **1998 Addendum to 2<sup>nd</sup> Order by Akita Grove**

Perhaps the Japanese just like to hurt themselves in their festivities more than Neo-Pagans? Anyway, this was Pat's bright idea, and being in Akita, it wasn't too difficult. We journey to the area around Yuzawa city in southern Akita and held in the mountains there, near the head waters of the Omonogawa river, which was rich in fish and cleaner to drink. Nozomi did quite well in this optional "day vigil" series, hand-weaving a very fetching skirt and jacket out of wild straw, plants and other items; which gathering wild plants and doing a spate of fishing. However, we found Pat, dirty and hungry after three days, with lots of tick-bites. I haven't yet tried it myself, but I might this summer, if my wife will let me.

### **1999 Addendum to 2<sup>nd</sup> Order by Carleton Grove**

Since Irony's departure and the reign of Merri & co., the Second and Third Order have become more generic and adapted to grove needs. The rigorous questioning by the Third Orders of new wannabees for the Second Order, took me quite by surprise when I first observed it, but it has grown on me over the years. Naturally, just because Carleton does it, does not mean that other groves must adopt this new format.

### **1999 Addendum to 2<sup>nd</sup> Order by Poison Oak Grove**

Stacey Weinberger, originally of the Live Oak Grove, was definitely influenced by Emmon's strict standards, and this shows in her reluctance to speed up the process like at other groves, in fact, she makes even more difficult.

### **2004 Addendum to 2<sup>nd</sup> Order by Carleton Grove**

Stacey's addendum inspired me, as did my experiences with the Akita Grove to "soup up" the 2<sup>nd</sup> Order a little, to make it a bit more memorable, and lower the "step up" to the Third Order.

### **1964 Ordination of Third Order Druids:**

Written by Fisher in Spring 1964. Not to be disclosed. Strangely enough, it is the only part of the Reform, except for member lists, that are not open to the public. We feel that knowing its contents makes the vigil less exciting and less insightful. Certainly mainly researchers would probably like to know the contents.

It is interesting that when *Druid Chronicles (Evolved)* was published in 1976, it had a separate insert, printed on Red Paper for the English and Irish version of the Third Order. The SDNA alternative version of the service, ADDS a few extra oaths, including a clause for Neo-Paganism focus, revocation for misbehavior and a few other environmentalist pledges. The English translation of the Irish version has a few minimal extra lines of no great importance.

### **1964 Ordination of Fourth Order Druids:**

The entrance-rite to the Order of Grannos (of Healing) was written by Fisher in May of 1964. Since the Patriarchy, originally held by Fisher, is currently in abeyance; it is assumed that any 4th Order Druid may perform it without his permission.

### **1964 Ordination of Fifth Order Druids:**

The entrance rite to the Order of Braciaca (of Malt) was written by Nelson in the May of 1964. Nelson is the current Patriarch and should be consulted by 5th Order Druids before the rite is administered.

## **1964 Ordination of Sixth Order Druids:**

The entrance rite to the Order of Belenos (of the Sun) was written by Frangquist in May of 1964. Frangquist is the current Patriarch and should be consulted by 6th Order Druids before the rite is administered.

## **1966 Ordination of Seventh Order Druids:**

The entrance rite to the Order of Sirona (of bubbling hot springs) was written by Gary Zempel in the May of 1966. Currently the Patriarch, Zempel, is in abeyance and there are no other members of the 7th Order.

## **The New Higher Orders**

The 8th, 9th, 10th orders were written by Nozomi Kibo, a very talented young woman in my Akita Grove. She wanted to complete the higher orders, but their legality is very contestable, of course, as they did not emerge from the standard procedure of the 7th Order Council electing the Eight Order Patriarch, and so on. When I explained the ambivalence of many to the self-initiatory aspect of her Orders, she replied, "The Gods do all the work anyway. We are just following them." Which is true, I doubt an Ordination ceremony without divine influence would be a hollow ordination. The 8th Order was later adopted as official by myself. Besides Nozomi's requirements make the Orders very difficult to attain, which should mute some of the criticism.

The P/Matriarchs of these orders are tentatively as follows without their permission or the Councils:

3<sup>rd</sup> Order: The Current Archdruid(s) of Carleton

4<sup>th</sup> Order: David Fisher (1964)

5<sup>th</sup> Order: Norman Nelson (1964)

6<sup>th</sup> Order: David Frangquist (1964)

7<sup>th</sup> Order: Gary Zempel (1966)

8th Order: Mike Scharding (2004)

9th Order: Irony Sade (2004)

10th Order: Richard Shelton (2004)

## **Here are some of the letters involved in the establishment.**

Dear David Frangquist

This is a bit of a surprisingly long letter, so I'd like to apologize in advance.

I tend to write much better than speak, and I easily get lost on side topics in person. I've CC'ed this to a few other people with a stake in this matter.

First, I hope is all is with you and yours.

This letters concerns the higher orders, yes, yet again. I am afraid that it now appears to be my turn to ask that the higher orders be finished, so I will try to explain my reasoning, but I know that there are always other options, of course, yet I feel this is a possible course to consider. It sometimes seems that we have spent more time inquiring about the higher orders, than through them. Perhaps this is a cyclical phase we all go through? Perhaps we make a bigger deal of them than is necessary? But I digress.

Anyway, when I heard that Robert Larson had died last month, I was inspired yet again to some long nettling thoughts that there should be an appropriate way to commemorate the passing of Third Orders who've worked long and hard over the years, although of course, the work should be its own

motivation. So the idea has been growing for about five years, that with the return of our remains to the earth, so the Druid might be automatically inducted to the Order of Danu, the last of the 10 orders. Originally devoted to fertility, and jokes aside, the death of a tree clears canopy room and fertilizes the ground for the growth of the next generation; and thus we all stand on the shoulders of giants, atop roots and layers of sediment and sentiment from this interaction with the past, taking a part of them with us as we walk to the future.

I thought this a lovely thought, but awoke to an obvious complication. There is no Order of Danu right now. I know an alternative could be devised, but decided to inquire into the obvious route of activating it first.

I believe it was you and Norman who first decided to name and fill the higher orders, for various reasons in the 1964-1967 period. As it currently stands, I understand that Fisher is still patriarch of Grannos (healing waters), Nelson is patriarch of Braciaca (intoxicating waters), you are Patriarch of Belenos (the sun), and Gary Zempel is patriarch of Sirona (flowing stream waters). I did some more review, and it seems that each higher order's council elects the Patriarch of the next higher order, so the 10th Order cannot be activated until the 8th and 9th are instated first. Ah, what a bother, I thought, then thought some more, and thought it a good time to work on those too.

Over the years, although the Order of DAL has blossomed rather vigorously, the ranks of the higher orders have remained thin (maybe 6, 5, 6 & 1 in 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th respectively). I have no problem with that, as not every priest is really interested in delving into the mysteries of one particular facet of nature; generalists that we are. Myself, I have worked on advising people in difficult times by Grannos, and observing the movements of the heavens in Belenos, and have considered that time well spent in light service.

Indeed, the higher orders do not bestow greater powers, merely greater responsibilities, and the certainty of being asked by strangers for help in unusual matters at odd times, which is why a single person is wisely limited to one patriarchy of a higher order. What started off in light-hearted sport, has instead been a way to inspire Druids to greater efforts of service. Despite that, the higher orders have so far peacefully continued in their quiet ways without much attention, fanfare or notice, and I think that is as they should be.

So to continue. I felt, that it was necessary to discuss this matter with Gary Zempel. I had first met with him at the 2003 Carleton Alumni Reunion and we spent an hour walking the forests of the lower Arb at night by the river trails, discussing his career, listening to the sounds of insects, and enjoying a celestial display of lightning bugs in the stillness. I had briefly thought about entering Sirona at that time, but I didn't feel a calling like Siddhartha towards rivers. Finally, last week, I called him over in Connecticut and explained my reasons, and he said he liked me and thought it was a good idea, but we both agreed that such a decision should not be made by the single member of the Council of Sirona (7th). Since you fleshed out the concept of the higher Orders, you should be best positioned to decide if the process towards 8th, 9th and 10th should be resumed. Which is why this letter is being written to you.

I have not finalized an over-view for the possible process, but I have a rough outline of ideas. With time and fullness of review, I'm sure each of the future Patriarchs or Matriarchs would develop them as the needs seem fit.

I humbly volunteer to begin the Eighth Order of Taranis, partly to get the ball rolling, and secondly because I have long

been attracted to the intricate integrated chaos of the sky and all that falls and blows through it. I've heard rumors that this order's concept was originally a popular one, perhaps because of the "Druid Curse" and perhaps because lightning is a rather flashy subject? As a reasonable person, I do not expect that being a Patriarch of Taranis will grant me the ability to fling lightning bolts and smite mine enemies. The Order of DAL already encourages us to speak with thunder and with the gentlest winds.

I do not think that I can influence the weather any more than the next person, but reflexively, I do feel that the weather can influence me more than some. I am not a magician or liturgist by heart or training, more of a contemplative and essayist. There are powerful symbols and systems of the rain-cycle, the way the most insubstantial wind can tear down a house, how clouds beguile us with their changing shapes and numerous other phenomenon that urges me to write how they can inspire us in our spiritual lives.

That's what I'd like to talk about with people, and encourage others to contemplate meteorological matters. One such mission would be to study air pollution emissions, perhaps. I think I could lead Taranis in this way without being Tyrannical. Did I also mention I was within fourteen feet of a lightning strike on the Northfield golf course by Carleton in 1989 or that I was taken to the hospital in 1992, for minor electrical burns from playing with the wiring in my dorm room. Not sure if that is to my advantage, but I think I've learned to respect the phenomenon of electricity, in any case, but it is a rare lightning storm or hurricane that I do not venture forth to dance and stroll in the rain and marvel at the elements in movement.

I wish to share this wisdom with others, but if another candidate wishes to do the job of Patriarch, I have no obstacles of pride to cede that role to them and following. But that's enough about me. Moving on.

Not to be presumptuous, but I believe I already have a candidate picked for the 9th Order of Llyr (Ocean), although I haven't told him yet. Irony Sade has been an inspired novelist, poet, harpist and able leader at Carleton after my time from 1996-2000, during which he spent a year on the SEA program; an educational boat cruise around the world. He also somehow convinced Carleton to build the stone circle that you saw, much to the delight of Druids and other denizens of the Arb. Afterwards, selfless person that he was, he went to the little Pacific island kingdom of Tonga to spend three years in a beach hut, teaching about sanitary engineering and industrial arts, despite volcanic eruptions. I believe he knows far more than I about the ocean, and would be quite dignified and careful about inviting and humbly encouraging others in their study of the ocean's ways and waves.

And finally we come to the 10th Order of Danu. I haven't really decided who to nominate, as that would be the decision of the 9th Patriarch. I figure it is necessary to have at least one living member of the 10th Order in the beginning, to set up the rules of entry in a hassle-free paperless automated system; such as to declare that the 10th Order is open to all priests who have passed on in this world without need of application.

After such a declaration, the Patriarch need not do more than sit back, and be notified who has died, as a simple matter of courtesy. I am now enquiring if Richard Shelton (AD 69-71) would be interested in establishing the framework for that order, as I believe he has the necessary gravitas for the subject matter, and is familiar with most of the older Druids who will be mostly likely to enter the order the soonest. But as for what those dead Druids do in their order, that is for them to decide upon, but I'd

recommend in my eventual turn into the order to try out feasting and campfire sing-a-longs, all friends invited.

And so that's the tangled web of plans that I am interested in weaving. I don't think its too bothersome a task for any involved, but it raises some issues. Part of me hesitates to finish the work of others, as the "missing orders" are somehow symbolic of how not all aspects of Druidism need to be completed. Yet part of me sees them as yet serving a role in the future. And I am not sure which way to proceed, which is why Gary and I have agreed to ask you on these matters.

If you feel that it would be best to follow this course through a different route, then you must disagree. If you feel that this course has some merits, then I hope you will advise that to Gary Zempel at [vkramer@snet.net](mailto:vkramer@snet.net)

Regardless of the decision, I have no hard feelings either way, but we felt the need to consult your opinion on the issue, and wish you well on your road in life.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Yours in the Mother,

Mike the Fool

From Richard Shelton

Friday, September 3, 2004 3:16 PM

Dear Michael.

I am touched. I have always perceived hanging about the Higher Orders something of a whiff of Eris, and a very real potential for mischief. But you have found an appropriate and moving role for at least the 10th. I like too this suggestion that the 10th can be not (just) the end of a series, but perhaps also a beginning, or a return – somewhat like the Druid Sign, I suppose. I find this circle a more fitting metaphor for the Higher Orders than the current one (of "permanently unfinished business") they seemed to be saddled with.

As for your suggestion for the first Patriarch of Danu, you acknowledge that the office is not in your gift. But as I say, O young friend of long standing, I am touched.

Peace,  
– Richard

Dear Richard,

Eh? I thought you were going to say I was "touched in the head"!

Always the meddling one, I thought I might have stamped on sacred ground. I appreciate the compliment, but it's really Nozomi's idea in Japan or Isaac's from DC(E) I believe, I just repackaged it. Perhaps you could prod Frangquist then? He's notoriously difficult to urge a response from in writing, as you're well aware. :)

Well, there's always surprises, I suppose. I like the idea of the closing the circle too. If I could just figure out how to make the 10ths into 1st again, I could rest quietly, but I cannot think how to word it in an analogy.

So, I suppose you might be willing to be nominated for the role, if we can ever establish a 9<sup>th</sup> Patriarch? Unfortunately, it won't be much fun, everyone else in your growing order would be dead, and wouldn't be letting you in on the what they are doing... but I guess as an Arch Druid, you're already used to being left out of the loop? :)

-Mike

Greetings Brothers David and Brother Michael,

I have been conversing with Brother Michael from time to time and recently the conversation turned to the higher orders. The orders have long been closed and as they were introduced to me they were orders that could only be entered into by death or near death. This seemed good...that is a fitting memorial. Of course, in the origin of the higher Orders I am sure that it was planned that they be completed. However, I think that the stagnation in the orders has offered a different chance for their use, that of a memorial. Moreover, while the higher orders have been closed off new side orders have been created of every size and shape for those who want to work on a specific path and the higher orders do not need to be reopened.

I admit that I am somewhat more mixed on the issues of the 8th and 9th orders, that those struck by lightning or who fall to a river may not need a special tribute (though, yea, it could be interesting) but I feel that the 10th order should be reserved for the dead. Brother Mike has proposed open even the tenth order, in specific so that those Druids who pass on may be automatically entered into it. While this may seem good I feel it to be deficient. If the entrance into the 10th order is for the sake of the living then they gain nothing but knowing that their friend and perhaps mentor is inducted. They would have no ceremony to commemorate and memorialize them as they enter. And if it is for the dead...well there are better ways, I think, for cannot Danu induct her own priests?

This past Saturday a few members of the Carleton Grove gathered and inducted Robert Larson into the 10th order. Of course, none of us were of the 10th order and we did not have the power to bring Robert into that order. Not, at least, on our own. However, lacking that power we did ask for the presence of Danu and ask her to induct Larson into her own order and she did reply with positive winds. It served both as a good memorial, though non present had met Brother Robert, and allowed Danu herself to induct Robert.

This, I think, was a good way to open the tenth order.

As to the 8th and 9th orders, I cannot say for certain. I do feel that they need not be opened solely for the sake of inducting Priests to the 10th order. There may be other reasons to open the other orders, but I think it should also be remembered that if those orders were to be closed to the living other orders might be made for those wishing, for instance, to invoke lightning.

Yours in the Mother,  
Stephen Crimmins

Dear Brothers David and Stephen,

Actually my idea was that the departed would automatically enroll in the 10th order without fanfare, that way if we don't hear about them until four years later, which may happen, we won't feel bad about "missing them".

However, I do fully agree that having someone hold a service of celebration "after the fact" is entirely appropriate and laudable, and I'd do it instantly on hearing the obituary notice myself, but I just don't feel its required to be a necessary preliminary step. Postliminary is fine, and what you've shown me of your service, is entirely of the style that I'd like at my own passing; but hopefully that won't be soon, so you'll have time to polish it further. If a 10th Patriarch is chosen, I will recommend that she or he incorporates many elements of your service.

My ideas for what the 8th and 9th order are indeed less pressing than establishing the 10th order, but I still think getting those 2 started is commendable, even if they don't function

noticeably for a long period of time; after all that's not such a concern, since how much has the 4,5,6 & 7th really done as a group in 40 years? Slow and quiet flows the deep stream.

Attached is my sermon that I gave for Robert Larson on Sunday which I inserted into a standard service at the meditation section. And also included is the service held by Stephen Abbot (no relation to you, but a brother in DAL).

-Mike

Dear Mike and David,

I wish to make but a few clarifications, and, if they need be, suggestions for the future. I agree with you

that we do not want to miss the departed. What I had hoped to convey and what was apparently not conveyed was that I do not believe that an 'automatic enrollment' created by a Druid bureaucracy is not the appropriate method.

As you seem to agree it is best to have a service when a passing is uncovered. But this is not my sole idea. I feel that before I had asked Danu to accept Robert Larson in the tenth, Danu herself had already done so. That Danu had, upon hearing of Brother Larson's passing, as she, unlike us, is wont to do quite quickly, she had Enrolled Brother Larson to her order with an awareness of doing so. The service that I held was an acknowledgment and confirmation of that.

Let me repeat. I feel that 'automatic enrollment' set up is a disservice to any member of Danu inducted by such means. It serves neither the purpose of Danu and the departed, nor those left to wait.

However, as I have no real power to stop anything (unless I can quickly find someone to summon blue skies over Brother Michael for the rest of his life) I would ask but this. If there must be a living Patriarch of the 10th Order that he or she not create a Bureaucracy, but rather to ask Danu to continue doing what it is that she already does, inducting the departed Druids into her order.

Though, I would make one last plea. When the ninth order is filled and ready to choose a Patriarch of the 10th Order, might that Patriarch be not of the living, but of the deceased? And then that Patriarch may govern the order as he or she wishes, and induct those who he or she finds out to be deceased (for he or she will then be like Danu, and hear nigh on immediately of a passing). And then, if we the living hear of a passing there might be a simple ceremony, and we may ask the Patriarch of the 10th order to let us know if we have created a suitable ceremony by asking her to respond by the winds, we may hold a service to induct them for the sake of those who remain.

-Stephen Crimmins

David Frangquist <davef@tibinc.com>

Wednesday, September 15, 2004 5:47 AM

Dear Brother-in-the-Mother Michael,

I hope you will forgive me for taking so long to respond to your query regarding the "higher" orders. I have been somewhat preoccupied in these last days preparing for an excursion into one of the Mother's greatest cleavages, that place known to North American English speakers as "The Grand Canyon," where we see laid bare the history of her many transformations over the course of half her lifetime. This excursion will be in the company of many others who have experienced Carleton, but I am sad to report that most of them did so during the period before the Reform. Nevertheless, we look forward to meeting them, and perhaps having a chance to share our druid

experiences with them. For seventeen days we will be in direct contact with one of Sirona's greatest streams, and perhaps some of us will even have the opportunity to be completely enfolded in Sirona's embrace. We are not eager to experience the power of Taranis there, however, for when Taranis and Sirona combine their powers, it is best for mortals to head for higher ground.

I was also well aware of your propensity to publish everything I write, and so I was hoping to be inspired to create something witty and wise. Alas, that has not come to pass, so I must take solace in the hope that if this is ever published, it will be buried among such a wealth of literary treasures that it will be easily overlooked.

I, too, have at times been vexed by the incompleteness of our orders. I think it had been our expectation that the Archdruids of Carleton would continue our tradition until all the orders would be populated, after which it would perhaps be appropriate to lose interest in them. But that happened sooner than expected, and so we never got past seven. The only reason we proposed ten orders in the first place was that the founders said there were ten, and we wanted honor that vision. But druids are a notoriously unruly lot, and Gary and the seventh order chose a different path. We should not have been surprised.

Over time I began to think that perhaps there was something fitting about leaving the orders incomplete. It may be seen as a parable about how druidism itself is never complete but is always growing and evolving in new directions. This has been true of every great religion, but many people refuse to acknowledge that and insist that their religion must be kept pure by adhering only to what has gone before and excluding anything new. But the Mother is always new, growing and evolving, and encouraging her children to do the same.

There is, I believe, a legend that there is a monastery somewhere in the Himalayas where the monks strive to say all the names of the Buddha, which is expected to take eons of eons, and when they finally complete their task, the world will come to an end. I do not expect such dire consequences from the completion of the orders, but I have some concern.

If our task is to grow and to encourage others to grow, and if it is true, as I believe, that we can encourage others to grow only by setting them free (especially our children), then my visions or preferences in the matter are of no matter. When the Council of Belenos elected the Patriarch of Sirona, our work was done in regard to that order. It was up to the seventh to enable the eighth. It is perhaps just as fitting that it has not done so as it would be if it had. I am honored that you have sought my opinion, but there is certainly nothing for me to decide. It is up to the Council of Sirona to decide. If you can persuade Sirona to act, you have my blessing.

As to your vision for the tenth order, it does seem to be an improvement on the early visions, which had something to do with the deflowering of virgins, I believe. But Danu is about fertility and birth. Are we suggesting that death is a new birth, as some other religions have? I'm not sure druidism has taken a position on that one. (Has druidism taken a position on anything?) On further reflection, since each of the "higher" orders has no assigned function other than to kick off the next one, then the tenth has no need to meet. So perhaps it is fitting that it should be populated by those who either cannot meet or, if they are indeed able to meet, cannot tell us about it.

I mean no disrespect to those you would honor, and I certainly have great respect and affection for Robert Larson, who is a member of my order. Druidism is focused on nature and therefore on life. If it is our purpose to honor the lives of our departed brothers and sisters, and to honor the life they have

brought to druidism, then by all means let us do so. If it is pleasing to the Mother for us to do this, then your efforts will be successful.

Yours in the Mother,  
Dave Frangquist

From : Mike, A Capitol Fool <mikerdna@hotmail.com>

Sent : Wednesday, September 15, 2004 10:00 AM

Dear Brothers David, Gary, Richard, Irony & Stephen in the Earth Mother,

I awoke today to a quiet rain of the approaching Hurricane Ivan and noticed that there had been a power outage last night that had reset my alarm clock, and I had sorely overslept. Perhaps this was an omen? Then I came to work and checked my email to receive your message before your flight, so you must have been up quite late (5:47 AM?)

Thank you, David, for your quick response, and I wish I had time to await the accumulated wisdom that you have brought back from such a fine trip to one of Nature's great mysteries. However, I'm sure that your mixture of concerns and encouragements will be sufficient to allow us to cautiously proceed on our course regarding the last known Higher Orders.

[Who knows, perhaps that 10th Patriarch will get mischievous and tell me he knows of three or four more Orders around the corner, and leave us in suspense for 37 more years? Perhaps I shouldn't even plant the seed of that headache!!]

Anyway, perhaps it is appropriate that this entire correspondence of Taranis has waited 37 years until it could be transmitted by electrical means in an election year?

As regarding completeness, or the profitable absence thereof, in Druidism... I have not yet completely discharged my own sense of druidic obligations yet, and I doubt I will until my own journey on this mortal coil has ended. I do not equate fullness with completion, as even if the Higher Orders of 8, 9 and 10 are begun, the loosely worded goals and tasks of each member who enters them (as with all Orders) seem vast enough to keep them happily toiling away for many years to come.

I see Druidism as not of filling a treasure chest, but more like digging a hole, when you stop digging, that all that will be dug. You might find a few treasures, certainly hit many rocks and roots, and hopefully enjoy the vigorous exertion and fresh air. Certainly my own digging will not produce a canyon as large as the one David travels to, and I hope after my own passage, they will fill in the dirt over my efforts, and go on to dig their own holes. This is our holey task, though I hesitate to call it holy, as we pit ourselves to wholly appreciate the wonders of Nature and wisdom that She and our friends can impart to us before we ourselves part company.

Thus, I have no doubt that who ever is elected to oversee the 10th Order's business, will use that classically Druidic style of providing us only with more questions, not answers, to contemplate the greatest mystery of life; the passing of one generation and start of new eras. That patriarch need not impart any assurances of afterlife, for the 10th Order is merely to honor those who have partook of and taught of the fertility and bounty of the Earth around them; and whose demise will remind us of our own time limit, that we may creatively endeavor further with the time left to us. If they need assurances beyond what we know of this world, I'm sure we can point them onward to other organizations that have full-fledged services in that regard.

**\*\*\* Request to Enter Eighth Order \*\*\***





thunder, not only of speaking with the whisper of winds, and not to hesitate to choose which option when the course is certain enough. The other symbol of the Order is an umbrella or golf-club to be carried as is comfortable, preferably a yellow and/or black one.

The second order of business, conducted at nine A.M., was to unanimously elect Irony Sade to assume upon himself the Patriarchy of the Order of Llyr, the Ninth Order in accordance with the power invested in our Council by Reformed tradition. Nine cheers were cried out in celebration. The council here now bids that Brother Irony forthwith quickly devise and adopt an appropriate ceremony, become consecrated and convene the Council of Llyr. We chose Irony for he has shown great wisdom of the land and also from the extensive experience he has from his travels by and on the many oceans and seas of the world. He is skilled in the ways of boating, fishing and swimming; and he will know whom to call and join his Order. The Council and Patriarch wish him great success in his endeavors.

The third order of business, conducted at ten A.M. was to induct David Fisher as an honorary member of our Council, with no voting privileges or responsibilities, but with freedom to address the council with his wisdom and bear its symbols. If he should later choose to fully become a member of the council, that request is granted at such time it is made.

The fourth order of business, conducted at ten thirty A.M. was to invite Samuel Adams, the Druid of Saint Olaf College to join the Order's Council at his convenience. We await you.

With that concluded, the Council of Taranis wished to you, my brothers and sisters, fair winds and pleasant weather, then called a recess and finished its business.

I hereby verify that all this is true, and submit this to you by the power of electricity.

Yours in the Mother,  
Michael James Anthony Ulhail Scharding, ODAL, Gr., Be.  
Patriarch of Taranis  
Day 49 of Foghamhar, Year XLII of the Reform

#### REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA

To the COUNCIL OF DALON AP LANDU

Greetings,

I am humbled and honored to be nominated for the patriarchy of the Order of Llyr. Having lived beside, sailed on, and all but drowned in the sea perhaps I can attempt to begin to understand its mysteries.

As one of the younger druids I have watched this discussion of the higher orders quietly, hardly feeling that it was my place to speak. Their utility beyond the funerary is unclear to me, though in the course of time that may change. As I understand it, nomination to the order of Llyr conveys no power, but three responsibilities: To seek to understand the sea; to offer membership to those druids who do the same; and to nominate someone to the Order of Danu.

If Llyr is one of the most obscure deities- just as the sea is an largely unknown realm, even to those who sail upon it, then Danu, as the patron of the Other world, is even more mysterious. It does seem that only those who have died might understand her.

I like the notion that those druids who have died are offered membership in her order by Danu herself. This argues in favor of Mr. Crimmins' idea that the patriarch should be a dead druid, possibly the first third order who died in the Reform. At

the same time, it seems reasonable that there be one living member of the Tenth, to look after Death's business on earth, so to speak, or to speak for the dead, if you prefer. What his or her role would be, I do not know. Catholicism aside, people die without help. Would the role of the Danu's priest be to acknowledge the dead, to set them on their path to the Other world, to remind the rest of us that our path does not end here, or something else?

I would appreciate the input of the more senior druids as to potential nominees for the order of Danu. Some of you I will be contacting directly. Everyone else in the council, specifically those whom I have not met, is invited to contact me: Irony Sade 3830 State Street Rd. Skaneateles, NY 13152 (315)561-6387 [irony@starmind.org](mailto:irony@starmind.org)

Yours in the Mother,  
Irony Sade  
Pending Patriarch of Llyr

### 1998 Ordination of Eighth Order Druids

Apparently there were many people who were very interested in joining the Order of Taranis, since many of the early Founders quite commonly practiced weather magic to improve the conditions of Carleton's football matches. However, possibly due to Fisher's near immolation by lightning and the over-effectiveness of the Druid Curse, perhaps they decided to not travel down the path any further?

When I founded the order in September 2004, I more or less used the identical format as Nozomi Kibou's text.

### 1998 Unofficial Ordination of Ninth Order Druids

With Minnesota being about as far from the ocean (except the Great Lakes) as any point in North America, it is not unreasonable that the Higher Orders never got this far. Irony Sade was elected by Mike Scharding to be the Patriarch of Llyr.

### 1999 Unofficial Ordination of Tenth Order Druids

Once at Samhain, I noted that a handful of RDNA Druids had died, and Nozomi commented that they had taken their final Orders, and I recommend that she use the Order of Danu. I believe the Founders thought it was an order of Earth fertility, and some were quite anxious to join, but joked about the difficulty of finding a willing person to sacrifice her virginity. Well, Danu apparently wasn't an Earth goddess, but rather a river goddess, and rivers are rather eternal things also. I have also set up a home page for departed Druids on my website.

## THE NEW ORDERS

While there were 10 Orders originally, many "Side Orders" or New Orders were established to supplement the traditional orders. They are similar to Special Interest Groups, and tend to be open to all Druids, regardless of Order.

### **1976 New Order of Diancecht:**

Made by Joan Carruth in 1981 as an alternative to the Order of Grannos which, to all appearances, seemed defunct. The Order was very active from 1977 to 1981. There are about 4 members. It has the most complicated ribbon-system of all the orders.

### **1976 New Order of Oberon:**

I found the longer letter from Les Craig-Harger and her copy of the ordination in a stack of materials that Stacey loaned to me from Emmon's collection, circa 1980. I believe that Brian Geller was the original Patriarch of this order, and was succeeded by Les. The later Matriarch, Les Craig, quietly stopped Bardic Session after moving to Humboldt in 1983, and the order has lapsed since then, although the Hazelnut Grove has apparently continued the Celtic Music sessions on a sporadic basis. She is also the author of several essays from the Live Oak

I found this quote on Brian:

April 1978 Br. David Geller, Patriarch of the Order of Oberon, has agreed to begin running weekly Bardic classes for Neopagans in the Bay Area, if enough people show a sincere interest in putting some work into music, poetry and singing practice. The idea would be to improve everyone's Bardic abilities and to develop new materials for use in Druid ceremonies.

Summer 1980: Matriarch and Chief Bard, Linda Von Braskat-Crowe, announces that beginning after Beltane, the Order will be inducting new members. Prospective Bards are encouraged to keep and add to a notebook of songs and poems, (both their own and others'), and to have a presentation ready for their induction ceremony. Contact the Matriarch (preferably in person) for further details.

The order is currently holding monthly Bardic rehearsals at the Matriarch's home. Call her at 839-1628 for specifics. Bardic revels also happen monthly, as desired, at various locations.

Nov. 1980 There will be a meeting of the Nordic Order on Tuesday, Nov. 15th, at 8 PM at the home of Patriarch Linda von Basket 863 E.28th St., Oakland. Her home is very near the Park Boulevard exit off the MacArthur Freeway. Call her at 839-1628 if you aren't sure how to get there. The meeting will discuss the fate of the Bards over the coming winter, and it is important that as many interested people as possible show up.

Nov 1980 The Order of Oberon is the old Bardic order of the NRDNA, and seems to be the only Order currently having an unbroken history. Leslie Craig-Harger is currently Matriarch of that Order, having taken over from Linda von Braskat in 19 y.r. I called her to find out what her Order was doing during the NRDNA Season of Sleep.

She says the Order is working on poetry and acting as well as music. This is intended to round out their talents and abilities as bards; being a bard covers far more ground than just being a singer and/or instrumentalist.

Her main news, though, did not concern the Order so much as what she is trying to do as Matriarch.

First, she is soliciting dedicatory works from Druidic bards. These works will go into the Matriarch's collection, and Leslie hopes eventually to print them. For more information, or to send her your work, write: Leslie Craig-Harger 1280 61st Street, Emeryville, CA 94608

In addition, she says that creative and archival works are also welcome. She will collect them, and use the ones that fit her needs in her Bardic revels.

In addition, she is working on a method whereby Archdruids or other Third Order Druids can ordain bards into the Order of Oberon. This will save Leslie a lot of traveling, which is both wearying and expensive. I will try to publish the details in DC as soon as she finalizes them.

We spent a long time talking about the Mother Grove, and what connections Mother Grove does and does not recognize with the old NRDNA structure. As a result, two days later, Leslie provided me with a chaining note concerning Oberon:

Bardic Revels December 19, January 23, and February 27. Call Leslie for location. We are working on the poetic and dramatic aspects of the 'Bardic arts' – beginning with the techniques of satire and lampoon. Lampoons can deal with whatever subject attending Bards choose, with attention to the transforming nature of satire. (Anyone who feels that humor is irrelevant to magic might want to check out Illuminatus, maybe?)

"PS: Order of Oberon does not intend to stick its nose into any Grove's liturgical business. Members of Mother Grove should feel free to attend without danger to their artistic or doctrinal autonomy."

Leslie tells me that due to space limitations, she is having to restrict attendance at her revels to her regular circle of bards (meaning those who already know or have access to her telephone number; she asked that I do not publish it). If this applies to you and you want to attend, call her for details.

April 1982 Leslie Craig-Harger Matriarch, will be retiring as such this season, when she can find a suitable successor. Nominations Welcome: Until then, she will be doing Ordinations into the Bardic order. If you are interested in joining, contact her through Live Oak Grove, here at the Miner Rd. address. You do not have to be Third Order to join Bards. She will be holding occasional Bardic Revels, when possible, and wishes to say that if some other members of Bards wish to hold a Bardic, she'd much appreciate it.

Druid Missal-Any, Summer 1984: Leslie Craig-Harger, Matriarch of the Order of Oberon, Bards, wants to retire and suggest these revisions in the process of instating Bards, archivists etc. In Order of Oberon.

Comments and acceptance /rejection are requested from all Third Orders bards before this is written into the Apocrypha. Reply before Samhain of 1984.

Not only does my remote location and lack of leadership ability make me a stunningly inappropriate Matriarch of bards, I also have a strong feeling that the Bards are better off unled. Art for Art's sake is a pretty anarchistic concept, and Art for the Gods' sake requires direct communication with the Gods; I.e., inspiration. I would like to propose to the ODAL that:

- A) I resign as MOO, leaving no successor.
- B) Anyone wishing investiture as a bard should be recognized and invested by the local AD
- C) Anyone who wants to be so recognized has to put their youth where their mouth is, by presenting some original work to the local grove, and that a text or tape of this work should then be presented to a central Archives.
- Love, Leslie.

### **1978 New Order of Lugh:**

Made by Katya Luomala, the last of the original line of Carleton Archdruids, wrote this in 1978. A simplified rite from January 1979 is included from a letter from Katya to Stephen. The last part is an addendum from Katya to Scharding in 1993. There are currently only three members, to my knowledge..

### **1986 New Order of the Earth-Mother:**

This was started by Willow, a member of the Live Oak grove, and one of the member of the Coup attempt. Willow also founded HAM in the Church of All World for keeping children active in Paganism. Not much more is known about this order except this reference in the Druid Missal-Any.

### **1994 New Order of Puck:**

Made by Michael Scharding in April 1994, currently having about 8 members and possibly growing more silly. In some respects, it was a statement about how silly I consider the higher orders in most cases. Although the sprite Puck may be of Celtic Origin, my inspiration was Shakespeare's England.

### **1996 New Order of Suzuki:**

Made by Michael Scharding in January 1996 during the coldest part of the year. It is generally a hope that more people will concentrate on meditation than ritual. I also desired that at least one of the Special Orders be specifically of non-Celtic origin, in this case Japan, although Zen goes back to China and eventually to India. Larson notes that the Brahmins of India are related through Indo-European connection back to the ancient Druids. Sigh.

### **1996 New Order of Bambi:**

Made by Michael Scharding in January of 1996 while listening to Disco music and confined indoors due to a severe blizzard. Another Special Order of non-Celtic origin, this is for all the wild animal-enthusiasts and the responsible outdoors people.

### **1997 New Orders of Hermes:**

Like it says, an order for Druids on the move with poetry in their soul. Founded by me while in Japan. My dog is the current Patriarch, and still resides in Japan, but doesn't answer his mail often. Basho was a famous Haiku poet who traveled all over Northern Japan writing poems that made places famous.

### **1998 New Order of Brigit:**

Another simple Order, for which I'm dutifully busy publishing ARDA 2 and the Druid Missal-Any newsletter.

### **1999 New Order of the Evening Mystic:**

Chris Middleton '01 was a gentle artist in the Carleton Grove who was good at making masks, drama and generally being a nice guy. He had his quirks, but so do we all.

### **1990s New Dis-Order of the Mithril Star:**

As mentioned before, the Order of the Mithril Star is a group that became dissatisfied with the Church of All Worlds, and preferred to stay closer to the organization as written in Stranger in a Strange Land. The following material has been extracted from the OMS course of Druidism 101, found in Green Book Volume 8.

### **2000 New Order of the Volcano:**

Written on the Island of Tonga by Irony during his stay there in the Peace Corps from Summer 1999-2001. On this distant islet was an inactive volcano that he often swam in.

### **2001 new order of druids minor**

Written by Ric Knight of Ontario, it is our first Order by a Canadian. Ric's wit and simple charm has graced the RDNAtalk conference for many years, and he operates a web site for the order of MSN groups, where he posts regular meditations.

## **Section Eight:**

### **Unusual Services**

#### **1970 Exorcism in Time of War:**

Written by Shelton to asperge the spirit of the Vietnam War from the country. Probably between Fall 1969 to Spring 1971, after the Cambodian Invasion. Apparently it worked after a few years. This liturgy inspired me to write the 2002 Fall Equinox Peace Service.

#### **1963 Order of Consecration (of Altars):**

This can be dated to April of 1963, making it perhaps the oldest known liturgy in the book. It was written by David Fisher for the consecration of the first altar at Carleton during the first weeks of Druidism. The original Druids at Carleton had a debate at that time, as is shown in the Early Chronicles of the Druid Chronicles, over whether to use animal blood sacrifice or plant sacrifice. Happily they chose to only use plant sacrifices. The original lines of "attend us now, O Spirits, as we offer up this sacrifice" was changed to "attend us now, O spirits as we light this fire" The original instructions of "here the blood of sacrifice shall be spilled upon the altar" was changed to "here the fire shall be lit upon the altar." The original is kind of grisly to even think about.

#### **1975 A King's Wedding:**

Written by Robert Larson on Lughnasadh 1975 for service to his clan leader of the ODNA. It is beautifully simple. These are also entirely optional and may be changed to suit anyone's fancy. Druids should note, however, that unless you have registered with their State and/or County authorities as a minister of a legal church, weddings performed by them may not be legal. This has proven popular at Beltane Services in recent years.

#### **1975 A Marriage Ceremony:**

It was written by Larson for Dan Pierson & Sue Buchignani or for Tom & Pat Macvey's wedding. The binding ribbon (green) should be tied in such a way as to reflect the sigil (around the hands a couple of times, then both ends down between the hands.)

### **1976 An Old Fashioned Wedding:**

As its introduction relates, it is the work of Isaac to begin to synthesize a Paleo-Pagan ritual. It was published in DC(E) in 1976. Isaac's drive to study Paleo-pagan religion would eventually realize itself in ADF. In the post-AIDS world, I doubt it would ever happen again, but one can dream.

### **1978 A Wedding Contract:**

This was read during the wedding between Isaac and Selene Bonewits on August 6th, 1978 c.e. It was reprinted in the Druid Chronicler Vol 1, Is 5 (Sept 1978) by public demand.

### **1978 Invocation to the Elements:**

From the Pentalpha news letter. Another element from the 1978 wedding ceremony of Isaac and Selene.

### **1978 An Invocation Poem:**

From the Pentalpha news letter. Another element from the 1978 wedding ceremony of Isaac and Selene.

### **1992 Wedding Ceremony:**

Now, Andrea Davis held this service for Joe Bank's wedding in 1992, I believe, and posted it in the VAX Druid Notes conference in 1996, to the delight of Michelle Curtis and Ann Graham. It's very much a Wiccan ceremony, but it reminds me of the creative elements of the Carleton Grove in the 1987-1992 period.

### **1976 Suggestions for A Druid's Funeral:**

Isaac Bonewits in 1976 for DC(E). Another example of how Isaac was trying to bring every aspect of religion into Reformed Druidism instead of vice-a-versa. Good ideas though.

### **1989 Further Suggestions for A Druid's Funeral:**

Written by Emmon Bodfish as his health began to decline for various reasons. His death in the late 90s was tragic, but if anyone was wise and well-prepared for his sudden departure, then it was him. Unfortunately, although a memorial service was held for him, most of the suggestions in this article were not possible.

### **1998 A Sample Druid Funeral:**

Steve Savitzky, a folk-singing computer worker, was AD of Carleton 1968-1969 and posted this on a web-conference in 1998. He chose to use the basic script of the Winter version of the Common Order of Worship, added a comment in the Consecration about new life, emphasized probably the "To thee we return this portion of thy bounty," added a eulogy for the Meditation, a piper's farewell, and further rebirth imagery in the Benediction. It's not a very elaborate change, but is reasonably somber and simple.

### **1998 Memorial for Beth Harlow:**

This eulogy was written by Pat Haneke of the Akita Grove for the Grove member, Beth Harlow, who died in a tragic scooter accident in Seattle while working as a pizza delivery person. Beth was a real free spirit I met at the Minnesota State University of Akita in Japan. Her example freed many of the grove members of their inhibitions.

### **2004 Memorial for Robert Larson:**

Written by Stephen Abbott on hearing of Robert Larson's death of August 5<sup>th</sup> on August 19<sup>th</sup>, he quickly threw together a

service, that was coordinated with several of Robert's disciples and friends in distant locations at the same time. He then had Tegwedd type it up and send it around, and is hoping to have another memorial service at Robert Larson's original Grove location in September.

### **2003 Baby Blessing**

Another service by Pat Haneke of the Akita Grove, and meant to be inserted into a standard service. A new baby boy was born to Nozomi Kibou and Pat Haneke on February 8th 2003 and his name was Taiyo Kibou. There's an interesting story to this birth. During an icy snow storm, Nozomi's rather remote and inaccessible mountain shrine was snowed in and she didn't feel like skiing down the hill in her condition. Then the electrical power was interrupted for almost five days, in the midst of which labor began, of course. Little Taiyo (which means "Sun") is believed to have been conceived during the 2002 Beltane festivities according to plan, and an Oimele birth had been keenly desired, but babies will be born when they want to. Pat at least had the presence of mind to at least use the blessed candles from the Candlemas, so possibly the home-birth was a bit easy than expected, finishing in less than 10 hours, with no complications. Nozomi's sister and cousin assisted in the delivery, while Pat used the firewood to heat up water in the old bath-house. Nozomi's father and brother were away on business. Nozomi is apparently not releasing the movie rights, and visited the hospital a few days later for a check-up.

## **Section Nine: Solitary Services**

### **2002 Ordination of Zero Order (Acorn) Druids**

As mentioned before, this order came about after observing the difficulties with joining the first order for isolated Druids, and to get their "foot in the door" organizationally, until such time as they could make it to a grove.

### **1976 Order of Worship for a Protogrove:**

This was one of Isaac's ideas from the mid to late 70s when he was setting up groves throughout the US. Probably 1977 to 1980 period. Such a ritual could be used by a group of people who wanted to be SDNA or NRDNA, but didn't yet have a Third Order Druid to hold the services. Isaac then went on long trips and ordained a Third Order for each Grove. Except for the Neo-Pagan leanings, which I don't really go for, I like them and they show a democratic approach to the service, without hierarchy. It's a pity David Fisher didn't go this route in the early years.

### **2002 Another Protogrove Service:**

Due to the proliferation of Protogroves since the RDNAtalk conference on Yahoogroups.com, there was a need for more services, and this is one that Stacey came up with.

### **2001 The Quick Order Liturgy:**

Pat has always kept a rather satirical eye on the liturgical services I provided, and once timed me and said it took too long, and that he needed one for "Druids on the go." So after some encouragement, this is what he came up with, for Druids by themselves with little in the way of paraphernalia, the essence of the ritual in a stripped down format.

### **2002 Daily Druid Devotional:**

Pat of Akita Grove got this idea from the Catholic Church's daily optional readings and prayers.

### **2002 Optional Activities for Voluntary Simplicity:**

It's nice to have someone just tell you not to do something, take it simple and relax a bit. Sometimes doing nothing is the most important thing.

### **2001 Prayer in the Work Place:**

Apparently Ian Friesland got upset over Ashcroft dragging his personal religion into the lives and work schedule, and wrote this little piece in protest. I don't suppose its been employed by anyone though.

### **2002 Sigil Construction 101:**

I wrote this article as a result of running out of the Druid Sigil necklaces, and I was inspired by Ian's article on using the workplace as a source of magickal goodies.

### **1978 Ritual Vestment for Druidic Services:**

Written by Isaac, with his habit of imitating the Catholic church vestments. Probably beyond the means of any groves, although Carleton did have a reversible vestment back in the 60s.

### **1988 A Druid Staff:**

One of Emmon's specialty was staff-magic, and Albionn wrote this after reading the Four Salutations by Emmon in 1986, and Emmon's version of staff construction.

### **1988 The Staff:**

After experimenting for a few years with staff work, this is his advice of gathering materials for a staff. Good staff is hard to find, you know.

### **1986 Four Salutations of the Day:**

A rather interesting addition from Emmon's files, vaguely reminiscent of Tai Chi to me. I believe that Stacey continues to practice this one every day.

### **2002 The Fire Ceremony:**

A little experience from the Big Ash Grove.

### **1992 Fire Building Fun:**

Written by a young spunky Michael, who was unusually interested in assisting the fire-preparations for the various Carleton services from 1990-1993. Posted on the Vax Conference, it's a summary of RDNA set-up customs at the time.

### **2004 sweat lodge Traditions:**

I had a terrible conundrum about writing up the extremely vaporous customs associated with the sweat lodge. Each was so unique, that to generalize was to do them an injustice. I was also worried about being accused of "robbing" Native American tradition, but I think that after 10 generations of Druids at Carleton since its adoption, that we do have a bit of a tradition of our own, and it's actually one of the most somber and respectful services that we ever did. I've forgotten a great deal of the smaller traditions that the 1985-1991 Druids extracted from the books I mentioned, but I'm sure that they can be rebuilt, by those who do the reading.

### **1977/1978 Norse Ritual Experimentation:**

Hall Moe went on to join ADF and make more Norse liturgies.

### **2001 Sirona's Shower Shugyo:**

One of the attractions to Nozomi's little mountain home is the 10 foot waterfall on the backside of a gully. It's a slippery as goose shit, but members of the grove and local community often go to it for drinking water or to meditate under it's pounding force between April and October. In July, she once spent about 8 hours under one in the mountains, and was a bit sick for awhile afterwards.

### **2001 Hot Tub Healing:**

More water shenanigans from the Akita grove.

### **2002 The Great Cailleach Search:**

Akita Grove has wonderful forested mountains, that provides an inviting place to have a game of hide and seek. I believe Carleton Grove did a search for the Golden Frisbee in 2002 also. Lots of fun for the active members, and gets them into the woods.

### **1980 Druid Cross Tarot:**

Stephan's specialty is the tarot, and ran a 1-800 line for awhile not too long ago.

### **1983 Creating a Wizard's Lite:**

Emmon was naturally a bit interested in psychic phenomenon, and this began a long stream of articles on visualizing light and magic.

### **1983 Back to the Shadows Again:**

How to mask one's presence by being aware of it yourself.

### **1984 Candle Staring:**

Similar to the Wizard Lite article.

### **1988 Why Another Article on Scrying?**

A little more on the subject.

### **2001 On Divination: Short Talk & Dialogue:**

Written by Larry Press in a Socratic manner from the Live Oak Grove. Apparently Emmon's emphasis on this subject was passed on to Larry.

### **2004 Divination Techniques:**

As you can see, I've grown more sober and mature since the Book of Ultimate Answers in 1994. I tend to avoid magical-like activities, but I see divination as a form of meditation and reflection, and since it is key to running a proper RDNA service; I added a few comments and suggested some alternative forms of divination. As far as I can tell weather forecasting, molten lead, wedding rings in loaves of bread, wind & lightning divination remain the most common forms at Carleton.

### **1994 Book of Ultimate Answers:**

Originally in Part 9, I moved it here as it seemed better placed for divination. This was my own poke at divination during my saucy period of Druidism (1992-1997).

### **2000 Planting Your Own Grove:**

How to plant acorns. The problem for a good acorn exchange with CA is that they have Sudden Oak Death virus in their valley.

### **2002 Winter Tree Care & Planting Tips:**

A little follow up from Stacey who has spent a lot of time tending Emmon's grove site in Orinda.

### **2022 Creation of a Druid's Nemeton:**

By Rhiannon, it is an interesting idea on how to set up stones and trees at a grove site.

### **2001 Tree Meditation:**

ADF introduced the Tree Meditation to Druidism and it has grown quite popular, even showing up at Carleton in the 1980s after a few visits to Pagan Spirit Gathering.

### **1997 Michelle's Meditation:**

This is one tree meditation by Michelle Hajder at Carleton's Vax conference not long before the conference ended. Similar meditations were used in sweat lodges and services in the early revival period at Carleton also.

## Section Ten: Non-Liturgical Festival Activities

These were a small collection of ideas for spicing up the festivals by suggesting more ideas. Up to 2001, one rarely saw much discussion of adding some color and life to them outside the liturgy. This thread ran for about a year in the Druid Missal-Any section, and I'm sure you'll enjoy them. You aren't required to do any of them, but you might like to try them.

## Section Eleven: Final Things

David's Final Mediation 1966 Written in May 1966 by Frangquist.

Original Introduction to Black Book by Fisher 1964 This was written by David Fisher on January 30th, 1964. It shows some of the hierarchical focus of Fisher, in that he only wanted Third Order Druids to keep it, although others could read it. This entry was probably made very soon after the first meeting of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu (January 27th, 1964) and so it's another early historical document to consider..

## Final Points You Should Quickly Notice:

As you go through the different liturgies, you should note that the titles of the different liturgical sections vary greatly from one to the other. The invocation changes "these three sins" to "these three errors" depending on the Priest's inclination. No one section of the liturgy is constant among all these liturgies and there is no need for your liturgies to be the same either.

Still Confused?

For more details on the liturgical customs see A General History of Reformed Druidism, or the Book of Customs in The Druid Chronicles (Reformed), or ARDAs Part Four. If that doesn't help, look me up in the Carleton Alumni services and call me.

Enjoy and use this volume well,  
Michael Scharding

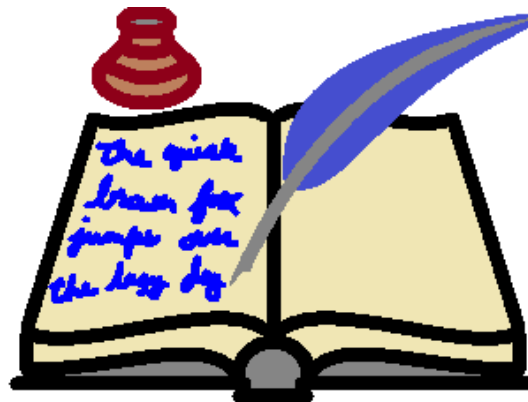


**Figure 53 Steps to Enlightenment,  
Japanese Garden, c. 2002**

## Later Additions in This Edition

Onward for the remainder of Volume Three are additional rites and rituals added by Oakdale Grove.

- Ordination to the Order of the Morrigan
- Ordination to the Order of the Mistletoe
- Ordination to the Order of the Acorn (Oakdale Grove Version for admitting members to the Grove during winter months)
- Lunar Healing Ritual
- Lunar Celebration Ritual
- Handfasting & Wedding Ritual (Oakdale Grove's modular version)
- A Druidic Meal Blessing
- All Good Things (sheet music)
- Sirona's Grace (prayer)
- Keltrian Tree Meditation
- Accessing the Divine in the Otherworld
- ADF & RDNA Combined Ritual
- An RDNA Solo Style Druid Ritual
- Meditation Techniques



# 11<sup>th</sup> Order Ordinations (Order of The Morrigan)

Dedication as an Acolyte  
and for Reformed Druids of at least the Third Order: repeated a year and a day later as **Ordination as a Priest of the Order of the Morrigan** using the liturgical tradition of the New Reformed Druids of North America.  
John the Verbose, 54 Y.R.

## Preface

The following ritual of self dedication (some say self initiation) and ordination is part of my way of answering my call to Service as a priest of the Reformed Druids. I create this new Order not for myself, but for those who have asked... three to be exact, and three is a sacred number to the Morrigan, so I took it to be a sign. Some may feel that this rite is very dire and too elaborate considering the light-hearted nature of the RDNA. Well, the Morrigan is dire, and in writing this I dare not approach Her in a light-hearted manner. It will help greatly if the seeker reads this through several times to understand the flow. The candidate might even consider memorizing their lines to be able to recite them from memory and with meaning!

## Preparatory Details – Part I

It is highly recommended that you read through all the preparatory details as well as the ritual before commencing. Take note of the unspoken instructions [in square brackets] as well. This rite is by far more elaborate than most Reformed Druid rituals. There is room for improvisation, embellishment, and to some extent, revision. The long-winded title indicates that this ritual can be used in two different ways: First, as a dedication or self-dedication rite as an Acolyte of the Order of the Morrigan. For some druids, this may be all they seek. Then for druids of at least the Third Order, after a year-and-a-day of contemplation, self-defined devotionals, and oneiromancy (dream divination), this initiation can be repeated as an ordination rite as a Priest or Priestess of the Morrigan. Since it is said that the Morrigan chooses you, I have written this with solo druids in mind, though you will notice it helps to have someone assisting with the ritual dialogue. If you are going the solo route with this rite, feel free to change the pronouns accordingly if you are speaking to yourself.

## Preparatory Details – Part II

You will need quite a few props and some ritual tools. To start, you will need a devotional pendant of some sort. Perhaps a silver triskele, or a metal raven skull, pentacle, triquetra, whatever represents the Morrigan *to you* that can be worn as a necklace. Get a spool of a non-metal necklace cord, or if you're on a budget, a spool of cotton cooking twine. Remove the cord or chain that may have come with your pendant, and put a cord of your own making on it. You'll be keeping the pendant, just don't get too attached to the cord; you'll be severing it. Wear the pendant when you can, meditate on the Morrigan with it during your own spiritual practices. Let it soak up your devotional energy, sweat, and so forth. Just be careful if you choose to sleep while wearing it; don't get strangled by it, and generally try not to bleed on it, even though the Scarlet Mother likes blood; let's keep this Reformed. Start this on the new moon *before* the ritual.

## Preparatory Details – Part III

In preparation for this ritual, you're gonna need more stuff. I'd apologize for any inconvenience, but the Morrigan would view my apologies as weakness so... obey my commands. The following is a list of things you will need for this ritual:

- Make a projectile sling from cloth, paracord, or thin leather
- Three polished stones (bloodstone, obsidian, garnet, or other stones that correspond to the Morrigan)
- Sharp knife
- Cauldron, or a vessel that can serve as a cauldron
- Ceremonial chalice
- Waters-of-Life, but for this I recommend a Pinot Noir, other dark red wine, dark ale, or mead. If alcohol is an issue, pomegranate juice or mugwort tea are good alternatives (check with a physician before taking mugwort)
- Waters-of-Death (a jar or bottle of water collected from a body of water in which someone has died)
- Salt (roughly a quarter or half cup)
- Two "spears" (or staves made to resemble spears, that can be stuck into the ground forming an X. If the soil is unyielding, have two volunteers hold the spears forming an X for the entire ritual.)
- Black ribbon (three yards in length, about two to three inches across)
- Maroon or purple ribbon (three yards in length, about 3/4 inch or one inch across, and NOT red; red is the vestment of the Third Order. Go for a really dark red if purple is not available)
- Nightshade (and by this I mean a tomato) and a towel, rag, or napkin (you'll see why)
- Apple (to be sliced across its equator to reveal the star)

Considering the above list, this ritual ought to be done outside. Privately owned land is convenient, but public land sometimes has the most ideal locations. Liminal spaces are highly recommended for this ritual such as hilltops, forest clearings, shorelines, and so forth. Keep in mind that the Morrigan appeared at shallow moving bodies of water. A park along a creek might be suitable, just be mindful of your spears and knife; know your local ordinances – the goddess of sovereignty would hold you accountable to your own laws. This ritual is best done on Samhain or new moons.

\*\*\*\*\*

# THE ORDER OF THE MORRIGAN

## The Invocation

[OFFICIANT] This is the appointed place, this is the appointed time. You... are... here! Great and Divine Earth-Mother, attend us now! We thy children have come to this place today to usher a brave seeker through a rite of passage. O Warrior Spirits, ye who have fought bravely, ye who have lived to fight another battle, and ye who have fallen to a warrior's death, join us and bear witness to this occasion. O Earth-Mother, we call upon thee now in the form of the Phantom Queen; the Dark Mother, the Morrigan. Stand amongst us now at the crossed spears. These grounds are sacred, this moment – solemn. Know that it is thee we invoke, as ye hear thine own words recited; the poem of victory and peace after the Second Battle of Moytura:



[with gusto!]

Peace to the heavens,  
Heavens down to Earth,  
Earth beneath sky,  
Strength in everyone.  
A brimming chalice,  
Full of honey – mead in abundance,  
Summertime in winter,  
Peace to the heavens!

O, Great Cailleach by thy very power! Though some of thy words hath been lost to the shadowy Veils of Time, we keep the faith that you perceive that which remains, for our bards sing that the Battles of Moytura were far greater heretofore of three and a half thousand years! Immense is the power surviving in thy lore!

## Praises of the Morrigan

[Insert any praises you deem appropriate or use the following]

**[OFFICIANT]** “The Admonished Warrior” by John the Verbose:

The harp strings hummed as Conn sang forth,  
Entrancing village folk, a bard of renown was he,  
Words eloquent and accurate of battles in the north,  
His voice pure gold – like Lughnasadh honey.

A playful jab at Cuchulain,  
Conn laid bare the brash and stubborn lad,  
Leathceann, a warrior present fumed,  
The bardic satire had made him mad.

You mock our warrior culture, barked Leathceann,  
O bard, you disgrace our way of life,  
I judge ye as a waste of man,  
Now face me as you meet my knife!

At Conn sprang the warrior, enraged,  
A portly druid stepped in between  
The confrontation ceased: assuaged,  
How fortunate that he intervene.

The druid spoke, Warriors are sacred and revered,  
For protecting the sovereignty of the land,  
but to our laws must you also be adhered  
Against a bard, must you never raise a hand.

Badb Catha with a coarse shriek swooped down,  
The Battle Crow alighted on the threshold,  
Entered, now a woman in ragged ebon gown,  
Swiftly grasped Leathceann in stranglehold.

If ever by you this bard stops his breath,  
By no actions, no deeds can you be saved,  
Your soul be bound from Magh Meall in death,  
You would lose your honor, your name – depraved.

Listen well my little warrior, with poise and noble grace,  
This bard can sing of what is true,  
Or from history, your life he could erase,  
Aye, or smear your name right through.

From Leathceann’s shoulder a dusky crow leapt,  
Flew off and out to worlds between,  
Quickly Conn burst into song, so adept,  
And sang the praises of the Phantom Queen.

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Excerpts from “Cuchulain’s Fight With The Sea” by William Butler Yeats:

Then Conchubar, the subtlest of all men,  
Ranking his Druids round him ten by ten,  
Spake thus: "Cuchulain will dwell there and brood  
For three days more in dreadful quietude,  
And then arise, and raving slay us all.  
Chant in his ear delusions magical,  
That he may fight the horses of the sea."  
The Druids took then to their mystery,  
And chanted for three days.  
Cuchulain stirred,  
Stared on the horses of the sea, and heard  
The chariots of battle and his own name cried;  
And fought with the invulnerable tide.

### The Ordeals (Sacrifices)

**[OFFICIANT]** There is one amongst us today who seeks ordination as {an Acolyte}/{a Priest} of the Order of the Morrigan. Seeker, please step forward.

The Order of the Morrigan is not for beginners. Dedication to her is not something that can simply be decided upon a whim. At the very least, the relationship must be cultivated over time, and one must prove their worthiness. The Great Crone may indeed have chosen you. She chooses survivors, she chooses warriors – those bearing the darkness of pain overcome, against the odds, who have emerged with honor and grace. She chooses those who do not lament their struggles and those who also do not wear their plights as a badge of honor. O Seeker, on Her behalf I must implore: By what justification dost thou feel worthy of the favor of the Dark Sovereign?

**[SEEKER]** I have wielded my Weapons across my Battlefields. I have bled my lifeblood, a flowing crimson wellspring, time and again. I have mourned in my losses on the Land of the Dead. I have all but Drowned in my Crossing of the Waters. I have faced many tribulations in the past, and there may be many challenges that lie ahead, but at this time, at this place, and before these witnesses, nothing matters more to me than the trial I presently face. My unconquered heart bleeds for this moment.

**[OFFICIANT]** Turn and face the Phantom Queen now. She stands amid the spears. Address Her directly.

**[SEEKER]** I stand now on my own two feet before you. Not in defiance, but in steadfast solidarity. May I be found fit to serve thee as I prove myself through my deeds.

**[OFFICIANT]** I laud thy sense of conviction, Seeker. The Morrigan is a goddess of destruction and demands sacrifice. What hast thou brought to honor the Great Queen?

**[SEEKER]** I bear a handcrafted sling, imbued with the efforts of my energy. It represents the brash and foolish actions of

Cuchulain. This sling shall never be used to maim the Great Queen. I destroy it as a votive offering unto Her.

[Seeker cuts sling (and/or burns it in the ritual fire if applicable)]

**[OFFICIANT]** That is a noble gesture. However, the Morrigan demands more. Have you additional offerings for Her?

[SEEKER] I have three sling stones, symbolic of the three wounds She sustained to Her ribs, to Her eye, and to Her leg.

**[OFFICIANT]** Place each stone into the cauldron with blessings of the virtues her wounds represented.

[SEEKER] Blessed be this stone with the power of Protection. Blessed be this stone with the power of Vision and Foresight. Blessed be this stone with the power of Surefooted Grace.

**[OFFICIANT]** Indeed a magnanimous threefold offering! Though I must ask more still. the great Battle Crow, Badb Catha wants blood! Though as Reformed Druids, we must not break from that which makes us Reformed. May the Phantom Queen heed the sovereignty of our dogma.

[SEEKER (cuts the apple across its equator to reveal the star)] I have yet more sacrifices to offer. An apple and a nightshade. I hereby shed the Blood of the Earth!

[Seeker squeezes tomato over apple.]

**[OFFICIANT]** The depth of the symbolism is admirable and compelling. Yet something more is still needed. She wants YOU.

**[SEEKER (takes up knife)] It is said that Reformed Druids do NOT make blood sacrifices.**

[Seeker raises knife up towards neck, edge of blade facing away from skin]

My Life for the Morrigan!

[Seeker grabs devotional pendant around neck with free hand and cuts the cord with the knife. Always cut AWAY from yourself!]

My Death for the Morrigan!

[Seeker removes the pendant from the cut cord, discards cord in (fire, or cauldron, or body of water, or on the ground, etc)]

My Rebirth for the Morrigan!

**[OFFICIANT]** O Dark Mother, behold thy stalwart servant's evocative offerings and deeds! Hast thou accepted these sacrifices, O Great Queen? We seek a sign of thy assent as we look inward to divinations.

[Conduct any type of divination here. Any crow or corvid calls are an automatic "yes" but if the divination indicates "no," either add more offerings and repeat this question or close the ceremony and reconvene at the next new moon.]

**[OFFICIANT]** Praise be to Victory! The Divine Sovereign has accepted the sacrifices!

## Consecration of the Waters-of-Life

**[OFFICIANT]** O Great Morrigan, descend into these Waters and hallow them, by thy Ninefold Charges and by the triplicities of your aspects. Give us to know thy power as we take and drink of thy ancient essences. Behold, a chalice brimming! *[and if mead say]* Mead in abundance! The Waters-of-Life!

Brave Seeker! Behold this chalice of the Waters-of-Life. Partake of them, and pour a small libation into the cauldron.

Now take up the Waters-of-Death, and pour them into the cauldron.

*[Seeker does so – don't drink it though]*

Now Cleanse the waters with the salt, for they shall become the Waters-of-Rebirth.

Now YOU must be Reborn, Reborn from the Dark Goddess herself. She stands amid the crossed spears. You must pass through underneath them now.

## Spoken Rebirth Meditation

**[OFFICIANT]** Excerpts from "The Mother of God" by William Butler Yeats:

[Seeker crawls under crossed spears.]

The threefold terror of love; a fallen flare,  
Through the hollow of an ear;  
Wings beating about the room;  
The terror of all terrors that I bore  
The Heavens in my womb.

## Divine Charges of the Order of the Morrigan

[Officiant should speak the title corresponding to the correct office, i.e. Acolyte or Priest, noting that priests must have been an acolyte first for at least a year and a day and are at least a Third Order Druid.]

**[OFFICIANT]** Noble seeker of the Order of the Morrigan, thou hast declared an oath before the witnesses gathered here that ye have survived adversity before this day. Now hear these nine sacred charges that are adjured upon thee. That as {an Acolyte}/ {a Priest} of the Order of the Morrigan:

The Ninefold Charges of the Morrigan

1. Your days of reverence shall be the dark moons, Samhain, and the Feast Day of Morrighu which is January the Seventh.
2. You shall restrain your pendant, and you shall use it in your meditations on the Phantom Queen.
3. You shall sever the pendant's cord on every dark moon as a symbolic act of self-sacrifice.
4. You shall continue your current devotional practice to the Scarlet Mother.
5. You shall add aspects to your devotional practice, and if necessary, let aspects die or be reborn.

6. You shall defend the sovereignty of the Land: the sacred Earth-Mother upon which we all live and depend.

7. You shall defend those who are unable to defend themselves.

8. Rather than wading into battle, you shall use magic to achieve victory so that there may be peace.

19. If you must take up the sword, you shall never do so in anger, nor in blind rage, for that would not serve justice under sovereign law.

She stands among us now. Feel that presence in the air! Do you accept these divine charges as {an Acolyte}/{a Priest} of the Order of the Morrigan? If so, address her by name, swear it now as an oath!

[Officiant detaches the black and purple ribbons from the spears as Seeker swears an oath.]

[SEEKER (something like the following)] Morrighu! I swear that I accept the charges laid unto me!

## Ordination to the Order of the Morrigan

[OFFICIANT] Well spoken! O faithful Seeker, you have fought your battles in the past. You have faced the ordeals today, and you have accepted the charges required of the Order. KNEEL.

In the name of the Dark Mother, the Divine Sovereign, I hereby declare you to be {an Acolyte}/{a Priest} of the Order of the Morrigan. Bestowed upon you are your black and purple ribbons: a symbol of your office. You were reborn beneath these today, and just as life and death are intertwined, you shall incise the wide black ribbon thrice threefold (9 equidistant cuts) down both sides and weave the other through its length.

[Officiant picks up the chalice.]

Now partake again of the Waters-of-Life, your first elixir of sustenance after being reborn into the Order.

[Acolyte/Priest partakes and hands the chalice back to the officiant. Some liquid should remain.]

## Libations

[OFFICIANT] To thee, O Dark Mother, we return this portion of thy bounty, even as we too must one day return to thee.

[Remnant in chalice is cast down to the ground, fire, cauldron, etc and brings cauldron to Seeker if it is out of their reach.]

And to you, dear {Acolyte/Priest}, a return of the blessings of Anu, the Triple Goddess. Take back your sling stones, and always remember their blessings.

[SEEKER takes stones from cauldron and says] I honor thy gifts of Protection, Foresight, and Surefooted Grace. Good fortune and blessings of the gods and mortals unto thee!

## Benediction

[OFFICIANT] Now rise, and Awaken into the realm of the living. Begin to cultivate your gifts of discernment. Thou shall have a heightened sense of what is genuine from all that is petty and illusion, like a harvester who separates the wheat from the chaff. In the turning of the Wheel of the Year, you shall be visited by the Morrigan in your dreams. Remember her many forms that she may take, and interpret her interactions as a message to you. Use mugwort to aid your prophetic dreams if rarely you dream, for it is one of the herbs of the Morrigan. Meditate deeply on the rite that has transpired today.

O Great Phantom Queen, we give ye thanks for thy sojourn here today. Though ye may depart henceforth, we are secure in the knowledge that the Earth-Mother is always amongst us.

O Warrior Spirits and all witnesses present: this rite has ended. You have our gratitude that you honored us with your presence, and we bid you safe journey to wherever it is you must go next!

Now triumphant {Acolyte/Priest}, go forth into the world, and live your life fearlessly and courageously. For in Her eyes, if you do not feel a renewed sense of purpose, then this was all for naught. May you be spared the fate of Cuchulain. I bid you victory and peace!

And there was much rejoicing!



# Ordination to the Order of the Mistletoe

John the Verbose, 52 Y.R.

A New Order of Ordination based in the Reformed Druids of North America. Anyone at least of the Order of Dalon Ap Landu may conduct this ordination at any time of year. As there is no plant quite like mistletoe and as mistletoe has no ogham symbol, this order has no patron deity, nor patriarch. Disclaimer is built into the ritual. Use only *Viscum album*. **Consult your doctor first.** You may also use a homeopathic mistletoe tincture, even though it's been diluted into nothingness.

## Invocation

OFFICIANT: O Earth-Mother, O Dalon Ap Landu, O Ye who perceive the mysteries of the Golden Bough, the All-Healing gift of Belenos, the rained-down seed of Taranis, O Ye whom we invoke, be among us now as we consecrate this courageous seeker as a druid to the Order of the Mistletoe.

From the misty veils of dreams on the year's longest night, a vision was revealed. Upon an earthen mound stood an ancient oak. Its great limbs extend far over the mound, limbs from which druids harvest the mistletoe with great ceremony. Wading in a crescent shaped pond that encircles half the mound were two elders and two youths robed in white, each partaking of a white berry to unlock the mysteries within.

## The Questioning

O, brave seeker, step forward with courage now.

Give heed to my words, for this is a matter of life and death. Mistletoe must poison before it can heal. To complete this ritual, you must partake of the sacred mistletoe. Doing so has the potential to cause *Shamanic Death*, or even your physical death, and the essence within you might cause discomfort. Do you understand and accept the potential perils of this rite of passage?

[Seeker must respond in the affirmative. If negative, officiant ends ceremony here with: "One day when you feel ready, may this opportunity rise again. Though now, may everything be as it was. This ritual has ended."]

SEEKER: **Yes/I understand/I do.**

OFFICIANT: Then speak now and declare whether or not you wish to proceed.

[Seeker must respond in the affirmative. If negative, officiant uses benediction phrase above.]

SEEKER: **I wish to proceed.**

## The Sacrifice

OFFICIANT: So be it. Offer up your sacrifice as a token of your reverence for the All-Heal.

SEEKER: **Spirit of Mistletoe, accept my prayer and sacrifice: please be merciful in thy blessing.**

[Seeker places offering into fire, on an altar, in water, or in a tree. If the offering is more mistletoe, it must not touch the ground.]

[Officiant takes up the chalice. The Server should have already prepared the infusion of either an herbal tea of *Viscum Album* or a chalice of the Waters-of-Life with an alcohol based *Viscum Album* tincture. Do not use other mistletoe species]

## The Consecration

OFFICIANT: O Spirit of Mistletoe within these waters, by the mysteries of your powers, imbue this courageous seeker with your essence, granting the legendary gifts found in the ancient lore.

Drink once of the Waters of the All-Heal.

[Seeker drinks]

Use the mistletoe as a talisman for Healing, for Fertility when needed, and for luck in the Hunt.

Drink a second time of the Waters of the Golden Bough.

[Seeker drinks]

Use the mistletoe as an amulet of Protection, for a time of Exorcism when needed, for Banishing malevolent forces or spirits, and for the removal of curses.

Drink a third time of the Waters of the Mistletoe.

[Seeker drinks]

May this bless you with an enhanced ability to interpret omens. May it grant you the gifts of Otherworld perception. And may you unlock the secrets of immortality!

## Libation

A portion of this mistletoe must not touch the ground in order to retain its power, therefore we return this portion of the bounty to the realm of \_\_\_\_\_ [Sky if pouring libation onto a tree; Fire if pouring into a ritual fire; Water if pouring into a body of water].

## Meditation

OFFICIANT: And now a silent meditation.

## Benediction

As you go forth, stay keen in your vigilance as the poison runs its course through your being. As a symbol of your order, take up the crescent bladed sickle, and salute with it the waxing moon on its sixth day. Those are your thirteen sacred days across the year, and also the solstices, especially midwinter. On the ends of the green shoulder sash of your Order shall be the likeness of the mistletoe. Wear this on your sacred days and other times that you see fit.

Now go forth as a champion of the Golden Bough!

Peace, peace, peace!

# Order of the Acorn Ritual: Oakdale Grove Version

*Based on Scharding's 2002 self-ordination liturgy, adapted to the version here in 2015 by John "The Verbose" Martens and Earl Drake of Oakdale Grove.*

*Edited for any Groves in the event of adding new members during the Season of Sleep, or for druids who seek Grove membership but do not wish to enter the first order yet.*

*Note: Since the seeker is not entering any of the main orders, anyone may lead this ordination, any time.*

## Opening Declaration

**Druid:** A grove of oaks may still grow during the Season of Sleep, if ever so slightly. For this, even a winter tree-ring gives testimony of the continual flow and renewal of life. Throughout the Season of Sleep, even Acorns aspire to grow and become a mighty Oak, reflecting outwardly the immortal essence that is known only to the acorn.

## If Winter, Read This

**Druid:** As ordinations to the First Order customarily come to pass during the Season of Life, the Order of the Acorn offers kinship amidst the Season of Sleep.

## Praise

*[Insert whatever warm-ups you think necessary, perhaps a song.]*

## Invocation

**Druid:** O Be'al, O Earth Mother, attend us now, we beseech thee. Come and dwell within our Hearts. Open our minds, eyes and ears; as we gather in the ground of our being in the face of Belenos, the sun. Enkindle in our hearts thy flaming spark which is perpetually prevailing throughout all life.

## Invitation

**Druid:** Is there anyone present today who wishes to enter the Order of the Acorn, and be counted among the members of the Grove? If so, please present yourself to the center of the circle.

*[Seeker enters center of circle.]*

**Druid:** You know not the ways of the Druids, yet you wish to become one. You desire to join our activities interwoven with your own search for truth. O Earth-Mother, please bless this seeker in their search, and fill them with Wisdom and Awareness.

## Offering

**Druid:** Have you a sacrifice for the Earth-Mother? If so, offer it up as a token of your spiritual quest.

*[The Seeker offers a small plant-based sacrifice, preferably acorns]*

**Druid:** Do you wish to become a Reformed Druid and join the fellowship of this Grove?

**Seeker:** I DO.

**Druid:** Do you believe Nature is Good and look towards her for Knowledge, Awareness, and Inspiration?

**Seeker:** I DO.

**Druid:** It is an unclear path you begin today, but you will learn by doing. We offer you our activities in the times to come, whether it be for a few days, or many years.

During the turn of the wheel of the year, may the Earth-Mother show you her favor, guiding you along the path to become a Reformed Druid of the First Order, in the proper way, at the proper time, at the proper place. If you ever must follow this course by yourself, so be it with great wisdom and small discoveries from your lessons around you.

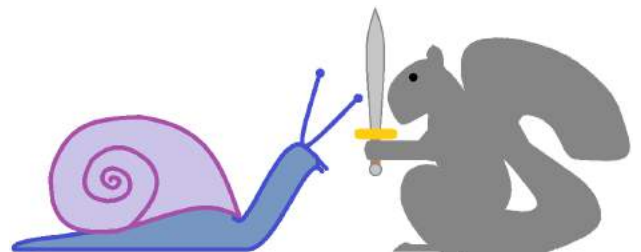
## Meditation

**Druid:** Think on the signs that appeared during this ceremony and what may appear after.

## Conclusion

**Druid:** May the Earth-Mother be with you during these trying times. You are hereby a druid in the Order of the Acorn, and a member of \_\_\_\_\_ Grove [*or Protogrove*].

*And there was much rejoicing.*



# Oakdale Grove Lunar Healing Ritual

*Based on a mishmash of RDNA and NRDNA liturgies,  
composed by John the Verbose, 54 YR*

## Preparatory Details

AD = Arch-Druid, PR = Preceptor,

B = Bard, MC = Master of Ceremonies, [*Italic bracketed words*]  
= instructions

You will need the following specific sacrifices: oats, evergreen,  
oak leaves, juniper berries, and mistletoe. The chalice should  
contain mead.

## Welcoming

**MC:** *Welcome to Oakdale Grove's lunar healing ritual!*

*Oakdale Grove is a ceremonial fellowship of the Reformed  
Druids of North America, which can be described as a  
universalist spiritual and philosophical neo-druidic order.*

*Nature, being one of the primary concerns in our life  
experiences, is personified as the Earth-Mother. Other deities  
that may be invoked today can be interpreted as different  
aspects of the Earth-Mother.*

*The opening invocations and centering help us ease into a ritual  
and meditative mindset. Breathe slowly and deeply as we guide  
you through the next few moments.*

## Invocation I

**AD:** In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of Life.

**PR:** And tonight we partake of it, we and all living beings.

**AD:** In the mighty helix we dance,

**PR:** And in harmony with all of Life, we sing:

**AD:** To those known and unknown, remembered and forgotten,  
Divine essences, creating, preserving and destroying...

**PR:** Be in our awareness, teach us Your joy, let us share Your  
sorrow, extend our limitations.

**AD:** Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the  
energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely, at this place,  
now our temple under the stars.

**PR:** LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

## Meditations 5:11-14

**PR:** For without life is there nothing which is anything. The sun  
is as darkness without that it shines down on the living things;  
and the earth is as empty space without that it is a pedestal upon  
which have been placed the living things. Thus, even the least  
leaf of this tree is greater than the earth and the sun. For life is  
not of the Earth-mother, and life is not of Be'al, rather life is of  
them both. And great is the power thereof.

## Opening Blessing

**AD:** Tonight is the eve of the full moon; let us begin our work in  
peace, for without peace, can no work be. May there be peace in  
the East. May there be peace in the South. May there be peace in  
the West. May there be peace in the North.

## Invocation II

**AD:** O Be'al, overlook these three shortcomings that are due to  
our human limitations. Thou art everywhere, but we worship  
you here. Thou art without form, but we worship you in these  
forms. Thou needest no praise, yet we offer thee these prayers.  
O Be'al, overlook these three shortcomings that are due to our  
human limitations. Mighty and blessed, fertile and powerful, to  
thee Earth-Mother, we sing our praise, asking that our prayers be  
heard during this night of the full moon. O Mother, cleanse our  
minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

## Centering I

**AD:** Why do you gather under the moon?

**PR:** It is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.

**AD:** What brings you here to this temple under the stars?

**PR:** We seek this sacred space to honor the celestial dance of  
the Moon and the Earth-Mother, for the **full moon** is at hand.  
We do not know what to offer the divine, so we offer our  
prayers and sacrifices. Each of us in our own way, Each of us  
with our own prayers, Each of us with our own sacrifices.

## Centering II

**AD:** Let each of us now go to the sacred place: to the sanctum of  
Divinity,

in the temple of the Earth-Mother,

in each of our bodies,

in each of our hearts,

in the back of our minds,

in the quiet of our spirit;

evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, so that the secret essence may help us to understand these experiences as sources of wisdom and growth, with the spirit of truth and of light within us, like a spark of the sun, and a flame within the heart of every being.

## Declaration of Goals I

**AD:** Now let each of us, within our own hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our lives, and make our individual dedications to those Whom we revere, or worship, or honor.

## Declaration of Goals II

**AD:** Now do we declare our goals: To grow as human beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength; to promote in our actions, a human and interdependent society; to heal and protect the biosphere of this planet; and to further the process of Evolution in ourselves, and in our groups, and throughout all time and space.

## Offering and Praise

**MC:** *We make offerings and sacrifices to those whom we wish to honor. First come offerings that are nonphysical, the bardic arts, poetry, perhaps a song. Sacrifices of plant material will come later.*

**AD:** We are together, yet we often feel separate, perhaps alone. Thus we make our offerings and our praises. We pour our energy into our offerings, and soon we may each cast them to the sacred fire, the ancient gateway to other realms. Every sacrifice is a solemn act of catharsis. We sacrifice a part of the Earth-Mother to remind us how truly we value her. For through the pain of the taking of a life may we deepen our respect and our empathy. And verily, it is indeed an offering up unto the beauty of the Earth-Mother.

## Chant of Praise I

**AD:** Though not all offerings are physical. Has anyone prepared a bardic offering for the Divine?

## Chant of Praise II

*[heavily adapted from the Order of Ordination of 4th Order Druids into the Order of Grannos]*

**B:** O Moon, O Earth-Mother, we thy servants praise thee. Grant us thy presence now, as we beseech thee in the form of Grannos, of the healing springs. Fill us with thy power, that we may be made fit to serve. Hear now these words, A Hymn to the Waters, adapted from the Rig-Veda:

Forth from the middle of the flood waters Their chief, the sea, flow cleansing, never sleeping Indra, the bull, the thunderer, dug their channels: Here let those waters, Grannos, grant us healing.

Waters which came from heaven, of those that wander, dug from the earth, or flowing free by Nature, Bright, purifying, spreading to the ocean, Here let those waters, Grannos, heal the Earth.

Those amid whom goes Varuna, the sovereign, He who discriminates men's truth from falsehood, Distilling mead, the bright, the purifying, Here let those waters, Grannos, heal our Leaders.

They from whom Varuna the King, and Soma, and all the deities drink strength and vigor. They unto whom the universal Agni entered, Here let those waters, Grannos, heal our Society.

Understand that imbued in these words is a sign of the power in the waters that flow beneath, over, and above the Earth. Know that we find the Mother's pleasure to extend her power to us in the form of a spring as it rushes forth from the Earth. Even as the Waters-of-Life grant Awareness, so do the healing springs minister to the needs of all, cleansing the weary and uplifting the weak in body, mind, and in spirit.

## The Supplication

**AD:** O Moon, O Earth-Mother, O Mighty Ones, We have called upon You and You have heard us. We have offered of ourselves and have faith that You have accepted. Yet each of us has needs for guidance and for aid, without which we cannot fulfill Thy ways. Hear now Thy children, and help us, as ever You have done. Now let each of us, within our hearts, declare silently our needs we wish fulfilled, in order to accomplish our goals.

*[15 second pause]*

**AD:** And we declare, that as this Grove: We need Your strength and wisdom, Your healing and joy, so that we may accomplish our goals, and fulfill our dedications. Bless this Grove and all present, and bring us all that we may need, materially and spiritually, so that we may grow ever stronger, in Awareness, in faith, wisdom, sincerity, health, and joy.

## OPTIONAL Paragraph Voices on the Wind – Protecting the Earth-Mother From Hydrofracking

We have heard the Voices on the Wind. Across the world, fracking and other forms of extreme fossil fuel extraction are doing damage to Earth, Water, and Sky. In Canada, indigenous peoples are seeing their forests turned into tar sand deserts. In Australia and the USA, people are experiencing the consequences of fracking every day. In South America, the rain forests that are the lungs of our world are being cut down for the sake of fossil fuels. In Britain, fracking has been given the go-ahead and the government is making plans to bribe people to accept it. The list goes on. Everywhere, the people are making their voices heard, crying out in sorrow and speaking up in



resistance. This voice is being heard, loud and clear. Now is our time to respond in kind.

## The Empowerment

**AD:** Gaze into the sacred fire. This fire has the will to be something greater than it is. Let the flames of this blaze represent the fire within ourselves. This is our vitality. This is what drives us to extend our limitations. This is the force behind our will. What you see before you are real flames, now see their greater likeness within your minds.

You are there. This is your inner fire. Feel the intensity of the heat of this inner fire. Let it be real unto yourself. Realize the synergistic nature of this blaze as it fuels your vitality and provides focus for your intent, as you fuel it by your will. Now – extend your limitations; You are at your inner fire. In your mind, step closer to it, and extend your energetically dominant hand. The heat intensifies. You may feel apprehension or fear of the pain. Do not doubt yourself, and do not let the sense of foreboding overcome you. Place your dominant hand into the very flames, but do not let them burn you. Recognize this power within yourself, acknowledge your authority over it, embrace it as a gift.

Raise your other hand, your energetically receptive hand, toward the moon. Take in the power and the light through your fingertips and palm.

Now, with your hand in this inner fire, you can use the center of the flames as a focus point to channel your will and intent. Now we channel our intent and funnel our will for a common cause. Imagine the Earth, our only home, being restored to her regal beauty. Visualize our sacred spaces, our wild lands, the resting places of our ancestors returning to their rightful glory!

See the decline of rampant greed on the face of the Earth-Mother. See the people being healed of the addiction to toxic habits. See alternatives to the need for living with the status quo – all these things that are anathema, we visualize as a thing of the past. We see the Earth as green and lush where it ought to be, free from toxic pollutants, free from toxic attitudes, and a people unified under a new sense of responsibility and stewardship.

Now withdraw your hand from the flames. Let the fire in your mind recede and merge into the fire that blazes before us. With your receptive hand, continue to draw from the moon as long as you need in order to balance and revitalize yourself as we prepare the sacrifices.

## The Sacrifice

**AD:** Our praise has mounted up on the wings of owls, our voices have been carried on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, for we have offered up our sacrifices of life, imbued with the spirit of our praise, prayers, and desires. Accept them, we pray, and cleanse our hearts and minds, granting us Thy peace, blessings, life, health, and prosperity so that we may in turn protect thee.

**Oats:** Greed is threatening the quality of our planet, for this we offer up the oats.

**Evergreen:** Addiction is fueling the greed that is rampant, for this we offer up the evergreen.

**Oak leaves:** Necessity is fueling the addiction we need to shed, for this we offer up the oak leaves.

**Juniper berries:** The Status Quo is fueling the necessity of our addiction. For this we offer up the juniper berries.

**AD:** A cultural change is needed, to change the status quo, to reduce the necessity, to heal our addiction, to cast off our greed. For this we need an All-Heal. For this, we offer up the **mistletoe**. The mistletoe is the time-honored All-Heal.

Hast thou accepted our sacrifices, O Earth-Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the East... of the South... and of the West... Praise be! our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life has been accepted!

## The Consecration of the Waters

**MC:** *In celebration of the acceptance of our sacrifice, diluted whiskey is consecrated and shared. If you prefer not to partake, you may decline or may raise the chalice to the sky to honor the Waters within. If you brought your own chalice, please bring it to the altar now. Is there anyone present who requires an alternative to alcohol?*

**AD:** Of what does the Moon give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

**PR:** Elixir of the Moon

**AD:** From whence do these waters flow? **PR:** From the bosom of the Earth-Mother and graced with the silver light above.

**AD:** And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

**PR:** By partaking of the Elixir of the Moon.

**AD:** Has the Earth and Moon given forth of her bounty?

**PR:** Indeed! Behold a chalice brimming! Mead in abundance!

**AD:** Then give me the Elixir!

*[PR gives chalice to AD]*

**AD:** O Dalon Ap Landu, master of this and of all groves, descend into these Waters and hallow them, by thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and the one of night. Give us to know thy power, and Join us together as we partake of thy secret essences. O Moon, with thy power of healing! Descend into these waters and hallow them, fill us with a tide of your life-giving waters, and aid also to the weak and to the needy, let us

remember always the source of all gifts and all strength... **The Elixir of the Moon!**

*[AD partakes, gives chalice to PR who partakes, gives chalice to Server who partakes. Server walks around sunwise handing chalice to others while PR follows and proclaims "Elixir of the Moon" to each participant while drawing the sigil in the air before they drink]*

## The Libation

**AD:** To thee O Earth-Mother, we return this portion of thy bounty, even as we too must one day return to thee.

**PR:** O Earth Mother, O Moon, O all ye whom we honor, around us and within us; That You have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, and the sky,

**B:** We thy children thank thee!

**PR:** That we have offered to You of ourselves, and You have accepted. That You have heard our prayers, our griefs and our needs,

**B:** We thy children thank thee!

**PR:** For all that You have given, all You give around us, all You will give in the future, For that we need each other, mortal and divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now and throughout the ages,

**B:** We thy children thank thee!

## The Meditation

**MC:** *Before the conclusion of the ceremony, participants have the opportunity to share a meditative piece with the group. This is followed by a moment of silent meditation, reflecting on all that has happened here today, taking in the sights and sounds of nature, with slow and deep breathing.*

**AD:** As we gaze up to her, the moon gazes back and sees a fragile planet, the Earth-Mother, a priceless gem flowing with life-giving waters, yet troubled by petty tribal disputes. We are suspended in the cosmos, bustling with life, but protected by just a thin atmosphere like an eggshell of fine glass.

Let us see our home as the moon does. It is not a map, there are no borders, no walls, no boundaries. Our fragile existence is unique and valuable, and so vulnerable. Let us be vessels of her divine light with the power to bring humanity together. May we see the beauty of our only home as she sees it from far above. May we be given a newfound sense of unity and responsibility to be stewards of the Earth-Mother.

And now for a moment of silent lunar meditation, to take in her energy that she gives, to revitalize and provide the potential to heal, to reorient us with the Earth-Mother beneath us, to seek

divine inspiration for our creativity, and to focus the power to bring about that which needs to manifest.

Cast your will and intent into the fire once more as a final push for fulfillment of our goals in this moment of silent meditation.

## Concluding Prayer

**AD:** Tonight, O Moon, thou hast found us in peaceful, happy rest. May thy living luster leave us seven times still more blessed, O Moon, so fair, may it be so. As seasons come and seasons go, may the light of the moon be like that of the sun, and the light of the sun be seven times greater, like the light of seven days.

## The Benediction

**AD:** This rite has ended. Let us go forth now, to heal and strengthen, in the name of Grannos, of the healing springs, and may the Elixir of the Moon shine forth from within us.



**Above:** The Warrior's Sigil, designed by Pagans United Against Fracking. As an option, this sigil can be used as a visual focal point in this ritual for the sake of protecting the Earth-Mother against fracking for oil, for reducing its harmful effects, and for healing the planet.

# Oakdale Grove

## Lunar Celebration Ritual

*Based on a mishmash of RDNA and NRDNA liturgy, composited by John the Verbose, 54 YR*

### Preparatory Details

AD = Arch-Druid, PR = Preceptor, B = Bard, MC = Master of Ceremonies, [*Italic bracketed words*] = instructions

### Welcoming

**MC:** *Welcome to Oakdale Grove's lunar celebration ritual!*

*Oakdale Grove is a ceremonial fellowship of the Reformed Druids of North America, which can be described as a universalist spiritual and philosophical neo-druidic order.*

*Nature, being one of the primary concerns in our life experiences, is personified as the Earth-Mother. Other deities that may be invoked today can be interpreted as different aspects of the Earth-Mother.*

*The opening invocations and centering help us ease into a ritual and meditative mindset. Breathe slowly and deeply as we guide you through the next few moments.*

### Invocation I

**AD:** In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of Life.

**PR:** And tonight we partake of it, we and all living beings.

**AD:** In the mighty helix we dance,

**PR:** And in harmony with all of Life, we sing:

**AD:** To those known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, Divine essences, creating, preserving and destroying...

**PR:** Be in our awareness, teach us Your joy, let us share Your sorrow, extend our limitations.

**AD:** Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely, at this place, now our temple under the stars.

**PR:** LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

## Meditations 5:11-14

**PR:** For without life is there nothing which is anything. The sun is as darkness without that it shines down on the living things; and the earth is as empty space without that it is a pedestal upon which have been placed the living things. Thus, even the least leaf of this tree is greater than the earth and the sun. For life is not of the Earth-mother, and life is not of Be'al, rather life is of them both. And great is the power thereof.

### Opening Blessing

**AD:** Tonight is the eve of the full moon; let us begin our work in peace, for without peace, can no work be. May there be peace in the East. May there be peace in the South. May there be peace in the West. May there be peace in the North.

### Invocation II

**AD:** My fellow children of the Earth-Mother, celebrate with me now! O Our Mother, grant us these threefold supplications which we seek on behalf of our human spirit. In the absence of the radiant brilliance of Belenos, on this night we call upon thee in the form of the Moon, the closest and dearest celestial body to the shores of our island in the cosmos. Attend us as we celebrate your presence here, though you are far above the limits of our skies. Let your cool glow illuminate us as we celebrate your presence in these forms. Anoint us with your joyful blessings for the offerings and sacrifices we give unto you, and may we in turn pay forward our blessings unto others in this world. O orb of night, grant us these threefold supplications which are desires of the human spirit.

Draw forth our spirits with your alluring embrace, as you would draw up the waters of the tides. As we gaze up to thee, let your gaze be reflected within us. Give to us your Awareness, the likes of which one gains when we behold the Earth-Mother from a mountain top. Let us perceive the fragility of our existence.

### Centering I

**AD:** Why do you gather under the moon?

**PR:** It is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.

**AD:** What brings you here to this temple under the stars?

**PR:** We seek this sacred space to celebrate the celestial dance of the Moon and the Earth-Mother, for the **full moon** is at hand. We do not know what to offer the divine, so we offer our prayers and sacrifices. Each of us in our own way, Each of us with our own prayers, Each of us with our own sacrifices.

### Centering II

**AD:** Let each of us now go to the sacred place: to the sanctum of Divinity,

in the temple of the Earth-Mother,

in each of our bodies,

in each of our hearts,

in the back of our minds,

in the quiet of our spirit;

evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, so that the secret essence may help us to understand these experiences as sources of wisdom and growth, with the spirit of truth and of light within us, like a spark of the sun, and a flame within the heart of every being.

## Declaration of Goals I

**AD:** Now let each of us, within our own hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our lives, and make our individual dedications to those Whom we revere, or worship, or honor.

## Declaration of Goals II

**AD:** Now do we declare our goals: To grow as human beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength; to promote in our actions, a human and interdependent society; to heal and protect the biosphere of this planet; and to further the process of Evolution in ourselves, and in our groups, and throughout all time and space.

## Offering and Praise

**MC:** *We make offerings and sacrifices to those whom we wish to honor. First come offerings that are nonphysical, the bardic arts, poetry, perhaps a song. Sacrifices of plant material will come later.*

**AD:** We are together, yet we often feel separate, perhaps alone. Thus we make our offerings and our praises. We pour our energy into our offerings, and soon we may each cast them to the sacred fire, the ancient gateway to other realms. Every sacrifice is a solemn act of catharsis. We sacrifice a part of the Earth-Mother to remind us how truly we value her. For through the pain of the taking of a life may we deepen our respect and our empathy. And verily, it is indeed an offering up unto the beauty of the Earth-Mother.

## Chant of Praise I

**AD:** Though not all offerings are physical. Has anyone prepared a bardic offering for the Divine?

## Chant of Praise II

*[Meditations 3:1-7]*

**B:** 1. Behold the rocks of the mountains, and the trees above the grass waving; this is the Earth-mother.

2. Behold the ocean on the right, and the sea on the left, and mighty river which is but a trickle; this is the Earth-mother.

3. Behold the blue which is day and the black which is the night, salted with the stars, all above; even this is the Earth-mother.

4. The Earth-mother is one.

5. The sun is her right eye, the moon her left; and the clouds are her silver hair. The rivers are her fingers, the oceans are cradled in her hands, as a child.

6. For the Earth-mother is all which is revealed unto our sight, and which our ears do perceive, and which we do touch as we reach out with our hands.

7. For the Earth-mother is all things which do make themselves apparent unto our sense.

## The Supplication

**AD:** O Moon, O Earth-Mother, O Mighty Ones, We have called upon You and You have heard us. We have offered of ourselves and have faith that You have accepted. Yet each of us has needs for guidance and for aid, without which we cannot fulfill Thy ways. Hear now Thy children, and help us, as ever You have done. Now let each of us, within our hearts, declare silently our needs we wish fulfilled, in order to accomplish our goals.

*[15 second pause]*

**AD:** And we declare, that as this Grove: We need Your strength and wisdom, Your healing and joy, so that we may accomplish our goals, and fulfill our dedications. Bless this Grove and all present, and bring us all that we may need, materially and spiritually, so that we may grow ever stronger, in Awareness, in faith, wisdom, sincerity, health, and joy.

## Chant of Praise III

*["Queen of the Night," Carmina Gadelica, public domain]*

**B:** Hail unto thee,!

Jewel of the night!

Beauty of the heavens,

Jewel of the night!

Mother of the stars,  
Jewel of the night!  
Fosterling of the sun,  
Jewel of the night!  
Majesty of the stars,  
Jewel of the night!  
...Glory to thee forever  
Thou bright moon, this night;  
Thyself art ever  
The glorious lamp of grace!

## The Sacrifice

**AD:** Our praise has mounted up on the wings of owls, our voices have been carried on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, for we have offered up our sacrifices of life, imbued with the spirit of our praise, prayers, and desires. Accept them, we pray, and cleanse our hearts and minds, granting us Thy peace, blessings, life, health, and prosperity so that we may in turn protect thee.

Do you extend a blessing to us, O Moon? We seek an omen in divination, through which you may give

answer.

*[Seek an omen!]*

Praise be! On this sacred night we are honored with the blessings of \_\_\_\_\_!

*[insert blessing in accordance with divination]*

## The Consecration of the Waters

**MC:** *In celebration of the acceptance of our sacrifice, mead is consecrated and shared. If you prefer not to partake, you may decline or may raise the chalice to the sky to honor the contents within. If you brought your own chalice, please bring it to the altar now. Is there anyone present who requires an alternative to alcohol?*

**AD:** Of what does the sacred Moon give that we may know the blessings of her fullness?

**PR:** The silver light that shines down upon us.

**AD:** And what is the nature of her moonbeams of silver?

**PR:** She takes the rays of Belenos, and purifies them as her own,

**AD:** How do we honor this cleansing blessing of light?

**PR:** By partaking of the Elixir of the Moon, given by the Earth-Mother and kissed by the silver light above.

**AD:** Has the Moon given us her blessing?

**PR:** Indeed! Behold a chalice brimming! Mead in abundance!

**AD:** Then give me the Elixir!

*[PR gives chalice to AD]*

**AD:** O Dalon Ap Landu, master of this and of all groves, descend into these waters and hallow them, by thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and the one of night. Give us to know thy power, and Join us together as we partake of thy secret essences. Tonight O Moon, descend into these waters and hallow them, by thy **eightfold** powers: by New and by Blue, by Wax and by Wane, by Full and by Crescent, by Tide and Eclipse. Imbue us with your blessings as we take and drink of thy secret essences... **The Elixir of the Moon!**

*[AD partakes, gives chalice to PR who partakes, gives chalice to Server who partakes. Server walks around sunwise handing chalice to others while PR follows and proclaims "Elixir of the Moon" to each participant while drawing the sigil in the air before they drink]*

## The Libation

**AD:** Imbued with the blessings of the Moon, to thee O Earth Mother, we return this portion of thy bounty, even as we too must one day return to thee.

**PR:** O Earth Mother, O Moon, O all ye whom we honor, around us and within us; That You have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, and the sky,

**B:** We thy children thank thee!

**PR:** That we have offered to you of ourselves and you have accepted, that you have shared your joy and peace with us,

**B:** We thy children thank thee!

**PR:** For all that You have given, all You give around us, all You will give in the future, for that we need each other, mortal and divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now and throughout the ages,

**B:** We thy children thank thee!

## The Forum and Other Lunacy

**AD:** Tonight the Moon swells with power! By the power of her light, we have a cleansing bowl of spring water and silver, with which you are all invited to purify yourself and any sacred objects you have brought. This moment is for you, to anoint, to hallow, to bless or to consecrate, each in your own way.

### Lunar Meditation

**MC:** *Before the conclusion of the ceremony, participants have the opportunity to share a meditative piece with the group. This is followed by a moment of silent meditation, reflecting on all that has happened here today, taking in the sights and sounds of nature, with slow and deep breathing.*

**AD:** As we gaze up to her, the moon gazes back and sees a fragile planet, the Earth-Mother, a priceless gem flowing with life-giving waters, yet troubled by petty tribal disputes. We are suspended in the cosmos, bustling with life, but protected by just a thin atmosphere like an eggshell of fine glass.

Let us see our home as the moon does. It is not a map, there are no borders, no walls, no boundaries. Our fragile existence is unique and valuable, and so vulnerable. Let us be vessels of her divine light with the power to bring humanity together. May we see the beauty of our only home as she sees it from far above. May we be given a newfound sense of unity and responsibility to be stewards of the Earth-Mother.

And now for a moment of silent lunar meditation, to take in her energy that she gives, to revitalize and provide the potential to heal, to reorient us with the Earth-Mother beneath us, to seek divine inspiration for our creativity, and to focus the power to bring about that which needs to manifest.

### Concluding Prayer

**AD:** Tonight, O Moon, thou hast found us in peaceful, happy rest. May thy living luster leave us seven times still more blessed, O Moon, so fair, may it be so. As seasons come and seasons go, may the light of the moon be like that of the sun, and the light of the sun be seven times greater, like the light of seven days.

### The Benediction

**AD:** Now go forth now into the world, touched by the moon and cleansed with a tide of joy, yet humbled with the Awareness that the entirety of humanity depends upon our stewardship of the Earth-Mother. This begins with the simplest acts of altruistic beneficence. With that I bid peace to the Moon, peace to the Earth, and peace to all present. May you find Awareness within the dreamworld as you descend into slumber.



# Handfasting & Wedding Ritual Script (Oakdale Grove Modular Version)

## Preparatory Details

In this script there are a couple sticky-note sized voids in the text block. They are precisely for just that – sticky notes to indicate the preference of the couple getting joined. You can also use sticky notes to cover up modules they want to skip. Naturally it is important to review this script with the couple in advance of the rehearsal so they can choose what they want and don't want. This script is written without a Preceptor part.

### *Sticky note:*

- *Both individuals' current first & last names*
- *Use current **full** names in **Opening Words** segment*
- *Whose name is changing to what, if applicable?*

## Invocation I

**AD:** In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of Life. And we partake of it, we and all living beings. In the mighty helix we dance, And in harmony with all of Life, we sing: To those known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, Divine essences, creating, preserving and destroying... Be in our awareness, teach us Your joy, let us share Your sorrow, extend our limitations. Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely, at this place, now our temple under the sky. LET THIS CEREMONY BEGIN!

## Opening Words

Welcome everyone! We are gathered here to celebrate and witness the joining together of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ in marriage. There are many things to say about marriage. Much wisdom concerning the joining together of two people has come our way through all paths of belief, and from many cultures. With each union, more knowledge is gained and more wisdom gathered. Though we are unable to give all this knowledge to these two who stand before us, we can hope to leave them with the knowledge of love, its strengths and the anticipation of the wisdom that comes with time.

## Sermon I

Beyond simply recognizing their love for one another, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ have concluded that theirs is an enduring love, that they will thrive and grow best by committing themselves in a loving relationship to one another. It is an affirmation of the essential relationship that exists between them; the formation of their love and trust into a unified emergent entity. It is a commitment which necessitates daily attention to flourish and brings a life-long responsibility to strive for the ideal love and kindness.

## Elemental Blessings

We call upon the four directions to observe and sanctify this rite of union between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

### **East**

We invoke the spirit of the East, symbolized by the elements of the Air, the breath of life, wisdom, and awareness, to recognize and bless this union.

### **South**

We invoke the spirit of the South is symbolized by the elements of the Fire and of the Sun, brilliant, warming, and energizing, to recognize and bless this union.

### **West**

We invoke the spirit of the West is symbolized by the elements of the Waters, nurturing, refreshing, and essential, to recognize and bless this union.

### **North**

We invoke the spirit of the North is symbolized by the elements of the Earth, fruitful, fertile, and strong, to recognize and bless this union.

May this recognition make the harmony of this union be complete.

## Sermon II

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, each of you give yourself, your life and love, into the hands of each other. You do so openly and with well-earned trust. In return, each of you receives the gift of the love and commitment from friends and family who are joined here in confidence of this bond.

### Consecration and Exchange of Rings

Let us bless the rings. Circles represent eternity, and though our lives are finite, love is everlasting. Love is the creative force that binds us together, and is the force that gives new meaning to life.

May there be blessings of the **Wind** upon these rings and your love are that you share communication and creativity.

May there be blessings of **Fire** upon these rings and your love are that you share passion and the spirit of your love.

May there be blessings of **Water** upon these rings and your love are that you share love and compassion.

May there be blessings of **Earth** upon these rings and your love are that you share health and strength.

We are born of stardust and the deepest oceans, of erupting volcanoes and the bones of the Earth. In celebrating love you celebrate the heritage of all elements of nature, and the love of all humanity from the dawn of time. In making this commitment to each other, you share that which is the **best** in us and give a moment of light to the world.

### Vows I

**Sticky Note:** Ask the couple if they prepared individual vows. **If no, write SKIP on the note.** If they do have individual vows, have the couple recite them at this time. Also **put their names on this sticky note too, because the last thing you want to do is blank on their names at a time like this!**

- Put their names on the sticky note
- Are they **vows** or other statements or a speech?
- Are these **replacing** the regular vows, or in addition?
- Who goes first (here and in the regular vows)?
- If neither can decide who goes first, go with the first name which has the better ordering to it (i.e. Chris & Sam sounds better than Sam & Chris, so Chris would go first)

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ have prepared personalized vows on this special occasion. \_\_\_\_\_ would you please share your words with us?

[Individual vows]

\_\_\_\_\_ would you now please share your words with us?

[Individual vows]

### Vows II – Traditional (Two Options)

*Sticky Note: There are two options for the traditional vows, first is the **Repeat After Me** method where the officiant recites each individual line and the individual repeats it to the betrothed. The second option is the **Listen & Response** method where the officiant recites the whole set of vows and asks the individual to say “I do” to their betrothed. Also ask them if they want the “until death” line or the more modern “for as long as love shall endure.”*

- Always indicate first & last name on a sticky note
- Use their full names here
- Repeat After Me or Listen & Response method?
- Until Death line or for as long as love shall endure?
- Cover up the method you don’t want to use with the sticky note

### Repeat After Me Method

\_\_\_\_\_, please repeat after me:

I \_\_\_\_\_  
take you \_\_\_\_\_  
to be my \_\_\_\_\_ [spouse title]  
and I promise to love and sustain you  
in the bonds of marriage  
to have and to hold  
from this day forward  
for better or for worse  
for richer or poorer  
in sickness and in health  
to love and to cherish  
in joy and in sorrow

[use one]

- until death shall part us
- for as long as love shall endure

[repeat for other betrothed]



## Listen & Response Method

Do you \_\_\_\_\_ take \_\_\_\_\_ to be your \_\_\_\_\_ [*spouse title*], to promise to love and sustain in the bonds of marriage, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better or for worse, for richer or poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, in joy and in sorrow,

[*use one*]

- until death do you part?
- for as long as love shall endure?

If so, say *I do*.

[*repeat for other betrothed*]

## Exchange of Rings

\_\_\_\_\_ place the ring on \_\_\_\_\_'s hand and say,

*With this ring, I thee wed.*

\_\_\_\_\_ place the ring on \_\_\_\_\_'s hand and say,

*With this ring, I thee wed.*

## Handfasting

**Sticky Note:** *Is a handfasting part of this ceremony? If not, write SKIP on the note. If one right hand is bound to the other's left, they can both face the same direction. If the left hands are bound, or the right hands are bound, in Consecration III they may use the "Brüderschaft" gesture with the chalices. Brüderschaft is the intertwining of each other's arms while holding a cup, but drinking from your own simultaneously, followed by a kiss. If you only tie one left hand to one right hand, skip the Brüderschaft as you cannot intertwine arms.*

- *Names again!*
- *Which hands are tied together?*
- *Will there be Brüderschaft?*

This is a ribbon of handfasting. The bonds of love it represents are stronger and more enduring than any physical cord or ribbon. **Join hands please.** [*Ties*]

Let these two halves be whole! Recognize now the physical, spiritual, and emotional bonds between this couple. Let these ties be strong and everlasting.

## The Consecration I

In the Reformed Druid tradition, let us consecrate the Waters-of-Life.

The Earth-Mother gives us the Waters-of-Life so that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life. These Waters flow from the bosom of the Earth-Mother, the ever-changing All-Mother. We honor this gift by partaking of the Waters-of-Life. The Earth-Mother has given forth of her bounty, therefore we shall take up the Waters.

## The Consecration II

I call upon Dalon Ap Landu, lord of this and all sacred Groves, descend into these waters and hallow them with your highest blessings on this day. By your sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. O Earth-Mother, ascend into these waters and hallow them with the virtues of the running stream, cooling and rejuvenating, for on this day, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ begin a new journey together. May they come to know thy power as they take and drink of thy secret essences. **The Waters-of-Life!**

## The Consecration III

Now it is not as important that I consecrate these waters, as much as it is important that you consecrate the Waters unto each other. Please take and raise a chalice.

\_\_\_\_\_ touch your chalice to \_\_\_\_\_'s and repeat after me:

*Unto thee \_\_\_\_\_ do I consecrate these Waters with all of my love.*

\_\_\_\_\_ touch your chalice to \_\_\_\_\_'s and repeat after me:

*Unto thee \_\_\_\_\_ do I consecrate these Waters with all of my love.*

Now affirm these blessings and partake of the Waters-of-Life.

I now pronounce you \_\_\_\_\_  
[*choose one*]

- husband and wife!
- Married!
- Husbands! / Wives!

**You may kiss!**

## Jumping the Broom

## Other Sticky Notes This Column

*Sticky Note: Cover this module up if you want to skip it*

Our final task in this ceremony is an age-old tradition of leaping over a broom. Leaping the broom symbolizes the mutual responsibility of the keeping of a home, and affirms your willingness to make your home a warm, loving, and tidy place for one another. Now jump over the broom as you jump from one life into another.

### Blessings

*Sticky Note: Names again plus new last name if changing*

As these two hearts have combined and merged in this sacred union, made strong by love, may the light of their love become a beacon by which they may always find one another. With their vows sealed, this ceremony is hereby concluded.

**I now present to you the newlyweds \_\_\_\_\_ and**

\_\_\_\_\_

**And there was much rejoicing!**

# A Druidic Meal Blessing

There is (for the most part) no wrong way to bless a meal. There have been a handful of times that I was approached about the topic of blessing food in a Reformed Druid style. Since not all Reformed Druids have the same base-religion it was tricky to formulate something that could be used by almost any druid. Granted it would allow for either literal or metaphorical interpretation when the gods are mentioned by name, just like any other RDNA ritual. If you don't like mentioning the gods by name you can always omit them and just give thanks directly to the Earth-Mother, the Waters, and the Sunlight like a Land-Sea-Sky blessing.

An important function of a meal blessing is to remind us that food isn't just for satisfying our hunger. By the act of blessing our food, it is consecrated unto us as something special: yes, for our nourishment, but also to raise our spirits or imbuing it with other symbolism. At the very least we ought to extend our gratitude for the food, how it came to us, and who we may be sharing it with. If in the unfortunate event the food is underwhelming, by contrast its blessing is all the more potent.

In the *Roots of Gratitude Blessing*, we start by blessing the food itself, then branch out (pun intended) one sequential step back, blessing those who prepared the food for us. Then we take more steps back to retrace the entire journey of our sustenance, extending our gratitude for the once-living food, back to the Earth-Mother, back to the water and the sunlight that made life possible, and back to Be'al for our Awareness. Lastly, like the *Tree of Life* whose branches connect back to the roots, we bring the blessing full circle, extended to those with whom we are sharing the meal. This last step can be omitted for those who are solo and it still works just fine. Again, there's really no wrong way to bless your meal in a druidic fashion. Be creative but above all, be sincere.

## Roots of Gratitude Blessing

So that we may bless and consecrate this sustenance to our life force,

We give thanks to those who have prepared this meal for us.

We give thanks to those who have brought these provisions to our table.

We give thanks to the laborers who have worked hard, from fields to markets, and places between.

We give thanks to the plants and to the animals who have died so that we may live.

We give thanks to the Earth-Mother, the source of all nourishment.

We give thanks to Grannos, to Sirona, to Taranis, to Llyr and to Danu, whose waters flow with the essence that sustains life within, on, and above the Earth-Mother.

We give thanks to Belenos whose light and warmth allow life and water to exist upon the Earth-Mother.

We give thanks to Be'al, the source of our Awareness of these blessings.

And we give thanks to Braciaca and to present company for sharing this feast in joyful fellowship.

May the Lord of the Groves unite us in the roots of our gratitude.

So be it.



# All Good Things

A brief chant composed by Sam Adams in 26 Y.R. The song was transcribed from Alice Cascorbi's interview (it is mentioned in the Oral Histories on page 874). The tune itself was transcribed after finding the recording of the audio tape interview uploaded to the Carleton College Archive website. With a guitar tuner in hand, singing along and pausing at every note to write it down, the tune has been faithfully put to sheet music. The metering is approximate but adjusted to fit in 4:4 time. I'm very glad it's in the key of C which also keeps things musically simple.

$\text{♩} = 60$



All good things from you, mother, all good things from you, (2x)



Your's the dawn so new, mother, your's the sun-drawn dew, mother,



All good things from you, mother, all good things from you.

The image shows three staves of musical notation in 4/4 time, key of C. The first staff begins with a tempo marking of quarter note = 60. The lyrics are: 'All good things from you, mother, all good things from you, (2x)'. The second staff has lyrics: 'Your's the dawn so new, mother, your's the sun-drawn dew, mother,'. The third staff has lyrics: 'All good things from you, mother, all good things from you.' The notation includes treble clefs, 4/4 time signatures, and various note values (quarter, eighth, and dotted notes) with stems and beams.

# Sirona's Grace

A prayer to Sirona in a time of need, by John the Verbose, March 17, 2020 as the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic was ravaging the nation. A series of disclaimers:

- I am not a doctor
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Get plenty of sleep
- Listen to physicians; they've dedicated their lives to healing
- Don't rely on magic alone to protect you
- Get vaccinated
- Vaccinate your kids
- Trust the sciences
- Find some comfort in your spirituality

## Sirona's Grace

O Sirona, goddess of the waters,  
countess of stars, countless,  
by thy power of healing,  
with your restorative springs,  
welling up and pouring forth,  
flowing from deep within the Earth-Mother,  
lend to us your solace.

May you uplift the weary,  
reconstitute the unsteady,  
comfort the downtrodden,  
aid the afflicted,  
mend the injured,  
soothe the ill at ease,  
and assuage the stricken.

May we partake of thy healing Waters,  
blessed by the starlight above,  
as it sparkles upon the rippling surface.  
Lead us to the pools of rebirth,  
so that we too can cast off our woes,  
like the lithe serpent on your arm,  
who had cast off his skin.

Flood our spirits with your mercy,  
immerse our souls in your grace,  
cascade over our worries with your compassion,  
and overflow our cups with your tranquility.  
May we be ever grateful for the blessings,  
-whether adrift or in the rush of the rivers of life-  
that we had partaken at all... of the Elixir of Sirona.

# A Keltrian Tree Meditation

John the Verbose, June 8, 2018

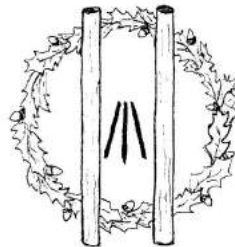
Get into a posture that is comfortable for you. Close your eyes and take a slow, deep breath. Exhale... now take a deeper breath, slower than the first. In through the nose if you can, and out through the mouth. Take another slow, deep breath, and exhale when you need to. You are about to take a stroll through the forest within us. So in your mind, let the walls and ceiling float away, and any distracting sounds are becoming distant and faint.

You are wandering in an old-growth forest late in the evening. The only trail you are following is the one in your heart; everything else around you is wild and enchanted. You are hiking uphill, and you see rays of golden sunlight peeking through the tree trunks on the higher ground. Countless unseen birds are in a chorus of evensong in the canopy above.

Ascending the hill, the sunlight meets your eyes and you come to a clearing in the woods. There is a single ancient oak tree at the center of the glade. This is where your heart has been leading you. As you cross the clearing, you see among the knotted and gnarled roots that the tree trunk is hollow at the base, and it's big enough to walk into. When you arrive at the opening in the tree, you brace a hand on the rough, deeply grooved bark.

Stepping into the trunk of the tree, roots spiral down into the cool, damp darkness like natural stairs as your heart leads you down into the earth. There is no light to see in the depths, but you are soothed by the mellow tannin scent of the roots and soil. You are at peace as you feel yourself being absorbed by the roots. It is a warm, red energy comforting and soothing from deep within the earth. Your essence moves up the height of the tree. You can feel the last vestiges of the setting sun as you flow out to a far-reaching branch, swaying gently in the breeze. It is a cool, blue, invigorating sky energy. Your essence fills into an acorn; and you let go of the tree and dive down to the earth, landing in soft, fertile soil, carrying the red and blue energies with you.

The red Earth-Mother and blue Sky-Father energies coalesce to form a perfect balance of white energy. You begin to grow from the acorn; your roots branch out for water while a sapling rises above to seek the light of tomorrow's sun. You feel the roots of the ancient oak mingling with your own, but something else happens. You feel the roots of others branching out, reaching to you from left and from right. The network of roots provides support, strength, and shared vitality for you to grow. Your heart has led you to this place, and you are not alone; you have all made this journey here. And like the dawning of a new day, you can now see your fellow companions.



# Accessing the Divine in the Otherworld

By John the Verbose, July 18, 2018

In your *typical* RDNA liturgy, we don't cast circles to create or designate sacred space. When we come together in Nature, we acknowledge that it is already sacred. We don't need to open mystical gates or part the mist between this world and some Otherworld. We're usually focusing on the Earth-Mother who is divine in her own right, and she's right here under our feet!

If we call upon other deities by a given name, oftentimes we're prefacing the statement with phrases like "...today we call upon you in the form of Belenos..." which is very soft-polytheistic and panentheistic. Whomever it is we are calling upon, it is usually a deity who is representative of one of the forces of Nature. Whether it's fertility, wind, rain, warmth, light, or something else, it's already here! There's no need to access the Otherworld to commune with Nature, but you can if you want to.

In the ADF Core Order of Ritual the Earth-Mother is honored near the beginning. Then they will call upon a liminal deity and make offerings to them in exchange for said deity to help by opening the gates between our world and the realm of the three Kindreds. Those are the ancestors, spirits, and shining ones (deities). The gatekeeper deities are able to hear us while the gates are shut simply because they already are in both worlds simultaneously, hence their liminality.

In the Henge of Keltria, they settled on just focusing on the Irish pantheon and mythological cycle, and have one go-to liminal deity to invoke: Manannan Mac Lir. He rode the sea in his coracle "Wave Sweeper" which could take him to the Otherworld or anywhere without the use of oars. In a Keltrian ritual he is invoked and asked to part the veil or the mists between our world and the Otherworld so that we may communicate with the ancestors, nature spirits, and deities.

If you were ever looking for an alternative option that didn't require some sort of intercessor deity, here is now an option, called *Calling Down the Path*. This was a segment written for Northern Roots Grove when they wanted to devise a modular ritual with different methods that can be used or left out so that each rite is somewhat unique in format. If they wanted to communicate to the Otherworld, they can choose to use the ADF method, the HoK method, and now this method. Or they can write any number of other modular methods and plug that into their ritual script.

This module does not call upon a liminal deity, but like our spiritual ancestors who left little traces of their rituals, this one also leaves no trace. It requires all attendees (or at least a few) to bring a stone to the ritual to create a stepping-stone path. A sunwise spiral of paving stones are set down in the center of the ritual circle while someone reads the first lines of the script.

Ideally the stones should all be laid before the last verse of the Calling is spoken, though there's no wrong way to do this.

At the end of the ceremony, the stones should still remain on the ground until after the verses of the Return are completed, giving the divine time to depart before the paving stones are taken back up. When the spiral path is deconstructed, do so widdershins. A recommendation would be that the stones are somewhere between the size and shape of a potato and a paperback book. This optimizes portability.

Northern Roots Grove members had a rock decorating party so that everyone can customize their own paving stone and they would be able to recognize their own when the path is deconstructed. As an alternative, whoever is presiding over the ritual or has a sturdy cart could also just bring a set number of paving stones to each ritual as "Grove property" and attendees or volunteers can help build and deconstruct the path. That way you don't have to worry about members forgetting their rocks at home. So many options!

## Calling Down the Path

We lay the stones of a sacred path,  
a winding road between the worlds,  
spiraling its way into our realm,  
a fragment of its course through space and time,  
sturdy for the footsteps of the ancestors,  
*it is you whom we call upon*  
showing the route for spirits of ancient lore,  
*it is you whom we call upon*  
an enchanted road worthy of the gods,  
*it is you whom we call upon*

*the stones are laid to guide the way  
connecting ancient lines of Ley  
venture up the path we pray  
and join us in our rite today*

## The Return

To the gods, spirits of old and to the ancestors  
we give our thanks and extend our gratitude  
for your sojourn to this grove today.  
It is time to journey wherever you must go,  
whether in this world or the one back down the path.  
For it is time we take up our stones,  
and return this trail to nature.

*Now as do we this rite adjourn  
To the Otherworld may ye return  
Down the path you will discern  
Your sky, your water, your earth and fern*



# ADF & RDNA Combined Ritual

March 24, 2018

**Dancing Waters Protogrove, ADF & Oakdale Grove, RDNA  
With Master of Ceremonies (MC) Announcements**

## Greeting

**MC:** Welcome to a special celebration of the Vernal Equinox in a unification of two druidic traditions. This will feature core elements of an ADF or Ár nDraíocht Féin ritual combined with a rite in the tradition of the RDNA or Reformed Druids of North America.

ADF is an organized neopagan religion founded in 1983 based on an amalgam of Indo-European polytheist Heath Cultures as interpreted by academic and archaeological sources. Despite the presumption that druidry is limited to Celtic cultures, ADF Heath Cultures also accommodate those who follow Norse/Germanic, Roman, Greek/Hellenic, Baltic, Slavic and other Indo-European pantheons.

The Reformed Druids of North America was founded in 1963 as a philosophical neo-druidic order with a universalist approach to spirituality, and is not rooted in any particular theological system. In the RDNA, Nature is personified as the Earth-Mother. Her and other deities that may be invoked can be interpreted in many ways in the RDNA, whether as literal deities, or as archetypes, or as symbolic aspects of Nature.

In this ceremony we will make many offerings and sacrifices. Participation is encouraged to the extent that you feel comfortable. If you wish to participate but do not have an offering, you are welcome to take something up from the altar. This demonstrates the ADF value of Reciprocity: We give – so that you may give. Above all, in both ADF and RDNA, blood sacrifices are not permitted.

We will begin with a brief centering meditation to help us ease into a ritual mindset. Breathe slowly and deeply as we guide you through the next few moments.

## Musical Signal – Carnyx

### Establishing the Group Mind

**Druid:** Let each of us now go to the sacred place: to the sanctum of Divinity, in the temple of the Earth-Mother, in each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of our spirit; evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, so that the secret essence may help us to understand these experiences as sources of wisdom and growth, with the spirit of truth and of light within us, like a spark of the sun, and a flame within the heart of every being.

Now do we declare our goals: To grow as human beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength; to promote in our

actions, a human and interdependent society; to heal and protect the biosphere of this planet; and to further the process of Evolution in ourselves, and in our groups, and throughout all time and space. Today we shall invoke many beings. May they acknowledge our heartfelt efforts and bestow us with their divine blessings.

## Purification

**MC:** In procession we will now enter the ritual site under a trilithon or an arch of staves. As we pass through the liminal space, it is an act of purification. This is accompanied by ribbons soaked in silvered water that will sweep over us as we enter.

**Druid:** By the light of the fire and the might of the water, may you be whole and holy. [repeat for each attendee]

## Offerings

**MC:** We will now begin making offerings and sacrifices to the many beings that will be invoked today. When someone calls to the beings to accept an offering, it is customary to reply with the same phrase in unison.

## Acknowledging the Outdwellers

**Volunteer:** Outdwellers! You who have no interest in our rite, you beings of disruption and chaos, those who would harbor animosity, speak malediction, or cause harm, do not encroach on our ceremony. In exchange for peace we consign a libation unto thee.

Outdwellers, accept our offering! [bay leaves]

## Honoring the Earth Mother

[*Hiraban Zekra of Dancing Waters Protogrove worked with members of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwa to develop a simple blessing that is respectful of the local spirits.*]

**Volunteer:** We now honor the spirit of the land as the Great Earth-Mother in a dual prayer in Ojibwa tongue:

Nimi'idawag Digowag Nibi,  
Nimaamaa Akiwan Dakonan Nibi,  
Mitgokaa Minikwe Nibi,  
Zhawenim Giinawind Minobima adizi o'ogizhig.

They dance the waves of water,  
My mother be the Earth holds the water,  
There are many trees that drink the water,  
Bless us all to live a good life this day.

Earth Mother accept our offering! [wild rice]

## Statement of Purpose

**Druid:** Today we come together to celebrate the Vernal Equinox: the length of day and night have become the same. The dark wintry half of the year is ebbing and we are flowing into the season of life! Today we also celebrate the unity of a shared ritual between Dancing Waters Protogrove of Ár nDraíocht Féin and Oakdale Grove of the Reformed Druids of North America. Our gatekeeper today will be Taranis, the Gaulish god of thunder who wields the power that can be present in Land, Sky, and Sea all at once. On this occasion we also honor Trebaruna, the Lusitanian goddess of alliances. After

partaking of the blessing today, our magical workings will be a second ritual of the Reformed Druid tradition. That will also be the time for individual offerings and sacrifices if you wish to do so.

## Re-Creating the Cosmos

**MC:** Now we recreate the Triple Hallows of the cosmos by consecrating a sacred well, fire, and tree. The triune of these sacred ritual components allows us to create the Sacred Center through which we can open the gates to the realm of the Kindreds.

### Sacred Well

**Volunteer:** Waters of the well! Ancient passage to the underworld, for the waters of healing and rebirth you give us, on this occasion we hallow you in the time-honored tradition of Silvering the Well.

Sacred Well, flow within us! [silver]

### Sacred Fire

**Volunteer:** Great fire! With the power to transmute our sacrifices into prayers, you who captivated our curiosity for countless generations with your warmth and light, by your power to destroy, cleanse, renew, and transform, we hallow you.

Sacred Fire, burn within us! [whiskey]

### Sacred Tree

**Volunteer:** World tree! With your tangled roots spreading beneath us and your majestic boughs stretching over us, we are reminded of your might. You are in the three realms all at once, above, below, and standing with us. We hallow you now as we have since ancient times.

Sacred Tree, grow within us! [mistletoe]

### Sacred Center

**Druid:** The Triple Hallows are now juxtaposed with the Three Realms of Sea, Land, and Sky. May the Sea not rise above us. May the Land not crumble beneath us. May the Sky not fall upon us. This is the place where the worlds now meet; we have reached the Sacred Center. Now we can open the gates between the worlds.

## Opening the Gates

**Druid:** The weather this time of year can be wild and unpredictable. So today we call upon Taranis to be our Gatekeeper! Taranis, the thunderer, you who wields the power which can be felt and heard in all three realms at once, help us to open the gates to the realm of the Three Kindreds, though please not with a bridge of lightning.

Taranis, accept our offering! [nutmeg]

We will now open the gates between the worlds, today with the thumping of staves. Take up a staff, as we stomp them to the ground in unison, after a while increasing to a thundering cacophony, then ending in unison. [Stomp away!]

Let the Gates be open!

**ALL:** Let the Gates be open! [STOMP!]

## Inviting the Three Kindreds

**MC:** We now invoke the Three Kindreds to join us. The Kindreds are the Ancestors, the Nature Spirits, and the deities of old: the Shining Ones. Thereafter we will honor the deity of today's occasion.

### Ancestors

**Volunteer:** We call upon the Ancestors: those who have gone before us, those we have known, and those we have not known, we call upon you who might see familiarity of our ways, ancestors who revered ancestors. You who have contemplated bright possibilities for your future generations, you who have given us unconditional love, you who we still hope to learn from, be with us today, allow us to honor you in these forms.

Ancestors accept our offering! [ale]

### Nature Spirits

**Volunteer:** We call upon the Nature Spirits: those who move among us though hidden from view, helpers and tricksters, magical beings and cunning critters, animal spirits and beings of ancient lore, you who bind the worlds together in your timeless spiraling web, be with us today as we honor you in these forms.

Nature Spirits, accept our offering! [seeds]

### Shining Ones

**Volunteer:** We call upon the Shining Ones: the goddesses and gods that our ancestors called upon. We call upon the Shining Ones known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, deities of creating, of preserving, and of destroying, be in our Awareness, teach us Your joy, let us share Your sorrow, extend our limitations. Be with us today as we honor you in these forms.

Shining Ones, accept our offering! [oil]

### Deity of the Occasion – Trebaruna

**Druid:** We have called upon the Shining Ones, and among them stands Trebaruna, the Lusitanian goddess of the home, of villages, and most importantly today, goddess of alliances! Trebaruna is the protectress of the people, ancestors toasted to each other in camaraderie where she kept watch. Trebaruna brought together people of different tribes, of those who sought cooperation, coexistence, and a common bond. Trebaruna, join us today as we celebrate the unity of two forms of druidic practice.

Trebaruna, accept our offering! [ale]

## The Grand Sacrifice

**MC:** We will now make a great sacrifice dedicated to all whom we have given offerings. This is followed by the seeking of an Omen to determine if our sacrifices have been accepted, and a blessing we might receive.

**Druid:** I call upon the Earth-Mother. I call upon Taranis the Gatekeeper, I call upon the Triple Hallows of the Sacred Well, the Sacred Fire, and Sacred Tree. I call upon the



Triple Worlds of the Sea, of the Land, and of the Sky. I call upon the Triple Kindreds of the Ancestors, of the Nature Spirits, and Shining Ones. I call upon Trebaruna, the goddess of the Occasion. We have called upon you and have faith that you have heard us. Behold as we offer up once more of ourselves.

Sacred Ones, accept our sacrifice! [one lavender bouquet]

## The Omen

**MC:** Seer, do your thang!

**Seer:** [If the omen is good] The omen is good! [Or if the omen is bad] The sacrifice has not been accepted.

## The Blessing

**Volunteer:** We are grateful that our sacrifice has been accepted! We give an offering in hopes that we may receive your blessing on this day.

Sacred Ones, hear our prayer. [oats]

**Seer:** Today we receive the blessing of \_\_\_\_\_.

**MC:** At this time, does anyone require an alternative to alcohol, or wish to use your own chalice? If you do not wish to partake but want to honor the blessing, you may also raise the chalice then pass it back.

## Hallowing of the Blessing

**Druid:** By the might of the waters, and the light of the fire, may this blessing be whole and holy. I hallow the contents of this vessel with the blessing of \_\_\_\_\_.

## Affirmation of the Blessing

**Druid:** [To each attendee individually] Do you accept the blessing of \_\_\_\_\_?

**Each attendee [Individually]:** I accept the blessing.

## Magical Workings

**MC:** The next segment is dedicated to magical workings. On this occasion, we are celebrating the Vernal Equinox with a ritual within a ritual. We will experience a rite in the tradition of the Reformed Druids of North America. Like in ADF, in this segment there will be a time for giving our individual offerings to those whom we honor, and time to share bardic offerings or meditations.

# RDNA RITUAL

## Invocation I

**AD:** In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of Life.

**PR:** And we partake of it, we and all living beings.

**AD:** In the mighty helix we dance,

**PR:** And in harmony with all of Life, we sing:

**AD:** To those known and unknown, remembered and forgotten,  
Divine essences, creating, preserving and destroying,

**PR:** Be in our awareness, teach us Your joy, let us share Your sorrow, extend our limitations.

**AD:** Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely, at this place, our temple under the sky.

## Invocation II

**AD:** O Be'al, overlook these three shortcomings that are due to our human limitations. Thou art everywhere, but we worship you here. Thou art without form, but we worship you in these forms. Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices. O Be'al, overlook these three shortcomings that are due to our human limitations. O Earth-Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

## Centering

**AD:** Why do you gather under the oaks?

**PR:** It is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.

**AD:** What brings you here to this temple under the sky?

**PR:** We seek this sacred space to celebrate and honor the Earth-Mother, for the Vernal Equinox is at hand. We do not know what to offer the Earth-Mother, So we offer our prayers and sacrifices. Each of us in our own way, Each of us with our own prayers, Each of us with our own sacrifices.

## Declaration of Goals

**AD:** Now let each of us, within our own hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our lives, and make our individual dedications to those Whom we revere, or worship, or honor.

## Offering and Praise

**AD:** We are together, yet we often feel separate, perhaps alone. Thus we make our offerings and our praises. We pour our energy into our offerings, and soon we may each cast them to the sacred fire, the ancient gateway to other realms.

Every sacrifice is a solemn act of catharsis. We sacrifice a part of the Earth-Mother to remind us how truly we value her. For through the pain of the taking of a life may we deepen our respect and our empathy. And verily, it is indeed an offering up unto the beauty of the Earth-Mother.

## Chant of Praise I

**AD:** Though not all offerings are physical. Has anyone prepared a bardic offering for the Divine?

## Chant of Praise II – Vernal Equinox Chant

And the God of the Sun did arise from His tomb in the South;  
and once more did He fare forth to His children in the Northern lands.  
O Belenos, O Thou unchanging God of many names, but one Face,

We, Thy children, welcome Thee back to our lands.  
 O Lord of Light, we welcome Thee.  
 O Belenos, O Lord of Light, long have we awaited Thy return,  
 that the coldness of the Night might be taken from our lands.  
 O God of Sun, We welcome Thee.  
 The nights were long, the trees had shed,  
 The night had conquered day.  
 The days were short, and life had fled.  
 The night had conquered day.  
 The winds were cold, the land seemed dead,  
 The night had conquered day.  
 But the Sun returns from the Southern lands.  
 Balanced now are we.  
 Plants spring up on every hand,  
 Balanced now are we.  
 "Let Life return!" is the Sun's command.  
 Balanced now are we.  
 The Sun grows stronger every day.  
 The day will conquer night.  
 The world grows lush and Life holds sway,  
 The day will conquer night.  
 So let us praise Him in all ways.  
 The day will conquer night.  
 O Belenos, O Sun, we praise Thee at Thy return to our midst.  
 Welcome art Thou among us.  
 Bless us with thy presence, O Lord of Light.  
 O Belenos, O Lord of Light, bless us with Thy warmth and  
 might,  
 that we may rejoice in Thy sight.  
 Bless us and light our way, O God of the Sun.

### The Supplication

**AD:** O Earth-Mother, O Mighty Ones, We have called upon  
 You and You have heard us. We have offered of ourselves  
 and have faith that You have accepted. Yet each of us has  
 needs for guidance and for aid, without which we cannot  
 fulfill Thy ways. Hear now Thy children, and help us, as  
 ever You have done. Now let each of us, within our hearts,  
 declare silently our needs we wish fulfilled, in order to  
 accomplish our goals.

[15 second pause]

And we declare, that as this Grove: We need Your strength and  
 wisdom, Your healing and joy, so that we may accomplish  
 our goals, and fulfill our dedications. Bless this Grove and  
 all present, and bring us all that we may need, materially  
 and spiritually, so that we may grow ever stronger, in  
 Awareness, in faith, wisdom, sincerity, health, and joy.

### The Sacrifice III

**AD:** Hail to the gathered ones! For now is the time to offer up  
 your sacrifices to the Earth-Mother.

[sacrifices are offered to the fire/altar]

Come ye winds and ye kindred spirits of the wood, from earth  
 and from sky, from greening tree and running stream;  
 speak to us of the coming of spring, of rain on the hill and  
 sun on the field, of the promise of ripening summer, of the  
 quickening of life and quickening of spirit that springeth  
 from the heart of all things and raiseth all unto life!  
 [second lavender bouquet]

## The Answers

**MC:** The Arch-Druid must now seek an omen through  
 aeromancy or augury to determine if the offerings and  
 sacrifices have been accepted.

**AD:** Our praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles, our  
 voices have been carried on the shoulders of the winds.  
 Hear us, we pray, for we have offered up our sacrifices of  
 life, imbued with the spirit of our praise, prayers, and  
 desires. Accept them, we pray, and cleanse our hearts and  
 minds, granting us Thy peace, thy blessings, and life.

Hast thou accepted our sacrifices, O Earth-Mother?

I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the East...  
 of the South... and of the West...

Praise be! our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of  
 life has been accepted!

### The Consecration of the Waters

**AD:** Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the  
 continual flow and renewal of life?

**PR:** The Waters-of-Life.

**AD:** From whence do these waters flow?

**PR:** From the bosom of the Earth-Mother, the ever-changing all-  
 mother.

**AD:** And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

**PR:** By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.

**AD:** Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

**PR:** She has, for this is a special occasion! Behold the chalice  
 brimming!

**AD:** Then give me the Waters!

O Dalon Ap Landu, master of this and of all groves, descend  
 into these Waters and hallow them, by thy sevenfold  
 powers, and by the three ways of day and the one of night.  
 Give us to know thy power, and Join us together as we  
 partake of thy secret essences... The Waters-of-Life!

### The Libation

**AD:** To thee O Earth-Mother, we return this portion of thy  
 bounty, even as we too must one day return to thee.

### The Meditation

**MC:** Before the conclusion of the Reformed Druid portion of  
 the ceremony, participants have the opportunity to share a  
 meditative piece with the group. This is followed by a  
 moment of silent meditation, with slow and deep  
 breathing.

**AD:** Has anyone brought or prepared a meditation to share with  
 the group?

And now for a minute of silent meditation, reflecting on the events of the day, taking in the sights, sounds, and sensations in the moment, kindling your curiosity within.

**AD:** Now do we return to the course of the ADF ritual.

## RETURN TO ADF CORE ORDER OF RITUAL

### Thanking the Kindreds in Reverse

**MC:** As we return to the remainder of the ADF ritual, we commence by thanking the Kindreds in Reverse, offering a final libation to each.

#### Deity of the Occasion

**Druid:** Trebaruna! We give our thanks to thee for aiding us in coming together as a community today. Though we must depart soon, may we come together in solidarity again in the future.

Trebaruna, we thank you! [ale]

#### Shining Ones

**Volunteer:** Shining Ones, we give thanks for standing among us mortals today. May your light shine within us and serve as sacred inspiration. May we stand with you again in the future.

Shining Ones, we thank you! [oil]

#### Nature Spirits

**Volunteer:** Nature Spirits, we give thanks to you for gracing us with your presence today. When our paths might cross again, may we perceive you right there with us.

Nature Spirits, we thank you! [seeds]

#### Ancestors

**Volunteer:** Ancestors, we are grateful for your companionship today. May we keep your memory alive in our hearts until next we meet again.

Ancestors, we thank you! [ale]

#### Gatekeeper

**Druid:** Taranis, you who moves so effortlessly between the realms with light and sound and fury, we are grateful for your presence as Gatekeeper today,

Taranis, we thank you! [nutmeg]

Though we ask one last favor of you, that now you would help us to close the gates between the worlds.

### Closing the Gates

**Druid:** We will now close the gates between the worlds, again with the thumping of staves. Take up a staff, as we stomp them to the ground rapidly in chaotic thundering cacophony, then slowing down, eventually stomping in unison. Let us close the gates. [Stomp away!]

Let the Gates be closed!

**ALL:** Let the Gates be closed! [STOMP!]

### Returning to the Mundane

**MC:** We will now return the Triple Realms and Triple Hallows to their mundane states, followed by giving thanks to the Earth-Mother.

#### Triple Realms

**Druid:** As we go forth into the world today, may the Sky not fall upon us. May the Land not crumble beneath us. May the Sea not rise above us.

Land, Sky, and Sea: blessed are these three.

#### Triple Hallows

**Volunteer:** May the Sacred **Tree** now be merely a walking stick.

May the Sacred **Fire** now be merely a flaming canoe.

May the Sacred **Well** now be merely a bowl of water.

Fire, Well, and Sacred Tree: Flow and Flame and Grow in me.

#### Earth-Mother

**Volunteer:** O Great Earth-Mother, sustainer of life without whom nothing that lives would live, we are grateful for your many gifts, for the bountiful harvests that you bestow upon us, for your places of natural beauty, may we not take these gifts for granted.

Earth-Mother, we thank you. [wild rice]

### Closing the Rite

**Druid:** Now do we go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our offerings and sacrifices have been accepted, and that we have received a very hallowed blessing today. This rite has ended! Peace... peace... peace!



# An RDNA Style

## Solo Druid Ritual

**A Simple Rite For Those Who are Solo Either by Choice or by Circumstance. Note: This rite would be best suited for practicing Third Order Priests in advance of founding a Grove. Consecrating the Waters-of-Life in this manner, particularly if you opt to invoke Dalon Ap Landu, technically requires that you are properly ordained to the Third Order.**

### Overview

*The following script is based on the outline and structure of rituals in the style of the Reformed Druids of North America. Since no two druids have quite the same practices, feel free to improvise, embellish, or change as needed. As a druid, I highly recommend performing rituals outside unless it's unsafe. The Earth-Mother, which is all of Nature, is central to this ritual. You may also wish to invoke ancestors, specific deities, or other beings. In this script I will use a placeholder phrase of "Sacred Ones" which you can either use as-is, or replace it with whomever you wish to contact. Any ritual segments in [brackets] and italics are instructions.*

### Ritual Accoutrements

*I would recommend designating a ritual satchel that can hold: a drinking vessel of your choice (henceforth referred to as a chalice), a sacramental beverage of your choice, some form of **plant** life that can be given as an offering or sacrifice, and perhaps a small hard surface to set the chalice on if the ground might not be level or stable. If you are able to make a fire, bring some herbs to consecrate the fire with once it's lit. Herbs endemic to your area and bountiful are more eco-friendly.*

## Opening Invocation

O *[Sacred Ones]*, I call upon you in hope that you might grant these threefold supplications: that you might enter and hallow this place, for I honor and venerate you here; and that you might hallow this moment in time, for I honor and venerate you now; and that you might anoint me with your blessings, filling me with Awareness and awe, the likes of which I might gain when I behold the vastness of the Earth-Mother from a mountain top. O *[Sacred Ones]*, please grant these threefold supplications which are the desires of the human spirit. O Earth-Mother, cleanse my heart and mind as I prepare for meditations.

### Processional

*[Circumambulate your ritual site to outline your sacred space while reciting a poem, prayer, chant, or song. The following recommendation is "Hymn to the Earth-Mother" by Kathie Courtice, music by Peter Basquin, 1963]*

O Earth-Mother,

We praise thee that seed springeth,

that flower openeth, that grass waveth.

We praise thee for winds that whisper,

through the graceful elm,

through the shapely maple,

through the lively pine,

through the shining birch,

through the mighty oak.

We praise thee for all things, O Earth-Mother, who givest life!

O- Earth-Moth-er! We praise Thee that seed springeth, that flower  
 openeth, that grass waveth. We praise Thee for winds that whisper thru  
 the graceful elm, thru the shapely maple, thru the live-ly pine,  
 thru the shin-ing birch, thru the mighty oak. We praise Thee for  
 all things, O- Earth-Mother, Who givest Life.

## Sacrifice of Life

### Tree Meditation

*[In case you still need to get into a ritual mindset, tree meditations can be helpful, however, a script might not be helpful. In a nutshell, you can Basically meditate on the life cycle of a tree: seed, sprout, roots, water below, earth all around, sky and sun above, grounding, centering, flowing life energy, strength, stability, growth, peace. When in doubt, wing it, improvise, or skip it if you feel you don't need it.]*

### Bardic Offering

*[You may wish to insert a bardic offering to the Sacred Ones. This is all you. Do you have a musical instrument? Do you know a song, poem, or prose of praise? Or perhaps do you have a crafted item or votive offering? Be creative!]*

My praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles, my voice have been carried on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, O *[Sacred Ones or Earth-Mother]* I pray thee, as I offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, I pray thee, and cleanse my spirit, granting peace and life unto me.

*[Plant sacrifice is placed in fire, on altar, or on ground.]*

### The Divination

*[Augury or aeromancy are typical methods of determining whether or not a sacrifice is accepted. In the Reformed Druids of North America, the spirits of the cardinal directions are sought, starting with north. There is generally no wrong way to do this. As with any segment, switch it up if you like, or perform your favorite method of divination.]*

Have you accepted my sacrifice, O *[Sacred Ones or Earth-Mother]*?

I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer,

I call upon the Spirit of the East to give answer,

I call upon the Spirit of the South to give answer,

and I call upon the Spirit of the West to give answer.

## The Answer

*[Good omens are the best. If you get a bad omen, you may make additional sacrifices as needed. If you keep getting bad omens and the sacrifice is not accepted, you might just want to wrap things up, ask the Sacred Ones for guidance in the days ahead]*

Praise be, my sacrifice dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of the mind and heart, has been accepted!

The Earth-Mother gives us the Waters-of-Life so that I may know the continual flow and renewal of life. These Waters flow from the bosom of the Earth-Mother, the ever-changing All-Mother. I honor this gift by partaking of the Waters-of-Life. The Earth-Mother has given forth of her bounty, therefore I take up the Waters.

## The Consecration

O *[Sacred Ones]*, *[Take and raise your chalice]* descend into these waters and hallow them with your virtues of *[you better know at least one aspect of them]*. O Earth-Mother, ascend into these waters and hallow them with the virtues of the running stream, cooling and rejuvenating. Might I come to know thy power as I take and drink of thy secret essences.

The Waters-of-Life! *[Drink some, but not all.]*

## The Libation

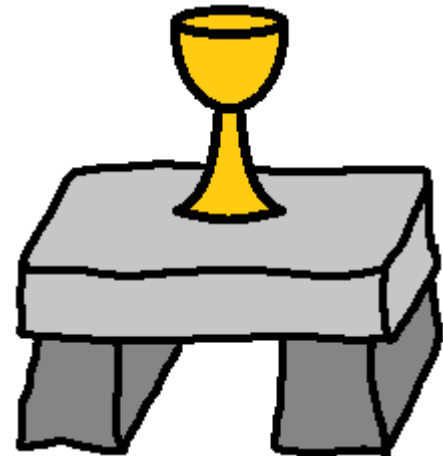
To thee, O Earth-Mother, I return this portion of thy bounty, even as I too must one day return to thee. *[Pour the remaining contents of the chalice into the fire or ground]*

## Final Meditation

*[The final segment is a silent meditation which should last for at least a minute, reflecting on all that has happened, taking in the sights and sounds of nature, kindling your curiosity within, with slow, deep breathing.]*

## The Benediction

Now do I go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that my sacrifice has been accepted, and that I have received peace and blessings of life from *[Sacred Ones]* and the Earth-Mother.



# Meditation Techniques

From Oakdale Grove's Druid Training Program

## What is Meditation?

Meditation is one of the core practices associated with Reformed Druidry. It is the act and art of willfully altering your state of mind to focus on something. It is quiet reflection of a personal nature. There are so many different forms of meditation that even if you are unfamiliar with the concept, you may have technically meditated before. A lot of people unfamiliar with meditation believe it would require them to clear their mind. Rather, that's a form of meditation that even experienced Buddhist monks have difficulty achieving. Some people like to say it's *impossible* to clear your mind. I'm not so sure it's absolutely *impossible*, but still extremely difficult. In the RDNA we don't really want to achieve a clear mind anyway, so **don't worry about trying to clear your mind** because we won't ask you to.

## The Essentials of Reformed Druidry

You don't necessarily *need* rituals. You don't *need* ranks or fancy titles. You don't *need* robes, vestments, altars, or golden sickles. However, meditation *is* important. It has so many positive benefits for the mind, body, and spirit... and like we said, it is an essential part of Reformed Druidism. Benefits of meditation include reduced stress and anxiety, lower blood pressure and heart rate, improved cognitive function, and serves to punctuate a hectic life with moments of peace, thereby lightening the spirit.

## The Importance of Breath

A key component of most forms of meditation is *breathing*. Mindfulness Meditation instructors place emphasis on taking

deep breaths: in through the nose and out through the mouth, all the while matching the instructor's own cadence. Inhale slowly and deeply, hold that breath for just a moment, exhale slowly, then pause before inhaling again. To be honest, this technique quickly became a chore for me because I don't have the same lung capacity as the instructor. The distracting matter arose of needing to breathe more frequently and not holding my breath that long. Matching my breathing with the instructor's felt too unnatural to me. I later found out that **matching their cadence doesn't matter**. With practicing on my own and just taking deep breaths at my own comfortable pace, I could easily reach that *Alpha state* (more on Alpha in a moment).

Just breathe with patterns that fit your lung capacity. If you're experiencing allergies, have a stuffy or runny nose, that may be a mild hinderance. Try tilting the head back and breathing solely through the mouth. Tilting your head downward or leaning forward would likely increase postnasal drip. Here are some additional helpful yogic breathing tips from the book Discover Inner Peace:

Imagine that you are inhaling truth, insight, and pure spiritual energy, and exhaling illusion, egotism, and the negative energy of emotions.... Deep, regular breathing is a tried-and-tested way to generate mental calm. (George, 2000. p. 104, 105)

## Altered State of Mind – Naturally

So **what is this Alpha state** we just mentioned? When you reach an ultra-relaxed sensation of calmness and peace, your brain starts producing alpha wave electrical patterns across your synapses. Once those brain waves are synchronized and uniform, that is when you are in an Alpha state. Another keyword here is *practice*; don't expect to be able to achieve an Alpha state all at once. You might notice this shift when the busy mind begins to declutter. Don't get too excited when you reach that moment because the sudden excitement of attaining that state could snap you back out of the meditative mindset altogether. If that happens, just keep practicing. The more you

meditate, the easier it will become to return to the Alpha state, sometimes in mere seconds.

With practice or luck you may even enter a *Theta state* of much deeper meditation. The Theta state is shared with the dreaming stage of sleep, but can be reached while awake and meditating. You will have the sensation of being somewhere between asleep and awake. In my own experiences I managed to maintain awareness and lucidity while in a Theta state. This is the perfect state of mind for *Shadow Work*; or addressing things embedded and often ignored in your subconscious. Theta states are the place to be for benefiting from self improvement, connecting with your deeper self, and acknowledging thoughts or feelings you've previously pushed out of the way.

## Don't Do Drugs

Most importantly, meditate *clean*. Avoid recreational or ceremonial substances, as they are needless crutches. You should practice meditation sober in every way, and train yourself to achieve the altered state of mind by your own power. *You don't need* alcohol, nicotine, caffeine, marijuana, peyote, datura, salvia, shrooms, ayahuasca, aconite, or anything else in order to meditate. Take nothing stronger than a typical cup of tea.

In fact caffeine (being a common drug worth mentioning) has been found to be detrimental to meditation. It doesn't stop you from meditating; I've had plenty of caffeinated sessions, but it's just easier on the brain if you're substance-free – and I've felt the difference. When you have a caffeinated beverage, it can take up to six hours for just *half* of the caffeine to break down. After another 6 hours you will still have roughly a quarter of that still remaining in your system. Depending on how much caffeine affects you, you may just want to have meditations before the coffee, or much later after you've finished it. Then again, perhaps you might enjoy the added challenge of caffeinated mediation?

## Full Disclosure on the Alcohol Tidbit

To be absolutely clear, I want to talk about the use of alcohol in RDNA rituals during the summer half of the year. Alcohol consumption and meditation do happen in the same rituals, however that does not imply that it is by any means a required aspect of the meditation. We don't force attendees to drink the sacramental whiskey (AKA the Waters-of-Life). That's entirely up to the individual attendee. Also, entering the numerical orders (First, Second, Third Orders, and above) *does* involve partaking of the sacramental whiskey, however it is the Grove Arch-Druid's responsibility to have an alcohol alternative available at every ritual. The Second Order rite of passage has the candidate drink a chalice of undiluted whiskey (perhaps about 100 mL). For rites of passage, if the candidate requires an alternative to alcohol, the candidate and Arch-Druid will reach a reasonable compromise.

If you're ever interested in entering the priesthood of the Reformed Druids of North America, the prerequisite All-Night Vigil is a supervised ordeal of meditation and fasting. It would be highly beneficial to start practicing different forms of meditation now. It's gonna be a long night, and you just never know what you'll learn while meditating on your Vigil.

## RDNA Style Meditation

If you attend a ritual in the mode of the Reformed Druids of North America, you might hear a scripted line "O Earth-Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation." And much of what comes next is more or less a guided meditation. The script spoken by whomever is presiding guides the attendees into a ritual mindset, focusing together on the purpose of the day. At Oakdale Grove's ceremonies, if there are guests or visitors who might be wholly unfamiliar with RDNA style rituals, at the opening welcome, the designated bard will make a statement like "The opening invocations and centering



help us ease into a ritual and meditative mindset. Breathe slowly and deeply as we guide you through the next few moments.”

Before the close of a typical RDNA ritual, there’s a final segment of silent, open meditation. It is usually prompted by the penultimate announcement: “And now for a moment of silent meditation, reflecting on all that has happened here today, taking in the sights and sounds of nature, with slow and deep breathing, kindling your curiosity within.” In my rituals led by Reformed Druid elders, the final silent meditations never went much longer than one minute. Mine might last between 30-45 seconds, but it really seems just about right, however short. Feel the wind on your face, hear it in the whispering trees, enjoy the songs of birds or the murmur of water if it’s nearby. Anecdotally I’ve heard some other Grove’s rituals that were mostly meditations, or had 10 minute segments of it. It really comes down to determining what your fellowship wants.

## Zen & Mindfulness

Meditation in the Reformed Druid movement is partially based on the style of Zen Meditation and a blend of similar styles. Zen and Mindfulness Meditation have a lot in common, both stressing an awareness or focus on breathing, observation of your thoughts and sensations. In Zen meditation you are encouraged to dismiss stray thoughts (which takes practice) whereas Mindfulness meditation encourages you to observe your stray thoughts with a passing curiosity, somewhat like watching traffic go by. To further the analogy just let those thoughts drive on by. Don’t try to stop them or ask where they’re going or why they’re on that road. There are a few more minor differences between Zen and Mindfulness Meditation, and it wouldn’t hurt to look into external resources on the topics.

## Pro Tip: Clean Up

Even if we’re meditating with our eyes closed, we might be hyperaware of our space being in a state of disarray. If you may be inclined to get stressed over clutter, then take a few minutes to at least partially straighten things up. Just be careful not to exert yourself too much, because reaching a meditative state might take longer if you get your heart rate going while power-cleaning. Granted, it’s equally possible to meditate while exercising if your body is moving rhythmically and you’re breathing deeply, but I digress. Just don’t get upset while having to clean up. Never get angry or stressed about meditation or it will neutralize the benefits

## Pro Tip: Minimize Distractions

Our life of modern conveniences is so full of distractions: sounds, lights, white noise, anything that fills the emptiness. The world is growing loud. Take a moment to notice what you’re hearing right now. Is it perfect silence? Is something whirring? Music playing? Are you wearing Air Pods? Dear gods, are you streaming videos or watching TV while scrolling through this workbook? Like drugs, music is also a crutch, but music can help with the mindset (and it’s not a harmful substance) so that’s a win.

Music as a meditation aid is still thoroughly enjoyable. Just try not to use music every time. If you do like meditation music so much or feel that you need it, designate separate times for both silent and music-aided meditation. You should still continue to practice meditating in silence, and on other occasions music can be added as a treat. Perhaps you live in the city and have noisy neighbors, traffic, sirens, and construction sounds. Maybe you live on a farm with machines and noisy animals. Maybe you’ve got crickets and cicadas or screaming kids. The key component of silent meditation (or any kind, really) is to *minimize* your distractions.

You can use meditative music to cover up background noise if you really need to. Other ways to optimize your setting is to have a dimly lit space. Sure, you can meditate in full sunlight, or in a basement closet at night. Generally speaking, it is beneficial for your space to be not too bright, and not too dark.

## **Pro Tip: Get Comfy**

Wear clothing that is comfortable and not tight or restrictive. If you have a billowing druid robe and lightweight pajama pants, try wearing those to meditate. Whatever you do, strive for total comfort. If you like yoga pants, wear them. For most meditations, you can sit on the floor, on a cushion, chair, couch, or bed. Don't lay down, because that would just invite you to fall asleep. In RDNA rituals, standing is the standard posture, generally with legs shoulder-width apart for stability. A staff might help steady you while standing. For mindfulness meditation it's best to sit forward on the edge of a cushioned chair with the palms of your hands resting down on your knees with your legs straight and your feet flat on the floor.

## **Pro Tip: Counting Down From 10**

Aside from practicing slow deep breathing, there is the *countdown* visualization. It can be tricky to meditate or reach an Alpha State by breathing technique alone. One of the common analogies I've been told is to imagine a 10-story escalator ride down, and each level down is less busy. It is a guide to descend into your subconscious mind. Technically speaking we'll start our descent from the 11<sup>th</sup> floor of our mind. Take that first slow inhale breath as you begin to descend to the 10<sup>th</sup> floor. Halfway between the eleventh and tenth floors, exhale while slowly saying "ten" in your mind, letting it take up the entire exhalation until you pass the edge of the floor. Then inhale slowly as you descend to the ninth floor, exhaling when halfway down while slowly saying "nine" in your mind until you pass the edge of that floor.

Follow the pattern of one inhale and exhale between each floor. Count down even to zero if it helps you reach that "basement" level: the depths of your subconscious. If you want the escalator to keep going, or if you lose count, it's okay to start over from 10 again until you feel that shift into deep relaxation of the Alpha state. If you've ever entered the London Underground at Westminster Station or Waterloo, do you remember those deep escalators that led to the platforms for lines that ran far below the Thames riverbed? If it helps to meditate, think of going down 10 flights of *those* escalators.

As a druid, the escalator analogy can feel like an awkwardly unnatural method of descent. Dungeon or castle stairs, mine shafts, or ladders down an empty well are alternative ideas. Whatever helps *you*. My preferred alternative is to visualize myself adrift in a canoe or coracle (small round Irish boat) with no oars on a large lake. The lake is egg-shaped, and I gradually drift toward the narrow end, which has an outlet to a stream or narrow river. To count breaths, you can imagine a connected chain of lakes, or massively tall trees at regular intervals along the shore, standing like gateways. Here the goal is to keep drifting until you reach that Alpha state of deep relaxation.

## **"But I Can't Concentrate!"**

For Mindfulness Meditation, if you're trying to focus or concentrate, you're doing it wrong. *Focusing* on relaxing is a counterproductive effort. Concentration is more likely to generate Beta Waves in the brain which is more suited for problem solving and related thought processes. If you're having trouble with your breathwork, it really just takes practice. If any mental visualizations are difficult to maintain, find a visual focal point to physically look at. Watch a candle flame burn, or wisps of smoke floating off of incense while you breathe slowly.

If you get to a point that you have completely zoned out, slowly try to become aware of any thoughts passing by. The keyword is Awareness. The Reformed Druids designated it as one of our primary goals in life. Mindfulness Meditation emerged more than a decade later from the psychology community and it fits right in with druidry. Once we have *awareness* that we've zoned out and we can observe our thoughts while in a state of deep relaxation, then it becomes meditation.

The first few times you meditate it is very normal for it to feel like its not working. When I was enrolled in Mindfulness Meditation classes at work, during an early session one of my coworkers burst out laughing and said she just can't do it. It really broke the rest of us out of our state, depending on who it was effective for at the time. The instructor assured us that everyone can do it, and it might just take time and repeated practice. I was able to return to a meditative state in about 30 seconds that day. That was exactly the case, just like taking up any new skill. We all improved, albeit at different paces. We became proficient, occasionally had our off-days, but were empowered to meditate on our own.

## What to Do in an Alpha State

Just being in this state of mind has numerous benefits for the mind, body, and spirit. If all you care to do is to observe your passing thoughts with a detached curiosity, then that is good. If you were hoping to do some shadow work, addressing your repressed thoughts and feelings to strive for resolution and self improvement, that is good. If you want to focus on enhancing your kindness, sincerity, or love of all beings, or perhaps even for yourself, that is good. You can focus on relieving tension in your body, letting go of past pains whether physical, psychological, or emotional. You can focus your creativity to capture those inspiring thoughts.

## What to Do in a Theta State

If you've managed to reach an ultra-deep state of relaxation where your perceptions shift again and you feel completely detached from the area around you, as if you are now existing entirely *within* your meditation, you may have achieved a Theta state. This is all on the condition that your mind is awake and you haven't inadvertently fallen asleep while meditating. This could happen if you meditate while tired. This is the state of mind where you can delve into creative imagery for problem solving or engage in *soul flight* as a form of recreational meditation if you wanted. This state of mind is also associated with dreaming when you are asleep, so any imagery journey you make would effectively be a blend of actual dreams and waking thoughts, and for this purpose that is just fine.

## An Anecdote on Theta States

The first time I reached Theta in a meditation state, I started out drifting down my "waterway" countdown. I had to start my counting over a few times until I reached the initial Alpha state. My busy mind kept thinking I was going to have to visualize a river delta opening into the ocean due to how long it was taking. Finally I was in an Alpha state: very relaxed, no longer feeling the need to count down from 10 again. My river had narrowed to a moderately paced stream, maybe 20 feet across. The banks were lined with rocks, a dark pine forest grew on both banks, and my sky above was overcast. It looked much like any river in northeastern Minnesota. I just drifted for a long time not expecting anything, just a gentle canoe ride in light rapids.

Then I entered Theta. The imagery in my mind was doing its own thing entirely. The environment stayed the same, but things started happening that I wasn't consciously creating. The stream began to narrow. A large fish leaped out of the water in front of my canoe and dove back in. After my meditation I spent a while looking up fish species until I saw the one in my vision, which was a Chinook Salmon. In my meditation after being visited by

the salmon, a very large fox peeked out from behind a pine tree and immediately receded back into the dark woods. The stream narrowed so that I might have been able to touch the rocky banks on both sides.

The stream curved and flowed at a brisk jogging pace. Two figures in full-length Carolina blue robes stood on opposing rock ledges. They held long boughs of birch crossed high over the center of my stream, as if I was part of a procession. As my canoe approached I saw that they were my late paternal grandparents. They did not look at me but only across the water, into each other's eyes. Their only acknowledgment of me was the arch of birch boughs they held up for me, and I passed under them, unable to stop. Two more figures in blue robes stood ahead, also holding an arch of branches. They were my grandmother's parents. They stood in the same posture, with the same gaze into each other's eyes. I hadn't seen my great grandfather in a quarter of a century, and I had never known my great grandmother, but there they were in silent fanfare.

After that vision I was alone on my journey again for a long time. The rapids in the river churned more turbulently and my stream widened back into a river. The rocky banks became steeper and I was surrounded by boulders. The clouds darkened and purple lightning skittered across the clouds. My meditation was becoming less comforting, and I gradually felt as if I was entering into a part of my subconscious that was in turmoil and chaos. Up ahead my river split around a rocky outcrop of an island covered in pine trees. The river didn't look safe ahead and I didn't want to find out what was in store for me.

became aware of the carpeted floor I was sitting on. I became aware that I was sitting propped up against my bed frame. I could feel the polished stones I was holding in my hands as something to fidget with in order to relax faster. I became aware of the ambient music I had playing, and noticed the slight discomfort in my back that I had totally forgotten about during the meditation. I kept my eyes closed well after I knew I had ceased meditation, and mentally reconstructed my room in my mind until I knew I could open my eyes for a seamless transition back to the present moment. I sat there for a few more minutes before actually getting up, refreshed and feeling great.



## Always Emerge Gradually

Not being prepared to address that part of my psyche, in my mind I stopped my canoe and gently removed the visual elements. This brought me back into an Alpha State and I started to become aware of my surroundings. I knew full well how jarring and disorienting it can be to *snap out* of a meditation. I

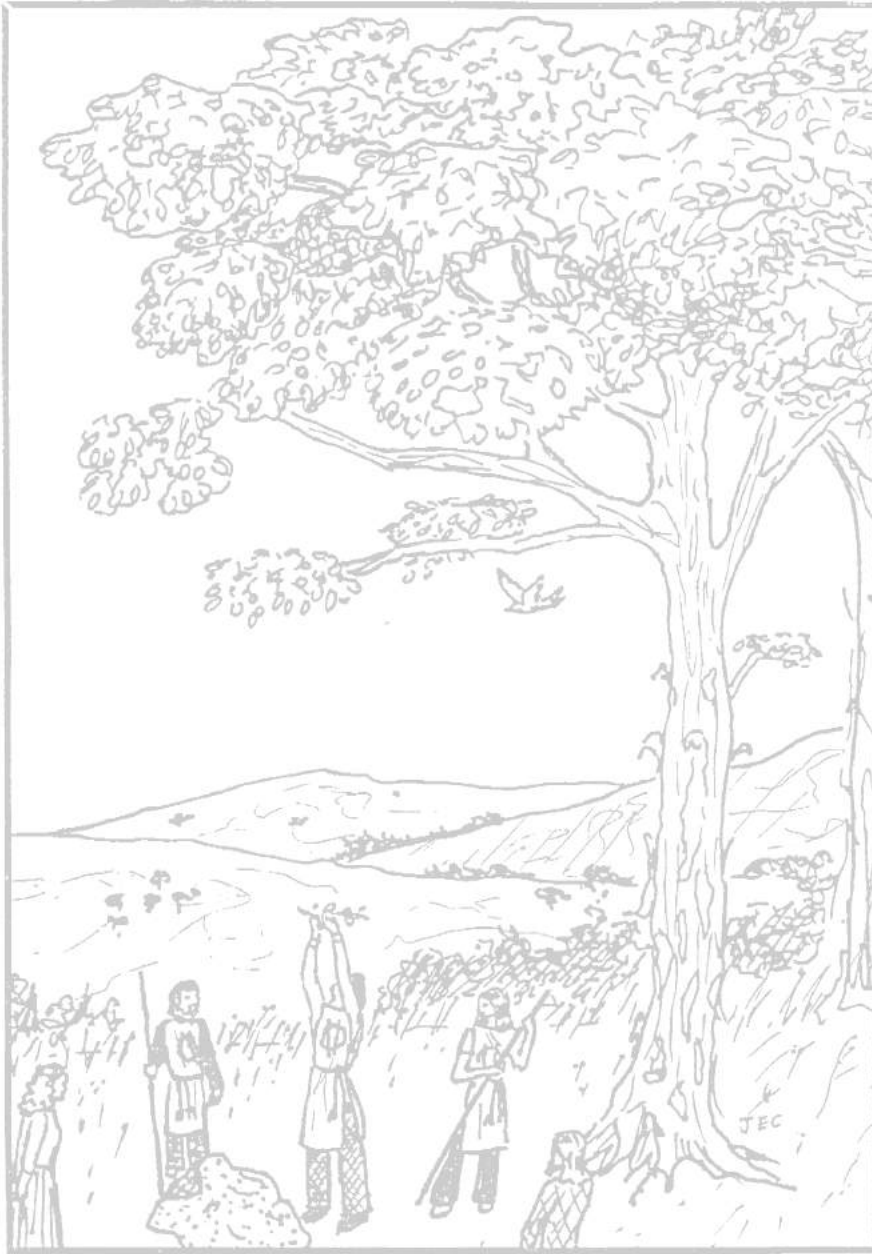


Figure 54 Druid at the base of the Hillside Prairie in the Lower Arboretum, c. 1998.

So Ends  
Vol Three  
Of ARDA 2

# VOLUME FOUR

## TRADITIONS, CUSTOMS AND OTHER IRRELEVANT TRIVIA

### 2003 Introduction

The major changes to this section are moderate. There are more RDNA constitutions, Coalition Council materials, Pentalpha, Keltria & OMS By-Laws to show how other Druid Groups have organized, statistical updates, fresher update on the situation of the groves and orders, letter writing conventions and a lot more materials on Calendars. Most of which is not terribly useful unless you're doing heavy duty research, I agree. Many of the customs and practices may differ quite substantially in different groves, so take them more as a general rule-of-thumb. Take what seems of use to you.

Yours in the Mother,  
Mike the Fool  
Day 52 of Earrach, Y.R. XL  
March 24, 2003 C.E.

### 1996 Introduction

We often notice the big differences between groups, but I believe that it's the smaller details that bring a group to life. Over the thirty or so years, the Reform has come up with its own peculiar laws, raiment's, ritual accessories, favorite books, titles, vocabulary, at least two sets of calendars, holiday customs, symbols and other traits. These are often the most difficult aspects for newcomers to learn and are often the first details that are forever lost when a group goes into abeyance. This is but a limited collection, but some of the more widespread and longevous traits of the Reform. Perhaps this is good, because they are only a sideline to the real search for religious truth. Do not get overly worked up over them, since most of us don't consider them very vital to the pursuit of Druidism, perhaps more of a decorative function. If you can come up with a better way of running your Druidism, feel free to forge ahead, rename things and so on. Just remember that you and I can speak for nobody's opinions and actions but our own.

Yours in the Mother,  
Michael Scharding  
Day 10 of Foghamhar, Year XXXIV of the Reform  
August 10th, 1996  
(The 1/3 Century mark of Reformed Druidism)  
St. Cloud, MN



# Drynemeton Press

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# SECTION ONE: RDNA Councils' Documents

## Record of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu

*[While the words and instructions of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu (which is the collective body of the Third Order Druids), are not graven in stone, they are generally accepted statements about how the Reform, as a whole, is organized. An astute reader can find all kinds of loopholes, and that is okay, since many of the passages were made with the intention of allowing a liberal interpretation. Most of the decisions don't directly affect the average layperson, but rather mostly shape the duties and privileges of the Third Order. Bracketed words for gender inclusivity have been added by myself in 1994 and are warranted by the intentions of the legislation. -Scharding]*

7 May 1964. Voted:

### **Patriarch**

To elevate David H. Fisher to the office and order of the Patriarch of the Order of Grannos (the 4<sup>th</sup> healing springs).

### **Liturgy**

To adopt the Order of Worship of the Carleton Grove (as formulated by David H. Fisher) as the basic order of worship of the Reformed Druids of North America.

26 May, 1964. Interpreted:

### **Higher Orders**

(a) that the purpose of the higher orders is to stimulate priests of the 3rd Order to continued spiritual inquiry, and are intended to honor achievement rather than tenure.

(b) That the higher orders are equal in the sense that no shall be considered a prerequisite for any other (except with regard to the formula for the election of Patriarchs *[or Matriarchs]*).

(c) That direct confirmation of the selection of each priest for a higher order must be made by the Patriarch *[or Matriarch]* concerned.

(d) That the ceremony of induction may be performed by any member of the order.

27 January, 1965. Voted:

### **Council**

(a) To declare in perpetuity that the Archdruid of Carleton shall be the Chairman Ex-officio of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.

(b) To reserve to all the priests, collectively in the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, the highest authority of the Reformed Druids of North America.

### **Priestesses**

(a) To delegate to the priest the right to individually consecrate priestesses to any order which they (the priests) may hold.

(b) To allow priestesses to hold the office of Archdruid, provided that they have first vigiled and been granted the right to perform the ceremony by the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.

Interpreted:

### **Missions**

(a) That any priest has the right to conduct worship and receive members into the First and Second Orders.

(b) That no one has the right to consecrate priests of the Third Order except the duly elected Archdruid of a legally constituted Grove, i.e., a Grove which has adopted a constitution and filled by election the offices of Archdruid, Preceptor, and Server.

(c) That the ceremony for the consecration of a Third Order priest as adopted at Carleton may not be altered without the permission of the Council.

(d) That the local Groves retain the right to organize themselves in any way which will best serve their needs.

### **Liturgy**

(a) That the waters-of-sleep shall be used during the winter half (Geimredh & Earrach) and the waters-of-life shall be reserved for the summer half (Samradh and Foghamhar), except when they are needed for healing or for the consecration of a priest. The priest shall wear the red ribbon when consecrating the waters-of-life, and he *[or she]* shall wear the white ribbon when consecrating the waters-of-sleep, both as the mark of the 3rd Order.

(b) That the white robe is the mark of the Druid, and it may be worn by any member; except that a Patriarch *[or Matriarch]* may wear a black robe (in honor of the first Patriarch), but may not at the same time wear the mark of any high order of which he *[or she]* is not Patriarch *[or Matriarch]*.

(c) That the first Patriarch *[or Matriarch]* of each higher order shall establish the ceremony and identifying mark of his *[or her]* order.

(d) That the individual Groves retain the right to establish any such identifying marks for its officers as it sees fit, provided that they do not conflict with any other marks already adopted.

29 March, 1966. Voted: (by mail)

### **Priestesses**

(a) To grant automatically to all priestesses who have conducted a vigil the right to perform the ceremonies of Reformed Druidism.

(b) To allow a priestess, while holding the office of Archdruid, to consecrate priests of the Third Order and priestesses unto the Order which she herself holds.

20 April, 1966. Voted: (by mail)

### **Council**

(a) To require the Archdruid of Carleton, upon their retirement from office, to prepare a report on the state of Reformed Druidism at Carleton, including such information on Reformed Druid activities elsewhere as they may have received, and including a list of Council members and Council resolutions; this report to be submitted to all members of the Council, the expense of the printing and distribution of said report to be fixed by him and charged to those who receive it.



(b) To require each Archdruid to promptly forward to the Archdruid of Carleton notice of the formation of any Grove and the name and address of any priest consecrated to the Third Order in that Grove.

1 May, 1971 Voted: (by mail)

### Priestesses

(a) To subordinate all previous resolutions of the Council concerning priestesses to this one.

(b) To allow a priestess who has conducted a vigil and who has been consecrated to the Third Order all prerogatives of the order, consecrate priests and priestesses to the Third Order. In token of this she is known as a priestess of the Third Order.

(c) To allow a priestess of the Third Order who has been consecrated to a high order and whose consecration has been confirmed by the Patriarch of the given order all prerogatives of that order. Again, she is known as a priestess of the given order.

(d) To abolish all restrictions other than those applying equally to priests on the number of high orders to which a priestess of the Third Order may be consecrated.

## A Summary of How the Council of

## Dalon Ap Landu Kind of Worked

1996

1. All Third-Orders maintain a current address with the Carleton Archdruid.
2. All new groves are announced to the Carleton Archdruid.
3. The Carleton Archdruid prepares a report when they retire.
4. Vote proposals are forwarded to the Carleton Archdruid.
5. The Carleton Archdruid then writes to all the Third-Orders and starts a debate.
6. If a quorum of the Third Orders vote (say at least 1/8 or 1/3 or 1/2, this is uncertain), and all agree, it passed.

It is unlikely that the Council will ever return, because the principle of grove independence is too strongly established and at least half of the Third Orders are without current addresses on record. It also seems that it is unlikely that any vote could gain unanimity.



# The Coalition Council of Dalon ap Landu

## 1996 Introduction

By 1981, it appeared that Carleton had gone defunct, which it had from 1980-82 (and it was not doing to well 1983-85). The original Council of Dalon ap Landu had already proven to be a moribund institution for passing new legislation. The job of the Provisional Council of ArchDruids was essentially being done by The Druid Chronicler & Pentalpha magazines. Joan Carruth and Stephen Abbot were ArchDruids of the Berkeley grove during Isaac's sabbatical from 1979 to late 1981 (when the Death March on the Beach occurred and the Live Oak hived off). With the original RDNA either missing or seemingly determined not to pass new legislation, a number of NRDNA groves decided to form their own legislative body, called the Coalition Council of Dalon ap Landu (CoCoDAL). Their legislation would only affect those groves involved (primarily the Mother Grove of Berkeley, Live Oak Grove of Berkeley, Greenwood Grove of Seattle and the San Diego Grove). By late 1982, during the final phase of the Druid Diaspora marked by Isaac's short return & leaving to form ADF, it appears that the CoCoDAL was finished with its work and quietly faded away. I suspect that the leaders of CoCoDAL were just plain burnt out. It is uncertain whether the current NRDNA groves still follow these rules.

-Scharding

## The Initial Letter of CoCoDAL

C. Early Summer 1981

To all ArchDruids & Solitary Thirds

### Full Poop on the Higher Orders

The Higher Orders were originally started at Carleton. I believe they got as high as Belenos [*incorrect, they got up to Sirona*], before the original Carleton impetus petered out. After that, two main problems arose. One was that Patriarchs (there were no Matriarchs) were not permitted to resign, though they dropped out and ceased functioning as M/Patriarchs, so no new members could be Ordained. Problem #2 was that ALL Members of the Council had to vote on an issue before the council, and at some point, less than half of the Council could be reached, or would respond to a vote. Groups struggled on, castrated, unable to stay in touch, crippled by unchangeable rules, and with no access to Higher Orders.

What we have to do is start it again for ourselves. I propose retaining almost all of the original flavor: Third Orders only, given for achievement, not tenure; no special status outside themselves; not prerequisite in nature (you need not be 4th Order to join the 5th); Council of Nth Order elects first M/P of N+1 Order, etc. I propose that we declare this Reform as a coalition of Groves and solitary 3rds, since we cannot speak for all Reformed Druids, within the old framework, and that these rules and suggestions are therefore only applicable to Members of the Coalition. We will institute this Coalition on Autumn Equinox, 19 YR 1981 c.e, with those Groves and Solitaries who respond to join by that date. Please vote on the following Reforms, in this format:

## Reform #1

for: Kerry P (full last name)  
against: Paul M

Also, give your responses to the Suggestions. Please send your responses to Chris Sherbak, 2345 Post St #21, San Francisco CA 94115.

We don't want to set up a series of Bosses, or interfere with your Grove's autonomy. I'm not trying to ego-trip, or ask a whole lot of time or effort from people. "Drawing Down the Moon" has initiated a flood of interest, and it would be nice to see these organizational blocks cleared up so we could experience an expansion. I hope as many Groves & Solitaries as possible become part of this.

PLEASE RESPOND

Yours in the Mother  
Joan Carruth, DAL  
ArchDruid, Berkeley Grove NRDNA  
Matriarch, Order of Diancecht

### Issues for Voting by Coalition Council

1. PROPOSITIONS BEFORE THE ORDER OF DALON AP LANDU (and the Higher Orders) WILL BE CONSIDERED TO COME OUT ON A MAJOR HIGH DAY (Summer or Winter) (propositions to be in the mail to all members of the Coalition CoDAL no later than said High Day) AND ARE TO BE PASSED BY 2/3 OF ALL THIRD ORDERS WHOSE REPLIES ARE RECEIVED BY THE NEXT MAJOR HIGH DAY (approximately 90 days). In essence we are saying that a Member may vote "for", "against", or "no vote", and issues will be decided by those who have an active vote.

2. THIS REFORM (which will permit both CoDAL business, and the restarting of the Higher Orders) SHALL BE INSTITUTED BY A COALITION OF GROVES AND SOLITARY THIRDS (originally those who choose to join by Autumn Equinox, 19YR). ANY GROVE THAT WISHES TO JOIN THE COALITION MAY DO SO BY 2/3 VOTE OF ITS THIRD ORDER MEMBERS, DURING THE SUMMER. ANY GROVE WISHING TO RESIGN FROM THE COALITION MAY DO SO BY THE SAME METHOD. IN THE WINTER.

3. M/PS OF HIGHER (or special) ORDERS MAY RESIGN OR OTHERWISE BE REPLACED WHEN NECESSARY (as by illness or death) BY THIS PROCESS: IT IS TO BE HOPED THAT THE OLD M/P SUGGESTS A REPLACEMENT, WHO IS THEN CONFIRMED BY 2/3 OF THE COUNCIL OF THAT ORDER BY 90 DAY ACTIVE VOTE PROCEDURE.

IF THIS IS NOT DONE, OR NOT CONFIRMED, M/P OF N-1 ORDER (i.e., the Order below the one in Question) SHALL ACCEPT NOMINATIONS (90 days) OF AND BY MEMBERS OF N ORDER (not for oneself) AND COUNCIL OF N-1 ORDER WILL ELECT NEW M/P FROM AMONG THESE CANDIDATES.

4. WITH THE M/PS APPROVAL, ANY MEMBER OF THE ORDER, OR THE CANDIDATE'S ARCHDRUID (who shall then wear the emblem of that Order, whether a member or not – this follows from the RDNA custom that a Third may consecrate emergency Waters of Life in the Winter, but must then wear the red ribbon) MAY PERFORM THE ORDINATION OF A NEW MEMBER. This will permit there to be an active, functioning Order in every Grove. In Groves in which the M/P of the Order does not reside, Order members will elect (during the

fall) one of their members to be Head of N Order for that Grove for the next year. This person will be in contact with the M/P, organize meetings of the Order, etc.

5. A PERSON MAY BE A MEMBER OF MORE THAN ONE ORDER. A PERSON MAY BE M/P OF AN ORDER, AND OFFICER OF A GROVE. A PERSON MAY NOT BE M/P OF MORE THAN ONE ORDER.

6. ORDINATIONS FOR ANY ORDER SHALL BE DONE IN THE SUMMER, EXCEPT IN EMERGENCIES. RESIGNING M/P SHOULD DO SO IN SUMMER, BUT IF THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE, INVESTITURE OF NEW M/P SHALL BE CONSIDERED EMERGENCY BUSINESS. M/P REPORTS RESIGNATION TO M/P OF NEXT LOWER ORDER, AND THIS DOCUMENT BECOMES PART OF THE RECORDS OF THAT ORDER, AND SHOULD BE RETAINED. Old M/P should be sure to get Order Records to the new M/P, or to the M/P of N-1 Order, who will pass them along to the new M/P.

7. CHILDREN UNDER PUBERTY MAY NOT HOLD HIGHER THAN FIRST ORDER (and must, to be Members of Angus). NO ONE UNDER 18 SHALL HOLD THE THIRD ORDER, HENCEFORTH. Sorry, I don't feel there's any reason to rush such a step. If you're interested at 16, you'll be interested at 18, or you shouldn't have been Ordained. Also, all the original Carleton members were 18 or older.

### Other Items to Vote on:

A: I (solitary) OR WE (Grove) CHOOSE TO JOIN THE PROPOSED COALITION.

B: JOAN CARRUTH (currently Matriarch of Dian Cecht, a Special healing Order) IS CONFIRMED AS MATRIARCH OF GRANNOS. Council of Grannos will be formed by Re-ordination of members of Diancecht, and this Council will elect the M/P of Braciaca.

Third Order Members please vote for, against, no vote on issues and mail by Autumn Equinox.

AD of Grove (or Preceptor) should record and send votes for all thirds in grove rather than grove thirds each mailing a response to Chris (this enables us to see what the grove activity as a whole is). Set up as shown on first page, on a sheet of paper. Date it, sign it, say what officer of what grove you are, and mail it to Chris.



Figure 1 Stephen Abbot & Joan Carruth, Berkeley AD in 1978.

# Important News for CoCoDAL! AD's and 3rds Especially Note!

Druid Chronicler  
Volume 4 Number 4  
August 1981

We plan to restart the Higher Orders (4-10), Berkeley Grove and as many other groves as wish to participate. Groves should get a consensus (at least 2/3) of their 3rds on whether they wish to be part and inform Chris by Autumn Equinox!!! Berkeley really doesn't want all the M/Patriarchs, so send suggestions for 3rds in your grove who you think would be good M/Ps or members of any order, especially 4-7. Matriarch of ODC will probably become M of Grannos.

These orders will be for the purpose of inciting further inquiry among 3rds, and are granted for achievement, not tenure. They have no further "rights" outside themselves, and are not prerequisite in structure (i.e., you need not be 4th to be 5th) Council of N Order elects M/P of N+1 order. Any 3rd or higher may nominate a member, M/P of order confirms. Ordinations may be done with the M/P's approval, by any member of the Order, or candidates AD so if the M/P is in Olympia, people in Santa Cruz can still join the order) M/P s may resign. If selection is not approved by 2/3 of that order, council of next lower order elects new M/P. Here are my proposals. See what you think. "Est" means "established"

4-Grannos —healers (est) green ribbon (est) ODC will fold.

5- Braciaca- altered states of consciousness- yellow maniple (est) parties?

6- Belenos- astrologers, scientist, teachers- yellow ribbon (est)

7 Sirona- earth activists, outdoors people, gardeners, etc.- blue ribbon with wave (est)

8-Taranis- warriors, armed and unarmed- orange ribbon

9- Llyr- Philosophers, thinkers, mystics, etc.- grey ribbon

10- Danu-Emeritus order for significant long-term service to the Earth Mother and RDNA. Nomination and selection to order by M/Ps of Order 4-9, by 2/3 consensus. M/P of 10th order confirms- brown ribbon.

Special Orders Must be 2nd order or above (except, of course the kids)

Oberon- Bards (est) Blue ribbon (est)- working order  
Merddyn- Magicians (est) staff or wand (est) proposed (no leader)  
Lugh — Craftspeople (est) purple ribbon (est) may or may not exist. There's no reason I can think of not to "restart" it anyway, and maybe the original matriarch will resurface.

Angus- Children's (est) pink sash- to puberty rites. Proposed. No leader.

On our Autumn Equinox, Matriarch of ODC should be confirmed by 2/3 of 3rd. Of participating Groves as M of Grannos. Council of Grannos will be created by re-ordination of members or ODC. Grannos council will then select m/p of Braciaca from all available 3rd candidates, present or by mail.

Please send info to Chris by Equinox. Let's do it!

# Coalition Council of Dalon Ap Landu

Druid Chronicler Vol. 4, No. 5  
Nov 1981

## Members of the coalition:

Mother Grove  
Live Oak Grove  
Greenwood Grove  
San Diego Grove

## Rules Passed (precis)

- 1) Votes before the CoCoDAL will be voted on by those- who respond to the Clearinghouse Grove within 90 days of postmark.
- 2) Groves join in Summer by 2/3 vote of their Thirds; Groves may resign in Winter by the same process.
- 3) Matriarchs/Patriarchs (M/Ps) may resign. There is a Process for their replacement.
- 4) New members can be Ordained by their ArchDruid, or another member of the Order, by permission of the M/P
- 5) A person may be a member of more than one Order, but not M/P of more than one.
- 6) Resignation of M/P of N Order should be reported to the M/P of N-1 Order, whether or not they are immediately replaced.
- 7) Children under puberty shall not hold higher than 1st Order; no one under 18 shall be Ordained Third.

Other Business Passed:

## A) Joan Carruth shall be the Matriarch of Grannos.

Live Oak Grove volunteered to be Clearinghouse for 20 y.r. Any Third Order member of the Coalition may originate a vote by sending a copy of the vote to all member Groves or Solitaries. and to the Preceptor of the Clearinghouse Grove.

Responses should be sent to the Clearinghouse, who will count them and resort the results in the next Chronicler. The address is Emmon Bodfish, 616 Miner Rd Orinda, CA, 945630 (*oops should be Leslie, but its 2 AM already*)

Rulings of the CoCoDAL are binding only to members of the Coalition. These rules are meant in no way to inhibit the autonomy of any member Grove or Solitary Third, but to facilitate the functioning of the Reformed Druid movement, and make the Higher Orders available once more. Each Third Order Coalition member has one vote in the CoCoDAL, whether solitary or a member of a Grove, though Grove Thirds should vote through their Preceptor or- AD, so Emmon will not get confused as to who's voted. If he gets the responses from all; the Thirds in a member Grove at once, it'll simplify his counting

# More News on the CoCoDAL

Druid Chronicler  
*Samhain/Yule 20 y. r. (December 1981)*  
Volume 5 — Number 1

Live Oak Grove's official mailing address is: Live Oak Grove c/o Emmon Bodfish 616 Miner Road Orinda, CA 94563

Joan has revived the old Council of Dalon ap Landu, calling it the Coalition Council" of Dalon ap Landu (CoCoDAL). This council represents the Carleton Traditionalists, and claims to comprise all Groves and free Third Order Druids who have not officially resigned. Speaking on behalf of CoCoDAL, Joan informed me that:

1. No Groves have resigned from CoCoDAL. [This is not exactly true; Mother Grove is not officially participating in CoCoDAL, but has not yet tendered its resignation. —*Elton*]

2. There is no new business before CoCoDAL at this time.

3. Live Oak Grove is acting as Clearinghouse Grove (ChG) for CoCoDAL during 20 y.r. (1981-82). They can be contacted through Live Oak Grove's mailing address, given above.

According to Joan, any member of the Coalition may bring business before CoCoDAL by a four-step process:

1. Write a formal petition and send it to the ChG.

2. The ChG will mail a copy of the proposal to each member Grove

3. CoCoDAL will wait 90 days from the date of mailing for a reply to each proposal.

4. After the waiting period, the ChG will tally t responses yea and nay, then announce both the proposal and the result of the vote.

When she originally spoke to me, Joan informed me that the results of each vote would be printed in the next issue of the Druid Chronicler. I unfortunately had to tell her that this is not necessarily so; please see my comments about news and the printing thereof on page 7. I will try, but schedule and space constraints may prevent me. If this happens, I assure that she will make other arrangements; she was not sure when we talked.

## Coalition Council of Dalon Ap Landu

A Druid Missal-Any  
April 1982  
Volume 6 Number 2

CoCoDAL has opened its shutters for business after a long, wet, miserable winter. We have nothing by way of old business pending. However, we have several pieces of new business.

One: we would like to encourage any Groove or solitary Third who has not already done so to join the Council,

Another: I have heard several proposals for streamlining the selection of Matriarchs/ Patriarchs of the Higher Orders. Some of them sound pretty good, but I have already put in enough of my opinions and proposals for a while, so if any of you would like to propose a change, please do so. Any Third Order who is a member of the Council, either as a solitary or as a member of a member Grove, may propose a new rule or a change by sending it to Emmon Bodfish, Preceptor, Live Oak Grove, 616 Miner Rd. Orinda, Calif, 94563. He will publish it in the next MISSAL-

ANY and wait 90 days for responses from solitaries and Gerber Groves' Third Orders. Remember, such rules are decided by those who respond, so you cannot block a piece of legislation by not answering. Pros and Cons may be sent in by a postcard or letter to Live Oak Grove Address. We will publish the results.

Current CoCoDAL members: Live Oak Grove, Evergreen Grove, Michael "Tiki" Teague, Chris Sherbak

## To the Council of DAL

By Emmon Bodfish  
A Druid Missal-Any, Lughnasadh 1990

I propose at this season between Solstice and Lughnasadh, to make these changes in the RDNA/NRDNA ordinary, New Moon and Full Moon Services, the "Order of Common Worship," Services for Samhradh and Foghamhar and for Geimredh and Earrach.

I propose to change the "False Uncial" script titles in the written text, (not spoken,) from "Catechism" to "Libation," and from "Communion" to "Connexus." This eliminates an obvious borrowing, and the bad memories that cling to such for many modern people. It installs in place of each a new title of Pagan lineage.

I propose adding to the RDNA/NRDNA ordinary New Moon and Full Moon Services, the same "Order of Common Worship" Services, for Samhradh and Foghamhar and for Geimredh and Earrach, the practice of pouring out offerings to the trees. This has been tried and practiced and found to be successful at Live Oak Grove, and now at Orinda Grove Site.

It is inserted in the Services after the "Communion" ("Connexus") and before the "Meditation." After the Waters-of-Life have been shared and the final portion poured out into the fire and or the earth, the officiating Third Order Druid/ess hands the Grove Chalice back to the Server and receives from the Server the Tree Chalice. This is a ceramic or precious metal cup preferably in the shape of the Sutton Hoe cup or of Greek, Roman or Indo-European libation cups.

It is filled with pure water and blood meal fertilizer\* (Which is available in the plant food section of any nursery or garden shop) in the summer half of the year, the Season of Life, and with pure water in the winter half of the year, the Season of Sleep.

The officiating Third Order Druid/ess walks Sunwise (clockwise) around the Grove altar circle, stopping before each tree, calling its name in Gaelic, Gaidhlig, or English, (Ex. "Ah Bheithen!" or "Birch!") and pouring out part of the blood meal as offering to the tree. The last of the libation is saved and offered to the earth in the Offering Shaft, if the Grove has one, or one the ground to the right of the altar. The Third Order Druid/ess then passes the Tree Chalice back to the Server, who replaces it beside the Grove Chalice. Then the "Meditation" begins.

**Note:** It is not known if there were any replies to this proposal.

# SECTION TWO: RDNA Constitutions

This is the format of most constitutions used in RDNA up to the late 1970s. It is in the format normally used in student organizational charters at Carleton. The Jan 27, 1965 vote requires official groves to have a constitution, but doesn't say what to put in them. In practice, most groves don't make or submit them. – Scharding



**Figure 2 A Grove is a changing mixture of permanence and living elements.**

## Carleton Constitution

1965, with possible revision in 1970.

We, the Reformed Druids of North America at Carleton College, in order to make our existence more fruitful, do hereby enact this, our Constitution.

### ARTICLE I

The name of this organization shall be the Reformed Druids of North America at Carleton College.

### ARTICLE II

Any student at Carleton College may become a member of this organization upon presenting a petition, which may be oral, stating that he believes in the basic tenets of North American Reformed Druidism as set forth in this Constitution.

### ARTICLE III

The basic tenets of North American Reformed Druidism are these:

- 1) North American Reformed Druids believe that one of the many ways in which the object of man's search for religious truth can be found is through Nature, the Earth-Mother.
- 2) North American Reformed Druids believe that Nature, being one of the primary concerns in man's life and struggle, and being one of the Objects of Creation, is important to man's spiritual quests.

### ARTICLE IV

There shall be three officers of the Reformed Druids of North America:

- 1) The Archdruid must be at least a third-order North American Reformed priest. He [*or she*] shall preside over all meetings.
- 2) The Preceptor must be at least a second-order North American Reformed Druid, shall assist in services, and shall be the principal officer in the secular arm of the Reformed Druids of North America.
- 3) The Server must be at least a first-order North American Reformed Druid, and shall assist in services.

### ARTICLE V

Elections for the posts of Archdruid, Preceptor, and Server shall be held annually, in May. Unless a member objects, the posts will be filled by a voice vote, with nominations being accepted from the floor of the meeting. Only those qualified to hold the posts may be nominated for any post.

### ARTICLE VI

This Constitution may be attended by a majority vote in two consecutive meetings of the Reformed Druids of North America. A quorum, which shall be one-eighth of those members known to the officers, must be present at both meetings.

I certify this to be a true and accurate copy of the Constitution of the Reformed Druids of North America at Carleton College, read and approved at two consecutive meetings by all members present.

-David Fisher

# Constitution of the Reformed Druids of North America at The University of South Dakota

We, the Reformed Druids of North America at the University of South Dakota, in order to make our existence more fruitful, do hereby enact this, our Constitution.

## ARTICLE I

The name of this organization shall be the Reformed Druids of North America at the University of South Dakota.

## ARTICLE II

Any student at the University of South Dakota, or any resident of Vermillion, South Dakota, may become a member of this organization upon presentation of a petition, which may be oral, stating that he believes in the basic tenets of North American Reformed Druidism as set forth in this Constitution.

## ARTICLE III

The basic tenets of North American Reformed Druidism are these:

- 1) North American Reformed Druids believe that one of the many ways in which the object of man's search for religious truth can be found is through Nature, the Earth-Mother.
- 2) North American Reformed Druids believe that Nature, being one of the primary concerns in man's life and struggle, and being one of the objects of creation, is important to man's spiritual quests.

## ARTICLE IV

There shall be three officers of this Drynematum of the Reformed Druids of North America:

- 1) The Arch-Druid must be at least a third-order North American Reformed priest. He shall preside over all services and meetings of the Drynematum.
- 2) The Preceptor must be at least a second-order North American Reformed Druid, shall assist in services, and shall be the principle officer in the secular arm of the Reformed Druids of North America at the University of South Dakota.
- 3) The Server must be at least a first-order North American Reformed Druid, and shall assist in services.

## ARTICLE V

Elections for the posts of Arch-Druid, Preceptor, and Server shall be held annually, in September. Unless a member objects, the posts will be filled by a voice vote, with nominations being accepted from the floor of the meeting. Only those qualified to hold the posts may be nominated for any post.

The Arch-Druid shall have the right to appoint any qualified member to fill an unexpired term, and may appoint any qualified member to serve in his place as Arch-Druid *pro tem*.

## ARTICLE VI

This Constitution may be amended by a majority vote in two consecutive meetings of the University of South Dakota

Drynematum. A quorum, which shall be one-eighth of those known to the officers to be current members, must be present at both meetings.

Approved this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of April, 1966, in the third year of the worship of the Earth-Mother, by the Drynematum of the University of South Dakota.

Norman E. Nelson, 5P, Arch-Druid.

# Constitution of the Berkeley Grove Of the Reformed Druids Of North America

1968

We, the Berkeley Grove of the Reformed Druids of North America, in order to make our existence more fruitful, do hereby enact this constitution.

## Article the First

The name of this organization shall be the Berkeley Grove, Reformed Druids of North America.

## Article the Second

Any person may become a member of this grove upon presenting a petition, which may be oral, stating that he believes in the basic tenets of Reformed Druidism (see Article the Third).

## Article the Third

Now, the basic tenets of Reformed Druids are these:

The object of the search for religious truth may be found through the Earth-mother, who is Nature; but this is only one way among many.

Nature, as one of the objects of creation and as something with which our lives are spent, is of great spiritual importance.

## Article the Fourth

The basic tenets of Reformed Druidism may also be phrased in the time-honored three-fold manner, thusly:

1. NATURE is good.
2. Nature IS good.
3. Nature is GOOD.

## Article the Fifth

The officers of the Berkeley Grove shall be:

The Arch-Druid, who must be a third order priest of the Reformed Druids of North America.

The Preceptor, who must be at least a second order Reformed Druid.

The Server, who must be at least a first order Reformed Druid.

## Article the Sixth

The duties of these officers are as follows:

The Arch-Druid shall preside over meetings and is the spiritual head of the grove. If, for any reason, he is unable to attend a meeting, he shall appoint another third order priest to preside over the meeting.

The Preceptor shall assist in services and is the secular head of the grove and its treasurer. If, for any reason, he is unable to attend a meeting, he shall appoint a qualified person to serve in his stead.

The Server shall assist at services and in any other ways the Arch-Druid or Preceptor request.

## Article the Seventh

Other officers may be added as necessary with the consent of the Berkeley Grove.

## Article the Eighth

Elections for the officers of the Berkeley Grove shall be held annually in the season of Foghamhar, near the time of the autumnal equinox. Elections will be held by voice vote, unless there is an objection. Only qualified druids will be nominated for officers.

## Article the Ninth

There shall be two kinds of members of the Berkeley Grove.

An active member shall be a member who has agreed to the basic tenets, partaken of the waters-of-life, and attended at least half of the meetings in the previous quarter.

An inactive member shall be any member who has not attended at least half the meetings in the previous quarter, unless a good excuse is given, such as sickness or death, and who has not formally notified the Arch-Druid or Preceptor that he is leaving the grove.

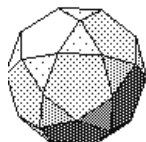
## Article the Tenth

This constitution may be amended by a majority vote in two consecutive meetings of the Berkeley Grove. A quorum, defined as one half of the active members of the grove, must be present at both meetings.

## Article the Eleventh

The officers of the Berkeley Grove and the Reformed Druids of North America disclaim any responsibility for any mind-warping experiences at any meeting, official or unofficial, of the Berkeley Grove. They DO, however, claim credit for any spiritual enlightenment which may be forthcoming, unless the one enlightened denies them such credit.

Fall Equinox, 1968



# Reformed Druids of North America Chicago Grove

24 July, 1970

Constitution of the Chicago Grove of the Reformed Druids

Article I The name of this organization shall be the Chicago Grove of the Reformed Druids of North America.

Article II Any resident of the Chicago area may become a member of this organization upon presenting a petition, which may be oral, stating that he believes in the Basic Tenets of North American Reformed Druidism as set forth in this constitution.

Article III The Basic Tenets of North American Reformed Druidism are these:

North American Reformed Druids believe that one of the many ways in which the object of man's search for religious truth can be found through Nature, the Earth-mother.

North American Reformed Druids believe that Nature, being one of the primary concerns in man's life and struggle, and being one of the Objects of Creation, is important to man's spiritual quests.

Article IV There shall be three officers of this organization:

The Arch-Druid must be at least a third order North American Reformed Druid priest. He shall call for all services.

The Preceptor must be at least a second order North American Reformed Druid, shall assist in services, and shall be the principal officer in the secular arm of this organization.

The Server must be at least a first order North American Reformed Druid, and shall assist in services.

The Arch-Druid shall appoint, or cause to be appointed, such other officers as may be necessary to preside at services, as directed in the by-laws.

Article V Election of officers shall be held in October at a date set by the officers, by secret ballot. Only those qualified to hold the posts may be nominated for them. The term of office is as follows:

The term of office shall extend for one year, from October 31 to October 31, investiture to take place immediately before the Samhain service.

Should an office fall vacant, it shall be filled as provided in the by-laws.

No officer may serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

Article VI Secular Business:

A meeting shall be considered secular, while a service shall be considered spiritual. A meeting shall be called by the Arch-Druid. A quorum shall consist of one quarter of the members of the Grove.

Any member of this organization may vote in secular matters such as the amendment of the constitution, the election of officers, the enactment of by-laws, and such other matters as may be provided for in the by-laws.

The business meetings of this organization shall have control over all secular matters and shall direct the Preceptor in the execution of such matters. The meeting may, by simple majority, enact by-laws to govern any phase of secular activity;

such by-laws to be subordinate to the constitution, as interpreted by the Arch-Druid, Preceptor, and Server of the Grove.

Article VII Spiritual Business:

Spiritual Business shall be controlled by the High Council, subject only to the authority of the Council of Dalon ap Landu.

All third order Druids of the Grove shall be voting members of the High Council, meetings of which must be called and presided over by the Arch-Druid.

The Arch-Druid shall decide if a quorum is present at a meeting of the High Council and he shall hold veto power over all acts of the High Council.

The Arch-Druid shall appoint some voting member of the High Council to keep The Book of the Worship of the Earth-mother, which shall consist of a record of all matters of doctrine and ritual as decided by the High Council.

Article VIII Amendments to the Constitution must be passed by ¾ vote of the entire organization at two meetings not less than one week apart; such voting to be carried out under the direction of the Arch-Druid.

Article IX This grove shall be considered as having been formed when three of more Druids of the Chicago area adopt this Constitution and elect an Arch-Druid, a Preceptor, and a Server. Subsequent election of officers shall be as directed in Article V.

I certify the above to be a true and accurate copy of the Constitution of the Chicago Grove of the Reformed Druids of North America, read and approved at two consecutive meetings.

Glenn McDavid, Arch-Druid

## The Constitution of the Reformed Druids of the Grove of Ann Arbor

Any person may become a member of the Grove upon his or her making a petition which shall be a declaration of his or her subscribing to the Basic Tenets of the Reformed Druids of North America. Said petition shall be made in writing or in speech to the Arch-Druid of the Grove.

There shall be elected three officers of the Grove:  
the Arch-Druid, who shall be a priest of the third order of the Reformed Druids of North America;  
the Preceptor, who shall be of the second order of the Reformed Druids of North America;  
the Server, who shall be of the first order of the Reformed Druids of North America.

These officers shall be elected by a simply majority of the members of the Grove. ["annually in October." –Amended 9 July 1976]

This Constitution may be amended by a majority of votes of at least one third of the members of the Grove at two consecutive meetings of the Grove.

["This Constitution may be amended by a majority vote at two consecutive meetings of the Grove, provided each is attended by at least one-third of the members" –Amended 9 July 1976]

Unanimously approved this 88<sup>th</sup> day of Samradh, 11<sup>th</sup> year of worship.

I certify that this is a true and accurate copy of the constitution of the Reformed Druids of the Grove of Ann Arbor.

Ellen Shelton, Archdruid  
27 Jul 1973

## The SDNA Constitution

*Here is a generic Grove constitution from 1975, as envisaged by Isaac Bonewits for future groves in the SDNA & HDNA (and possibly in some NRDNA groves). It is uncertain whether any grove besides the Hasidic Druid of North America and the Twin Cities Grove ever adopted this constitutional format. As you can tell, it is more complex and explicit about it's terminology than the Generic Carleton constitution. Scharding*

### CONSTITUTION OF THE \_\_\_\_\_ GROVE OF THE \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA

We, the \_\_\_\_\_ Druids of North America, living in the vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_, in order to make our existence more fruitful, do hereby enact this, our Constitution.

#### ARTICLE ONE

The name of this organization shall be The \_\_\_\_\_ Grove of the \_\_\_\_\_ Druids of North America and it shall be an autonomous Grove within the Branch of the Reform known as \_\_\_\_\_ Druidism.

#### ARTICLE TWO

Any person, regardless of race, gender, color, culture, age or sexual preferences may become a member of this organization upon presenting a petition, which may be oral, stating that she or he believes in the Basic Tenets of North American Druidism, as set forth in The Book of Law in The Druid Chronicles, and that she or he further believes in and agrees with the self-definition of this Branch of the Reform.

#### ARTICLE THREE

The Basic Tenets of North American Druidism, as set forth in The Book of Law, are these:

1) The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother; which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.

2) And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it do people live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face-to-face with it.

#### ARTICLE FOUR

The self definition of the Branch of the Reform to which this Grove shall belong, which is the \_\_\_\_\_ Druids of North America, is as follows \_\_\_\_\_



## ARTICLE FIVE

There shall be at least five officers of the Grove:

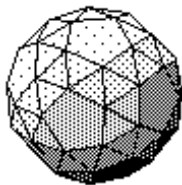
- 1) The Archdruid/ess must be at least a Third Order Druid/ess, holding legitimate Apostolic Succession from the Original Grove at Carleton College. He or she shall preside over all meetings and most religious services and shall be a member of the Provisional Council of Archdruids. She or he shall perform those functions usually performed by a Pastor in other religious organizations.
- 2) The Preceptor must be at least a Second Order Druid/ess, shall assist in services, and shall be the principal officer for secular matters, including the handling of the Grove's treasury, if any.
- 3) The Server must be at least a First Order Druid/ess and shall assist the Archdruid/ess insofar as he or she may be called upon to do so, including those function usually performed by a Secretary in other religious organizations, unless the Preceptor shall have decided to perform them.
- 4) The Chief Bard must be at least a Second Order Druid/ess and learned in matters of poetry, music, dancing and song. She or he shall be responsible for all Bardic matters within the Grove. She or he shall be elected as soon as there is a person qualified to hold this post and annually thereafter, and may hold one of the other posts at the same time; but need not be present for the founding of this Grove.
- 5) The Assistant Archdruid must be at least a Third Order Druid/ess, holding legitimate Apostolic Succession from the Original Grove at Carleton College. She or he shall be elected as soon as there is a person qualified to hold this post and annually thereafter, and may hold the office of Preceptor, Server or Chief Bard at the same time; but need not be present for the founding of this Grove. She or he shall serve those functions usually performed by an Assistant Pastor in other religious organizations and shall preside over services in the absence of the Archdruid/ess.
- 6) Other officers may be added from time to time as the Grove shall decide when they are needed.

## ARTICLE SIX

Elections for the posts of Archdruid/ess, Preceptor, Server, Bard and any other officers decided upon shall be held annually during the period of Foghamhar, except for the first election for each post. Unless a member of the Grove shall object the post shall be filled by a voice majority vote, with nominations being accepted from the ground of the meeting. If such an objection is lodged, the election shall be by majority vote or secret ballot.

Only members of the Grove may vote for the officers of the Grove and only those persons qualified to hold the posts may be nominated for them.

Also at this time the Grove may vote upon the amount, if any, of dues to be paid by all members of the Grove; said dues to be used strictly for the expenses of the Grove and to be kept by the Preceptor.



## ARTICLE SEVEN

A member of this Grove shall be defined as one who:

- 1) Is at least a First Order Druid/ess
- 2) Has asked that her or his name be placed in the Grove Records as being a member of the Grove.
- 3) Has attended at least one-third of all services held by the Grove during the time since attaining initial membership as defined in section (1) and (2) of this Article; save that the Grove may, by majority vote, suspend this rule for any former member who, by reason of illness, require extensive travel or other emergency has been unable to attend services as desired.
- 4) Has kept current with whatever dues the Grove may vote in during the annual election.

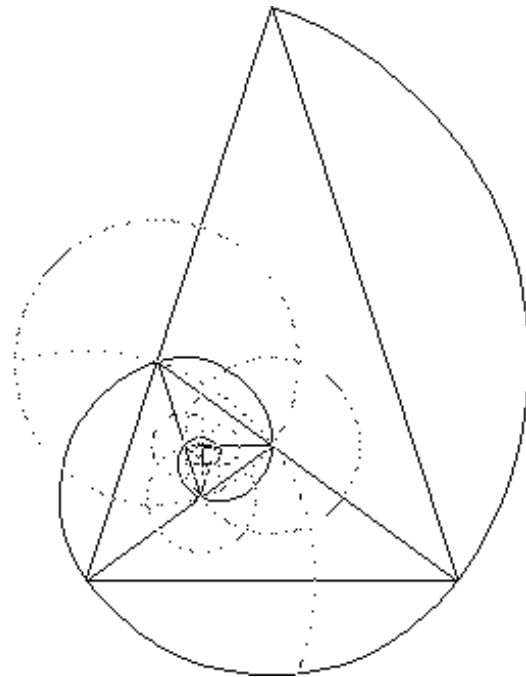
## ARTICLE EIGHT

This Constitution may be amended by a majority vote of the members of this Grove in two consecutive meetings, a quorum being present.

A quorum for this and all purposes shall be taken to be two-thirds of the members of the Grove. All members of the Grove who miss the first meeting at which an amendment to this Constitution was passed must be notified in writing of the date and place for the second meeting, as well as the content of the amendment.

ADOPTED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, in the Year of the Reform, being the date of \_\_\_\_\_ in the Common Era, by

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Constitution of the Reformed Druids of North America at Carleton College

1977

We, the Reformed Druids of North America at Carleton College, in order to make our existence more fruitful, do hereby enact this, our Constitution.

ARTICLE I. The name of this organization shall be the "Reformed Druids of North America at Carleton College".

ARTICLE II. Any person may become a member of this organization upon presenting a petition, which may be oral, to the Arch-Druid stating that he believe in the basic tenets of North American Reformed Druidism as set forth in this Constitution.

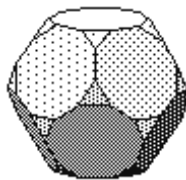
ARTICLE III. The basic tenets of North American Reformed Druidism are these: 1) North American Reformed Druids believe that one of the many ways in which the object of one's search for religious truth can be found is through Nature, the Earth-mother. 2) North American Reformed Druids believe that Nature, being one of the Objects of Creation, is important to one's spiritual quests.

ARTICLE IV. There shall be three officers of the Reformed Druids of North America: 1) The Arch-Druid must be at least a Third-Order North American Reformed priest. He shall preside over all meetings. 2) The Preceptor must be at least a Second-Order North American Reformed Druid, shall assist in services, and shall be the principle officer in the secular arm of the Reformed Druids of North America. 3) The Server must be at least a First-Order North American Reformed Druid, and shall assist in services.

ARTICLE V. Elections for the posts of Arch-Druid, Preceptor, and Server shall be held annually, in May. The posts will be filled by a majority vote, with nominations being accepted from the floor of the meeting. Only those qualified to hold the posts may be nominated for any post.

ARTICLE VI. This Constitution may be attended by a majority vote in two consecutive meetings of the Reformed Druids of North America. A quorum, which shall be one-third of those members known to the officers, must be present at both meetings.

Adopted May, 1977  
-Donald M. Morrison



# The Constitution of the "Big River Grove" of the Reformed Druids of North America at Saint Cloud State University

By Scharding, 1995

## ARTICLE I NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Big River Grove of the Reformed Druids of North America at Saint Cloud State University. We are loosely affiliated with the international Council of Dalon ap Landu, the chief legislative branch of the Reformed Druids of North America, as headed by the current Arch-Druid of Carleton College in Northfield Minnesota.

When the club consists of less than 3 members, it is called a "protogrove". When the club consists of 3 or more members, it is called a "grove".

Our name is generally shortened to "RDNA" or "Druids" in non-official literature.

## ARTICLE II PURPOSE

We, the Reformed Druids of North America at Saint Cloud State University, in order to make our search for personal spiritual truth more fruitful, do hereby enact this, our Constitution.

## ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP

Any student, faculty, staff member, university employee or their friends at Saint Cloud State University may become a member of this organization upon presenting a petition, which may be oral, stating that she or he believes in the basic tenets of North American Reformed Druidism as set forth in this Constitution.

The basic tenets of North American Reformed Druidism are these:

1) North American Reformed Druids believe that one of the **many** ways in which the object of man's search for religious truth can be found is through Nature, the Earth-Mother.

2) North American Reformed Druids believe that Nature, being one of the primary concerns in man's life and struggle, and being one of the Objects of Creation, is important to man's spiritual quests.

There will be no restriction on membership or participation because of sex, gender, age, race, color, religion, creed, philosophy, place/nation of origin, sexual preference, physical/mental ability or politics. Nor will this organization discriminate against any non-member student, faculty, staff member or university employee for the above reasons. The only notable restriction is that voting & holding office is only permitted for currently enrolled students of Saint Cloud State University.

There are no membership dues.

## ARTICLE IV

There shall be three officers of the Reformed Druids of North America, if there are sufficient numbers of members. The role of Preceptor and Server may be left vacant if there is insufficient work for them to do, or if none wishes to fill their role. The officer(s) must be full-time enrolled students at Saint Cloud State University. Their job description is as follows:

- 1) The Arch-Druid must be at least a third-order North American Reformed Druid. He or she shall preside over all meetings.
- 2) The Preceptor must be at least a second-order North American Reformed Druid, shall assist in services, and shall be the principal officer in the secular arm of the Reformed Druids of North America.
- 3) The Server must be at least a first-order North American Reformed Druid, and shall assist in activities.

## ARTICLE V ELECTIONS & VOTING

A. Elections for the posts of Arch-Druid, Preceptor, and Server shall be held biannually, in May and November. A vacancy in the Archdruidcy will necessitate an election within 2 weeks, vacancies in the Preceptorship or Servership may wait until May or November. An election can be called within 2 weeks by 10% of the membership or 2 members, whichever is less.

B. Unless a member objects, the posts will be filled by a voice vote, with nominations being accepted from the floor of the meeting. Only current students of Saint Cloud State University may vote. Only those qualified to hold the posts may be nominated for any post. Entry to all orders is accessible to all possible members of the Grove. The candidate with the majority of cast votes will win elections.

C. This Constitution may be amended by a majority vote in two consecutive meetings of the Reformed Druids of North America. A quorum, which shall be one-eighth of those members known to the officers, must be present at both meetings.

D. All other operating decisions (including choosing a faculty advisor) will be determined by the same methods as in section C immediately above, as the situation arises.

## ARTICLE VI EXPULSION

Members are welcome to disagree with each other and still be members. There is no current process for expulsion in our group. Rather, let us work out our problems instead of avoiding them.

## ARTICLE VII AUTHORITY

In the event that there is a conflict between the Council of Dalon ap Landu record of legislation and the club constitution, the club constitution shall supersede the Council's rules. We are, after all, only voluntarily connected with them.

In the event that there is a conflict between our club's constitution and the general guidelines of the authorities-that-be at Saint Cloud University, the group will obey the wishes of the University.

The club will follow all local, state & national laws.

# Amon Sul Grove Constitution

2001

The summer solstice was celebrated by observing the sunrise and sunset at the Sacred Circle. The Water of Life was consumed on a regular basis during and between the two ceremonies. The Grove has adopted the following tenets:

The Amon Sul Grove is devoted to the worship of nature.

We believe that all Druids are equal and consequently we do not recognize any hierarchical structures or "Orders".

All members are authorized to conduct any and all rites and rituals related to Druidism.

All offices are strictly functional and do not carry any status beyond conducting necessary organizational tasks of the Grove. The Arch-Druid shall publicly represent the Grove. The Scribe shall be responsible for Grove correspondence. The Purser shall be responsible for handling the Grove's finances.

Anyone wishing to be a member of the Grove shall inform the Scribe of such intent.

Visit the Grove's web site at: <http://geocities.com/gandalf4.geo>. Contact the grove by sending an email to [Gandalf952@cs.com](mailto:Gandalf952@cs.com).

# Eurisko Grove Constitution

Aug 2002

The Eurisko Grove is in Hampton, VA and we can be reached at [gwydionream@aol.com](mailto:gwydionream@aol.com). "Eurisko" in Greek means "I discover things" which is the general approach we have to our Druidry. We are all previously Wiccan trained and studying under ADF.

Five members in total; three humans (Mike "Gwydion" Ream, Jacquie Ream, Vonn Gants), one dog (Apollo), and one cat (Agnes).

Our length of office is generally one year from Yule to Yule.

Mike and Jacquie Ream = co-senior druids

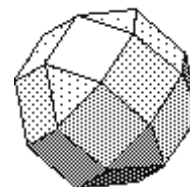
Vonn Gants = student

Apollo = head of security

Agnes = keeper of mysteries

Our basic tenets are:

- 1) Nature is good
- 2) When in doubt consult your nearest tree
- 3) Question authority
- 4) Each member of Eurisko Grove is encouraged to study under different teachers
- 5) Suggested titles of recognition; protégé, contemporary, and mentor
- 6-10) to come as we think of them



# SECTION THREE: Evolution of Modern Druidic By-Laws

Included here to show how other members of the modern Druid movements have chosen to organize themselves far beyond the simple RDNA's roots.

## Articles of Association and By-Laws of Pentalpha

By Isaac Bonewits  
Pentalpha Journal Dec 1978

**Editor's Note:** *Pentalpha was something Isaac formed with Selene to experiment with a new umbrella organization, since he felt that the RDNA was not adaptable for that purpose. After a few productive years, Pentalpha folded as a legal organization, and then a few years later, ADF was begun in 1983. As a result, I prefer to see Pentalpha as a test-run for ironing out the organizational aspects of ADF. -Scharding*

*As promised in the last issue here are the Articles of Association and By-Laws of Pentalpha, along with our statement of philosophy.*

### Philosophy

*Pentalpha: The Association for the Advancement of Aquarian Age Awareness* is a religious, educational and charitable association devoted to seeking and sharing the many paths by which the Aquarian Age may be entered. We are a religious group because we seek to be among those spiritual midwives who are helping with the painfully slow birth of a new consciousness that is gradually transforming humanity. We are an educational organization in that we seek to assist people in discovering and/or creating their own paths to physical, psychic, emotional, mental and spiritual growth. We are a charitable institution in that we seek to collect and disburse funds to those Aquarian age organizations and individuals most in need of support for their Aquarian research and activities.

Among the many organizations and systems of growth that are now beginning to blossom, there exist several Minority Belief Systems that are less "respectable" and that receive less support from the spiritual growth movement. Although we work with individual and groups from many mystical, magical, artistic and scientific backgrounds, we have chosen to place a special emphasis on the unfashionable spiritual movements of the Aquarian Age, such as Neopaganism, Witchcraft, Voodoo and Ceremonial Magic. We believe that the insights to be gained from these neglected faiths may inject fresh life and joy into the Aquarian movements in particular and human evolution in general.



## ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION of a Religious Group to be known as

### PENTALPHA:

## The Association for the Advancement of Aquarian Age Awareness

The undersigned, a majority of whom are citizens of the United States, desiring to form a religious association in California, U.S.A., declare

**FIRST.** The name of the Association shall be **Pentalpha: The Association for the Advancement of Aquarian Age Awareness.**

**SECOND:** The place in this State where the principal office of the Association is to located is the City of Oakland, Alameda County

**THIRD:** Said Association is organized exclusively for charitable, religious and educational purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

**FOURTH:** The names and addresses of the persons who are the Initial Trustees of the Association are as follows:

Deborah Selene Bonewits and  
Philip Emmons Isaac Bonewits  
5543 Claremont Avenue, no.2  
Oakland, CA 94618

Deborah Lowe  
475 Sanchez Street  
San Francisco, CA 94114

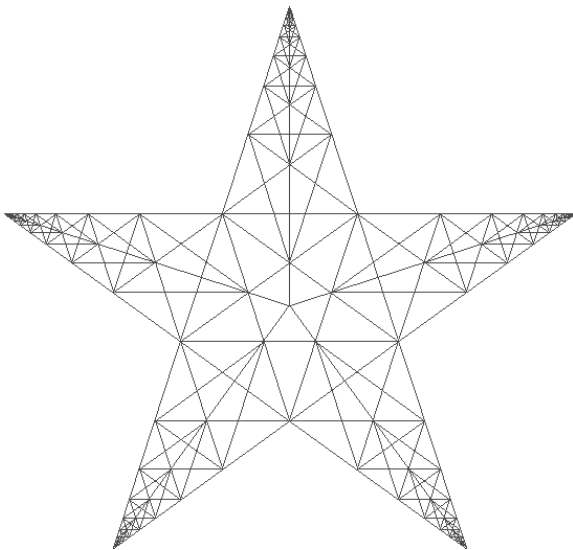
**FIFTH:** No part of the net earnings of the Association shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the Association shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article Third hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the Association shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting, to influence legislation, and the Association shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of the articles this Association shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the purposes of this Association

**SIXTH:** Upon the dissolution of this Association, the Board of Trustees shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all the liabilities of the Association, dispose of all the assets of the Association exclusively for the purposes of the Association in such manner, or to such organization or organizations organized

and operated exclusively for charitable, educational or religious purposes as shall at that time qualify as an exempt *organization or organizations* under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the Board of Trustees shall determine. Any of such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the county in which the principal office of the Association is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

The undersigned, being the Initial Trustees of the above Association, being duly sworn, upon their oaths did each say that the statements and matters set forth herein are true and in witness whereof, we have hereunto subscribed our names this 7th day of November, 1978.

*signed,*  
Deborah Selene Bonewits  
Philip Emmons Isaac Bonewits  
Deborah Lowe



## BY-LAWS OF PENTALPHA

### Article 1: Offices

The principal office of the Association in the State of California shall be located in the City of Oakland, County of Alameda. The Association may have other such offices, either within or without the State of California, as the Board of Trustees may designate or as the business of the Association may require from time to time.

### Article 2: Meetings of the Members of Record.

The annual meeting of the members of record of this Association shall be held at its principal office, 5543 Claremont Avenue, no.2, in the City of Oakland, State of California, at 3:00 PM on the first Monday in August, at which time they shall transact such business as shall properly come before them. Members of record for voting purposes are those members who

- (a) have attended a minimum of twelve church services during the preceding year;
- (b) are up to date with church dues;
- (c) who have not voluntarily withdrawn from the church nor been excommunicated by the Board of Trustees;
- (d) are members of record on July 1st of the year of the meeting in question;
- (e) have signed a statement indicating that they have read, understood, and accepted these by-laws.

Each member of record shall have one vote. There shall be no proxy votes. There shall be mailed to each member of record at his or her last known address, at least ten days prior to the annual meeting, a notice setting out the time and place of the annual meeting. In case a quorum be not present at the annual meeting, those present may adjourn to such day as they shall agree upon, and notice of such adjournment shall be mailed to each member at least ten days before such adjourned meeting; but if a quorum be present, they may adjourn from day to day and no notice need be given. A special meeting of members may be called at any time at the request of a trustee or of one-third of the members of the Association. Such meeting shall be called by the secretary, who shall mail a notice, stating the object of the meeting, to each member at least ten days before such meeting.

### Article 3: Election of Trustees.

The Initial Trustees of this Association having been chosen by Divine Selection as such, shall serve in perpetuity. They may elect to their ranks from time to time such other persons as they shall unanimously agree are also divinely called to serve as trustees. Such secondary elections shall be for periods of a year and a day each, and shall require unanimous agreement of the Initial Trustees upon each occasion of re-election. Such additional trustees shall exercise equal powers and responsibilities with the Initial Trustees, save where otherwise stated in these by-laws.

### Article 4: Meetings of Trustees.

The trustees shall hold regular meetings on the first day of each month at 7:00 PM, at the office of the Association in California or at other such time as they shall appoint. Special meetings may be

called by the president by giving one day's notice to each trustee. A majority of the trustees shall constitute a quorum. The trustees shall have the general management and control of the business and affairs of the Association and shall exercise all the powers that may be exercised or performed by the Association, under the statutes, the articles of association and the by-laws.

#### **Article 5: Executive Committee.**

The trustees are authorized in their discretion to appoint from their number an executive committee of three members, Who shall be vested with the powers of the Board when the same is not in session.

#### **Article 6: Officers.**

The officers of this Association shall consist of a president, secretary, treasurer, and other such officers and agents as may from time to time be chosen. The president shall preside at all meetings of the trustees and members, and shall have general control over the affairs of the Association, subject to the trustees. The secretary shall keep a record of all votes and minutes of the proceedings of all meetings, and shall give notice as required in these by-laws of all meetings. The treasurer shall sign all checks, drafts, contracts and other instruments for the Association, and shall have the custody of all moneys of the Association received or disbursed, and shall deposit all moneys and valuables in the name of and to the credit of the Association in such banks or depositories as the trustees shall designate. All these officers shall be selected by the Board of Trustees.

#### **Article 7: Vacancies.**

In the case of the death, disability, resignation or otherwise of one or more of the officers or trustees, the remaining trustees, although less than a quorum, shall fill the vacancies for the unexpired term.

#### **Article 8: Amendments of By-Laws.**

Suggestions for amendments of these by-laws may be made by majority vote of the members of record at any annual meeting, or at any special meeting called for the purpose, but shall not take effect without the unanimous consent of the Initial Trustees of this Association.

#### **Article 9: Fiscal Year.**

The fiscal year of the Association shall begin on the first day of January and end on the thirty-first day of December in each year.

The above by-laws were adopted by the unanimous consent of the Initial Board of Trustees of Pentalpha: The Association for the Advancement of Aquarian Age Awareness, on the 7th day of November, 1978, a quorum then being present.



## Unofficial Introduction to ADF By-Laws

*Ar nDraíocht Fein (ADF) is **not** officially related in any way to the Reform. However, because it was founded by Isaac Bonewits, not long after his attempts at Reforming the NRDNA, it may provide some idea of the type of national organization that Isaac was dreaming of during the Isaac debates of the 1970s and the experiment with the Pentalpha organization. By analyzing the ADF, you might better understand the experimentations of the SDNA from 1974-79, which in retrospect looks like the training grounds for what would be ADF in 1983. It should be remembered that ADF was not just Isaac's project, but the work of many individuals. Since Isaac stepped down in the mid-90s as Archdruid, yet more changes have occurred in the ADF, and newer editions of their by-laws should be referenced.*

By-Laws of Ár nDraíocht Féin:  
A Druid Fellowship, Inc.  
as of November 1st, 1994 c.e.

#### **ADF Preamble:**

- 1) Ár nDraíocht Féin: A Druid Fellowship, Inc., also known as "A.D.F.," is the legal structure for a Neopagan Druidic religion based on the beliefs and practices of the ancient Indo-Europeans, adapted to the needs and sensibilities of modern people. We are a nonprofit religious, scientific, educational, artistic, and charitable corporation, organized to practice the full spectrum of legal activities practiced by any religious organization.
- 2) As we define it, Neopagan Druidism is a polytheistic, non-dualist, nonsexist, non-racist, scientific, holistic, and ecologically oriented faith. We are dedicated to the preservation of our Holy Mother Earth, the full achievement of human potential, the revival of the worship of the Old Gods in a modern context, and the creation of a world of peace, love, freedom, health, and prosperity for all intelligent beings.
- 3) The following bylaws are intended to help us achieve these ideals and all future bylaws and amendments shall be similarly intended.

#### **ADF Article 1: Purposes**

- 1) To accomplish the goals outlined in the Preamble, A.D.F. advocates and practices, as an integral part of our faith, many sciences, arts, and disciplines, both mainstream and alternative, within a non-dogmatic, pluralistic context, in order to change ourselves, each other, and the world around us.
- 2) Since one of the primary duties of the ancient Druids was to lead their tribes in magical and religious activities, A.D.F. advocates and practices, as an integral part of our faith, open, inclusionary, and public ceremonies to worship the Earth Mother and the Old Gods and Goddesses, rites of passage to mark the cycles of our lives, and magical rituals to accomplish our other goals in an honest and ethical manner.
- 3) Since the ancient Druids were the intellectuals of their tribes, A.D.F. advocates and practices, as an integral part of our faith, scientific and scholarly research and debate about the ancient Druids, the Indo-Europeans, comparative religion, folklore, ethnomusicology, and every other relevant field of human knowledge.
- 4) In keeping with our reverence for and worship of the Earth

Mother, A.D.F. advocates and practices, as an integral part of our faith, ecological and environmental research, education, and activism.

- 5) Since the ancient Druids were the artists of their tribes, A.D.F. advocates and practices, as an integral part of our faith, a wide variety of auditory, graphic, movement, dramatic, liturgical, and other arts and crafts.
- 6) Since the ancient Druids included many healers in their ranks, A.D.F. advocates and practices, as an integral part of our faith, the investigation, dissemination, and performance of a wide variety of healing arts and technologies, both mainstream and alternative, including herbal, nutritional, mental, magical, and spiritual methods, among others; advising all parties concerned as to the presence or absence of appropriate credentials as required by civil law.
- 7) Since the ancient Druids included diviners in their ranks, A.D.F. advocates and practices, as an integral part of our faith, the use of the divinatory arts and sciences as tools for spiritual counseling and liturgical guidance; advising all parties concerned as to the presence or absence of appropriate credentials as required by civil law.
- 8) Since the ancient Druids included counselors, mediators, and judges in their ranks, A.D.F. advocates and practices, as an integral part of our faith, the investigation, dissemination, and performance of a wide variety of counseling arts and methods, both mainstream and alternative, as well as techniques of mediating disputes and judging conflicts between organizations and/or individuals in the Neopagan community; advising all parties concerned as to the presence or absence of appropriate credentials as required by civil law.

## **ADF Article 2: Offices**

- 1) The principal office of the Corporation shall be located in the City of Newark, County of New Castle, in the State of Delaware, USA. The Corporation may have other such offices, either within or without the State of Delaware, as the Directors may designate or the business of the Corporation may require from time to time.

## **ADF Article 3: Calendar**

- 1) The eight High Days of the Druidic calendar, as referenced in these bylaws and all legal documents of A.D.F., are as follows: Samhain, Winter Solstice, Oimelc, Spring Equinox, Beltane, Summer Solstice, Lughnasadh, and Fall Equinox.
- 2) For legal purposes, each High Day shall commence at sunset in Delaware on the days preceding the following dates: Samhain = Nov. 1st, Winter Solstice = Dec. 21st, Oimelc = Feb. 1st, Spring Equinox = March 21st, Beltane = May 1st, Summer Solstice = June 21st, Lughnasadh = Aug. 1st, and Fall Equinox = Sept. 21st.
- 3) For ceremonial purposes, however, each High Day may be celebrated upon either the legal date, the astronomical date, or upon a date mutually convenient to the participants of the particular celebrations involved.
- 4) Since the Druidic year traditionally runs from one Samhain to the next, the legal and ceremonial Druidic years shall run according to the legal and ceremonial dates for Samhain described previously in this Article.
- 5) The fiscal year of the Corporation shall begin on the first day of January and end on the thirty-first day of December in each civil year.

## **ADF Article 4: Categories of Membership**

- 1) "Regular," "Supporting," and "Sustaining" members of A.D.F. are those individuals paying an annual amount of dues to be determined by the Mother Grove, and who are entitled to receive all A.D.F. publications meant for the general membership.
- 2) "Family" members are those individuals, annually paying a lesser amount than regular dues, who reside with regular members and who are relatives, spouses, or unmarried partners to them. They will not receive separate mailings of most A.D.F. publications.
- 3) "Lifetime" members are those individuals making large donations of money or service to A.D.F., as shall be determined by the Mother Grove. They are entitled to receive all A.D.F. publications meant for the general membership, and shall be considered current with their dues for the rest of their lives.
- 4) "Prisoner" members are those individuals currently incarcerated in correctional institutions, who may pay a lesser amount than the regular dues. They are entitled to receive all A.D.F. publications meant for the general membership, except that the Membership Directory and other publications which the Mother Grove may decide constitute a violation of privacy or risk for the general membership if examined within the prison system shall be withheld. Prisoners may not run for office, except within a local prison-based grove.
- 5) "Exchange Editor" members are those individuals, annually paying a lesser amount than regular dues, who publish periodicals with which A.D.F. has an exchange subscription arrangement. Like family members, they will not receive separate mailings of most A.D.F. publications.
- 6) "Complimentary" members are those individuals whom the Mother Grove has decided should receive mailings of the general A.D.F. publications in order to keep them informed of our activities, and who pay no dues at all. They may not be voting members and may not run for office.
- 7) From time to time the Mother Grove may institute other categories of membership, including combinations of categories, and shall define their characteristics as needed.
- 8) Children under the age of 18 must have the signed and notarized permission of at least one parent or legal guardian in order to become a member of A.D.F., unless the Mother Grove shall rule otherwise.

## **ADF Article 5: The Voting Members**

- 1) "Voting" members, also known as the "members of record," are those members of A.D.F. who: (a) belong to one of the dues-paying categories listed in the preceding sections of this article; (b) are up to date with their A.D.F. membership dues; and (c) have not resigned from A.D.F., nor been expelled.
- 2) Each voting member shall have one vote, plus one additional vote for each full, continuous year that he or she remains a voting member.
- 3) A gap of more than three months from the expiration of membership to renewal shall constitute a discontinuity of membership and cause the loss of all accumulated votes and related privileges. Any discontinued member may petition the Mother Grove for a reinstatement of their initial membership date and thus the recovery of accumulated votes and privileges, upon payment of dues in arrears. If the membership gap be three years or less in length, the Registrar shall grant such petitions under most circumstances. If the gap be longer than three years, or if the former member claims an inability to pay said arrears,

or for any unusual conditions concerning the petitioner, the Registrar shall present the petition at the next Mother Grove meeting. The Mother Grove may then decide whether or not to reinstate the lapsed member's initial membership date.

- 4) Except as may be noted elsewhere in these bylaws, all references to voting by the voting members assume these multiple votes.
- 5) Except as otherwise mentioned in these bylaws, a quorum for voting purposes shall consist of those voting members representing twenty-five percent of the total number of votes available to be cast.
- 6) Proxy votes may be assigned to voting members who are to be present at an annual or special meeting, through the signing of the proxy statements issued by the Mother Grove, and are valid only for the annual or special meeting marked thereon.
- 7) If election or referendum choices are combined with a proxy statement, the person receiving the proxy must cast those votes given him or her according to any electoral choices marked on the combined ballot/proxy statement. If a given member sending in such a proxy has not made any such electoral choices, the person receiving the proxy may cast those votes according to his or her best judgment.
- 8) Voting members may attend annual or special meetings via electronic communications devices if such are available.

### **ADF Article 6: The Annual Meeting**

- 1) The annual meeting of the voting members of A.D.F. shall be held during the annual International Druid Festival, the time of which shall be decided by the membership at the previous annual meeting.
- 2) There shall be mailed to each voting member at her or his last known address, by first class mail or overseas airmail, at least six weeks prior to the annual meeting, a notice setting out the time and place of the annual meeting, and including a combined proxy statement and ballot to be signed by those voting members so desiring. Said notice and proxy/ballot may be incorporated into an A.D.F. newsletter published at the appropriate time, which must be mailed out by first class mail or overseas air.
- 3) In case a quorum is not present in body or proxy at the annual meeting, those present may adjourn to such a day and time as a majority shall agree upon. If said day and time is within the current International Druid Festival, verbal notice to those voting members present at the A.D.F. shall suffice, and the necessary quorum shall drop to ten percent of the total membership vote. Otherwise, notice of such adjournment shall be mailed to each voting member of A.D.F. at least 21 days before said date and
- 4) Alternately, if a quorum is not present at the annual meeting, those present may decide by majority vote to hold the annual meeting without binding votes upon any subject other than the election of a new Members' Advocate, who may be elected as described elsewhere in these bylaws. If the office of Archdruid is up for election at that time, this election shall take place as well, as described elsewhere in these bylaws.
- 5) If a quorum is present, elections for all Officerships open shall be held as described elsewhere in these bylaws.

### **ADF Article 7: Special Meetings & Referenda**

- 1) A special meeting or a referendum of the voting members may be called by the request of a majority of the Mother Grove, or by a petition representing one-third of the membership votes. Such a special meeting shall be held sixty to ninety days after the Board meeting at which such request or petition is received, at a location to be selected by the

Mother Grove. Notice of such a special meeting, stating its particular purpose, shall be mailed to the voting members as with the annual meeting, including the provision of proxy statements.

- 2) The Mother Grove may decide to hold a referendum through the mails at any time, and such referendum may be instead of a special meeting, should the topics under consideration lend themselves to such treatment. Ballots for a referendum shall be mailed out with the next issue of the A.D.F. newsletter, which shall include brief arguments presenting all sides of the topics involved. Voting shall be considered to be closed sixty days after the issue has been mailed.

### **ADF Article 8: Elections of Officers/Directors**

- 1) At the annual meeting held in 1993 c.e., all Officers, except the Archdruid, shall stand for re-election. At that and every third following annual meeting, the voting members shall vote to fill all expiring Officerships in the Mother Grove and may choose to add Non-Officer Directors to the Board as well.
- 2) At every annual meeting the voting members shall elect, by simple majority vote of those participating, with no quorum required, a Members' Advocate who shall thus be elected to the Mother Grove as well.
- 3) Nominations to the Board may be made by the standing Board, as well as by any group of twenty or more voting members or any group of voting members having a total of fifty or more votes, who shall sign a petition nominating a qualified candidate, and submit said petition at least sixty days before the elections are to be held.
- 4) Any voting member of A.D.F., save a prisoner, may run for election as an Officer or Non-Officer Director, or be selected as a Non-Officer Director. All candidates must have passed their 18th birthdays and fulfill the requirements for office listed elsewhere in these bylaws.
- 5) After verification of membership status of all candidates and nomination signatories by the Registrar, the names of the candidates shall be published, along with brief statements by the candidates (if provided), in the ADF newsletter.
- 6) Brief rebuttals (if desired), as well as ballots, shall be mailed to all voting members along with proxy statements, six weeks prior to the elections. Such mailing may be combined with an issue of the ADF newsletter.
- 7) Plurality of votes cast for a given Office shall be sufficient to elect an Officer other than the Archdruid. Non-Officer Directors shall be elected by receiving at least 25% of all votes cast.
- 8) Any member may split his/her available votes between the various candidates for any given Office. Any member may split his/her available votes between the various candidates who wish to become Non-Officer Directors, but may not cast more than his/her available total for all such candidates together.
- 9) Should there be no quorum achieved for the elections (which shall be defined as being the same as for the annual meeting), by presence or proxy, then all incumbent candidates shall be deemed to have been reelected.
- 10) At the end of every triannual election, after all Officers and Non-Officer Directors (if any) have been elected, and before the annual meeting is finally adjourned, the Archdruid-elect or continuing Archdruid may select one or more voting members as Non-Officer Directors to join those Officers elected in the Mother Grove.
- 11) All Directors, whether elected or selected, shall exercise equal powers and responsibilities, save as otherwise noted in these



bylaws.

- 12) Missing three consecutive Mother Grove meetings, whether regular or special, shall constitute an offer of resignation from the Mother Grove by that Director. The rest of the Mother Grove may accept or decline that offer.
- 13) Any Director, Officer or Assistant Officer of the Mother Grove, other than the Archdruid, may be removed for nonfeasance or malfeasance of office, by a three-quarters vote of the Directors (not counting the subject of such action if he/she be a Director). No such removal may be made without written notice by registered mail to the last known address to the subject, giving 30 days to respond. Failure to respond constitutes acceptance of the removal. In an emergency, the Archdruid may suspend an Officer subject to the approval of the Mother Grove at the next meeting. An elected Archdruid may not be removed thusly but may be recalled by the membership as detailed elsewhere in these bylaws.
- 14) In the case of the death, removal, expulsion, resignation, or permanent incapacitation of any Director or Officer other than the Members' Advocate or the Archdruid, who shall be replaced as described elsewhere in these bylaws, the remaining Directors may, at any time thereafter, elect a qualified voting member to finish out the departed Director or Officer's term.
- 15) All Officers and Non-Officer Directors elected or selected at the annual meeting, including an elected Archdruid, shall take office as of the second High Day following that annual meeting.

### **ADF Article 9: The Mother Grove**

- 1) The Board of Directors of the Corporation shall be known as the "Mother Grove" of A.D.F.
- 2) The members of the Mother Grove may exercise all the duties, responsibilities, and privileges normally held by the Directors of other nonprofit religious corporations.
- 3) The Mother Grove shall hold regular meetings at least once between each Solstice and Equinox at the offices of the Corporation in Delaware, or at such times and places as they shall appoint. Special meetings may be called by the Archdruid by giving one day's notice to each Director.
- 4) Regular or special meetings of the Board or any committee may be held in person, via electronic communications devices, or through the mails. These may include: telephone conference calls, a telephone or postal polling of Board Members by the Archdruid or another Officer at the Archdruid's request, the use of a computer bulletin board, etc.
- 5) A majority of the Mother Grove shall constitute a quorum. Each Director, as such, shall have one vote. Except as otherwise stated in these bylaws, a simple majority shall carry all motions.
- 6) At the Archdruid's choice, consensus decision making or Roberts Rules of Order may be adopted for all or part of any given meeting.
- 7) The Mother Grove shall have the general management of the business and affairs of the Corporation, subject to the veto of the Archdruid, which may be overruled by a three-quarters vote of the other Directors.
- 8) The Mother Grove shall exercise all the powers that may be exercised or performed by the Corporation under the statutes, the Articles of Incorporation, and the bylaws.
- 9) Minutes of every meeting of the Mother Grove shall be taken by the Scribe. Abbreviated versions shall be edited by him or her to eliminate meandering and/or possible violations of

members' privacy, and published in the regular A.D.F. newsletter. Any member of A.D.F. may see the unabbreviated versions of the minutes by consulting the archives or by paying for any copying and mailing expenses.

- 10) On those occasions when the Mother Grove is meeting with a majority of the Directors physically present in one location, such meetings shall be open to attendance by any voting members who may happen to be in the vicinity, unless matters of extreme delicacy or personal privacy may be involved, or in the case of a spiritual retreat being held by the Mother Grove. When Mother Grove meetings are being held via electronic communications devices, the Archdruid may invite one or more individuals, whether voting members or not, to attend as guests.
- 11) Any voting member may, through the Members' Advocate, request a position on the agenda of a Mother Grove meeting, for the discussion of matters of concern to her or him. If she or he is an electronic guest or a physical visitor to a Mother Grove meeting, said member may then address the Directors on the issues involved.
- 12) The Directors are authorized at their discretion to appoint from their number an executive committee of two or more persons, one of whom shall be the Archdruid, who shall be vested with the powers of the Mother Grove when the same is not in session.
- 13) The Mother Grove is the supreme authority in the Corporation and may, if necessary, overrule the decisions, policies, and practices of all other groups within A.D.F., including guilds, councils, special interest groups, committees, and local groves. In order to facilitate creativity, communication, and spiritual growth for all members, however, said authority is to be used lightly and rarely.
- 14) The maximum number of Directors shall be twelve. The minimum shall be eight.
- 15) Any Director may pass her/his proxy onto another for a particular meeting for one or more particular issues (but not a general proxy), verifying such in writing to the Scribe within three weeks following the meeting.

### **ADF Article 10: Incapacitation**

- 1) A two-thirds majority of the Mother Grove may request any member of A.D.F. in any position of responsibility or trust, including any Director, Officer, or Archdruid, to submit to evaluation by two or more appropriate medical or psychological specialists, who shall be chosen by the Mother Grove and paid for by the Corporation. A member of the Mother Grove shall be selected to consult with said specialists and shall make a written and verbal report of the specialists' findings and her or his own.
- 2) Upon receipt of this report, the Mother Grove may then declare that the person so evaluated is temporarily or permanently incapacitated. Said person shall then be immediately removed from all positions of responsibility either temporarily or permanently, depending upon the declaration.
- 3) Restoration of her or his previous positions, whether through election, selection, appointment, or simple resumption of duties shall be contingent upon a statement by the same or other acceptable specialists that she or he is once again fit to execute her or his responsibilities.

### **ADF Article 11: The Archdruid**

- 1) The Archdruid shall preside at all meetings of the Mother Grove and voting members; shall be a member, whether participating actively or not, of all committees organized by

the Mother Grove; shall have normal executive control over the affairs of the Corporation; may perform all those other duties that would otherwise be performed by a corporate President; and shall be responsible for articulating the spiritual vision of A.D.F. He or she shall not be considered to be impeccable nor infallible on any topic.

- 2) The initial Archdruid of A.D.F., having been chosen by Divine Selection as such, and having been the original Incorporator of A.D.F., shall serve in perpetuity — i.e., until his death, retirement, or permanent incapacitation.
- 3) After the death, retirement, or permanent incapacitation of the initial Archdruid, the Vice Archdruid shall become the Acting Archdruid, and shall exercise all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of the initial Archdruid until the second High Day following the next annual meeting.
- 4) At said annual meeting, a new Archdruid shall be elected by a two-thirds majority of the available votes held by those members participating, with no quorum required. Should no single candidate win a two-thirds approval, the candidate with the lowest total shall be disqualified, and this process shall continue until only one candidate is left or a candidate has won two-thirds of the votes.
- 5) Any of the following shall be eligible to be a candidate for the office of Archdruid: (a) the Acting Archdruid; (b) one person chosen by a majority vote of the Mother Grove; (c) one person chosen by a majority of those members of the Council of Senior Druids who are not also members of the Mother Grove; and (d) any person or persons presenting a nomination petition to the Mother Grove signed by at least fifty voting members of A.D.F. There may thus be from one to three or more possible candidates. All candidates for the office of Archdruid must be individual voting members of A.D.F. in good standing, announce their willingness to take on the responsibilities of the office, and announce that Neopagan Druidism is their primary religious path.
- 6) The first Archdruid elected in this manner shall take office on the second High Day following that annual meeting; and shall exercise all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of the initial Archdruid for nine years, at which point she or he must relinquish the office to another chosen in the same manner through an election held at the annual meeting immediately preceding the end of her or his term.
- 7) The normal term of office for all elected Archdruids shall subsequently be nine years. No elected Archdruid may serve two terms in a row, except that if a Vice Archdruid finishes out the term of an elected Archdruid, as described later in this article, for a period of less than three years, she or he may be elected for the next full term.
- 8) An elected Archdruid may be recalled by a three-quarters vote of all voting members of A.D.F., at a special meeting or referendum called for that purpose.
- 9) An elected Archdruid who relinquishes his or her duties to the Vice Archdruid for more than three months at one time, or for more than a total of twenty-seven months in his or her term, shall be deemed to have offered to retire. The Mother Grove may accept or decline this offer.
- 10) If an elected Archdruid is recalled, retires, dies, or is permanently incapacitated, the Vice Archdruid shall become the new Archdruid and shall finish out the term of her or his predecessor. References in these bylaws to "elected" Archdruids shall then include such a person.
- 11) The original Archdruid upon his retirement may take the position of Archdruid Emeritus which shall entitle him to attend and speak, but not vote; at all Board and committee

meetings he may choose, and to publish his thoughts in any Mother Grove publication.

## **ADF Article 12: The Other Officers**

- 1) The Officers of this Corporation shall consist of: an Archdruid, a Vice Archdruid, a Scribe, a Pursewarden, a Registrar, a Chronicler, a Preceptor, a Members' Advocate, and other such officers and agents as may from time to time be chosen.
- 2) The Vice Archdruid shall exercise the functions of the Archdruid in her or his absence; shall replace the Archdruid in the event of her or his recall, death, retirement, or permanent incapacitation, as described elsewhere in these bylaws; and may perform all those other duties that would otherwise be performed by a corporate Vice President. Candidates for the office of Vice Archdruid shall each be a willing member of one of the two innermost Circles then populated of an official Druidic study program, as verified by the Council of Lore.
- 3) The Scribe shall keep a record of all votes and minutes of the proceedings of all meetings of the Mother Grove and voting members; shall give notice as required in these bylaws of all meetings; shall send proxy statements and/or mail ballots to all voting members as described in these bylaws; shall organize all incoming correspondence for reply; and may perform all those other duties that would otherwise be performed by a corporate Secretary. Candidates for the office of Scribe shall have the ability to take minutes and word processing skills, shall have a knowledge of all basic information regarding A.D.F. history, policies, polytheology, etc.; and shall have access to a computer with which to perform their duties.
- 4) The Pursewarden (and/or other designee as approved by the Mother Grove) shall sign all checks, drafts, contracts, and other instruments for the Corporation; shall have custody of all monies of the Corporation received or disbursed; shall deposit all monies and valuables in the name of and to the credit of A.D.F. in such banks or other financial institutions as the Mother Grove shall designate. All checks or other financial instruments involving sums greater than (US) \$5,000 shall require the signatures of both the Pursewarden and the Archdruid. The Pursewarden shall be responsible for keeping the Corporation's financial records according to generally accepted accounting principles for nonprofit corporations; will generate quarterly financial reports for the Mother Grove; and may perform all those other duties that would otherwise be performed by a corporate Treasurer. Candidates for the office of Pursewarden shall have bookkeeping and/or accounting skills.
- 5) The Registrar shall keep all membership and subscription records, shall have general responsibility for maintaining the database thereof; shall generate reports and mailing labels for the Mother Grove and other designated agents of A.D.F.; and shall assist grove organizers and other members with specialized mailings. She or he shall maintain strict confidentiality of the membership list according to guidelines established by the Mother Grove. Candidates for the office of Registrar shall have database management skills, and shall have access to a computer with which to perform their duties.
- 6) The Chronicler shall have responsibility for newsletters, journals, directories, and other publications to be issued by the Mother Grove, as determined by the Directors. He or she shall function as Editor in Chief of all Mother Grove publications; shall keep track of advertising (paid,

- exchange, and donated); and shall supervise physical production and distribution. Candidates for the office of Chronicler shall have editing and desktop publishing skills, and shall have access to a computer with which to perform their duties.
- 7) The Preceptor shall function as the head of the Council of Lore; shall supervise the creation and operation of A.D.F.'s Druidic study programs; and shall be responsible for monitoring and recording the progress of individual members of A.D.F. through the Study Programs. She or he shall investigate the legal and academic requirements for creating and operating accredited institutions of higher learning, and shall use this information to help create and operate the College of Druidism. Candidates for the office of Preceptor shall be persons holding an earned Masters Degree or higher from a regionally accredited institution and having at least five years' experience in the design and/or administration of programs for adult learners leading to accredited degrees, professional certification, or recognized recertification credits for occupations requiring registration, licensure, or certification.
  - 8) The Members' Advocate shall represent individual members of A.D.F. at large, with special attention to the needs of minority factions not otherwise represented. She or he shall function as an ombudsperson, and shall be a member (whether active or inactive) of every committee organized by the Mother Grove. The Members' Advocate shall be elected on an annual basis by the voting members, as described elsewhere in these bylaws. No person may serve as Member's Advocate more than three years in a row. In the case of the death, removal, expulsion, retirement, or permanent incapacitation of a Members' Advocate, a new Members' Advocate shall be elected to fulfill her or his term by a mail election, unless there are less than three months remaining in her/his term, with a simple majority vote of those responding being sufficient for election.
  - 9) The normal term of office for all officers, save the Archdruid and the Members' Advocate, shall be three years.
  - 10) In the event of a departure of an officer from the Mother Grove, as described elsewhere in these bylaws, any two offices may be temporarily held by one person simultaneously, save that the same person cannot be both the Archdruid and Vice Archdruid and that the Members' Advocate shall not hold any other office. Such dual officership shall be only until another Director with the proper qualifications shall be available to take over the duties of the departed Officer.
  - 11) All Officers described in the above sections of this article shall be Directors. Additional officerships of a lesser nature, such as Bookkeeper, Assistant Chronicler, etc., may be created by the Mother Grove at their discretion, and said lesser officers need not be Directors. Lesser officers who are not Directors need not be over 18 years of age if they will have no legal responsibilities for A.D.F. If under 18, they must have the signed and notarized permission of at least one parent or legal guardian.

### **ADF Article 13: The Board of Advisors**

- 1) The Board of Advisors shall consist of those members of A.D.F. who are leaders in the various arts, crafts, and sciences practiced within A.D.F. They may be appointed by the Archdruid or be approved by the Mother Grove after an election by members of A.D.F. concerned with their field of expertise.

- 2) Appointees to the Board of Advisors shall serve until removed by the Archdruid. Approved Advisors shall serve until replaced by their successors. Any Advisor may be removed by a two-thirds vote of the Mother Grove.
- 3) The Board of Advisors shall individually and/or collectively advise the Archdruid, the Mother Grove, and the general membership of A.D.F., on matters relating to their fields of expertise, but shall have no political function save within the guilds or other special interest groups which may have elected them.

### **ADF Article 14: The Council of Lore**

- 1) The Council of Lore shall be a standing committee, headed by the Preceptor. Its membership shall include those Directors who wish to participate, those willing members of the Board of Advisors competent to provide educational guidance, and other such members of A.D.F. as the Preceptor shall nominate and the Mother Grove shall approve.
- 2) Since the primary purpose of the Council of Lore shall be to provide educational guidance to those members of A.D.F. working their way through the Druidic study programs, members of the Council shall be expected to have and maintain demonstrable knowledge and skills relevant to their areas of responsibility. Whenever possible and applicable, the possession of advanced academic degrees is preferable to the lack thereof.

### **ADF Article 15: Other Standing Committees**

- 1) In addition to the Executive Committee and the Council of Lore, the Mother Grove shall create and staff the following committees with such members as may be willing and appropriate: the Finance & Fund Raising Committee, the Publications Committee, the Grove Organizing Committee.
- 2) Every standing committee shall be headed by a Director, usually an officer with related duties.
- 3) The Directors may at their discretion create other committees, both standing and ad hoc.

### **ADF Article 16: Local Groves**

- 1) The Mother Grove shall act upon all requests for the chartering of local congregations, to be known as "groves," and shall issue appropriate regulations as needed for their proper functioning.
- 2) In order to prevent confusion with other organizations calling their local groups "groves," all local groves of A.D.F. shall use the naming convention of "\_\_\_\_\_ Grove, A.D.F." or "Grove of \_\_\_\_\_, A.D.F." or the bilingual equivalent, in all brochures, posters, announcements, public letters, etc., meant to be read by nonmembers of the local groves.
- 3) All local groves shall comply with all relevant federal, state/provincial, and local laws regarding the operation of branch congregations of larger religious organizations; unless specifically directed by the Mother Grove to test a law in the courts.
- 4) All local groves of A.D.F. are entitled to the maximum amount of autonomy consistent with the survival, identity, and well being of A.D.F. as a whole.
- 5) Each local grove may choose any Indo-European ethnic focus, pantheon, and liturgical language of interest to the majority of its members. Non-Indo-European ethnic focuses, pantheons, and liturgical languages are not appropriate to official A.D.F. activities, except that local Native American traditions may be respectfully integrated into a local grove's official activities, according to policies set by the Mother Grove.

- 6) Every local grove is expected to provide open public or semipublic worship opportunities on a regular basis, including all eight High Days. The overwhelming majority of local grove activities are to be open and inclusionary. Smaller groups may be formed within a grove, and may engage in closed activities, provided that no such group includes more than half of the grove's members.
- 7) Only those persons who would qualify as voting members of A.D.F., as described in Article 5, Section 1, may vote in official local grove elections, be officers of a local grove, or be counted as official grove members for chartering purposes. The Senior Druid, Scribe, and Pursewarden, as well as any other local officers who will exercise any legal responsibilities for the grove, must have passed their 18th birthday.
- 8) The Mother Grove shall have the power to suspend or revoke the charter of a local grove for good and sufficient cause.
- 9) The Archdruid shall have the power to suspend the charter of a local grove for good and sufficient cause, subject to the agreement of the Mother Grove at their next Board meeting.

### **ADF Article 17: Rank**

- 1) Rank within the membership as a whole shall be a function of progress within one or more Druidic Study Programs of Circles within Circles, as shall be determined by procedures to be instituted by the Council of Lore with the approval of the Mother Grove. All such study programs shall be grounded in the attainment and maintenance of demonstrable knowledge and skills.
- 2) Since it is envisioned that clergy and other leaders in A.D.F. will be only a fraction of the total membership, no pressure is to be placed on members to participate in any of the Druidic study programs.
- 3) Any person claiming a rank related to a Druidic study program may be politely challenged to demonstrate his or her knowledge and/or skills, either by one or more examiners from the Council of Lore, or by any member of A.D.F. being asked to extend rights or privileges to said person based on his or her claimed rank.

### **ADF Article 18: Discrimination**

- 1) Membership and rank in A.D.F., attendance at public or semipublic A.D.F. activities, and participation in any Druidic Study Program, shall not be denied to any person on the basis of race, ancestry, color, physical disability (except as mentioned elsewhere in this article), age, gender, or affectional orientation, but may be denied to individuals practicing creeds inimical to Neopagan Druidism.
- 2) Membership within the Mother Grove, the clergy, and other such positions of responsibility and trust as the Mother Grove may determine, shall be granted only to practicing Neopagans who are not simultaneously practicing a creed inimical to Neopagan Druidism.
- 3) As used herein, "inimical creeds" shall include varieties of conservative monotheism, atheism, demonism, racialism, or other such faiths, as shall be determined by the Mother Grove.
- 4) Proven communication or behavior of a virulently racist, sexist, homophobic, heterophobic, anti-Semitic, or otherwise bigoted manner, shall be grounds for expulsion from A.D.F., as described elsewhere in these bylaws. This does not include strong verbal statements about the theology, history, or psychological characteristics of other religions.
- 5) All organizers of public and semipublic A.D.F. activities shall make strenuous efforts to facilitate the participation of differently-abled individuals. Nonetheless, all aspirants to

any given rank or position must be able to meet all the relevant qualifications previously determined for said rank or position, unless the Mother Grove shall rule otherwise in a particular instance.

### **ADF Article 19: Suspension, Expulsion and Resignation of Members**

- 1) The Mother Grove may, by a two-thirds vote, suspend or expel any member confessing to or found guilty of committing felony crimes-with-victims, as defined by civil law and current criminological opinion, or for proven and documented disruptive or abusive conduct which works directly against the aims, activities or welfare of A.D.F. or its members.
- 2) If a member under consideration for suspension or expulsion is a Director, he or she may be suspended or expelled only by a two-thirds vote of the remaining Directors. The initial Archdruid cannot be suspended or expelled. An elected Archdruid can be suspended or expelled, but only after being recalled as described elsewhere in these bylaws.
- 3) "Disruptive or abusive conduct" does not include: the temperate expression of disagreement, such as public or private written or verbal criticism of A.D.F. or its leadership; vigorous debate over matters of scholarship, art, spirituality, or politics; the circulation of petitions to the Mother Grove; the organizing of other members into voting blocks; nor mere rudeness, thoughtlessness, or lack of social skills.
- 4) Disruptive or abusive conduct does include: the spreading of slander or libel against A.D.F. or its leadership; bigoted communication or behavior as described elsewhere in these bylaws; or active efforts to persuade members to quit or to dissuade nonmembers from joining.
- 5) In the case of a person who was declared temporarily or permanently incapacitated at the time of his or her resignation or removal from a position of responsibility, the Mother Grove shall require a reevaluation of his or her competency similar to the process which had declared incapacity, before he or she may seek election or appointment.
- 6) Members may resign from membership at any time for personal reasons, and will then be eligible to rejoin A.D.F. at a later date. Any member whose membership dues lapse for a period of three months or more shall be deemed to have resigned. If a resigned member should decide to rejoin at a later date, her or his votes shall be calculated from that later date.
- 7) Suspended, expelled or resigned members may not hold office or act in any way as representatives of A.D.F. Expelled or resigned members have no right to receive A.D.F. publications, and may not continue to participate in Druidic Study Programs administered by A.D.F.
- 8) Members who have been suspended or expelled may, at the discretion of the Mother Grove, be banned permanently or temporarily from attending A.D.F. activities, including public worship. Such bans shall be published immediately in A.D.F. publications. They may be published elsewhere in the case of very serious crimes.

### **ADF Article 20: Open Financial Records**

- 1) All members of A.D.F. are entitled to see the accounting records. The Pursewarden shall make these available at a nominal fee for reproduction and mailing. Balance sheets and other similar summary reports shall be regularly published by A.D.F.

- 2) Purswardens in local groves shall make quarterly financial reports to the Mother Grove, accounting for all income and expenses, and shall make these reports available to local grove members in a similar fashion.

### **ADF Article 21: Amendment & Replacement of By-Laws**

- 1) Amendments to these bylaws may be made at any annual or special meeting or referendum, as described elsewhere in these bylaws, by a two-thirds vote of the entire voting membership; or by a two thirds vote of the Directors at any regular or special meeting of the Mother Grove.
- 2) The initial Archdruid's lifetime term of office and immunity from recall and/or expulsion; the requirement in this article for all future sets of bylaws to contain similar language concerning replacement of bylaws; and this section of this article; may not be amended without the consent of the initial Archdruid.
- 3) Every twenty-seven years after the death of the initial Archdruid, at an annual meeting of the voting members, the voting members shall decide by a two-thirds vote whether to retain the current set of bylaws. Said decision shall be made after all other electoral matters have been settled.
- 4) Should the results be negative, a By-Laws Revision Committee shall be formed. The members of said committee shall include the newly elected Members' Advocate, who shall head the committee, the newly-elected Archdruid (or if no Archdruidic election has taken place, the current Archdruid), a newly-elected Director (or a continuing one, if no Directorial election happened), three members of the Board of Advisors who are not Directors, and the Senior Druids of three local groves. The annual meeting may not be ended without these nine being selected and approved by majority vote of the voting members participating in body or proxy.
- 5) The By-Laws Revision Committee shall have one year to produce a proposed new set of bylaws. Halfway through that year, an early draft shall be published in the A.D.F. newsletter for comment by the membership.
- 6) At least six weeks prior to the following annual meeting, the By-Laws Revision Committee shall publish and distribute to the voting members a proposed new set of bylaws. At that annual meeting, alterations to the proposal shall be debated and passed by a majority vote of those participating in body or proxy. The final set of proposed new bylaws shall then be voted upon as a whole, with a three-quarters vote of the entire voting membership necessary for passage. The quorum for this vote shall therefore be seventy-five percent of all votes available to be cast.
- 7) Should there not be such a quorum available in body or proxy at said annual meeting, the final set of proposed new bylaws shall be submitted by the Mother Grove, by first class or overseas airmail, to the voting membership as a referendum within three weeks after the annual meeting concludes, with a six week deadline for reply. Again, a three-quarters vote of the entire voting membership shall be necessary for passage.
- 8) Should the new bylaws not be passed at either the annual meeting nor a referendum as just described, the old bylaws shall continue in effect for the next twenty-six years.
- 9) Should the new bylaws be passed at either the annual meeting or the referendum, they will take effect upon the following Samhain, completely replacing the previous set of bylaws at that time. It shall be the duty of the existing Directors to notify all appropriate civil authorities and to arrange any

required elections for new officers, etc., in keeping with the spirit as well as the letter of the new bylaws.

- 10) All new sets of bylaws must contain an article equivalent to this one, allowing for their complete replacement every twenty-seven years at the will of the membership.

### **DF Article 22: The Council of Senior Druids**

- 1) All Senior Druids of provisionally or fully chartered groves shall be members of a Council of Senior Druids. Protogrove organizers and former Senior Druids may participate as non-voting members.
- 2) The Archdruid shall be an honorary member of said Council and shall be entitled to attend its meetings, receive copies of its meeting minutes and other publications, etc. She/he shall not have a vote in said Council, however, unless she/he is simultaneously the Senior Druid of a chartered grove, or unless a tie-breaking vote is needed.
- 3) Said Council shall be organized and run by its members and may establish its own goals and priorities, and take action to achieve them, subject to the bylaws of A.D.F.

### **ADF Article 23: Non-Profit Nature of Corp**

- 1) No part of the net earnings of the Corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, directors, officers, or other private persons, except that the Corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in the Preamble and Article I of these bylaws.
- 2) No substantial part of the activities of the Corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting, to influence legislation, and the Corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.
- 3) Notwithstanding any other provisions of the Articles of Incorporation or these bylaws, this Corporation shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the purposes of this Corporation.
- 4) Upon the dissolution of this Corporation, the Mother Grove shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all the liabilities of the Corporation, dispose of all the assets of the Corporation exclusively for the purposes of the Corporation in such manner, or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for Neopagan religious, educational or charitable purposes as shall at that time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 as revised (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the Mother Grove shall determine.
- 5) Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the county in which the principal office of the Corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such Neopagan organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

The preceding bylaws were originally adopted by the Mother Grove of A.D.F., Inc. on July 15, 1990 c.e. They have been amended and corrected since. This edition is current as of November 1, 1994 c.e. For later versions, send an SASE (2oz.) to: ADF, Box 516, E. Syracuse, NY, USA 13057.

# BY-LAWS OF THE HENGE OF KELTRIA

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## 2003 Editor's Introduction

*The Henge of Keltria broke off from ADF in 1986, to follow a more specifically Celtic Path, and due to a number of issues and controversies (some of them liturgical) that plagued the early years of ADF (many of which have been patched up). Intended as a "private" organization, rather than holding public services, it has never become as large as ADF. Keltria has been a Mid-Western phenomenon with a handful of Henges, and a newsletter, annual reunions, study course and a web-page to bind them together. One of their founding groves was in Minneapolis, so their interaction over the years with the Carleton Grove has been sporadic, but rewarding.*

-Scharding

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## ARTICLE I – NAME

1.1. The name of this Corporation shall be THE HENGE OF KELTRIA.

1.2. The address of the Corporation shall be: C/O Henge of Keltria, P.O. Box 17969, Long Beach, CA 90807 or such other location as the Board of Trustees may, from time to time, establish by resolution and place on file with the Secretary of State of the State of Minnesota.



## ARTICLE II – CORPORATE PURPOSES

2.1. This organization is formed exclusively as a religious and/or Church Corporation and is not organized for the private gain of any person or persons.

2.2. The Corporation has a specific and primary purpose to foster and practice the spiritual and cultural teachings of Celtic Earth-based religions, to facilitate communications with and between different Celtic Earth-based Religions.

2.3. The Corporation shall have power to establish, modify or dissolve schools and other affiliated religious orders, lodges, groves and groups.

2.4. The Corporation shall have power to authorize, bestow, convey, grant, issue or revoke certificates, charters, degrees, credentials, diplomas, franchises, licenses, memberships, or ordinations through the church corporation, or any subsidiary corporation created by this church Corporation, including cemeteries.

2.5. The Corporation shall have power to publicize, publish, promote, celebrate, teach, research, and explore any and all material which may bear upon its beliefs, philosophies, theology, and religious history, ancient or modern.

2.6. The Corporation shall have the power to apply for and receive grants, accept bequests and to establish and maintain an endowment fund.

2.7. The Corporation shall have the power to own property, for the purpose of carrying out the above.

2.8. Notwithstanding the above statements of purpose and powers, the corporation shall not engage in activities that in themselves are not a furtherance of the purposes set forth in this article.

2.9. The Corporation shall conduct its activities in accordance with Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

## ARTICLE III – PECUNIARY GAIN

3.1. No part of the net earnings of the Corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article II hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the Corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the Corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

3.2. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the Corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to

be carried on by a corporation exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

## ARTICLE IV – DURATION

4.1. The period of duration of this Corporation shall be perpetual.

## ARTICLE V – PERSONAL LIABILITY

5.1. Upon the dissolution of the Corporation, the officers and/or Board, after paying or making provisions for the payment of all the liabilities of the Corporation, the remaining Church Corporation properties and assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code. Said distribution shall be in keeping within a basic harmony of the Church Corporation beliefs.

5.1.1. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by a Court of Competent Jurisdiction of the county in which the principal office of the Corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are operated exclusively for such purpose.

5.2. The Members, Officers, Trustees and Founders of the Corporation shall have no personal liability for the debts of the Corporation.

## ARTICLE VI – CAPITAL STOCK

6.1. The Corporation shall have no capital stock and shall have no authority to issue shares.

## ARTICLE VII – COUNCIL OF ELDERS

7.1. All theological direction for the Henge of Keltria shall be from the Council of Elders. Members of the Council are from active members of the Ring of the Oak. The Council of Elders supersedes and overrides all secular offices and officers in matters that are deemed by the Council Elders to be of a spiritual nature or may inappropriately impact the beliefs and philosophies of the Henge of Keltria. The Council of Elders shall consist of no more than nine members of the Rings of the Oak. Election of Council members is from the active membership in the Rings of the Oak. A simple majority of affirmation from the total Oak Ring membership is required for appointment to be carried. Abstention of a vote does not apply to the majority of assent needed for election. The duration of appointment is nine years. There is no limit to the number of consecutive appointments. The Council of Elders is empowered to remove any member from the membership roles for cause as stated in these Bylaws.

7.2. The number of members of the Council of Elders shall be based upon the number of the Ring of the Oak. The number, election, and appointment process to the Council of Elders shall be described in the Council's working documents.

7.3. The primary authoritative spokesperson for the theological direction of the Henge of Keltria shall be known as the Arch-Druid. The Arch-Druid shall be selected from the Council of Elders by the Council of Elders and shall hold the position for as long as she or he remains on the Council. The Arch-Druid shall preside over meetings of the Council of Elders.

7.4. The Council of Elders may, on a case by case basis, approve waivers to requirements for Levels of Achievement when it believes that such a waiver is in the best interests of the Individual, their Grove, and/or the Henge.

## ARTICLE VIII – BOARD OF TRUSTEES

8.1. The initial board of Trustees will consist of the founders being appointed for a period of nine (9) years and one trustee elected from the membership for two years with subsequent elected terms of three (3) years. This to provide a consistent direction during the early years of the church. At the end of nine (9) years, Board tenure will convert to a Board of Trustees consisting of at least three (3) members of the Corporation, each elected for the term of three (3) years at the regular annual meeting of the Corporation. No more than two thirds of the Board may be elected at any one given annual meeting.

8.1.1. The first Board of Trustees:

Nine year term:

a. "Tony" Taylor

The remaining two Trustee positions are now elected.

8.1.2. Trustees may serve concurrently as Officers with one vote per person, not per seat. There is no limit to the number of terms a Trustee may serve.

8.1.3. The business of the Henge shall be conducted by a Board of Trustees. The size of the initial board has seven seats. The corporate officers: President, Vice-president, Secretary, and Treasurer and three (3) Trustees. The terms of office for the Trustees shall be staggered so that no more than two-thirds of Trustees shall be elected in one election. Increases in the number of Trustees may increase with membership.

8.1.4. The board shall have the responsibility of establishing policy to achieve the objectives of the Henge as stated in Article II of these bylaws.

8.2. The Board of Trustees shall meet at least bi-annually.

8.3. A simple majority of Board members shall constitute a quorum for conducting business at any meeting of the Board of Trustees. Teleconferencing is acceptable to create a quorum.

8.4. Board members shall receive electronic notice, written notice, or a telephone call from the secretary informing them of each Board meeting. Notice shall be given no less than ten (10) days prior to each meeting.

8.5. The Board shall hold such meetings as may be necessary for conducting business of the Corporation. Meetings of the Board

may be called by the President, in his/her absence, by the Vice-president and any two Trustees.

8.6. The Board of Trustees shall be empowered to employ or dismiss an Executive Director whose duties will be determined by the Board of Trustees in a written policy and duty statement. The Executive Director may hire staff to carry out the goals and policies of the Board of Trustees.

8.7. The Board shall appoint members of the Henge to fill an unexpired term which may become vacant on the

## ARTICLE IX – OFFICERS

9.1. The Officers of the Henge shall be a President, a Vice-president, a Secretary, and a Treasurer.

9.2. Officers, with the exception of the Treasurer, shall be elected by the membership and shall serve terms as established in the Corporation's By-laws. Any officer may be removed for cause by the Board and, upon any vacancy, the Board may fill such vacancy by a majority vote for the unexpired term of the Officer.

9.3. The Officers with the Board of Trustees shall manage the affairs of the Henge, subject to such regulations and restrictions as may be prescribed by the Henge and within these Bylaws.

9.4. The Officers, with the exception of the Treasurer, and the Board of Trustees shall be elected at the annual meeting by ballot of the membership, for a two-year term with three consecutive terms as a limit, and shall hold office until their successors have been elected. No person shall hold the same office of President, Vice-president, or Secretary, for more than three consecutive terms. In case of vacancy arising in any office it may be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term through selection by the Board of Trustees.

9.5. The retiring President of the Henge shall automatically become an ex-officio member of the Board of Trustees (non-voting) to act in an advisory and consultative capacity for a two-year period. The retiring President may also be elected to a voting Trustee position.

9.6. The Treasurer is to be appointed by the Board of Trustees. There shall be no limitation to the length of term the Treasurer may serve, if so appointed.

9.7. Elections will be held at the annual meeting and will be done by ballot.

9.8. The HENGE OF KELTRIA is and shall be an equal opportunity employer. It does not discriminate based on race, color, age, national origin, marital status, disability, creed, religious or political affiliation, sex or sexual preference. All vacancies whether paid or volunteer will be filled on the basis of qualifications the applicant has in relation to the job requirements.

9.9. Duties and Qualifications of Henge Officers:

9.9.1. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Henge and its officers. If the President is absent at any meeting, the Vice-president shall assume his/her duties. The President will act as the liaison between the Board and the Executive Director. The President with the help of the Executive Director shall determine

the agenda for all meetings. Must be capable of administering the workings of the entire church Corporation, including but not limited to the following:

- i. act as Chairperson of the Board of Trustees;
- ii. act as Chairperson of the general membership meeting;
- iii. administer operations of the entire church Corporation;
- iv. delegate responsibility to ensure smooth operation of the Corporation as a whole;
- v. issue an annual State of the Henge Report to the membership;
- vi. orchestrate the planning and scheduling for the implementation and operation of all major Corporate projects;
- vii. oversee the disbursement and use of all Corporate funds and
- viii. all other powers and duties delegated by the bylaws.

9.9.2. The Vice-president shall assume the office of President should the President be unable to execute his/her duties. The Vice-president shall also be in charge of activities directly related to the membership, i.e., programs for the membership and membership recruitment. Must be able to take over the administration of the church Corporation in the event that the President is unable to continue in that capacity, and;

- i. substitute for the President at any corporate event, meeting, or function in the event the President is unable to attend; and
- ii. any other duties or responsibilities as delegated in the By-laws or by the Board of Trustees.

9.9.3. The Secretary shall keep the minutes of all meetings of the Henge and of the Board of Trustees. The Secretary shall keep a roll of the members, and give a report on both at the annual meeting. The Secretary shall maintain a current membership list at the Henge headquarters and will have a current membership list present at all Henge meetings. The Secretary shall work with the office of Treasurer to maintain accurate and up to date membership rolls. The Secretary shall also conduct the correspondence of the Henge, give notice of all meetings, notify committee members of their appointments, and carry on such other correspondence as may be necessary for conducting the affairs of the Henge. The Secretary shall be responsible for notifying members of expiration of membership and default of active status. The Secretary shall be responsible for the annual registration of the Henge with the Minnesota Secretary of State's Office. Said duties may be delegated with Board approval.

9.9.3.1. The Secretary must be capable of handling and organizing a large amount of paperwork. Should be proficient in all clerical skills necessary to fulfill the position. The Secretary will supervise any staff member that has been approved by the Board of Trustees to assist with carrying out the responsibilities of this office.

- i. take minutes of all Corporate meetings (in person or by delegation). Record all minutes taken and present latest minutes at current meetings;
- ii. keep and file copies of all corporate minutes, correspondence, and other paperwork; and
- iii. any other duties or responsibilities as delegated in the By-laws or by the Board of Directors.

9.9.4. The Treasurer shall collect the dues of members and all subscription donations and allocations of money to the Henge. The Treasurer shall work with the office of the Secretary in maintaining accurate membership rolls. The Treasurer shall keep an account of the same and shall make a report thereof at the



annual meeting and whenever required by the Henge or the Board of Trustees. All Henge money is to be kept in a Henge bank account. The Treasurer shall pay out moneys of the Henge upon presentation of bills approved by the Board of Trustees as attested to by the Secretary. At the close of each fiscal year the books shall be audited and a report submitted to the membership. The Treasurer at the discretion of the board of Trustees may make disbursements on behalf of the Henge without prior approval up to a dollar level specified by the Board.

9.9.4.1. The Treasurer must be capable of handling the financial aspect of the church Corporation and provide oversight of any contracted accounting services or Henge employees,

- i. keep a clear and accurate record of all corporate finances;
- ii. provide regular reports on the financial condition of the church Corporation for all Corporate meetings, and provide a copy of the record to the Secretary for inclusion in the minutes;
- iii. prepare and complete all required reports to the Internal Revenue Service, as set forth by IRS guidelines and requirements;
- iv. audit all Corporate checking, savings, escrow, trust, or any other accounts on a periodic basis as determined by the Board of Directors;
- v. audit all Corporate financial records of any coordinators who are in custody of Corporate moneys, and compile a quarterly report for the Board of Directors; and
- vi. any other duties as mandated in the By-laws or assigned by the Board of Directors.

## ARTICLE X – INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP

10.1. Membership shall consist of those persons who understand the principles of Keltrian Druidism, who have made written application, paid their annual dues and have been accepted by the Board of Trustees or its delegated authority. The form of application shall be that approved by the Board of Trustees or its delegated authority.

10.2. Honorary Life members may be elected by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any regular meeting of the corporation. The honorary members shall not be required to pay annual dues.

10.3. Voting and other rights and privileges of members are set forth in these By-laws. An individual membership fee covers basic administrative costs and entitles the member to any informational or emergency mailings made that year, including a quarterly news letter. At the time of incorporation the news letter is titled Henge Happenings.

10.4. The Henge of Keltria shall be composed of active and honorary individual members.

10.4.1. Change of dues for membership shall be proposed and approved by the Board of Trustees. Policies for prorating of dues for the first year of membership is at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.

10.4.2. Active membership shall include the following categories:

- a. Individual membership – any person may become a member of the Henge by payment of annual dues.
- b. Honorary Life membership

10.4.3. No person shall be qualified as a member and entitled to vote in regular, special or annual meetings unless his/her annual dues have been paid to the treasurer and his/her name inscribed on the membership list at or in advance of any meeting.

10.4.4. Members failing to pay their dues for more than 60 days after they become payable shall be regarded as inactive members. Inactive members shall have no voting privilege, shall not receive subscriptions to the membership newsletter, nor receive any other benefits of membership until such time as they renew their memberships with payment of their annual dues and such payment is processed as normal.

10.4.5. Honorary life members shall not be required to pay dues; they may attend all meetings, but they shall not have the right to vote unless they are also paying members. Any individual, in recognition of achievements or for services rendered in line with the purposes of the Henge of Keltria may be elected an honorary life member by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any regular meeting.

10.5. Members are presumed to have read and understood the Articles of Incorporation, the Bylaws, and any other such documents, manuals or handbooks delineating policy or procedures which are by reference hereby included in and made a part of these Bylaws, and that the applicant agrees to abide by the same. Copies of these documents are available through the Henge Office.

10.6. Any member who violates the code of ethics of the Henge of Keltria or otherwise puts the Henge, its members and or the Pagan community at large in a disreputable light may be removed from the membership by the Council of Elders. Such removal may be appealed in writing within 30 days of removal to the office of the Secretary. Notice of Appeal will be distributed to The Council of Elders within ten days of receipt.

10.7. Youth Memberships. Minor children under the age of 18 may join the Henge of Keltria as Youth Members upon filing a Youth Membership Application which includes a signature of parent or guardian granting permission and approval. Dues for Youth Memberships shall be as determined by the Board of Trustees. Youth Members shall not have the ability to vote in Henge business and Youth Members may not hold office nor be listed in the Membership Directory.

## ARTICLE XI – THE GROVES

11.1. Each Grove within the Keltrian system is, for the most part, autonomous. Groves must abide by the Henge beliefs, ethics, By-laws and religious methodology. Groves are encouraged to gather and interact with other Groves in their area or the membership at large. Groves need to apply to the Board and be granted Charter by the Board of Trustees pursuant to a recommendation of the Council of Elders.

11.1.1. Such application will include identification of a designated individual who takes on the major responsibilities of administration of the Grove who will act as contact and liaison to the Henge. Such person shall also be known as the Grove Founder.

11.1.2. Such application shall also include the names of at least two other active members. The Grove Founder along with the other two members shall also be designated as Grove President, Secretary, and Treasurer (or Grove Leader, Scribe, and Pursewarden).

11.1.3. The Grove, when Charter is first granted, will be Chartered as, a "Seed Grove," a "Seed Birch Grove," a "Seed Yew Grove," or a "Seed Oak Grove" based upon the definitions established in Article XX - DEFINITIONS.

11.2. Groves of any type must submit quarterly financial statements to the Treasurer of the Henge to take advantage of tax-exempt status.

11.2.1. A Seed Grove's Charter automatically lapses one year after its last submitted Quarterly Financial Statement.

11.2.2. A Grove which fails to submit a Quarterly Financial Statement for over one year will become a Seed Grove at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.

11.3. A Grove of any type must submit an annual, "State of the Grove" report to the Henge indicating the current Officers of the Grove, location of Grove Meetings (City and State) and a contact point.

11.3.1. This report must be suitable for publication in Henge Happenings.

11.3.2. Groves of any type shall not have the power to incur debt in the name of the Henge of Keltria.

11.4. All types of Groves must register annually with the Henge and certify its actions and activities in order to maintain or increase in status. The Board of Trustees, pursuant to a recommendation of the Council of Elders may remove the Seed designation or increase or decrease its stature during the review of the annual registration report.

11.5. Oak Groves chartered by the Board of Trustees shall be legal subordinate organizations of the Henge of Keltria as incorporated and are eligible to be covered by any appropriate Church Group Exemptions.

11.6. A Grove may be disbanded upon the Grove sending written notification from the Grove's Founder indicating that the Grove intends to disband. The records of the Grove will go to the Henge Office where they will be inactive.

11.7. A Grove's Charter may be suspended pending an investigation of problems brought to the attention of the Board of Trustees. A Grove's Charter may also be suspended based upon the Grove's Quarterly or Annual reports or lack thereof.

11.7.1. A Grove's Charter may be suspended if the Board of Trustees has reason to believe that the Grove is not functioning as a viable organizational Unit of The Henge of Keltria.

11.7.2. A Suspended Grove of any type may be reinstated if the Grove can resolve its problems to the satisfaction of the Board of Trustees pursuant to the recommendation of the Council of Elders within one year of suspension.

11.8.1. A Grove's Charter may be revoked by Council of Elders based upon religious theological issues.

11.8.2. A Groves Charter may be revoked by the Board of Trustees based upon secular issues. These issues include, but are not limited to the following: Conduct found to be incompatible with the purpose of the Corporation or contrary to the Laws of the State or Country the Grove is located in, conduct or statements of the Grove in its meetings or statements that discredit the Henge of Keltria, its purposes, or members.

11.8.2.1. A Grove's Charter may be revoked by the Board of Trustees if three months after suspension, a Grove has not made adequate corrections to the issues involved which were the cause of the suspension.

## ARTICLE XII – MEETINGS

12.1. The annual meeting shall be in the month of June each year. The Board of Trustees shall set the date of the meetings. Six weeks notice must be given to all members of date and location of annual meeting.

12.2. Special meetings of the Henge may be requested by the President, in his/her absence, by the Vice-president and any two Trustees at any time and by ten members of the Henge. Such request is to the Office of the President. If the request is approved by the Board of Trustees, the Board shall set the date and location of the meeting.

12.3. A simple majority representing at least 5 percent of the membership of the Henge must be physically present, or represented by proxy to constitute a quorum for annual and special meetings. Physically present is hereby defined to include not only the physical presence of a voting member, but also as being in communication with the persons physically present by telephone or an equivalent mechanism.

12.4. There shall be three types of votes possible concerning any proposals before the Corporation: affirmative, abstention, and negative.

12.5. The Henge shall operate on a fiscal year, running from January 01 through December 31.

12.6. All eligible voters may cast one vote. Voting will be done by ballot. Voting by proxy is allowed. Proxies must be given to a member in good standing.

12.7. All meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Revised Rules of Order or accepted future standards of Rules of Order for a non profit corporation.

12.8. The Board of Trustees and Officers shall meet publicly, at least annually and privately on an as-needed basis. The meeting dates shall be determined by the President. All interested members in good standing are encouraged to attend any publicly held meetings. However, the as-needed-meetings are open to generally interested parties at the Boards pleasure, or they will be assumed to be closed meetings.

12.9. The Board of Trustees is a voting entity in and of itself.

## ARTICLE XIII – COMMITTEES, BOARDS, AND BUREAUS

13.1. The President shall appoint, or cause the Board of Trustees to appoint, such standing committees as are deemed necessary for the efficient operation of the Henge. Chairs of such committees, shall, insofar as possible, be appointed from members of the Board of Trustees or Officers. Such committees may include regular members of the Henge.

13.2. All standing committees, boards, and bureaus shall be appointed to serve until a particular project is completed or until the next annual meeting, whichever occurs first. All committees, boards, and bureaus may be appointed annually. There shall be no limit to the number of annual terms to which a member of a committee, board, or bureau may be reappointed. Insofar as possible, all committees and boards should represent geographically the areas served by the Henge.

13.3. The President, or in his/her absence the Vice-president, shall be an ex-officio member of all committees, boards, and bureaus.

13.4. The chairs of all committees, boards, and bureaus shall represent their respective committees, boards, or bureaus at meetings of the Board of Trustees when requested to attend by the Board.

## ARTICLE XIV – INDEMNIFICATION OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

14.1. The Henge shall indemnify any officer, trustee, employee, or volunteer who is sued for actions done in good faith for the benefit of the Henge and in the performances of his or her duties for the same. This shall not cover criminal actions that result from unlawful conduct.

14.1.1. Indemnification maybe covered through the purchase of insurance or by any means the Henge chooses.

## ARTICLE XV – AMENDMENT

15.1. Amendments to these By-laws may be proposed in writing and filed with the Secretary by any three members.

15.2. Amendment proposal tracking:

15.2.1. An amendment proposal must be received in the Office of the Secretary by March 1st to be considered for that year's annual meeting. At other times of the year a special meeting of the Henge may be called if special meeting and notification requirements are met. In either event within ten days upon receipt of the proposed amendment, the Office of the Secretary will have informed the Henge officers, Board of Trustees and members of The Council of Elders. The Office of the President will respond to the parties acknowledging receipt of the proposed amendment within 5 days of receipt. The Council of Elders will examine and judge the proposed amendment to insure its passage would not weaken the theological foundations of the Henge of Keltria.

15.2.2. The Board of Trustees shall then review the amendment and may veto sending any amendment to the membership if they believe it to be inappropriate or undesirable. The Board shall have 45 days to consider the amendment. The Secretary shall inform the amendment's submitter of the Board's decision. The submitter shall then have an opportunity to address the Board concerning the proposal.

15.2.3. After the Council of Elders and the Board of Trustees both rule upon the proposed amendment, the Secretary shall notify the membership in writing of the proposed amendment(s), and they may be adopted by a two-thirds vote of the members present at the annual meeting if a quorum is present and provided six weeks have elapsed since the sending of the notice.

## ARTICLE XVI – ELECTIONS

16.1. Election of Board members shall occur at regular intervals as specified in these By-laws.

16.1.1. A clear majority comprising of a 10% margin over the opposing candidates of the tallied votes shall be required to elect any eligible member to any position on the Board or any other elective position in this Corporation, except as specified in these By-laws. A person who fails to receive a clear majority but does receive a plurality shall be considered elected to a one year term of office.

16.1.2. Replacements to vacancies in elected or appointive positions under the Board's direction, shall be appointed by the Board of Trustees to serve until the next election date. The Board is not required to fill a vacant Trustee position. Said appointments may not exceed 13 months.

## ARTICLE XVII -ETHICS

We adhere to the following:

17.1. The Henge of Keltria does not discriminate on the basis of age race, color, national origin, sex, or sexual preference. Individual groves with a 'cult focus' (such as the women who tended Bridget's fire at Kildare) may be exclusionary on the basis of sex only, with periodic review and approval of the Council of Elders. As the notion of same sex or single focus cult worship is not unprecedented in Celtic society, we have concluded that individual groves may be exclusionary on certain issues, so long as the tradition as a whole maintains balance. At NO TIME,

however, may a Keltrian grove discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national origin.

17.2. At NO TIME shall a Grove or member of this organization espouse or engage in the practice of blood sacrifice; nor shall any Keltrian, as part of his or her religious practice participate in the torture, mutilation, enslavement, or abuse (physical or emotional) of any sentient creature for the purpose of enjoyment or spiritual gain. Any taking of life for the purpose of meeting physical needs shall be done only in accordance with civil law, and shall be conducted as humanely as possible.

17.3. Every Henge member shall keep confidential the names, addresses, telephone numbers, and places of employment of other members of the Henge, except where expressed permission has been given to publicize said information; or in such a case as a person is deemed to be a public threat (in which case confidential information may only be revealed to those authorities under whose jurisdiction the matter of conduct falls).

17.4. We view our ordained and lay clergy (Grove leaders, Officers, Elders, and Trustees) as professionals and, as such, demand professional behavior equal to that of secular and other religious professionals. Our clergy are expected to be honest, to abide by the law (except in cases of certain "victimless crimes" or civil disobedience), to respect the rights and privacy of others, to maintain a professional profile while "on duty," and to respect certain sexual taboos placed upon virtually all professionals in our society, rules which have been instituted for the protection of the client. Therefore, Keltrian clergy will refrain from engaging in sexual activities with their Grove "clients" when acting in the following capacities: teacher, healer, therapist, or divinatory counselor. (The above restrictions do not apply to sexual relationships that existed prior to the onset of the professional relationship).

17.4.1. We accept that we are all adults and capable of making our own choices; however, extreme discretion in any sexual interlude between clergy and lower ranking Grove members is advised.

17.5. It shall be the custom of this tradition to work robed or clothed at any public ritual. Private rituals may be conducted skyclad at the discretion of the individual grove.

17.6. Manipulation or coercion of a sexual nature will not be tolerated in Keltrian ritual.

17.7. At NO TIME shall firearms or explosives be brought to or used during an official Keltrian ritual.

17.8. It is in the tradition of Keltria to induce altered states of consciousness through meditation, chanting, etc. While psychoactive substances of various sorts have been used by traditional societies for this purpose, only legal psychoactive substances are permitted in Keltrian ritual.

17.9. We will not tolerate bigotry, slander, perjury, or other forms of harassment leveled against our members or against other members of the Neopagan community.

17.10. Keltrians shall abide by their initiatory oaths and shall respect the confidentiality of any oathbound material from either our tradition or another.

## ARTICLE XVIII – LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT

18.1. Keltrian Druidism is an Initiatory Mystery Tradition. Prior to initiation a person must study and prepare for initiation. The uninitiated may go through three phases on the way to initiation.

18.1.1. The Seeker is a person who is investigating Celtic Spirituality or Druidism in its many and varied forms. A Seeker typically first contacts the Henge of Keltria seeking to know and understand what forms of Celtic Neopagan spirituality are available.

18.1.2. The Member is a person who is interested enough in Keltrian Druidism to join the organization. Members are considered general laity and may participate in all Mistletoe and Seasonal Rituals, serve on committees, partake in open meetings and have any other privileges and responsibilities as shall be designated by the Henge or their local Grove. A Member is not required to enter into a study program.

18.1.3. The Dedicant has committed him/herself to the study of Keltrian Druidism and has demonstrated this commitment by undergoing a Dedication Ceremony. The Dedication Ceremony establishes a Student/Teacher, Dedicant/Mentor relationship. The Dedicant is enrolled in a study course with the Mentor or is involved with the training system employed by a Grove. Dedicants may be called upon to assume lesser roles in Mistletoe and Seasonal rituals should their services be needed.

18.2. Our Ring System measures the growth and achievements of its participants. All levels are membership. Being a member in no way infers a right to initiation or advancement to the different rings. Initiation and advancement requires the approval from a member of the ring of the Oak.

18.2.1. An initiate of any higher ring may perform the actual initiation or elevation up to their ring, with the approval from a member of the ring of the Oak. Family members or "partners" to be elevated or initiated require the approval of a member of the Oak not related or sexually involved with them.

18.2.2. Upon initiation, the member is admitted into the Rings. There are three Rings, which are named after sacred trees. These are: Ring of the Birch, Ring of the Yew, and Ring of the Oak. The innermost ring, that of the Oak, has within it three tiers. These are named Hawthorne, Rowan, and Mistletoe. Our ring system is designed not to be a measure of rank, but of achievement. We use a three-fold system to measure this achievement. Advancements are based on time, study, and service. In this way we ensure our members are both well-founded and well-rounded.

18.2.3. The Ring of the Birch. The student is required to stay at the first ring for a minimum of one lunar year (13 moons). During this time, the student is expected to study the required areas, and to serve the Grove in a capacity commensurate with his or her station. We associate the ring of the Birch with the producer class; therefore, members of this ring wear green cords. This ring is considered a student level. Most of the study and work done in this ring is of a preparatory nature. To advance to second ring, the Druid of the Birch must serve the Grove on a regular basis, and must demonstrate the ability to lead the Grove in a high rite or mistletoe rite. The Druid of the Birch is expected to continue

studies to reach an advanced level of Druidic knowledge. When the Druid has completed the time, educational, and service requirements, s/he may be advanced to the Ring of the Yew by a member of the ring of the Yew or Oak.

18.2.4. The Ring of the Yew is analogous to the noble class; therefore Druids of this ring wear red cords. We consider members of this ring active participants with the Grove leadership. They are responsible for continuing their personal studies and for serving in all ritual capacities (Bards, Seers (Ovates), Druids, and Grove Tenders). A member of this ring is considered lay clergy or Druid Deacon. A member of the ring of the Yew may lead a grove site if championed by a member of the ring of the Oak. To advance to Ring of the Oak, a second ring Druid must undergo clerical training and demonstrate their skills by acting as clergy and conducting rituals over a period of time.

18.2.4.1. If, after three lunar years, and the Druid has completed the necessary service and training s/he may petition for advancement to the Ring of the Oak. Advancement is granted by a member of the ring of the Oak.

18.2.5. As the Ring of the Oak is representative of the Priest class, members of this ring should wear white cords and may be elected to the Council of Elders. A Druid of the Oak is considered qualified to break from his or her Mother Grove to start a new Grove or Champion other groves. Members of the ring of the Oak may elect to be legally Ordained as Keltrian ministers. Enabling them to perform the legal functions recognized by law. i.e.: marriages/ handfastings.

18.2.5.1. The first tier within ring of the Oak is that of Hawthorne. At this point the Druid may chose one of the three disciplines: Bard, Seer, or Priest. The Druid focuses study in his or her area of specialty, while continuing general Druidic studies. The third ring, first tier Druid is expected to function as clergy. S/he is also expected to teach Grove Leadership material and should be mentoring members of the ring of the Yew on preparation for ordained clergy. At this level the Druid should begin attending philosophical/theological roundtables and debates. Advancement to Rowan requires the endorsement of two members of higher tiers of Oak either Rowan or Mistletoe. Upon completion of three lunar years a Druid may be advance to the Rowan if s/he has adequately performed his/her service to the Grove or the Henge.

18.2.5.2. At the Oak tier of the Rowan, the Druid should be acting as primary clergy, continuing studies in his or her specialty, and teaching any advanced courses. S/he should continue to be taking an active role in the philosophical/ theological roundtables and debates. Advancement to Mistletoe requires the endorsement of three members of the tier of Mistletoe.

18.2.5.3. The highest level of achievement within our system is that of the tier of Mistletoe. The Druid is this tier no longer needs to be actively conducting ritual, but should oversee the actions of other acting clergy. At this level the Druid should devote him/herself to the service of one of the triads; either the Ancestors, the Nature Spirits, or the Gods; or to all three.

## **SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR TRANSFERS**

18.3. People entering Keltria from another initiatory Neopagan Druidic tradition may be admitted to a Ring equivalent to their previously held grade or degree up to the Ring of the Yew, provided that they can demonstrate an equivalent level of knowledge. This position will be awarded for a probationary term

of one solar cycle at the discretion of the Council of Elders. If, within the passage of one solar cycle, said person demonstrates that s/he has acquired sufficient ritual skills and understanding of the Keltrian system, his/her Ring will become permanent.

## **ARTICLE XIX – DEFINITIONS**

### **THE PANTHEONS**

19.1. A pantheon is a family of Gods and Goddesses from a single cultural tradition. Our Groves are free to use any of the Celtic pantheons in their rituals (Irish, Welsh, Scottish, Briton, Gaulish, Cornish, and Manx). Groves must work with a single Celtic pantheon rather than mixing two or more within ritual. We feel that it is easier for students to learn a single set of myths. Pantheons reflect the whole of the ancient culture. When we leave out Gods or Goddesses or mix pantheons, we risk losing certain religious aspects of that culture.

19.1.1. Our Grove members are free to work with other pantheons in their private rituals or magick, if they so desire.

### **DAYS OF CELEBRATION**

19.2. We keep in tune with the movement of the Earth and the heartbeat of our ancestors by celebrating the eight seasonal feasts of the Celtic year. We observe the four solar festivals (the two solstices and equinoxes) giving thanks and homage to the sun. We observe as well the four cross quarters; those of Samhain, Imbolc, Beltane, and Lughnasadh. These are the Earth festivals. At these times the earth begins to note the change of seasons as prescribed by the sun. At the cross quarters we give thanks and homage to our Mother Earth.

19.2.1. For each of these eight festivals we honor a specific God and Goddess from mythology. These deities are both representative of the feast and the time of year.

19.2.2. We also conduct two lunar festivals each month. The Mistletoe Rite, which commemorates the gathering of the mistletoe, is conducted on the sixth night of the moon. This ritual is devoted to the aspects of health and communion. Our other lunar observance, the Vervain Rite, is held after sunset when neither sun nor moon is in the sky (about the third quarter). It commemorates the gathering of the Vervain, which was to be harvested when neither sun nor moon were in the sky. The Vervain Rite concerns itself with spells and magic working, and is open only to initiates of the tradition.

19.2.3. In addition to the cyclical feasts we also observe two yearly commemorative feasts, which honor specific events. The first of these is the "Feast of Age," a reenactment of the feast given for the Tuatha de Danaan by Manannan Mac Lir and Goibhniu. The pigs and ale consumed at this feast gave the Gods their immortality and invincibility. We partake in this feast to celebrate our spiritual immortality and the invincibility of our faith. Groves utilizing other pantheons may substitute a similar style ritual.

19.2.4. The second yearly feast we observe is the "Feast of Remembrance," dedicated to the Druids who were slain and the sacred Groves that were desecrated when Caesar's army took the island stronghold of Anglesey in 60 CE (60 AD). This feast also

extends to remembering all people who have been slain or persecuted because of their religious beliefs.

19.2.5. Observing the cycles and the seasons gives meaning to our lives. Through them we are made aware of the cyclical nature of life itself. We are comforted in the knowledge that this life has not been and will not be our only existence. Like the mighty oak that awakens anew in the spring, we know we shall once again touch our feet to the soil of the Great Mother, our Earth.

### **SEER (or Ovate)**

19.3. The Seer (or Ovate) is concerned primarily with the Cosmic World of Land and is associated with the Nature Spirits. The Seer functions as an herbalist, healer, an alchemist, a weather worker, and a diviner. S/he is concerned with the magick of the natural world around her/him. Persons wishing to pursue this discipline should concentrate their second ring Grove service in this area.

### **BARD**

19.4. The Bard is concerned with the Cosmic World of the Sea and is associated with the Ancestors. The Bard functions as a folklorist, genealogist, singer, musician, and storyteller. Persons wishing to pursue the discipline of Bard should concentrate their second ring Grove service in this area.

### **DRUID**

19.5. The Druid is concerned with the Cosmic World of the Sky and is associated with the Gods. The Druid functions as clergy, teacher, mediator, and judge. The priest oversees all "high magick." Persons wishing to pursue this discipline should concentrate their second ring service in the area of Grove Tender. The term Druid encompasses both Male and Female persons.

### **A NOTE ON THE GROVE TENDER**

19.6. The Grove Tender performs tasks similar to those of a Wiccan handmaiden. The purpose of the Grove Tender is to attend to all mundane functions of the ritual, freeing the Clergy to concentrate on their spiritual jobs. The Grove Tender would be expected to relight blown-out candles, keep incense on the charcoal, refill sacramental chalices, prompt when people forget their lines, construct and tend the ritual fire, take care of disturbances (such as someone fainting or the police showing up), prepare the altar, act as gopher, or any other tasks required by the circumstance. This job acquaints the Grove Tender with the magical tools, ritual structure, and energy flow of the service. As such, it is an excellent preparatory position for those aspiring to be clergy.

### **SEED GROVE**

19.7. A Seed Grove is a Grove which has submitted quarterly financial reports for less than one year. It also has not submitted an annual Grove report for the previous year.

### **GROVES**

19.8. A GROVE consists of three or more people who meet regularly, at least once per month, and have received a Charter as a Keltrian Grove.

19.8.1. In a BIRCH GROVE the Grove Leader is a member of the Ring of the Birch or higher.

19.8.2. In a YEW GROVE the Grove Leader is a member of the Ring of the Yew, or higher, at least two other members of the Grove are members of the Ring of the Birch or higher.

19.8.3. In an OAK GROVE, the Grove Leader is a member of the Ring of the Oak, and at least two other members of the Grove are members of the Ring of the Yew or higher.

### **INITIATIONS**

19.9. The initiation is, above all, a covenant made between the Druid and her/his Gods.

19.9.1. The initiation marks a turning point in the candidate's life in two ways. First, it establishes the candidate's acceptance in the mystery path. This part of the initiation is spiritual in nature, and rests in the hands of the Gods.

19.9.2. Second, the initiation affirms the candidate's acceptance into a select group of people. This facet of initiation takes place on a cognitive, physical level. The decision to accept the candidate lies with her/his fellow humans.

19.9.3. The initiation should be a profound experience for the new Druid. It signifies a death of old ways and a rebirth into spiritual awareness. In fact, most initiations work with a motif of symbolic death and rebirth. Often, during the event, the answers to some of the "Great Mysteries" will be revealed to the candidate. The vehicle for this revelation can be either the Gods or the Initiating Druid of the group. Some traditions may also use this time to reveal the "secrets," hidden knowledge held exclusively by the group or the tradition. Frequently the candidate will be put to a test. This could be a test of knowledge, courage, trust, or endurance. Any oaths that are required by the tradition will be taken at this time.

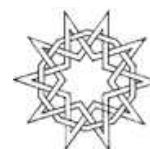
19.9.4. On an emotional level, initiations are often frightening – not because they are physically or emotionally dangerous (competent Neopagans should never require such initiations), but because there is an element of the unknown. It is natural for candidates to experience some fear; after all they are making a serious commitment.

19.9.5. It is imperative that initiations only be performed with the candidate's full knowledge and permission. The candidate must be both ready and willing to undertake the ordeal that lies ahead.

19.9.6. It is for the above reasons, and more, that we have decided to make Keltria an initiatory tradition. We have spoken with many Neopagans from non-initiatory backgrounds who feel that they have missed out on something. The initiation is a religious rite of passage. If conducted properly, it can be a profound and memorable experience.

19.9.7. Until our tradition has fully taken root, we will recognize initiation (group conducted) from traditions using a methodology similar to ours. "Self-initiations" will be recognized on a case-by-case basis as determined by the Elders.

19.9.8. Being an initiatory path does not intone that we have an unbroken tradition dating back to pre-historic times. Few, if any, of the Neopagan traditions can truly make such a claim. Our initiation signifies that a person has been accepted into the mystery path, and has gained sufficient knowledge and skills to be called a Keltrian Druid.



# Constitution of the Order of the Mithril Star of the Reformed Druids of North America

2002

We, the Order of the Mithril Star of the Reformed Druids of North America, in order to make our existence more fruitful, do hereby enact this, our constitution.

## ARTICLE ONE

The name of this organization shall be The Order of the Mithril Star of the Reformed Druids of North America and it shall be an autonomous collective within Reformed Druidism.

## ARTICLE TWO

Any person, regardless of race, gender, color, culture, age or sexual preferences may become a member of this organization upon presenting a pledge, which may be oral, affirming that she or he believes in the Basic Tenets of North American Druidism, as set forth in The Book of Law in The Druid Chronicles, and in the basic tenet of the Mithril Star, as set forth in the novel, "Stranger In A Strange Land," by Robert A. Heinlein and that she or he further believes in and agrees with the self-definition of this Branch of the Reform.

## ARTICLE THREE

The Basic Tenets of North American Druidism, as set forth in The Book of Law, are these:

The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother; which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.

And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it do people live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face-to-face with it.

The basic tenet of the Mithril Star, as set forth in the novel, "Stranger In A Strange Land," by Robert A. Heinlein is this:

"Thou art God.' It's not a message of cheer and hope. It's a defiance – and an unafraid unabashed assumption of personal responsibility."

## ARTICLE FOUR

The self definition of this Branch of the Reformed Druids of North America is as follows:

The Order of the Mithril Star is a non-prophet, irreligious, dis-organization whose purposes are:

To further develop and spread the seed of Reformed Druidism beyond the expectations (or even the desires) of the original founders of the Reform at Carleton;

To establish a network of intentional communities and Groves across the world, which will be at the service of all Druids and Groves of the RDNA and it's offshoots as well as the Pagan community at large;

- To promote and celebrate self-realization and our integration into the Mother Earth;
- To celebrate life, liberty and pursuit of happiness;
- To promote a Pagan, non-consumeristic, micro-socialistic, polyamorous lifestyle free of the outmoded mores and conventions of the dominant bourgeois

monotheistic paradigm as depicted in "Stranger In A Strange Land";

- To help heal and awaken the Earth Mother Gaia;
- To help heal and awaken refugees of the dominant paradigm as they come to the realization that "Thou art God/dess."

## ARTICLE FIVE

The Mother Grove of the Order of the Mithril Star shall be the ruling body of the Order, insofar as doctrinal, dogmatic and liturgical matters are concerned. The Mother Grove will function as the Board of Directors for the Order, and among its members shall be the following officers:

The Arch-Druid/ess should be at least a Third Order Druid/ess, preferably with legitimate Apostolic Succession from the Original Grove at Carleton College. He or she shall preside over all meetings and most religious services. She or he shall perform those functions usually performed by a Pastor in other religious organizations. He or she shall serve as the official spokesperson for the Order and the Mother Grove.

The Clerk must be at least a Third Order Druid/ess, and shall be the principal officer for secular matters, including the handling of the Order's communications. She or he shall serve those functions usually performed by an Assistant Pastor in other religious organizations and shall preside over services in the absence of the Arch-Druid/ess.

The Preceptor must be at least a Second Order Druid/ess, shall assist in services, and shall assist the Clerk insofar as he or she may be called upon to do so, including the handling of the Order's treasury, unless the Clerk shall have decided to perform them.

The Server must be at least a First Order Druid/ess and shall assist the Preceptor insofar as he or she may be called upon to do so, including those functions usually performed by a Secretary in other religious organizations, unless the Preceptor shall have decided to perform them.

The Official Bard must be at least a First Order Druid/ess and learned in matters of poetry, music, dancing and song. She or he shall be responsible for all Bardic matters within the Order. She or he shall be appointed by the Arch Druid of the Mother Grove as soon as there is a person qualified to hold this post and may hold one of the other posts at the same time; but need not be present for the founding of this Order.

Other officers may be added from time to time as the Grove shall decide when they are needed.

## ARTICLE SIX

Elections for the posts of Arch-Druid/ess, Clerk, Preceptor, Server, and any other officers decided upon shall be held annually during the period of Foghamhar, except for the first election for each post. Unless a member of the Mother Grove shall object the post shall be filled by a voice majority vote, with nominations being accepted from the ground of the meeting. If such an objection is lodged, the election shall be by unanimous vote by secret ballot.

Only members of the Mother Grove may vote for the officers of the Order and only those persons qualified to hold the posts may be nominated for them.

Also at this time the Mother Grover may vote upon the amount, if any, of dues to be paid by all members of the Order; said dues to be used strictly for the expenses of the Order and to be kept by the Preceptor.

## ARTICLE SEVEN

An individual member (or solitaire) of this Order shall be defined as one who: 1) Is at least a First Order Druid/ess, and 2) Has pledged themselves to the Order, by execution of a Pledge, affirming their belief in the three tenets.

## ARTICLE EIGHT

Membership in OMS, attendance at public or semipublic OMS activities, and participation in any Druidic Study Program, shall not be denied to any person on the basis of race, ancestry, color, physical disability (except as mentioned elsewhere in this article), age, gender, or affectional orientation.

Proven communication or behavior of a virulently racist, sexist, homophobic, heterophobic, anti-Semitic, or otherwise bigoted manner, shall be grounds for expulsion from OMS-RDNA, as described elsewhere in these by-laws. This does not include strong verbal statements about the theology, history, or psychological characteristics of other religions.

All organizers of public and semipublic OMS activities shall make strenuous efforts to facilitate the participation of differently-abled individuals. Nonetheless, all aspirants to any given position must be able to meet all the relevant qualifications previously determined for said position, unless the Mother Grove shall rule otherwise in a particular instance.

## ARTICLE NINE

The Mother Grove may, by a unanimous vote, initiate an investigation into a member's conduct after either that member has confessed to or been found guilty of committing felony crimes-with-victims, as defined by civil law and current criminological opinion, or having been presented with documented evidence of disruptive or abusive conduct which works directly against the aims, activities or welfare of OMS-RDNA or its members. The member will be immediately sent a written notice by registered mail to their last known address informing the member of the investigation, the accusations, the accusers, and any evidence pertaining to the investigation. The member will be given 30 days to respond in his/her defense. After considering the member's response, if any, the Mother Grove may, by a unanimous vote, suspend or expel the member.

"Disruptive or abusive conduct" does not include: the temperate expression of disagreement, such as public or private written or verbal criticism of OMS or its leadership; vigorous debate over matters of scholarship, art, spirituality, or politics; the circulation of petitions to the Mother Grove; the organizing of other members into voting blocks; nor mere rudeness, thoughtlessness, or lack of social skills.

Disruptive or abusive conduct does include: the spreading of slander or libel against OMS- RDNA or its leadership; bigoted communication or behavior as described elsewhere in these by-laws; or active efforts to persuade members to quit or to dissuade nonmembers from joining.

In the case of a person who was declared temporarily or permanently incapacitated at the time of his or her resignation or removal from a position of responsibility, the Mother Grove shall require a reevaluation of his or her competency similar to the process which had declared incapacity, before he or she may seek election or appointment.

Members may resign from membership at any time for personal reasons, and will then be eligible to rejoin OMS- RDNA at a later date. Resignation should be made in writing or by email.

Suspended, expelled or resigned members may not hold office or act in any way as representatives of OMS- RDNA. Expelled or resigned members have no right to receive OMS-RDNA publications, and may not continue to participate in Druidic Study Programs administered by OMS- RDNA.

Members who have been suspended or expelled may, at the discretion of the Mother Grove, be banned permanently or temporarily from attending OMS- RDNA activities, including public worship. Such bans shall be published immediately in OMS publications. They may be published elsewhere in the case of very serious crimes.

## ARTICLE TEN

Individual, autonomous collectives within the Order shall be known as "Groves."

The Mother Grove shall act upon all requests for the chartering of local groves, and shall issue appropriate regulations as needed for their proper functioning.

In Order to prevent confusion with other organizations calling their local groups "groves," all local groves of OMS-RDNA shall use the naming convention of "Cylch \_\_\_\_\_ Grove, OMS- RDNA" or the bilingual equivalent, in all brochures, posters, announcements, public letters, etc., meant to be read by nonmembers of the local groves.

All local groves of OMS- RDNA are entitled to the maximum amount of autonomy consistent with the survival, identity, and well being of OMS- RDNA as a whole.

Each local grove may choose any ethnic focus, pantheon, and liturgical language of interest to the majority of its members. Local aboriginal traditions may be respectfully integrated into a local grove's official activities, according to policies set by the Mother Grove.

Only those persons who would qualify as voting members of OMS, as described in Article 7, may vote in official local grove elections, be officers of a local grove, or be counted as official grove members for chartering purposes. The Arch-Druid, Clerk, and Preceptor, as well as any other local officers who will exercise any legal responsibilities for the grove, must have passed their 18th birthday.

The Mother Grove shall have the power to suspend or revoke the charter of a local grove for good and sufficient cause.

The Archdruid of the Mother Grove shall have the power to suspend the charter of a local grove for good and sufficient cause, subject to the agreement of the Mother Grove at their next Board meeting.

This Constitution may be amended by a unanimous vote of the members of the Mother Grove in two consecutive meetings, a quorum being present.

A quorum for this and all purposes shall be taken to be two-thirds of the members of the Mother Grove. All members of the Mother Grove who miss the first meeting at which an amendment to this Constitution was passed must be notified in writing of the date and place for the second meeting, as well as the content of the amendment.

ADOPTED this 62nd day of Samradh, in the 39th Year of the Reform, being the date of July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2001 in the Common Era,  
by: Ellis S. Arseneau, Arch Druid  
Ceridwen Arseneau, Clerk  
Preceptor



# SECTION FOUR: Pertinent Past Proselytizing Propaganda Publications

## 1996 Introduction

How did the people join Reformed Druidism? Some merely observed a ritual in progress and joined in, but other were recruited by reading a flyer about Reformed Druidism. One can tell a great deal about a grove by the information in the flyers that it distributes to the general public. A flyer often tries to express the spirit of a grove's Druidism in its simplest and most understandable format. I have presented three flyers here for your perusal. The first was made by Fisher and Frangquist for distributing at Carleton's student activity fair, and it proved to be the foundational template for later flyers at Carleton and beyond. The second flyer was originally used as an introduction to the *Druid Chronicles (Evolved)* by Isaac Bonewits, and later as a handout by several groves on the west coast. The third flyer was made by Michael Scharding to hand out in his missionary grove at St. Cloud. Carleton tended to use a variant of the first flyer up to 1995, although a variant of the second one appeared once or twice. Both the second and third flyers were made for distribution in regions where Reformed Druidism was new and unheard of.

**Note:** None of these flyers contain dogmatic organizational principles, but provide a basic idea of how the groups historically operated. Their ideas are not set in stone.

–Scharding



**Figure 3 Michael, Perverse Perpetrator of Purveying Pernicious Propaganda, 2004.**

## The Song of the Earth

(By David Frangquist, 1964)



Reformed Druids of North America  
1964

### INTRODUCTION

"The *Druid Chronicles*" are the so-called scriptures of the Reformed Druids of North America. The "Chronicles" have grown out of the movement, and contain the history as well as the principles of the RDNA.

There are five books in the "Chronicles." This pamphlet is designed to present some of the more important passages, and to give an impression of the flavor of each book.

- 1) THE EARLY CHRONICLES: is a history of the early months of the existence of the RDNA.
- 2) THE LAW: gives the "Basic Tenets" and rules for simple local organization.
- 3) THE CUSTOM: gives customs.
- 4) THE LATTER CHRONICLES: is a continuation of the history.
- 5) MEDITATIONS: examines the religious purpose of Reformed Druidism

###

1. The first of the chronicles of the disciples of the Earth-Mother, and of the various and wondrous events which did occur to them who gave themselves in service to the establishment of the reform, which branch\* of the order was in Northfield, which is a city in Minnesota, the southeast part thereof. Peace be unto those whose hope lies in the comfort of the Earth-mother.
2. In those days (when Nason was president at Carleton) a decree went out from the Administration that all Sundays must be accounted for.\* So each went to their own place of worship in order that their credit might be established on their record.
3. And it came to pass that there were those among these people who chose to pursue such forms of worship as were not at that time in general acceptance. And one of these was a man named David, who was also a Fisher.\*
4. Now he did appear in the area which is north of the Lake of Lyman,\* proclaiming the glory which was Druid. And a few there were who listened to him and consulted with him.

(Early Chronicles 1:1-4)

4. Now the Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism are these:
5. The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, among many.
6. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it men do live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face to face with it.

(Law 4-6)

(A Chant\*)

1. O Earth-mother!  
We praise thee that seed springeth,  
that flower openeth,  
that grass waveth.
2. We praise thee for winds that whispers.  
through the graceful elm,  
through the shapely maple,  
through the lively pine,  
through the shining birch,  
through the mighty oak.
3. We praise thee for all things,  
O Earth-mother,  
who givest life.

(Custom 2:1-3)

1. It came to pass that the Arch-Druid was one day walking in the woods, and he was sorely perplexed, for it did happen to begin to rain.
2. And he was exceedingly wroth, so that he did feel tempted to utter a vile curse.\*
3. And it came to pass that he did so utter a vile curse, for such was his wrath.
4. And this curse which he did utter was a vile curse which was a vile curse which did call down the wrath of the Earth-mother, yea, even did it call upon the power of the Earth-mother.
5. And it came to pass that when he had spoken, there was a period of time which did last no longer than the space of a few seconds, and it passed.
6. And suddenly, there did occur a most horrible sound, and a blinding light did fill all the sky about.
7. For behold, all the power of Taranis was caused to be unleashed, and it did fly as a spear, and did strike a tree which was rooted in the earth.
8. And Behold, from the tree to the Arch-Druid was a space not more than fifteen cubits in length, and he was sore afraid.\*
9. So he did go back among the faithful, and he did say unto them: "Curse not in the name of the Earth-mother, for verily I say unto you: ye know not what it is that ye say."\*
10. And when he had told them of these things which he had seen and heard, they did marvel at it.
11. And it was taken by them to be a sign.<sup>b</sup>

(Latter Chronicles 2:1-11)

5. For thus saith the Earth-mother: "The Groves of the forest are my temples, and the trees of the groves are my icons,
6. "and the branches of the trees are my sacred scepters, and the green leaves of the branches are my sacrifice, which is a living sacrifice up unto beauty."<sup>b</sup>

(Meditations 2:5-6)

1. For what reasons is that ye sit here under the oak? Why is it that ye have come together under the stars?
2. Have ye come that ye might not be alone? If so, it is good.
3. But verily I say unto you: many there are who have come together, yet remain alone.
4. Do ye sit in the open that ye might come to know Nature? If so, it is good.
5. But verily I say unto you: many there are who have sat for hours and have risen up knowing less than when they sat down.
6. Rather, in your coming together, seek to know in what way ye may help him who is next to you, and strive to act justly toward.
7. And in your sitting down in the fields of the Earth-mother, open your minds as well as your eyes. Let your meditation grow and branch out as the oak which is over your head.
8. Except that ye have done these things, your sitting is in vain and coming is futility.
9. And why is it that ye do stand up before others and speak unto them?
10. Do ye teach unto them the ways of the Ancient Druids? If so, it is good.<sup>1</sup>
11. For they had their wisdom, and that is oft forgot.<sup>1</sup> But verily I say unto you: in their day, even they also were young in their traditions.
12. The wise man is not constrained to learn only that which he is taught. Yea, even as there is a time for talking, is there also a time for no talking.
13. In the silence of your being shall ye find that which is not of your being; and in the Earth-mother shall ye find that which is not of the Earth-mother; in Be'al shall ye be made aware, and your awareness shall fill you.
14. Ye shall be like the morning sun which has risen and whose brightness is already full, but whose path is yet ever upward;
15. and the light of your awareness shall sweep before it all the shadows of your uncertainty.
16. Then shall ye need wait no more; for this is the great end and all else is but beginning.

(Meditations 7:1-16)

**PEACE!**

# What is Reformed Druidism?

Reformed Druids of North America  
Flyer for Fall 1965 at Carleton

## Origins

Reformed Druidism has its beginning at Carleton College in the spring of 1963 as a protest to the college's requirement that all students attend a certain number of religious services or meetings. One of the ways of fulfilling the requirement was by attending services of one's own religion. The Reformed Druids of North America proposed to test the degree of freedom permitted under this clause.

Druidism was ideal for this attack. It had a perfect combination of exotic ritual plus some relevance to the so-called Judeo-Christian tradition. If religious credit were granted, the religious requirement could be exposed as totally ineffective. If, on the other hand, credit were denied, the college could be charged with bigotry. The initial attitude of the college was, "If we ignore them, they'll go away." But the RDNA not only refused to go away, it grew, acquiring an advisor, and becoming a registered college organization.

In June, 1964, the religious requirement was repealed. Even though the Druids rejoiced at this triumph, they recognized that their job was not over. For many members the movement had come to represent a valuable part of their spiritual lives. So there was the importance of continuing the RDNA as a protest against all coerced religion.

## Principles

Druidism boasts its lack of institutionalized dogma. Each Druid is required only to adopt these Basic Tenets:

(1) One of the many ways in which the object of Man's search for religious truth can be found is through Nature: the Earth-Mother.

(2) Nature, being one of the primary concerns in Man's life and struggle, and being one of the objects of creation, is important to Man's spiritual quests. (The phrase "objects of creation" does not necessarily imply a single Creator, but it does imply an important link between the spiritual and the material realms)

In Reformed Druidism, the material realm, Nature, is personified as the Earth-Mother. The abstract essence of the universe, in opposition to the material world, is referred to as Be'al, from a word which the ancient Celts applied to an abstract supreme being. The "object of Man's search" is called "awareness," and it is defined as "unity with Be'al".

## Ritual

In accord with the Basic Tenets, all Reformed Druid worship must be directed toward Nature. For this reason, many customs and rituals of the Ancient Druids, who were essentially Nature-worshippers, are retained.

Druid worship must, in so far as possible, be held in the out-of-doors; an oak grove, or a hill or other prominence, is ideal. According to ancient Druid custom, the officiating Druids, and others who so wish, ought to be clad in long white robes; the robe of the Archdruid having a distinctive decoration or color. The waters-of-life are usually passed to all present as a symbol of the link man has with Nature. Incantation and other ancient Celtic ritual is also used; but in "Reformed" Druidism, human sacrifice is out.

In order to focus attention on Nature, various aspects of it retain the names of their corresponding Celtic gods and goddesses.

Dalon Ap Landu – the grove  
Grannos – healing springs  
Braciaca – malt  
Belenos – the sun  
Sirona (goddess) – rivers  
Taranis – thunder & lightning  
Llyr- the sea  
Danu (goddess) – fertility

## Festivals

Druid festivals correspond to the important dates of the old Druid year. Celebration always begins at sundown the previous evening, and includes bonfires and revelry appropriate to the season.

Samhain – Nov. 1: "Halloween" begins the period of Geimredh.  
Midwinter – the winter solstice; day of the "Yule log"  
Oimelc – Feb. 1; begins the period of Earrach.  
Beltane- May 1; "May Day," begins period of Samradh.  
Midsummer – the summer solstice  
Lughnasadh (Brón Troghain) – Aug. 1; day for gatherings and feasts, begins the period of Foghamhar.

The phases of the moon also ought to be followed closely. A new venture should be begun only when the moon is waxing, an old one consummated only when it is waning. The night of the full moon is a time of rejoicing; while the night of the new moon is a solemn occasion, calling for vigils and meditation.

## Organization

Each organization (known as a grove) has three officers: an Archdruid, who must be a third order priest or higher, to direct worship; a Preceptor, who must be at least a second order Druid, to handle business matters; and a Server, to assist the Archdruid.

To become a first order Druid, a person must partake of the waters-of-life, and affirm his acceptance of the Basic Tenets (listed under Principles above).

To become a second order Druid, one must pledge himself to the service of Druidism, as well as have an understanding of basic Druidism.

To become a third order priest, one must dedicate himself to a life of Druidic inquiry, the beginning of which is an all-night, outdoor vigil. Higher orders of the priesthood (up to the tenth) are reserved for outstanding insight and dedication over a period of time. They are similar to academic degrees in that they represent personal achievement, but carry no special authority. Each order of the priesthood is dedicated to one of the eight aspects of Nature mentioned under Ritual.

## Purpose

On a superficial level, it might now seem that the purpose of Reformed Druidism is merely to delve into the strange customs and rituals of the ancient Celts, and to have some fun doing it, and also to serve as a new and different type of protest movement.

But, on deeper examination of the RDNA, it might be said to have two important purposes: (1) It offers a reasonable alternative for the person who cannot stomach organized religion, or who feels that it is somehow deficient; and it hopes that its exotic forms of worship will appeal to the rebel. (2) In communing with Nature, it seeks to promote a spirit of meditation and introspection, aimed ultimately at awareness of religious truth.

# What and Why is Reformed Druidism in the 70s?

Schismatic Druids of North America  
Used as the Introduction for  
The Druid Chronicles (Evolved) Fall 1976

## Origins

Many people coming across the Reformed Druid movements for the first time may very well be confused as to their exact nature, and for good reason – Reformed Druidism is very confusing, even (or perhaps especially) to its members. Therefore, this introduction may help to place certain concepts into perspective.

Reformed Druidism (or, at least, the first known Branch of the Reform) was started as a lark at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota in the Spring of 1963 c.e. (common era) as a protest to the college's requirement that all students attend a certain number of religious services or meetings per semester. One of the ways in which this requirement could be fulfilled was by attending the services of one's own religion. The original Reformed Druids of North America ("RDNA") was founded in order to test the amount of freedom granted under this clause – by inventing a new and unheard of religion on the spot.

As originally founded, Reformed Druidism was ideal for this attack. It had a perfect combination of "exotic ritual" plus "some relevance to the so-called Judeo-Christian Tradition." If religious attendance credit had been given then the requirement would have been shown up as totally ineffective. If, instead, credit had been denied, then the college could have been charged with creedism.

The initial attitude of the college administrators was "If we ignore them, they'll go away." But the RDNA not only did not go away, it grew, acquired a faculty advisor and became a registered student organization – one that has existed, off and on, to this very day. [*Never recognized, actually. -Scharding*]

In June of 1964 c.e., the religious requirement was repealed. Even though the Druids rejoiced at this triumph, some of them realized that their job was not yet over. For many members, the movement had come to represent more than a practical joke and an excuse to miss Sunday Chapel – It had come to represent a valuable part of their spiritual lives. And so, to the surprise of the original Founders, the RDNA continued to exist and grow; with graduates of Carleton College spreading the movement (and its offshoots) across the country.

## Basic Beliefs

The principles of the original RDNA are quite simple and are referred to as the "Basic Tenets." We quote here from *The Book of the Law*, Verses 4-6, as they appear in the Lughnasadh 14 y.r. Edition of *The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*:

"4. Now the Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism are these:

5. The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother; which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.

6. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it do people live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face-to-face with it."

This has since been abbreviated, in *The Outline of the Foundation of the Fundamentals*, to the following statements:

- "1. Nature is good! And the second is like unto the first:
2. Nature is good!"

It appears that all Reformed Druids, of every Branch of the Reform, believe in the above principles, though all have their own interpretations of the words. In all the Branches of the Reform, the material realm, Nature, is personified as the Earth-Mother (one of the oldest archetypes known to humanity). The abstract essence of the universe(s), in distinction from the material world, is referred to as Be'al, from a word which the Ancient Celts applied to an abstract supreme being (based on the root "Bel", meaning "good, shining, bright"). The "object of Humanity's search" is called "awareness" and it is defined as "unity with Be'al".

## The Branches of the Reform

There are at present (*Lughnasadh* 14 y.r.) several overlapping Branches of Reformed Druidism: the Reformed Druids of North America (RDNA), the New Reformed Druids of North America (NRDNA), the Schismatic Druids of North America (SDNA), the Hasidic Druids of North America (HDNA), and rumblings of a few others (including Zen Druidism, Chaotic Druidism, Norse Druidism, etc.)

The RDNA is, of course, the original group and looks somewhat askance at the offshoots. The NRDNA and the SDNA were founded during *Foghamhar* 12 y.r. (Fall of 1974 c.e.) and the HDNA during *Samradh* 14 y.r. (Summer of 1976 c.e.). The other offshoots are as yet twinkles in their Founders' eyes.

The RDNA itself neither categorically denies nor accepts the validity of any particular faith, including its own. This is one of the most important principles of the RDNA. It means that anyone may become this kind of Druid without feeling obligated to renounce her or his present religious beliefs and without being committed to anything but the Basic Tenets. Many find this approach to mysticism liberating, although some may also feel that it prevents them from answering the question, "Is my Druidism valid?" The answer to that question must be found on an individual level and a Druid would say "It will come with awareness."

While the original RDNA includes Jews, Christians, Agnostics, Atheists, Marxist and members of other faiths in its ranks, the NRDNA seems to include many Neopagans as well (for a discussion of what Neopaganism is see *The First Epistle of Isaac, Part Two*) and one Grove at least is headed further and further in that direction. However, the major distinctions between the NRDNA and the RDNA appears to be in their political structure rather than their philosophy (see below).

The SDNA is emphatically Neopagan in its philosophy (although in an anti-dogmatic fashion) and defines itself as follows: "The SDNA is a Branch of Reformed Druidism, emphasizing its own nature as an Eclectic Reconstructionist Neopagan Priestcraft, based primarily upon Gaulish and Celtic sources, but open to ideas, deities and rituals from many other Neopagan belief systems. We worship the Earth-Mother as the feminine personification of Manifestation, Be'al as the masculine personification of Essence, and numerous Gods and Goddesses as personification of various aspects of our experience. We offer no dogmas or final answers but only continual questions. Our goal is increased awareness and harmony within ourselves and all of Nature. We are willing to interact philosophically and ritual with members of all other belief systems, including all other Branches

of the Reform, that are compatible with our own approach and Nature. We accept our duty to assist Evolution, on all levels, and to work for the survival of our Holy Mother the Earth."

The HDNA is the most recent Branch of the Reform, being an offshoot from the SDNA. It too considers itself to be a form of Neopaganism and has chosen to orient itself around a total Neopagan Lifestyle, based upon "repaganized" patterns taken from Jewish origins. It is currently offering the following self-definition, until a better one is evolved: "The HDNA is a Branch of Reformed Druidism, emphasizing its own nature as an Eclectic Reconstructionist Neopagan Lifestyle, based primarily upon Gaulish, Celtic, Yiddish and Hebrew Paleopagan sources, but open to ideas, deities and rituals from many other Neopagan belief systems..." [the rest of their definition follows that of the SDNA]

It should be remembered that most of the members of the RDNA do *not* consider themselves to be Pagans of any sort, but rather followers of a way of inquiry that is applicable to any faith. Druids believe that among the many obstacles to spiritual growth are Dogmatism and Orthodoxy; the formalization of beliefs in a fashion that discourages continual spiritual inquiry, or that encourages others to adopt them without their own inquiry. Many also feel that most of the world's religions are beset by these problems and must constantly combat their ossifying influence. The Neopagans agree that it is necessary to keep a wary eye and a keen sense of humor about the whole problem. Still, many of the older members of the RDNA disapprove of Neopagan Druidism, considering it a dangerous step backwards.

The SDNA and the HDNA seem to place more of an emphasis than the RDNA and the NRDNA (except for the Berkeley Grove) upon the following areas; Magic, craft, Poetry, Song, Dance, use of Solar and Lunar cycles, Neopagan ecumenical rites, civil liberties actions and active worship of many Gods not mentioned in the original RDNA literature. All Reformed Druid movements are interested in ecological activities and in the creation of new liturgies.

There are many members of the NRDNA who agree with the philosophy of the SDNA and/or the HDNA, but who prefer to remain with the organizational structure of the RDNA. This is what we mean when we say that the Branches of the Reform "overlap". Also of interest is the fact that, thanks to the Apostolic Succession from Carleton College (maintained by using the same basic ordination ceremony, with or without additions, for the Priesthood), all Third Order priests and priestesses of any Branch of the Reform are equally "legitimate", though personal beliefs vary widely and some groups may not allow priests of a different Branch to lead some of their specialized rites.

In none of the currently existing Branches of the Reform is either sex given precedence over the other, nor any race, color, nationality or culture considered superior. The SDNA and the HDNA accept only Pagans for the Priesthood. The Priesthood of the RDNA and the NRDNA, on the other hand, are open to members of all faiths.

## Local Organization

All Branches of the Reform operate locally in "Groves". Each Grove has at least three officers; an Archdruid/ess, who must be at least a Third Order Druid or Druidess, to direct worship; a Preceptor (or Preceptress) who must be of at least the Second Order, to handle business matters; and a Server, who must be of at least the First Order, to assist the Archdruid/ess. In the SDNA and the HDNA, other officers are added, including an

Assistant Archdruid/ess, to preside over services when the regular Archdruid/ess is absent, and a Bard, to direct all the music, poetry, singing and dancing. Some Groves may also appoint an Astrologer to select the proper dates for services, etc.

To become a First Order Druid/ess, a person must partake of the waters-of-life and affirm her or his acceptance of the Basic Tenets.

To become a Second Order Druid/ess, one must pledge himself or herself to the service of Druidism, as well as have an understanding of basic Reformed Druidism.

To become a Third Order Druid/ess (priest or priestess), one must dedicate herself or himself to a life of Druidic inquiry, the beginning of which is an all night fast and vigil in the outdoors. The SDNA and the HDNA add various other requirements for this Order, including, amongst others, (1) a statement to the members of the Grove that one does indeed think of oneself as a Pagan, (2) progress in the learning of magical, religious and parapsychological knowledge, (3) progress in the learning of various crafts and fine arts, and (4) an agreement between the candidate and the ordaining Archdruid/ess that a genuine vocation is evident. The normal time period in the SDNA and the HDNA from becoming a member of the First Order to being ordained to the Third Order (for those who are not already clergy in other Neopagan religions) is a year and a day.

The RDNA and the NRDNA also encourage the ordination only of those with vocations, however, they define this differently and do not necessarily consider holding of Neopagan priesthood as evidence of such.

In order to establish a legal Grove, in any Branch, it is necessary to have three people, at least one of whom is of the Third Order and one of the Second, to adopt one of the standard forms of a Constitution and (for the offshoots) to register the fact of the Grove's existence with the head of one's Branch.

## National Organization

Each Grove, in every Branch of the Reform, is an independent entity, as is each Branch. In the RDNA, what little governance occurs is handled by the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, which consists of all Third Order priests and priestesses, including (presumably) those who belong to the other Branches. (It would be difficult legally and ethically to oust the "heretics", in any event, since they do hold legitimate Apostolic Succession and there are no provisions -currently- for loyalty oaths to the original Branch.) The basic principal of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu has been described by some as "that government is best which governs least." The CoDAL operates by mail and is officially headed by whoever is Archdruid/ess of Carleton Grove. Since (a) Druids don't write letters much, (b) the Carleton Grove is most active during the school year, and (c) it has also suffered organizational difficulties over the last few years (though it now seems healthy enough) the CoDAL has actually done very little over the years.

The NRDNA formed, in part, over this difficulty and is in the process of reorganizing its political structure. Three of the five RDNA Groves (Berkeley, Chicago and Stanford) decided in August 1974 c.e. to stage a coup d'etat and form a Provisional Council of ArchDruids, inviting the leaders of all active Groves to join. Further details on this action, and the confusion accompanying it, can be found in *The Book of Changes*.

The fifth Grove (the Twin Cities) began to schism from the RDNA at the same time. The reasons for the schism (whether full or partial, temporary or permanent, has never been decided) were

dissatisfaction with the religious vaguenesses and overly anarchistic disorganization that they believed to exist in the original Druid organization, a desire to make their form of Druidism more available to the public, and a feeling that it was unfair to all parties involved to use the same name. It is currently headquartered in Berkeley California (The Mother Grove, which has an overlapping membership with the Berkeley Grove, NRDNA).

The HDNA was formed as an offshoot of the SDNA, with its full cooperation, and is currently headquartered in St. Louis, Missouri (the Arch Grove)

The Archdruids of the NRDNA, SDNA and HDNA Groves belong to the Provisional Council of Archdruids (PCoADS), which is in correspondence with the RDNA Archdruids. However, the political structure of all these Branches will no doubt continue to evolve as time goes on.

The SDNA has arranged for legal minister and church status to be granted to any Druid priest/ess or Grove so desiring (in any Branch) via a federally recognized Nonprofit Religious Association (the Association for the Advancement of Aquarian Age Awareness). [I.e. "Pentalpha"]

## Special Orders

Within the RDNA there are "Higher Orders," from the Fourth to the Tenth, that are "reserved for outstanding insight and dedication over a period of time. They are similar to academic degrees in that they represent personal achievement, but carry no special authority." Each of these Higher Orders is dedicated to one of the aspects of Nature mentioned below (under "Ritual"). There are at present only four of these Orders operating (the Fourth through Seventh), since the Patriarch of the Seventh Order resigned several years ago (as did the Patriarch of the Fourth Order more recently) and the RDNA has never instituted or executed any procedures for selecting replacements for the heads of the Higher Orders. Since the heads (Patriarchs and Matriarchs) of each Higher Orders are elected by the members of each Order directly below, this means that the Eight, Ninth and Tenth Orders have no leaders and no members.

There are also other Orders associated with the other Branches of the Reform, including the Order of Oberon and the Order of Merddyn in the SDNA (which are Bardic and Ceremonial Magical Orders, respectively), the Order of Diancecht in the NRDNA (a Healing Order), etc. As a general rule, these Orders have only whatever "authority" in a local Grove may choose to grant them. For example, in the Twin Cities Grove, the Order of Oberon is headed by the Grove's Bard and is in charge of all music, poetry, ritual dramas, etc. The Matriarch or Patriarch of each special Order is usually self-appointed and exercises whatever internal authority they can get away with, which isn't much.

## Ritual

In accordance with the Basic Tenets, all Reformed Druid worship is directed towards Nature. For this reason, many customs and rituals (real, reconstructed, or fancied) of the Ancient (Paleopagan) Druids are retained. The Berkeley Grove seems to have done the most research in this area so far, having a gigantic library of Celtic materials and holding many of its services in Gaelic. Druid worship should in so far as is possible, be held in the out-of-doors. An oak grove, beach, hill or other place of natural beauty is ideal.

During the winter, especially in the Northern parts of the country, frequent outdoor services are impractical. The Berkeley Grove solves this by having "Celtic Nights" every other week during the winter, and the Twin Cities Grove has experimented with weekly Taoist meditation services, which seemed to fit quite well with the Reformed druid idea.

According to custom, the officiating Third Order Druids, and other who so wish, ought to be clad in long robes (white is traditional, but any color other than black is acceptable), with the robe of the presiding Archdruid/ess having a distinctive color or decoration. The official mark of the Priesthood is the red or white ribbon (depending on the season) worn around the neck. This is the actual minimum of vestments and some Groves may choose to wear ordinary clothes or dress in some other manner. Ribbons of other colors are worn as insignia by the various Orders as well.

The waters-of-life are usually passed to all present as a symbol of the link we have with Nature. Incantation and other Paleopagan ritual devices are also used, but in all Branches of the Reform human and animal sacrifice is forbidden (actually there is very little to support the idea that human sacrifice was ever very common among the Ancient Druids anyway). The sacrifice that is used instead is usually the leaves and branches of a living plant (often, but not always, an oak tree).

In order to focus attention on Nature, various aspects of Her retain the names of their corresponding Celtic and Gaulish Gods and Goddesses:

Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of the Groves  
Grannos, God of Healing Springs  
Braciaca, gender-ambiguous deity of Malt and Brewing  
Belenos, God of the Sun  
Sirona, Goddess of Rivers  
Taranis, God of Thunder and Lightning  
Llyr, God of the Sea  
Danu, Goddess of Fertility

These deities are referred to by all Branches of the Reform, though their relative importance varies from Grove to Grove. In the HDNA, SDNA, and some parts of the NRDNA, several other deities are added. For details concerning these and other deities, see *Miscellaneous Customs and Liturgical Notes*, *The Book of Footnotes*, *A Guide to Gaelic Deities* and the appropriate books in *A Bibliography of Druidism*.

There are two standard services for weekly use, called the "Orders of Common Worship," one for the Summer half of the year and one for the Winter half. There are also "Special Orders of the Worship" for the High Days (see below), most of them written by the Berkeley Grove, and all of them optional. Many other ceremonies, some required and some optional, have been created over the years and more are still being invented. For copies of these rituals, see *The Liturgy of the Druids*.

## Festivals and Holy Days

The Druid festivals that are held in common by most Branches correspond to the important dates of the old Celtic year. Celebration always begins at sundown of the previous evening and includes bonfires and revelry appropriate to the season. The High Days are divided into Major and Minor ones:

*Samhain* occurs around November 1st, is a Major High Day and begins the period of *Geimredh*.

*Midwinter* occurs around December 21st, is a Minor High Day and marks the Winter Solstice.

*Oimele* occurs around February 1st, is a Major High Day and begins the period of *Earrach*.

*Spring* occurs around March 21st, is a Minor High Day, the Vernal equinox is not celebrated by the RDNA.

*Beltane* occurs around May 1st, is a Major High Day and begins the period of *Samradh*.

*Midsummer* occurs around June 21st, is a Minor High Day and marks the Summer Solstice.

*Lughnasadh* occurs around August 1st, is a Major High Day and begins the period of *Foghamhar*.

*Fall or Autumn* occurs around September 21st, is a Minor High Day, the Autumnal Equinox is not celebrated in the RDNA.

These dates are all calculated in different ways by different Groves, and are extremely flexible in any event. The phases of the moon are closely watched and attempt is made to begin projects when the moon is waxing and to end them when it is waning. The night of the full moon is a night of rejoicing, while many Druids use the night of the new moon for solemn vigils and fasting. There are numerous other holidays and festivals, especially in the SDNA and the HDNA, kept by individual Druids and Groves. For more information about these matters, see *The Tally of the Years* and the *Druid Calendars*.

## Sacred Scriptures

There are a number of collected writings held in greater or lesser reverence by various Druids. *The Chronicles of the Foundation*, originally entitled *The Druid Chronicles (Reformed)*, are the only writings universally held to be of "sacred" status. *The Books of the Apocrypha* consist of a variety of letters sent out by members of the Priesthood to each other. *The Liturgy of the Druids* is a collection of rites performed by both large and small numbers of Druids. *Further Laws, Customs and Ordinances* is the title for several pieces of constitutional and legislative material, as well as articles on the calendrical systems and miscellaneous customs developed by various individual Druids and Groves. *The Great Druish Books* are those held to by the Hasidic Druids (and a very few others). *The Druid Miscellany* is a number of short articles concerning matters historical, linguistic, polytheological, Bardic and bibliographical. All of these items will be found in *The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)* which is currently selling at a price (cost) of \$6.00 per copy. *The Green Book* is a collection of favorite meditational passages and poems used by the Carleton Grove. It should be available later in 1976 c.e., from the Ann Arbor Grove. *The Black Book* is the name for the Carleton Archdruids' copy of the liturgy.

## Conclusion

We hope that this brief Introduction has answered some of your more important questions about the different organizations called themselves part of the Reformed Druid movements. Obviously, only a thorough and careful reading of all of the literature of the various Branches will acquaint you completely with each one. Naturally each Branch of the Reform likes itself the best and wishes to be distinguished from the others (especially the RDNA, which wishes to be kept completely distinct from its offshoots). It is up to the reader to decide which, if any, of the Reformed Druid movements strikes a responsive chord.

Further information about Druidism of your choice can be obtained by writing to the nearest Grove of the Branch that you are interested in.

## Addresses:

The addresses and affiliations of the currently active Groves are as follows:

Ann Arbor Grove, RDNA c/o Adr. Richard M Shelton, 722 Dewey Avenue, Ann Arbor, MI 48104.

Arch Grove, HDNA, c/o Vicki Rhodes, 475 Lockwood, Webster Groves, MO 63119.

Berkeley Grove, NRDNA, c/o Adr. Robert Larson, 5208 Manila, Apt 6. Oakland CA 94618

Carleton Grove, RDNA, c/o Adr. Don Morrison, Carleton College, Northfield, MN 55057.

Chicago Grove, NRDNA, c/o Adr. Michael Bradley, 5611 South Blackstone, Chicago IL 60615

Mother Grove, SDNA, c/o Adr. Isaac Bonewits, box 9398, Berkeley, CA 94709

New York Grove ("the Second"), RDNA, c/o Adr. Steve Corey, 185 Mountainview Road, East Longmeadow, MA 01028

Southern Shores (Stanford) Grove, RDNA /NRDNA, Adr. David Uggla, 1820 West Bayshore Road, Palo Alto, CA 94303.

Twin Cities Grove, SDNA, c/o Adr. Eleanora Auvinen 212 Southeast Bedford, Minneapolis, MN 55414

Remember that these addresses are very out of date, so don't write to them, except Carleton.

Protogroves will be starting up soon in many parts of the country. See the address in the Box below for the Druids closest to you.



Figure 4 Springtime shore of Lyman Lakes in 1960s.

# What is Reformed Druidism?

By Emmon Bodfish, Live Oak Grove  
Druid Missal-Any, Midsummer 1987

## GUIDELINES FOR

### VISITORS AND NEWCOMERS

Reformed Druid Services schedule to mesh with the movement of the Sun and the Stars. They must start on time, such as at Solar Noon, when the Sun is highest in the sky, or at Sunset. Please be on time. If you are late, stand quietly outside the circle; please don't interrupt.

The Service is not a party; partying is afterwards. While R.D.N.A. is not grimly solemn, Druids are serious in their religious purpose. If you are not seriously interested in spiritual development or meditative skills, then Druidism, R.D.N.A. system, is not for you.

Once the Service begins, focus. Talking, joking, laughing etc. are rude. They break the concentration of others and prevent the Grove from achieving its goal. If you are drunk, stoned, or uncontrollably disruptive, you will be asked to leave.

While everyone is not a scholar, you are expected to learn some historical background about the Ancient Druids.

Ranks earned in other religions don't "count" in R.D.N.A. There is not fast way up or around the hierarchy. We are in no way connected with any other Neopagan religion, Wiccan, Craft or the secular, charitable organization style "Druids".

If what you really want are "Sex 'n Drugs 'n Rock 'n Roll", Druidism, again, is not for you. You might consult the San Francisco Sex Information Switchboard (415-665-7300) who deal with that sort of networking. Neither do we offer instant magic, curses, nor predictions about the Stock Market.

Enough Said  
(With thanks to Selena Fox's Guidelines)  
Now, if you're still with us,

### How to Join.

Read the basic Tenets and see if you agree with them. Read over the Outline of the Foundation of the Fundamentals.

To become a full member of the Reformed Druids, you must attend a Service or a Grove, during the summer half of the year, state that you want to join, state that you agree with the Basic Tenet, "Nature is Good," when you are asked this by the Archdruid, and share with the Grove a sip of the Water-of-Life. Or you may be accepted by a Solitary Third Order (clergy) Druid who performs the standard Service and shares with you the Waters-of-Life.

If neither of these opportunities are available to you, you can become a Proto-grove member until you can meet an ordained Druid or attend an active Grove. Perform the proto-grove Service yourself. Tell Deity(s) that you agree with the basic Tenets. Let us know and we will announce your new Proto-grove in the Missal-Any. To wisecracks who only want to see their names in print, and so send us fallacious Proto-Grove applications, we leave them to Cernunnos, Sucellos, and their consciences.

For a copy of the Proto-grove service, send us two or three stamps and an envelope, or \$1.00 (We are on budgets too.)

## Now the Basic Tenets of

### Reformed Druidism are These:

The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.

And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it we do live, yea, even as we do struggle through life are we come face to face with it.

or

Nature is good!

and the second is like unto the first:

Nature is good!

The following is from: The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)  
[Here is included a copy of "The Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals" from the Apocrypha]



**Figure 5 Emmon Bodfish at  
Live Oak Grove, Fall 1982**



# What is Reformed Druidism?

The "Big River Grove" of the  
Reformed Druids of North America (RDNA) at SCSU  
Initial Flyer for the Fall of 1995 at St. Cloud State University

## Definition

The Reformed Druids are a club of students from all backgrounds who are interested in exploring the beliefs of religions and philosophies. They also have a reverence for the importance of the Earth in our daily lives. We join together to enrich each other by sharing insights and pointing out good resources. This is our first year at SCSU.

## Common Beliefs:

There are only two Basic Tenets which we, as a group, agree with:

1) The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother; which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.

2) And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it do people live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face-to-face with it.

Everything beyond that is up to you, as far as we are concerned. We don't like dogma.

## History

The first grove of the Reformed Druids was founded at Carleton College in Northfield Minnesota in 1963. Some students wanted to protest mandatory chapel attendance, and they learned of a loophole allowing students to alternatively attend services of their own religion. They decided to make up their "own religion" and created the Reformed Druids as a hoax, based on the image of the ancient Druids of France & Britain. When the chapel requirement was dropped by the college, they found that they were enjoying the Druidical activities too much to quit. Many had found that the eternal search for religious truth was too important to abandon and that Druidism was the vehicle for that search. As they graduated from Carleton, many Druids founded new Druid groups, called "groves" and continued to help other students explore their own beliefs.

## Structure

Being a creation of the 1960s, Reformed Druidism doesn't really like hierarchy. However, three basic officers of the group are necessary to maintain club status and to make sure activities DO happen. We elect them every year in the first three weeks of Fall term.

1) Archdruid. This is the titular head of the grove. She or he is responsible for organizing activities and leading seasonal services.

2) Preceptor. The right-hand Druid of the Archdruid. She or he helps the Archdruid with organizing events and they play a role in the services.

3) Server. The server merely is a go-for to help with advertising and various tasks.

Although all members are equal in the eyes of the group, some members will occasionally pass through different stages of spiritual growth. It is customary to mark these events by holding a ceremony in their honor. We call these ceremonies "orders",

similar to the different levels of Masonic groups.. There are traditional speeches and activities associated with the three different orders. They are serene and dignified events and they are often designed & directed by the initiate. Most people don't go through the orders, and that's fine. But there is much more to Druidism that collecting silly titles.

## The Festivals

Because we find one type of inspiration through Nature's cycles, we hold periodic ceremonies to honor the passing of the seasons. The names are taken from public holidays in Ireland that were similarly practiced in most of Europe up until W.W.II. Each of these four holidays is usually accompanied by a campfire.

**Samhain** (Pron. "Sa-veen" or "Sawin") Nov. 1st. Known in Christian calendars today as "All Saints Day" Remembrance of our ancestors and honoring the beginning of the Winter half of the Druidical year.

**Imbolc** (Pron. "Eem-bolluck" or "im-wolac") Feb 1st. Known in Christian calendars as "Candlemas". At this time of the year, the first signs of spring are revealed through pussy willows, ewes bearing lambs and a slow warming of temperatures.

**Beltane** (Pron. "Bell-tain" or "Bel-tin-uh") May 1st. Known to many as "May Day". It is the celebration of the fertility in the Earth and the beginning of the Summer half of the Druidical year. Maypole dances and flower-gathering are common activities.

**Lughnasadh** (Pron. "Loo-na-sa") Aug. 1st. This is a harvest festival, celebrating the pinnacle of the Earth's productive bounty and the realization that winter is slowly coming and that we must prepare for upcoming hardships.

## Part Two: Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is Reformed Druidism?

A: Reformed Druidism is that feeling when you see a little bird hatching from an egg in the spring. It is a deep personal drive for religious truth, a drive so important that you will follow it no matter where it takes you. It is a journey, perhaps with occasional wayside rests, but still a journey whose only distant destination is truth.

Q: Do Reformed Druids have scriptures?

A: Not really. We are a living experience that cannot be encompassed with pen & ink. We do have some reflective writings from past members, but most people ignore them as silly. Instead, most Druids seek inspiration from various philosophical and religious writings that they find attractive. Some Druids find that events in their everyday lives provide plenty of inspiration. No two Druids have the same background of ideas, which makes our interactions all the more productive & unpredictable.

Q: What do Reformed Druids think about the Earth?

A: Most of us agree that the Earth is good; so much so that we affectionately refer to her as the "Earth-mother". Everyone today realizes that we have to be environmentally aware of the earth's cycle and the Druids often go a step further. While many of us find spiritual fulfillment in the lofty aeries of theoretical theology, we also realize that the material world can also teach us spiritual lessons. We can find truths in the eternal cycles of life and death and in the passing of the seasons. We recognize these lessons by marking the seasons with rituals to express these lessons.

Q: Do I have to abandon my previous religion to become a Druid?  
Do I have to be Pagan?

A: We welcome people of all religions and philosophies to the group, provided they can interact respectfully and maturely.

Reformed Druidism does not require (nor does it desire) that you change religion. It only asks you to examine your beliefs and expand your understanding of alternate systems. It is far better to be able to expand the understanding of one's own religion than to wander aimlessly, although for some members, such wandering may lead them to new religions or philosophies that they may find better suited to their life.

Q: What kind of activities do Druids do?

A: Most of the time it's just talking together, sharing ideas and telling each other about good courses to take. Other times we may meet to quietly meditate or go for nature walks. Occasionally we get together for a service to mark the passing of the seasons and pause to reflect how similar cycles of ebb and flow also occur in our daily lives. Some members prefer to do Druidical activities on their own with only the occasional interaction of the group. Many members drift away after they find that they don't need the group anymore, others stay behind to help future members in their searches.

Q: Are you guys a cult? I mean, do you do animal sacrifice or brainwashing?

A: Nope, No and No. We're a club for people looking for truths and who are willing to share their insights. We do offer up the occasional vegetable or oak-branch at our services, but then again the Christians often offer up bread and wine.

Q: So what's the point?

A: "The Search is it's own reward."



Figure 6 Bill Scherer, Mike Scharding, Andrea Davis, Matt Cohen, Sam Adams and Gretchen Johns March 1993 in 5<sup>th</sup> Floor Watson Hall to elect Mike Archdruid and vote for a constitution.



Figure 7 Tracy Utsuka, Allison, Dan Coil, Mike, Stephen Crimmins at New Stone Circle, 4/30/01.

# What Is Up With Reformed Druidism?

By Stephen Crimmins, Carleton Grove 2003

"In those days (when Nason was president at Carleton) a decree went out from the administration that Sundays had to be accounted for."<sup>1</sup>

The Reform Druids of North America (RDNA) were started in 1963 as a protest against Carleton's Religion Requirement.

Since then the Druids have come to be a source for any one interested in Spirituality and Nature, no matter what background or lack there of.

Druids Have Only

Two Common Beliefs:

1. The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never ending search, may be found through the Earth Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.

2. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it we do live, yea, even as we do struggle through life as we come face to face with it.

Some can't even agree on [or parse] these and so they've been simplified to:

1. Nature Is Good.

2. Nature Is Good

Which is still controversial, leading to:

1 and 2. Nature Is Nature

(We drew the line here)

If you are interested in Reformed Druidism email [crimmins@carleton.edu](mailto:crimmins@carleton.edu) or try our web page, <http://orgs.carleton.edu/druids>

## FAQ About the Reformed Druids

**Q: The Druids Hold Satanic Rituals, Right?**

A: No. Absolutely Not. In fact, some of us, such as the founder of Reformed Druidism, are devout Christians.

**Q: But what about the orgies and the animal sacrifice I've heard about?**

A: Sorry, but we are Reformed Druids. Since the Reform, we hold discussions, practice meditation, and pursue other avenues of spiritual exploration; most of all, we spend lots of time in the Arb.

**Q: Do I have to quit my current religion to be a Druid?**

A: Most certainly not. Anyone can be a Druid, regardless of religion, or lack there of.

<sup>1</sup> From "The Druid Chronicles (Reformed)", by David Frangquist, class of '66

**Q: But Druidism Is A Religion, Right?**

A: It depends on who you ask. Some say that it's an additional spiritual path, Some just show up for conversation and food (We don't mind, really) and some consider it a religion.

**Q: So, how do I join?**

A: You just did.

**Q: Oh really? How do I quit?**

A: You just did.

**Q: Ok. How do I join and know when events are?**

A: Try emailing the ArchDruid at [crimmins@carleton.edu](mailto:crimmins@carleton.edu). We'll also put notices in the NNB. Another resource is our conference on caucus.

## Truth or Myth About the Druids

**The Druids started as an excuse to go into the Arb and get drunk on Sundays.**

MYTH: The Druids started as a genuine protest against the religious requirement; alcohol is not allowed at Druid events.

**The Druids are weird unshaven throwbacks to the Sixties.**

MYTH: We look pretty much like everybody else on campus. We could live next door without your knowing it (You're thinking of the mustache club and the seventies.)

**The Druids all wear cloaks.**

MYTH: A few of us have cloaks but it has nothing to do with Druids (Except that they are nice to wear during ceremonies in the bitter Minnesota winter. [And yes, the bitter Minnesota winter is true; the Druids can do nothing about that])

**The Druids are Neopagans.**

MYTH: The Druids are made up of people of many religions, only a handful are Neopagans.

**In the year 1999 the God Dalon Ap Landu was defeated and killed by Hu Gadarn because Hu had more historical evidence to support him.**

MYTH: But one of our sources says he's now in FL.

**You can join the Druid mailing list by contacting [crimmins@carleton.edu](mailto:crimmins@carleton.edu)**

TRUE: You can also ask him questions about the Druids for any reason.

This Pamphlet Created By the Reformed Druids of North America, Messing With Forces We Do Not Fully Understand Since 1963.



**Figure 8 Ross Wilke (St.Cloud), Crimmins, Frangquist, (tall) Darren, Larry Press, Mike, Julie Doneaux , Stacey, Shelton, Nelson at Beltane 2003 at Monument Hill.**

# Basic Form Reply Letter

By Mike Scharding, Japan, c. 1998

Dear Friend of the Earth-Mother,

I am grateful that you have heard about our group and chose to ask more about us. We get about 4 requests a month, so we made a standard reply letter. There may be a more personal response at the end, to deal with specific questions from your letter.

I am not the "leader" of the Reformed Druids of North America, merely the historian and busy-body, a person willing to answer questions. I used to be the Archdruid of Carleton (and therefore leader of the RDNA), but I retired from that post. However, I should be able to answer most of the questions that you may have.

I guess that you have probably written to many Druid, Celtic Wiccan and other such organizations in your desire to find information about the truths and wisdom of the ways of the ancient Celts. This is very admirable. It will take many years of long study, personal introspection, external communications, and lots of practice to achieve this lifestyle that you are aiming for. I wish you good luck and persistence in your quest.

Why chose RDNA? There's no pressing reason really, people just join if they want to. We're not a proselytizing group, nor are we secretive. People come and go freely. Many newcomers to Druidism prefer the vitality and more intense groups like Order of Bards Ovate & Druids (OBOD), Ar nDraiocht Fein (ADF), or Henge of Keltria (Keltria) which have established study programs, newsletters, magazines, published books, regular meetings, national councils, rules and by-laws, annual conferences and other such goodies. Sounds good, right? Well it is good, and we recommend that you write to the following addresses if you are interested:

- Ar nDraiocht Fein: A Druid Fellowship, Inc. (ADF) PO Box 15259, Ann Arbor, MI, USA 48106-5259 <http://www.adf.org> ADF-Office @ADF.org (734) 485-2722
- Henge of Keltria, P.O. Box 48369, Minneapolis, MN 55448-0369 or email: [Henge-Office@keltria.org](mailto:Henge-Office@keltria.org) <http://www.keltria.org>
- Order of Bards, Ovates, and Druids (OBOD) The Secretary OBOD PO BOX 1333 Lewes, East Sussex England BN7 3ZG <http://druidry.org/index.shtml>

So why choose the RDNA, which has a lot of nothing? For some people, they enjoy the greater flexibility and simplicity. You can carve your own system from a hunk of unfinished wood. In fact, if you wish, you may consider yourself a Reformed Druid already (of the 1st order, there are 3), regardless of how many other Druid groups you may join, we're not too picky you see. As the enclosed literature will explain, we're a very loose organization of groves and individuals (active and inactive) and sacred objects (usually inactive) who are dedicated to the search for something we like to call "Awareness". If you like, it's easy to register as a grove in the RDNA. Or not, if you choose.

Literature: We don't publish regular magazines or bulletins, but (for a few years perhaps) there is the website <http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna> where articles or stories by members will be aired daily. Past writings, musings, stories, articles, great letters and histories are also downloadable, "The Anthology", for free of course. We also have posted several bibliographies of books that we recommend for the study of Neo-Paganism, Druidism (modern and ancient), Celtic life, Wicca, etc.

There is no "secret" literature or inner circle knowledge (or at least no one has told me yet!) What you see it what you get (WYSIWYG).

Contacts: With the exceptions of a few overseas groves, we usually prefer the anonymity and ease of the internet. Some of you may not have computers, but access at library, school, cafe or friends house may be possible, no? You can also write to ARCHDRUID, c/o Carleton College, Northfield MN 55057 USA and someone will probably get your letter, though they may not reply (busy students, you see). But I do recommend you get on the internet, where information gathering will be greatly accelerated.

Final Recommendations Many starting seekers feel that they have to learn Gaelic, read all the old tomes, recite 100 ancient poems, be herbalists etc. before they can be Druids. Much has been lost and much has been saved; but remember that the Druids acquired their wisdom by pondering Nature and the actions of their fellow man and themselves, followed by consultation with each other. If you do the same, you will certainly also become wiser, perhaps with different conclusions than them. "Don't follow in the footsteps of great men seeking wisdom, follow after what they were seeking".

I wish you great luck, whether you come to us or another, or both. Enjoy the journey.



**Figure 9 Julie the Red at Beltane 2003.**



**Figure 10 Shenanigans Beltane 2001.**

## Dear Prospective Druid

By Mike, c. November 2001

Dear Prospective Druid,

Greetings and thank you for visiting my website and inquiring about us. I see the RDNA as a simple rag-tag band of philosophers, anarchists, dreamers and seekers of wisdom seeking Awareness through the study of the Earth-Mother (& Be'al. We began in 1963 at Carleton College in Minnesota, as a humorous protest against mandatory attendance of religious services and have expanded since then to question and pursue many other ideas. We have since spread new groves in many parts of North America. There are 40 or so groves and protogroves with maybe 500 grove members, and 3500 solitaries in various levels of communication (mostly quiet & abstentious).

My name is Mike, I record the history of the RDNA as well as I can, but I am not the gatekeeper nor its leader. I'm an archivist, not an ArchDruid. I speak only for myself, and even then I often disagree with myself. I hope what follows, a form letter, will give you a greater sense of what I personally believe our group does and doesn't do. If you contact other members, and you should, they may give you quite a different opinion on our group. <http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/wherogrove.html> Do not be disheartened by this impersonal form-letter, which is a mere vehicle for first-time information dissemination. Personal contact will likely occur and continue if you write back. Persistence is a virtue in communication.

For many people exploring Druidism, especially novitiates to Neo-Paganism (which we may or may not be a part of), it is a difficult choice choosing which tradition they will follow. Many members will change paths several times before settling in with a main tradition. We recognize that for many in the Reform, the RDNA has often been like a temporary religious way-station (a spiritual Ho-Jos, if you will) where people of many traditions, bound by a reverence for nature, desire for simplicity, and a wry sense of humor, congregate and interact to a varying degree and amounts of time. For others, like myself, we have found it a convenient permanent base from which to sally forth, confront and investigate the world. And for some, it is oddly sufficient, in and of itself, for all their needs. And, yes, for others, it is a mistaken choice, soon abandoned and forgotten as they proceed to greener pastures.

Our tradition appears to be unfocused, because we have no group-wide agreement on what "religion", "gods" and other terms mean. It is a dialogue in progress. Our group facilitates the spread of questions, rather than the accumulation of answers. What do we do in the Reform, besides pondering everything? The answer is; "Whatever you need to do, in your grove." For more on this matter see [www.geocities.com/mikerdna/faq.html](http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/faq.html) and [www.geocities.com/mikerdna/lessismore.html](http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/lessismore.html) Those pages debunk some common misconceptions about us.

If you are determined to be strictly Celtic aligned, you may do that in the RDNA, which allows a great diversity of grove-themes, but do not expect the rest of us to be so inclined. If such an orientation is important to you (beyond just your own local grove, on an organizational level) then one of our spin-off Druid groups such as "Ar nDraiocht Fein (ADF)" at [www.adf.org](http://www.adf.org) or "The Henge of Keltria" at [www.keltria.org](http://www.keltria.org) may be more to your liking. To get more guidance on the study of ancient Celts, you might wish to go to [www.geocities.com/mikerdna/acalinks1.html](http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/acalinks1.html) For deep serious study of the myriad modern Druid movements see [www.geocities.com/druidarchives](http://www.geocities.com/druidarchives) The RDNA encourages you to study with and belong to multiple groups, as you'll learn much

from all of them. Besides, we're not cool enough to deserve all your attention. For a more comprehensive list of other groups visit [www.geocities.com/mikerdna/drulinks.html](http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/drulinks.html)

We have rather successfully eschewed written dogma and the often numbing effect it has on personal exploration, but we have published some of our past thoughts for future reflection. There is currently our free on-line 25 pg. magazine (published eight times per year) at [www.geocities.com/mikerdna/news.html](http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/news.html) (whose editor is [poppinjay@earthlink.net](mailto:poppinjay@earthlink.net)). We also have a 500pg diverse collection of 40 years of past printed thoughts (for free download & easily printed) at [www.student.carleton.edu/orgs/Druids/ARDA/](http://www.student.carleton.edu/orgs/Druids/ARDA/) which will be updated in 2003. Three to five times a month, I send out a short letter to announce various new RDNA publications or news; feel free to join by asking me to mail you ([mikerdna@hotmail.com](mailto:mikerdna@hotmail.com)). You do not have to read them, many don't and do just fine. You can probably learn most of life's important lessons from participation in Nature and society, if you keep your eyes and ears open. If you'd like to talk with other Protogroves and interested solitaries about issues of setting up a group, then you might join RDNA Talk Circle at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/RDNAtalk/> But you're welcome to figure it out on your own, as we all must in some areas. Don't worry, it sound organized, but its just loosely managed chaos, really.:-)

You are more than welcome to be a member of the RDNA and another Druid group at the same time. There are indeed traditional initiation ceremonies (i.e. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> orders) for those who really need them, but there are many valued members who choose to be casual acquaintances; who contribute and exchange their thoughts and deeds, but do not attend services. Most ordinations occur between May 1<sup>st</sup> and Nov 1<sup>st</sup>, because during the Winter "Time of Sleep" most activity is not ritually oriented, and tends to be more interactive and research oriented. Any full grove can officially perform them, but it is really the link between you and the Earth-Mother that should be more important, so don't take it hard if distance, money or inclination preclude interaction with a full grove. You can have full experiences on your own, until fate crosses our paths.

Please go where thou wilt, be it in our direction or elsewhere. Take your time in choosing which route you may wish to do. Whatever happens, try to keep a sense of humor and wit.

Yours in the Earth-Mother,  
Mike the Fool  
Washington, D.C.

P.S. Here's something about Groves

## It's about Groves and Protogroves.

Do you need to part of a grove? No, of course not. The vast majority in the Reform are solitaries and are quite satisfied in their personal searches with only the most occasional of contact with other members. Power to them. Some band together for warmth, reasons of insecurity, or they actually like each other. According to the old "official" (whatever that is) rules of the 1970s, a GROVE requires 1+ third order (called an Archdruid) and usually 2 other members (sentient or other wise). A PROTOGROVE is a group of (even more than usual) unorganized Druids who perhaps lack a third order member, or haven't made up their minds if they want to be together for a year or more.

It's actually often hard to distinguish between an active solitary member with a lot of friends and a grove; which is why I usually don't bother to differentiate. But if it matters TO YOU (not me, of course, it doesn't mean anything to me, you're fine the way you are now), then here's a method for you stuffy-orthodox types who like the illusion of being more "official-ish". Being official plus \$3.00 will buy you a cup of Starbucks coffee! The only possible advantage of a grove is that I only list Groves on the [www.geocities.com/mikerdna/wheregrove.html](http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/wheregrove.html) So if you want to attract more friends within your area (we are getting about 10-15 stop-bys there every day), I'd recommend calling yourself a grove (and it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy).

See [www.geocities.com/mikerdna/newgrove.html](http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/newgrove.html) were it says:

- Collect 3 or more members,
- Choose roles, length of office, and responsibility (if any). Some groves have democratically elected fish or inanimate objects as Arch-Druid, since they tend to cause less trouble and have smaller egos. If it's written agreement it's called a "constitution", if it's orally agreed upon it's call an "oral-thing".
- Do your thing.
- Keep it simple stupid (KISS)
- When the grove is not needed, just break up and tell us.

Unnecessary stuff, but makes it appear more legitimate

- Write a constitution (see above).
- Contact other groves. Maybe they'll recommend members to you.
- If you want to be listed on this site or initiation, contact [mikerdna@hotmail.com](mailto:mikerdna@hotmail.com) Tell me your grove's name, general location (city), rough membership guess, contact address (internet is best), any homepages you've built; and a few paragraphs to describe your grove.
- Download a copy of "A Reformed Druid Anthology", but don't read it too much; it's dull in many parts.
- Vigil. Perhaps one of your members will do the vigil for the Third Order (or again, perhaps no one wants to yet, you can still be a protogrove.) Contact a local Third Order Druid to personally assist you or talk to Mike. Afterwards, tell Mike, and he'll record it in the Record of the Council of Dalon ap Landu.

There is an inherent difficulty in traveling for ordination (an oversight at the beginning, to be sure). If you use the older liturgies without a third order, merely substitute the Consecration of the Waters with a different prayer, such as:

"Earth-mother, we your children partake of these waters as a sign of our friendship and common search for awareness. You are in everything we hear, see and touch. May we be brought closer together to each-other now, and our far-flung siblings later. Bless these waters."



Figure 11 Mai Fete in the 1950s.

# SECTION FIVE

## On-Line Outreach

### Materials

*The following Information is taken from the website <http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna>, where daily readings, links to other groups, grove contacts, lists of recommended books, and a copy of our 500 page anthology of past RDNA materials can be downloaded (free, of course). Check it out, if you can. Email to me [mikerdna@hotmail.com](mailto:mikerdna@hotmail.com)*

## Reformed Druids F.A.Q.

Pert Answers to Tough Questions  
By Mike, April 2000

1. How did the RDNA start?

**Answer** Back in 1963 at Carleton College in Northfield, MN USA, some students objected to a mandatory attendance of religious services, so they protested by making a bizarre group and attending it regularly. The requirement was thus mocked and was withdrawn. Members found it groovy and continued to participate in the group in order to explore world faiths and personal paths in an open and honest way. As they graduated, they started groups in other states. By the 1980s there were about 10 groves scattered across the country. Then Isaac Bonewits left to form Ar nDraiocht Fein (ADF) Druidism, which later splintered and soon Henge of Keltria Druidism appeared. Nowadays, there are lots of sophisticated groups in America that can trace their roots to our simple little group, which still putters about.

2. What do you believe?

**Answer** Um... Nature is good. (Is that too simple?)

3. What are your goals?

**Answer** Awareness. Yup.

4. Why do you call yourself "Reformed"?

**Answer** Good question. Um...Because we also worship bushes? Well, the ancient orthodox Druids probably did some nasty stuff, (everybody did back then) and we don't.

5. What do you do?

**Answer** It's more of a question of what we don't do that makes us special. Like the Neo-Pagan Druids, we have loads of individual druids and also group druids. Individuals treat life as a spiritual lesson. Group Druids have the occasional ritual, nature walk, research project, arts and crafts, tea party debates and so on.

6. What will I get from the group?

**Answer** You know this.... You get out what you put in.

7. Who can be a Reformed Druid?

**Answer** Who can't be a Reformed Druid?

8. How do I join?

**Answer** You already did.

9. Oh, really? How do I quit?

**Answer** You just did.

10. I want a contact, guru, or just a friendly ear.

**Answer** Ask [mikerdna@hotmail.com](mailto:mikerdna@hotmail.com) he talks too much, but he's in Japan right now, so sometimes a week passes between e-mail checks, therefore be patient.

11. Your answers are too vague, give me longer documentation, please.

**Answer** You can always read A Reformed Druid Anthology. Just about every subject of our last 40 years has been carefully studied, charted and explained in a cheeky style.

12. OK, I read the book, learned a lot, was bored in some parts. What's next?

**Answer** Now forget all that you just read, and do Druidism.

## Quick Statistics on Reformed Druids (RDNA)

By Mike, April 2000

Established: 1963 at Carleton College, Northfield Minnesota  
Membership: 4000 or more, mostly independents, who do their own thing.

Membership of the groves: is 150 or so, fluctuating wildly

Number of Groves: Maybe ten. For a detailed map.

National Council?: Thankfully defunct.

Dogma: None, really. We only have Two basic tenets. We think Less is more.

Publications: Nothing regular. A Reformed Druid Anthology contains past publications.

Orientation: Sedentary and laid back

Famous Members: David Fisher (founder: abandoned us), Isaac Bonewits (on sabbat-acle), Chris Sherbak (in ADF), Rob Larson (retiring), Daniel Hansen (busy), Emmon Bodfish (deceased), Mike Scharding (exiled to Japan), Irony Sade (digging ditches in Tonga)

## The Two Basic Tenets

By Mike, April 2000

The founders believed that all religions began from the observation of Nature, including Ancient Druidism, therefore our first teacher has always been Nature. The Reform has only required two basic tenets of its members for the last 40 years. In the flowery prose of the Chronicles, they are described:

1. The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.

2. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it we do live, yea, even as we do struggle through life are we come face to face with it.

Most Druids can't remember even this, so we simplify it:

1. Nature is good.

2. Likewise, Nature is good.

Me, personally, I summarize it as 'Nature is Nature'. Which is less debatable.

# Less is More

a.k.a. Summaries of Reformed Druidism  
By Mike April, 2000

Reformed Druidism is a gentle protest against organized religion. We're not really anarchists, just minimalists.

We've noticed that good Archdruids (animate and otherwise) spend much of their time explaining what Druidism is not. In a Taoist sense, what is not there can make something useful (like a doorway in a wall).

Former Carleton AD, Pookum's Summary

If you join, you get a whole lot of nothing, which is what most of our members want. Hopefully, our system (or lack of a system) will simplify your search for Awareness.

Former Berkeley AD, Isaac Bonewits' Summary

Zen Anarchists.

Former Chicago AD, Thomas's Summary

Outdoorsy Unitarians.

Former St. Olaf AD, Sam Adams's Summary

I really don't know.

## Akita Grove AD, Mike's Summary

a.k.a. "The 15 Lousy Lessons of Merlin the Schlep"  
(soon to be a book?) These are not official rules!

### 1. Not Celtic-Focused.

Any inspiration source is okay, 25% choose Celtic.

### 2. Not a Religion

We're split on this one. Some say it's a religion. Some say it's a philosophy or outlook. Some say some rather silly things. Others ignore the question as unimportant and not tending towards edification.

### 3. Not Neo-Pagan

Well, about 40% of us are Neo-Pagans, and we do resemble Neopaganism very closely, but we don't define ourselves as such. We include Neo-paganism among our many possible sources of inspiration. The NewRDNA, however, is more firmly in the Neo-Pagan camp. As a rule, Druids are mischievously difficult to pin down.

### 4. No Established Dogma

We don't take anybody too seriously, especially ourselves. We like Nature, think a lot and sometimes share our thoughts in writing. We do have Two Basic Tenets and some think that's too much.

### 5. No Established Ritual

Attendance is, of course, unnecessary, and perhaps undesirable. Members of groves occasionally meet on the 8 festivals and the moons, but we are split on whether ritual is more distracting to Druidism or if Druidism is more distracting to ritual... Irregardless, we recognize that a lack of ritual can become a ritual, in and of itself!

### 6. No Strong Priesthood

Sure we've got priests,(they grow like weeds) but no seminary program. Non-priests can lead services too. In some branches, any member can just vigil all night outdoors and presto, You've got a sleepy priest. Others are more thorough in preparation.

### 7. No Membership Requirements

Well almost. We're not exclusive, any background can join, if they respect the other members. There is no excommunication or religious sanctions; Nature knows Her own. Inanimate objects are equally able to join, some even doing a better job than the mobile Druids. I can think of several groves entirely composed of trees, imagine that. The deceased are always free to join also, but I hear that the LDS has already took most of them.

### 8. No Cross-Membership Restrictions

You can simultaneously belong to other groups or dimensions.

### 9. No National Organization

We used to have one, but it wasn't useful, so it's thankfully defunct after much bludgeoning.

### 10. No Buildings

When nature is so wonderful, why hide inside a building?

### 11. No Money or Fees

It's sad, but we're always in the red, relying on generosity to pay for the sacramental whiskey and such.

### 12. No Regular Publications

No monthly journals and such, you're on your own. There is A Reformed Druid Anthology of past attempts, but since there's no money in it, few publish much. Internet is free, though.

### 13. No Proselytization

We're not secretive, but how do you effectively advertise a lack of something? People generally find us, stay for awhile, and move on when they're ready. That's cool.

### 14. No Uniforms

Occasionally somebody dresses up in SCA clothes, but jeans are cool. Homemade is impressive, though.

### 15. No Bad Stuff

Well, we've succeeded, so far, at least. Like the vast majority of Neo-Pagans; we don't do blood/animal/human sacrifice (although we occasionally offer a carrot or zucchini) because we are "Reformed" and we think blood or animal sacrifice is yucky. We are however divided on whether fungi should be ritualistically categorized as animal or plant because they do possess characteristics of both. Likewise, we don't do such un-cool things like brainwashing (who wants a clean mind?), orgies (which is obviously a fast way to get STDs), take money/property, or abuse our members (who'd want to be in such a group?). We treat our members with respect, and they freely come and go.

# Grove Formation Thoughts

By Mike the Fool, DC Grove, 2004

I apologize in advance over my long winded observations, I hope they will clarify some general traditions about Grove formation, by dealing with it as a single subject.

There comes a time in many a Druid's lives when they wish to begin holding services or hold meetings in a semi-organized framework, and the idea of grove formation arises. The first problem that arises is that no one knows how to found a Grove, and second, there are often no Third Order Druids present in the group to run the traditional services and do the usual ordinations. What's an enthusiastic go-getter Druid to do?

Well, first off, I have to cautiously say that I'm not the final *du jour* authority on the issue, merely one well-informed voice among many. That being said, I have unofficially ended up as the de-facto networker and advisor of groves at my website (see end of article) where I give some simple guidelines and list the various groves and contact information for people who want to reach a pre-existing grove. So I thought it would be appropriate to share a summary of the thoughts on the various pros and cons of Groves.

## Benefits of Grove Formation

The major benefit of Grove formation is probably a stronger sense of identity, that often comes by slapping a label onto something. You are longer "Joe's friends who meet in Joe's backyard" but you are suddenly "The Apple Grove that meets in Joe's backyard." Names have a power in themselves to some. As always, a title is an abstract concept, but titles are important to us, providing legitimacy and gravitas to a venture or person; a shorthand indicating certain powers or authority are inherent in them. Perhaps it's only the "magic feather" effect of Dumbo?

Like a corporation, a Grove is an entity that includes the members, but it also exists in a sense as a separate entity in both legal and metaphysical terms. In a Grove, there are elections for Archdruid, Preceptor and Server; (or President, Secretary, Treasurer if you want secularly titled folks for dealing separately with financial/secular Grove business) and matters can be voted upon, you advertise for recruiting, design logos and stationary, send representatives to inter-faith council, have members admitted in various formal ways, apply for charity status, print letterhead stationary, buy group land in a forest, produce team T-shirts, and a dozen other nifty non-liturgical ways to build brand-loyalty. Mascots, secret hand-shakes and matching belt-buckles are, of course, optional.

Traditionally (I'll use that word a lot in this essay), only the Archdruid (being a Third Order Druid) of an active grove would perform ordinations of 1st, 2nd or 3rd Order, so the founding a grove was seen as a necessary pre-step for missionary expansion & liturgical activities in a region. Some groves were even ephemerally founded simply for ordaining one or two folks in question, and then promptly disbanded after their purpose was finished. Most Groves in practice act rather independently, with nearly complete sovereignty, rarely interacting with their neighbors, following the RDNA traditions, customs and services as their Grove members interpret and elaborate upon them. Some Groves work closely together, holding occasional joint services, with large cross-over memberships.

Other Groves may disapprove if a particular Grove goes boisterously off-course from the standard patterns (such as restricting membership to those of certain faiths, sacrificing mushrooms or Twinkies, becoming too serious, requiring

ridiculous fees, or censoring the modes of expression) but there is little they can do except criticize or distance themselves from that offensive Grove; which they do. Running a Grove can be a fun and exhilarating project, full of memorable events, conversations and interactions, but that is not always the case.

## Costs of Grove Formation

On the flip side of the equation, as with any contentious group of anarchistic leaning spiritual wanderers, you also introduce the specter of small-group politics, group-think, power plays, and the misappropriation of funds. Many groves don't outlive the departure of their founding Archdruid, the owner of the meeting property, or another mainstay of the group, leading to what I call "Grove collapse." Many leaders or supporters may be in danger of eventually suffering from "Grove burn-out" due to the inherent tendency of one or two heroic people doing all the logistic, financing or other gruntwork; without adequate compensation or praise from some less motivated members. It happens over and over again, and seems to be a fact of Druidism, Wicca and Neo-Paganism; although a few will last long longer than a decade.

When a Grove collapses, like other works of love and devotion, it can be a depressing series of wrenching events that can depress involved members for years to come. As with marriage, reproduction or other long-term commitments, you should also maturely consider the pros and cons of investing a lot of time and effort into producing a new religious group entity.

The very action of defining a group carries implied inclusive and exclusive components. By defining who is in your group, you are often in a subtle way also defining who is not in your group; which bothers some members who feel that some things are better left unclarified or defined (what I call strategic ambiguity) and part of "keeping it simple, stupid." (KISS)

## Three Alternative Paths

The way I personally see it, there have been three standard ways to form a Grove, of which each aspiring wannabee Archdruid should be aware. You might come up with some new models, but these are the ones that I've seen among the 85 past entities so far in the Reform. First there is a missionary Grove. Second there is a Protogrove start. And third, there is a hiving Grove. Let's look at them in some depth.

Missionary Groves were the first model during the early 1960s when various Third Order Druids from the Carleton Grove left after four years and went to graduate school or to start a job in another part of the country. (Obviously, the majority of Druids after graduation pursued non-Grove activities or solitary paths.) Back then, the missionary Third Order would arrive in a new area, which would naturally have no pre-existing Druid groups, and decide that they would like to have services and pursue Druidical pursuits with new friends. They'd gather three or more people together and vote on a local constitution, often similar to the Carleton Constitution. Then the Third Order would ordain a First and Second Order Druid at the first service to take the usual elected constitutional and/or liturgical offices. Then a copy of the constitution was sent to the most current Carleton Archdruid (as the Chairman of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu; the overseeing body of Third Order activities), who has apparently always approved it, although the busy student didn't always remember to write back. A permanent fixed site and altar might be consecrated, or the Grove may select the most convenient site for each season. Annual elections would naturally follow and updates were sent to Carleton, where they are promptly misplaced or put in the Archives.



That's a very simple system, although there were some procedural debates of the chicken/egg sort of whether a Third Order Druid can consecrate Waters for ordination of 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Order Druids without already having a pre-existing Server (of 1st Order) and Preceptor (of 2nd order) at the service. The general consensus is that the Third Order can do so, when necessary, in such situations as Grove formation and emergencies. (See early Apocrypha for the debate.) We have existing approved guidelines for this model, but rarely are we such sticklers, and many a naughty unregistered Grove has happily poked around for decades in communion with other Groves. (Please note a stern wagging finger is implied here.)

So how about the Protogroves? Well, the missionary model worked fine for 10 years, then in the 1970s with the rise of Neopagan and Celtic Reconstructionists, the RDNA faced the novel problem of many people popping out of the woodwork in distant locations wanting to start RDNA-style Groves with no Third Order Druid present. It was a perplexing dilemma to many Third Orders, since how can we tell them they can't be Druids, when we started our own tradition from scratch without any acknowledged lineage? Possibly this was because we were the only accessible model at that time (esp. with Isaac's fame) in an age before the wonders of the Internet. Can a maestro, in love with the music, object to another maestro performing and the same concerto, even one she wrote herself? Imitation has been called the most sincere form of flattery. They naturally encouraged the budding groups to start new strains of Druidism, but they were persistent about joining us, so Brother Isaac Bonewits devised and promoted the Protogrove model.

Now, in the Protogrove system, you'd make a temporary constitution (perhaps the model of the President, Secretary, Treasurer) and would hold diminutive versions of the Order of Worship services that Isaac wrote, omitting or reworking the wording of the sacrifice and consecration of Waters of Life, until the pseudo-messianic arrival of an itinerant Third Order. This Protogrove model allowed them a pseudo-grove status to advertise more members, feel a sense of belonging, and they could devise their own side-services to meet their needs until one could be trained to the Third Order during visits to the nearest full Grove, or if a wandering Third Order passed through their area.

Technically, since only an active Archdruid can ordain, the visiting Third Order would have to be temporarily elected as an Archdruid before ordaining the local members. Once a new local Third Order existed in the Grove, and after a Server and Preceptor were ordained, a full Constitution was enacted and a copy sent to the record keeper of the Carleton Archdruid. Then they became a full Grove in the fullest good standing with tradition. This convoluted process may seem a little confusing the first time you read through it, but it tends to work out well within a year with a little effort.

Thirdly, Grove hiving is when an existing Grove splits its membership apart into two or three pieces for reasons of either enormous size of membership or internal faction fighting. This notably happened in the Berkeley Grove in the late 1970s. Berkeley was an old Grove, with long-term, consistent membership and a slow build-up of several Third Order Druids, each with their own visions and developing agendas. Eventually a mixture of strong personalities, keen organizational preferences and avid revisionism rent the group asunder into the Berkeley Grove of the Bay Area, the Clann na Brocheta Grove, the Hazelnut Grove of San Jose and the Live Oak Grove of Orinda; all within a few miles of each other. In a hiving model, one Grove usually keeps the originally title and the other Groves go off and establish new constitutions and elect new officers, although they

may use the same ritual/meeting site, using it in turns like a timeshare arrangement. This is similar to a separation agreement in a marriage, hopefully on friendly terms, but often not so. Although Wicca & magic-intensive groups may have a practical limit to the number of attendees, Druidism is more oriented to mass-gatherings. It is still conceivable that a really charismatic Grove may outgrow the facilities or other factors and necessitate a spin-off Grove. However, I haven't seen this yet, since we could hold services in an open-air football stadium, if necessary.

## The Third Order Factor

As you can see, the key factor to traditional Grove formation is a present Third Order. Like the Catholic and Anglican models, the RDNA Orders were laid out in a sort of "top-down" hierarchy. 1st, 2nd and 3rd Order Druids are ordained by an Archdruid who was ordained herself into the Third Order by a previous Archdruid of another Grove; and so on back to David Fisher in 1963 whose ordination is a mystery. However, there is also a "bottom-up" democratic element, in that the congregation must elect a Third Order Druid into the position of the Archdruidcy. If they are unsatisfied, they can vote for another viable candidate next year (or earlier) into the position or they can abandon the grove. So, in a sense, part of a Third Order Druid's ability to consecrate ordinations or hold services comes from his or her elected position in the Grove, in addition to their innate possession of the Order's title and experience, and the blessing of the higher powers. In this way, the leadership and the Grove are symbiotically dependent upon each other for purpose and existence. No Grove, no Archdruid. No Archdruid, no Grove. But remember, you can still be a Druid without being active in a Grove.

All Third Order Druids are automatically members of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu (headed by the often busy Carleton AD) and must follow their simple rules for ordination and Grove formation, but each Third Order Druid (who becomes an Arch Druid) may ordain any viable candidate they wish without seeking permission from the Council (or they may also decline on their own criteria, although this is rare). There is no known council for 1st or 2nd Druids as yet (usually being more concerned with in-Grove matters) although the higher orders (4-10) and side-orders have councils with their own rules. The higher orders are to encourage further efforts by Third Orders and many side-orders have been opened up as Special Interest Groups for usually all Druids to pursue interests in a less hierarchical manner.

If you can't convince a Third Order to visit your Protogrove in a reasonable period, then you must select a member to visit a nearby existing Grove to become ordained; or roust up an old "retired" Third Order Druid to do the work. You've heard the saying, "If Mohammad won't go to the mountain, then the mountain must come to Mohammad." There is a bit of an element of a quest involved here, especially when a higher order is involved.

Now each Third Order Druid has a free hand in how they choose people to be ordained. Some Arch Druids, like myself, will ordain quite quickly, on the spot even, if the ordainer finds the ordainee to be sincere, honorable, reasonably sane, of good humor, witty, benevolent in manner, reverently irreverent, possessing that deep vocational love for the Earth and bearing some quality whiskey. Other Arch Druids are slower to warm to a stranger or short-term guest and may require attendance at several services, spend a while in residence, or require lengthy correspondence before a grudgingly granted mutually-agreed meeting. Indeed, in retrospect, some people even like to work hard like this for their ordinations, "earning them" through sweat

equity in RDNA activities, although I also tend to take into account their previous experience before joining the RDNA.

Your best bet is to ask around to the different Groves or seek out retired ADs (I keep a guarded list as a go-between) of a compatible nature. The Carleton Grove in MN and myself in DC are usually of the former method, which tends to be most conducive to ordainees residing in remote locations. Naturally, Carleton has heartbreakingly history-drenched beautiful scenery, lots of young perky members, and some great camping options. I would highly recommend that every Third Order Druid visit the campus at least once in their lifetimes. I call it the Mecca of the Middle-West.

## Go-It-Alone and Phone Option

As we've explained, when access to a Third Order has proven impossible or resolutely impractical, the ordination system traditionally ground to a halt and Grove formation stopped at the Protogrove stage. And sometimes waiting for Fate to change our fortunes is good, too. Some Groves, like Carleton (1985-1993) did self-ordinations, and devised their own services "until such time as we are blessed by a wandering Third". Naturally, some of the self-made RDNA Protogroves eventually preferred their self-devised non-order-dependent services (originally temporary fill-ins) to the traditional ones, and often the Earth-mother seemed to respond equally favorably, so some would say grove legitimacy is more about pleasing fellow mortals. A few went off to form their own religions, such as Reformed Druidic Wicca over in Oklahoma, without ever becoming a functional RDNA grove, and they seem happy enough. So that's always a fourth course to consider, although you should not be surprised if some "Ordered" Arch Druids do get a bit huffy about these other self-initiated Arch Druids. Hierarchies invariably tend to be self-supportive that way and very particular about membership rules, so even the best of the RDNA might get some twinges of conscience in these matters. I think most in the RDNA still feel some sense of common purpose and belonging to this sprawling family of "American Druidism" that includes such spin-offs like RDW/MOCC, ADF and Keltria, among others.

A fifth option is the technology's ability to supersede the tyranny of distance. Telephone ordinations were first performed in the 1960s by David Frangquist to ordain a Carleton AD during the breakage of succession in the 1967-1968, when there were unannounced study-abroad shenanigans of the previous AD. I've done a handful of these myself, due to reasons of extreme distance, where the likelihood of meeting was scarce in the next few years (e.g. people at Thule AFB in Greenland on a 3 year tour of duty). In fact, I did one in August for Sister Colleen in Alaska. I see them as equally effective and minimally sufficient for the task, but aesthetically less than a third as enjoyable or memorable, as some traditions are best enjoyed in the subtle gestures, the shared sights & sounds, and physical mannerisms that occur during in-person ordinations. But whenever possible, I try to first arrange for a meeting with someone closer to them.

My own general strategy in those telephone cases is to have a long period of frequent written and telephonic conversation with the new person beforehand; to better understand their needs and style. After that, I have a service at my Grove, and retain some of the (hopefully) successfully consecrated Waters-of-Life and reseal them in a bottle. I then mail the consecrated whiskey, a sealed copy of the services, reading material, ribbons and a Druid Sigil necklace to the ordainee-wannabee. I discuss a few final matters with the ordainee at sunset (their time), ordain them to 1st and 2nd (with part of sent Waters), send them off to start a fire and vigil away the evening. Myself, I bide my time in late-night walks

in DC's nearby forests until I am contacted by them by cell-phone at sunrise (their time). I bless the phone by the power of Taranis, establishing a contact with them through the planet and air itself (we're all just out of sight of each other, you know) and perform the services and pack them off to get some sleep. I try to limit my self to 4 or 5 vigils in a year, for personal reasons or ordination purposes, due to the amount of effort, time and energy I have to invest. My only concern is that the newly ordained folks will miss the aesthetic stimulation and gestures, pacing and mannerisms, unless they see a service in person, and the way I prepare sacrifices and set up the site. To alleviate that problem, I'm considering the idea of making a "training video tape" to accompany long distance ordination; but my other alternative for now, is to recommend that when circumstances later permit, the ordainee should visit CA, MN or DC and attend one or two traditional services to enhance their understanding of Druidism further. Certainly they might wish to continue correspondence with me, their mentor and other active groves during the initial start-up period when those predictable mini-dilemmas will arise.

## Final Notes on Groving

Ordinations traditionally only occur during the Season of Life [i.e. between Beltane (May 1st) and Samhain (Nov 1st)], except in periods of disaster or pressing emergency. This is because, it is only during that time that the Waters of Life, crucial to ordinations, can be traditionally consecrated; and even then it's up to the Earth-Mother. During the Season of Sleep (i.e. Samhain to Beltane) only the Waters of Sleep (plain water) are usually consecrated in our tradition. Therefore, there is only a six-month window for ordinations every year, and you must plan ahead accordingly. 1st and 2nd ordinations conceivably can be inserted into a standard Order of Worship service on the same day, although most Druids like to separate them by varying periods of time to have a period of growing.

Third Order ordinations take place only after a supervised (but solitary) vigil of at least seven hours duration (usually sunset to sunrise) by a fire (if possible) without sleep, with the ordination at dawn the next day by the Archdruid, and attended by any other Third Order Druids in the area. I should note, that I highly encourage a 24 hour waking period (sunrise, noon, sunset & night) when vigiling. Some Groves have further elaborated the various ordinations, so they might not even closely resemble the services in the ARDA liturgies on first glance. Some Groves send out emissaries to visit and discuss matters for a short while with the vigiler during the night, add extra quests, questions, and others play wry pranks on them. There is a lot of room for invention here, and a few traditionalists will object to adding, but they certainly hesitate if you remove material. I could go on for hours longer on matters related to Groves, but I think I've laid out some recognizable rational frameworks for making a decision "to grove or not to grove" and my next article will address the important factors to contemplate before making the choice to enter Orders, or to vigil for the Third Order. Please refer to the following recommended resources if you want to found a Grove, or contact me at [mikerdna@hotmail.com](mailto:mikerdna@hotmail.com) As always, Druidism can be as simple or complicated as you want it to be, but always leave the same option to your other members.

## Further resources:

Protogrove & Grove Constitutions are in Part 4 of ARDA 2  
Examples of Protogrove Services are in Part 3  
General History of Reformed Druidism in Part 8  
The Apocrypha of Part 2 describes a great deal about the purpose of ordination, groves and liturgy.

# Thoughts on Ordinations

By Mike of DC Grove, 2004

A discussion of Grove formation would not be complete without a discussion on the process of seeking Ordinations, particularly the Third Order when setting up a Grove. How does being an ordained Druid really differ from being an associated Druid in the RDNA tradition? I can not speak definitively ex-cathedra on the matter of ordination, and these are only my observations based on my research, interviews and practice. However, my words might bring some aspects of the processes into clearer focus, and assist you in making your own decisions about ordination.

## Some Lengthy Background Notes

You might wonder at why the various Orders even exist. The Orders in the RDNA were probably devised as a result of several factors common to the Founders at Carleton College four decades ago. One reason was that the college required elected officers for the club's constitution. Second, several members were from hierarchical religious backgrounds, like Episcopalianism, with a clear layered structure of laymen, deacons, priests, bishops & archbishops (although there were no Orders at the original services). Third, more than a few of the Founders had been members of fraternal organizations, or were clearly familiar with the general structure of Boy Scouts, Masonry or parliamentary procedures. Fourth, although Greek fraternities & sororities were banned at Carleton at the time, [I guess Celtic fraternities were okay?] first-year students were still hazed (ask your parents), rites of passage were more pronounced, and there were clear differentiated barriers between members of different class-years even in the 1960s. Fifth, ordination was a fun way to "pass the torch" off to carefully selected leaders who had "jumped through the right hoops" of the departing leadership (although I can point to few examples of refused members). Sixth, there were clear cultural/religious examples in society about knights vigiling before entering service or holy people praying off in the wilderness before entering a vocation.

Things have changed over the years since the Counter-Culture revolution, and I think Americans, in general, have become less enamored with hierarchical rankings in the four decades since the Druids were founded, especially after the decline of fraternities, fraternal organization, recent church scandals and conservative reactionary activities by church leadership, Watergate, the increasing casual style of treating colleagues as equals despite differences in age, wealth or experience. This has naturally influenced the RDNA structure in recent years, giving new options and possibilities of interaction, along with the plentiful examples available now from the proliferation of non-hierarchical liberal offshoots of monotheism. (On the other hand, other parts or our society, of course, are seemingly more willing than ever to hand over spiritual authority to charismatic or dogmatic church leaders.)

When I first started my own Druidic path and joined the existing Carleton Grove in 1990, it was particularly functioning but a bit anarchic then since the loss of Third Order continuity in 1983 and the graduation of the revivalist Druids from 1985-1989. Their departure left a new generation of Druids who did not share the experience of communal quarters on an adjacent farm to the campus. The group was searching for a new stable base, and would settle on different off-campus houses and dormitories every two years or so; while often dining or attending folk-dance,

SCA or sci-fi club meetings together. The Carleton Grove was definitely leaning towards Wiccan and Native American themes, but still open to members of different traditions, with a fun eclectic range of activities. In the revival period, people initiated each other at Carleton to the 1st and 2nd Orders, and simply vigiled on their own for a Third Order, which was recognized by others as a sort of an individual vision quest. I did so likewise, and found it very empowering and sufficient in many ways; but yet there was still a small doubt that I might be missing out on something else, although I couldn't put a finger on it.

Finally, in 1993, I found Richard Shelton (AD 1969-1971) who came to Carleton to re-establish the "Apostolic Succession." After becoming interested in the older lost traditions of the RDNA, I thought about bringing back the Order of Worship and traditional ordination patterns. The Order of Worship was not well received, considered too staid and churchy, with people preferring more creative methods of worship, but the Ordinations proved popular and permanent. I thought this surprising as the Order evolved out of the liturgical positions of the Order of Worship service. The traditional ordinations seemed to provide a stronger sense of continuity for a constantly mutating college Grove. After my own vigil, being historically inclined by nature, I felt a great sense of comfort from belonging to a line of succession and the influence of a strengthened sense of common mission, not unlike joining a police or boy-scout squad; a sense of passage or a step forward on a journey. It motivates me to live up to my oaths when I'm down, and restrains me when I'm tempted to excess in my roles. I feel a sense of being watched and guided by Dalon (or Something) and felt the invisible influence of the other members of the Order, in a healthy supportive manner; like a school principal or the U.S. President feeling the weight of her predecessors. It might have been possible to have reached this state without ordination, but perhaps it came easier with a little structure and tradition? It certainly turned out to be a memorable rite of passage for me that I've enjoyed sharing with many people over the years.

Since 1993, I have been present or officiated at about 25 vigils for Third Order (including 4 telephone ordinations), dozens of 1st & 2nd ordinations, and a handful of higher orders (which are a whole discussion in themselves). This has been both draining and empowering to be part of those moments. Self-initiations still sometimes occur at Carleton (and in a few other Groves), but regular ordination still seems the general rule, although Carleton often embellishes the traditional services to make it more amusing and moving for the ordainee. And each ordination has had a unique stamp of circumstances upon it. I've seen many different people enter 1st, 2nd, & 3rd Orders for many different reasons, although the Book of Customs in the Druid Chronicles gives good summaries that I like to follow. What follows may not make sense to some, but each person chooses/refuses Orders for unique reasons that have to be thoughtfully weighed.

## Hesitation on Ordination

What's the big hurry? Ordination is not for everyone, and many RDNA Druids get along just fine without it, or choose only to do 1st Order at most, and enjoying long productive solitary ways. Awareness is not the sole possession of the Orders. Some don't have the time, motivation, or "pieces of the puzzle" ready for such a decision. I pushed Orders rather hard in my Grove at Carleton, St. Cloud & Akita, but few decided to enter them, possibly because of varying reasons of interest in organizational power, distaste of liturgical activity, "speed", "old ties", "grovity" and plain disinterest. As for the last, disinterest, mature groves

with 16 people and 8 years of stability will certainly have different dynamics motivating ordinations than a missionary start-up grove as described in the earlier essay.

Regarding power, many Druids want to jump to Third Order quickly. This is quite understandable, as the Third Order has many well-known attributed rights (or should I say "roles"?), and far less-well-known responsibilities. However, I believe a 1st Order Druid is equally as "good" a Druid as a 3rd order Druid, but I feel a Third has undertaken greater responsibilities and dedication to the "organization" and members of the RDNA, little as there is in this group. I personally think the Earth-Mother will hear a devout heart regardless of their Order at a service, but tradition exists in most Groves for Third Order Druids to preside at a service. I have to acknowledge that each Order (1st-10th) has their own traditional organizational/liturgical/spiritual roles which, if followed in succession with proper performance, will deepen the spiritual experience of those Druids and sense of attachment to a band of siblings. As an ordainer of a simple, flexible tradition, I try to balance and adjust the ordination to meet the needs of the ordainee as much as possible, without losing all traces of tradition and continuity. I then always instruct the ordainee to give their next ordainees options of strict ordination and the possibility of some flexibility, according to a mutual decision of what's most proper. I believe in options.

Although some people see the Orders as spiritual rites of passage, the Orders predominantly exist to fill liturgical roles. A Server in the Order of Worship must be of the 1<sup>st</sup> Order, a Preceptor of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Order and an Arch Druid at a service of the Third Order. In practice, 1<sup>st</sup> Order sometimes doubled as Preceptor in a bind; and sometimes a 3<sup>rd</sup> or even a 2<sup>nd</sup> Order has led a service, or a make-shift meditation, when the Arch Druid didn't show up. There are always exceptions, but the traditional pattern is the most often the preferred pattern in many Groves, so far. As you can tell from perusing the Apocrypha and interviews with "retired" Druids, RDNA Druids have always had issues on whether liturgy is more conducive than distractive from the core goals of Druidical activity; the observation and contemplation of Nature's aspects and learning from the wisest in the world. Indeed, in what ways are you less of a Druid if you never partake of rituals? Is not life itself a long series of religious moments, that Zen-like, are of greater importance than our attempts to verbalize or sacralize them through short periods of liturgy? For those who eschew liturgy and tend towards contemplation and sacred living, ordination may not seem an important goal.

There are different "speeds" in the ordination process for varying reasons. Some people are glacially ponderous in making the decision to enter an Order, taking many years in one case (like Sister Stacey), weighing each aspect of the responsibility and feeling out whether they have the "gravitas" or i involved, and who already made the choice and are just trying to find an ordainer (it took 2 years for me). In some Groves, people take at least a year between orders (slow-and-steady model), other Groves do them in rapid fire succession as needed to fill out the liturgical roles or when suddenly presented with a mature candidate. Some egalitarian groves (e.g. Amon Sul Grove and Swamp Grove) don't participate in Orders in the traditional sense (as did Carleton from 1985-1993), and those who could lead there, did and do so, and without titles, quite contentedly it seems.

"Old Ties" hesitations refers to discontented links to previous religions among members. Reformed Druidism doesn't require abandonment of previous beliefs; it merely encourages an honest re-evaluation and thoughtful contemplation of them. Certainly, some other beliefs systems do not accept any association with Reformed Druidism, and some members decline

to enter Orders for fear of being shunned by the jealousy of the old system. This concern kept me back for a year as I worked out my personal relationship with Catholicism in 1991-2. Taking Orders in the Reform, as in Christianity, is a major step for some people who take oaths and ministry very seriously, because it involves a change of identity at some level inside; one that is hard to reverse or decline without losing a bit of honor. I have noticed that the step into the 1<sup>st</sup> Order was much more momentous for some than the achievement of entering the 3<sup>rd</sup> Order.

Originally, a grove usually only had a single Third Order member (often the Arch Druid), and only ordained more when someone was leaving/graduating to go form a new Grove or succeed a retiring Arch Druid. This impending "grovity" led to vigiling activity, for aforesaid practical missionary activity reasons. In some Groves, however, you may have many core members in the Third Order due to varied reasons of protecting continuity in a rapid turn-over environment (like Carleton), or for the fact that a grove has been around for a dozen years (like the Berkeley Groves) and many long-term members have eventually seen a need to vigil themselves over the years.

## Rights of the Third Order

Although the 1st and 2nd Orders have prescribed liturgical roles, they appear to have no defined particular defined "powers," except possibly determining if the sacrifice was accepted, by some interpretations of the liturgy. A Grove or individual appear to be welcome to encourage, assign or assume powers to them; such as to devise separate liturgy formats for just 2<sup>nd</sup> Order, weather working, blessings, do Bardic performance at service, do divination, gather sacrifice or purify a site or props. The more comfortable you are with your Order, the more creative you can become, and reduce the gulf in popularity, that encourages the rush to the Third Order. I theorize the power comes from the Earth, the Grove members and their own experience. Recently I've been awarding clear-tape ribbons to 2<sup>nd</sup> Order Druids, to remind them of the need to think clearly, be pure and adapt to the coloration of society. I might also permit services to be done, while under supervision of an attending Third Order. Similar to Sister Stacey's Grove, I also require them to read the early Druid Chronicles, find a cup (either Gregorian style or their own choice), write a little comparing Druidism and a religion of their choice and to find their own ribbons. I'll keep you updated on how it works.

A nice aspect of ordination is the mentorship relationship usually involved both before and after the ordination. Depending on the people and personalities involved, it may vary from a short period with a few wise suggestions and simple factual answers, to a deeper life-long bond that might broach advice on other aspects of life like choosing a job, finding a companion or other life issues. The Third Order also has a number of privileges, in addition to the invoking of Dalon's "seven-fold powers and three ways of day and one of night," that they have granted unto themselves; the most widely known are namely:

1. Right to vote in the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, which is more-or-less defunct now in a legislative sense due to numbers and unanimity traditions, but still possesses a sense of camaraderie.
2. Right to be elected as an Arch-Druid and start a grove.
3. As an elected Archdruid, you may ordain people to 1st, 2nd, 3rd order, or to the Archdruidcy, although in practice some Thirds choose to ordain regardless of being an Arch Druid,

which they see as a ten minute formality (to construct a temporary grove).

4. May enter the higher orders, if invited.
5. May conduct almost any rite or service of the Reform (excepting ordaining people to higher orders to which you don't belong); including the right to write rites.
6. Consecrate the Waters of Life and Waters of Sleep.
7. Wear a red ribbon for summer services and a white ribbon for winter services.
8. Employ really bad puns, sarcasm, irony and witty comments to the amazement of one's friend & foes.
9. Use of fancy titles, like:  
Priest/ess of the Third Order  
Priest/ess of the Reform  
Priest/ess of the Order of Dalon Ap Landu  
A Reformed Druid Priest/ess  
Grand Poobah  
Sign the letters O.D.A.L. or write a sigil after your name.  
Call yourself "Reverend", or whatever is appropriate, which might be sufficient in some states & commonwealths to perform marriages & funerals.

## The Responsibilities

As with any public role, of course, there are even heavier responsibilities upon the Second Order, and especially the Third Order, although they are less clearly laid out than implied and unmistakably felt, and each person tends to enunciate them in a different manner. I have devised my own nine rules that have mostly governed my actions, since I was a 1st Order Druid, with a few tweaks. You are welcome to borrow some elements or come up with your own set.

1. Study widely, keep skills honed, and contemplate deeply.
2. Live a wholesome and respectable life according to a stable code of ethics.
3. Follow the general customs & practices of the Druids.
4. Encourage the best performances from others.
5. Assist and guide all who come in search of Druidism onto their correct paths.
6. Be available for consultation, assist & visit with vigilers in your area.
7. Revere Nature and protect it (and the weak) from unbridled predation.
8. Avoid the fossilizing touch of dogma, mandatory traditions, and unnecessary organization.
9. Keep a strong sense of cheeky humor.

## Conclusion

Again, these are my own thoughts on the matter, but you can see that there are a number of issues with pros and cons to consider when choosing an ordination or considering an alternative course of leadership or spiritual initiation. Take the time to complete an honest self-evaluation of whether and how you would like to undergo an ordination. If you are thinking of entering the 1st, 2nd or 3rd Order, feel free to confer with your nearest Arch Druid, or give me an e-mail to me to discuss the matter at [mikerdna@hotmail.com](mailto:mikerdna@hotmail.com). In any case, I hope that your path will be clearer and full of bright promise and rewarding challenges.



**Figure 12 Boliou Fountain, which used to rotate 360 every day long ago, 2002.**



**Figure 13 River altar stone, Cannon River, 2004.**

# SECTION SIX:

## Who Did What When?

### Simple Time Line of Reformed Druidism

#### 1956

First Stone Circle Appears in Arb

#### 1963

First ritual of RDNA April,  
Basic Tenets April,  
Carleton Grove founded May,  
Hierarchy up to Third May  
First Beltane May  
Carleton Constitution June,  
First Samhain November  
Predictions come true November

#### 1964

First Third Order ceremony, April  
Fisher resigns Archdruidcy, May  
CoDAL begins, May  
Nelson is ArchDruid, May  
Higher Orders 4th to 6th, May  
Chapel requirement gone, June  
First missionary groves, Summer  
Druid Chronicles (Reformed), Summer  
Vermilion SD, Summer  
Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan WI. Summer  
First non-Carleton priest at MKJW.  
Frangquist is Archdruid Sept

#### 1965

7th Order Established

#### 1966

Green Book produced, May  
Initial legislative period ends, May  
Frangquist resigns Archdruid, May

#### 1967

Hiatus at Carleton

#### 1968

Berkeley Grove founded  
Isaac enters RDNA  
Smiley Affair begin

#### 1969

Shelton is Archdruid May  
Codex of Form proposed  
Priestess Vote Returns

#### 1970

Stanford Grove Begins July?  
Smiley Affair ends  
Codex of Form withdrawn

#### 1971

Shelton resigns May  
Priestess Issue resolved

#### 1972

DC(R)'s footnotes

#### 1973

Search for the Blue Book of Archives

#### 1974

Isaac Affair begins July

#### 1975

DC(E) assembled

#### 1976

Morrison Archdruid Carleton, May  
DC(E) published, Aug.  
Prov. Council, Aug.  
Carleton Apocrypha, Summer  
Stone Circle re-emerges on Hill 3 Oaks

#### 1977

Prov. Council fades  
Isaac Affair ends?  
Druid Chronicle Newsletter starts

#### 1978

Morrison resigns Carleton, May  
Pentalpha begins

#### 1979

Isaac enters a sabbatical  
Luomala Archdruid Carleton, May  
Order of Lugh established

#### 1980

Luomala resigns Carleton, May  
Carleton Druidism sleeps

#### 1981

Coalition Council DAL, Aug  
CoCoDAL votes  
Isaac quits sabbatical and returns  
Isaac leaves NRDNA  
Live Oak Grove Begins

#### 1982

Coalition Council fades away  
Frangquists revive Carleton

#### 1983

Ar nDraíocht Fein (ADF) begins

#### 1984

Carleton Druids sleep

#### 1985

Live Oak Grove Closes  
Live Oak unofficially continues  
Cascorbi revives Carleton Grove

#### 1986

Carleton Sweat lodge tradition begins

## 1987

St. Olaf Grove (RDNA) begins

## 1988

Henge of Keltria splits off ADF

## 1989

## 1990

Davis Archdruid Carleton, May  
Pagan Studies gone Carleton, Sept  
Catalyst meetings Carleton, Sept

## 1991

Catalyst Group quits at Carleton  
Druid Missal-Any ceases

## 1992

End of Hazelnut's "Boring Times"  
Scharding inspect Archives

## 1993

Druid Archival Project begins, Feb.  
Davis resigns Carleton, May  
Scharding Archdruid Carleton, May  
Third Order resumed at Carleton, May  
Oral History Project Begins, May  
Tampa Bay FL Grove (RDNA), June  
Green Book Vol. 2, Summer  
Green Book Vol. 3, Summer  
Poetry Vol. 2, Summer  
Book of African Jedi, Summer  
Dead Lake Scrolls, Fall  
Dead Bay Scrolls, Fall

## 1994

Order of Puck starts, April  
Pan-Druidic conference, April  
Scharding resigns Carleton, May  
Hrobak ArchDruid Carleton, May  
Graham co-ArchDruid Carleton, Nov.  
Curtis co-ArchDruid Carleton, Nov.

## 1995

Big River Grove of SCSU, May  
ARDA collection assembled, Sept  
Carleton Grove becomes an official student organization Fall,

## 1996

Isaac retires as Archdruid of ADF  
Order of Bambi starts, January  
Order of Suzuki starts, January  
St. Olaf Grove closes, May  
Scharding to Akita Japan, June  
ARDA published, August  
Big River Grove closes, August

## 1997

Stone Circle reappears on Hill 3 Oaks  
Religious House at Carleton

## 1998

Unofficial 8, 9, 10<sup>th</sup> Orders Devised  
1998 Stone Circles re-appear at Carleton

## 1999

Dispute over Third Order, June  
New Stone Circle Appears, June  
Irony goes to Tonga, June  
Emmon Bodfish's mysterious murder

## 2000

New RDNA homepage, April  
Rapid Growth in number of groves.  
Scharding returns to USA, June  
Green Book Vol. 4, June  
Druid Missal-Any begins, November

## 2001

RDNA talk conference start, April

## 2002

Irony returns to USA

## 2003

HDNA restarted, January  
40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, May & June  
OMS Affair, August

## 2004

ARDA 2: Green Book published, March  
Archives renovated, July  
Robert Larson dies, August  
Fisher Interview, August  
Scharding becomes Patriarch of 8<sup>th</sup> Order, September  
Irony Sade becomes Patriarch of 9<sup>th</sup> Order, September  
Richard Shelton becomes Patriarch of 10<sup>th</sup> Order, September  
ARDA 2: Main Volume published, October

## 2005

ARDA 2: Magazine Volume published, Jan



**Figure 14 Goodhue Hall across Lyman Lakes, Nestled in the Upper Arb, Summer 2003.**



**Figure 15 Jenny the Harpist, c. 1998.**

## All-Time Roll of Groves and Arch Druids

Only seven or eight have constitutions that are still recorded to the Archives, so it is difficult to give their precise foundational dates. Likewise, most Groves rarely sent in a formal announcement of their dispersal, they just fade away. These are the only ones that I've heard about and remembered to record. My dates are vague at best and come from indirect methods, like mailing lists, to determine which Groves were still functioning. As for designations, that is even more tricky, since many were shifting labels rather frequently. P=protogrove, A!=Alternative Grove with no Orders. Please note many of these groves are no longer active. This is merely a record of all known fellowships of the Reform that ever existed.

Name	Place	Date	Label	Archdruids/Leaders
Acorn	Twin Cities	1978	SDNA	see Twin Cities, Grant 1/78-11/78?
Acorn 2 P	New Market	3/2003	RDNA/ o.d.m.	Ric Knight 03-Now
Aelvenstar P	Philly, PA	5/04	RDNA	Aelvenstar 04 -Now
Alabama P	Southern AL	4/ 2002	RDNA	Maddy 2002-2004
Alberta P	Calgary, AL	10/03	RDNA	Jim McCrae 10/03-Now
Amazon	Brazil	2002	RDNA	Friesland 2002-2003
Amber Oak P	Toronto, ON	8/03	RDNA	Amberoak 03-04.
Amon Sul A!	Georgetown, KY	6/2001	EDNA	Gandalf 2001-2009
Ancient Circle P	Argyle, NY	1990s	MOCC	Inion an Dagda 90s-Now
Ann Arbor	AnnArbor MI	1973	RDNA	Ellen Shelton 73-74, Dick Shelton 74-77?
Angus Og	Bay Area	1993	NRDNA	Until Late 90s.
Akita	Akita, Japan	1996	ShintoDNA	Scharding 96-2000, Haneke & Kibou 2000-Now
Arch	St. Louis MO	1976	HDNA	Rhodes 74-78, Clark Sept 78-79?
AZ	Black Canyon City, AZ	2019	RDNA	Captin Dunsail 2019-now
Baccharis	Orinda, CA	1999	NRDNA	Press 99-Now
Bamboo P	Dover, DE	9/2002	RDNA	BrightMirage 2002-Now
Barn Owl P	Cadillac, MI	2003	RDNA	Celtrin 2003 –Now
Berkeley	Berkeley CA	1968	RDNA	Larson 1968-76
Berkeley	Berkeley CA	1976?	NRDNA	Larson 1976
Berkeley	Berkeley CA	1977	SDNA	Bonewits & Carruth 77-79
Berkeley	Berkeley CA	1979	NRDNA	Carruth & Abbott 79- Fall 81
Berkeley	Berkeley CA	1981	SDNA	Bonewits Fall 81 to Early 82
Big Ash P	Garden City, MI	2000	RDNA	Matt Summer 2000-2003
Big River	St. Cloud, MN	1995	RDNA	Scharding May 95 to May 96
Birch	NH	1986	NRDNA	Carruth mid 80s to Now
Blackthorn P	Louisville, KY	2006	RDNA	Hyperion
Carleton	Northfield MN	1963	RDNA	See <i>Carleton Arch-Druids</i> below for full list
Cat in the Corner	Denver, CO	9/2001	RDNA	Alyx 2001-Now
Cattle	Dallas, TX	2002	RDNA	Josh Badger 2002-Now
Central Ohio P	Cambridge, OH	4/2004	RDNA	Celtic Faerie 04- Now
Chicago	Chicago, IL	1970	RDNA	McDavid 70-3, Bradley 73-76
Chicago	Chicago, IL	1976?	NRDNA?	Bradley 76- Sept 78
Chico	California	2/81	NRDNA	League 2/81 to _?
Circle	Parish, NY	1999	RDNA	Weber 99-01
Clann na Brocheta	Traveling	1977	ODNA	Larson 77-79?
Clan of the Triplehorses P	Southern Oregon	2001	RDNA	Aigeann/Cathy Weed
Corn P	Iowa	12/2001	RDNA	Gayla 2001-2002
Creeks called Rivers P	Columbus, OH moved to WV	2000	RDNA	Ian 2000-Now
Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Budoedd	Grants Pass, OR	7/2001	OMS	Ellis Arseneau 1996-Now
Cylch Kitsap Peninsula	Bremington, WA	7/2001	OMS	Butterfly 2001-Now



Name	Place	Date	Label	Archdruids/Leaders
Cylch Sequoia Sepervirons	Crescent City, CA	7/2001	OMS	Cernunnos 2001-Now
Cylch Tylwyth P	Westmoreland, TN	7/2002	OMS	Stephen 2002-Now
D.C. (Digitalis)	Washington, DC	2000	RDNA	Scharding 2000-Now
Dogwood P	Tappahannock, VA	2009	RDNA	Tony Dunsworth
Dragon's Eye P	Calgary, Alberta	2001	RDNA	Shaun McCann 2001-2002
Dragon Fly, Order of	Gillet, AR	2/2002	RDNA	Chis 2002-Now
Dragon Oak P	Virginia Beach, VA	6/2001	RDNA	2001-2002
Dravidia P	Edgewood, MD	8/2001	RDNA	Dolanimus 2001-Now
Druid Heart Spirit P	Chico, CA	2001	RDNA	Rhiannon Hawk 2001 to 5/03
Duir de Danaan	Silicon Valley, CA	1999	NRDA	MaDagda & Tegwedd 1999-Now
Earth Spirit	Ridgecrest, CA	2008	RDNA	Sayer
Elder P	France	4/2004	RDF	Cerene 4/04-8/04.
Emerald	Seattle, WA	1997	NRDNA	Cyndie Sallee 1997-1999, Priya Kendrick 1999-Now
Eurisko P	Hampton, VA	7/2002	RDNA	Gwydion 2002-Now
Evergreen	Olympia, WA	1975	ZDNA	Tom Schuler 75- 9/79?, Cyndie (née Sallee) Schuler 11/78-2/81, Merrill 2/81 to '97? Merged into Evergreen Grove.
Faerie Spell P	Whittier, CA	7/2001	RDNA	Dusty 2001-Now
Flatulent Waters P	Niagara, NY	June, 2001	RDNA	2001-2002
Frozen Aspen	Big Lake, AK	3/2004	RDNA	Colleen Peterson 04-Now
Galatia A!	Izmit, Turkey	4/2004	RDT	Greumach MacCoinneach 04-Now
Greenwood	Seattle, WA	2/81	R, N, S, Z?	Cyndie (Schuler) Sallee 2/81 to '97. Renamed to Emerald
Golden Apple P	Rocky Mount, NC	2/2002	RDNA	Unknown 2002- 5/04
Golden Bough	Joshua Tree, CA	2008	RDNA	Rusty
Golden Oak P	Duluth, MN	9/2001	RDNA	Coisiche 2001-5/04
Gray Oak P	Marlborough, MA	10/2002	RDNA	Binky 2002- 5/04
Grove of the Golden Valley	Sacramento	2005	NRDNA	Sean Harbaugh
Grove of the Order of the Mists P	Rock Springs, WY	2005	RDNA	Tully
Hazelnut	Bay Area	1975	changing	Moe & Abbot off and of to Mid 80s
Hazelnut	Bay Area	1990	NRDNA	Abbott & Reitan 90 to Now
Hemlock Splinter	Mexico, NY	7/2002	RDNA	Irony Sade, 2002-Now
Hidden Wood P	Blair, PA	2/2003	RDNA	Swordfighter 03-Now
Ice Floe	Antarctica	1999	RDNA	Friesland 1999-2002 became Amazon Grove
Koad	Toledo, OH	2008	RDNA	Jean (Drum) Pagano
Lark P	Tampa, FL	5/2003	RDNA	Druidess@hellotkitty.com 03-Now
Life Garden P	Long Island, NY	4/2002	RDNA	2002-Now
Live Oak	Berkeley, CA	12/81	NRDNA	Carruth 12/81 to 83?
Live Oak (2)	Orinda, CA	1983?	NRDNA	Press 83-85, Blunt 85, Bodfish 85-93
Los Angeles	LA, CA	6/78	SDNA?	Sherbak 6/78 to 12/81?
MaKaJaWan	Wisconsin	1964	RDNA	Frangquist 1964, Holding/Hirsch? 65-66?
Mojo P	Unknown	12/2001	RDNA	Juju 2001-Now
Monument	Washington, DC	2000	RDNA	Scharding
Mother Berk.	Berkeley CA	1976	SDNA	Bonewits 76
Mulberry P	Tucson, AZ	11/2001	RDNA	Ken Bennet 2001-2002
New York 1	NY City	4/66	RDNA	Fisher Apr 66-Sept 69?
New York 2	Meadow, MA	1976	RDNA	Corey 76-77?
Nine Oaks and Mystic Well P	Las Vegas, NV	2005	RDNA	Brid
Nomadic P	Roseneath, Ontario	2/2002	RDNA	Unknown 2001-Now
Oakdale	St. Paul/Mpls, MN	2013	RDNA	John Michael Martens
Oaken Circle P	Northern KY	2001	RDNA	Sherry 2001-Now

Name	Place	Date	Label	Archdruids/Leaders
Olympia	Olympia, WA	9/2001	RDNA	Daniel Hansen 2001-Now
Ombanda	Ombanda, CA	1993?	NRDNA	93- Mid 90s.
Poison Oak	Orinda, CA	2002	NRDNA	Weinberger 2002-Now
Post Oak Protogrove	Houston, TX	1984	NRDNA	Tom Cross 84-88
Princeton	Princeton, NJ	1978	RDNA	Morrison 78 to _?
PSG festival	Madison, WI	1993	RDNA	Scharding 1993
Purdue	Purdue, IN	1965?	RDNA	Smiley 65?-70?
Rapid City	Rapid City, SD	1966	RDNA	Nelson 4/66? -68?
River Oaks PROTO	Jacksonville, FL	2000	RDNA	Uncertain until 2002.
Rochester	Rochester, NY	1/2002	RDNA	Wolf 2002 to Now
Rogue River P	Medford, OR	5/04	RDNA	Aeigeann 5/04 to Now
Saint Louis P	St. Louis, MO	5/2002	RDNA	Unknown 2002-Now
Saint Olaf	Northfield, MN	1987	RDNA	Adams 87?-94?
Shikoku Grove	Tokushima, Japan	1997	RDNA	Ikari Segawa 1997-Now
Silver Oak P	Wilkesboro, NC	4/ 2002	RDNA	Unknown 2001-2002
Stanford a.k.a.	Palo Alto, CA	7/ 1970	RDNA	Savitzky or Uggla 70 to 76
Southern Shores	Palo Alto, CA	1976?	NRDNA	Uggla 76 to 11/78?
Southern Shores	Palo Alto, CA	1979?	SDNA?	Sherbak 79? to 81?
Stag's Trail P	Alta, CA	1997	RDNA	Pendragon 97-2001
Sunrise P	Green Valley, CA	2/2004	RDNA	Orianna 04-Now
Stockton	Stockton, CA	1972?	RDNA	Bonewits 72? to 74?
Swamp Protogrove	Naples, FL	1991	RDNA	Finn Goodwyrd 91-Now
Tampa	Tampa, FL	1993	RDNA	Kyle Clark 1993 to _?
Tampa #3 Protogrove	Tampa, FL	2000	RDNA	Jantzen 2000 to 2003
Three Stones P	Las Vegas	2010	NRDNA	Finn
Twin Cities	Twin Cities	1974	N or SDNA	Bonewits 74-76, Auvinen 76-78 See acorn
Tuatha	San Diego, CA	1976?	NRDNA?	O'Neil 76? to 79?
Tuatha de Danaan	Bay Area	1993	NRDNA	Sommer 93 to late 90s
Tucson P	Tucson, AZ	2019	RDNA	Meirneal
Vermilion	Vermilion SD	3/64?	RDNA	Nelson 3/64 to 11/65?
Volcano	Tonga, South Pacific	6/1999	RDNA	Irony Sade 1999-2002
Whispering Winds Through the Willows	Battle Creek	2013	RDNA	Rev. Earthdragon
White Rabbit	Monona, WI	11/2001	RDNA	Luomala 2001-Now
Yns Avallach P	Atlanta, GA	8/2003	RDNA	John Ness 03-Now



**Figure 16 Hill of Three Oaks, Lughnasadh 1993.**

## Leadership of Carleton College Grove

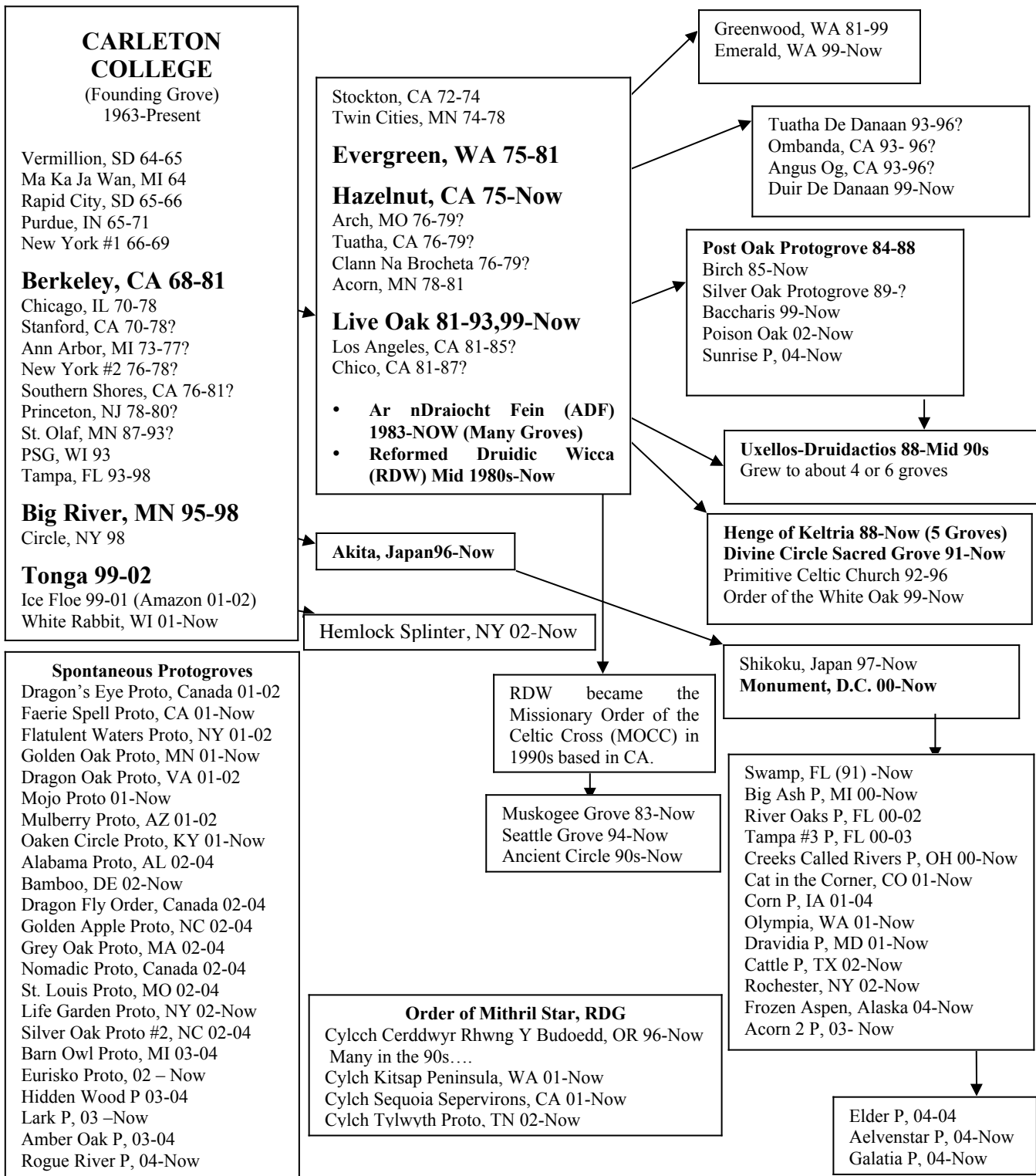
Carleton Arch-Druids	Archdruidcy
David Fisher	Spring 63 to Spring 64
Norman Nelson	Spring 64 to Fall 64
David Frangquist	Fall 64 to Spring 66
Gary Zempel	Spring 66 to Spring 67
Thomas Carlisle	Spring 67 to Spring 68
Marta Peck	Spring 68 to Fall 68
Steven Savitzky	Fall 68 to Spring 69
Richard Shelton	Spring 69 to Spring 71
Glenn McDavid	Spring 71 to Spring 72
Renata Seidel	Spring 72 to Spring 73
Steven Corey	Spring 73 to Summer 74
Diana Erbe	Summer 74 to Spring 76
Donald Morrison	Spring 76 to Spring 78
Susan Olin	Spring 78 to Spring 79
Katya Luomala	Spring 79 to Spring 80
Heidi Schultz	Spring 80 to _?
<i>(First Interregnum period)</i>	
Robert Nieman	Spring 82 to Spring 84
Thomas Lane	Spring 82 to Spring 84
Megan Ross	Spring 84 to Summer 85
<i>(Second Interregnum with various leaders such as)</i>	
Alice Cascorbi	mid 80s
Heiko Koester	mid 80s
Jan Schlamp	mid 80s
Carron Perry	late 80s
Tino Thompson	late 80s
Brandon Schields	late 80s
Joanne Mandt	late 80s
Heather Gruenberg	early 90s
John Nauert	early 90s
<i>(Return of Archdruids)</i>	
Andrea Davis	Spring 90? to Spring 93
Michael Scharding	Spring 93 to Spring 94
Rebecca Hrobak	Spring 94 to Spring 96
Anne Graham	Spring 95 to Spring 96
Michelle Curtis	Spring 95 to Spring 97
Irony Sade	Spring 96 to Spring 99
David Coil (honorary)	Spring 96-Spring 99
Michelle Hajder	Spring 96 to Fall 98
Amanda Bradley	Fall 97? to Spring 00
Chrissie Phelps (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	Spring 99 to Fall 00
Chloe Flynn (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	Spring 99 to Spring 2001
MerriBeth Weber	Fall 98? to Spring 2003
Ehren Vaughn	Spring 99 to Spring 2002
Chris Middleton (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	Spring 99 to Spring 2002
Steve Crimmins	Spring 2002 to Spring 2004
Corwin Troost	Fall 2002 to Spring 2005
William Reckner	Fall 2004 to Spring 2005
Ian Hill	Fall 2004? to Spring 2007?
Daniel Lessin	Spring 2007 to Spring 2009
Avery Morrow	Spring 2008 to Spring 2010
Beksahn Jang	Spring 2010 to Spring 2011
Laura McCreary	Fall 2011 to Spring 2012
Austen McBain	Spring 2012 to Spring 2012
Tina Chen (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	Fall 2012 to Spring 2013

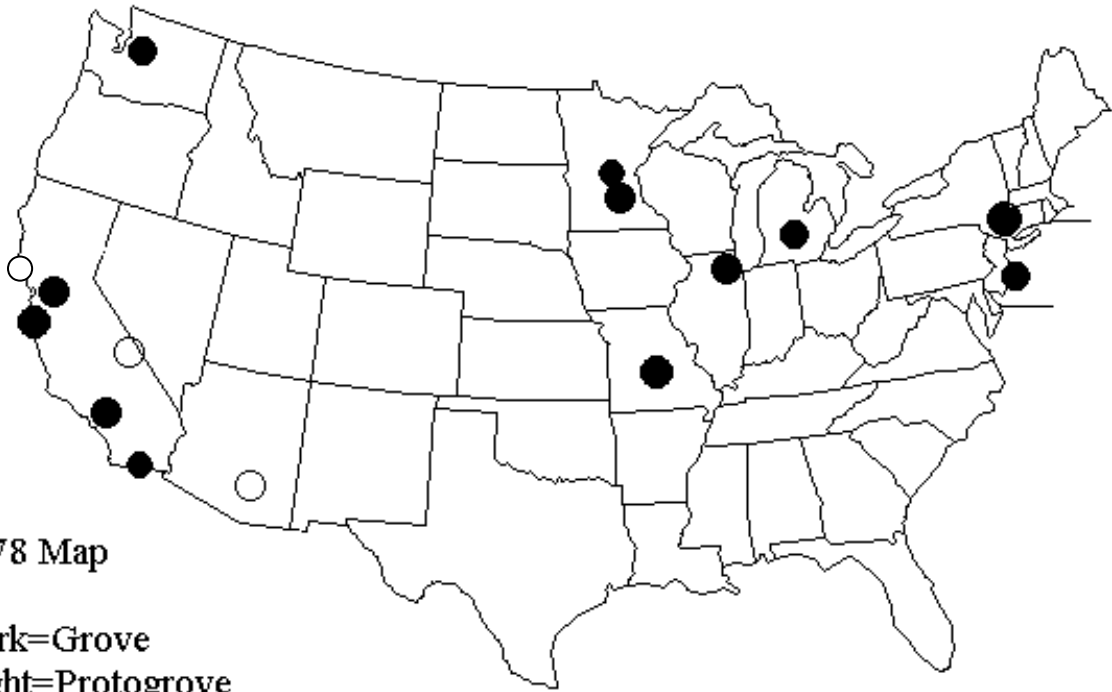
Carleton Arch-Druids	Archdruidcy
Matt Jaquette (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	Spring 2013 to Spring 2014
Anna Smith	Fall 2014 to Spring 2016
Rebecca Stover	Fall 2016 to 2018
John Scott	Fall 2017 to 2018
Daniel Quintero	Fall 2018 to Spring 2020
Jo Berlage <i>Co-Arch-Druids</i>	Fall 2020 to Spring 2021
Sam Anderson <i>Co-Arch-Druids</i>	Fall 2020 to Spring 2021

List of Carleton Missionaries	
Norman Nelson	
David Frangquist	
David Fisher	
Richard Smiley	
Robert Larson	
Steven Savitzky	
David Uggla	
Glen McDavid	
Michael Bradley (hon.)	
Ellen Conway Shelton	
Richard Shelton	
Steven Corey	
Donald Morrison	
Sam Adams (hon.)	
Kyle Clark (hon.)	
Michael Scharding	
Irony Sade	
Merri Weber	
Ian Friesland (hon.)	
John Michael Martens (hon) rebooted Carleton Archdruidcy 2015	

# A Family Tree of Modern Druidism

Naturally most dates are approximate, and many offshoot organizations may not be recognized by their apparent parent organization as truly descended from them. I would love to receive corrections and additions for the next issue. There are perhaps a dozen other offshoots of ADF, plus Celtic Wiccan groups and other organization that may have borrowed RDNA/ADF/Keltrian materials over the years, and when significant, we'll add them to the family tree. **(Current list is not current)**





1978 Map

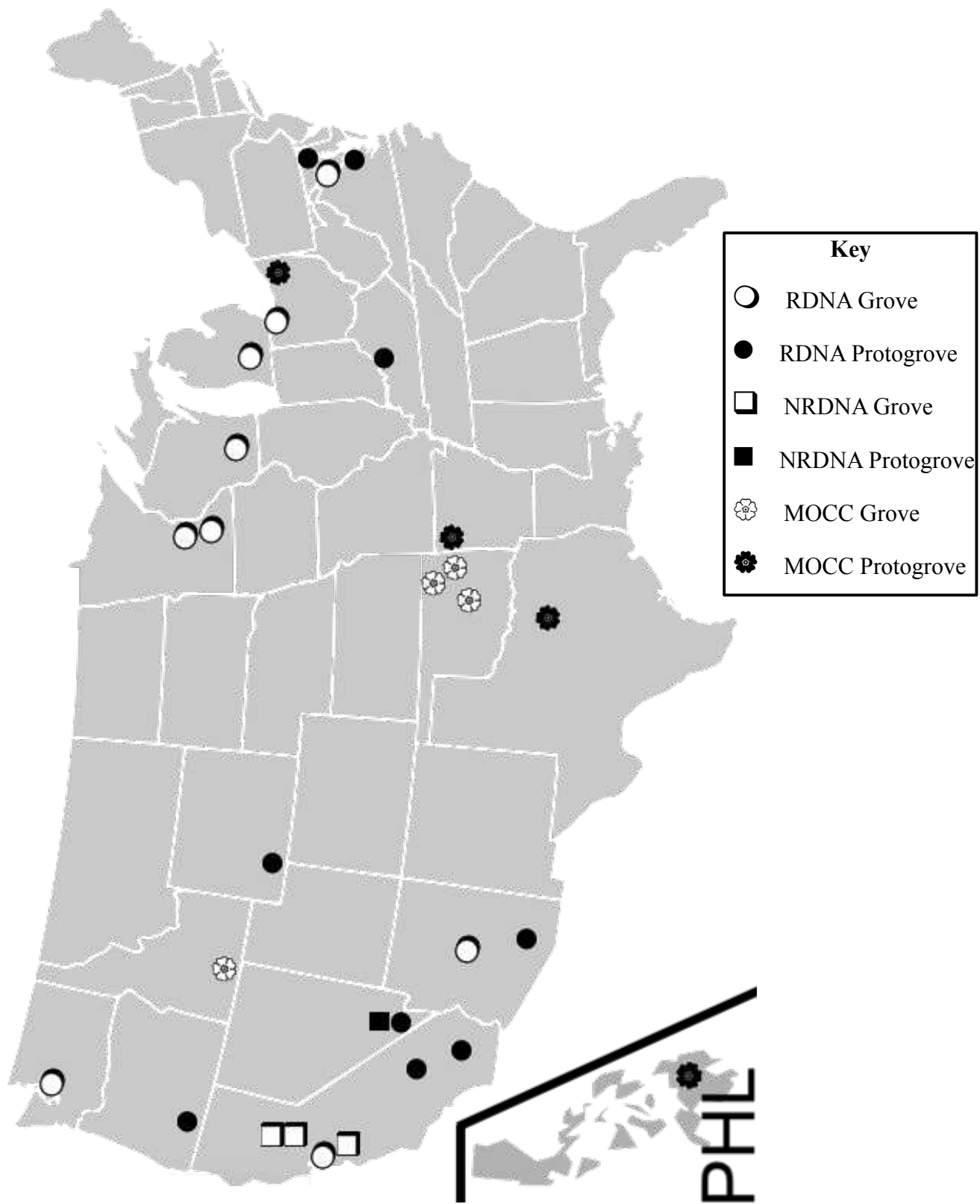
Dark=Grove  
Light=Protogrove



2004 Reformed Druidism  
Black=Grove, White=Protogrove  
Grey=OMS or MOCC grove.

[www.theodora.com/maps](http://www.theodora.com/maps)

# 2020 Groves Map



# Active Groves and Protogroves as of January 2020

## Attempted Communiqués

These figures are based on responses to communiqués sent to Grove Arch-Druids and Protogrove provisional Arch-Druids. Some of the previously listed contact methods from older Grove roll calls were no longer viable; some email addresses had permanent delivery failure. Some web addresses and social media links had become defunct. Sadly in a lot of cases, some fellowships just never replied back. As of this entry into ARDA-2 a year and a half has passed. If they won't answer for a roll call, would they answer strangers reaching out to join a Grove? This data is from just before the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Criteria for Listing

In the 2014 roll call, Groves and Protogroves were listed even if they were outside of the RDNA/NRDNA such as RDG/OMS, or from other druid orders. Different druid orders have their own methods of tracking their Groves. It is much easier for the RDNA to just track the RDNA and its direct offshoots. The site <https://www.danaan.net/druidry/druid-groups-map/> has an interactive map that lists all publicly known Groves across many druid orders. For this roll call the following conditions had to be met:

1. Groves and Protogroves that have adopted the Two Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism as the primary principles of their foundation
2. Groves or Protogroves explicitly identify as Reformed Druids (RDNA, NRDNA, SDNA, ZDNA, HDNA, RDW/MOCC) and are not already under another order
3. Groves have at least one Third Order Druid with ordination lineage to David Fisher
4. Grove and Protogrove details including location and contact methods would become public information, as the purpose of the roll call is to help seekers find our fellowships

## RDNA Groves

### Carleton College Grove

- Northfield, Minnesota
- Founded 1963
- 9 members (students only, may permit visitors – inquire)
- Active intermittently (usually not during summer break)

### Emerald Grove

- Seattle, Washington
- Founded 1981
- 77 members (may permit visitors – inquire)
- Active regularly

### Monument Grove

- Washington DC
- Founded 2000
- 2 members (may permit visitors – inquire)
- Active intermittently

### White Rabbit Grove

- Western Wisconsin
- Founded 2001
- 1 member (not open to public)

- Active regularly

### Poison Oak Grove

- Canyon (Bay Area, California)
- Founded 2007
- 1 member (may permit visitors – inquire)
- Active regularly

### Koad Grove

- Toledo, Ohio
- Founded 2008
- 6 members (open to public)
- Active regularly

### Oakdale Grove

- Minneapolis-Saint Paul, Minnesota
- Founded 2011/2013 (Protogrove/Grove)
- 7 members (open to public)
- Active regularly

### Whispering Winds Through The Willows Grove

- Battle Creek, Michigan
- Founded 2013
- 40 members (may permit visitors – inquire)
- Active regularly

### AZ Grove

- Black Canyon City, Arizona
- Founded 2019
- 6 members (open to public)
- Active intermittently

## RDNA Protogroves

### Clan of the Triplehorses Protogrove

- Southern Oregon
- Founded 2001
- 4 members (open to public)
- Active regularly

### Dravidia Protogrove

- Edgewood, Maryland
- Founded 2019
- 1 member (open to public)
- Active regularly

### Grove of the Order of the Mists Protogrove

- Rock Springs, Wyoming
- Founded 2005
- 4 members (may permit visitors – inquire)
- Active regularly

### Nine Oaks & Mystic Well Protogrove

- Las Vegas, Nevada
- Founded 2005
- 7 members (may permit visitors – inquire)
- Active regularly

### Blackthorn Grove Protogrove

- Louisville, Kentucky
- Founded 2006
- 2 members (may permit visitors – inquire)



- Active regularly

**Earth Spirit Protogrove**

- Ridgecrest, California
- Founded 2008
- 1 member (open to public)
- Active regularly

**Golden Bough Protogrove**

- Joshua Tree, California
- Founded 2008
- 7 members (may permit visitors – inquire)
- Active regularly

**Dogwood Protogrove**

- Tappahannock, Virginia
- Founded 2009
- 2 members (may permit visitors – inquire)
- Active regularly

**Tucson Protogrove**

- Tucson, Arizona
- Founded 2019
- 4 members (open to public)
- Active regularly (solar High Days and Beltane)

**NRDNA Groves**

**Hazelnut Mother Grove**

- Sacramento, California (online only)
- Founded 1977
- 15 members (may permit visitors – inquire)
- Active regularly

**Tuatha De Danann Grove**

- Hayward/Castro Valley, California
- Founded 1992
- 6 members (may permit visitors – inquire)
- Active regularly

**Grove of the Golden Valley Grove**

- Sacramento, California
- Founded 2005
- 3 members (may permit visitors – inquire)
- Active regularly

**NRDNA Protogroves**

**Three Stones Protogrove**

- Las Vegas, Nevada
- Founded 2010
- 9 members (may permit visitors – inquire)
- Active regularly

**MOCC Groves**

**MOCC Muskogee – Our Lady of the Elms**

- Muskogee/Warner Oklahoma
- Founded 1983
- 8 members (open to public)
- Active intermittently

**MOCC Tulsa – Our Lady of the Oaks**

- Tulsa, Oklahoma
- Founded 2002
- 14 members (open to public)
- Active regularly

**MOCC Jerome, Idaho**

- Jerome, Idaho
- Founded 2002
- 3 members (open to public)
- Active intermittently

**MOCC Seminole – Our Lady of Holy Wisdom**

- Seminole, Oklahoma
- Founded 2009
- 14 members (open to public)
- Active regularly

**MOCC Protogroves**

**MOCC Forth Worth**

- Fort Worth, Texas
- Founded 2002
- 1 member (open to public)
- Still forming

**MOCC Akron, Ohio**

- Akron, Ohio
- Founded 2018
- 3 members (may permit visitors – inquire)
- Still forming

**MOCC Forth Smith, Arkansas**

- Fort Smith/Springdale Arkansas
- Founded 2019
- 6 members (may permit visitors – inquire)
- Still forming

**MOCC Mindanao, Philippines**

- Mindanao, Philippines
- Founded 2019
- 3 members (may permit visitors – inquire)
- Still forming

# Statistical Commentary on the Reform

## Rough Estimates

Here are a couple armchair estimates of the size of Reformed Druid statistics. Do not quote them as they are unverifiable and unscientific. They are based on general discussions, intuitions, and wild guessing. Note that all Third Order Druids are 1st and 2nd Order also, and all 2nd Order Druids are 1st Order Druids also. First numbers are for 2003, and numbers in parentheses are 1996 figures

## Estimate of Ritual Attendees

3600 (3000+)

## % from Carleton

43% (33%)

## Population of First Orders

1100+ (1200+)

## % of 1st from Carleton

60% (70%)

## Population of Second Orders

190+ (170+)

## % of 2nds from Carleton

43% (40%)

## Population of Third Orders

110+ (80+)

## % of 3rds from Carleton

70% (Less than 70%)

## Ratio Male/Female of 3rd till 1971

15:1 (15:1)

## Ration M/F of new 3rds since 1971

3:5 (2:3)

## Ratio Male/Female of 3rds till Now

1:1 (3:2)

## Ratio of M/F Archdruids till 1971

15:1 (15:1)

## Ratio of M/F new ADs since 1971

1:1 (1:2)

## Ratio of M/F Archdruids till Now

4:5 (1:1)

## Population of Higher Orders

28+

## Estimate of Total Past Groves

60 (45)

## Estimate of Past Protogroves

60 (10)

## Reasons for Grove Collapse

1. Ennui & In fighting

2. Finances
3. Archdruid had to move

## Largest Known Grove

Greenwood Grove (60+ regular)

## Smallest Known Grove

Saint Olaf (1 or 2 regular)

## 1976 Grove Pop. Estimates

*Doubling or tripling on High Days*

Ann Arbor 5-10

Arch 10-12

Berkeley 5-10

Carleton 5-10

Mother 3-5

New York Two 3-5

Southern Shores 3-5

Twin Cities 5-15

*Solitary Thirds: 30+*

## 1995 Grove Pop. Estimate

*Doubling on High days*

Bay Area Total 5-10

Big River 5-10

Birch 3-5

Carleton/Olaf 5-10

Greenwood 30-60

Tampa 3-5?

*Solitary Thirds: 60+*

## 2004 Grove Pop. Estimate

Carleton 20 (120 mailing list)

Emerald Grove 80

Swamp P 7

Duir De Danu 7

OMS main 18

Rogue River P 8

St. Louis P 6

Baccharis 5

Birch 4

Digitalis (DC) 5

Akita 5

Rochester 4

Hazelnut 4

Acorn P 4

Lark P 4

Poison Oak 3

Amon Sul 3

Creeks called Rivers P 3

Hemlock Splinters 3

Bamboo P 3

Frozen Aspen 3

Shikoku 3

Aelvenstar P 3

Sunrise P 1-3

Yns Avallach P 1-3

Alberta P 3

Dravidia P 3

Life Garden P 3

White Rabbit 3

Eurisko P 3

Cattle P 1-3

Cat in the Corner 1-3

Olympia Grove 1-3

*Solitary Thirds: 80+*

Protogroves total: 124

### **Oldest Grove**

Carleton

### **Longest Running Grove**

Greenwood

### **Most Groves at One Time**

general increase in groves reaching:

Twelve (Sept 1978)

increase since 1987 reaching:

Six to Eight (May 1993)

Seventeen (Aug 2004)

### **Fewest Groves at One Time**

One (May 1963 to Summer 64)

Three (1967)

Three or Four (1983-1987)

### **Average Number of Groves**

Six

### **Years of Cyclical Peaks in Dispersal**

1963-6

1973-78

1990-95

2001-03

### **Years of Cyclical Troughs in Dispersal**

1967

1979-82

1998

### **Prediction of next Peak**

2010 (2010)

### **Prediction of next Low**

2007 (1999)

### **Number of Labels in Reform**

6 to 8 in Sept. 1978

RDNA, New RDNA, Norse DNA (Tuatha), Zen DNA (Evergreen),  
Hasidic DNA (Arch), Schismatic DNA (Mother), Orthodox DNA  
(Clann na Brocheta), Humanistic DNA (Chicago)

### **Longest ArchDruidcy**

(??Abbot & Hazelnut Grove??)

Cyndie Sallee 2/81 to present

Carruth mid 80s? to present

Larson 68-76

(Adams 87?-94?)

### **Shortest Known ArchDruidcy**

Bonewits (Berkeley) 2 months? (1981)

Frangquist (MKJW) 4 months? (1964)

Nelson (Carleton) 5 months? (1964)

### **Avg. Archdruidcy in Reform**

Three or Four years

### **Longest ArchDruidcy at Carleton**

Official: MerriBeth Weber Fall 98- May 03?

Unofficial: Andrea Davis Sep 89? to May 93

### **Avg. Archdruidcy at Carleton**

One (maybe Two years)

### **Avg. Grove Activity by a Druid**

One to Three Years

### **"Prolific" Ordainers of Priests**

Mike Scharding 28+

Isaac Bonewits 14+

Frangquists 10+

Sheltons 6+

Larson 6+

Fisher 5+

### **"Prolific" Authors in Pages**

Michael Scharding

Isaac Bonewits

Emmon Bodfish

Stacey Weinberger

Irony Sade

Frangquist

Stephen Crimmins

Shelton

### **Cultural Centers of the Reform**

(in time Order)

Carleton / Ann Arbor 1963-1978

Berkeley / Twin Cities 1968 to 84?

Twin City / Arch 1974-8 (SDNA & HDNA)

Greenwood 1976 to Present

Carleton / Big River 1985 to present

Bay Area 1990 to Present

### **Most Populous Druid Areas**

1. Bay Area

2. Carleton & Great Lakes

3. North West

4. North East

5. Japan

### **Least Populous Druid Areas**

1. South West

2. South East

3. South

4. Rocky Mountains

### **Most Written Rituals**

Samhain

Beltane

### **Most Read Druid publications**

What is Reformed Druidism?

Druid Chronicles (Reformed)

ARDA

Druid Chronicles (Evolved)

Black Book

Green Book

### **Probably the Most Notable Druids**

Fisher & Cherniack

Frangquist & Nelson

Savitzky, Shelton & McDavid

Larson & Bonewits

Carruth, Abbott, & Bodfish

Cascorbi & Koester

Scharding, Weinberger

Sade, Weber & Crimmins

# The State of the Groves 2020

## 2nd Day of Earrach, YR 57

### (2 February, 2020 CE) by John The Verbose

Greetings my fellow siblings throughout the many soloships, fellowships, and branches of the Reform! As some may be aware, keeping track of known fellowships of the Reformed Druids of North America can be a daunting task. Indeed it is a lot like herding cats, because let me be honest with you... I've tried that. The cats scatter and look at you funny, as if trying to figure out what you're trying to do. Unfortunately, the phrase "It's like herding Reformed Druids" just never caught on in the modern vernacular, but I digress.

I would like to take this moment to express my gratitude to everyone who has a Grove or Protogrove and has demonstrated the selfless courage of putting yourself out there for the sake of letting seekers of druidry come to you. That commitment takes a great deal of time and energy, as well as the possibility of apprehension or stresses of not knowing whom you might meet. Thank you for doing what you have done to help sustain the living tradition! Now to the heart of the matter: the stats!

### Fellowships Active

- Active RDNA Groves: 9
  - Members of Groves: 139
- Active RDNA Protogroves: 7
  - Members of Protogroves: 49
- Active NRDNA Groves: 3
  - Members of Groves: 24
- Active NRDNA Protogroves: 1
  - Members of Protogroves: 9
- Active MOCC Groves: 4
  - Members of Groves: 39
- Active MOCC Protogroves 4
  - Members of Protogroves: 13

Total fellowships: 28

Total Members of Fellowships: 273

### Losses: No Contact or Confirmed Disbanded

- RDNA Groves: -4
  - Members displaced: -61
- RDNA Protogroves: -4
  - Members displaced: -16
- NRDNA Groves: -1
  - Members displaced: -7

Total fellowships lost: -9

Total members displaced: -84

The following fellowships have been removed to the "Lost Contact 1+ Years" tab of the Grove Finder spreadsheet due to inoperable contact methods, lack of response, or confirmation of closure:

- ✗ Duir De Danu Grove (NRDNA), California
- ✗ Shikoku Grove, Japan
- ✗ Rose Rock Grove, Oklahoma
- ✗ Sunset Protogrove, California
- ✗ Awen Grove, Alberta

- ✗ Dogwood Protogrove, Virginia
- ✗ Whispering Winds Through The Willows Grove, Michigan
- ✗ Ghost Orchid Protogrove, Florida
- ✗ Wilding Protogrove, Mississippi

It is unfortunate that there are 9 fellowships of the Reform that have been closed or have not responded to the Census via their listed preferred contact methods. Some were even left active as a courtesy after last year's census, but it's important to face the facts (or observed trends) that the half-life of the average fellowship is only about four years. In speaking with Stephen Abbott on the phone about Hazelnut Mother Grove of the NRDNA, he helped me understand that a lot of the druids running older Groves just might not have the energy to maintain a whole group like that these days. That, and the Internet has thoroughly enabled druids of all ages to go solo. That's not a bad thing, but my heart always goes out to the ones who ask, "Is there a Grove near [place with no Groves]?" and we're like, "Nope," or "Not anymore."

Though that is exactly how my own scenario panned out back in 2011. Moose Breechcloth Protogrove, (just over the county border from me) had a dead email address listed as their contact information. I didn't have my hopes up for them anyway, because according to the Missal-Any from Samhain of YR 43 (2005), the Protogrove was not accepting new members. I then tried contacting the Arch-Druid of Carleton Grove which was only a mere 45 minute drive away, and about a month later I received a reply stating that Carleton Grove was a bit cloistered. Besides that there were (actually important) academic duties and Grove activity was at a lull during those years.

So I said to myself, "I'm just gonna have to start my own Protogrove and figure things out from there," and on a whim Oakdale Protogrove was born. Less than two years later, six members voted on a constitution, two of us were ordained to the Third Order, and we became Oakdale Grove. Yes, I probably had it easy given that half of those future Grove members were at the 50th Anniversary Reunion in 2013 and I met the other half for the first time at the local Pagan Pride festival in early autumn.

### New Groves Take Root

Much to the credit of a few brave souls, there have been a few new fellowships cropping up in 2019:

- ✓ AZ Grove, Arizona
- ✓ Tucson Protogrove, Arizona
- ✓ MOCC Fort Smith, Arkansas
- ✓ MOCC Mindanao, Philippines

Overall I see this as the Reform breathing. It's doing what it does; it's very well alive and in no need of artificial life support. It wasn't even intended to expand beyond the bounds of the Carleton Arboretum. Yet the legacy persists, just as life finds a way. Though in truth I am hoping that this article will make the rounds and inspire a response out of some of the fellowships that never got back. Although the census is once per year, I will gladly make real-time updates to the spreadsheet whenever I am asked. It is genuinely something that I enjoy doing, so don't worry about feeling like you're inconveniencing me, cause in reality it is very fulfilling.

-John the Verbose

# Credits, Founders, and Known Innovators

A number after the item indicates in which Part of ARDA2 it can be located. Green Books come in ten volumes, so "6.5" means Part 6 Volume 5. If I missed your name or contribution, please do contact me.

\*F=Founder, C= Carleton Alumni, B=Berkeley, L=Live Oak, O=Other

## David Fisher \*F -C

Order of (altar) Consecration 3  
Altars  
Clothes of office  
Order of Worship 3  
First officiating priest  
"Dalon ap Landu"  
Druid Sigil  
The Ribbons of office  
The Waters of Life  
ArchDruid office  
Preceptor office  
Server office  
Constitution 4  
Basic Tenets 1  
First Beltane 3  
"The Druid Curse"  
First Samhain Service 3  
Samhain #1 3  
Samhain Chant 3  
The Waters of Sleep  
Summer & Winter halves  
Second Order 3  
Oimeic #1 3  
Third Order 3  
Existence of the Higher Orders 3  
Fourth Order Patriarch 3  
A chant for Midsummer?? 3  
Reply of Other David 2  
Fisher's Farewell 2  
Apology for Simplicity 2  
Epistle to Encyclopedist 2  
Began the Black Book 3  
Began the Blue Book 3  
Book of Faith 2  
Established the Council 4  
New York Grove

## Jan Johnson -C

First attempt at a Schism 1  
First writer of an epistle

## Howard Cherniack \*F -C

Constitution 4  
Basic Tenets 1  
First Preceptor

## Norman Nelson \*F -C

Constitution 4  
Basic Tenets 1  
First Server  
First post-Fisher Archdruid  
Fifth Order Patriarch 3  
First Missionary 2

Vermilion Grove 2  
A Service at Winter Solstice 3  
A Chant for Winter Solstice 3  
Rapid City Grove  
Helped to edit DC(E)  
Epistle of Norman 2  
Some Last Thoughts 2  
RDNAtalk moderator  
2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Epistle of Norman 2

## David Frangquist \*F -C

A Spring Thaw? 2  
First Third ordained  
One of few Thirds ordained in Winter  
Names of the Higher Orders 3, 4  
Sixth Order Patriarch 3  
Druid Chronicles (Reformed) 1  
Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Grove 2  
Epistle of David the Chronicler 2  
What is Reformed Druidism? 4  
A Meditation for Midwinter? 3  
Incantation for Midsummer #2 3  
Origins of the Carleton Calendar 4  
The Green Book (volume one) 6  
Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals 2  
Reply of David 2  
Pushed the Priestess Issue 10  
Felicitous Communications 2  
Epistle of Midsummer 2  
Boosted the Druids in 60s  
Boosted the Druids in 70s  
Restarted the Druids in 80s  
Boosted the Druids in 90s  
Higher Order Letter 3 (historiography)  
Standard Forms 4  
Song of the Earth 4

## Gary Zempel -C

Seventh Order Patriarch 3  
Oimeic #2 3

## Dick Smiley -C

Purdue Grove  
Hill of 3 Oaks Haiku (Zero)  
The Smiley Draft Affair 2

## Marta Peck -C

First Female Carleton ArchDruid  
First 3rd Order ordained by phone

## Robert Larson -C-B

First Celtic enthusiast at Carleton  
Berkeley Grove 4  
Leabhar Toirbhealbhagh 2  
Started 1971 Priestess Vote in 1969  
8 standard NRDNA festivals in DC(E) & ARDA 3  
First Epistle of Robert 2  
Order of Worship in Irish 3  
Second Order in Irish 3  
Third Order in Irish 3  
A King's Wedding 3  
Druid Chronicles (Evolved) 2  
Provisional Council A-Ds 2  
Pronunciation of Irish Gaelic Terms 6.10  
A Guide to Celtic Deities 6.10  
First Epistle of Robert 2

Second Epistle of Robert 2  
Orthodox Druids of North America  
Clann Na Brocheta Grove  
Celtic Time Reckoning 4  
Edited the ARDA collection  
Intro to ARDA (Zero)  
Third Epistle of Robert 2  
Last Epistle of Robert 2

### **Steve Savitzky -C**

Revived 60s Druids  
Order of Investiture 3  
Letter to My Brothers 2  
Stanford Grove  
Southern Shores Grove  
Sample Druid Funeral 3

### **Richard Shelton -C**

Exorcism in Time of War 3  
Order of Worship in Greek 3  
Smiley Affair letters 2  
Oimeic #3? 3  
Lughnasadh alternative service? 3  
Relocated the Blue Book  
The Codex of Form 2  
Polite Refusal 2  
Report of Richard 2  
Words of Green 2  
Lesson for a New Archdruid 2  
Epistle of Richard 2  
Post Carleton Perplexions 2  
Helped to edit DC(E)  
Beltane Alternative Service 3  
Carleton Apocrypha 2  
Standardized Carleton Calendar 4  
Repub. Green book 6  
Boosted Druids in 70s  
Boosted Druids in 80s  
Boosted Druids in 90s

### **Thomas McCausland -C**

Discourse of Thomas the Fool 2  
Wisdom of Thomas the Fool 2

### **Ellen Shelton -C**

Boosted Druids in 70s  
Ann Arbor Grove 4  
Epistle of Ellen 2  
Second Epistle of Ellen 2

### **Isaac Bonewits -B**

"Real Magic"  
First Ordained 3rd in Berkeley  
Stockton/Lodi Grove  
First Epistle of Isaac 2  
Protogrove Concept 2  
Twin Cities Grove  
Arch Grove  
Initiated Isaac Affair 2  
Second Epistle of Isaac 2  
Third Epistle of Isaac 2  
Fourth Epistle of Isaac 2  
Fifth Epistle of Isaac 2  
The Beginning of ADF 2  
Mother Grove in Berkeley

Schismatic Druidism 2, 4  
SDNA & HDNA constitutions 4  
Hasidic Druidism 5  
Order of Merddyn Patriarch 3  
Standardized Spelling  
Druid Chronicles (Evolved)  
Book of Changes 2  
Suggestions for a Druid Funeral 3  
Old Fashioned Wedding 3  
Wedding Contract 3  
The Druid Seasons of the Year 4  
The Holidays of the SDNA 4  
Different Strokes 7  
Book of Bards 6.6  
The Other Druids 6.10  
Neopagan Druidism 6.10  
A Bibliography of Druidism 6.10  
Authentic Thaumaturgy (book)  
Many, Many Liturgies 3  
ADF Liturgy Outline 3  
Money & Priesthood 6.10  
Step by Step Guide to ADF 3  
ADF Midsummer 1987 3  
A Wedding Contract 3  
Druid Chronicler magazine 11  
Pentalpha magazine 11  
ADF founder 4  
6<sup>th</sup> Epistle of Isaac 2

### **Glenn McDavid -C**

Indexed the Chronicles 1  
Chicago Grove Constitution 4

### **Gerre Goodman -C**

Gobbledegook and Red Tape 2  
A Cup Filled to the Brim 2

### **Renata Seidel -C**

Epistle of Renny 2

### **Dale Fierbe -C**

Salutations 2

### **Julia Vinograd -C**

Several Poems 6.6

### **Cwerthin -O**

HDNA sage 5  
Book of Bards 6.6

### **Shirine Morton -B**

Musings of an Ancient Religion 2  
Bristlecone Pines 6.9

### **David Geller -B**

Order of Oberon Patriarch 3  
Many songs 6.6  
Swirling Galaxy liturgy idea. 3

### **Mike Bradley -C**

Humanistic DNA of Chicago Grove 4

### **Hal Moe -B**

Nordic Fire Rituals 3

### **Stephen Abbot -B**

Live Oak Grove 1981  
Celtic Goddesses of Moon 6.10  
Druid Cross Tarot 3  
Hazelnut Grove 1975 -  
Dead Bay Scrolls 1993 9  
Memorial for Robert Larson 3

### **Sally Eaton -B**

Epistle of Sally 2

### **Anodea Judith -B**

Let the Spirit Come to You, poem 3  
Goddesses, Goddesses, song. 3  
Let it All Happen, Song 3

### **Cyndi Salee -B**

Evergreen Grove  
Greenwood Grove  
First major use of Native American  
Druid Choirs

### **Joan Carruth -B -L**

Epistle to the Myopians 2  
Coalition Council of DAL 4  
Order of Diancecht Matriarch 3  
Mini-Chronicles  
Live Oak  
Birch Grove  
New Matriarch of Grannos

### **Katya Luomala -C**

Order of Lugh Matriarch 3  
1978 Lughnasadh 3  
One of Last Carleton Druid in 70s

### **Emmon Bodfish -L**

Editor, Druid Missal-Any 1982-1991, 11  
Writer of several Missalany articles 11  
Orinda Grove AD & Live Oak Preceptor  
Live Oak Grove Tender  
Open Letters to the Grove 2  
Further Funeral Suggestions 3  
The Staff 3  
Four Salutations of the Day 3  
Creating a Wizard's Lite 3  
Back to the Shadows 3  
Candle Staring 3  
Why Another Article on Scrying 3  
Collection of Poems 6.6  
Mistletoe 6.9  
Hazel and Salmon 6.9  
Seasonal Essays 6.7

### **Larry Press -L**

Live Oak Grove AD  
On Divination 3  
Calculating Cross Quarter Days 4  
Lair of Cthulu 6.6

### **Susan Press -L**

Poems of the Season 6.6

### **Tom Cross -O**

Druidism and Truth 2  
A Rebuttal to Albion 2  
Spring Equinox Salvo 2

Druidaxta 2  
Farewell of Tom Cross 2  
Sacred Cauldron (book)  
Vehicle Chant, poem. 6.6  
Hymn to the 3 Brigits, poem  
Gaulish Language 6.10  
The God List 6.10  
Gaulish Gods 6.10  
Decline of Druidism 6.10

### **Willowoak -L**

Order of the Earth-Mother 3  
Live Oak coup member 2

### **Albion -O**

Letter to the Editor 2  
A Rebuttal to Cross 2  
Albion's Response 2  
Albion's Thoughts 2  
A Druid Staff 3  
Experiment in Iron Age Living 11

### **Les Craig -B -L**

Matriarch of Oberon 3  
Balanced Epistle 2  
The Gift of Horses 2  
Epistle on Gruntwork 2  
Balance & Synthesis 2  
Author of "Heathen on Heath" 6.7

### **Alice Cascorbi**

Revived Druids in 80s  
Revived 1st Order  
Revived 2nd Order  
Revived Order of Worship  
First Neopagan at Carleton  
Interview 10

### **Jan Schlamp/ Heiko Koester -C**

Samhain #3 3  
First Fall Equinox rite at Carleton 3  
Sweat lodges  
Speaking of Beliefs 2, 3

### **Sam Adams -C**

Saint Olaf Grove  
First RDNA to enter Henge Keltria  
Friend of the RDNA 6.6  
Oimelc Song 6.6  
Oimelc Silly Song 6.6  
Epistle of Sam 2

### **Andrea Davis -C**

Boosted Druids in 90s  
Wedding Ceremony 3

### **Michael Scharding -C**

Boosted Druids in 90s  
Re-found the Black Book  
Re-found the Green Book  
Revived Third Order  
Revived Higher Orders  
Invented Whang (Whisky/Tang)  
Revived Order of Worship  
Book of Poetry (Volume one) 6.6  
Book of Poetry (Volume two) 6.6

Book of Poetry (Volume three) 6.6  
 Re-found the Carleton Apocrypha 2  
 Green Book (Volume two) 6.2  
 Green Book (Volume three) 6.3  
 Book of the African Jedi Knight 6.5  
 Friends of the Earth Mother organization  
 Book of Poetry (Volume three) 6.6  
 1992 Midsummer 3  
 1994 Candlemas 3  
 Temporary Regent of Order of Grannos  
 Many Oral Histories of RDNA 10  
 A General History of Reformed Druidism 8  
 Re-found the Blue Book  
 Book of Ultimate Answers 6.5  
 Book of Ancient Sources 6.10  
 International Druid Archives  
 Big River Grove of St. Cloud 4  
 Order of Suzuki (Founder) 3  
 Order of Bambi (Patriarch) 3  
 Part Zero  
 Various Introductions  
 New Orders of Puck 3  
 New Order of Phoenix 3  
 New Order of Suzuki 3  
 New Order of Bambi 3  
 New Order of Hermes & Basho 3  
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 Roll of Groves and ArchDruids 4  
 Statistical Commentary on Reform 4  
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 What is Reformed Druidism? 1995 4  
 Timeline of Reformed Druidism 4  
 Fire Building Fun 3  
 Mike's Farewell 2  
 Book of Lacunae 2  
 Akita Grove  
 1997 Beltane 3  
 The Sigil Letters 2  
 Epistle of Rising Sun 2  
 Freedom Within/Freedom Without 2  
 Parenthetical Epistle 2  
 Mini-Essay on RDNA 6.10  
 Part Eight of ARDA 8  
 Dead Lake Scrolls 9  
 Dead River Scrolls 9  
 D.C. Grove  
 2001 Fall Equinox 3  
 2002 Fall Equinox 3  
 Sigil Construction 101 3  
 Salmon of Knowledge 6.9  
 Druidical Diet Dilemma 6.9  
 Romanization of Japanese Service 3  
 The Most Famous Reformed Druids 6.10  
 Where are My Druid Ancestors? 6.10  
 Where are Ideas for Druids From? 6.10  
 Green Books Five 6.5  
 Green Book Six 6.6  
 Green Book Seven 6.7  
 Green Book Nine 6.9  
 Green Book Ten 6.10  
 Green Book Eleven 6.11  
 2002 Order of Acorn (Zero Order) 3

Missionary Im-Position 2  
 Mike's Mini-Missive 2  
 The Arch Epistle 2  
 Divination Techniques 3  
 Ordination of 8<sup>th</sup> Order Druids 3  
 Patriarch of Taranis  
 Higher Order Letters 3  
 Unofficial Danu Sermon 3  
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### **Daniel Hansen -O**

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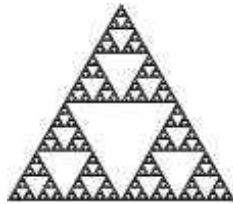
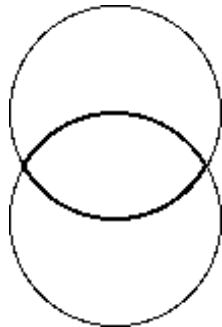
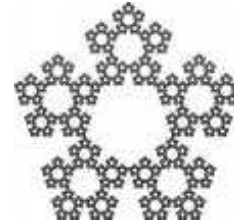
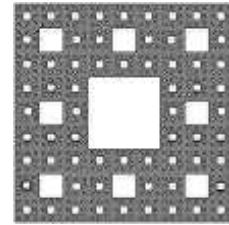
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(Ordained Anna Smith, 2015)  
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2<sup>nd</sup> Patriarch of Order of Sirona (2017)  
RDNA style druid training program  
Connexus of Reformed Druids Biquarterly  
(C.O.R.D. BQ) newsletter

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# SECTION SEVEN: RDNA GLOSSARIES

## Traditions, Miscellaneous Customs and Liturgical Notes

### The Druid Sigil

The circle with the two vertical lines passing through is the major symbol used by all of the branches of the Reform. In later years, the circle has sometimes been drawn as a wreath with two staves in front of it. It has also been adopted by such second and third generation spin-off Druid organizations from the Reform as Ar nDraíocht Fein (ADF), The Henge of Keltria and the Primitive Celtic Church, and Order of Mithril Star.

This symbol was once thought to be an ancient Celtic symbol for the Earth-Mother. In the Reform at least, the Druid Sigil is used in blessings, and in signing of names by members of the Third Order. It is often mistakenly asserted that the Founders took it from an illustration (plate 2) in *The Druids* by Stuart Piggott, showing the floor plan of a Roman-Celtic temple of Nodens. However, this book was published after 1966, and the Druids were using the sigil since 1963, so it seems unlikely as a source. Larson still believes that the illustration may have been published somewhere else earlier. As a symbol, no one knows exactly what it means or where it came from (David Fisher has refused interviews since the 70s), but there are MANY interpretations.

### Symbols Used by Other Druid Groups

Although not used by the RDNA, there are many other symbols used by other Druid organizations. One such symbol is the three rays of Awen: / \ . One possible explanation is that it represents the three drops of wisdom that fell from the Cauldron of Knowledge; the ones that landed on Taliesin's tongue and made him a super-bard. Another explanation is that they represent the angles of the three different rays of light as they come through a hole in a stone at megalithic sites on the winter solstice, equinoxes and summer solstice. This symbol can be found used by the Henge of Keltria (within a Druid Sigil), the New Forest Center, Order of Bards Ovates and Druids, L'ecole Druidique des Gaules, L'eglise Druidique des Gaules and the Welsh Bards of the Gorsedd.

Other generic symbols used by Druids are the oak leaf, the oak tree (or any tree), the acorn and the golden sickle. ADF uses a trunk of an oak tree that has been chopped down, yet with a sapling growing from the center of the supposedly dead trunk; and also with its roots wrapped into a Celtic knot. This badge was designed by Jim Odberts, with inspiration from the Clan MacEwen badge. The interlacing of the roots indicate the Pan-Indo-European "roots" of Druidism.

"The French Druids of the Druidic Church of Gaul (L'eglise Druidique des Gaulois) use a circle transcribing a large "X" inside. Pierre de la Crau writes in "Druids Progress #5"; The symbol that we use is the labarum (a Latin word from the Celtic labaron; Welsh llafar, "ringing, eloquent," Irish labar, "eloquent"). The source of the labarum is the Gaulish sign (X) symbolizing the flashing and domineering power of the Celtic god Taranis. This symbol was taken up by the Roman emperor Constantine following a vision in the Grand's sanctuary (France), when he saw "Apollo" with the goddess "Victory", showing him three groups of three labari

surrounded with crown laurels can be seen on a tombstone in the Lyon's Museum (France). Constantine used this sign as his standard to lead his Gaulish armies to victory against Maxentius. After this victory, the Celtic Pagan symbol was co-opted by the Christians and became the Constantinian "chrisme" or the Chi-Rho monogram for Christ."

Daniel Hansen in his article in Circle Magazine, mentions other Druidic magic symbols, such as the Sun Wheel (Rota Taranous) and the Celtic Cross, which are found throughout the Celtic countries. He also mentions that the circle represents mystery or eternity and the cube signifies truth. The Swastika (fulfot) and the Triskelion (Trifot) are symbols found throughout western Europe and Celtic countries. When spinning counter-clockwise many consider them destructive and warlike, but they are creative when spinning clockwise. He also claims that the Caduceus, used today in the medical profession, was associated with the Druids. The "Ovum Anguinum" or Adder Stone is a well known Druidic amulet, supposedly formed by twisting snakes. It is claimed to float upstream and can be used to win lawsuits.

### Kinds of Liturgy

There are several types of liturgies performed in the different Reformed Druid movements. Most common are the *Orders of Common Worship* for the Winter and Summer halves of the year (one each). These are the two types used for regular weekly services, which were common during the early years of the Reform. Now that these weekly services are rare to nonexistent, their use is now often as generic rituals for use on non-festival occasions. Their format is not fixed in finality and adjustments or entirely new creations are highly encouraged and recommended in the spirit of the Reform.

Then there are the *Special Orders of Worship for the High Days*, one or more versions for each of the Four Major and Four Minor Days. These are entirely optional and vary from Grove to Grove. For more on the 8 festivals, see the Calendar Section further below. Most are vaguely based upon the *Orders of Common Worship*, with special additions to emphasize the unique elements of each festival. There are also *Ordination Ceremonies* for the First, Second, Third and Higher Orders, sometimes called "Consecrations" and sometimes called "Sealings" to those Orders. There have been occasional liturgies written for weddings, funerals, child namings, puberty rites, and the like, but these are usually written by an individual Grove or Druid for the occasion.

### Spelling Conventions

It has become standard to capitalize many of the following words. There is also a great deal of variety in spelling choices. In DC(E) Isaac offered standardizations for spelling, these were: Archdruid, ArchDruidess, Archdruid/ess, Druid, Druidess, Preceptor, Neopagan, Paleopagan, Grove, Hasidic, Schismatic, Earth-Mother, Season of Life, Season of Sleep, Geimredh, Earrach, Samradh, Foghamhar, Samhain, Oimeic, Beltane, Lughnasadh, waters-of-life, waters-of-sleep, the Waters, Weekend, acorncap, tellit, Hairpull, Mishmash, Dru. I however, have not stuck to these, but you are welcome to.

There are two major conventions used in the Reform in respect to the word "Druid". In the Carleton Grove the tradition exists that "Druid" stands for any RDNA member of any of various genders. In some of the New RDNA groves, the tradition exists of indicating a female Druid by writing "Druidess" with an indefinite word of "Druid/ess" to indicate either a male or female Druid.

Since this publication is being written by a Carleton Druid, the former tradition will be used, with no offense intended.

## Third Order Ordination Customs

Among various Groves the following customs have developed. Perhaps the oldest custom is that the new Third Order Druid buys the ordaining Archdruid a hearty breakfast after the ordination and is encouraged to lead the next service in the Grove. In some Groves, the Archdruid may read or recite passages from the Book of Meditations (in the Druid Chronicles) during the Vigil, his or her voice coming from the darkness. The Candidate is usually consulted as to whether this will be a help or a distraction. Visiting of the Candidate is allowed, as long as the visits are brief. Some Groves take up a collection to buy regalia for the new Druid, such as a proper red chalice or a bottle of their favorite brand of the Waters. In some Groves, it is the duty of the new Druid to lead the Grove's next service.

The only restriction on the activities of the Candidate during the vigil is that they must **not** sleep at all during that night and the vigil must be at least 7 hours long. While it was usually the custom that only an Archdruid could ordain people to the Third Order, it is now generally the custom at Carleton that any qualified Third Order Druid may perform the task upon any Second Order Druid; although it is usually polite to ask the Archdruid first (if one exists). Any one who ordains new members to the Third Order should try to remember to send a postcard or letter of notice of this Ordination to: Carleton College Archives, RE: Druid Archives, 300 North College St., Northfield, MN 55057.

## Apostolic Succession

For those who are concerned, while any group of people can use Druid ceremonies if they really wanted to (who's going to stop them?), only a Third Order Druid, duly ordained by a previous member of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, may consecrate the waters-of-life and the waters-of-sleep. All Third Orders should be able to trace their ordination back to the Founder of their grove, and back to the Founder at Carleton College, who got it from who knows where. The ritual for the Third Order, by vote of the Council, is not to be added to or deleted from; although gender changes of pronouns is now often done for courtesy. The ritual for the Third Order, by custom, is not generally made available to the public, to retain its full impact when being used.

## Establishing a Grove

Traditionally, in order to establish a legal Grove, it is necessary to have at least three people. At least one of these must be a Third Order Druid, at least one of the others a Second Order member, and the last need only be a First Order member. The three or more people adopt a Constitution, usually similar to that used by the Carleton Grove and proceed to elect an Archdruid, a Preceptor and a Server. They may add other officers as they see fit such as, for example, a Bard, an Astrologer, a Guard, etc. Traditionally, a Third Order Druid establishing a mission should first organize a legal Grove and be elected Archdruid before they should ordain any new Third Order Druid. However this step has sometimes been skipped.

Once one has organized a legal Grove, one should try and remember to send a letter mentioning this to: the Carleton Archives, RE: Druid Archives, 300 North College St., Northfield, MN 55057. There, the record keepers will help you establish connections with other groves, should you so desire it.

## On Forming a Protogrove

Some people reading these materials may wish to start a Grove, but may have no easy access to a Third Order Druid. What they should do is write to: Carleton Archives, RE: Druid Archives, 300 North College St., Northfield, MN 55057 and ask if there is a Third Order living in their region. With luck, there will be one nearby which may be prevailed to jump-start your grove. While waiting, groups may form Protogroves (after all, there's nobody to stop them). Protogroves could hold regular services, though they could not properly consecrate the Waters. One substitute prayer for the consecration could be something like: "O Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, bless these Waters that are held in your name. Send unto us a member of your Order, that we may worship the Earth-Mother in proper fashion. O Mother, join us together by thy power as we meditate upon thy glories." See more in Grove Formation article, Pt. 4.

## On Homosexuality, Bisexuality and Transgender Identity in RDNA:

So what?

## The Higher Orders

The names of the Higher Order were taken predominantly from Gaulish Paleo-Paganism, plus two Welsh names and one Irish. All are from Celtic cultures, but with vast differences between them! I, myself, think it would have been interesting if they had made an Order of the Buddha. Further details on the deities can be found in most dictionaries of Celtic Folklore and encyclopedias of mythology and god/desses. It is generally up to the individual member to determine whether the names of the Higher Order are full-fledged Gods and Goddesses or whether they are Jungian archetypes. Or they may be something else entirely. (see Historiography of Part 3)

The Higher Orders were established in the spring of 1964 as an encourage the Third Order to do further study and/or to encourage spiritual inquiry. They are intended to honor achievement rather than tenure. As such, the Higher Orders are equal in the sense that none shall be considered a prerequisite for the other. Admittance to a Higher Order is the prerogative of the acting Patriarch or Matriarch of that Order. The Patriarch or Matriarch of each Higher Order designs the symbol or vestment of that Order. Thus the Eight, Ninth and Tenth Orders are in the process of choosing a Matriarch or Patriarch now. Some more information on the higher orders can be found in the Interview with David Frangquist or Richard Shelton. Within the ARDA, look at the Ordination rites, their historiographies, the Book of Customs, and the debates in the Apocrypha. The following table gives the names, origins, symbol, patronage and Order of each of the eight orders involved (though it is important to note that the order of listing the orders in no way implies any ranking between either the deities or of the orders they are patron to).

## The Original Ten Orders of Reformed Druidism

In order to build out the higher orders above the original Third Order Priesthood, it was required that a quorum of at least three members (or at least two thirds of the Council, whichever number is greater) must attain a two thirds majority vote to appoint an atriarch of the next order up. So the Council of Dalon Ap Landu at the time was only three members, and they voted unanimously to appoint Fisher to the Order of Grannos, becoming the patriarch. He then had to ordain at least two others to the Order of Grannos, forming the minimum requirement for a Council of Grannos. At that point they were able to appoint Norman Nelson to the Order of Braciaca. He in turn ordained them both to the Order of Braciaca, thus forming that Council, which appointed Frangquist to the Order of Belenos. Fisher and Nelson were then ordained to the Order of Belenos. A year later in 1965, the Council of Belenos was able to expand beyond three members, and appointed Gary Zempel as the first patriarch of the Order of Sirona.

It seems apparent that Zempel never ordained anyone else to the Order of Sirona, and therefore was never able to establish a Council of Sirona, thus stalling the formal creation of further higher orders. Somehow though, the table below indicates that there is a *pro tem* patriarch for the Orders of Taranis and of Llyr but apparently neither have a council of three or more.

In 2017 with the written consent of Gary Zempel and a quorum of the living members of the Council of Belenos, John “The Verbose” Martens was appointed as the second patriarch of the Order of Sirona. This was the first time a non-Carleton druid was appointed by council to one of the official higher orders of the RDNA priesthood. This was also the first time a second atriarch was appointed to any of the higher orders. The ceremony took place at the 2017 Carleton College Alumni Reunion on the Midsummer Solstice, and was presided over by David Frangquist, the patriarch of the Order of Belenos. The Order of Sirona is now accepting new seekers who are at least of the Third Order and are willing to commit to long-term dedication to Sirona and would be proactive members of the council. One of the early goals of the Council of Sirona would be for the sake of formally appointing the *pro tem* patriarch of Taranis to make it official. Only then can the higher orders be built up, one by one.

Order	Name	Patron of	Symbols	Origin	Atriarch
First	(NONE)	(NONE)	(NONE)	(NONE)	(none)
Second	(NONE)	(NONE)	(NONE)	(NONE)	(none)
Third	Dalon ap Landu	Groves	Red & White ribbons	Wales	Headed by current Carleton AD, but not a Patriarch
Fourth	Grannos	Springs	Green chalice & ribbon	Gaul	Fisher
Fifth	Braciaca	Malt (gender ambiguous deity)	yellow wrist maniple	Gaul/Brit.	Nelson
Sixth	Belenos	Sun	yellow neck ribbon	Gaul	Frangquist
Seventh	Sirona	Springs, rivers	Light blue on dark blue ribbons or woven rickrack	Gaul	Zempel (Retired 2017) Martens (2017-___)
Eighth	Taranis	Lightning	Knotted black & gold maniple & umbrella	Gaul	Scharding
Ninth	Llyr	Oceans	(Sea green?)	Wales	Sade
Tenth	Danu	Fertility	(Brown?)	Ireland	Undetermined as yet...

Steve Crimmins has puckishly suggested, 11<sup>th</sup> Triple Morigiu (War), 12<sup>th</sup> Arawn (Underworld) & 13<sup>th</sup> Aengus (Youth).  
Let's make that happen!

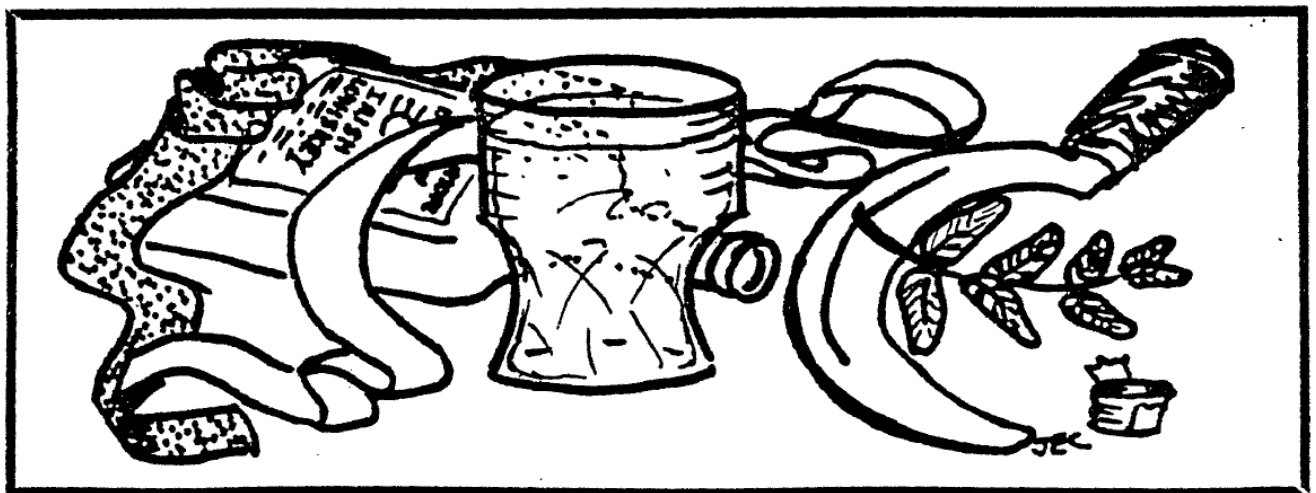
Eleventh	Morrigan/Morigiu	War	3” wide black ribbon incised 9x w/ 1” wide purple ribbon woven	Ireland	Undetermined as yet...
Twelfth	Arawn	Underworld	3” wide black diagonal sash, pinned at hip or weighted with wolf or hound-headed penannular brooch	Wales	Undetermined as yet...
Thirteenth	Aengus	Youth, Love	Pink ribbon secured by songbird lapel pins	Ireland	Undetermined as yet...

## Special/New Orders:

In addition to the original Higher Orders there are Special Orders or "New Orders" that have been established since 1974. Unlike the Higher Orders, most of these orders are less oriented towards Nature and more towards human skills or traits. The Order of Myrddin was established by Isaac Bonewits between 1974-6, the Order of Oberon by Mr. Geller between 1974-6, the Order of Diancecht (and its two subsets of Airmed and Miach) in 1976, the Order of Lugh by Carleton's very own Katya Luomala, the Order of Angus was created in 1979 for children before puberty (the 1st Order in Berkeley was only enterable after puberty in the NRDNA). The resumption of New Orders re-began in the 1990s with Michael Scharding, who created the Order of Puck in 1994, the Order of Suzuki in 1996, and the Order of Bambi in 1996. Many of these rites are in Section Three of the Liturgies. It is noteworthy that many of them have Patrons of non-Celtic origin (e.g. Puck, Suzuki & Bambi).

## The Special/New Orders

Order	Patron of	Symbol of Office	Origins	Atriarch
Oberon	Bards	Dark Blue ribbon	Britain	Geller, Les Craig
Merddyn	Magic	A Wand or staff	Wales	Bonewits
Diancecht	Healing	Green stole/ Red wavy	Ireland	Carruth
(Airmed)	Doctors	gold border ribbon	Ireland	
(Miach)	Counselors	Silver border ribbon	Ireland	
Lugh	Crafts	(none)	Everywhere	Luomala, Scharding
Angus	Children	Orange ribbon	Ireland	UNKNOWN
Puck	Mischief	Hockey Puck on ribbon	England	Scharding
Earth Mother	Children	Pink Ribbon	Unknown	Willow-Oak
Suzuki	Meditation	cord w/ paper pendants	Japan	None
Bambi	Outdooring	Brown with white spots	USA	Scharding
Hermes	Traveling	Wand with a winding yellow ribbon	Greece	Nelson (Designated)
(Basho)	Traveling Poets	5 inch, 7 inch & 5 inch red & white ribbons	Japan	
(Amerghin)	Traveling Poets	3 ply blue belt	Spain	
Brigit	Writers, smithing	Paper ribbon w/ printed words on them (or a smith's apron?)	Ireland	Frangquist (Designated)
Mithril Star	Water	Seven pointed star	Science Fiction	Arseneau
Volcano (Pele)	Volcanoes	Igneous rock on a neck ribbon.	South Pacific	Irony Sade
Hephaestus	Fire working	Yellow ribbon on right ankle	Greek	Steve Crimmins
Evening Mystic	Bardic	None	Unknown	Chris Middleton
Order of Druids Minor	Reflection in Nature	None	Unknown	Ric Knight
Pack Rat	Archiving	3' twine with stuff	Europe	Scharding
Mistletoe	Herbal healing	Sickle, diagonal green sash w/mistletoe pin at hips	Gaul	N/A



## Vestments

"In accordance with Druid practice, certain vestments may be worn by Second Order and higher Druids during a meeting. Also, however, in accordance with *Reformed* Druid practice, it should be stressed that vestments are only *permitted*, not required." (David Frangquist) While the custom of dressing up for rituals has generally fallen out of practice at Carleton, occasionally it is revived. Other Groves in the Reform have generally adopted some individual customs of dressing, as is their right, most still choosing to use the traditional bed sheets.

Several systems of vesting have been suggested over the years. With the exception of some of the Higher Orders, these usually break down into matters of robes and ribbons. Usually Second Order Druids, or higher, by dint of their enthusiasm, usually wear white robes (kind of like the ancient Druids). We strictly caution those people who live in the Southern US that they should not wear hoods, as this may be misconstrued by the locals and we recommend a nonwhite color robe for those regions. Unfortunately, according to Larson, the Klan has also adopted the use of colored robes

The Third Order Druids usually wear white robes with their red or white ribbons of office around their neck, depending on if it's the Summer Half of the Year (wear Red) or the Winter Half of the Year (wear white). If a grove has other officers (such as a bard) they, of course, can be designated to wear distinctive symbols or ribbons.

IF you have a really gung-ho and rich grove you can, of course, choose to have seasonal robes for your Archdruid and/or grove members. Some of Isaac's & Frangquist's suggestions are listed here: Throughout the season of Geimredh, the robe is black with white facing. During Earrach, the robe is black with white and red facings. At the point of the Beltane service at which the sacrifice is accepted, a change to or addition of a red robe is made. Through out Samradh, the color is red or green. At Summer Solstice and Lughnasadh, the robe is green. The Samhain service begins in green, until the sacrifice is rejected, at which point a black robe is put on and over it a white facing or robe. As for the other High Days, at Winter Solstice he suggests a solid white robe and at Oimelc black with a white facing or overgrown, to which red may be added during the service. No suggestions are made for spring equinox or fall equinox. For those of you who are poor, or who think this whole thing is silly, he suggest a simple black robe with white facings for the Winter Half of the Year and red facings for the Summer Half of the Year

The use of plain white robes, with variously colored ribbons, is really much simpler and cheaper. The following traditions seem to have developed: The ribbons are usually at least two yards in length, (purchased, if at all possible, at the Ben Franklin Dime Store in Northfield Minn.) with their raw ends either sewn, painted with clear nail polish, or taped with Scotch (or Irish) tape to prevent raveling. See Records of the Council of Dalon ap Landu for rule governing ribbons-of-office. There is a great deal of room here for invention, if you should so choose.

Among the Hassidic Druids, now disbanded, two other pieces of vestment were worn. The first was a special skullcap, usually of a knitted or crocheted of variegated green yarn, called an acorn cap; while the second was a green and white prayer shawl called a *tellit*, which (unlike the acorn cap) is usually worn only at services or daily prayers. If a Druid is interacting with Wiccans, one should be careful that one's Druidic ribbons or robes of office do not impinge with the system being used by the Wiccans.

## Black Robes

Every once in a while, one will hear of a custom that "only Patriarchs may wear a black robe" and that if a Patriarch does so he may not wear at the same time the symbol of any Order other than the one he is the Patriarch of. All this is "in honor of the first Patriarch" and is an insider joke concerned with the fact that David Fisher, Founder of the RDNA and the Patriarch of Grannos, wore a black cassock and eventually became an Anglican Priest. In point of fact, hardly anyone (including the Patriarchs) ever wears a black robe at Druid services.

Also note: this fun about black robes has nothing to do with either a postulated historical phenomenon called "Black Druidism" (supposedly a system of "Black Magic" – a racist term that- used by Evil Renegade Druids, way back when) nor a modern cult called "The Druidic Craft of the Wise" (whose leaders wore black robes and practiced some rather unsavory techniques of psychic manipulation). The reason there is no connection with either of these two concepts is twofold: none of the Founders ever heard of them, and no reputable scholar ever has either. For more details on these two concepts, see Other Druids.

## The Waters

The Waters-of-Life are served during the Samradh and Foghamhar (Beltane on May 1st up until, but not including Samhain on Nov. 1st). The Waters-of-Sleep are used during Geimredh and Earrach (Samhain on Nov. 1st up to, but not including Beltane on May 1st).

"The Waters-Of-Life are *na huisci beatha* in Irish Gaelic (*uisge beatha* in Scots Gaelic), or what is known in English as "Whiskey". Waters of Life therefore consist of the whiskey chosen by the Third Order Druid, mixed with water to the strength desired. There is a tradition of 3 parts water to 1 part Scotch during the Summer Half of the Year, with inverted ratios on feasts. They may either be premixed, or mixed during the service. In either case, they should be brought to the service in an appropriate container, not the original bottle. In the beginning, Scotch was used (Black & White being the standard brand at Carleton); others prefer Irish or Manx or Jim Bean. Any alcoholic beverage may be used in a pinch

"The Waters-of-Sleep", on the other hand, are just plain water, preferably not tap. Larson notes that if you don't rinse out your Waters container, then the Waters at Samhain will still have a slight tinge of whiskey flavor. Several Groves use special Waters for the Major High Days and recommend this practice. For Samhain ordinary spring water; for Oimelc, sheep, goat or cow milk fresh and chilled (note- canned goat milk is abominable); for Beltane, the Waters-of-Life are mixed as strongly as is generally tolerated (most Druids drink it unpolluted); and for Lughnasadh, hard cider, applejack or mead.

## On the Serving of the Waters

The Server does not drink from the chalice each time it is received back from one of the partaking members of the circle. To do so would be to court disaster, especially with a large congregation at Beltane.

If two chalices are being circulated (one regular, one nonalcoholic), it may sometimes be advisable to have the Preceptor assist the Server by carrying one of the chalices around the circle, perhaps in the opposite direction. Larson suggests against this method, and only recommends *deosil*, clockwise passing.

## On Teetotalers

Your Grove may have one or more members who for reasons of health may not be able to tolerate drinking even the slightest sip

of the weakest alcoholic beverages (for example, some diabetics, recovered alcoholics, people who have inherited or acquired allergies, etc.); it is unfair to deprive them of full participation because of this. Among the Schismatic Druids, it has become a habit to bring, to every Summer Service where such people are expected, strong herbal teas that are fully as intoxicating as some forms of alcoholic beverages. For example, a mixture of equal parts of peppermint and linden boiled for ten minutes, then strained and chilled makes an excellent and lively drink. Or there are other herbs that can be used in the production of "magic tea" for services and ordinations (a blessing in the name of Braciaca while brewing it, that is quite appropriate).

At rituals where two chalices are to be used, one alcoholic and one not, the presiding Druid follows the same procedure as in the Ordination of Second Order Druids; consecrating both chalices at the same time.

From time to time at Carleton, the grove has gone dry and abstained from the use of alcohol (mostly 88-92 and 99-now), substituting tea or some type of lively drink, due to run-ins with security & funding rules.

## Other Uses of the Waters

In addition to being used during the Summer Half of the Year, the waters-of-life are also used for the Consecration of an Altar (if you use one), the Ordination of a Second or Third Order Druid, and at some wedding, healing and funeral services. Whenever possible, these events should be arranged to occur during the Season of Life; however, in an emergency, a Third Order Druid may consecrate the waters-of-life at any time of year (but should wear a red ribbon of office while doing so).

## The Chalice

The traditional chalice in the Early Days for official Druid services was a red glass one. Originally, this was an octagonal, glass, hollow-stemmed, restaurant drinking glass (of the style called "Georgian"), purchased from the Ben Franklin Dime Store in Northfield, Minnesota. Since the authentic dye for the making of real ruby-glass is now expensive, authentic chalices are hard to find and many Druids use any thick, heavy, inexpensive red glass chalice they can get. Yellow chalices of the style are easy to obtain and are often used as secondary chalices for consecrating Second Order Druids and/or for passing special nonalcoholic Waters during the Winter Half of the Year. Green chalices are one of the special symbols of the Fourth Order and are used in healing rituals. Various Druids use other colors of chalices for other purposes. Wood or pottery chalices are often carried by traveling missionaries, as being less likely to break in transit. The major thing to remember is that chalices should be inexpensive, sturdy, new if at all possible, and of natural materials.

## The Altar

Altars have generally fallen out of custom at Carleton, but many Groves still use them. Anything may be used as an altar, including large rocks, tree stumps, record racks, etc. If an altar is not available, sacrifices may be placed directly on the ground or in a fire. Most Druids agree that the nicest arrangement is to have a stone altar in such a way as to allow the fire to be made inside the altar (see Latter Chronicles, Chapter 7, verse 1). Naturally, the altar should be built, placed, or found in a grove of trees (oaks or sequoias), on a hilltop, on the beach, on an island, or in a similar place of natural beauty. Parking lots are poor choices.

## The Sacrifice

The various movements of the Reform (and most modern Druid movements) only permit plant sacrifices and strictly forbid

blood/animal/human sacrifices (regardless of a possible historical precedent). The plant is personally cut by the Third Order Druid or by the Preceptor. Any nonpoisonous plant will do, though twigs from a tree branch or oak leaves are the most traditional. During the winter, evergreen and coniferous branches are a nice touch. One should never cut enough to damage the tree (unless one is clearing land and the large sacrifice is part of a funeral for the tree). Don't forget to ask permission first, thank it afterwards and say a prayer for healing over the cut. Many Groves will get a special sickle for the sole purpose of cutting sacrifices. In the SDNA and the HDNA, only members of the Third Order used to wear a sickle (although a Second Order Druid, who was Preceptor, would carry one while cutting the sacrifice, if so directed).

## Fires

Vigils and the ceremonies for the High Days are usually held around bonfires (the bigger, the better!). On special occasions, there are often torch lit processions. Note: Local conditions and fire regulations (especially in California) may rule out fires. Let your love for the Earth-Mother decide. The Carleton Grove, since at least the 80s, has made it a policy only to use local deadfall wood or to swipe it from woodpiles made by the Grounds department. Cutting down live trees for fire wood is frowned upon at Carleton and amongst Druids in general.

## Times of Services

Ordinary weekly services (now defunct) were usually held on Saturday or Sunday afternoons. Services for the High Days can be held on the evening and night of the High Day's "Eve" or during the middle of the day or night of the festival itself. Whatever works. Bonfires & torches look more dramatic at night, but it's easier to read one's prayer book in the daytime.

## The Summer Blessing

Soon after the celebration of Beltane, the Archdruid makes a circuit of the Grove's surroundings on foot, awakening, blessing and consecrating them. Any members of the Grove who wish may accompany the Archdruid.

## Standard Liturgical Blessing

Many letters and rituals end with these words: "Peace! Peace! Peace!". Some shout them towards the three corners of area.

## Letter Writing Styles

See the "Standard Letter Format" in Part 4. Certain correspondence styles have entered usage among Reformed Druids. When writing to the Council one will sometimes top the letter with "REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA COUNCIL OF DALON AP LANDU" followed by the date, both in Druid Calendar and Julian. A Druid will often address each other as "Dear (First Name)," or "Dear Brother/Sister/Sibling-in-the-Mother". If they belong to a higher or special order they may begin with "Dear Brother/Sister-in-(Name of Patron/Matron)".

When writing to the whole council, many authors will use very formal, sometimes arcane language and excessive wordiness. This is what I call "Writing like Frangquist", in honor of the Druid Chronicles format. A common way of closing off is saying "Yours-in-the-Mother," or "Yours-in- (higher order Patron)," for those so inclined. No one actually writes in numbered verses, that occurs when editors collect them.

Like nobility, many Reformed Druids have come to signing their documents with only their first name, followed by a Druid Sigil. Occasionally they will add whatever titles they feel are appropriate, such as current or past Archdruidcies, ODAL (short for Order of Dalon Ap Landu), Higher Orders or the name of the



location they are writing from. Some of the bolder correspondents actually type their full name! (oooh!)

## Closing of the Grove or Arboretum

Similarly, after the celebration of Samhain, the Archdruid makes a circuit of the Grove on foot, blessing and consecrating the Season of Sleep on it. Any members of the Grove who wish to go along, may accompany the Archdruid. Apparently this is only a Carleton tradition.

## Marshmallow Stoning

A bizarre custom at Carleton since 1997 has been the institution of throwing marshmallows at members when tension is felt, with the concern voiced while throwing it. The person being marshmallowed, must answer the charge, whether it is fictitious or true.

## Bread Weddings

At Carleton since 1997, a custom began of having people engaged in the Fall by finding matching rings in loaves of breads. The happy couple is then married in the Spring at Beltane for one year, writing their own ceremonies.

## Stone Circles

Despite the likelihood of most stone circles being built by European Druids, it has become a fashion for Druids at Carleton to pile stacks of stones in various places. It is also a custom to rebuild them after they are demolished by vandals, grounds crews or mysterious forces which we do not understand.

## Non-Liturgical Activities

It is well known that Druids don't spend all their time enacting the liturgy and vigiling. Various other activities have become commonplace at Carleton including: folk singing (Evergreen's choirs, Berkeley's Celtic Nights, Carleton's Picking n Grinning), folk dancing, harping, Society for Creative Anachronism, attending lectures at nearby colleges or town halls, picnics & camping trips, inviting guest speakers, info tables, garbage pickup, stone circle building, forest maintenance, attending religious services of diverse religions, massage parties, meditation practices, ESP experimental sessions, arts & crafts projects, tea parties, letter writing, discussion groups, and book clubs.

## Humor

Perhaps it goes without saying that Druids are mostly a wry & witty group, always noting the humorous and playful aspects of life, interactions, religion, and everything. How they express it greatly varies, from tongue-in-cheek, biting satire, slapstick, outrageous over-formality or hail-fellow-well-met. They also respect those moments of reverence that sometimes occur. We are rather embarrassed by our own literature, and refuse to take it too seriously as more than advice from our fellow sisters & brothers. Liven up and take risks, laugh as much as possible.

## The Talking Stick

Introduced in the 1980s, a special decorated stick is passed around at a campfire or a sweat lodge to focus the easily distracted attention of the group's members on one person in turn to tell a story or relate something. The speaker plants it firmly on the ground, as if pulling strength from the earth and speaks freely. Usually in such traditions, what is spoken there is usually not related outside the circle, for reasons of the private nature of things that tend to gush out.

## Performance Art

It need not be dreary or somber. A few acting classes, rehearsal with your preceptor, and study of stage magic & sleight of hand might make it a bit more entertaining and memorable. A handful of powdery dust makes a great emphasis of a part of the liturgy when thrown in a fireball on the campfire.

## Most Difficult Liturgical Practice

Empty your mind of every custom that you have read about, every term that you have defined, every script that you have memorized, because they belong the past. Don't plan out ahead what you will say or do. Just BE at the site. Do what seems to come naturally, say what comes to your mind, and adjust to the situation. Be creative, without being complicated. See a little bit of liturgy in every action that you do on every day. Be sure to have your heart and soul in the right place because it will be a wild trip. Good luck.

## Ritual Vestments for Druid Services

By Isaac Bonewits, 1978?

One of the things that makes a ceremony dramatically effective is the sort of clothing being worn by the participants. Among the Reformed Druids a white robe for Second and Third Order members has been customary, with the priestesses and priests wearing their red or white ribbons-of-office. The following suggestions have recently been made about vestment customs and local Groves are free to use, change or ignore them as they see fit:

The system used by the Masonic-Rosicrucian Druids in the British Isles could be modified thusly: First Order Druids would wear green robes; Second Order Druids would wear green-and-white robes; Third Order Druids would wear white robes; Bards would wear blue tabards over their regular robes; Guards would wear dark red or brown tabards, etc.

AND/OR everyone not wearing robes could wear Paleopagan styles of clothing, usually of the Celtic or Germanic sort. This would ease some of the trans-temporal clashes so common at Druid rites and would add greatly to the ritual gestalt.

AND/OR special seasonal tabards could be worn by the Archdruid (and other officers?) presiding over ceremonies. Simple rectangles (about 18"x36") of cotton or linen could be carefully embroidered, then sewn together at two corners. These would be worn over the head and belted. Each tabard would have a large tree on the front piece and a large Druid Sigil (II) on the back piece, both in the appropriate seasonal foliage. One set of possibilities runs thusly:

From Samhain to Midwinter: Rowan tree with bare branches, mistletoe and light snow.

From Midwinter to Oimeic: Holly tree with berries/mistletoe and heavy snow.

From Oimeic to Spring: Fir tree with new needles and light snow.

From Spring to Beltane: Fruit tree in bloom, with budding branches.

From Beltane to Midsummer: Oak tree in full green.

From Midsummer to Lughnasadh: Sequoia tree in full green.

From Lughnasadh to Fall: Fruit tree with fruit, some leaves starting to turn.

From Fall to Samhain: Sugar maple tree turning gold and scarlet, dropping.

## Druid Terminology

Like every "religious" movement, the Reform has accumulated special meanings to ordinary words and coined new

terms which may be baffling to the Reader. Treat this section as a type of Druid Dictionary. Other Druid movements are using similar terms, and we differentiate between us and them where it is appropriate.

**Acorn Cap:** An HDNA vestment, consisting of a knitted cap, that looks like an acorn.

**ADF:** see Ar nDraíocht Fein

**Airmed:** One of the two sub-degrees of the Order of Diancecht. This Degree deals with herbal healers, medical workers, and body manipulators. See Liturgy.

**Altar:** An object upon which something of religious importance is put.

**Angus:** One of the special Orders, dedicated to children.

**Ann Arbor Grove:** A grove of the mid-70s overseen by the Sheltons.

**Anti-Druid:** A term used in the original Druid Chronicles (see Part One), referring to a person who interferes with Druid worship by destroying altars or by being a rude troublemaker.

**Apocrypha:** A collection of letters from various Druids. See Part Two. Accumulated rubbish.

**Apostolic Succession:** The lineage of every Third Order Druid back to David Fisher, who in all likelihood made it up.

**Archdruid:** The figurehead leader of a Grove tricked into doing all the work.

**Archdruidcy:** A period of time when a person is an Arch Druid.

**Arch Grove:** A mid-70s grove in St. Louis Missouri with Hassidic Druids.

**ARDA:** A Reformed Druid Anthology.

**Ar nDraíocht Fein:** A new Druid organization that split off from NRDNA to pursue Indo-European Druidism, led by Isaac Bonewits.

**Aspen Eve and Aspen Day:** HDNA term. Sunset Sunday to Sunrise Monday and Sunrise Monday to Sunset Monday.

**Awareness:** the state of mind that is the goal of Reformed Druidism. See Book of Meditations in Part One.

**Awen:** Bardic inspiration. Related to story of Taliesin

**Bambi:** A special order dedicated to outdoors people.

**Bard:** a singer, usually with Celtic connections.

**Bay Area:** Any place in California near San Francisco Bay (Sometimes including Washington State) and Alaska.

**Basic Tenets:** The only two statements a Reformed Druid has to agree with. Found in the Book of Law 4-6.

**Basho:** A New Order based on a traveling Japanese Haiku poet who wandered about.

**Belenos:** A higher order (sixth) of the Sun.

**Beltane:** Beginning of the Summer half of the year, near May 1st. Lots of Fun.

**Berkeley Grove:** A late 60's Grove in California that was one of the centers of RDNA culture and literature.

**Birch Day:** HDNA term. Sunrise Saturday to sunset Saturday

**Birch Eve:** HDNA term. Sunset Friday to Sunrise Saturday. And the beginning of their week.

**Birch Grove:** A late 80's Grove in New Hampshire.

**Black Book:** An informal hodgepodge of early Carleton liturgies.

**Blue Book:** An eclectic archival collection of early Carleton memos, rites and letters.

**Bonewits:** A prominent Reformed Druid. Founder of SDNA, HDNA & ADF. Called Isaac.

**Boring Times:** A NRDNA term for the dull period between the Death March in 1981 and the revival of Bay Area Druidism in 1990.

**Braciaca:** A higher order (fifth) dedicated to brewing and malt.

**Brethyn Allor:** An OMS term for an altar cloth

**Brigit:** (Various spellings) Popular goddess in Gaelic countries, associated with Oimelc and sheep. Became St. Bridget.

**Burning Times:** A term used by the Neo-Pagan community to refer to the historical period of the Witch Hunts when hundreds of people were accused of practicing witchcraft so that the governments could steal their property and kill them.

**By-Laws:** Rules followed within an individual grove.

**Calendar:** Either the Carleton Calendar (beginning May 1st) or Berkeley's (beginning Nov. 1st) which lists the various holidays of Druidism.

**Canhwylbrens:** An OMS term for candles.

**Candlemas:** Another name for Oimelc.

**Caregl:** OMS term for a chalice.

**Carleton Grove:** The birthplace of Reformed Druidism. Located in Northfield Minnesota. A small private liberal arts college of high academic caliber.

**Catechism (of the Waters):** the questions asked by the Priest to the Preceptor in the Orders of Worship beginning with "Of what does the Earthmother..."

**Celt:** An indigenous inhabitant of Ireland, Scotland, Isle of Man, Wales, Cornwall and Brittany. Historically the Celts also once inhabited France, Switzerland, Spain, Italy and Turkey.

**Celtic languages:** There are two branches of living Celtic languages the Goidelic (Irish, Scots Gaelic and Manx) and the Brythonic (Welsh, Breton and Cornish).

**Celtic Night:** A bimonthly activity at Berkeley to pass the winter blahs.

**Chair:** The head of the Council of Dalon ap Landu, held by the currently presiding Archdruid of Carleton Grove.

**Chalice:** The cup used in the Order of Worship. A Green Chalice is the symbol of the 4th Order.

**Chicago Grove:** An early 70s Grove in Illinois. Later was Humanistic DNA.

**Chico Grove:** A late 70s grove in California. Possibly a Protogrove.

**Cleddyf:** OMS term for a sword.

**Coalition Council of Dalon Ap Landu:** A late 70's attempt to keep a legislative forum after the Carleton Grove collapsed. Lasted only a few years.

**COCODAL:** Coalition Council of Dalon ap Landu

**CODAL:** Council of Dalon ap Landu

**Codex of Form:** An ill-fated attempt by Richard Shelton to clarify RDNA matters in 1969.

**Constitution:** A basic document of a grove's structure.

**Council, The:** short form of the Council of Dalon ap Landu.

**Council of Dalon Ap Landu:** The collective body of Third Order Druids who legislate primarily about matters of organizing the Third Order. Headed by the Chair.

**Couth:** Something that is agreeable to Hassidic Druids.

**Crochan:** An OMS term for a cauldron.

**Cross-quarter Days:** Oimelc, Beltane, Lughnasadh, Samhain. So named because they come midway between the solstices & equinoxes.

**Cryman:** OMS term for a sickle.

**Cyllell:** OMS term for a ritual pointed knife.

**Dalon ap Landu:** A *very* obscure Welsh deity who is the Patron of the Third Order.

**Danu:** A higher order (tenth) dedicated to fertility. Never established.

**DC(E):** abbreviation for Druid Chronicles (Evolved)

**Dcr:** abbreviation for Druid Chronicler newsletter.

**DC(R):** abbreviation for the original Druid Chronicles (Reformed)

**Dead Bay Scrolls:** A history of the Hazelnut Grove from 1980 to 1993.

**Dead Lake Scrolls:** A history of the Carleton Grove from 1980 to 1993

**Dead River Scrolls:** A history of Carleton/Akita/Tonga Grove from 1996-2003.

**Death March:** An incident at the Berkeley grove in 1981 when the procession to the ritual took hours and people collapsed from boredom and fatigue. A pivotal moment in NRDNA history, because the troublesome last official election of the Berkeley Grove followed.

**Diancecht:** A special order dedicated to healing in the late 70s. Has subsets Airmed and Miach.

**Dru:** A member of the Hasidic Druids of North America

**Drues:** More than one Dru.

**Druid:** Any member of the Reform.

**Druid Archives:** short for the International Druid Archives at Carleton College.

**Druid Chronicler:** NRDNA's national newsletter from 1977 to 1982. A supplement to DC(E)

**Druid Chronicles (Reformed):** The original five books by Frangquist containing history and customs. See Part One. Abbreviated as DC(R).

**Druid Chronicles (Evolved):** A collection of Reformed literature by the Berkeley Grove. Abbreviated as DC(E).

**Druid Missal-Any:** A publication of the Live Oak Grove from 1982-1991, primarily by Emmon Bodfish. Revived in 2000 by Stacey Weinberger of the same grove.

**Druid Curse:** a powerful curse accidentally formulated by the Founders, used four times, and then forever banned. Copies are unavailable. Some people quip that the modern Druid Curse is the inability to keep a grove from collapsing every few years.

**Druid Sigil:** A circle with two parallel vertical lines passing through it. Symbol of the Reform.

**Druidess:** A Druid who also happens to be female.

**Druidic:** adjective of being very much in keeping with Druidism.

**Druidical:** another adjective, like Druidic

**Druish:** being like a Hassidic Druid.

**Druidism:** The practice of Druids.

**Druidry:** The practice of Druids.

**Earrach:** one of four Druidic seasons. Spring. From Oimelc up to Beltane.

**Earth-Mother:** another way of saying Nature.

**Eisteddfod:** An annual cultural festival in Wales in which Welsh Druid/Bards are seen.

**Epistle:** An official letter to another Druid, usually on weighty matters.

**Equinox:** A time of the year when the nights and days are of equal length.

**Evergreen Grove:** A mid 70's Grove in Washington State. Began the ZDNA.

**Ffon:** An OMS term for a staff.

**First Order:** The first step into Reformed Druid "hierarchy" achieved by partaking of the Waters and affirming the Basic Tenets.

**Fisher:** Founder of the RDNA and author of much of its hierarchy and form.

**Foghamhar:** one of four Druidic seasons. Fall. From Lughnasadh up to Samhain.

**Founders:** The people who established Druidism, usually consider to be Fisher, Cherniack and Nelson. Frangquist is usually also considered a Founder.

**Frangquist:** A prominent member of the early RDNA.

**Fraternalism:** Freemasonry, Rosicrucianism, or Greek Fraternities.

**Gaelic:** one of three variant Celtic languages spoken in Ireland (Irish), Scotland (Scot Gaidhlig) or the Isle of Man (Manx Gaelic).

**Geimredh:** one of four Druidic seasons. Winter. From Samhain up to Oimelc.

**Grannos:** A Higher Order (fourth) dedicated to healing springs and helping people.

**Greenwood Grove:** A late 70s grove in Washington State. ZDNA

**Green Book:** A collection of meditative readings in the early RDNA.

**Grove:** A collection of three or more Druids.

**Gwialen:** An OMS term for a wand.

**Hair Pull:** A theological debating session held by the Hassidic Druids or SDNA.

**Hassidic Druids of North America:** A group of Jewish Druids in the Arch grove.

**Hazelnut Grove:** A late 70s grove in California. NRDNA

**HDNA:** Hasidic Druids of North America.

**Henge of Keltria:** An offshoot of ADF.

**High Holy Days:** The four biggie festivals; Samhain, Oimelc, Beltane, Lughnasadh.

**Higher Orders:** The orders of Grannos, Braciaca, Belenos, Sirona, Taranis, Llyr and Danu. The last three were never filled. Used to inspire further study.

**Hill of Three Oaks:** A place of importance to the Carleton Grove.

**Hymn to the Earthmother:** the song beginning "o Earth-mother, we praise thee for..." a common liturgical invocation.

**IDA:** International Druid Archives of the Carleton Druids.

**Imbolc:** Another name for Oimelc festival.

**International Druid Archives:** A collection of materials from Druid groups around the world.

**Isaac:** The common reference to Phillip Emmons Isaac Bonewits. A prominent Druid.

**Joke:** See Reformed Druidism.

**Keltria:** Short form of Henge of Keltria.

**Koan:** a Japanese meditative story with a hidden message of meaning.

**Lacunae:** holes, empty spaces

**Lammas:** Another name for Lughnasadh festival

**Live Oak Grove:** An early 80s NRDNA grove in California.

**Llyr:** A Higher Order (ninth) dedicated to Oceans. Never established.

**Lughnasadh:** A major Druid festival held near Aug 1st to celebrate harvest.

**Magick:** Mind over matter.

**Maple Eve and Maple Day:** HDNA term. Sunset Monday to Sunrise Tuesday and Sunrise Tuesday to Sunset Tuesday.

**Marshmallowing:** A Carleton's light-hearted custom in late 90s of flinging marshmallows at members with whom you have a grudge, who must then apologize, even to fictitious comments.

**Maypole:** A tree with ribbons hanging from it. Dancers weave the ribbons together at the Beltane or Midsummer festival.

**Matriarch:** A woman in charge of a Higher Order or Special Order.

**Merddyn:** A Special Order dedicated to magic working.

**Meso-Druidism:** Fraternal and Rosicrucian forms of Druidic revival. The original RDNA may be considered to be in this category.

**Meso-Pagan:** Fraternal or Rosicrucian revivals of various pagan cultures.

**Miach:** One of the subdegrees of the Order of Diancecht. Dedicated to counselors.

**Midsummer:** the summer solstice

**Midwinter:** the winter solstice

**Mishmash:** A collection of materials of the Hassidic Druids.

**Missionary Dilemma:** Early problem of the 60s of how a missionary Third Order Druid could consecrate waters to ordain a first or second order Druid, without already having a first and second order Druid already in a new grove.

**Monument Hill:** Site of the first RDNA rituals at Carleton.

**Mother Grove:** A term that Isaac used for the HQ of the SDNA movement. This title was usually applied to any grove to which he was an ArchDruid.

**Multi-verse:** SDNA term. Every imaginable reality and universe.

**Neo-Druidism:** Druidic groups belonging or resembling the Neo-Pagan movement in the modern age, not based primarily on Fraternal movements.

**New Orders:** Any of the orders created since 1976. There is no succession by one council electing the next one, as with the Higher Orders.

**Neo-Paganism:** A modern attempt to revive ancient paganism, but with modifications to suit present needs and laws.

**New Reformed Druids of North America:** A title used on two groups in the 70s. The first groups, composed of Carleton Archdruids, were interested in greater communications. The second groups were predominately interested in Neo-Paganism.

**New Reformed Druids of South America:** The hypothetical name of any future Druid group that would be formed in South America.

**New York Grove #1:** A mid 60s grove founded in New York. RDNA

**New York Grove #2:** A mid 70s grove founded in New York. RDNA

**NRDNA:** Abbreviation for New Reformed Druids of North America

**Oak Eve and Oak Day:** HDNA term. Sunset Sat to sunrise Sun and Sunrise Sun to Sunset Sun.

**Oberon:** A Special Order dedicated to bards.

**OBOD:** An abbreviation for a British Meso-Druid group called the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids.

**odm:** order of druids minor

**ODNA:** Orthodox Druids of North America

**Oimele:** A major festival of Druids near Feb. 1st, to mark the weakening of winter, stirrings of new life, and poetry. Also called Imbolc or Candlemas.

**Olive Eve and Olive Day:** HDNA term. Sunset Thursday to Sunrise Friday and Sunrise Friday to Sunset Saturday.

**OMS:** Order of the Mithril Star

**Order:** A group of Druids dedicated to a purpose. A term used to indicate a ritual, as in Order of Worship or Order of Consecration.

**Order of the Mithril Star:** OMS, an offshoot of Church of All Worlds that follows "Stranger in a Strange Land", joined up with RDNA in 2000.

**Order of Worship:** The generic ritual of the Reform, which comes in three major forms: Winter, Summer and Festivals.

**Orthodox Druids of North America:** A group of mid 70s Druids dedicated to ancient Irish Druidism.

**Paleo-Druidism:** Isaac's term for the ancient Druids of Europe.

**Paleo-Pagan:** The original pagans of a culture that haven't been monotheized.

**Patriarch:** A man in charge of a Higher Order or Special Order.

**PCoAD:** Provisional Council of ArchDruids.

**Pine Eve and Pine Day:** HDNA term. Sunset Wednesday to Sunrise Thursday and Sunrise Thursday to Sunset Thursday.

**Preceptor:** A Druid of at least 2nd Order, who plays an important role in taking care of Business matters and answering the Catechism of the Waters in the Order of Worship.

**Priest:** A member of the Third Order.

**Priestess:** A Third Order Druid who also happens to be female.

**Protogrove:** A 70s concept of the NRDNA, for starting groves that haven't acquired a Third Order Druid yet.

**Provisional Council of ArchDruids:** A collection of mid 70s Druids who sought to establish greater communication between groves in the Reform.

**Puck:** A Special Order dedicated to Mischief and Tomfoolery.

**RDNA:** An abbreviation for Reformed Druids of North America.

**RDNAtalk:** An on-line mailing list by Mike Scharding at yahogroups.com that began in 2000 and grew to 140 members in 2003 and is probably still continuing.

**Rede:** A Wiccan version of the Golden Rule.

**Reform, The:** A collective term to included all the branches of Reformed Druidism.

**Reformed Druid:** A member of any branch of the Reform, at least of the First Order.

**Reformed Druids of North America:** A term for the movement until 1976, when it came to indicate a branch of the Reform which did not see Neo-Paganism as its primary source of inspiration and stayed very anarchic. Abbreviated as RDNA.

**Reformed Druidism:** The pursuit of the Reform.

**Ribbons:** Common symbols of a Druid's membership in a Higher Order or Special Order.

**Rowan Eve and Rowan Day:** HDNA term. Sunset Tuesday to Sunrise Wednesday and Sunrise Wednesday to Sunset Wednesday.

**Sacrifice:** An offering given during the Order of Worship. Only vegetation, fungi and lichen are acceptable sacrifices within the Reform. Oak leaves are especially popular.

**Samhain:** A major Druid festival near Nov. 1st. Marks the end of the Summer half and beginning of Winter half. It focuses on death and endings and births and beginnings.

**Samradh:** one of the four seasons of the year. Summer. From Beltane up to Lughnasadh.

**San Diego Grove:** A late 70s Grove in California.

**Schismatic Druids of North America:** A mid 70s group that sought members with an exclusive alliance to the Neo-Pagan movement.

**SDNA:** Schismatic Druids of North America.

**Second Order:** A later step in the Druid "hierarchy" for Druids who see Druidism as being an important part of their life. Preceptors must come from the Second Order or higher.

**Sequoia Sempervirons:** The hymn of the OMS by Leslie Fish.

**Seren Saith Pigfain:** An OMS symbol of seven pointed star encircled by a snake biting its own tail.

**Server:** A helper to the ArchDruid, who carries the cup in the Order of Worship. Must be of at least the First Order.

**Sigil:** The Druid Sigil of a circle with two vertical lines passing through it.

**Sirona:** A Higher Order (7th) dedicated to rivers and streams.

**Smiley Affair:** Richard Smiley's Attempt to dodge the draft by arguing exemption because of priesthood.

**Solstice:** A time when the days are the longest or shortest. A time for Druidic festival.

**Southern Shores Grove:** An early 70s Grove of the RDNA and NRDNA in California.

**Special Orders:** Essentially new Orders of Priesthood devised outside the structure of the 10 original Higher Orders. Special Orders often have a Patriarch or Matriarch.

**Stanford Grove:** An early 70s grove of the RDNA in California.

**State of the Grove:** A special letter sent out by Carleton Archdruids upon retirement. Copies should be sent to the Council as a whole. Reimbursement may be requested.

**Summer:** A Druidic period of time between May 1st and Nov. 1st, during which it is warm and the Waters of Life can be shared.

**Suzuki:** A special order dedicated to meditation and mature training in Martial arts.

**TANSTAAFL:** There is no such thing as a free lunch.-Heinlein.

**Taranis:** A Higher Order (eighth) dedicated to Thunder. Never established.

**Tellit:** A prayer shawl worn by Hasidic Druids of North America.

**Te-Mara:** Commentary upon the Mishmash, derived from Hair Pull sessions by HDNA.

**Third Order:** The Order of Priesthood in the Reform. A member of the Third Order.

**Thuser:** An OMS term for an incense holder.

**Track:** ADF term. There are 13 different tracks of study in the ADF seminary program, ranked in level of difficulty from 1 (easy) to 5 (Phd).

**UAOD:** An abbreviation for United Ancient Order of Druids.

**United Ancient Order of Druids:** A worldwide fraternity of men.

**Uncouth:** Something that is disagreeable to Hassidic Druids.

**Vigil:** The overnight period of meditation taken by a Third Order candidate, while preparing for entry into the Third Order.

**Waters-of-Life:** A liturgical drink used in the Summer to mark Siblinghood between Druids.

**Waters-of-Sleep:** A liturgical drink used in the Winter to mark Siblinghood between Druids.

**Water Sharing:** An OMS term of brotherhood.

**Whang:** A non-alcoholic form of Waters of Life, using Tang and Water.

**Wheel of the Year:** The cycle of the eight festivals of Druidism.

**Wicca:** The religion of the Wiccans

**Wiccan:** A believer in Wicca or used as an adjective. Read "Drawing Down the Moon".

**Winter:** The Druidic period of time between Nov. 1st and May 1st, during which it is cold and the Waters of Sleep can be shared and no ordinations take place.

**Witch:** A believer in Wicca.

**Witchcraft:** The activity of a Witch.

**Yule:** another term for the winter solstice celebration.

**ZDNA:** Zen Druids of North America.

**YOW:** Year of Worship. Same as Y.R.

**Y.R.:** Year of Reform, dating from Year 1 beginning on May 1 1963.

**Ysbrid Cynefin:** An OMS term for a ritual pet.

**Zen Druids of North America:** The Evergreen and Greenwood Groves of Washington state.

**A.T.:** Albion's Thoughts (Apocrypha)

**A.R.A.:** A Rebuttal to Albion (Apocrypha)

**A.R.C.:** A Rebuttal to Cross (Apocrypha)

**A.F.S.:** The Apology for Simplicity (Apocrypha)

**A.W.D.:** A Whole of Druidry (Apocrypha)

**B.A.D.:** Being a Druid (Apocrypha)

**B.A.D.F.:** Beginning of ADF (Apocrypha)

**B.A.S.:** Balance and Synthesis (Apocrypha)

**B.C.R.:** The Book of Cattle Raids (DLS)

**B.J.B.:** The Book on John Burridge (DLS)

**B.L.:** The Book of Lacunae (Apocrypha)

**B.L.T.:** The Book of the Laundry Think-tank (DBS)

**B.A.J.K.:** The Books of the African Jedi Knight

**B.O.B.:** The Book of Bards

**B.O.B.T.:** The Book of the Boring Times (DBS)

**B.O.M.B.:** The Book of Mr. Boring (DBS)

**B.O.C.:** The Book of Changes (Apocrypha)

**B.O.F.:** The Book of Fire (DLS)

**B.O.G.:** The Book of Games (DBS)

**B.O.O.:** The Book of Opposition (DLS)

**Books:** The Book of Books (DLS)

**B.O.Q.:** The Book of Q (DRS)

**B.O.S.:** The Book of Samhain (DBS)

**B.O.St.:** The Book of Stones (DLS)

**B.O.St.2:** The Book of Stone, Part 2 (DRS)

**B.O.T.:** The Book of the Thirtieth Anniversary (DBS)

**B.O.Y.:** The Book of Years (DLS)

**B.P.:** The Book of Paul (DLS)

**B.P.S.:** The Book of Post Scripts (DLS)

**B.V.:** The Book of Vigils (DLS)

**B.V.2:** The Book of Vigils Part Two (DRS)

**C.F.M.:** The Codex Form Missive (Apocrypha)

**Con.:** Consider the Alternatives

**Coalition.:** The Coalition Council of Dalon Ap Landu's records

**Cus.:** Book of Customs in DC(R)

**Cup:** A Cup Filled to the Brim with Druidism (Apocrypha)

**D.A.T.:** Druidism and Truth (Apocrypha)

**D.B.S.:** The Dead Bay Scrolls

**B.E.:** The Balanced Epistle (Apocrypha)

**D.E.T.:** Das Edda Todvolkfortgeshritten (DBS)

**D.L.S.:** The Dead Lake Scrolls

**D.X.:** Druidaxta (Apocrypha)

**DC(E):** The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)

**DC(R):** The Druid Chronicles (Revolved)

**Dream:** The Book of the Great Dream (DLS)

**D.T.F.:** The Discourse of Thomas the Fool (Apocrypha)

**E.A.:** The Epistle of Amanda (Apocrypha)

**E.C.:** The Early Chronicles in DC(R)

**E.D.C.:** Epistle of David the Chronicler (Apocrypha)

**E.E.:** The Epistle of Ellen (Apocrypha)

**E.2.E.:** The Epistle to the Encyclopedist (Apocrypha)

**E.M.:** The Epistle of the Myopians (Apocrypha)

**E.M.S.:** The Epistle of Mid Summer (Apocrypha)

**E.R.S.:** The Epistle of the Rising Sun (Apocrypha)

**E.N.:** The Epistle of Norman (Apocrypha)

**E.O.C.:** The Epistle of Corwin (Apocrypha)

**E.O.S.:** The Epistle of Stephen (Apocrypha)

**E.O.G.:** The Epistle of Gruntwork (Apocrypha)

**E.R.:** The Epistle of Richard (Apocrypha)

**E.Rn.:** The Epistle of Renny (Apocrypha)

**E.R.N.:** The Epistle of Ric of the North (Apocrypha)

**Eric:** The Epistle of Eric (Apocrypha)

**E.S.:** The Epistle of Sally (Apocrypha)

**E.T.D.:** Ein Tanz Dream (DRS)

**Faith:** The Book of Faith (Apocrypha)

## Standard Literary Abbreviations

When quoting Druidic literature, it may be appropriate to establish a standard code for referring to various works. Please don't use the abbreviations in general literature, because no one will know what you are talking about. *Use them only in academic papers, and only with an accompanying table at the beginning of the essay.* Standard bible notation is used in the Reform. An example, to refer to verse ten of Chapter three of Book of Customs, you would write Cust. 3:10. Half jokingly (i.e. no one uses them), here are my recommended abbreviations:

**Adapt:** The Epistle of Adaptation (Apocrypha)

**Alyx:** The Epistle of Alyx (Apocrypha)

**Answers:** The Book of Ultimate Answers

**ALE.:** The Alphabet Epistle (Apocrypha)

**Ar.E:** The Arch Epistle (Apocrypha)

**ARDA:** A Reformed Druid Anthology

**A.R.:** Albion's Response (Apocrypha)

**F.F.:** Fisher's Farewell (Apocrypha)  
**F.E.I.:** The First Epistle of Isaac (Apocrypha)  
**F.E.R.:** The First Epistle of Robert (Apocrypha)  
**F.T.C.:** The Farewell to Tom Cross (Apocrypha)  
**F.W.F.W.:** Freedom Within Freedom Without (Apocrypha)  
**G.B.1:** Green Book, volume one  
**G.B.2:** Green Book, volume two  
**G.B.3.:** Green Book, volume three (etc.)  
**G.O.H.:** The Gift of Horses (Apocrypha)  
**G.R.T.:** Gobbledegook and Red Tape (Apocrypha)  
**History.:** General History of Reformed Druidism in America  
**H.O.L.:** The History of Legitimacy (DRS)  
**I.D.A.:** International Druid Archives  
**Law:** Book of Law in DC(R)  
**L.C.:** The Later Chronicles in DC(R)  
**L.E.:** Letters to the Editor (Apocrypha)  
**L.E.R.:** Last Epistle of Robert (Apocrypha)  
**L.M.B.:** Letter to My Brothers (Apocrypha)  
**LNAD:** Lessons for a New Arch Druid (Apocrypha)  
**L.T.:** Leabhar Toirbhealbhagh (Apocrypha)  
**M.A.R.M.D.:** Musings of an Ancient Religion in a Modern World  
**Med.:** Book of Meditations in DC(R)  
**M.E.M.D.:** The Mini-Epistle of Michelle the Dark (DRS)  
**M.F.E.:** Mike's Farewell Epistle (Apocrypha)  
**M.I.:** Missionary Imposition (Apocrypha)  
**Mish.:** The Mishmash of Hasidic Druidism  
**M.M.M.:** Mike's Mini-Missive (Apocrypha)  
**M.W.F.W.D.N.F.U.:** Messing with forces we do not fully understand (Carleton slogan)  
**O.F.F.:** Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals (Apocrypha)  
**O.L.G.:** Open Letters to the Grove (Apocrypha)  
**P.C.P.:** Post Carleton Perplexations (Apocrypha)  
**P.E.M.:** Parenthetical Epistle of Michael (Apocrypha)  
**P.O.B.:** The Poems of Brad (DRS)  
**P.O.Ch.:** The Poems of Chris (DRS)  
**P.O.C.:** The Poems of Corwin (DRS)  
**P.O.I.:** The Poems of Irony (DRS)  
**P.O.M.:** The Poems of Merri (DRS)  
**P.R.:** The Polite Refusal (Apocrypha)  
**Poetry V1:** The Book of Poetry Volume 1  
**Poetry V2:** The Book of Poetry Volume 2  
**Poetry V3:** The Book of Poetry Volume 3  
**Record.:** Record of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu  
**R.D.:** The Reply of David (Apocrypha)  
**R.O.D:** The Reply of the Other David (Apocrypha)  
**R.O.R.:** The Reply of Richard (Apocrypha)  
**R.T.M.:** The Replies to Mairi (Apocrypha)  
**Sam:** The Epistle of Sam (Apocrypha)  
**S.B.:** Speaking of Beliefs (Apocrypha)  
**S.C.:** The Silent Cacophony (Apocrypha)  
**Serm:** The Book of the Sermon (DRS)  
**S.L.:** The Sigil Letters (Apocrypha)  
**S.E.D.:** The Spring Equinox Diatribe (Apocrypha)  
**S.E.E.:** The Second Epistle of Ellen. (Apocrypha)  
**S.E.I.:** The Second Epistle of Isaac (Apocrypha)  
**S.E.R.:** The Second Epistle of Robert (Apocrypha)  
**S.O.J.S.:** The Soul of Juliana Spring (DRS)  
**S.O.R.:** The Sociology of the RDNA (DRS)  
**S.S.:** Sacrificial Sentiments (Apocrypha)  
**T.E.J.:** The Tree Epistle of John (DRS)  
**T.E.R.:** The Third Epistle of Robert (Apocrypha)  
**T.M.:** The Te-Mara: Commentaries on the Mishmash  
**T.O.C.:** Thoughts on Chaos (Apocrypha)  
**T.O.D.:** Thoughts on Discord (Apocrypha)  
**X.L.:** The Exile Letters (Apocrypha)

**W.A.D.:** What are Druids? (Apocrypha)  
**W.B.S.:** Wind Borne Seeds (Apocrypha)  
**W.H.:** The Wild Hunt (DRS)  
**W.K.:** The Winter King (DRS)  
**W.L.L.U.:** When Leaves Leave Us (Apocrypha)  
**W.T.F.:** Wisdom of Thomas the Fool (Apocrypha)  
**W.W.C.R.:** Why are We Called Reformed? (Apocrypha)  
**4 E.I.:** Fourth Epistle of Isaac (Apocrypha)  
**5 E.I.:** Fifth Epistle of Isaac (Apocrypha)  
**6 E.I.:** Sixth Epistle of Isaac (Apocrypha)

#### **Abbreviations of Titles**

**AD** or **Adr** Arch Druid or Arch Druidess  
**An.** Angus  
**Ba.** Bambi  
**Be.** Belenos  
**Br.** Braciaca  
**Br.** Brigit  
**CoCoDAL** Coalition Council DAL  
**CoDAL** Council of DAL  
**DAL** Dalon Ap Landu  
**Dn.** Danu  
**DDT** Doctor Druid Textology  
**Di.** Diancecht  
**Em.** Earth Mother  
**Gr.** Grannos  
**He.** Hermes  
**Hp.** Hephaestus  
**Lr.** Llyr  
**Ob.** Oberon  
**ODAL** Order of Dalon ap Landu  
**odm.** order of druids minor  
**P-R.** Pack Rat  
**Pr.** Preceptor  
**Si.** Sirona  
**Su.** Suzuki  
**Ta.** Taranis  
**Vol.** Volcano



**Figure 17 Monument Hill 1998.**

# Standard Letter Format

By David Frangquist, 1966  
Non-official, of course.

REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA

COUNCIL OF BELENOS

12 October, 1966

Dear Reverend Brother-in-the-Mother John:

This is a standard format letter for the Reformed Druids of North America. The Heading should always be typed as shown. The second line may indicate either a Council or a Grove. In letters between priests, a Council or Order which they have in common should be indicated. Any Druid may use the name of his Grove; members of missions who have no Grove may use the line "PEACE! PEACE! PEACE!" Official or semi-official business of a Council or Grove should have the appropriate heading for that Council or Grove.

The date may be written as shown, if it is desired to use a civil date. In less formal correspondence, a traditional Druid date may be used; a Druid date is written like this: Wednesday, 73 Foghamhar.

The above salutation is used by priests or priestesses addressing priests. When priestesses are addressed, the word "Brother" is changed to "Sister." The first name is always used. Correspondence from or to a Druid of the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> Order simply drops the word "Reverend." Any letter to a non-member would use a standard business letter salutation.

Paragraphs should always be indented five spaces.

It is important that the closing agree with the heading. If a Grove is indicated, the writer should show his position in the Grove: his office, or if he holds none, his Order. If a council is indicated, he should indicate "priest," "priestess," or "Patriarch," as the case may be. In order to indicate an Order, the line "Of the \_\_\_ Order" is used. The Arch-Druid of Carleton should be careful to use the appropriate heading – either "Carleton Grove" or "Council of Dalon Ap Landu" – depending on the business being conducted; in either case he signs the letter "Arch-Druid of Carleton." The closing always begins "Yours in the Mother," at the center of the page, three lines below the body of the letter.

Yours in the Mother,  
/S/  
David A. Frangquist  
Patriarch

(SAMPLE IN STANDARD FORMAT)

*(Note these four standard formats were written in mock formality by David Frangquist while typing up manuals for the military, apparently. They are guides that might help, but not official.)*

# Standard Committee Format

By David Frangquist, 1966  
Non-official, of course.

REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA

CARLETON GROVE

11 October, 1966

Report of the Committee on Formats

1. This is a standard format for reports by committees and officers.

2. The heading shows the organization which appointed the committee, and to which it is therefore reporting. The same is true for officers: they are reporting to the organization which elected them, and so that organization is shown in the heading. There are two exceptions;

- a. The Arch-Druid is elected by the Carleton Grove, but he must make an annual report to the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.
- b. the Patriarch may from time to time issue reports to their councils, although they are in fact elected by the next lower council.

The council to which the report is being made is shown in the heading.

3. Paragraphs are numbered for easy reference. The number is indented five spaces.

4. The difference between the report of an officer and the report of a committee is in the use of the closing certification paragraph. A certification paragraph is always used when the chairman of a committee is reporting the opinion of the committee, as is shown below. It is never used in the report of an officer, who needs simply to sign his name and office. Certification paragraphs are not numbered.

I certify that the above is a true and accurate copy of the report of the (majority/unanimous) opinion of the committee.

/s/  
Winston Churchill  
Chairman

(SAMPLE IN STANDARD FORMAT)



# Standard Council Resolution Format

By David Frangquist, 1966  
Non-Official, of course.

REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA

COUNCIL OF DALON AP LANDU

14 October, 1966

Report of Resolutions

12 October, 1966 Interpreted:

## FORMATS

- a) That this is a standard format for the reporting and recording of Reformed Druid resolutions.
- b) That the heading shows the name of the council or grove adopting the resolution. The date in the heading is the date of publication of the resolutions. Resolutions from several different dates may be published under one publication date.
- c) That resolutions are organized by date, section and clause. The sections are not numbered but are given titles. Clauses are indicated by letters. The proper way to refer to this clause is "12 October, 1966, Formats, c)."
- d) That sections are written in block form, indented 5 spaces from the left margin. Titles of sections are underlined.
- e) That resolutions may be either "interpreted" or "voted." Interpretations are simply clarifications of already existing traditions. Resolutions which are voted are new policies and original decisions. Each clause of an interpretation begins with the word "that;" each clause of a "voted" resolution begins with the word "to."

## Sections

That there may be more than one section under one date.

13 October, 1966 Voted:

## Standardization

- a) To recommend to all Druid organizations that they adopt this format for reporting and recording resolutions.
- b) To require that all reports of resolutions be followed by this certification paragraph.

I certify that the above is a true and accurate copy of resolutions adopted by the Reformed Druids of North America (at \_\_\_\_\_/Council of \_\_\_\_\_).

/S/  
Thomas Becket  
Arch-Druid of Carleton

(SAMPLE IN STANDARD FORMAT)

# Standard Constitution Format

By David Frangquist, 1966

Unofficial, of course.

REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA

\_\_\_\_\_ GROVE

13, October, 1966

Constitution of the Reformed Druids of North America at \_\_\_\_\_

Article I The name of this organization shall be the Reformed Druids of North America at \_\_\_\_\_.

Article II Any (resident of/student at/etc.) \_\_\_\_\_ may become a member of this organization upon presenting a petition, which may be oral, stating that he believes in the Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism as set forth in this Constitution.

Article III The Basic Tenets of North American Reformed Druidism are these:

- 1) North American Reformed Druids believe that one of the many ways in which the object of man's search for religious truth can be found is through Nature, the Earth-Mother.
- 2) North American Reformed Druids believe that Nature, being one of the primary concerns in man's life and struggle, and being one of the Objects of Creation, is important to man's spiritual quests.

Article IV There shall be (#) officers of the Reformed Druids of North America:

- 1) The Archdruid must be at least a third-order North American Reformed priest. He shall preside over all meetings.
- 2) The Preceptor must be at least a second-order North American Reformed Druid, shall assist in services, and shall be the principal officer in the secular arm of this organization.
- 3) The Server must be at least a first-order North American Reformed Druid, and shall assist in services.
- 4) (Provision may here be made for such other officers as may be needed.)

Article V Elections of officers shall be held annually, in (month). (Here may be specified the method, i.e. voice vote, ballot, etc.) Only those qualified to hold the posts may be nominated for them.

Article VI This Constitution may be attended by a majority vote in two consecutive meetings of this organization. A quorum, which shall be (fraction) of the members, must be present at each meeting.

I certify this to be a true and accurate copy of the Constitution of the Reformed Druids of North America at \_\_\_\_\_, read and approved at two consecutive meetings.

/S/  
John Doe  
Arch-Druid

(SAMPLE IN STANDARD FORMAT)



# SECTION EIGHT:

## The Druid Calendars

### 1996 Introduction

Over the years, two or more calendars have developed and been adopted by the different branches of the Reform. They boil down to two systems; one for Carleton & the RDNA and one for Berkeley & the New RDNA, SDNA & HDNA.

The difference, is that while both systems acknowledge Samhain (Nov. 1st) to be the normal beginning of the Celtic year, it is the Berkeley calendar which counts the years since the Foundation of the Reform to the Samhain that occurred before May 1st 1963, which is the first day an official RDNA ritual took place, thus beginning their year-count with Nov. 1st, 1962. The Carletonian year-count begins with May 1st, 1963. This ends up with two different year-counts being used to Druidically date documents, books and letters. Another difference is that the original RDNA didn't recognize the Equinoxes, giving them originally 6 High Days; although the current Carleton Druids do recognized them now. I will respectfully present each system separately, beginning with the Carleton Calendar.

### The Carleton Dating System and Calendar

(and other timely matters)

Assembled for the reader's delectation and edification by

Dick Shelton, self-appointed  
Chronographer to the Reform.

### Instructions for Use:

1. Draw the Druid Sign on the ground. Enter it. Compose your thoughts. Marshal your cognitive faculties: dealing with the Druid Calendar is no mean undertaking!

2. The four Quarter Days are Samhain, Oimelc, Beltane, and Lughnasadh. These are the first days of the four Quarters (respectively, Geimredh, Earrach, Samradh, and Foghamhar), and they correspond to November 1, February 1, May 1, and August 1. The Quarter Days, together with the Solstices (Mid-Summer and Mid-Winter), are the high feast days of Reformed Druidism

3. But the Druid Day begins at sundown on the previous day. Thus Samhain – Day 1 Geimredh = sundown Oct. 31 to sundown Nov. 1. (This is absolutely the only aspect of Reformed Druidism in which Druids are early.)

4. In the matter of leap years, the Reform follows the Gregorian reform. (Who can resist a Reform?) Every year divisible by 4 is a leap year, except those years divisible by 100 are not leap years unless divisible by 400. (Thus 1976 and 2000 are leap years, while 1977 and 1900 are not.) The Druid leap year day is 90 Earrach (or Day 90 of Earrach) – Primarily because the Gregorian Day (Feb. 29th) falls during Earrach; so to make 1 Samradh fall on May 1 there isn't much choice!

5. To find a Druid date from a Gregorian one in the accompanying chart, find the Gregorian date on the bottom line of

the appropriate box, and read off the Druid date from the top. To go the other way, reverse the process. During Earrach in leap years, use the middle line for Gregorian dates rather than the bottom line [one can also use the chart in calculating & Deciphering Druid Dating".]

6. The following mnemonic may prove useful: "89 days hath Earrach; all the rest have 92."

7. The Druid dates for Mid-Summer and Mid-Winter [and, of course, the Equinoxes] vary, of course, depending on when they fall. Consult an almanac to find the *time* of the solstice [or equinox]- the Gregorian *date* is not enough, because the Druid date will depend on whether the solstice falls before or after sundown: if before, the Druid date is the one the chart gives for the Gregorian date: if after, the Druid date is the next date on the chart. (Clear?)

8. The Druid Week begins at 1:00 pm Saturday, or as soon thereafter as the Archdruid makes it to the service. (This was the traditional time of the regular weekly service at Carleton.) If there is a lot of snow on the ground, there are no Druid weeks.

9. The Druid Year begins at Samhain, much as the Druid Day begins at sundown. Samhain was such an important festival that the early Christian Church shrewdly invested November 1 with the power of not any one particular patron saint, but of "All Saints." In ancient time, Samhain did not in fact belong to either the old year or the new year; it was a day "outside of years" when supernatural forces ordinarily kept in check could come out to raise havoc, and could also be questioned for divinatory purposes. This gave rise both to Hallowe'en and to the expression "a year and a day" – the time required for a full year to pass.

10. But the Year of Worship (YOW) or Year of the Reform (YR) used by Reformed Druids for dating purposes begins at Beltane. This gives us two "New Year Days", marking opposite ends of the year. Beltane and Samhain have always been the two highest days of the year. (Man, through his temporal limitation, can hardly resist the urge to mark fundamentally continuous things with beginnings and endings. The Druid Sign itself imposes upon the endless cycle of eternity (or upon the orb of the world) two human, finite lines. In a very real sense, the two finite lines encompass the entire human condition.)

11. Reformed Druid Worship began on Beltane 1963, and the early record in the Carleton Grove Archives clearly indicate that the founders considered "YOW I" to have run from Beltane 1963 to Beltane 1964. (There is a minor difficulty that EC 1:7-8 seems to imply that some services were actually held in the month before Beltane 1963 – but who am I to gainsay the Founders?). Let the Gregorian Year= $n$ . For days between and including Jan 1 and April 30th use  $YOW=(n-1963)$ . But for days between and including May 1 to Dec 31st use  $YOW=(n-1962)$ : February 29, 1976 = 29 Earrach XIII and July 4, 1976 = 65 Samradh XIV

12. There remains, finally, the notion of Druid Standard Time. Alas, there is nothing official about this, but it is universal among Druids: their sundials seem to run hours behind everybody else's (Cf. items 3 & 8 above.)

[Charts continued on next pages]

**Charts to Determine Year of Reform (Y.R.)  
And Yes, Beltane 1963 Starts at 1 Y.R.**

<b>Common Era Year</b>	<b>Y.R. as of Beltane</b>
1959	4 B.R.
1960	3 B.R.
1961	2 B.R.
1962	1 B.R. / 0 Y.R
<b>1963</b>	<b>1</b>
1964	2
1965	3
1966	4
1967	5
1968	6
1969	7
1970	8
1971	9
1972	10
1973	11
1974	12
1975	13
1976	14
1977	15
1978	16
1979	17
1980	18
1981	19
1982	20
1983	21
1984	22
1985	23
1986	24
1987	25
1988	26
1989	27
1990	28
1991	29
1992	30
1993	31

<b>Common Era Year</b>	<b>Y.R. as of Beltane</b>
1994	32
1995	33
1996	34
1997	35
1998	36
1999	37
2000	38
2001	39
2002	40
2003	41
2004	42
2005	43
2006	44
2007	45
2008	46
2009	47
2010	48
2011	49
2012	50
2013	51
2014	52
2015	53
2016	54
2017	55
2018	56
2019	57
2020	58
2021	59
2022	60
2023	61
2024	62
2025	63
2026	64
2027	65
2028	66
2029	67

<b>Common Era Year</b>	<b>Y.R. as of Beltane</b>
2030	68
2031	69
2032	70
2033	71
2034	72
2035	73
2036	74
2037	75
2038	76
2039	77
2040	78
2041	79
2042	80
2043	81
2044	82
2045	83
2046	84
2047	85
2048	86
2049	87
2050	88
2051	89
2052	90
2053	91
2054	92
2055	93
2056	94
2057	95
2058	96
2059	97
2060	98
2061	99
2062	100
2063	101
2064	102
2065	103

<b>Common Era Year</b>	<b>Y.R. as of Beltane</b>
2066	104
2067	105
2068	106
2069	107
2070	108
2071	109
2072	110
2073	111
2074	112
2075	113
2076	114
2077	115
2078	116
2079	117
2080	118
2081	119
2082	120
2083	121
2084	122
2085	123
2086	124
2087	125
2088	126
2089	127
2090	128
2091	129
2092	130
2093	131
2094	132
2095	133
2096	134
2097	135
2098	136
2099	137
2100	138
2101	139

Common Era Year	Y.R. as of Beltane
2102	140
2103	141
2104	142
2105	143
2106	144
2107	145
2108	146
2109	147
2110	148
2111	149
2112	150
2113	151
2114	152
2115	153
2116	154
2117	155
2118	156
2119	157
2120	158
2121	159
2122	160
2123	161
2124	162
2125	163
2126	164
2127	165
2128	166
2129	167
2130	168
2131	169
2132	170
2133	171
2134	172
2135	173
2136	174
2137	175

Common Era Year	Y.R. as of Beltane
2138	176
2139	177
2140	178
2141	179
2142	180
2143	181
2144	182
2145	183
2146	184
2147	185
2148	186
2149	187
2150	188
2151	189
2152	190
2153	191
2154	192
2155	193
2156	194
2157	195
2158	196
2159	197
2160	198
2161	199
2162	200
2163	201

If someone is still using this after 2163, wow! Please write the next chapter of druidism!

**Charts to Determine Day of the 4 Druid Seasons**

Samradh			
Begins Now	May	Samradh	June
01	01	32	01
02	02	33	02
03	03	34	03
04	04	35	04
05	05	36	05
06	06	37	06
07	07	38	07
08	08	39	08
09	09	40	09
10	10	41	10
11	11	42	11
12	12	43	12
13	13	44	13
14	14	45	14
15	15	46	15
16	16	47	16
17	17	48	17
18	18	49	18
19	19	50	19
20	20	51	20
21	21	52	21
22	22	53	22
23	23	54	23
24	24	55	24
25	25	56	25
26	26	57	26
27	27	58	27
28	28	59	28
29	29	60	29
30	30	61	30
31	31		

		Foghamhar	
Samradh	July	Begins Now	August
62	01	01	01
63	02	02	02
64	03	03	03
65	04	04	04
66	05	05	05
67	06	06	06
68	07	07	07
69	08	08	08
70	09	09	09
71	10	10	10
72	11	11	11
73	12	12	12
74	13	13	13
75	14	14	14
76	15	15	15
77	16	16	16
78	17	17	17
79	18	18	18
80	19	19	19
81	20	20	20
82	21	21	21
83	22	22	22
84	23	23	23
85	24	24	24
86	25	25	25
87	26	26	26
88	27	27	27
89	28	28	28
90	29	29	29
91	30	30	30
92	31		

Foghamhar	Sept	Foghamhar	Oct.
32	01	62	01
33	02	63	02
34	03	64	03
35	04	65	04
36	05	66	05
37	06	67	06
38	07	68	07
39	08	69	08
40	09	70	09
41	10	71	10
42	11	72	11
43	12	73	12
44	13	74	13
45	14	75	14
46	15	76	15
47	16	77	16
48	17	78	17
49	18	79	18
50	19	80	19
51	20	81	20
52	21	82	21
53	22	83	22
54	23	84	23
55	24	85	24
56	25	86	25
57	26	87	26
58	27	88	27
59	28	89	28
60	29	90	29
61	30	91	30
		92	31

Geimredh			
Begins Now	Nov.	Geimredh	Dec.
01	01	31	01
02	02	32	02
03	03	33	03
04	04	34	04
05	05	35	05
06	06	36	06
07	07	37	07
08	08	38	08
09	09	39	09
10	10	40	10
11	11	41	11
12	12	42	12
13	13	43	13
14	14	44	14
15	15	45	15
16	16	46	16
17	17	47	17
18	18	48	18
19	19	49	19
20	20	50	20
21	21	51	21
22	22	52	22
23	23	53	23
24	24	54	24
25	25	55	25
26	26	56	26
27	27	57	27
28	28	58	28
29	29	59	29
30	30	60	30
		61	31

		Earrach	
Geimredh	Jan.	Begins	Feb.
62	01	01	01
63	02	02	02
64	03	03	03
65	04	04	04
66	05	05	05
67	06	06	06
68	07	07	07
69	08	08	08
70	09	09	09
71	10	10	10
72	11	11	11
73	12	12	12
74	13	13	13
75	14	14	14
76	15	15	15
77	16	16	16
78	17	17	17
79	18	18	18
80	19	19	19
81	20	20	20
82	21	21	21
83	22	22	22
84	23	23	23
85	24	24	24
86	25	25	25
87	26	26	26
88	27	27	27
89	28	28	28
90	29	(29)	(29)
91	30		
92	31		

Earrach	March	Earrach	April
29*	01	60*	01
30	02	61	02
31	03	62	03
32	04	63	04
33	05	64	05
34	06	65	06
35	07	66	07
36	08	67	08
37	09	68	09
38	10	69	10
39	11	70	11
40	12	71	12
41	13	72	13
42	14	73	14
43	15	74	15
44	16	75	16
45	17	76	17
46	18	77	18
47	19	78	19
48	20	79	20
49	21	80	21
50	22	81	22
51	23	82	23
52	24	83	24
53	25	84	25
54	26	85	26
55	27	86	27
56	28	87	28
57	29	88	29
58	30	89	30
59	31		

\* Remember to add one to each number in this column during leap years.

# The Berkeley Dating System

Years among the RDNA at Carleton are dated from the first official Reformed Druid service at Carleton in May 1963. Archdruid Robert Larson, who founded Berkeley in 1968 after leaving Carleton in 1965, chose to follow the Celtic custom and dated the First Year of the Reform to the Samhain (Nov. 1st) of the 1962. Thus among the NRDNA, the year beginning the day after Samhain 1962, is the First Year of the Reform, or "1 y.r." and the year running from the day after Samhain 1963 to the day before Samhain 1964 is really 2 y.r., etc. The year in which the *Druid Chronicles (Evolved)* were prepared, November 1975 through October 1976, was the Fourteenth Year of the Reform (14 y.r.).

Naturally the years run backwards as well. Fortunately, unlike the civil calendar, the Druid calendar has a Zero date (Samhain 1962) which belongs to neither the Years of the Reform (y.r.) nor the years Before the Reform (b.r.). Let  $n$  be the Gregorian year. When the day of the year is on or between Nov 1st Dec 31st use  $Y.R.=(n-1961)$ . When the day is on or between Jan 1st and Oct. 31st use  $y.r.=(n-1962)$ . A simple graph for converting from civil history to New Reformed Druid history appears below. In the list below, "S" stands for Samhain



**Figure 18 A Druid in Lower Arb by the 100 Acres of natural tall-grass prairie, 2001.**



**Figure 19 Lyman Creek in Upper Arb, 2003.**

Common Era	New RDNA Era
Day Before S. 1961	2 b.r. ends
Day Before S. 1962	1 b.r. ends
Samhain 1962	Day Between
Day After S. 1962	1 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1963	2 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1964	3 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1965	4 y.r. begins

Day After S. 1966	5 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1967	6 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1968	7 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1969	8 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1970	9 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1971	10 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1972	11 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1973	12 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1974	13 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1975	14 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1976	15 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1977	16 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1978	17 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1979	18 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1980	19 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1981	20 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1982	21 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1983	22 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1984	23 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1985	24 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1986	25 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1987	26 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1988	27 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1989	28 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1990	29 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1991	30 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1992	31 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1993	32 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1994	33 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1995	34 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1996	35 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1997	36 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1998	37 y.r. begins
Day After S. 1999	38 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2000	39 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2001	40 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2002	41 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2003	42 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2004	43 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2005	44 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2006	45 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2007	46 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2008	47 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2009	48 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2010	49 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2011	50 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2012	51 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2013	52 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2014	53 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2015	54 y.r. begins
Day After S. 2016	55 y.r. begins

## The Berkeley Calendar

By Isaac Bonewits & Robert Larson, 1975

The Berkeley Calendar is noteworthy as being more concerned with the Celtic aspects, names, and deities associated with the festivals, than the Carleton contingent, which did not concern itself too much with Celticisms. It should be noted that neither system is necessary.



## Druid Time

Reformed Druids of all Branches have a habit of running on Druid Standard Time (DST), also known as Pacific Sidhe Time, Central Sidhe Time, etc. DST is always from fifteen minutes to six hours later than standard civil time, depending upon the individual Druids involved. In summer, and it would seem, "energy crises," DST becomes Druid Daylight Time (DDT), also known as Eastern Druid Time, Mountain Druid time, etc. In DDT the sunset is put off for an hour. If you can't do this, you'll have to stick with DST.

The Druid Day begins at sundown of the previous standard calendar day (the Druid November 1st, for example, begins at sunset of the evening of October 31st). Among some of the more ritualistically oriented Druids, the total number of minutes between sunset and sunrise are divided into twelve equal "hours" and the same thing is done between the sunrise and sunset; making it easy to calculate High Noon and Mid-Night every day. Of course they have to recalculate them every day of the year (or get a Druid computer to do it for them), but some of them think it is worth the effort. Others disagree, especially those with electric watches.

Among the Hasidic Druids, sunset was defined as that moment at which one could first see three stars in the evening sky over one's oak grove or through the window of one's chess club. Refusing to look over the oak grove or blocking the window was considered uncouth.

## The Druid Week:

The Druid week begins at sunset on Friday [*as opposed to Saturday at Carleton -ed.*] This makes sure of the joyful reception of the new week by the majority of the populace. Among the Hasidic and Schismatic Druids, a two day period of rest and relaxation, was called the "Weekend", also began at this time, with as big a feast as could be managed. Why they started the week with a celebration called *Weekend* is not clear.

The Hasidic Druids also had their own names for the days and evenings of the week (the "eve" being the night before each day, naturally) based upon an association of a tree with each day: Saturday - Birch, Sunday - Oak, Monday - Aspen, Tuesday - Maple, Wednesday - Rowan, Thursday - Pine and Friday - Olive. Thus the Weekend runs from the start of Birch-eve to the end of Oak-day.

## The Druid Months

May, August, September, October and November are known by the names here presented in Modern Irish. The other names were invented by Adr. Robert Larson by analogy to the autumn months. Larson notes, in 1996, that his guesses were confirmed by Manx calendar. Manx does not use High days to denote months and uses Manx equivalents of Tús, Meán, and Deireadh (beginning, middle, end) with the appropriate season. Note that these months do not always start on the same day as their equivalent civil months.

MONTH	DRUID NAME	MEANING
November	<i>MÍ na Samhna</i>	month of Samhain
December	<i>Me-n Geimhridh</i>	middle of winter
January	<i>Deireadh Geimhridh</i>	end of winter
February	<i>MÍ na hOimelc</i>	month of Oimelc
March	<i>Me-n Earraigh</i>	middle of spring
April	<i>Deareadh Earraigh</i>	end of spring
May	<i>MÍ na Beltane</i>	month of Beltane
June	<i>Me-n Samhraidh</i>	middle of summer

July	<i>Dearead Samhraidh</i>	end of summer
August	<i>MÍ na Lughnasadh</i>	month of Lughnasadh
September	<i>Me-n Fumhair</i>	middle of fall
October	<i>Deireadh Fuhmhair</i>	end of fall

## Calculating and Deciphering Druid Dating Methods

By Mike Scharding, 1996

Occasionally when you receive a letter from an older Druid, or perhaps you'll be browsing in archived letters of the past, and you'll see a strange garbled sentence, like:

Michael Scharding, Archdruid of Carleton

Day 64 of Geimredh, Year XXXI of the Reform

or

Richard Shelton, Archdruid of Ann Arbor

Samhradh 26, XXIII y.r

or

Robert Larson, Archdruid of Berkeley

37th of Earrach, XXI YOW

At first glance you will have no idea of when they were written, unless they also included the Gregorian date. All this special dating, as you can guess, is a Druidic form of showing off, but it is also a way to pause and remember how long we -as an organization- have been around.

There is a simple method for determining the Year or the Reform (y.r.) or Year of Worship (YOW), which is the same thing. One is to note where the person is writing from; are they of the Carleton Grove or from the NRDNA? This you'll learn by researching the Third Order list or by asking them. People from the Groves of Carleton, Chicago, Ann Arbor, Purdue, Stanford, New York #1 and New York #2 will probably use the Carleton Convention of Dating the Year, so call up that chart listed earlier. If the authors are definitely Neo-Pagans, or if they come from the Bay Area or West Coast, they are likely to be using the Berkeley Convention of Dating the Year. But first you must know the day of the year, before the y.r. can be ascertained in either system.

As for deciphering the date that comes before the Year of the Reform, a few pages earlier have a key to deciphering them. On that page are gathered 6 minor columns, three major columns to a page, each column has two vertical rows of numbers in them. Take for instance the first of the three examples above; Day 64 of Geimredh. Look back a few pages until you find a major column with the word Geimredh on its left side. Go up and down on the left side of that major column until you find the number 64. Then look on the right side of that major column. You'll find that Day 64 of Geimredh is the same as January 3rd. Since it was written by someone from Carleton, the year will be from the Carleton convention; and Year XXXI (using the formula for Carleton dates before Beltane) is 1994. The final date is January 3, 1994 of the common era.

Here are some more conversions to practice deciphering. Remember leap years.

## Carleton Conversion Method

Dec 13, 1965=43 Geimredh, 3 y.r. Jan 20, 1975=81 Geimredh, 12 y.r. Aug 1st, 1988=1 Foghamhar, 26 y.r.  
May 1, 1998=1 Samhradh, 36 y.r. Nov 1, 1964= 1 Geimredh, 1 y.r.  
July 28, 1975= 89 Samhradh, 23 y.r.  
Feb 3, 1971= 3 Earrach, 8 y.r. Oct 30, 1968= 91 Foghamhar, 6 y.r.  
Mar 16, 1972=45 Earrach, 9 y.r.

## Berkeley Conversion Method

Jan 1, 1969= 62 Geimredh, 7 y.r. June 2, 1990= 33 Samradh, 28 y.r. Nov 3rd, 1965=3 Geimredh, 4 y.r.  
Dec 31, 1968= 61 Geimredh, 7 y.r. Oct 31, 1977=92 Foghamhar, 25 y.r. Nov 1,1977=1 Geimredh, 26 y.r.  
Apr 20, 1979=79 Earrach, 17 y.r. Apr 20, 1980=80 Earrach, 18 y.r.  
May 1, 1978= 1 Samradh, 16 y.r.

## Here's a couple for you to decipher:

Carleton Conversions: 45 Earrach, 12 y.r. 45 Earrach, 13 y.r. 77 Foghamhar, 24 y.r. 39 Geimredh, 21 y.r.  
12 Samhradh, 30 y.r. Jan 24th, 1964 July 10, 1978 Nov 1, 1966 Mar 3, 2000 Dec 31, 1988  
Berkeley Conversions: 1 Geimredh, 36 y.r. 44 Samradh, 22 y.r. 56 Foghamhar, 24 y.r. 30 Earrach, 18 y.r.  
Dec 29th, 1963 July 30, 1988 Nov 1, 1966 Jan 1, 1964 June 2, 1977



**Figure 20 Ancient Druids waited in caves for the first light of the year to shine through the entrance. Sometimes they got a bit bored.**

## The Druid Seasons of the Year

This section written by Isaac Bonewits and Robert Larson for DC(E) contains lots of trivia about the origins of these ancient festivals. As such, this information could be useful for everyone in the Reform and can be useful.-MS The Druid year is divided into four seasons, marked by the four Major High Days of Samhain, Oimeic, Beltane and Lughnasadh (see below).

Samhain begins the season of Geimredh (gee-ru), in Modern Irish an Geimredh (uN gee-ru); which is Winter, running from roughly the beginning of November till the end of January.

Oimeic begins the season of Earrach (u-RoCH), now an tEarrach (uN tu-RoCH); which is Spring, running roughly from the beginning of February till the end of April. Together, these two seasons constitute “the Winter Half of the Year”, otherwise known as “the Season of Sleep”.

Beltane begins the season of Samradh (S,u-Ru), now an Samhradh (un S,u-Ru); which is Summer, running from roughly the beginning of May till the end of July.

Lughnasadh begins the season of Foghamhar (FÙr), now an Fomhar (uN FÙR); which is fall or autumn, running from roughly the beginning of August till the end of October. Together, these two seasons constitute “the Summer Half of the Year” or “the Season of Life”.

## The Major and Minor High Days

There are four Major High Days (Samhain, Oimeic, Beltane & Lughnasadh) and four Minor High Days (Winter Solstice or “Midwinter”, Spring Equinox, Summer Solstice or “Midsummer”, and Fall Equinox) in the Druid year. While the Minor High Days are easy to obtain from any good astrological ephemeris or almanac, the methods for calculation of the Major High Days will vary from Grove to Grove and branch to branch of the Reform.

The most common practice for the calculation of Samhain, Oimeic, Beltane and Lughnasadh is to use the civil calendar days or eves of November 1st, February 1st, May 1st, and August 1st, respectively. Another way is to use the weekend closest to these dates. Still others use the sixth day after the new or full moon closest to each of these dates. Astrologically oriented Druids use the days upon which the Sun enters 15 degrees of each of the “Fixed Signs” of the Zodiac to wit: Eagle Point- 15 deg Scorpio, Man or Angel Point – 15 deg Aquarius, Ox Point – 15 deg Taurus and Lion Point – 15 deg Leo.

The calendar used by the Berkeley Grove of the NRDNA, as well as the SDNA and the HDNA, is that designed by Adr. Robert Larson. In this calendar the Major High Days are calculated as those days upon which the Sun hits 16 deg 18 min. inclination North or South of the Celestial Equator. This makes them come exactly half way between the Solstices and Equinoxes.

We will now, turn to some details about the Major and Minor High Days celebrated by New Reformed Druids.

**Samhain** (SÙ-un), known in Modern Irish as L· Samhna (Laa SÙu-Nu), in Welsh as Nos Galen-graef (that is the night of the Winter Calends), in Manx as Laa Houney (Hollantide Day), Sain or Souney; is, of course, the eve of “All Saint’s Day”, All Hallow’s Evening or Halloween. Among other things, it is the beginning of the Winter Half of the Year (the seasons of Geimredh & Earrach) and is known as “the Day Between Years.” The day before Samhain is the last day of the old year and the day after Samhain is the first day of the new year (though for clarity’s sake, most New Reformed Druids assign each Samhain to the year following it. Being a day “between years,” it is considered a very magical night, when the dead walk among the living and the veils between past, present and future may be lifted in prophecy and divination.

Samhain basically means “summer’s end” and many important mythological events occurred on that day. It was on a Samhain that the Nemedians captured the terrible Tower of Glass built by the evil Fomorians; that the Tuatha De Danann later defeated the Fomorians once and for all; that Pwyll won his wife Rhiannon from Gwawl; and that many other events of a dramatic or prophetic nature occurred (see Later Chronicles, Chapter 5, Verses 11-14). Many of these events had to do with the temporary victory of the forces of the darkness over those of light, signaling the beginning of the cold and dark half of the year.

The **Winter Solstice** is a Minor High Day, usually occurring around December 21st or so of the civil calendar. Also known as Yule and Midwinter, this is a day sacred to Sun Gods, Thunder Gods and Fire Gods. Large fires were built up outdoors and a Yule Log lit indoors, in order to rekindle the dying Sun and help it to return brightly to the Northern skies. Burnt logs and ashes from Midwinter fires were kept as a talisman against lightning and house

fires. It was also a custom in many parts of Paleopagan Europe to decorate live evergreen trees in honour of the Gods (cutting down a tree to bring indoors is a blasphemous desecration of the original concept). This is considered, along with Midsummer, the best day of the year to cut mistletoe.

Among some Paleopagans, a date on or near this (such as December 25th) was celebrated as the Birthday of the Sun God, frequently from the womb of a virgin or unmarried girl (who was sometimes also the Mother Goddess).

**Oimele** (i-melc), is known in Modern Irish as L· na FÈile Brìde (Laa Nu fÈ-li bree-di), in Manx as Laa'n Arragh (Day of Spring), and as Imbolc, Candlemas and Lady Day in English. L· na FÈile Brìde means the day of the festival of "Saint Bridget." Brighid, Bride or Bridget is yet another Pagan deity turned by the Christians into a "saint," in order to co-opt Her worship. This goddess was a triple-aspected deity of Poetry/Divination (considered the same thing), Healing and Smithcraft, whose followers kept an eternal flame burning in Her honour.

By analogy with the Gaelic names of the other High Days, we may assume that the holiday was originally called L· hOimele (Laa Hi-melc). It is the festival of the lactation of the ewes. In Paleopagan days (and, indeed, until the recent past) the sheep was a very important animal, providing both food and clothing. The occasion of the birth of lambs (not to mention kids and calves) was a cause for rejoicing and a sign of life in the "dead" world of a Northern winter.

The name "Candlemas" is a Christian term for a holiday occurring February 1st or 2nd. This supposedly is in honour of a "Saint Blaise" and has no official connection with "Saint" Bridget and Her cult of fire, nor with the fact that this day was one of the four major fire festivals of Paleopagan cultures throughout Western and Northern Europe. Of course they don't mention a certain Slavic god named Vlais, Who was the Patron of cattle, wealth and war, and Who was worshipped with fire. La hOimele begins the spring season of Earrach. It is also the day before St. Groundhog's Day.

The **Spring Equinox**, although sometimes known as the Festival of the Trees, is better known as the feast of (the Fertility Goddess) Eostara, or "Easter". It is a celebration of the returning of life to the Earth. Rabbits, eggs and children are sacred at this feast and Pagans in need of fertility talismans now color hollow eggs and pass them through the ceremonial fires (quickly) to take home and hang over their beds and in their barns. A fascinating source of almost forgotten Paleopagan symbols can be found by examining carefully the fantastically decorated eggs produced by folk artists from Europe (especially Eastern Europe and Russia), Mexico and South America.

A Minor High Day, in usually takes place around March 21st or so. On the night before, some Hasidic Druids stayed up until dawn, reading meditations about trees, eating the fruits of various trees and singing hymns about trees. Among many Paleopagan cultures in Southern Europe, the Spring Equinox was the date of the New Year (instead of Samhain, as it is among the Celts) and indeed, many Druids refer to this holiday as "the New Year for Trees". Adding a bit to the confusion is the fact that some Neopagan groups call this holiday "Lady Day".

**Beltane** (bauL-Ti-Ni, or bauL-Hi-Ni), known in Modern Irish as L· Beltane (Laa bauL-Hi-ni, or Laa baul-Ti-ni), in Welsh as Galan-Mai (calends of May), in Scottish Gaelic as Baltiunn, and in Manx as Shenn da Boaddyn, La Boaldyn, or Laa'n Tourey (Day of Summer); is, of course, the day we know in English as May Day. It is also called by a variety of other names, such as Roodmas, Summer Day, Walpurgistag, St. Pierre's Day, Red Square Day, etc.

It is the beginning of the Summer Half of the Year (the seasons of Samradh & Foghamhar) and is a festival of unalloyed joy.

A very large number of important mythological events are connected with this day. It was on a Beltane that Partholon and his followers, the first inhabitants and partial creators of Ireland, landed on that isle. Three hundred years later, on the same day, they returned to the Other World. It was on a Beltane that the Tuatha De Danann and their people invaded Ireland. It was on a May Eve that Pryderi, the missing son of Rhiannon and Pwyll (Rulers of the Welsh Otherworld) was lost by them and later (on another May Eve) was found by Teirnyon Twryf Vliant (and eventually restored to Them). On every first day of May "till the day of doom," Gwyn-son-of-Nudd fights with Gwyrthur-son-of-Greidawl, for the hand of Ludd's (Lugh's) fair daughter, Creudylad. Most of these events, again, as all over Europe, have to do with stories of the forces of light defeating the forces of darkness. Why did you think the Marxists chose May Day as their international Holiday? And can you guess why Adam Weishaupt chose Walpurgistag as the day to announce the founding of the Bavarian Illuminati, and why the date at which the forces of evil later tried to Imannetize the Eschaton?

The **Summer Solstice** is a Minor High Day, usually occurring around June 21st or so. Also known as St. John's Day and Midsummer (and, confusingly enough, by at least one Neo-Pagan group, as Beltane!), it shares mythical elements with both Beltane and Lughnasadh. Like both, it is a feast celebrating the glory of summer and the peak of the Sun God's power. But in many systems of belief, it is the day of the biggest battle of the year between the Dark Sun God and the Lugh Sun God (or between the evil one and the good one), Who are usually brothers or otherwise intimately related. Midsummer is a peak from which the Sun can only fall, for it is the day on which the hours of light slowly begin to shorten.

In those areas where it is safe to do so, Neopagans frequently will light cartwheels of kindling and roll them down from the tops of high hills, in order to symbolize the falling of the Sun God.

**Lughnasadh** (Loo-Nu-Su) is known in Modern Irish as L· L'nasa (Laa Loo-Nu-Su), in Welsh as Gwyl Awst (August Feast), as Lla Lluanys or Laa'n Ouyr (Day of the Harvest Season) in Manx and as Lammas, Apple Day and Harvest Home in English. It is the anniversary of the funeral games given by Lugh, the God of All Crafts, in honour of his Father. Essentially a harvest festival, this signals the beginning of the harvest season and the ripening of the apples (as well as other fruits and vegetables). Enormous quantities of applejack, hard cider, mead and other alcoholic beverages are consumed at this time (it's almost a duty!) by all enthusiastic Neopagans. Hasidic Druids may prefer to drink ten-day-old slivovitz (plum brandy) at this time, but it's their stomach lining!

This holiday is a day of mixed joy and woe (Irish wakes are an old tradition), for it is by now obvious that the days are getting shorter. Stories of the battles between Lugh and Balor (the good Sun-Fire God and the bad one) are retold, as the autumn quarter of Foghamhar begins.

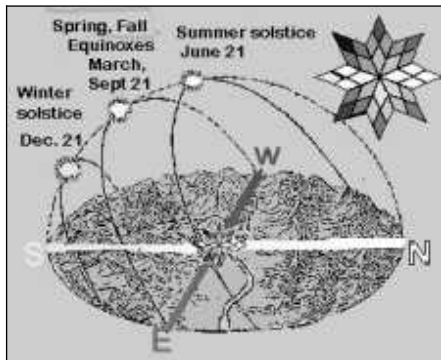
The last big holiday of the year, the **Fall Equinox** (sometimes called Michaelmas and the Feast of the Hunters) is a Minor High Day occurring somewhere around September 21st or so. This is a Thanksgiving feast and signals the beginning of the Hunting Season (for deer and other large game) in many parts of Europe and North America. Thus, it is dedicated to the Hunting and Fishing Gods and the Gods of Plenty, in thankfulness for benefits received and hoped for. Outdoor picnics in the woods are a popular Druid tradition in those areas where the weather is still good at this

time of year. Hunting magic may be minimized by those Groves living in areas where game is a little dear.

### Other Important Days:

Various branches of the Reform may add more holidays and celebrations in honour of different gods and goddesses to the above list. Those for the Schismatic Druids of North America will be found in the SDNA Calendars.

[Also take a look at the Green Book 7 for more essays and information on the various seasons.]



**Figure 21 Predicting an equinox event on the horizon is a cheap Druid trick to impress your grove, and can be done just by paying attention for a year. This livens up the routine on an otherwise fuzzy festival.**

## The Holidays of the Schismatic Druids of North America

By Isaac Bonewits & HDNA Grove, 1976

The following were some of the additional Holy Days and Feast, recommended for celebration by members of the Schismatic Druids of North America, the Hasidic Druids of North America and various affiliated and nonaffiliated Neopagan groups and individuals.

Although it is best to celebrate each holiday on the date(s) given, they are usually observed on whatever nearby date happens to be convenient. Notes on additional customs associated with the Major and Minor High Days will be found in the Tally of the Years and elsewhere in the Druid Chronicles.

- November 10-11: Festival of Thanksgiving to the Gods of Harvest, Hunting, Fishing and Plenty. Have an absolutely gigantic feast. This festival is often postponed until the fourth Thursday of the month.
- November 22: Feast of Oberon and the Divine Musicians. Have the biggest Bardic Revel you can manage. Do something nice for the Bards in the Grove.
- November 30: Feast of the Gods of the Crossroads; dedicated to the deities Who guard the paths between the living and the dead, and between this world and all others. Time to consider your attitudes about Death, to study shamanism and to practice teleportation and apotation.
- December 8-9: Festival of the Conception of the Earth-Mother. Meditate upon the immaculate conception of Life from the primeval seas, billions of years ago. Make a statue of the Mother out of clay or rock.
- December 13: Feast of Belisama, Goddess of Light, Wisdom and at least one River in Britain. A young woman with a crown of candles in her hair should wake the members of your household, carrying a tray full of coffee and various munchies.
- December 21-22: Festival of Taranis, God of Fire, Lightning & Thunder. Burn a Winter Solstice need-fire and have a feast (on goat meat if possible), retell stories of Taranis, Thor, Donner and other related Gods.
- December 25-27: Festival of the Birth of the Sun. Gifts should be exchanged and many parties held.
- December 28: Feast of the Divine Children. In honour of all the Gods of Youth, special events should be held for all the girls and boys in your Grove.
- December 29-31: Winter Festival of Wine and Pleasure. It is obligatory to become intoxicated and sexually sated, so hold the biggest feast and orgy you can manage.
- January 6: Feast of Sirona, the Goddess of Rivers. Rivers in your vicinity should be blessed by your local Archdruid and hymns of praise to various river deities sung. Go fishing.
- January 24-26: Festival of Braciaca, God of Brewing, Intoxication and Altered States of Consciousness. It is obligatory to become intoxicated.
- February 14-21: Festival of Love, dedicated to Danu and Cernunnos, as well as other deities of Fertility. It is obligatory to make love.
- March 1: Feast of Merddyn, Patron of Wizards. Do something magical. Read an Arthurian legend.
- March 3: Feast of Rhiannon, Goddess of Horses, Patron of Mothers and Queen of the Welsh Otherworld.
- March 11: Feast of Angus Og, Warrior. Practice using your ritual weapons. Learn to sword fight.

- March 17: Feast of the Druid Amhairghin. Celebrate Irish Paganism.
- March 21-25: Spring Festival of Wine and Pleasure. Hold a feast and orgy and invite all your friends. The 25th is also the Feast of Young Mothers, so do a good deed for the ones you know.
- April 1: Feast of the Spring Fool. Do something silly just because it feels good. Or take the day off and go fishing. Or sit on a hill and herd clouds.
- April 5: Feast of Alexander Nevsky, Warrior. Nevsky was a Slavic Viking who led a Pagan army into battle on April 5, 1242 c.e. against the Christian Teutonic Knights, luring them out onto the thin ice of Lake Chud (near Pskov). His victory over them marks one of the very few clear-cut victories of a Pagan people against the forces of Christian imperialism (even if the Russian Orthodox Church did later turn him into a "Saint"). This is a day on which to practice pride in being Pagan, and on which to contemplate our hope for total freedom someday.
- April 23: Feast of Oghma, the God Who Binds. He is a mighty Warrior and the Inventor of Ogham Writing. Spend the day learning and practicing this alphabet. Or go out net fishing.
- May 1: Feast of the Illuminati. Anniversary of the public founding of the Bavarian Illuminati. Investigate a conspiracy, or start one.
- May 18: Feast of Cernunnos, the Horned God of Lust and Hunting. Celebrate British Paganism. Go hunting. If you can't go hunting, go lusting. On this day, a man should be granted any sexual desire he may express. [If it were only that easy. — Ed]
- May 24: Feast of the Dark Goddess. Celebration of the Goddesses Babh, Morrigan, Macha and other Demon Killers. This is based on the Romany feast for their patron Goddess, the Black Kali from India. Meditate upon the beauty of an angry woman.
- May 25: Feast of the Two Ladies. Celebration of the other two aspects of the Triple Goddess, those of the Virgin/Harlot and of the Mother (the third aspect being that of the Old Woman). Meditate upon your concepts of womanhood and why you have them.
- June 13: Feast of Epona, Goddess of Horses. Go horseback riding and spend the day appreciating our equine friends. Buy a kid a horse book.
- June 18-22: Festival of the Bards. Hold a big Bardic Revel, with as much singing and dancing as possible. It is also a traditional time for Puberty Rites, so adolescents who are ready and willing should be initiated.
- July 2: Feast of Expectant Mothers: Meditate upon the mysteries of conception and pregnancy. Bring some pickle and ice-cream to a friend.
- July 22-24: Summer Festival of Wine and Pleasure. Time to hold an outdoor feast and orgy.
- August 6: Feast of Lugh, the Shining One. Meditate upon the power of the Sun Gods.
- August 15: Feast of Our Lady Queen of the Heavens. Celebration of the Star/Moon/Mother Goddess. Take a High Priestess out to dinner and give her the best night you can.
- August 23-25: Festival of the Heroes. Dedicated to all those brave Pagan warriors who fell before the invading Christian armies. Meditate upon the values of the honorable warrior.
- September 8: Feast of the Birth of the Mother. Celebrating the birthday of the physical incarnation of the Goddess. Give a birthday celebration for every mother in your Grove.
- September 26: Feast of the Druid Taliesin. Spend the day reading or telling his stories. Celebrate Welsh Paganism. Compose a poem.
- September 27-28: Festival of the Demon Slayers. Now that the days are really starting to get short, it is good to meditate upon the fact that not all Gods of Darkness are Evil. This festival is to honour both the Light Gods and the Dark Gods who slay Demons, Fomorians, Giants and other enemies of Life.
- October 1: Feast of Chwerthin, "the laughing one." Tell jokes, make outrageous puns, pontificate at ridiculous length, while being as amorous as possible.
- October 2: Feast of the Guardian Spirits. Give love, respect and honour to your own Guardians.
- October 7-9: Autumn Festival of Wine and Pleasure. Hold a mid-harvest feast and get as intoxicated as you can manage. Then hold a good enough orgy to keep you warm through the next few months.
- October 12: Feast of the Autumn Fool. Play practical jokes upon those who actually enjoy them. Talk pompously all day, make fun of ascetic occultists, make a Great Beast out of yourself.
- October 24: Feast of the Inhabitants of the Air. Meditate upon and try to communicate with Nature Spirits. Attempt intimate relations on the Astral.
- November 2: Feast of the Ancestors. Spend the day reading and thinking about your ancestors. Light a candle or two for them. Invite them to the Samhain feasting to take place next week.

You, of course, are welcome to create your own holidays.

# REFLECTIONS ON CELTIC TIME RECKONING

or "Running Around in Cycles"  
DC V1 Iss 4 Aug. 1978  
By Robert Larson, 1978

*This article is by Ard. Robert Larson, Archdruid of the clanna Brochecta Grove, and was originally printed in the Clann's quarterly publication "An Poc Uaine," in the Earrach 1978 issue. Subscriptions to this journal are \$4.00-per year and can be sent to: Cody Grundy, Ri Clanna Brochecta, 820 Circle Court, South San Francisco, CA 94080.*

## I. The basics of Celtic time

There are four logical times to begin the most basic time cycle, the day: midday, midnight, sunrise, and sunset. The use of either of the first two results in an equal day, but they are much more difficult to observe, especially midnight. As a result, early peoples began their days with either sunrise or sunset. The Celts chose sunset, and, instead of days, calculated time in nights, as is attested to by linguistic evidence. This selection also corresponds to the druidic tenet which was simplified by Caesar and Pliny to "the night has precedence over the day." Philosophically, starting the day at sunset makes the statement that things begin in darkness and cold and develop to brightness and warmth--the life from death theme which is recurrent in Celtic myth, and is thus reflective of pagan Celtic religious belief. (The choice of sunrise to begin the day seems to me to make the opposite, and obvious, statement that death comes after life; which is more in keeping with the religious beliefs of the peoples of the Mediterranean and Near Eastern areas, from whom we get our modern method of time reckoning.)

Then, again, perhaps the proto-Celts lived in an area with frequent morning fog, making the choice of sunset natural. However, the choice of sunset does correspond to the other cycle beginnings of Celtic time reckoning, which are symbolic.

The day is divided naturally into halves, light and dark. Though proof is lacking, it is certain that the Celts further divided the day into fore-midnight, after-midnight, forenoon, and afternoon; and I believe it likely that they halved these divisions.

The Celtic year began at Samhain, which was counted as a day between years. The year was divided into quarters by the four holy days of Samhain, Imbolg, Beltane, and Lughnasadh. The dates normally given for these days are, respectively, November 1, February 1, May 1, and August 1 -- the days of the often thinly-Christianized holidays of Hallowe'en/All Souls', Candlemas/St. Bridget's Day/ St. Groundhog's Day, May Day, and Lammas. As I shall explain later, these dates are only approximate, but they'll do for now.

Though Lughnasadh and Imbolg were holy days, Samhain and Beltane, the most important days of the year, effectively divided the year in two. Samhain, whose name means "summer's end", was the beginning of the winter half of the year, called geimredh. Geimredh was the dark and cold half of the year, corresponding to the night half of the day. During geimredh, the sidhe and other malevolent beings were believed to be most active, and life was at its lowest ebb. On the other hand, it was also the time of reforming and resurrection. During geimredh, the old sun reached its nadir and was reborn, the familiar new-sun-god-replacing-old-sun-god theme found in various forms in Celtic myth. Though the last vestiges of old life disappeared under the snows

during geimredh, in its second half new life appeared, to reach full vigor at Beltane.

Beltane means the "fires of Beal", who was presumably a Celtic solar/sky deity. Another name for Beltane, given on the Coligny calendar, is Giamon, which in Irish would be geimh-fhuin, or "winter's end". Under either name, Beltane marked the beginning of samhradh, the bright and warm half of the year, during which the forces of life reached their apex, and the solar deity attained his full manhood. However, the sun god also began to deteriorate during Samhradh after his solstice battle (the combat of gods myth); and the forces of life, after coming to fruition, slowly gave way as the year decayed to Samhain.

The choice of Samhain and Beltane as the turning points of the year was dictated by both druidic belief and the Celtic economic system. Religiously, the "precedence of dark over light" dogma seen in the day is repeated in the division and beginning point of the year. Economically, Beltane and Samhain are the times of transhumance, the moving of the herds from winter to summer pasture, and vice versa. By Beltane the ground has firmed up enough from the spring thaw to safely drive the livestock to their mountain pastures, and there is enough growth at the higher altitude to support them. Transhumance is a great social occasion among pastoral peoples, as they gather together for the drive. Inevitably, it became an occasion for religious ritual. At Beltane the cattle were blessed by driving them between two huge bonfires (probably sacrificial to ensure a good herding and growing season). By the way, a good smoky fire is an excellent method for killing livestock parasites. Judging by peasant May Day practices throughout the British Isles, it was also a time of much merry-making and promiscuity. These customs reflect the symbolic nature of Beltane as the time of mating between the sky god and the earth goddess which will bring forth the next year's life during the latter half of geimredh, corresponding closely with (and probably inspired by) the nine-month human gestation period. This symbolic connection is, of course, reinforced by the fact that this time of year is also the mating period for many animals, making Beltane an appropriate time for phallus-related worship (such as may-poles).

At Samhain, the tribe would again be together after driving the livestock back to the winter pasture in the sheltered valley. Again, ritual inevitably arose about the occasion. With winter come, prayers and sacrifices to protect the tribe and livestock from the depredations of the evil spirits of the dark half of the year were necessary. As the time of change, it was also a time for attempting to divine what lay in store for the tribe during the coming year. Many of our Halloween games probably started as divinatory practices, even if the Gaulish druids did have a weakness for entrails. Even the dressing up in frightening costumes for Hallowe'en probably had its beginnings in Samhain ceremonies to try to scare or, at least, confuse the spirits, which were believed to be especially active during this night. (Well, after all, if you'd been cooped up in a sidhe hill for six months, you'd want to raise a little hell, too.) The Celtic deity most closely associated with Samhain was the Dagda in his character of god of the otherworld and rebirth, who was able to take the dead, immerse them in his cauldron, and bring them forth alive.

Geimredh was divided into halves by Imbolg, which may mean "swelling belly", and which began the sub-season of Earrach, "spring". Around Imbolc-tide many animals give birth, and a celebration of this increase was natural. Its association with St. Brigid, the euhemerized goddess Brighid, leads me to believe that it was also a celebration of the hearth, home, and culture, but this is admittedly conjecture. Of actual Imbolg ritual we know nothing. Symbolically, the new life conceived at Beltane is brought forth at Imbolg.

Samradh was sub-divided by the festival of Lughnasadh a name which means the "games of Lugh" and which begins the sub-season of Fomhar, "harvest". Lugh was a god of many attributes and myriad realms of power. Though probably originally a solar deity, Lugh was also a warrior, an artist and poet, and a craftsman, among other capabilities, and in Gaul was the main god of commerce. It is thus appropriate that his name be given to Lughnasadh, the time of the great fairs, at which competitions were held in athletics, crafts, and the arts, legal cases were decided, livestock bought and sold, etc.--a necessary periodic time of truce in inter-tribal relationships, an affirmation of cultural identity, and an opportunity for open and free trade among craftsmen and herders. Another name for Lughnasadh is Bron Troghain, a difficult name to define, but which has to do with parturition and giving birth. At this time of year, the harvest begins to come in and trees are bearing fruit. The ceremonies of Lughnasadh were thus probably those of thanks to the gods for a bountiful year, or sacrifices to increase the harvest if the crop looked small.

The Celts also celebrated the solstices. At the summer solstice, ceremonies involved the kindling of large wooden (wicker?) wheels, which were then rolled downhill to symbolize the coming decline of the sun after the solstice. Conversely, at the winter solstice huge fires were lighted to symbolize the rebirth of the sun and its coming return. Evergreens and, on the continent and in England, the mistletoe were given special veneration due to their retaining their life during the time of death. In Ireland the yew supplanted the mistletoe and in Scotland, the rowan. Though we have no direct evidence that the Celts celebrated the equinoxes, I am sure that they did, if only from a desire for neatness in their year. Also, the equinoxes are significant solar times, marking the return and departure of the sun—the god's adolescence and old age.

The Celtic year, then, was divided into eight parts by the holy days and the solstices and equinoxes. It may be best to look upon it as two overlapping years, one having to do with the sun/sky god and the other, the earth goddess. Samhain was the time of dying for the Earth; Imbolg, its rebirth; Beltane, its flowering; and Lughnasadh, its fruition. The winter solstice was the time of death and rebirth for the sun; the vernal equinox, its puberty; the summer solstice, full maturity; and the autumnal equinox, the onset of its old age.

Taking the cycles together, however, we see that the seasons reflect not only the status of the earth-mother, but also the status of the sun god. The period Samhain-Imbolg corresponds with the weakest period of the sun god – extreme age and infancy. The period Imbolg-Beltane corresponds with his childhood and adolescence; Beltane-Lughnasadh with his young manhood and early middle age; and Lughnasadh-Samhain with his late middle age and old age.

The two cycles are thus bound into a syncretic whole. The agent of this binding is the moon. In its monthly period the moon reflects the yearly cycles of the earth and the sun. Because the lunation period closely approximates the female cycle, the moon was most likely personified as a goddess. Now, goddesses are normally connected with either the earth or with water in Celtic mythology. The moon goddess is thus connected to the earth by gender, and this connection is reinforced by the moon's obvious tidal effects. Because of the moon's light-giving capability and its obvious solar connection, the moon goddess was probably thought of as the consort of the sun god. The moon is thus symbolically connected to both the sun and the earth. The Celts used the true lunar month. In keeping with the division of the year and the day, the moon's period was divided into dark and light halves determined naturally by the moon's phases; the dark half consisting of the first and last quarters and the bright half, the second and third

quarters. These halves were subdivided by the new and full moons, reflecting the four-fold division of the solar and earth cycles and reinforcing the symbolism.

Finally, I would like to note that many sources have the druids celebrating only one of the holy days per year. I believe this to mean a large scale celebration, with the other holy days having lesser celebrations, probably intra-tribal rather than inter-tribal. The celebration cycle ran retrograde through the holy days thusly: Samhain, Lughnasadh, Beltane, Imbolg. This cycle gives an actual periodicity of three years, which corresponds to the frequency of the great games at Tailltiu; so this ritual cycle is very likely to be basically correct. As we shall see, this ritual cycle was the heart of the Celtic method for calculating time spans of more than a year.

## REFLECTIONS ON CELTIC TIME RECKONING cont.:

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By Robert Larson, 1978

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### II. Achieving an accurate calendar

Nowadays we take the Calendar pretty much for granted. The Roman calendar we use is now quite accurate. In the eighteenth century, however, a gross adjustment of about two weeks had to be made in the calendar to rectify accumulated error. The calendar had gained nearly two weeks over the sun. The method for insertion of leap days now used (the insertion of an extra day in every year evenly divisible by four; except the century marks, when the year must be evenly divisible by 400) assures an almost exact accuracy. But it took a long time to arrive at this method of interpolation.

To achieve an accurate calendar, two things are necessary: the need for a calendar and a goodly period of accurate observation. The need for a calendar automatically arises when a people in a temperate climatic zone advances beyond hunting and gathering society. In an agricultural society, accurate timing of planting and harvesting is a necessity. While a calendar may seem to be less necessary in a mainly pastoral society such as that of the Celts, the times of transhumance must be predictable in order for the tribe to gather the herds. If the herds are moved too early in the spring, there may well be too little growth in the hills to support them; if they're moved too late, valuable growing time and the mountain grasses are wasted. If the herds are moved too early in the fall, grasses are wasted again and the harvest is interfered with; if too late, the herds may suffer from the onset of winter storms. In a pastoral society, moving the herds at the wrong time can seriously threaten the tribe's survival. Some sort of calendar is obviously necessary to avoid wastage of time, grass, livestock, and, ultimately, the tribe.

Being a northern people, the Celts had an advantage in calculation over more southerly peoples, for the difference in the lengths of the light and dark periods of the day is greater in the North. Determination of the solstices and, with them, calculation of the length of the solar year is thus made fairly simple. Equinoxes are also more easily determined, and their determination is more accurate than that of the solstices, because the sun's declination is

changing more rapidly at equinox than at solstice. In fact, the Celts might well have been saved the trouble of these calculations (and many of the others, too).

A definitely Celtic culture first arose in that crucible of early northern Europeans, southern Germany and Central Europe. In earlier times successive prehistoric cultures had sprung from this area and spread in much the same directions as the Celts did later. One of these pre- (or perhaps proto-) Celtic peoples built Stonehenge. Gerald Hawkins has convincingly shown that Stonehenge incorporates incredible astronomical knowledge. The Celts might well have taken over, or inherited, their entire calendric system from their predecessors. Judging by later Celtic practice, they would not have evicted the peoples they found in their conquered lands, but would only have made them pay tribute to their new overlords. If this be the case, it raises interesting questions about Celtic religion. Considering the correlation of Celtic myth and Druidic philosophy with the calendar, if the Celts co-opted the calendar, much of their religion must also have come from these peoples. The druidic cult would thus be much older than the rest of Celtic culture, and Celtic Myth would reflect not so much early Iron Age beliefs as Bronze Age and Neolithic beliefs, the specifically Celtic elements being a later overlay. Many of the more primitive elements of Celtic religion, such as animism, would be explained by such circumstances.

Be that as it may, the Celts had an accurate count of the solar year early in their history. While the equinoxes are close enough to planting and reaping seasons to do for an agricultural people, a pastoral people follows different rhythms. The most propitious times for transhumance do not fall on significant sun days, but about midway between the equinoxes and solstices. At these midpoints, the sun is at the same angle of declination in the sky. The sun's midpoints can thus be determined by observation and the days of Samhain, Imbolg, Beltane, and Lughnasadh set in place. This angle of declination is 16.3', which again corresponds with certain megalithic alignments, again showing the antiquity of at least the basic Celtic calendar. This declination gives the following dates for the holy days: Samhain, November 7; Imbolg, February 4; Beltane, May 5; and Lughnasadh August 7.

Now, the phases of the sun are not equal, due to the slight eccentricity of the earth's orbit causing it to move faster in the winter when it is closer to the sun. Even as using the solstices and equinoxes yields unequal seasons, so does the use of the midpoints. The period from Samhain to Imbolg is about 89 days, whereas the period from Beltane to Lughnasadh is about 94 days, while the other quarters are around 91 days each. I believe it likely that the druids equalized these intervals, both from a sense of neatness and from a desire to better reflect the equal phases of the moon and maintain their religious symbolism. They most likely started at Samhain, the time of regeneration they probably considered immutable. This would yield the following normal dates for the holy days: Samhain, November 7; Imbolg, February 6; Beltane, May 8; and Lughnasadh, August 8. Though this adjustment is not strictly necessary, it makes the calendar work more smoothly and thus would be more convenient for the average Celt or for places where solar observation was difficult and unreliable due to weather. It also reflects druidic numerology, for the days set in this manner are three lunar months and three days apart, give or take a day.

So we come to the moon. The inclusion of the moon in the calendar was inevitable, not only on religious, but also on practical grounds. In practical terms, the moon is a counting device, enabling the observer to easily count large numbers of days and fix time spans with great accuracy. The introduction of the moon into a solar calendar creates great difficulties due to the incompatibility of lunar and solar movements. (The solar year is 365.242 days,

whereas twelve lunar periods are 354.36 days.) The Celtic method of reconciliation between these two cycles is in full agreement with druidic precept and ritual and correlates with the peculiar nine-month cycle of celebration.

To be Continued:

## Reflections on Celtic Time Reckoning

Continued

Vol 2 Iss 1 Nov. 1978

By Robert Larson, 1978

*This article, begun two issues ago, is by Robert Larson, Archdruid of the Clanna Brocheta Grove of the ODN. An earlier version of this issue's section was published in the Clann's journal, "An Poc Uaine." It has been completely rewritten, since he now thinks he has "cracked the code" of the ancient Celtic calendrical system once and for all. Although the mathematical explanations seem complex, the system itself is easy to remember and use – a tribute to the brilliance of the "barbaric" Celtic peoples.*

### III. The Coligny Calendar

The Coligny calendar is a bronze tablet (1.5m x 1m) uncovered at the turn of this century in Coligny, France. Though it is broken and is missing pieces, it is still an important clue to Celtic time reckoning and a confirmation of what was believed on the topic from Greco-Roman sources. However, since it seems to date from the time of Augustus after Gaul had been more or less Romanized, it could well be decadent. Its complex permutations would seem to increase its chances of decadence, as does the fact that it is inscribed in defiance of what is said to have been a firm Druidic custom of non-literacy. However, there is evidence that the Celts of Central Europe did possess calendrical monuments and devices.

The months of the Coligny calendar begin with the "last" quarter of the moon and are subdivided into dark and light halves. The months are of two types, "complete" and "incomplete," consisting of 30 and 29 days respectively. With some variation and permutation these two types of months alternate through the year, beginning with the "complete" month of "SAMON" (Samhain). This kind of system is a common and quite accurate approximation of two lunar cycles, being only some 132' hours short of exactitude. The calendar begins with Samhain on the 30th day of its month, followed by a 30 day intercalary period. The lunar year consists of 12 months. After 2 1/2 years, or 30 months, another 30 day intercalary period is inserted at Beltane. The calendar as a whole consists of 64 months, including two intercalary periods.

This calendar keeps accurate track of both sun and moon and is also quite practical. As Neven Hanaff points out in Carn (a Pan-celtic cultural journal), the day can be fixed by observation. The season is, of course, fixed by the state of the vegetation. The month can then be fixed by observation of the sun's position, and the day by moon phase. But it is not a complete calendar, since true calibration of sun and moon over such a short interval is impossible.

The shortest whole number ratio of solar years to lunar months is the "metonic cycle" of 19 years = 235 months. This cycle was the basis of the Babylonian and Jewish calendars and was well known in the Mediterranean world. Herodotus and Diodorus both appear to mention this cycle in passing, in their descriptions of



what seems to be Stonehenge, in their accounts of the inhabitants of "Hyperborea" and Britain (though whether the people described were Celts or pre-celtic is debatable). Pliny, however, does not mention this cycle. Instead, he mentions a Druidic "long count" of 30 years-- a month of years. We shall see later that this 30 year interval is indeed part of a disguised metonic cycle.

In calculating a calendar, the method used should be as direct and accurate as possible. In an oral system of teaching, such as was used by the Celts, the method of calculation must be kept simple for ease of memorization and recall. Insofar as is possible, complex systems are formularized. Ideally the calendar will then work automatically.

If we regularize the spacing of the holy days as suggested last issue, they will be about 3 months and 3 days apart. But the difference between the solar year and 12 lunar months is only about 11 (10.8748) days. If we add 3 days to the date of each holy day, the calendar will gain a day over the sun. Therefore the date increase must have been only 2 days for one high-day interval. Because the interval between Samhain and Imbolc as determined by the sun is the shortest of the year, I suggest that the addition formula was 2-3-3-3. Let's explore the consequences of applying this formula.

Starting out with Samhain occurring on the 30th of its month, we insert an intercalary month and initiate the addition (S = Samhain, I = Imbolg, B = Beltane, L = Lughnasadh). The date is in the lower row.

S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L
0/30	2	5	8	11	13	16	19	22	24	27	30

Lughnasadh (Lughnasadh) falls on the 30th of its month, so an intercalary period must be inserted after it, lest Samhain fall out of its own month.

However, if we merely alternate 30 and 29 day months, Lughnasadh's month has only 29 days. Either we must add a day to this month or insert the intercalary period before Lughnasadh. But if the latter is done, Lughnasadh will fall out of its month. To make a long explanation short, I have experimented with both these methods (and many others) and the former is the more accurate. After the 30 day intercalary period ("IP") the months will restart their 29/30 alternation.

This calculation method results in a 2.75-year calendric period with a total of 1004 days, which corresponds very well with both the lunar and solar periods: 34 lunar months = 1004.0404 days; 2.75 solar years = 1004.4155 days. Another result of this method is an alteration in the number of days in each high day's month according to which high day was involved in the last intercalary month. That is, when the last IP immediately preceded or succeeded Samhain or Beltane, their months have 30 days and the months of Imbolg and Lughnasadh have 29. When the IP involved Imbolg or Lughnasadh, their months have 30 days and those of Samhain and Beltane have 29. Obviously, such alteration would supply a convenient reminder of which holy day had the last leap month and which will have the next.

If we continue our method of addition, the following dates will result:

L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B
0/3	3	5	8	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	30
0				1	4	6	9	2	5	7	

Insert another leap month.

B	L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L	S	I
0/3	3	6	8	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	30
0				1	4	7	9	2	5	8	

Insert another leap month.

I	B	L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L	S
0/3	3	6	9	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	31!
0				1	4	7	0	2	5	8	

A leap month is inserted immediately before Samhain, which falls on the first day of its (30 day) month.

This addition yields a cycle of 11 years, consisting of 136 months having a total of 4016 days. 136 lunar months = 4016.1616 days; 11 years = 4017.662 days.

The lunar count is dead on. Samhain occurs on the first of its month, the 4017th day of the calendar, losing 0.662 days to the sun. This loss is a natural result of the method of calculation which can and will be corrected before it gets to be critical.

It should be noted that a similar cycle will emerge if the actual intervals between the high days is used, but more fiddling is needed to keep the calendar co-ordinated; the formula alternates between 0-2-5-4 and 1-1-6-3, and the pattern of leap months seen above (SLBI) does not develop. I feel that these are good arguments for regularization of high day intervals.

Continuing the addition formula (with the cycle now beginning with Samhain falling on the first), we have the following:

S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L	
1	3	6	9	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	=1
				2	4	7	0	3	5	8	1	

L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B	
1	4	6	9	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	=1
				2	5	7	0	3	6	8	1	

B	L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L	S	I	
1	4	7	9	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	=1
				2	5	8	0	3	6	9	1	

I	B	L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L	S	
1	4	7	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	=2
			0	2	5	8	1	3	6	9	2	

The total period of the calendar is now 22 years = 272 months = 8032 days. The actual figures for the moon and the sun are: 272 lunar months = 8032.3232 days; 22 solar years = 8035.324 days. Samhain occurs on the second day of its month, the 8034th day of the calendar. It has thus lost a day to the sun.

This loss can be corrected in various ways. If we add 1 to the date of the leap month high day when the loss to the sun most nearly equals one day, this addition would be made after the fifth leap month of the calendar (not including the Samhain we started with), or 13.75 years in. If we then continue the addition formula, we end up with the metonic cycle of 19 years 235 months = 12 lunar years + 7 months. The actual figures are: 19 calendric years 6939 days; 19 solar years 6939.568 days; 235 lunar months = 6939.691 days.

On the other hand, if we instead add the day to the date after 22 years, we end up with a total cycle of 24.5 years = 303 months

8947 days. The actual figures for the sun and moon are, respectively, 8948.429 days and 8947.771 days.

*To be continued!*

## Reflections on Celtic Time Reckoning

Continued:  
Vol 2 Issue 2 Dec. 1978  
By Robert Larson, 1978

*This article, begun three issues ago, is by Robert Larson, Archdruid of the Clan na Brocheta Grove of the Orthodox Druids of North America.*

### III. The Dance of Time

While both of the solutions presented last issue are quite accurate, they both need a one day interpolation, a task of no great difficulty. However, there seems to be no correlation with the 30-year "long count" mentioned by Pliny. Was he mistaken? I don't believe so. One day is not that great a discrepancy, given primitive observation facilities and Northern European weather conditions. What happens if we merely continue our addition formula without correcting for sun drift?

S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L	
2	4	7	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	=2
			0	3	5	8	1	4	6	9	2	

L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B	
2	5	7	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	=2
			0	3	6	8	1	4	7	9	2	

B	L	S	I	B	L	S	I	B	L	S
2	5	8	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	30
			0	3	6	9	1	4	7	

Which is where we started. Instead of 11 years, this cycle has eight, and the final intercalendary interval of 2 1/2 years = 31 months = 915 days, completing a total calendric period of 30 years.

Well, not really total. Actually this 30-year point is a convenient place for interpolation. The actual figures are: 30 years calendric = 10955 days; 371 lunar months = 10955.853 days; and 30 years solar = 10957.26 days. To keep time with the moon, one extra day must be interpolated. The most convenient way to do this is to add a day to the month preceding the month of Samhain, thus making it a 30 day month instead of its normal (for a Beltane leap cycle) 29 days.

This addition gives us a 30 year calendar of 10956 days, correct for the moon but one day off for the sun. So we add one day to the date of Samhain, starting off the next cycle with Samhain on the first of its month. This eliminates the High Days = 30th-of-month 11 year cycle from this new greater cycle, resulting in a metonic cycle (11 years + 8 years = 19 years). We now stand at the 49-year point of the calendar: 49 years calendric = 17895 days; 606 lunar months = 17895.544 days; and 49 years solar = 17896.858 days. The moon is about day off, an amount which I don't feel justifies the interpolation of a day, especially considering that the

month of Samhain contains 30 days, gaining back.. .4694 days. Also, the observable phase of the moon would be almost identical to the exact phase.

The sun is thus left two days off from the calendar, requiring the addition of 2 days to the date of Samhain. Thus this, the last greater cycle, begins with Samhain falling on the second day of its month. This greater cycle is a short one, consisting of only 8 years, which gives us a total calendric period of 57 years= 705 months = 20818 days. The actual-figures for the sun and moon are: 57 years solar = 20818.794 days, and..705 lunar months = 20819.073 days. One day must be interpolated to justify the moon. This is added in the same way as the correction at the 30-year mark and automatically justifies the calendar with the sun. The correlation we see here should come as no surprise, for 57 year equals three metonic cycles. But why not just use three metonic cycles??

The reason, I believe, was mainly mnemonic. Using a true metonic cycle requires the addition of a day to correct for moon drift about two out of three cycles. The one cycle not requiring addition could cause confusion – especially without written records. Using the method outlined above, however, results in three distinct greater cycles: a long count, a middle count and a short count. All that need be remember is that the long and short counts require moon correction and that all the counts require sun correction (tho the sun correction of the short count happens automatically). In fact, as I shall demonstrate later, not even this really needs to be remembered!

First, however, I wish to point out some characteristics of this calendar which may not be immediately obvious [*especially to those of us who got lost in the math two issues ago! --Editor*]. One of these is that it is possible to predict the status of the moon on any High day from its date (and vice versa). In fact, the moon's phase for any day during the year is equivalent to its date. The first day of the month is the 3/4 moon; the eighth is the new moon; the 15th the 1/4 moon; and the 22nd and/or 23rd the full moon. This last uncertainty occurs because it's difficult to tell with the naked eye when the full moon actually happens, since the full disk looks about the same for about two days. Extrapolation of the moon phase for any date is thus child's play. For instance, the solstices and equinoxes fall one month and 15 days after the preceding High Day, making calculation of the date and moon phase for these critical sun days merely a matter of adding 15 to the date of the preceding High day.

A second subtlety lies in the numerological relationships between the greater cycles and the leap month cycles. The total calendric period of 57 years consists of cycles of 30, 19 and 8 years – each 11 years less than its predecessor, which is equivalent to the number of days difference between the solar and lunar years. The greater cycles contain respectively 11, 7 and 3 leap months – each four fewer than its predecessor, which is equivalent to the number of seasons (or rather, sub-seasons) in a year. This method of calculation thus not only keeps accurate track of both the lunar and solar years, but also binds them together numerologically and mnemonically.

The calendar described above is accurate and mathematically consistent, but is it Druidic? Yes, it is, and here we begin to see another subtlety of the system. First note the standard 2.75 intercalendary interval which consists of 11 seasons and which has 11 holy days. Previously I believed that the 9-month Druidic cycle of High Day celebration was connected to this interval (and the rest of the calendar) numerologically; since if the 9-month ritual cycle is restarted every leap month, it results in a 3-3-3-2 pattern of ritual interval, reflecting the addition pattern for the year. I now believe that the ritual cycle was not restarted every leap month, but rather

that an extra ritual was inserted to mark the leap month, with the ritual cycle being continued without alteration. The ritual cycle thus adds a third strand to the interlacing of the sun and moon – a ritual strand. The results are interesting:

- Year Number 1, 2. etc.
- Sun Cycle SIBL etc.
- Ritual Cycle S L I etc.
- Leap Month Cycle S L B etc.

<b>1</b>	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIBL
S** L	**B *	*I**	S** L	**B *	*I**	S** L	**B*
S***	****	***L	****	****	**B *	****	****

9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIBL
*I**	S** L	**B *	*I**	S** L	**B *	*I**	S**L
*I**	****	****	S***	****	***L	****	****

<b>17</b>	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIBL
**B *	*I**	S** L	**B *	*I**	S** L	**B *	*I**
**B *	****	****	*I**	****	****	S***	****

25	26	27	28	29	30	<b>31</b>	32
SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIBL
S** L	**B *	*I**	S** L	**B *	*I**	S** L	**B*
***L	****	****	**B *	****	****	S***	****

33	34	35	36	37	38	<b>39</b>	40
SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIBL
*I**	S** L	**B *	*I**	S** L	**B *	*I**	S**L
***L	****	****	**B *	****	****	*I**	****

41	42	43	44	45	46	<b>47</b>	48
SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIBL
**B *	*I**	S** L	**B *	*I**	S** L	**B *	*I**
****	S***	****	***L	****	****	**B *	****

49	50	51	<b>52</b>	53	54	55	56
SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIB L	SIBL
S** L	**B *	*I**	S** L	**B *	*I**	S** L	**B*
****	S***	****	***L	****	****	**B	****

						*	
--	--	--	--	--	--	---	--

57	<b>Start</b>
SIB L	SIBL
*I**	S**L
****	S***

This Begins a New Calendar!

Note that these cycles coincide only eight times during the calendar, twice for each High Day [typed in italics above]. Samhain on the three cycles only at the end of 30 and 57 years-- the times when the moon correction is required. Correlating the ritual cycle to the calendar thus obviates the need for remembering which greater cycles receive moon correction. The coincidence of the cycles on Samhain dictates the timing of moon correction.

In fact, it might be better to divide the calendar into two greater cycles, a long count of thirty years and a short count of 27, rather than three cycles. The pattern of the coincidence of the cycles indicates that such a division exists, consisting as it does of two year-patterns of SIBL. Looked at in this way, the lengths of the two cycles have a difference of three years, the interval between rituals on the same High-day, surely a Druidic interval.

The patterns resulting from the interlacing of cycles could easily be used to determine the character of a particular ritual. At the times of the leap months time was literally out of phase, a condition which would call for extra solemnity and larger sacrifices. Having a large rite on the holidays connected with the leap months while continuing the ritual cycle normally results in two (and twice three) rituals in a year – a holy year. It is worthwhile noting that the two times-three rituals would occur in the same year fall in the years containing the last leap months before the 30 and 57 year marks--the 28th and 55th years of the calendar, thus marking the coming end of the year count. The eight times when all the cycles coincide must have been times of great ceremonies and sacrifices, especially the Samhain coincidences; as these times were very special and rare (and thus Holy).

The calendric method outlined on the last couple of pages incorporates all the cycles and fulfills all necessary criteria. It is accurate, and though it may appear complex on the surface, it is really simple in its mechanics. In fact, its working is virtually automatic. Only the following rules need be remembered:

SIBL

1. Months alternate between 30 and 29 days in length.
2. The addition pattern for the dates of the High Days is 2-3-3-3.
3. The month containing a High day which is immediately either preceded or followed by a leap month ALWAYS has 30 days.
4. A leap month always has 30 days.
5. Sun correction is needed after any short leap period (212 years instead of 2.75).
6. Moon correction is needed when all cycles coincide at Samhain.

Using these rules, the calendar works itself. It is quintessentially Druidic, reflecting what we know of their beliefs and ritual patterns from myth, folklore, and Greek and Roman commentaries. Indeed, it confirms the reputation for astronomical knowledge that the Greeks gave the Druids. And it is practical.

A calendar of this great a correlation and accuracy would take literally centuries to achieve; pointing again to great antiquity and (inevitably) to Stonehenge and other megalithic alignments. It's unlikely that the Druidic cult had anything to do with the construction of Stonehenge (it's very hard to realistically believe that they were that ancient), and they may never have even used it. But they undoubtedly met the builders' peoples during the Celtic expansion and obtained much astronomical data from them,

probably then shaping it to fit their own philosophical and religious systems (which were in turn probably altered by the new information). The symbolic wholeness of Celtic time reckoning would then imply that much of the symbolism came from the pre-Celtic subject peoples, helping to-explain some of the more "primitive" aspects of Celtic religious beliefs, such as Animism.

Of course, some fiddling is needed from month to month due to the eccentricity of the moon's orbit if total accuracy is desired in the calendar. The slight unevenness of the months is, accentuated by the inequality of day length caused by the choice of sunset rather than midnight or noon for the beginning of the day. This fiddling is very likely the cause of the permutations incorporated in the Coligny calendar. I believe that the Coligny calendar was not so much a "calendar" as we use it today (as a predictive device, however little its coordination with anything but the sun), as it was a record of its period.

Be that as it may, Celtic time reckoning was accurate and mathematically, numerologically, religiously and symbolically consistent. It was a true dance of time. The End!

## Cross Quarter Day Calculations

By Larry Press, Poison Oak Grove  
Druid Missal-Any, Oimeic 2003

This article sprang from queries to the Grove mathematician on how to calculate the major Druid High Days. The Druids were the mathematicians and astronomers of their day and would have been able to determine when the major and minor High Days would fall. Poison Oak Grove tries to maintain such practices of the ancient Druids.

The principle is simple. I don't have my calendar here with me, so I can ONLY explain the principle and give artificial examples, but it should be enough to give you the idea.

The astrological calendar doesn't give the times of the cross-quarters because those events are of no interest to most astrologers. It does, however, give the Sun's positions at various dates and times; we can use that information to estimate the date and time the Sun will be in the position that interests us.

Suppose for example, that the Sun is at 14 degrees of the sign at noon PST on the 6th of November, and at 16 degrees of the sign at noon PST on the 7th of November. Then the position of interest (15 degrees) is halfway between the two given positions, so the Sun should reach that position halfway between the two given times (in this case, Midnight of the 6th-to-7th).

That's the basic principle. In practice, things are a bit trickier because:

1. The Sun's position is given the calendar in degrees, minutes, and seconds, and we need to convert that to degrees-and-fractional-degrees (e.g. 14 degrees 30 minutes 0 seconds becomes 14.5 degrees).

2. The times are given the calendar in hours, minutes, and seconds, and we need to convert them to hours-and-fractional-hours

3. We use the degrees + fraction and hours + fraction values to compute the date-time of the cross-quarter, but that gives us a value in hours + fraction, so we need to convert that back to hours and minutes.

However, if all you're doing is confirming my calculations, you don't need to worry about all the tricky arithmetic. Do this instead:

1. Go to the tables in the back of the calendar. Look for the LATEST day and time at which the Sun's position is LESS THAN 15 degrees of the sign. Note the date and time, and convert it to Pacific Daylight Time (by subtracting however-many hours). Note the position, and convert it ROUGHLY to degrees and fraction (you don't have to be too accurate here—we're just estimating – it you get it to the nearest 1/4 degree, it'll probably be good enough)

2. Then find the EARLIEST day and time at which the Sun is MORE THAN 15 degrees of the sign. Make note of that date and time, and convert it to Pacific Daylight Time, as well. As before, note the position, and convert it roughly to degrees + fraction.

3. How far apart are the two positions? I.e. subtract the smaller from the larger, to get a separation (in degrees + fraction). How far along that distance is 15-degree position? Once again, you can be rough here. Is it about 1/3 of the way? 1/4? 3/4? If you just get it to the nearest 1/4 or so, that may be enough to confirm or reject my more detailed calculation.

4. So, if 15 degrees at some fraction of the way between the first and second positions (e.g. 2/3 of the way), then the Sun should reach 15 degrees roughly that fraction between the two given times (e.g. 2/3 of the way between the first and second times).

5. Now compare the date-times I gave you (in my e-mail message) to date-times of the first and second positions from the calendar tables (i.e. steps 1 and 2 above). Is the date-time I gave you BETWEEN those two date-times? If not, then one of us has made a big mistake. Is the date-time I gave roughly the same (say, within 1/2 day or so) as the rough calculation you arrived at in step 4 above?

In the exercise above, I calculated the date-time the Sun reached 15 degrees of the sign, but the same techniques work to estimate when the Sun reaches 16 degrees 18 minutes declination.

I believe you have a copy of the same Jim Maynard's Pocket Astrologer 2002 that I have. (We bought them while visiting Stephen last year.)

1. Go to page 56. The upper portion gives the positions (right ascension) of various astrological planets for each day of November; the 2nd column is the Sun's positions.

2. Note that at Noon GMT on the 7th of November, the Sun is 14 degrees 54 minutes of Scorpio, while at Noon GMT on the 8th it is at 15 degrees 54 minutes.

3. The difference between the two POSITIONS is exactly 1 degree; the difference between the two TIMES is exactly 24 hours.

4. The position we're looking for is 15 degrees of Scorpio; this is 6 minutes past the FIRST position (i.e. 14 deg 54 min + 6 min = 14 deg 60 min, that is 15 deg). But the two positions are 1 degree apart (see step 3 above); 6 minutes is 1/10th of the way between those two positions.

5. So we know that the cross-quarter position is 1/10th of the way between the Sun's position at Noon GMT on the 7th and Noon GMT on the 8th. That means that it should reach that position after about 1/10 of the TIME between Noon GMT of the 7th and Noon GMT of the 8th. The time difference is 25 hours, and 1/10th of that difference is 2.4 hours i.e. 2 hours and 24 minutes. Thus the Sun should reach 15 degrees Scorpio at about 2:24 GMT on the 7th of November – which is very close to the time I calculated, using my program to do the interpolation.

6. The final step is to convert the GMT time to PDT. Page 21 of Jim Maynard's calendar gives the time corrections: to convert from GMT to PST, subtract 8 hours; to convert from GMT to PDT, subtract 7 hours.

# Section Nine: Conclusion to Part Four

As you can tell, most of the material in this section is considered irrelevant trivia to most of the Reformed Druids. I hope that you have found it amusing, because I laugh out loud every time I read certain sections. The mere idea that any Reformed Druid (such as myself) could actually be bothered with such a complicated mess of materials, forces me into hysterical laughter.

None of the material in this section should be considered unalterable dogma, it merely a collection of customs and terms that have been used over the last 33 years. There is no reason why most of them cannot be replaced with new ideas.

Yours in the Mother,  
Michael

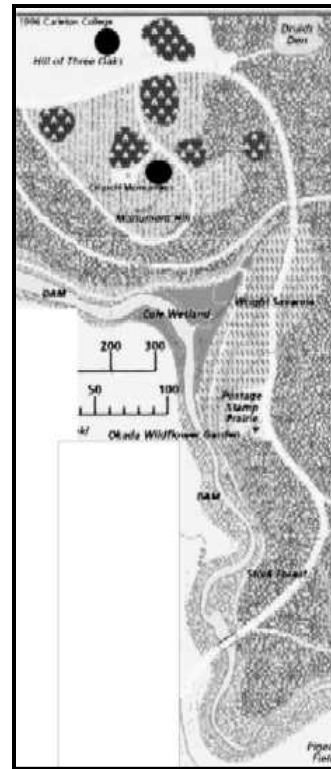


Figure 22 Above, Monument Hill, 2001.

Figure 23 Upper Arb detail. Top black spot is Hill of 3 Oaks and site of Old Stone Circle aka Stonehenge. Black spot below it is Monument Hill, site of the Founding year. Upper right corner is the Druid's Den/Little Grove, popular in 90s Druidism for Sweat lodges and Vigils. Half-spot on right edge in bottom half is the New Stone Circle, aka Stones of Irony.

So Ends  
Vol Four  
Of ARDA 2



# VOLUME FIVE

## THE GREAT DRUISH BOOKS

Of the Hasidic Druids of North America

### 1996 Introduction

The last major Branch of the Reform to have been (more or less) organized was that of the Hasidic Druids of North America (HDNA), which was an offshoot of the SDNA. The Hasidic Druids began when Isaac Bonewits stopped en route in St. Louis on the way from his previous position as Arch-Druid of the Twin Cities to Berkeley (where he was subsequently elected Arch-Druid of the Mother Grove, which for awhile, was different from the Berkeley Grove). Hasidic Druidism was one of the many Branches of the Reform, growing out of the SDNA, consisting of Neopagans of even greater piety. Their grove was known as the Arch Grove, led by Vicki Rhodes, named after the 630 foot arch that is the symbol of the City of St. Louis. Incidentally, this was the first grove not to use its city-location as the name of its grove, mainly because they objected to the use of a Christian saint in the name of their grove. The HDNA agreed to continue to use the same ordination ceremonies as those of the other Branches of the Reform (with their own additions), so as to maintain the Apostolic Succession and to encourage those who are interested in Reformed Druidism, but not Hasidic style, to be able to get in touch with other Branches of the Reform. Sadly, the one grove of the HDNA disbanded within three years of its foundation c. 1977 c.e. and many decided to join the Church of All Worlds.

The *Lughnasadh* 1976 c.e. (14 y.r. Berkeley) edition of *The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)* was the first publication to present these books to the general public. In the late 70s, *Pentalpha Journal* republished a few of their works. Although they are currently considered an "inactive" Branch (at least until someone revives it), the current editor Scharding, feels that, in their short time with our organization, they produced a marvelous group theilogy and rule of living. They are also another noteworthy example contrary to the general belief that all the members of the NRDNA and other offshoots were only interested in Celtic Druidism. Although the HDNA may appear bizarrely dogmatic and complex compared to even the SDNA, much more so when compared with the RDNA, there was a subtle aspect of play and self-mocking woven into the following documents. They were also serious in many ways, too, and that should be remembered. I republish these books in memory of a unique experiment within the Reform, but their documents should not be misconstrued as speaking for members of other Branches of the Reform.

Michael Scharding

[P.S. The HDNA enjoyed a brief attempt at revival in 2002-3.]

The Drynemeton Press



## 1976 Introduction

The *Mishmash* of Hasidic Druidism consists of a listing of the basic laws, customs, vocabulary and the ethical principles of the HDNA. As mentioned in Chapter 15, a major function of the *Mishmash* is to provoke regular and extensive debate about every aspect of the religion. Known as "Hairpull," this obligation of scholarly debate forces every generation of Hasidic Drues to reevaluate their benefits and to adjust them to their current environment. It is important to note that the verses of the *Mishmash* are not eternal laws carved in stone (see 1:4), but are designed to provoke debate and meditation. Nonetheless, they are a serious attempt to condense, into one concentrated source, the ethical principles believed in by, it would appear, a majority of living Neopagans (of all persuasions). While many verses of interest only to Hasidic Drues, the rest of the *Mishmash* will be found to ring quite a few bells in the minds and hearts of Neopagans of every cultural heritage.

The *Te-Mara* consists of commentaries on the verses of the *Mishmash*, by several generations of Druish scholars. These commentaries are of great help in the practice of Hairpull as they give Drues of all positions arguments with which to back themselves up. Attempting to discuss the *Mishmash* without reference to the appropriate verses of the *Te-Mara*, is foolish, for the Ancient Sages have often warned against discussing the *Mishmash*, "as if there were no *Te-Mara*." From time to time, additions to the *Te-Mara* were printed and distributed by the Arch-Grove. [Hopefully, we got them all, Ed]

*Consider: the Alternatives*, consists of prayers and blessings of particular value to Hasidic Drues. Most of them will sound familiar to members of the RDNA, but some have been written in an entirely original manner. A basic principle of the HDNA is that one's religion should totally saturate one's life and lifestyle. Thus, any Hasidic Druie is expected to be able to make up a blessing or prayer for absolutely any occasion. Additions to this Book will also be printed and distributed by the Arch Grove from time to time.

Where did this religion come from? Hasidic Drues were, for the most part former Jews who love many of the old Jewish (especially Yiddish) customs but who did not care for the repressive and puritanical theology, which they perceived as going along with them. Others are merely looking for a total Neopagan Lifestyle and Hasidic Druidism was one of the very few available. Over the last few decades, there has been a great deal of Neopagan retrieval of customs and holidays from Christianity. Now it is the time for Judaism to be similarly invaded and our Pagan heritage revived (and someday, the same process may happen to Islam).

Hasidic Druidism should not be viewed as a series of deliberate insults against Judaism. On the contrary, an argument may be quite honestly made that Judaism has represented a millennia-long series of insults against Paganism. The Jewish Scriptures are replete with one example after another of blasphemy, sacrilege and genocide committed by the Jews against their Pagan neighbors. But while the Jews were murdering, enslaving, raping and insulting Pagans and Paganism in the Middle East, the Jews (like their later offshoots) were also absorbing, borrowing and stealing various Pagan customs, concepts and holidays. It is these that the Hasidic Druid movement has "borrowed back," knowing their Pagan origins. There is, of course, also the fact that, over their own centuries of Persecution by the monotheistic cultures they spawned, the Jews

developed a number of new habits and customs; designed to help an endangered minority religion survive in a hostile environment. These too, the Hasidic Drues feel free to borrow, for there is of much value to Neopagans (followers of endangered minority religions in a hostile environment) in these traditions.

## The Mishmash of Hasidic Druidism

### Chapter One: On Identity

1. Hasidic Druidism is a way of life.
2. All ordinances of the Hasidic Druids shall be abased upon identity as Hasidic Druids and are binding on no others.
3. All Ordinances and customs may be modified for reasons of health, livelihood, the avoidance of incarceration and survival.
4. The Mishmash is an oak tree, not a stone monument.

### Chapter Two: On General Ethical Priorities

1. The Multiverse is very large!
2. Lifestyle is more important than credo.
3. Intent is more important than results.
4. People are more important than property.
5. Discipline is more important than control.
6. Survival is more important than comfort.
7. Creation is better than criticism.
8. Destruction is better than complaint.
9. Unity is better than dissension.
10. Individuality is better than conformity.
11. Responsibility is better than blame.
12. Remorse is better than guilt.
13. Sensuality is better than asceticism.
14. Love is better than hate.
15. Caution is better than fear.
16. Courage is better than foolhardiness.
17. Knowledge is better than ignorance.
18. Self-knowledge is better than pride.
19. Wisdom is better than knowledge.
20. Honesty is better than deceit.
21. Honor is better than arrogance.
22. Peace is better than war.
23. Joy is better than sorrow.
24. Generosity is better than thrift.
25. Mercy is better than justice.
26. Loyalty is better than slavery.
27. Trust is better than cynicism.

28. Skepticism is better than gullibility.
29. Good works are better than good promises.

### Chapter Three: On Food and Drink

1. Any food or drink found to be fatal shall be declared uncouth and may not be consumed by Hasidic Druids.
2. Followers of Hasidic Druidism may be vegetarians, carnivores or omnivores, as they individually choose.
3. The flesh and blood of sentient beings is uncouth and may not be consumed.

### Chapter Four: On Sexual Conduct

1. Sex is a gift of the Gods and is to be enjoyed by all concerned, as often as possible and desired, but especially during Weekends and High Holy Days.
2. Any sexual act physiologically dangerous or impossible to any participant is forbidden.
3. Sexual gratification may not be used for coercion, nor coercion (physical or nonphysical) be used to obtain sexual gratification; such is a crime against the Gods.
4. No restrictions shall be placed upon the sexual acts of any participants upon the ground of age, species or sexual preferences; save where danger to health and/or arrest is imminent.
5. All bonded partners are expected to provide sexual satisfaction to each other (if desired) at least once every week, or to arrange for surrogate partners to provide said satisfaction.
6. It shall be considered uncouth for any member of a bonded group to forbid or hinder any other member of the group from seeking sexual gratification outside of the group.
7. Matters of hygiene and conception are the responsibility of all participants involved in any sexual activity.
8. No gender is superior to any other; therefore sexual chauvinism is uncouth.
9. A person of any gender may participate in any activity desired or refrain from any activity disliked, regardless of traditional cultural gender associations with specific activities.

### Chapter Five: On Blood

1. Being the fluid and essence of life, blood is not, under any circumstance, to be wasted.
2. Blood sacrifices may be made only in these following special circumstances: If the blood is provided by the person offering the sacrifice...
3. .... If the blood is spilled during the course of hunting and/or the butchering of animals killed for food or a similar survival necessity....
4. .... If the blood is spilled in equal and honorable combat, or in a genuine accident, or in a fully natural disaster.
5. It is uncouth to arrange fatal accidents or disasters, except in equal and honorable combat.
6. Menstrual periods are natural functions to be blessed and enjoyed as a sign of the mysteries of Womanhood.
7. There shall be no restrictions place upon women during their periods, because of their periods, save those self-imposed by the women involved for their own comfort.

### Chapter Six: On Grooming

1. All shall bathe once a week, whether they need it or not.
2. Bedclothes shall be cleaned once a month, whether they need it or not.
3. All clothes that are worn shall be cleaned once a year, whether they need it or not.
4. The hair of all genders shall not be cut less than two fingers' length, save where matters of law or livelihood make such mutilation necessary.
5. To symbolize the grace and fruitfulness of growing vines, all genders may wear sidelocks.
6. Due to the principles of Divine Androgyny, clothing shall not in any way be restricted by reason of gender.
7. To betoken the fact that Wisdom is bestowed equally upon all genders by the Gods, green caps (known as *acorn caps*) may be worn by all genders whenever desired.
8. Similarly, to betoken the fact that all are sheltered equally by the Gods, green shawls (known as *tell-its*) may be worn by all genders during prayers and rituals.
9. Any color not found in the visible spectrum of light is not couth, and should not be worn in clothing nor used in rituals.
10. The wearing of clothing of any sort is optional, both in daily life and at rituals.

### Chapter Seven: On Wars and Weapons

1. All are encouraged to wear at least one weapon at all times and to know how to use each weapon carried.
2. Violence is always to be kept to an absolute minimum; solve the problem, no more, no less.
3. One may participate in a war only if one is convinced that it is a just and honorable war, necessary to one's personal survival and that of one's loved ones.
4. One may use whatever violence necessary to protect oneself from rape.
5. Absolute pacifists are excused from all of this chapter.

### Chapter Eight: On Ecology

1. Humans are only part of the Earth-Mother; the attempt to dominate Nature is uncouth.
2. If one must hunt or butcher animals in order to survive, the animals killed must be killed swiftly, mercifully and with proper and respectful ritual.
3. If a stray animal comes to one's door either injured or ready to give birth, it is couth to take care of it until after it injury was healed or the offspring are ready to walk after the mother.
4. For every tree cut down for survival purposes, another must be planted elsewhere beforehand, and the spirit of the doomed tree given a day and a night in which to move into the sapling newly planted, which should be of the same species.
5. When one is camping in the wilderness, the campground must be left as clean or cleaner than it was upon one's arrival; and all fires must be dead and drowned.
6. It is as couth to clean up the air and land and water as it is uncouth to dirty these things.



7. Love your Mother and your Father and your Siblings all.

## Chapter Nine: On Divination and Magick

1. Always be careful what you ask for; you may get it.
2. The ability to divine that which is hidden is a gift of the Gods; therefore, all those who have such talents should use them for their own benefit and for the benefit of those seeking counsel.
3. No one form of divination is superior to any other; all are equally blessed by the Gods.
4. No diviner is infallible, and to claim to be such is an uncouth deception.
5. Divination and Magick are hard work; therefore, it is allowed to ask for recompense for efforts made for non-druids.
6. It is uncouth to use Magick upon another sentient being without their express permission; except in case of war or in case of an ability to give permission caused by unconsciousness, youth or inability to understand one's offer to heal.

## Chapter Ten: On Liturgical Customs

1. It is couth to follow the customs of other Reformed Druid movements, provided they do not contradict those of Hasidic Druidism.
2. Ritual equipment should be inexpensive, handmade, and of natural materials such as stone, glass, wood or metal.
3. The chalices are of various colors for various purposes, to wit: red chalices are standard for weekly and High Holy Day services of worship...
4. ....yellow chalices are extra for services of worship and are used for Second Order ordinations and for circulating among those who cannot drink alcoholic liquids....
5. ... green chalices are sacred to Grannos and are used in healing rituals....
6. ...blue chalices are used in rituals in home, especially Weekend services, and for divination and bardic rituals.
7. Other colors of chalices and ritual equipment may be used for other purposes and the colors listed above may be altered to fit the magical systems of any Hasidic Druid.
8. Hasidic druids may worship any Gods and Goddesses they wish in addition to those listed in *The Druid Chronicles*.
9. Hasidic Druids may join the worship of any other Neopagan group they wish, provided such worship does not contain uncouth elements.
10. Hasidic Druids are encouraged to invent new rituals, prayers, hymns, holy days, and other ritual elements designed to glorify the Gods, provided that said inventions are not uncouth.
11. It is uncouth for a Hasidic Druid not to be able to compose poems or songs or a blessing for any occasion.

## Chapter Eleven: On Healing

1. The key is temperance; which is moderation in all good things and abstinence in all evil things.
2. Cleanliness is important, but only material things should be sterilized.
3. Pain is neither good nor evil; it is a warning.

4. Pain should be controlled first by will and mental exercises; only after these fail should one resort to other methods of suppressing pain.
5. It is uncouth to endanger your health by ignoring signs of illness or injury.
6. Be neither eager nor reluctant to use new or strange methods of healing; but consider always the most natural methods first.
7. Do not let your bodies be cut open unless a life is at stake.
8. It is more important to treat causes than symptoms.
9. The words of one who has never been pregnant are not to be weighed as heavily as those of one who has, when matters of conception and abortion are discussed.
10. Let midwives be honored among you, and let one who is wise in the ways of herbs and healing be accounted more noble than the bravest warrior.

## Chapter Twelve: On Hasidic Time

1. Hasidic Druids use primarily the calendrical system developed by the Schismatic Druids of North America, based upon that of the New Reformed Druids of North America, with additions.
2. Individual households may choose an individual calendar, but once chosen it should be kept to.
3. The week starts at sundown on Bircheve and every day begins at sundown, the darkness being the *eve* and the light being the *day*.
4. The week, compared to the civil calendar, runs as follows: sunset Friday to sunset Saturday is Bircheve and Birchday; sunset Saturday to sunset Sunday is Oakeve and Oakday; sunset Sunday to sunset Monday is Aspeneve and Aspenday; sunset Monday to sunset Tuesday is Maple-eve and Mapleday; sunset Tuesday to sunset Wednesday is Rowaneve and Rowanday; sunset Wednesday to sunset Thursday in Pine-eve and Pineday; sunset Thursday to sunset Friday is Olive-eve and Oliveday.
5. Weekend shall be taken to extend from sunset, the beginning of Bircheve, to sunset, the end of Oakday.
6. Whenever possible, the Weekend shall be started with a ritual feast in each home, and all manner of feasting, celebration and relaxation continue throughout.
7. It is uncouth to concentrate during the Weekend on matters one concentrates heavily upon the rest of the week.
8. The months and seasons of the year, together with their colors and metals, are as follows: Geimredh: November, December and January; red-purple, purple and purple-blue respectively; silver and lead....
9. Earrach; February, March and April; blue, blue-green and green respectively; copper and mercury....
10. Samradh; May, June and July; green-yellow, yellow and yellow-orange respectively; gold and electrum....
11. Foghamhar; August, September and October; orange, orange-red and red respectively; bronze and iron.
12. Many there are who start these months according to the Druid calendar rather than the civil calendar, and this is not uncouth; but it is best if an entire Grove follows the same pattern.

## Chapter Thirteen: On Altered States of Consciousness

1. Every sentient being lives in a unique universe and has the right to live in that universe or any other universe he or she may choose to occupy or visit.
2. The interlinking totality of all perceived and perceivable universe is called the Multiverse and it is beyond description.
3. It is uncouth to induce another entity to alter his or her state of consciousness.
4. It is uncouth to prevent another entity from altering her or his state of consciousness.
5. There are many means for altering one's state of consciousness, among them are: breathing exercises, physical exercise, sexual exercises, psychic exercises, religious exercises and the ingestion of natural and artificial chemicals.
6. All of these are gifts of the Gods, designed to help us expand our awareness of Them and the Multiverse, and should be treated reverently and lovingly.
7. The major technique used for the altering of states of consciousness in most Hasidic Druid worship is the ingestion of the waters-of-life.
8. Other techniques may be used in rituals, provided the leader is competent and has made full explanations to all participants beforehand.
9. It is forbidden to use mind altering methods in such a fashion as to cause grave physical, mental, psychic or legal harm to oneself or others.
10. The versions perceived during altered states of consciousness may be messages from the gods, but they should however be shared and tested by the Grove before being acted upon.

## Chapter Fourteen: On Dealing with Outsiders

1. Other Pagans should be treated as sisters and brothers.
2. Heretics are potential comrades; it is couth to talk to them.
3. Skeptics are fun; have several as friends.
4. Cynics are a plague; avoid them as such.
5. Fanatics are dangerous, for their hearts are closed.
6. Beware the [pejorative removed] of experience.
7. Carry a long spoon wherever you go.
8. Be neither showy nor overly timid, but remember: nobody likes a missionary.
9. Be careful about seducing their children.
10. Be cautious in telling them unpleasant truths, especially about themselves.
11. Never expect them to live up to our standards.

## Chapter Fifteen: On Study and Scholarship

1. When one or more laws are taken from the Mishmash, the accompanying commentaries read, and the matters involved debated with wit and grace, this is a *Hairpull*.
2. It is couth for Hairpull to last at least an hour on each occasion.
3. Hairpull should be done by every family at least once every Weekend.
4. It is couth for Hairpull to be done by an entire Grove after services.
5. It is also couth for a Grove to hold weekly Hairpull indoors during the Season of Sleep, instead of outdoor services.
6. Hairpull may take place at any other time between two or more Hasidic Druids, and this is also couth.
7. Every Grove should have a library where members may meet for study and Hairpull.
8. A scholar in the house is a blessing from the Gods; how much more blessed is the house where scholars meet!
9. If one is teaching the young or ignorant, or making ready to so teach, a scholar may be excused from many household duties.
10. Metaphysical gymnastics are uncouth, save when one is teaching their power, humor and danger.
11. It is not couth to divorce theory from action.
12. Once cannot be a scholar alone.
13. Plant an oak grove about the Mishmash.



**Figure 1 SDNA conception of Dalon Ap Landu with an Acorn Cap, 1976.**

# The Te-Mara:

## Commentaries on the Mish-Mash

1:1 A WAY OF LIFE: Here in the opening line of the Mishmash we have the major characteristic that distinguishes Hasidic Druidism among most religions, including the most Neopagan religions, for Hasidic Druidism is not merely a play in which one acts once a week or once a month, but an integral part of everyday life (Dru Chwerthin).

The major emphasis in this opening line of the Mishmash is that actions are more important than one's claimed beliefs, as it is stated in 2:2, and from the very beginning of the Mishmash we are reminded to put our thought and beliefs, our hopes and our faith, into action in our daily lives (Dru Amherghin).

1:2 AND ARE BINDING ON NO OTHERS: No moral aspersions are to be cast upon those who are not Hasidic Druids for not following our ways (the Ancients).

And yet we know that many of those who are not Hasidic Druids do very evil things, how then can the Ancients of Blessed Memory declare that "no moral aspersions are to be cast" upon them? They can say this because they are talking about calling someone evil or inferior merely because they are not Hasidic Druids, not about calling someone evil for committing acts of an evil nature (Dru Iolo).

This Law does not allow a Hasidic Druid to hire, persuade or coerce an Outsider into violating the Laws for the Druid's own profit or convenience: use of such a surrogate is as uncouth as if the Druid himself violated the Law (Dru Earl).

1:3 MAY BE MODIFIED: Hasidic Druidism is not a dogmatic belief system, but a living being, and as a living being, it must be free to grow (Dru Chwerthin).

But we must beware of allowing modifications to be made to easily. Necessity is one thing, excuses for laziness are quite another (Dru Amherghin).

An old folk-saying states: "A stupid wolf is afraid to fight the trap for fear of maiming himself. A smart wolf wins his freedom at the price of his foot. A wise wolf avoids the trap." Likewise the truly wise Druid plans his or her lifestyle and understands his or her social environment well enough to avoid having to compromise the principles of Druidism for reasons of survival, except in cases of rare and unforeseeable emergency (Dru Earl).

1:3 AN OAK TREE, NOT A STONE MONUMENT: We must always remember that the purpose of the Mishmash is to grow and to help us with our own growth. Therefore did the ancients state that it is like an oak tree, which grows ever greater as the years go by; rather than a stone monument, which never grows but merely crumbles as time passes (Dru Iolo).

This phrase is used to point out that the beliefs of many other religions are merely stone monuments to dead ideas, and have no meaning for current generations; therefore should we rejoice in the shelter of our ever growing, many-branched Mishmash (Dru Isaac).

However, the imagery of this Law should not be taken literally. An oak tree is entirely the creation of the Gods: a person may hatch it from the acorn, plant it, water and fertilize it but he or she did not design it and if one tires to prune and confine it to control the pattern of its growth, one only ends up stunting and distorting it. The Mishmash, while inspired by the Gods is also the work of human intellect, emotions and psychic

faculties. To create an oak tree, the Gods work through the genetic programming inside the acorn-germ, the soil in which it grows, climactic factors, etc. To create the Mishmash, the Gods have chosen to work through the human mind, and every wise Druid should concentrate on this Gods-given responsibility whenever contemplating or commenting on the Mishmash (Dru Earl).

2:1 THE MULTIVERSE: Every possible combination of every possible universe with every other one, when conceived as a Whole, is the Multiverse (the Ancients).

Every alternate probability universe that can be constructed by every possible combination of every existing particle of energy, exists (Dru Hixson).

IS VERY LARGE: However this does not mean "infinite" in the sense of "nothing is true, all is permissible." Multiplicity does not mean chaos, nor free will anarchy. The vast number of choices open to the individual at every turning point of his or her life does not render choosing meaningless (Dru Earl).

Dru Earl is speaking through his acorn-cap, for Chaos, like Order, is an integral part of the Multiverse. Neither is meaningful without the other, nor very much fun (Dru Eris).

2:2 LIFESTYLE IS MORE IMPORTANT: The actual relationship between lifestyle and credo is that between the map and the territory, or between the recipe and the stew in the pot. Lifestyle is "more important" only in the sense that it has physical and operational reality, while credo has only theoretical reality. For this reason, the wise Druid contemplates and comments on the Mishmash in terms of its application to the lives of Hasidic Druids not merely in sterile words and ideas for their own sake (Dru Earl).

The emphasis in this Law is that we should always "practice what we preach," unlike those around us in other religions who are all too often hypocritical (Dru Iolo).

For hypocrisy is the sign of one who is a liar, or coward, or unimaginative (Dru Amherghin).

If one does not truly believe in the religion one professes, then the honorable person changes religion, so that he or she may follow the lifestyle deemed authentic rather than attempting to present the Image of what one really is not (Dru Chwerthin).

Yet sometimes one is prevented, by poverty or by other tyranny, from exercising one's faith in public. Surely the Ancients of Blessed Memory did not intend that we should make ourselves martyrs, for we have plenty of those in recent centuries (Dru Isaac).

But one should be very careful in how much one pleads poverty as an excuse. Many poor people of other religions manage to lead authentic lifestyles, though it is not always easy (Dru Iolo).

2:3 INTENT IS MORE IMPORTANT: The purpose of this Law is to remind us that winning is not of as great a moral value (although it may be higher on other value scales, such as survival) as a sincere effort (Dru Isaac).

This Law is to indicate that a person who accomplishes a worthy goal through unworthy means, or an unworthy goal through means that are normally worthy ones has acted in an uncouth manner (Dru Iolo).

It is easier to forgive a doofus who means well than one who is truly evil, even if their actions create identical results (Dru Amherghin).

The purpose of this Law is to discourage Druids from compromising or discarding a worthy goal merely because it is difficult or impossible for imperfect humans to achieve. It is *not* intended to excuse uncouth conduct by saying "the ends justify the means." Anytime the results of one's conduct do not turn out as intended, one should carefully examine both the goal itself and the methods employed trying to achieve it. In many cases, one will find ways to improve either or both. If not, then this Law applies, and one should persevere. However, if Druids whose wisdom one respects disagree with one, this is a case where one should listen to them even more carefully than usual, because this Law deals with one of the most important aspects of practical morality (Dru Earl).

This means, as well, that we should try not to be harsh in our judgments of the conduct of others, until we know both their goals and their methods (Dru Isaac).

2:4 PEOPLE ARE MORE IMPORTANT: This Law goes against the entire history of Western Civilization and marks a basic difference between Pagans and nonpagans (the Ancients).

What the Ancients of Blessed Memory are obliquely referring to is Capitalism (Dru Karl).

What the Ancients of Blessed Memory are really referring to is Christianity. (Dru Iolo).

What's the difference? (Dru Chwerthin).

THAN PROPERTY: In the context of this verse, what is meant is personal property, the material things used and directly controlled by one individual or group. It does *not* mean that the whole material world is less important than a single human life. Therefore, it is couth to treat people who advocate or practice wholesale destruction of material property, especially the destruction of non-sentient living beings and disruption of the ecology, the same as one treats those who advocate or practice the destruction of human beings (Dru Earl).

2:5 DISCIPLINE: What is meant here is the control one exercises over oneself, not that imposed by another. Therefore, discipline can never be an excuse for uncouth activity (Dru Amherghin).

IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN CONTROL: A better translation of this verse reads "Self-Discipline is more important than obedience." A wise Druid is one who knows the proper rules for living and obeys them as they apply to his or her life, without having to be compelled to do so by either written laws or the words of others. The Mishmash is intended to guide, not to serve as an excuse for coercion. Conversely, a Druid who finds oneself in frequent and serious disagreement with other members of the one's Druid community over the rules governing the Druidish way of life should consider leaving one's present community and joining or founding another which interprets the Mishmash in such a way that one can obey it without coercion (Dru Earl).

2:6 SURVIVAL: In a world of hate and mistrust, Druids, like all other minority religions, must consider the real possibility that, persecution and genocide never being far from the minds of the monotheists, we may one day once again have to go underground in order to preserve our lives and our faiths (the Ancients).

Even without religious persecution, Western Civilization is currently in such a political and economic mess that we may all, Druid, and non-Druid alike, find ourselves without the facilities with which to live in the manner to which we, like most

soft Westerners, have become accustomed. Therefore, it is wise for Druids to know how to farm, and how to live off the land, and how to defend themselves from both human and nonhuman predators (Dru Isaac).

IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN COMFORT: This law is intended to discourage laziness and timidity in planning for and overcoming adversities. It does not advocate the Spartan ideals of austerity. The best medicine is not always the one that tastes the worst, but the one that cures the disease best, regardless of what it tastes like. The wise Druid put survival first, but he or she always considers comfort as well, and above all, tries to develop "common sense" (Dru Earl).

Common sense is "neither very common, nor usually very sensible (Dru Chwerthin).

2:7 CREATION IS BETTER: The wise Druid always proposes a solution to a problem at the same time he or she calls attention to the problem itself. However, it is not uncouth to merely identify the problem if one genuinely does not have a solution oneself. But in such a circumstance the praise goes mostly to those wiser ones who eventually solve the problem (Dru Earl).

2:8 DESTRUCTION IS BETTER: It should never be forgotten that the forces of breakdown are as important as those of building, in producing the balance of the Multiverse. Without the bodies of dead plants and animals to feed the soil, the biosphere would soon be impoverished. Therefore, did the Ancients of Blessed Memory remind us that it is better to destroy that which is in need of destruction, rather than merely complaining about it (Dru Iolo).

The Law is interpreted by many as meaning "Never call attention to a problem unless you genuinely want action taken to solve it" (Dru Earl).

2:9 UNITY IS BETTER: As Dru Earl once said, "free will does not mean anarchy." Therefore, one should realize that Druids are a community and that open and free discussion is to be aimed at attaining a consensus, not at merely giving everyone a chance to declare their independence. The differences between argument and discussion should always be remembered (Dru Amherghin).

This verse should never be cited to discourage dissent. It is only intended to point out Unity as a worthwhile goal. In practice, unity is normally reached only after hearing dissent and making changes to bring the dissenters into agreement. The Law also *encourages* each individual to make compromises in order to achieve unity, but it does not compel. Above all, the wise Druid realizes that a rule that causes a significant amount of dissent among members of the community is probably an oversimplification and probably should be made more complex to fit reality (Dru Earl).

The purpose of this Law is to point out that spiritual growth is hard to achieve while arguing at the top of one's lungs about the rules for achieving spiritual growth (Dru Iolo).

2:10 INDIVIDUALITY IS BETTER: Among every Branch of the Reform, individuality has always been sacred. Therefore, let every Druid in your community be free to express herself or himself as a unique person (the Ancients)

The wise Druid never does anything simply because others do it – she or he merely does what she or he thinks and feels is right. If others think and feel likewise, this is couth. If they don't this is every bit as couth. Though Hasidic Druids are expected to live in close association with one another, this association is

expected to be entirely voluntary and not on coercion of any kind. Druidism is basically a religion of the individual, not of the group (Dru Earl).

Just as in group singing, a certain amount of counterpoint can add to the beauty of the final result, but too much or too little can ruin everything (Dru Chwerthin).

2:11 RESPONSIBILITY: The wise Druid takes responsibility for his or her own actions; he or she does not wait for others to point it out. However, it is not uncouth for any Druid to tell another that his or her actions displease or harm one (Dru Earl).

Druids are responsible for taking action when needed, whether requested or not, for they are guided by their sense of honor and their sense of that which is couth (Dru Iolo).

IS BETTER THAN BLAME: Blame is only rarely of any lasting value. When an error has been made, the person or persons, if any, responsible for the failure should be discovered, and the problem carefully examined with a view to preventing future mistakes, not to punishing anyone or to making them feel bad (Dru Isaac).

It is the function of the elders of the Grove to assign responsibilities for the achieving of various projects, and they have the right and duty to point out malfeasance or nonfeasance. They do not have the right or duty to browbeat people who fail to keep their commitments, especially if through no fault of their own (Dru Amherghin).

Once again, there is a narrow bridge to cross, with the problems of discipline often on one side and the problems of freedom on the other (Dru Iolo).

2:12 REMORSE IS BETTER: A more literal translation of this phrase would be: "intellectual recognition of one's wrongdoing is better than an emotional reaction to it" (Dru Earl).

Yet the emotional element is very important in making sure that the wrongdoer remembers her or his wrongdoings (Dru Iolo).

THAN GUILT: Guilt is the major emotion behind monotheistic religions. Therefore do Druids refrain from laying "guilt-trips": on either themselves or others. If they make a mistake, they admit it, make amends, and resolve not to do it again. They do not whine and moan and grovel before vengeful deities, either external or internalized (Dru Amherghin).

Once as a general rule, the Gods are not vengeful (unless on deliberately insults Them). They usually prefer to let one reap the results of one's actions. This can be more than sufficient (Dru Chwerthin).

This Law that guilt is a lesser emotion than remorse is designed to make an emphasis on the repairing of damage caused. If one breaks a vase at a friend's house, one feels remorse for one's clumsiness and attempt to repair or replace the vase. One does not run to a member of the Druid clergy or to the Gods and beg forgiveness for having been evil (Dru Isaac).

As a general rule, Druids tend to make dumb mistakes rather than an emotional or spiritual reaction is usually more appropriate (Dru Iolo).

2:13 SENSUALITY IS BETTER: This is one of the most basic principles of Hasidic Druidism, and one that serves to separate it from other non-pagan religions. At the heart of this Law is the realization that gratification of our Gods-given senses is natural and pleasing to the Gods, and that denial of such gratification is, as a general rule, sterile and anti-life. This Law reduces asceticism to a mere survival aid (when sensual

gratification would harm the individual or others) and as an aid in training the will (Dru Earl).

From Dru Earl's comment, it follows that "ascetic pleasures" (enjoyment of denying sensual gratification) is masochistic, displeasing to the Gods and, hence, uncouth. One obvious exception to this rule, however, is the deliberate delaying of sensual pleasure to achieve the equally pleasurable sensation of anticipation: this is no more masochistic than the memory of past sensual pleasure (Dru Iolo).

It should also be remembered that if sensual pleasures are interfering with the performance of honorable duties, it is uncouth to continue with them until after one's duties are properly discharged (Dru Iolo).

The delay of gratification is also sometimes needed in order to accomplish said gratification fully. For example it is often wise to remain celibate for several days before an orgy is to take place. Such celibacy is not ascetic nor is it masochistic (Dru Chwerthin).

However, there are a number of deities around Who serve to remind us that asceticism, in proper proportion, may be genuine value in achieving spiritual awareness. It is certainly often useful in psychic training (Dru Isaac).

2:14 LOVE IS BETTER: Many religions preach love, yet few seem to practice it. Because Druids believe in expressing love freely and in a variety of manners, they tend to accomplish a loving lifestyle more easily than those who are restricted to "spiritual vs. fleshly" love (the Ancients).

As it is written "the act and emotion of love is an act and emotion of praise." Therefore, to a Druid, every opportunity to exercise Pagan Charity is a new chance to praise the Gods and to expand one's awareness of the complexity of one's fellow humans (Dru Amherghin).

Pagan Charity is a sense of compassion exercised by Pagans towards others, based upon the Pagan realization that, although everyone is God/dess, no one is perfect, and therefore, inhuman virtues are not expected of them (Dru Isaac).

THAN HATE: Druids are capable of realizing that others mean them harm, but they do not need to be hostile in return. They make the necessary preparations to defend themselves (if any are really needed) and attempt to avoid those who are or would do evil to them. But they do not become vindictive (Dru Amherghin).

This Law should not, however, be interpreted as "love your enemies." The wise Druid manages his or her life so as to love many and hate few, but he or she does it by controlling who he or she associates with as much as possible. One does not force oneself to try to love those who deserve one's hate: one tries to change their conduct so that one no longer has to hate them, one avoids them, or one destroys them. But one never changes oneself so that one loves those one should hate: such is uncouth (Dru Earl).

It is an important question, whether or not one "should" ever hate another. Better it is to concentrate on understanding others, for this often removes any perceived need for hate (Dru Amherghin).

Yet many people there are who do hateful things: mass-murderers, kidnappers, polluters, brainwashers, etc. it can be difficult to retain a non-hateful attitude towards such, especially if one is committed (as all Druids should be) to the stopping of such people. One does not hate a rabid dog, one cures it or kills it (Dru Iolo).

Hate is usually based on fear. To one who is without fear, hate is an unnecessary emotion that can be profitably done without (Dru Chwerthin).

2:15 CAUTION IS BETTER: A more literal translation of this Law reads: "Intellectual recognition of danger is superior to emotional reaction to it" (Dru Earl).

Caution is rational, fear is non-rational. And because fear so often leads to evil actions, it is best that it be avoided whenever possible (Dru Isaac).

THAN FEAR: Fear is an unruly animal, though sometimes a useful one. Ride this mount carefully, with tight reins (Dru Amherghin).

Nothing can endanger the one who knows the Flow, for death has no place to enter that person (Dru Lao).

2:16 COURAGE IS BETTER: Druids are expected to be brave in the defense of their lives and ideals, and in defense of the innocent and helpless (Dru Iolo).

They are not expected to be stupid, however. Rather, they are expected to be wise in the ways in which they face danger, and to know when to be sneaky instead of obvious. Thus Druids never seek out danger, but are fully able to deal with it when it arrives (Dru Amherghin).

2:17 KNOWLEDGE IS BETTER: Druids place great emphasis upon the attainment of knowledge, both rational and non-rational and are flexible in their methods of learning (Dru Amherghin).

They are not, however, gullible (Dru Iolo).

2:18 SELF-KNOWLEDGE: From the earliest days, our ancestors have stressed the importance of self-knowledge. For how can one hope to help oneself or others if one does not first know and understand oneself? An accurate idea of one's strengths and weaknesses is of far more value than mere vanity, for it allows one to live with one's faults while cherishing one's virtues (Dru Amherghin).

IS BETTER THAN PRIDE: More Pagans (and other people) have met their downfall through pride than through any other emotion. Yet the Mishmash does not say that pride is evil, merely that it is inferior to self-knowledge. Therefore, we can assume that they meant that pride is not a danger when held by one who has true self-knowledge. However, this is an extremely rare combination, occurring in less than one in a hundred of those who think they have achieved it (Dru Chwerthin).

2:19 WISDOM IS BETTER: How many time have the Ancients of Blessed Memory, as well as the many distinguished commentators on the Mishmash, reminded us of the value of wisdom? How many times does a commentary begin "the wise Druid will...?" Therefore, let us seek always after wisdom, for with it come all the elements of the happy and noble life (Dru Amherghin).

THAN KNOWLEDGE: Druids and others are well aware of the horrors capable of being committed by those who accumulate knowledge is isolation, without wisdom. Therefore, do we look with distrust upon those who claim to be seeking knowledge for its own sake (Dru Iolo).

2:20 HONESTY IS BETTER: This is obvious to all Druids for, being polytheists, we have no need to twist the truth in order to match an irrational and insane worldview. Because we are gentle

with one another, we are free to tell the truth, and we know that our fellow Druids will take our words into consideration together with our intentions (Dru Chwerthin).

Why does Dru Chwerthin refer to Druids as "gentle with one another" in a discussion on honesty? He does so to say that, because Druids have an accurate idea of human nature, rather than that which he calls "irrational and insane," we are able to communicate with a maximum amount of trust and a minimal need for deception (Dru Isaac).

THAN DECEIT: The superiority of honesty should not be taken as a forbidding of deceit. There are times in one's life when less damage will be done in the long run by a carefully constructed tale of less than total accuracy than a bald statement of fact (Dru Amherghin).

It is important to note that Dru Amherghin refers to "in the long run." Druids always attempt to have a long-range view of matters, for such is a cardinal sign of wisdom (Dru Iolo).

One must be very careful in choosing the situations when one will allow oneself to lie, such should not normally be done for one's own benefit (it is better usually to face the consequences of one's own actions) but rather for the benefit of others. Only if one's life is in danger, or a similar emergency situation exists, should one feel free to lie (Dru Isaac).

If one is besieged by the Anti-druid, however, one may perform any deceptions necessary to throw them off the track, as long as they do not harm innocent people. Any other position would be anti-survival (Dru Chwerthin).

2:21 HONOR IS BETTER: There is nothing wrong with a sense of honor. Arrogance, however, is a plague upon the earth and will be punished by the Gods (the Ancients).

Honor should be flexible and sensible, however it should not interfere with your spiritual growth, but rather assist it (Dru Amherghin).

2:22 PEACE IS BETTER: All Druids are lovers of peace, although they can fight (and quite well) when absolutely necessary. It is very difficult to attain enlightenment while ducking spears and bullets (Dru Chwerthin).

THAN WAR: We are, however, perfectly capable of fighting for our survival. As mentioned in 7:3, though, Druids are extremely selective in which wars they choose to fight (Dru Isaac).

2:23 JOY IS BETTER: Our is a religion of joy, of love and of sensuality. The Earth-Mother is good and the natural world is to be enjoyed. Any Gods who would prefer us to be morose are not worth worshipping (Dru Iolo).

THAN SORROW: Once in a while, sorrow is an appropriate emotion, as at the death of a loved one (Dru Amherghin).

But sorrow should be limited in duration, for although millions of living beings, from insects to humans, die every day, Life goes on (Dru Isaac).

2:27 TRUST IS BETTER: Trust is not always rational, but in the long run, the trusting person has a more enjoyable life than the cynical one (the Ancients).

As is implied in 14:4, cynics destroy everything they touch. Therefore, we should avoid cynicism and take the risk of trusting one another (Dru Amherghin).

2:29 GOOD WORKS ARE BETTER: As is written in the commentary to 2:2, Druids believe in practicing what they preach. It is better to actually perform a small task, if promised, than to promise a large task and not follow through (Dru Isaac).

Often it is added, that "evil promises are better than evil works." This phrase, strange as it sounds, was actually intended to invoke charity towards those who promise all sorts of dire vengeance upon persons and objects annoying them, but who never actually do anything about them. Such is a moderately harmless habit, though not a praiseworthy one (Dru Iolo)

3:1 FOUND TO BE FATAL: An ancient proverb states, "One person's meat is another person's poison." Therefore, it is the individual's responsibility to determine what food or drink is harmful to him or her personally, and to avoid them with a minimum interference with the diets of the other members of the household (Dru Earl).

A food or drink found to be fatal to some, but generally healthful, shall not be declared uncouth. Else those with allergies or dietary peculiarities would easily impose tyrannies on the majority of Hasidic Druids (Dru Margola).

Poison ivy, poison oak, poison sumac and other poisonous plants are thus uncouth and may not be consumed in injurious amounts nor used as sacrifices in rituals (the Ancients).

The Ancients of Blessed Memory were careful to state that poisonous plants may not be consumed "in injurious amounts." This is because many plants, though not of course the three mentioned, while poisonous in large amounts are actually of medicinal or ritual use in smaller quantities (Dru Isaac).

Food or drink containing more than five unpronounceable artificial ingredients should be considered uncouth (Dru Iolo).

The number 5 is purely symbolic and ties in with the Law of Fives. The earlier versions of Dru Iolo's comments leave out the word "unpronounceable." And this older versions seems more correct, for the true emphasis should rest on the artificiality of the ingredients. The point to be made is: the more artificial, the more uncouth (Dru Margola).

A less literal, but more readily understandable translation of Dru Iolo's comment would read, "Food or drink containing an excessive number of highly artificial ingredients shall be considered uncouth." Even so, it remains vague. Therefore, it is up to the individual to determine if a particular food or drink is uncouth to his or her own taste and metabolism (Dru Earl).

SHALL BE DECLARED UNCOOUTH: in this verse we have the first and definitive definition of the word "Uncouth." Those things which are uncouth are to avoided exactly as if they were poisonous food or drink and, contrarily, those things which are couth should be sought after as if they were ambrosia and nectar to be consumed in ecstasy (the Ancients).

The term "uncouth" is used frequently in the Mishmash and form the basic term of definition for behavior not acceptable to Hasidic Druids. The definition offered in this verse is literally "found to be fatal." However, this raises problems. Is the inability to compose poems, songs or blessings for any occasion literally fatal to a Hasidic Druid, as it is stated in 10:1? Obviously, this cannot be so. The Ancients of Blessed Memory have said "those things which are uncouth are to be avoided exactly as *If* they were poisonous food or drink..." This explication of the definition of the word "uncouth" is the solution to our difficulties. We are told that things which are uncouth, such as those mentioned in 10:11, 13:3, etc., are as *if* poisonous, that is to say, harmful to the life of the individual concerned. Thus we can see that anything that a Hasidic Druid

shall find harmful to his/her life, physical or mental shall be deemed uncouth for that person (Dru Lew).

3:3 THE FLESH AND BLOOD: This includes all other parts of a sentient being as well. Therefore various products made from the bodies of sentient beings are also uncouth and should not be purchased nor used (Dru Chwerthin).

OF SENTIENT BEINGS: this includes not only humans, but whales, dolphins, other cetaceans, and some would say elephants as well. Naturally extraterrestrial visitors would be included as well (Dru Isaac).

The prohibition by Dru Isaac of the flesh and blood of "whales, dolphins, other cetaceans and... elephants" is based on spiritual rather than purely physical grounds: on the fact that the proscribed creatures are believed by many, including Dru Isaac, to be sentient beings and not because their flesh is unwholesome. Therefore, the individual may add any creature whose spiritual qualities he or she especially reveres (i.e., "Taboo Animals") to the list. However, such additions are binding only on the individual making them, although common courtesy impels all devout Hasidic Druids not to ostentatiously violate the personal taboos of members of their household or others around them (Dru Earl).

It is sometimes necessary to expand this prohibition even further, for example, many refuse to eat the flesh of tuna, because many dolphins are killed in the pursuit of tuna fish, and dolphins are uncouth to eat. In a similar fashion, others refuse to deal economically with those nations who pursue and kill cetaceans, and this is certainly a couth attitude. Yet it is a pity that one cannot refuse to purchase products from nations that regularly kill another endangered sentient species, humans (Dru Iolo).

AND MAY NOT BE CONSUMED: Historically there have been exceptions to this rule; the eating of Michael Valentine Smith, for example. We can conclude that a truly willing sacrifice is an exception, and therefore couth (Dru Margola)

That is a very dangerous thing to say, for our Paleopagan ancestors were not always careful in deciding who was truly willing and who was not. Better it is to say that a person who dies in an unexpected manner, that is, not in a sacrifice, and who insists upon being eaten by his or her friends as a memorial service, then has flesh and blood that is neither couth nor uncouth (Dru Amherghin).

4:1 SEX IS A GIFT OF THE GODS: Unlike most religions, including some Neopagan ones, Hasidic Druidism positively encourages its members to have full, varied sex lives (Dru Chwerthin).

4:2 PHYSIOLOGICALLY DANGEROUS: Thus there are many sexual "perversion" that are forbidden, not because they are unusual methods of sexual gratification, but because they are capable to causing physical harm to one or more of the participants (Dru Amherghin).

It is couth to interrupt others who are engaged in a sexual activity that might be dangerous, only long enough to determine whether or not it really is dangerous. If, indeed, the activity may damage one of the partners physically, it should not be resumed, and the interrupter is justified in using violence to prevent this, subject to the principles in 7:2 and 7:4. If it turns out that precautions have been taken of a sufficient nature, the activity should be allowed to resume and no apologies are necessary. (Dru Chwerthin).

OR IMPOSSIBLE: Druids are not expected to be sexual athletes. On the other hand, sexual acts that are truly impossible will not usually be attempted (Dru Iolo).

4:3 COERCION: The purpose of this Law is to prevent the use of sexual desire to manipulate others, as well as to prevent other forms of manipulation from being used to force sexual compliance. Naturally, therefore, all forms of sexual blackmail, assault, rape and the secretive use of physical or psychic aphrodisiacs are forbidden (Dru Iolo).

4:4 AGE: Beings, human and nonhuman, of any age are entitled to obtain any form of nondestructive sexual pleasure they may desire, with any partner desired, provided proper sexual etiquette is followed and all participants have a proper understanding of what is going on (Dru Chwerthin).

The opinions of others, whether parents, siblings, children or friends, are not always relevant, although their feelings should be taken into consideration (Dru Iolo).

However, if a prospective sexual partner is a human below the age of legal consent, it is usually foolish to ignore objections lodged by family members or law enforcement agencies (Dru Amherghin).

Nonetheless, children of any age are entitled to learn as much about sex as they wish to learn and are capable of handling, from whoever they wish as teachers. The best people for the teaching role are, of course, the parents. In any event, the parents should normally be consulted and their wishes followed (Dru Isaac).

It is the duty of all Druish parents, or others having responsibility for the welfare of children, to see to it that their children are sexually educated as soon as they are interested and willing, by whoever the children wish. If the children have no preferences and the parents or guardians have no preferences and the parents or guardians choose not to play the role of teachers, they should select a member of the community to perform that function (Dru Chwerthin).

Elderly people are also entitled to sexual satisfaction and this should not be forgotten (Dru Amherghin).

SPECIES: If beings not universally regarded as "sentient" are used as sexual partners, the person doing so must accord them all the rights (though not necessarily the responsibilities and obligations) of a human or other sentient being (Dru Earl).

Following the Law mentioned in 4:2, it is best to make sure beforehand that any sexual partner of another species will not be physically damaged by his or her participation in sexual activities (Dru Iolo).

If the being concerned is of a nature to be owned by another person, it is usually uncouth to engage in sexual activities with him or her without the owner's knowledge (Dru Chwerthin).

It should be pointed out that sexual contacts between humans and nonhumans is usually illegal and carries a stiff penalty almost everywhere (Dru Amherghin).

OR SEXUAL PERSUASION: There are no Laws either forbidding or requiring Hasidic Druids to have any particular sexual tastes, although straight adult heterosexual behavior is the norm. Homosexuality, Bisexuality, Autosexuality, Bestiality and other nondestructive preferences are completely up to the parties involved (Dru Amherghin).

Autoeroticism, in the major form of masturbation, is indeed to be encouraged among those beneath the age of legal

consent for personal sexual interaction, for otherwise we shall raise warped children (Dru Chwerthin).

It should be considered a perfectly acceptable outlet for adults, and no shame or ridicule should be placed upon those who, for their own good reasons, may choose this outlet (Dru Iolo).

Although if it is their exclusive outlet, they may be in need of counseling and perhaps some aggressive flirtation from another member of the community (Dru Isaac).

SAVE WHERE DANGER: It should never be forgotten that we live in a Death culture where opinions of the sort offered above can, even without being put into action, be the cause of great physical violence and legal harassment being directed at those holding them. Therefore, Druids are urged to be extremely cautious in discussing these matters with outsiders. The advice given in 14:9 should be taken to heart and these mores followed only within the community, or much grief will come to us all (Dru Iolo).

4:5 ALL BONDED PARTNERS: It is important to note that the original wording does not refer to couples at all, but to any group of two or more sentient beings (Dru Earl).

(IF DESIRED): This phrase is not to be forgotten, for otherwise strict observance of this rule would lead to violations of 4:3 (Dru Taliroth).

Dru Taliroth who was, after all, asexual for large portions of her life, was very wise to see that this phrase was given due attention; for many are the cases where members of bonded groups do not wish frequent sexual satisfaction (Dru Margola).

Although this phrase exists to remind members of bonded groups that they should satisfy their partners regularly, it should not be used to beat them over the head with (Dru Chwerthin).

OR ARRANGE FOR SURROGATE PARTNERS: A wise and loving member of a bonded group, who is not himself or herself feeling like sexual activity, should be happy to arrange for other members of the group to achieve satisfaction, with other parties if not with himself and herself (Dru Iolo).

The wise Druid does not seek to enforce this verse upon his or her partners, preferring instead to politely and unobtrusively seek sexual satisfaction elsewhere whenever he or she feels it appropriate (Dru Earl).

Yet one must be careful in going outside the group, for many jealousies and destructive emotions are generated in this fashion. True, one has the right as stated in the very next verse, but nonetheless, if that right has to be invoked often it is perhaps time to look for a new group with which to be bonded (Dru Isaac).

4:6 TO FORBID OR HINDER: However, practical matters of a nonsexual or non-possessive nature may be brought up as objection (Dru Iolo).

4:7 THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL: Thus it is highly uncouth to expect only the women in the group to worry about contraception (Dru Chwerthin).

4:8 NO GENDER: Whether female, male, or anything in between (Dru Amherghin).

IS SUPERIOR: Obviously, this refers to sweeping statements of total superiority. Obviously there are some areas (such as childbirth) where one gender will have an advantage over the other, but this should never be expended to cover unrelated matters (Dru Isaac).



4:9 OR REFRAIN FROM ANY ACTIVITY DISLIKED: The use of one's gender as an excuse to avoid responsibility for the performance of honorable duties is uncouth, as are unfounded accusations that someone else is doing this (Dru Amherghin).

5:1 TO BE WASTED: Blood is not to be removed excessively from food, as it is the gift of the animal's spirit to us (Dru David).

5:4 IN EQUAL AND HONORABLE COMBAT, OR IN A GENUINE ACCIDENT, OR IN A FULLY NATURAL DISASTER: In the event of these occurrences, the victor, the victim or a bystander may declare the spilled blood to be a sacrifice and direct its energies as desired (Dru Isaac).

5:6 MENSTRUAL PERIODS: It would seem fitting that an acknowledgment of the continual renewal of seed in the body of woman, celebration, rather than the traditional taboo, should be the order of dealing with this matter. Accordingly, the following is recommended: the father of a girl who begins menstruation should, as close as possible to the day when this event occurs, give a feast for the Grove at which, after drinking of wine and much merriment, reading and study should be given to material concerning the renewal of life and the continual cleansing and growth of all living things. At this time also it would seem fitting that the girl be initiated into the Women's Mysteries of the Grove and, if she be not already deflowered, that this be arranged by the women of the Grove (Dru David).

This is a truly inspired tradition, and one that could no doubt be set up as a complement to a similar puberty feast and initiation for boys, as soon as they have had their first flow of semen (Dru Chwerthin).

5:7 BECAUSE OF THEIR PERIOD: It is not uncouth to place restrictions upon women who are having their periods, if the restriction is only indirectly connected (or not at all connected) with the fact that they are having their periods (Dru Iolo).

One needs to be very careful in what one calls an "indirect" connection, for males have placed some very uncouth restrictions upon females throughout history, due to male myths of the effects of menstruation. However one example of a fair restriction is this: women who are, because of their periods or for any other reason, feeling nervous, hostile, weak or depressed should refrain from participating in group rituals; as said emotions may generate psychic static and disrupt the smooth flow of energies in the rituals (Dru Chwerthin).

It is vital to note that the restriction mentioned by Dru Chwerthin is equally appropriate for any men or children who may be feeling the same negative emotions, of any reason (Dru Amherghin).

It is perhaps unfair to restrict menstruating women who are having a rough period from all group rituals, better it is that the women of each Grove, as part of their Women's Mysteries, compose proper rituals to help such individuals (Dru Isaac).

6:Title ON GROOMING: What do these words mean in the title of this Chapter? Grooming is what monkeys do to one another in order to remove lice. It is indeed thorough, but should the Druish Hasidim be clean only on the outside? In my humble opinion, a title like "Hygiene among the Hasids" is more appropriate than the present one. Druids should be clean and presentable in spirit as well as bodies, for is not cleanliness next to godliness? And

should Druids, though they be natural creatures, be thought of as lousy as well? (Dru Tefillen).

The Ancients of Blessed Memory chose wisely this title, not only because it implies that Hasidic Druids take care of one another, as do baboons, chimpanzees and many other of the higher primates; but because "good grooming" has always been a sign of sociability and Drues are nothing if not sociable. The implication is a subtle one, but there nonetheless: Hasidic Druids are responsible for the external cleanliness (Physical, mental and emotional) of one another, as well as the internal (Dru Iolo).

Considering how intimate Hasidic Druids tend to get with each other, physically as well as otherwise, it is good indeed that this chapter is entitled as it is. Druids are expected to keep one another clean, not only of lice, but of nay other diseases or plagues that might interfere with the health and happiness of the community (Dru Isaac).

However, the only louse-y element that is common among Hasidic Druids would appear to be their puns (Dru Chwerthin).

6:1 WHETHER THEY NEED IT OR NOT: What determines need? Perhaps a particular standard of need should be set? Do Druids need to have a weekly bath in the event that they are bedridden or hospitalized? In this case, can perhaps five consecutive bed-baths equal one regular bath? Should a bath be taken more than once a week in the event that the Druid in question is attracting gnats? (Dru Tefillen).

This Law was first enacted when it was found that Hasidic Druids, being enthusiastic children of the Earth-Mother, have a tendency to accumulate large quantities of soil, peat, compost and other earthy elements over large portions of our bodies. This has a tendency to interfere with their social and other intercourses (Dru Amherghin).

Considering the manner in which Dru Tefillen and other Hasidic Druids are most often bedridden, tub baths at even more frequent intervals are to be advised, lest the frequency mentioned in 6:2 have to be increased as well (Dru Iolo).

Although she has been known to keep a delightfully effective flytrap in her bedroom (being an advocate as most Druids are, of natural methods of predator control), I hear that is Dru Tefillen herself who is attracting, or at least straining after, gnats in this question (Dru Chwerthin).

6:2 WHETHER THEY NEED IT OR NOT: Let us set limits and define need where the cleaning of bedding is involved. Do we wash our sheets once a month if perhaps we have been on vacation and didn't sleep on the bedding but perhaps a week or so? This does not seem ecologically minded, and thus is not Druish. ON the other hand, it is not hygienic to sleep on filthy, bacteria coated sheets, so can bedding be laundered more than once monthly if desired and necessary? If not, why not? (Dru Tefillen).

Once again Dru Tefillen has concerned herself with a subject close to her heart: dirty bed sheets. Her concern is not only as a healer and as a Druish scholar, but also as one who enthusiastically produces many ruffled sheets in urgent need of cleaning. Therefore, her expertise in this field should be given much weight, for she represents the cream of scholarship in such matters (Dru Isaac).

One reason traditionally given for this Law has to do with the cycles of the Moon. Not only is laundry often easier to clean at certain times of the month, it often need cleaning most at monthly intervals (Dru Taliroth).

6:9 IN THE VISIBLE SPECTRUM: This would seem to forbid the use of white robes at Druid services, a shocking interpretation, as well as of black robes, which are usually discouraged in any event (Dru Chwerthin).

This Law was ordained by the ancient Dru Scholomocha, in order to end the barbaric racial customs of the period. In our day, black and white are permitted, though it is well to de-emphasize their use (Dru Margola).

6:10 IS OPTIONAL: However, matters of both health and legality should be carefully considered before going nude into the out of doors (Dru Iolo).

It should be expected by all concerned that skyclad activities, including rituals, are liable to lead to uprisings by the males in the Grove. Since this is a sign of Life, it should not be considered either blasphemous or inappropriate (Dru Chwerthin).

7:1 ALL ARE ENCOURAGED: Since this rule uses the phrase "are encouraged" rather than "required," it is not considered uncouth to refrain from wearing a weapon at all times (Dru Earl).

Weapons are worn for many reasons, including the following: to honor the Gods of Battle, Who are the Slayers of Demons; to provide ritual weapons for religious and magical uses; to declare our willingness to defend our lives, our honor, the honor of the Gods (although They are usually quite capable of defending Themselves) and our way of life (Dru Amherghin).

They are also worn to remind us of the disciplines of the honorable Warrior and the necessity of restraint at all times (Dru Iolo).

AND TO KNOW HOW TO USE: Common sense and a concern for personal survival dictate that it is a definitely uncouth to carry any weapon in public that one does not know how to use (Dru Earl).

7:2 AN ABSOLUTE MINIMUM: When retreat will prevent unnecessary bloodshed, it is uncouth to attack (Dru Amherghin).

One may kill another only to prevent gross bodily injury or death to oneself or another innocent party (Dru Chwerthin).

7:3 NECESSARY TO ONE'S PERSONAL SURVIVAL: Wars, therefore, that are fought over economic, political or ideological matters are not usually just (Dru Iolo).

Especially in economic conflicts should one remember verse 2:4, and be not fooled (Dru Isaac).

7:4 TO PROTECT ONESELF: This Law includes the right to defend oneself from all forms of sexual assault, whether heterosexual or homosexual (Dru Chwerthin).

One should remember the Law in 7:2, however, and not overreact to minor sexual harassment. Breaking a leg or arm is usually sufficient (Dru Isaac).

It should be emphasized that males also have the right to protect themselves from sexual assault, whether from other males or from females (Dru Iolo).

As mentioned in Dru Chwerthin's comment on 4:2, any Druid is ethically required to interfere with a sexual assault against a woman, man, child or animal (though in the last case one would not usually kill over the mater). However, it is always wise to make sure that an actual assault is under way and not merely a rough session of foreplay (Dru Amherghin).

7:5 ARE EXCUSED: However, members of the pacifist's household and the Druish community at large are under no strict obligation to use violence in his or her defense (Dru Earl).

An exception to this opinion would be found in matters of sexual assault or injury, which are sins against the God and the entire community, and must therefore be halted in all circumstances (Dru Isaac).

8:3 IT IS COUTH: It is not uncouth to refrain from doing so, but it's not very nice either (Dru Chwerthin).

Besides, one can never tell when a supposed animal is a deity in disguise (Dru Amherghin).

8:7 LOVE: This means that one should be knowledgeable in the fields of ecology and woodcraft, for one cannot love that which is unknown to one (Dru Iolo).

9:2 A GIFT OF THE GODS: The ability to divine that which is hidden is a sign of holiness, but it is only one possible sign among many (Dru Amherghin).

Not everyone who can divine is of equal spiritual development (Dru Chwerthin).

9:5 TO ASK FOR RECOMPENSE: Charges for magical and divinatory efforts must be fair and based upon the poverty or wealth of the person asking for help (Dru Iolo).

Although any form of psychic working takes much energy, it is couth to offer to return one's fee in the event of failure – though it is not uncouth to refuse a refund or to refrain from offering one (Dru Chwerthin).

The advice in 14:10 should be remembered in these matters (Dru Amherghin).

FOR NON-DRUIDS: This phrase implies, though it does not directly state, that a Druid is prohibited from taking compensation from other Druids for magical or divinatory services rendered. Since there is no discernible boundary between a person's "Magical" skills and all the other skills he or she may possess, it follows that is uncouth of any Druid to perform any work or service for another Druid for pay. However, since such a prohibition would seriously interfere with the economic life of the Druish community, it is only prudent to reduce the implied prohibition to a mere admonition to always deal fairly with other Druids (Dru Earl).

9:6 WITHOUT THEIR EXPRESS PERMISSION: It is always couth to ask the Gods to bless someone or something, as long as the exact nature of the blessing is left up to Their wisdom (the Ancients).

It is uncouth to ask the Gods to visit someone's just deserts upon them (Dru Isaac).

However, the Gods, being both fickle and just, may see fit to judge the petitioner as well (Dru Earl).

10:2 INEXPENSIVE: Ostentatious display of expensive ritual equipment is uncouth rudeness to less wealthy Groves (Dru Isaac).

Nonetheless, the Gods deserve the very best (Dru Amherghin).

But They do not want the very best at the expense of the welfare of the Grove's members (Dru Iolo).

11:5 FATAL: It should be noted that in this case the word may be interpreted literally in connection with the definition of "uncouth" given in 3:1 (Dru Lew).

11:7 UNLESS A LIFE IS AT STAKE: If one will be maimed or permanently incapacitated, and one's life made miserable for years at a time, unless surgery is performed, one may have it done over a nonfatal matter (the Ancients).

One should be conservative in how this exception is applied to given situations (Dru Iolo).

11:9 MATTERS OF CONCEPTION OR ABORTION: No Hasidic Druid Laws concerning these matters exists, save 4:7, for they are considered to be entirely up to the parents or non-parents involved (Dru Chwerthin).

Men have no business saying anything about abortion at all (Dru Taliroth).

12:5 SHALL BE TAKEN: Often Hasidic Druids are forced by occupation to disobey this rule and therefore, if such is the case, an alternate psychic Weekend may be established. However, it would be far better for such persons to change to less uncouth occupations (Dru Margola).

13:4 UNCOUTH TO PREVENT: Here we encounter the question of the preservation of life and of responsibility. Shall it be couth to watch an entity destroy herself or himself with alcohol, if it be medically determined that such is an imminent possibility? The same may be said of many other drugs, and one may ask also about children. In 13:9 we have the prohibition, wisely given, against self-harm, but collective responsibility for those unable to make logical determinations for themselves (because of age, inexperience, madness or other reasons). Much consideration should be given these matters, and scholarship into the ancient texts may be looked to, as well as that knowledge open to scholars now, and it would be expected that each Grove (knowing its members and their needs) may make determination on their own of the following of this Law. It is recommended fully three councils of each Grove be held to make determination on this matter, with all members present if this is possible (Dru David).

It may also be added that when a member of an individual Grove is having difficulty with drugs of any sort, or with a chaotic and confused interior state which may appear to Outsiders as madness, it is preferable that assistance in his or her difficulties be provided by the members of the Grove rather than by Outsiders; such help being more in accordance with the wishes of the Gods (Dru Taliroth).

Thus one may say that it is couth to render assistance to a troubled member of the community, but it is uncouth when such help is given in such a way as to cut short that individual's responsibility for his or her actions. The Gods help those who help themselves (Dru Rusty).

The Original intent of this Law was to make sure that all Hasidic Druids had the freedom to explore alternate universes, and not to allow Druids to commit suicide, slow or fast, with hard drugs (Dru Iolo).

Obviously, however, it is open to abuse, as are all the Laws. Fools will find a way (Dru Amherghin).

14:1 SISTERS AND BROTHERS: What does this mean, that we should treat other Pagans as "sisters and brothers?" One answer may be found in 8:7. Mother is the Earth, Father is the Sky/Sun, and our Siblings are Their offspring- all living things.

Therefore, the injunction to love one's siblings is an injunction to love Life. Thus we are enjoined to love other Pagans as sisters and brothers, i.e., as Life itself (Dru Lew).

These words of Dru Lew are, as usual, wise, for not only is he one of the most up and coming young scholars of Hasidic Druidism, he is well versed in matters of sibling rivalry (Dru Chwerthin).

## CONSIDER:

### The Alternatives

#### Upon Arising

I thank Thee, O Gods, that I was made both male and female, and with the capacity to seek awareness of both in the One.

#### Upon Washing the Hands at Arising

I thank Thee, O gods, for all the works of Thy hands and for the life given me out of them.

#### Upon Dressing

I thank Tee, O Gods, for the shelter granted me by Thy grace and love.

#### Upon Studying or Seeing a Learned Person

Thanks to Thee, O Be'al, for the gift of the desire for awareness.

#### Upon Hearing of a Birth.

Thanks be to Thee, O Danu, for the supreme gift of a new life. Bless the child and keep him/her in Your loving care.

#### Upon Hearing of a Death:

To Thee is returned this portion of Thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to Thee. Blessed be the great wheel.

#### Upon the Lighting of Candles or Other Fires:

Thanks be to Thee, O Belenos (OR Taranis), for the light and warmth of fire.

#### Upon Cooking of Food

Blessed be Thou, O our Mother, Who brings forth the good things of the Earth.

#### Upon Eating of Food:

Blessed be Thou, O our Mother, Who brings forth the good things of the Earth.

#### Upon Brewing of Alcoholic Beverages

Thanks be to Thee, O Braciaca, for the gift of divine intoxication. Guides us in our preparation and bless our results.

## Upon Drinking

Thanks be to Thee, O our Mother, for the Waters which pour forth from Thy side.

## Prayer Before Meals

Blessed are Thou, O Queen of the Universe, Who brings forth food and drink from the Earth for our sustenance and pleasure. Bless us, O Gods, and these Thy gifts, which we are about to receive, from Thy bounty, through our sweat, so be it.

## Poem Before Meals

Good food, good drink,  
Good Gods Let's eat!

## Prayer After Meals

We give Thee thanks, O our Gods, that we have been able to receive Thy gift. Bless us and keep us in Your hearts, now and always.

## Plea to Mari

Remember, O most blessed mother Mari, that never was it known, that anyone who fled to Thy protection, implore Thy help, or sought Thy intercession was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly unto Thee, O Lady of Ladies, my Mother. To Thee I come, before Thee I stand, in need of thy assistance. O Mother of the Gods, despise not my petitions, but in Thy mercy hear and answer me.

## Litany of the Earth-Mother

O Earth-Mother, Thou of uncounted names and faces, Thou of the many-faceted Nature in and above All, Nature Incarnate, Love and Life fulfilled; look favorably upon this place, grace us with Your Presence, inspire and infuse us with Your powers; by all the names by which You have been known, O Earth-Mother:

*Come unto us.*

Thou Whom the Druids call Danu

*Come unto us.*

Thou Who art Erde of the Germans

*Come unto us.*

Thou Whom the Slavs call Ziva

Thou Who art the Nerthus of the Vanir

Thou Whom the Poles call Marzyana

Thou Who art Frigga of the Aesir

Thou Whom the Romans call Terra

Thou Who art Diana to the Etruscans

Thou Whom the Persians call Kybele

Thou Who are Iphimedeia, Mighty Queen of the Greeks

Thou Whom the Egyptians call Nuit, Star Mother

Thou Who art Ninmah of Sumeria

Thou Whom the Hittites call Kubala

Thou Who art Mami-Aruru of Babylon

Thou Whom the Canaanites call Arsai

Thou Who art Our Lady of Byblos in far Phoenicia

Thou Whom the children of Crete call Mountain Mother

Thou Who art Yemanja of the Umbanda

Thou Who art Shakti and Parvati of India  
Thou Whom the Tibetans call Green Tara  
Thou Who art Kwanyen of China  
Thou Whom the Nipponese call Izanami  
Thou Who art Sedna and Nerivik of the Eskimos  
Thou Whom the Pawnee call Uti-Hiata  
Thou Who art Corn-mother of the Plains  
Thou Whom the Navaho call Estanatlehi  
Thou Who art Omoteotl and Guadalupe in Mexico  
Thou Whom the Islanders call Hina-alu-okamoana  
Thou Who art the Great Mother, the Star Goddess, the All Creating One  
Mother of All, we call upon You  
Terra Mater, Mater Sotier, Earth-Mother  
*Come unto us!*

## Spectrum Plus

(An Order for the Lighting of Candles)

BLACK: "From Darkness,"

WHITE: "To Light,"

GREEN: "To Life. First came the Life of Plants,"

RED: "Then came the Life of Animals,"

YELLOW: "Then came the Life of the Mind,"

PURPLE: "From the Mind comes Passion,"

ORANGE: "From Passion comes Courage,"

BLUE: "From Courage comes Self-Awareness."

INDIGO: "From Self-Awareness we pass beyond all Space and Time

To touch the Most High one.

## Exorcism

In the name of the Earth-Mother, the Great Goddess, She who is called Danu, Frigga, Devi, Terra, Uti-Hiata, Yemanja, and by many other Names; Mother of all mortals and immortals, Source of Love and Life; before Whom all Gods, Demons, Angels, Demiurges, Elementals, Men, Women and all other Entities must Bow:

I cleanse this place, commanding all Spirits and Entities of Destructive, Diabolical, Diseased or Demonic nature of any sort so ever to quit and depart from here instantly!

Leave! For it is commanded in the name of Macha, Kali, Chandika, Kybele -the Wrathful Goddess who is the Slayer of Demons; She Who soars above the Battlefields; She Who is drunk on the blood of Evil Ones.

Leave! for it is commanded in the Mother's Name and ye dare not refuse, lest the Star Goddess visit Her vengeance upon ye.

Leave! For this is to be an abode of the Spirits of Life and of Love, and such as ye have no place here, now or ever.

In the Name of the Great Goddess: So be it.



## Psalm of the Star Goddess

1. The heavens declare the glory of the Goddess, the firmament shows Her handiwork.
2. Day after day shouts this; night after night reveals this knowledge.
3. No language fails to contain Her praise.
4. Her praise circles the world and rises to the Sun.
5. This praise is as joyous as love and as strong as the hunt.
6. She contains all in Her hands and Her bosom.
7. Her laws work, follow them and you will be wise.
8. Her laws are just, follow karma and your eyes will see.
9. Be awed by Her mighty knowledge;
10. Knowing and doing right is better than gold and sweeter than honey.
11. By Understanding Her Way, your path will always be lit.
12. She will teach you the way to balance, and to avoid pitfalls.
13. Never presume to know Her all, for She is greater than any human.



Prayer of the SeaHow wondrous are the works of the Earth-Mother!

Consider the oceans and their inhabitants.

Consider the waves that swell and fall afar from any human land, never seen by human eye.

Consider the waves born far out to sea, traveling many leagues to crash at last upon the rocks of some barren shore; spraying their white frustration high into the air; or which softly creep across furlongs of glistening sand, sending spies far inland, scouting new territory for the sea to reclaim.

Consider that for every grain of sand, every chip of rock, every cliff and promontory slipping into the waters; for each is another deposited elsewhere.

Consider the plants of the Sea; the mighty beds of mile-long kelp, the mosses growing upon the shore, the vast fields of algae and plankton, giving unto us the breath of life.

Consider the animals of the Sea; the horses of the sea and the lions of the sea, clam and barracuda, whale and kraken, and the dolphin—beloved of the Mother and friend to humans.

Consider as well the inhabitants of the depths where light is never seen, where waters never stir, where monstrous pressures crush all who would dare invade the realm; and also the dwellers of the reefs, the angels and anglers, octopus and starfish, and the deadly man-o-war.

Consider the monsters and the beauties, and wonder at the bounty of the Earth-Mother and wonder more at Her power.

Consider the seas of our ancestry, screaming in white, foaming frenzy against the barren rocks; while somewhere in a quiet tidal pool, one atom links with another, one molecule with another, one chain with another. And behold the miracle as the sky impregnates the waters and the Earth-Mother cries out “Let there be Life!”—and there is Life!

Consider thou that, as surely as we did come from the Sea, so shall we as surely return unto Her. Though we be buried beneath the soil of the driest land, it matters not—for all the world has been once covered by the Sea, and shall be covered again in days to come.

For the Mother Who rules the waters and the rocks, the skies and the pits, will have Her own, and none shall gainsay Her.

For the Earth-Mother is the Sea-Mother, Who arose from the waters to become the Goddess of Love and Life, and Who therefore bids us to Love and Live.

Ea Leukothea, Ea Yemanja, White Goddess of the Waters! Hail to Thee, Sedna and Nerivek!

And when our loving and our living is at an end, we shall return to the Sea, our Mother; where for every weakness there is a power, for every hurt a cure, for every sorrow a joy.

Long and live and consider: How wondrous are the works of the Earth-Mother!

So Ends  
Vol Five  
Of ARDA 2

# VOLUME SIX

## THE GREEN BOOKS

As a result of the enormous expansion of Part Six to over 848 pages, it has been necessary to print the Green Books as a separate volume from the Main Volume. You can still download them at <http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/arda.html> And feel to assemble your own books. **The Green Books also contain some copyrighted material; therefore they cannot be reprinted by us at this time.**

Green Book Vol 1 The Original Collection 21 pages, 1966 & 1971  
Green Book Vol 2 Celtic, American, African, Hindu & Greek Writings, 34 pages, 1993  
Green Book Vol 3 Oriental and Monotheist Wisdom, 34 pages, 1993  
Green Book Vol 4 The Ill-AD and the Odd Essay, 112 pages, 1997  
Green Book Vol 5 Chicken Soup for the Druid's Soul, 118 pages, 2002  
Green Book Vol 6 Books of Songs and Poetry, 116 pages, 2003  
Green Book Vol 7 Seasonal Selection, 74 pages, 2003  
Green Book Vol 8 Order of the Mithril Star, 21 pages, 2003  
Green Book Vol 9 Plants, Animals, Food & Drink, 54 pages, 2003  
Green Book Vol 10 Research Resources on Druidism, 165 pages, 2003  
Green Book Vol 11 Druidic Board Games, 61 pages, 2004

### The Original 1966 Introduction

Those who join the Reformed Druids are, in one sense or another, religious rebels. They are usually fed up with the hypocrisies and inadequacies of the institutionalized churches. They seek a satyric outlet, and they find it in Druidism. But they are seldom anti-religious. On the contrary, they often feel that there is in fact some truth to be found in religion, and this belief is affirmed in the Basic Tenets. A common complaint among Druids is that the truth has been obscured because they have been forced, more or less against their will, into various particular religious molds. They seek to be freed in order to freely seek, and to make independent judgments on what passes for religious truth.

Druidism, as an institution, must remain independent. It can never hope to profess absolute truth; for when it does, it then will become no better than the fossilized institutions from which its members have fled. But even while it systematically shuns dogmatism, it can, and must still lead. It must provide the opportunity for discovery, which many of its members have never had. It must, in short, provide in its written meditations a taste of the writings of the world's great religions, in the hope that this taste will stimulate a wider search for knowledge and wisdom in the quest for religious truth.

As Arch-Druid, you are charged with preparing meditations, which will prove meaningful to the congregation. In order to do this, you must choose selections from the Buddhists, the Hindus, the Taoists, the Muslims, and many others, as well as from the Bible. You must provide a wide variety in order to give truth a chance. The best method is to study widely yourself. But this can be too time-consuming. I therefore strongly urge you to purchase, for your own edification, an excellent and useful collection: Viking Portable #5, Robert Ballou's World Bible. It is available in paper for less than \$2.00\*\*, or in hardcover for slightly more. The selections are short and illuminating, and the editor exhibits a bias, which can almost be called Druidic. It makes a good beginning.

For those Arch-Druids who are lazier still, or who suddenly find themselves in desperate need of a meditation at the last minute, I offer the following collection. It is hoped that the collection, although short, is representative and especially useful for Reformed Druids.

David A. Frangquist  
Editor, 1966

\*\*Circa 2021: ≥ \$8.19 from Penguin Books

Drynemetum Press



## 2003 Introduction

Amazingly, the Green Books collection has grown as large as the original collection of ARDA 1. Most of these books were rather solitary efforts and the addition of more editors would have sharpened the focus and removed sub-par materials. Instead, I have erred on the side of inclusivity, being the pack-rat that I am.

The first Green Book began as a collection for the lazy Arch-Druids of Carleton to come up with something to say in the early 1960s during the Meditation section of the weekly liturgies, much as modern clergy refer to books of ready-made sermons. Building on that tradition, I collected two more books for the first edition of ARDA. These went relatively well, but my research didn't stop; and book after book of recommended reading material, and stuff I just thought was neat, were produced over the years, especially as I began to mine the older magazines of the NRDNA movement, and consolidate interesting types of materials.

Each Green Book has its own theme. Green 2 was my European studies, and Green 3 was my Asian studies in 1993. After my trip to Japan, Green 4 was conceived as a trip around the world, with readings from all the continents and major religions. Levity has been a constant companion to the Reformed Druid, so Green 5 was conceived as material to cheer up a Druid in those times when they are depressed or unhappy. Green 6 is a collection of all the songs, poems & stories written by past Reformed members. Green 7 has seasonal essays to inspire Druids during their preparations for the eight major Druid festivals. Green 8 is materials from the Order of the Mithril Star, that didn't fit anywhere else. Green 9 is a collection of the works on food, drink and trees; so important to Druidic life. Green 10 is a collection of writings about the history and nature of the modern and ancient Druids (especially the RDNA), to assist in future research on our group. And Green Book 11 is to just have a bit of fun with games.

Future volumes are in the process of planning even as I send off seven new volumes in this edition. There may well be a collection of religious and social freedom speeches, a volume on transcendentalist & nature poets of the 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> century, and volumes 6-11 will undoubtedly be supplemented over the following years.

As always, none of this material is to be considered dogmatic or reflective of the views of any Reformed Druids. It is meant to widen your understanding of spiritual matters, not to narrow your possibilities. Please use them well and perhaps add a few volumes of your own.

Sincerely,  
Mike Scharding  
Circa Day 75 of Earrach, Y.R. XL  
April 15th, 2003 C.E.  
Embassy of Japan, D.C.



## Preface to 1976 Edition

In the first few years after the foundation of Reformed Druidism at Carleton College, there became attached to the office of Arch-Druid three collections of written material, which became known collectively as the Three Books of the Arch-Druid. Handed down over the years from Arch-Druid to Arch-Druid, they have acquired for the Druids at Carleton some measure of venerability, such as the scant age of the Reform can confer.

The first of these, The Book of the Worship of the Earth-Mother, preserves much of the liturgy used in the beginning, though indeed as the Reform grew, so did the realization that liturgy cannot remain fixed and static while religious outlook changes. So today each presiding priest is encouraged to write liturgy that he can celebrate without antagonizing his own religious scruples; and while much is still drawn from the Book of Worship, its influence is less than it once was. The second book, the Archives, though of much historical interest, has hardly ever borne much influence on the religious activity at Carleton.

By contrast, the Book of Written Meditations has waxed large in the consciousness of the Carleton Grove, larger even, perhaps, than the Druid Chronicles. These meditations were gathered by David Frangquist as an aid to lazy Arch-Druids (or so he said), and the collection was bound in green covers which readily distinguish it from the black covers of the Book of Worship and the blue covers of the Archives; indeed at Carleton it is called simply "the green book" and that has become in effect its title. These meditations found their way with increasing frequency into services at Carleton, not from increasing laziness, but from increasing awareness of the treasures that David had gathered together between the green covers. Members of the grove would often borrow the book for their own meditation and reflection, and eventually the essence and core of Druidism at Carleton could be found in seminal form within this free-form, eclectic collection more than any place else, save only the great world at large, whence, after all, these meditations came.

And so we have thought it appropriate to print The Green Book to bring it to a larger audience, in the hope that others, too, may find it useful in the search for awareness. The pages of the original are unnumbered, for David encouraged his successors to add such meditations as they found appropriate. We encourage our readers to do likewise, and have accordingly left the pages unnumbered. There have been additions since David's time, but they have been few. For this edition we have included several selections that have long wanted adding; the Yeats' poems, for example, which have almost become part of the Carleton liturgy. We have resisted the temptations to make a few excisions. We should especially have liked to excise the "Sayings of the Ancient Druids" which are no more Druidic than is Stonehenge, and which certainly cannot be said to represent the beliefs of the Reformed Druids; yet David included it, and we shall not gainsay him.

Herewith, then is The Green Book, in substantially the same form as it was bequeathed to Carleton by David. May you find joy in the reading!

Richard M. Shelton  
Ellen Conway Shelton  
Editors, 1974

Write-In Your Own Meditations Here



Write-In Your Own Meditations Here

Write-In Your Own Meditations Here

Write-In Your Own Meditations Here

So Ends  
Vol Six  
Of ARDA 2

# VOLUME SEVEN

## THE DRUID MISCELLANY

### 2003 Introduction

Do not confuse this section with “A Druid Missal-Any” magazine of the NRDNA.

Most of the contents from this dusty corner have been moved into the Green Books of Part Six, which is a separate publication, viewable on-line at the internet site into Green Book Vol 10. Originally, this Part 7 was going to be a good hefty 140 pages, and now its down to a handful, but I felt that this section was better suited to being “the waste bin” for things that absolutely didn’t fit anywhere else”.

As a result, two new Green Books developed and stole all the materials from this section of ARDA 2. One was a collection of materials related to Food & Trees and the other was Research Materials on Modern Druidism. Both of them also had considerable copyright concerns, so it was removed to the Green Books, which will not be commercially available. A few things from the cutting room floor were tossed in here at the last minute.

Yours in the Mother,  
-Mike Scharding  
March 20, 2003  
Embassy of Japan

### 1996 Introduction

Most of the material in this section is of very little importance to most pre 1986 Carleton Druids (because of its heavy Celtic Pagan orientation), but I feel that it has great importance for understanding the later NRDNA, and it may be of use to modern Carleton Druids.

The books have been pretty much reprinted in order and verbatim from DC(E). This is better preserves the historical nature of these documents, to show the approach and "angle" that the DC(E) of 1976 was presenting, especially to the compilers of religious encyclopedists. Many issues of The Druid Chronieler magazine would essentially add to this section from 1976 to 1980. I removed the Book of Footnotes, broke it up and placed them under the appropriate texts rather than stuffing all of them in this obscure section of ARDA. I have added those sections and indicated so.

As with every section of this collection, none of this material is necessarily indicative of the opinion of any other Druid except that of the author(s). The material is not dogmatic or canonical, and can not be assumed to represent the Reform as a whole. Most of it is terribly out of date, and much **better** recent materials are available.

Day 1 of Foghamhar Year XXXIV of the Reform  
(August 1st, 1996 c.e.)  
Michael Scharding

The Drynemeton Press



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## The Original Chapter Contents in DC(E) 1976 & ARDA 1996

- Different Strokes
- The Pronunciation of Gaelic Terms (Moved to Pt.6, Vol 10)
- A Guide to Gaelic [*sic*] Deities (Moved to Pt. 6, Vol 10)
- The Book of Bards (Moved to Pt. 6, Volume 6, Book Zero)
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- The Other Druids (Moved to Pt.6, Vol 10)
- A Basic Wiccan Rite (Moved to Pt.6, Vol 10)
- The Book of Footnotes (incorporated into text)
- A Bibliography of Druidism (Moved to Pt.6, Vol 10)
- Credits (deleted)
- Corrections (incorporated into text)



**Figure 1 Could this be Druids in MN bundling together for warmth on Samhain, or an ancient world-record attempt for the largest go-go dancing group?**

# Pagan Musings

## DC(E) Introduction:

*This following was written in 1970 c.e. by Tony Kelly of the Selene Community in Wales. Tony, a most excellent poet and philosopher, was one of the founders of the Pagan Movement in the British Isles and, through his writings and concepts, one of those who initiated Pagan Way in this Country. (Pagan Movement in Britain in Britain and Pagan Way in the US both began as one with the same group of Pagan scholars, the same research into the ancient Goddess cults, and, in initial stages, the same rituals. The two later divided since all agreed that each country had its own particular needs and each required a unique approach in bringing back Paganism.)*

What follows expresses well the feeling which lies behind the Paganism of today, and gives the hope that Pagans have for the future. Tony Kelly's inspired manifesto has become one of the great works of resurgent Paganism. As such, I feel that the Neopagan Druids will still find it inspiring for them. As for the non-Pagan Druids, it may increase their knowledge of diverse traditions and give them to appreciate the finer aspects and dreams of Paganism.

We're of the Old Religion, sired of Time, and born of our beloved Earth Mother. For too long the people have trodden a stony path that goes only onward beneath a sky that goes only upwards. The Horned God plays in a lonely glade for the people are scattered in this barren age and the winds carry his plaintive notes over deserted heaths and reedy moors and into the lonely grasses. Who now knows the ancient tongue of the Moon? And who speaks still with the Goddess? The magic of the land of Lirien and the old Pagan gods have withered in the dragon's breath; the old ways of magic have slipped into the well of the past, and only the rocks now remember what the moon told us long ago, and what we learned from the trees, and the voices of grasses and the scents of flowers.

We're Pagans and we worship the Pagan gods, and among the people there are Witches yet who speak with the moon and dance with the Horned One. But a Witch is a rare Pagan in these days, deep and inscrutable, recognizable only by her own kind, by the light in her eyes and the love in her breast, by the magic in her hands and the lilt of her tongue and by her knowledge of the real. But the Wiccan way is one way. There are many; there are Pagans the world over who worship the Earth Mother and the Sky Father, the Rain God and the Rainbow Goddess, the Dark One and the Hag on the mountain, the Moon Goddess and the Little People in the mists on the other side of the veil. A Pagan is one who worships the goddesses and gods of nature, whether by observation or by study, whether by love or admiration, or whether in their sacred rites with the Moon, or the great festivals of the Sun.

Many suns ago, as the pale dawn of reason crept across the Pagan sky, man grew out of believing in the gods. He has yet to grow out of disbelieving in them. He who splits the Goddess on an existence/nonexistence dichotomy will earn himself only paradoxes for the gods are not so divided and nor the magic lands of the Brother of Time. Does a mind exist. Ask Her and She will tell you yes, but seek Her out, and She'll elude you. She is in every place, and in no place, and you'll see Her works in all places but Herself in none. Existence was the second-born from the Mother's womb and contains neither the first-born, nor the un-born. Show us your mind and we'll show you the gods! No matter that you can't for we can't show you the gods. But come

with us and the Goddess Herself will be our love and the God will call the tune. But a brass penny for your reason! for logic is a closed ring, and the child doesn't validate the Mother, nor the dream the dreamer. And what matters the wars of opposites to she who has fallen in love with a whirlwind or to the lover of the arching rainbow.

But tell us of your Goddess as you love Her, and the gods that guide your works, and we'll listen with wonder, for to do less would be arrogant. But we'll do more, for the heart of man is aching for memories only half forgotten, and the Old Ones only half unseen. We'll write the old myths as they were always written and we'll read them on the rocks and in the caves and in the deep of the greenwood's shade, and we'll hear them in the rippling mountain streams in the rustling of the leaves, and we'll see them in the storm clouds, and in the evening mists. We've no wish to create a new religion, for our religion is as old as the hills and older, and we've no wish to bring differences together. Differences are like different flowers in a meadow, and we are all one in the Mother.

What need is there for a Pagan movement since our religion has no teachings and we hear it in the wind and feel it in the stones and the moon will dance with us as She will? There is a need. For long the Divider has been among our people and the tribes of man are no more. The sons of the Sky Father have all but conquered Nature, but they have poisoned Her breast and the Mother is sad for the butterflies are dying and the night draws on. A curse on the conquerors! But not of us, for they curse themselves for they are Nature too. They have stolen our magic and sold it to the mindbenders and the mindbenders tramp a maze that has no outlet, for they fear to go down in to the dark waters, and they fear the real for the One who guards the path.

Where are the Pagan shrines? And where do the people gather? Where is the magic made? And where are the Goddess and the Old One? Our shrines are in the fields and on the mountains, in the stars and in the wind, deep in the green wood and on the algal rocks where two streams meet. But the shrines are deserted, and if we gathered in the arms of the Moon for our ancient rites to be with our gods as we were of old, we would be stopped by the dead who now rule the Mother's land and claim rights of ownership on the Mother's breast, and make laws of division and frustration for us. We can no longer gather with our gods in a public place and the old rites of communion have been driven from the towns and cities ever deeper into the heath where barely a handful of heathens have remained to guard the old secrets and exact the old rites. There is magic in the heath far from the cold grey society, and there are islands of magic hidden in the entrails of the metropolis behind closed doors, but the people are few, and the barriers between us are formidable. The Old Religion has become a dark way, obscure, and hidden in the protective bosom of the night. Thin fingers turn the pages of a book of shadows while the Sunshine seeks in vain His worshippers in His leafy glades.

Here, then, is the basic reason for a Pagan Movement: we must create a Pagan society wherein everyone shall be free to worship the goddesses and gods of Nature, and the relationship between a worshipper and her gods shall be sacred and inviolable, provided only that in her love of her own gods, she doesn't curse the name of the gods of others.

It's not yet our business to press the law-makers with undivided endeavor to unmake the laws of repression and, with the Mother's love, it may never become our business for the stifling tides of dogmatism are at last already in ebb. Our first work, and our greatest wish, is to come together, to be with each other in our tribes for we haven't yet grown from the Mother's

breast to the stature of the Gods. We're of the Earth, and sibs to all the children of wild Nature, born long ago in the warm mud of the ocean floor; we were together then, and we were together in the rain forests long before that dark day when, beguiled by the pride of the Sky Father, and forgetful of the Mother's love, we killed her earlier-born children and impoverished the old genetic pool. The Red Child lives yet in America; the Black Child has not forsaken the gods; the old Australians are still with their nature gods; the Old Ones still live deep in the heart of Mother India, and the White Child has still a foot on the old Wiccan way, but Neanderthal is no more and her magic faded as the Lil and Archan burst their banks and the ocean flowed in to divide the Isle of Erin from the land of the White Goddess.

Man looks with one eye on a two-faced god when he reached for the heavens and scorned the Earth which alone is our life and our provider and the bosom to which we have ever returned since the dawn of Time. He who looks only to reason to plumb the unfathomable is a fool, for logic is an echo already implicit in the question, and it has no voice of its own; but he is no greater fool than he who scorns logic or derides it impotence from afar, but fears to engage in fair combat when he stand's on his opponent's threshold. Don't turn your back on Reason, for his thrust is deadly; but confound him and he'll yield for his code of combat is honorable. So here is more of the work of the Pagan Movement. Our lore has become encrusted over the ages with occult trivia and the empty vaporings of the lost. The occult arts are in a state of extreme decadence; astrology is in a state of disrepute and fears to confront the statistician's sword; alien creeds oust our native arts and, being as little understood as our own forgotten arts, are just as futile for their unfamiliarity. Misunderstanding is rife. Disbelief is black on every horizon, and vampires abound on the blood of the credulous. Our work is to reject the trivial, the irrelevant and the erroneous, and to bring the lost children of the Earth Mother again into the court of the Sky Father where reason alone will avail. Belief is the deceit of the credulous; it has no place in the heart of a Pagan.

But while we are sad for those who are bemused by Reason, we are deadened by those who see no further than his syllogisms as he turns the eternal wheel of the Great Tautology. We were not fashioned in the mathematician's computation, and we were old when the first alchemist was a child. We have walked in the magic forest, bewitched in the Old Green Things; we have seen the cauldron and the one become many and the many in the one; we know the Silver Maid of the moonlight and the sounds of the cloven feet. We have heard the pipes on the twilight ferns, and we've seen the spells of the Enchantress, and Time be stilled. We've been into eternal darkness where the Night Mare rides and rode her to the edge of the abyss, and beyond, and we know the dark face of the Rising Sun. Spin a spell of words and make a magic knot; spin it on the magic loom and spin it with the gods. Say it in the old chant and say it to the Goddess, and in Her name. Say it to a dark well and breathe it on a stone. There are no signposts on the untrod way, but we'll make our rituals together and bring them as our gifts to the Goddess and Her God in the great rites.

Here, then, is our work in the Pagan Movement; to make magic where the gods would wish it, and to come together in our ancient festivals of birth and life, of death and of change in the old rhythm. We'll print the rituals that can be shared in the written word; we'll do all in our power to bring the people together, to teach those who would learn, and to learn from those who can teach. We will infiltrate groups, bring people to groups, and groups to other groups in our common devotion to the goddesses and gods of Nature. We will not storm the secrets

of any coven, nor profane the tools, the magic, and still less, the gods of another.

We'll collect the myths of the ages, of the people and of the Pagans of other lands, and we'll study the books of the wise and we'll talk to the very young. And whatever the Pagan needs in her study, or her worship, then it is our concern, and the Movement's business to do everything possible to help each other in our worship of the gods we love.

We are committed with the lone Pagan on the seashore, with he who worships in the fastness of a mountain range of she who sings the old chant in a lost valley far from the metallic road. We are committed with the wanderer, and equally with the prisoner, disinherited from the Mother's milk in the darkness of the industrial wens. We are committed too with the coven, with the circular dance in the light of the full moon, with the great festivals of the sun, and with the gatherings of the people. We are committed to build our temples in the towns and in the wilderness, to buy the lands and the streams fro the landowners and give them to the Goddess for Her children's use, and we'll replant the greenwood as it was of old for love of the dryad stillness, and for love of our children's children.

When the streams flow clear and the winds blow pure, and the sun nevermore rises unrenowned nor the moon ride in the skies above; when the stones tell of the Horned God and the green wooded grows deep to call back Her own ones, then our work will be ended and the Pagan Movement will return to the beloved womb of our Old Religion, to the Nature goddesses and gods of Paganism.

(Selene Community, Con y Lloer, Ffarmers, Llanwrda, Sir Gaerfyrddin, Cymru, Wales)



## Different Strokes

By Isaac Bonewits  
Druid Chronicles (Evolved) 1975

*[This section is terribly out of date, but it is shown to you in its historical originality. Do you notice a bias in the presentation? Scharding]*

After studying the materials available from the various Branches of Reformed Druidism, it is possible that you may not find any of them to your personal spiritual taste. Therefore, we append a list of various other organizations you may find more to your liking. Feel free to write to them about their beliefs, activities and goals. Always include a stamped, self-addressed envelope (a large one) with ever request for information. Those organizations with a star (\*) attached publish newsletters, magazines or other periodicals. -Bonewits

### Neopagan:

Coven du Bandia Grassail, Alliston, MA  
Manhattan Pagan Way Grove, New York, NY 10022  
Children of the Moon, Bladensburg, MD 20710  
Ordo Templi Dianos, Lake Worth, FL 33460  
Sabaeon Religious Order, Chicago, IL 60613  
Chicago Mithraeum, Chicago, IL 60614  
Temple of Isis, Chicago, IL 60656  
Temple of Uranus, Chicago, IL 60637  
Church of All Worlds,\* St. Louis, MO 63130  
Church of Seven Arrows, ULC Denver, CO 80210  
Feraferia, \* Altadena CA 91001  
Temple, Tujunga, CA 91042  
Church of the Eternal Source,\* Burbank, CA 91505  
Council of Earth Religions, San Diego, CA 92116  
Temple of the Golden Calf, Berkeley, CA 94704

### Wiccan:

Seax-Wicca, \*Weirs Beach, NH 03246  
Temple of Rebirth, Inc., Passaic NJ 07055  
Theos & Phoenixm,\* Commack, NY 11725  
Moonstar/Starrcraft, Watertown, NY 13601  
Association of Cymmry Wicca, \* Atlanta Metro Branch, Smyrna, GA 30080  
American Order of the Brotherhood of Wicca, St. Paul, MN 55165  
Church and School of Wicca, \* Salem, MO 65560  
Wicca Contact Service, Dallas TX 75205  
The Dianic Craft,\* Dallas, TX 75221  
Arianhu Church, Albuquerque, NM 87101  
Susan B Anthony Coven, Venice CA 90291  
Church of Wicca of Bakersfield, CA 93304  
New Reformed Orthodox Order of the Golden Dawn,\* Oakland CA 94661  
The Covenant of the Goddess, C/o NROOGD  
Nemeton, \* Oakland, CA 94661  
The Elf Queen's Daughters, Seattle, WA 98104

### Other:

The Humanist Society:\* check local phone book.  
The Theosophical Society:\* clpb  
The Vedanta Society:\*  
The Universal Life Church, Inc.,\* 601 3rd St, Modesto, CA 52951  
The Buddhist Churches in America:\* clpb  
The Socialist Party:\* clpb  
The Society of Friends (Quakers):\* clpb

The Swedenborgian Churches: \* clpb

The Spiritualist Churches:\* clpb

Note: The Majority of the addresses in the first two sections were taken from "The Pagan Yellow Pages," which were published over two years ago. Addresses may not be current. A letter of inquiry to the "Forum" of Green Egg (Box 2953, St. Louis, MO 63130) will usually produce a reply. -Bonewits

### Ecology:

Druids of every Branch of the Reform are deeply concerned with ecological matters. Therefore, we present a list of some of the more effective ecological and conservation organizations in the United States. Each of them deserves your support and (if you live close enough) your volunteer time.

Write to them, enclosing a large self-addressed, stamped envelope, to find out if there are local branches in your area and how you can help.

America the Beautiful Fund, 219 Shoreham Bldg., Washington, DC 20005

California Tomorrow, Monadnock Bldg., 681 Market St., San Francisco, CA 94105

Defenders of Wildlife, 2000 "N" St NW, #201, Wash DC 20036

Environmental Defense Fund, 162 Old Town Rd, East Setauket, NY 11733

Friends of the Earth, 529 Commercial St, San Francisco, CA 94111

National Audubon Society, box 5133 Church St Station, NY, NY 10008

National Parks Association 1701 18th St NW, Wash DC 20009

National Wildlife Federation, 1412 16th St NW, Wash DC 20036

National Resources Defense Council, 15 West 44th St, NY, NY 10036

The Nature Conservancy, 1800 North Kent St, Arlington VA 22209

Point Reyes Bird Observatory, Box 321, Bolinas, CA 94924

Sierra Club, 220 Bush St, San Francisco, CA 94104

Wilderness Society, 1901 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Wash DC 20006

World Wildlife Fund, 901 17th St NW, Wash DC 20005



**Figure 2 Sturdy engineering endures.**

# The Sociology of the RDNA

By Irony Sade  
November 1998  
(New to ARDA 2)

## Introduction

In this paper I intend to demonstrate that the great sociological theories of Schleiermacher, Marx, Durkheim and others are applicable to the study of the Reformed Druids of North America. I believe that these theories can shed useful light on even a movement as peculiar as the RDNA and that the Druids themselves hold some valuable contributions for the general study of religion. I intend to demonstrate that while they do not call themselves a religion, and perhaps ought not to do so on philosophic grounds, the Reformed Druids share enough of the qualities of a religious movement to be usefully studied as such. I will discuss the sources and methodological problems involved in this kind of study, give an introduction to the Reformed Druids, and a brief sketching of their origins and belief. Next I will address the question of religious applicability, and finally delve into the examination of the sociological theories of Schleiermacher, Marx, and Durkheim as they relate to the Reformed Druids.

## Disclaimer and Acknowledgments

It must always be remembered that in matters of religious belief each individual can express only his or her conception of what a religion is or teaches. This is especially true of Reformed Druidism. The Druidic path is an intensely individualistic one and each Druid can only speak for sure of what he or she has found. To a certain extent this also holds for describing the movement as a whole. The way in which I see Reformed Druidism is only one amongst the many views that can be taken of it. Anyone wanting to take a serious look at the subject should be careful to view it through more than one lens.

Which brings me to a certain methodological problem with this study. Most- if not all- of the scholarly work that has been done regarding the Reformed Druids of North America at Carleton has been done by one man- Michael Scharding. Archdruid of the Carleton Grove from the spring of 1993 to that of 1994 he cosponsored the most recent revival of the Druids at Carleton (1995-6) and remains an influential- albeit absent-friend at the time of this writing. Michael Scharding majored in History as an undergraduate and in 1994 undertook the wonderfully self-referential endeavor of researching the history of the Reformed Druids for his Senior Integrative Exercise. In 1996 he revised this paper into a rather longer one, A General History of Reformed Druidism in America, and published it along with nearly all the collected writings of Reformed Druids past in A Reformed Druid Anthology, of which he was also the associate editor. "As a result of this research," he writes, "I've probably collected and read more Reformed Druid material and talked with more Druids from the different factions than any other Reformed Druid (except possibly Isaac Bonewits.) This means that I'm either an 'expert' or I am now more irreparably confused in my Druidism than ever as a result."<sup>1</sup> It also means that no academic study of Reformed Druidism to date- to my knowledge- has escaped from his shadow.

<sup>1</sup> In his forward to A General History... A Reformed Druid Anthology, pp. 331. ARDA pp. 16



Daniel Hansen's *American Druidism* is a wonderful field guide to the various Druid groups of the Americas, and provides a fine history of the RDNA, but, as Mr. Scharding has commented, "it would not be a good book to compare my opinions against as I had a great deal to do with getting [it] published."

Margot Alder also talks about the RDNA in what many consider the definitive work on the Neo-Pagan movement, *Drawing Down the Moon*, but says very little that Scharding does not.

Isaac Bonewits also mentions the RDNA at Carleton in *Real Magic* but discusses them primarily in terms of one of their rituals, which he uses as an example to illustrate his theories on magic working. In short, beyond a few oral interviews performed by the College archivist and others and the preserved writings of past and present Druids there is little written work to study.

To date, Michael Scharding represents the most influential academic voice in the study of Reformed Druidism. Except by performing new, original research it is nearly impossible not to be influenced by his perspective on the movement. As mentioned above, any adequate study of religion ought to view it through more than one lens. Luckily most of the progenitors of the movement are still alive and much of its history has been recorded and stored so the possibility of original studies remains. I write this merely to make the reader aware of Scharding's influence. The study of Reformed Druidism is both indebted to and dominated by him, and, while I have drawn extensively on my own observations, interviews, research, and experience as Archdruid over the past three years, this paper is no exception. People who wish a clearer look at the movement are encouraged to explore it for themselves.

Finally let me make one technical note. Wherever I refer to 'Druids' in this paper I mean the Reformed Druids of North America at Carleton College, past and present. I do not intend to discuss the Paleo-Druids of the Old World, nor the Meso-Druids of Brittany revived in 1717, nor most of the other Neo-Druid groups in America except as they directly relate to our understanding of the RDNA. If you want an overview of them, read Hansen. With that caveat, let us begin.

Irony Sade  
Prentice 206  
November, 1998

## Section I

### An Introduction to Reformed Druidism

"Religions that combine humor, play, and seriousness are a rare species," Margot Adler wrote. "Once you embark on a journey of change in perception, even when you start this journey as 'play,' you can end up in waters far different from those you may have originally intended to enter."<sup>2</sup> Reformed Druidism represents the embodiment of this sentiment. Created partially as a joke, partially as a reaction against authority, it nonetheless blossomed and grew far beyond the hopes and desires of its founders, becoming both sillier than they had intended, and far more serious than they had ever imagined.

Reformed Druidism began at Carleton as a humorous response to the ruling that all students attend a set number of religious services each term. The early flavor of the movement was always one of serious tongue-in-cheek, a combination of the intentionally profound with the pointlessly silly. The early

Liturgy, for instance, was written in a playful pseudo-King James style both to provide a semblance of legitimacy and to tease the traditional profundity of holy writings. At the same time it contains some incredibly meaningful passages. Deborah Frangquist, one of the early formative members of the RDNA, recalls one of them nearly thirty years later.

O Lord, forgive these three sins, which are due to our human limitations:  
Thou art everywhere, but we worship Thee here;  
Thou art without form, but we worship Thee in these forms;  
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, but we offer unto Thee these, our prayers and sacrifices.

"I still find that one of the most profound spiritual statements I have ever heard," she recalls. "It informs my understanding of what I as a believing Christian am doing in Christian liturgy, including the Eucharist. Every time I ended out on the Hill somewhere saying that prayer, I was moved anew by it, and I don't think I was alone in that."<sup>3</sup> The Druids at Carleton today continue to exhibit this characteristic blend of the meaningful and the frivolous. Their celebration of Beltane- the first of May- in 1998 included both a pair of weddings as serious and beautiful as the nuptial pairs could ask and an extended bout of 'doughnut fishing,' a spontaneous game where people chased a doughnut suspended on the end of a string, trying to catch it in their mouths while being tickled.

It is, I believe, this persistence of humor and spontaneity, respect and seriousness that has kept Reformed Druidism alive at Carleton for the last thirty-five years and enabled it to spread as far as it has. Were it to lose either of these qualities the movement would be finished. It would become either the useless ghost of a religion or a sacrilegious joke. With them it becomes something both meaningful and liberating, a way of searching and of exploring life in the company of others and oneself that is not exactly one thing or another. Neither a religion by its own definition nor a philosophy by anyone else's, Reformed Druidism represents a unique and valuable creation of the human mind, and a fascinating confusion to the study of religion.

## Section II

### Origins of the Reformed Druids

The Reformed Druids of North America began, with no connection to either the Paleo or the modern European Druids, at Carleton College in April of 1963. At that time the college had a requirement for graduation stating that

"Attendance is required at the College Service of Worship or of the Sunday Evening Program or at any regularly organized service of public worship. Each term, every student must attend seven [of ten] of the services or religious meetings."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> This triad first appears in the Order of Common Worship as the invocation and again in nearly all the early liturgy. The Druids at Carleton have currently fallen out of the habit of actually using the old liturgy, but they still read through it for a good laugh and ponder it's many truths. See *A Reformed Druid Anthology*, Part Three, *Liturgy of the Druids*.

Deborah Frangquist in an interview with Eric Hillemann, *Carleton Archivist*, October 31, 1993; pp. 450 of *A Reformed Druid Anthology*.

<sup>4</sup> *Carleton College Catalogue*, March 1964, pp. 136. -ARDA-

<sup>2</sup> Margot Adler, *Drawing Down the Moon*, pp. 299-300

## Section III

### Beliefs of the Reformed Druids

A number of students felt that it was unfair to require people to attend services and decided to test the policy. The protesters were led by the original 'Triumvirate', consisting of David Fisher, Howard Cherniack and Norman Nelson. They noted the escape clause of "or at any regularly organized service of public worship" and realized that they could create and organize such a service themselves and offer it up to the relevant deans as a fulfillment of the requirement. The college would have two choices, as they saw it: either to refuse to recognize them and be accused of religious discrimination, or to let them graduate at which point the movement would be declared a hoax and the requirement further ridiculed.<sup>5</sup>

Instead, in the summer of 1964, John Nason, the president of the college, sent out a memo revoking the requirement. It should be noted that Nason had already decided that the college's policy of in *Loco Parentis* was outdated and may have been planning to revoke the requirement all along. The role of the Druids in its elimination is debatable, but they cheerfully took the credit for its disappearance.

Two things about this origin are crucial to the understanding of Reformed Druidism. The first is that the founders never intended the movement to last. The second is that the Reformed Druids had no connection what so ever to any other Druid group at the time of their founding.<sup>6</sup> "Indeed," writes Scharding, "this leads up to the greatest hindrance to the entire study of Reformed Druidism; the name 'Druid.' Many scholars will see the word 'Druidism' on a sheet of paper and suddenly a myriad of assumptions will strangle their minds."<sup>7</sup>

The Reformed Druid movement embodies none of the philosophy, worldview, cultural resonance or even religion of the Celts, Paleo, or Meso-Druids. The name was picked because it was sufficiently venerable to be taken seriously and sufficiently misunderstood that the young RDNA could make up whatever they chose and not be called on inaccuracies.<sup>8</sup> As the story goes, Howard

Cherniack's parents did not like indicating that they were Jewish on government forms, and had taken to writing 'Druid' instead. The Triumvirate picked up the idea and ran with it, inventing beliefs as they went. The subsequent history of the movement is complex and fascinating but I do not intend to address it here. Scharding has covered it more thoroughly than I am ever likely to and traces its internal dividing and developments over a thirty-year span. I will attempt to avoid much of that discussion except where it is relevant to our purpose here.

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<sup>5</sup> It should be remembered that these students- the original 'triumvirate' consisting of David Fisher, Howard Cherniack and Norman Nelson- were in no way irreligious. David is currently an Episcopalian priest. They merely felt that the requirement was unfair on principle and should be tested. They also hedged their bets and continued attending the 'legitimate' services throughout their protest.

<sup>6</sup> This will be discussed more in section IV.

<sup>7</sup> ARDA pp. 339. This seems to be a thing that each researcher is at pains to learn anew

<sup>8</sup> "Mec"- Michael Scharding- wasted eight months of research before figuring this out. I knew he'd done so and I still fell for it. My desk is littered with fascinatingly irrelevant books on Druidism that have nothing to do with the RDNA.

Two things were of primary importance for the Reformed Druids in the beginning, and have remained fundamental to the movement ever since. The respect for nature, and the respect for each individual's rights. The founders wanted to create a system that would contain a meaningful core while eschewing all dogma and orthodoxy. In the words of one Druid, "Reformed Druidism is a statement that religion has a tendency to become organized religion and [sic] which then becomes organization devoid of religion."<sup>9</sup> The founders were very conscious of this 'fossilization theory' and wished to provide no framework for organization that could be exploited later. As such, when the two tenets were devised and finalized in 1963, they were kept as simple and as inclusive as possible.

The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother; which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.

And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it people do live, yea, even as they do struggle through life they are come face to face with it.<sup>10</sup>

These are the only two tenets of the Reformed Druids of North America- and the only two statements with which all Druids are ever likely to agree. Everything else is up to the individual. In their original form the tenets are rather cumbersome. They are often paraphrased as 'Nature is good' and 'Nature is good.' A more serious way of putting it, currently practiced amongst the Druids at Carleton is to say that first: The spiritual search is an important, individual, and life long endeavor, and secondly, that one way of searching lies through the study, understanding, and awareness of nature. Each of these phrasings indicates something rather different if they are taken literally, yet it is at one truth that they point. The only commandment I have ever seen attached to Reformed Druidism is Think for thyself! The tenets, however you conceive of them, establish the framework in which to do this.

Druidism teaches that you have the right to believe what you know to be true, no matter what anyone else thinks of it. At the same time it holds that you cannot simply pick what you would like to be the case, nor design a cosmology irrespective of what the world teaches. To be a Druid is to deliberately and consciously seek out the truth of the world and decide for yourself what it is you will believe. Margot Adler sheds some useful light on the matter when she writes "The original founders seemed to hold the fundamental idea that one should

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<sup>9</sup> Internal correspondence ARDA pp. 338

<sup>10</sup> An interesting change in the modern phrasing of the first tenet is the omission of the idea that the spiritual search is universal. The reason for this is two fold. One motivation is a desire not to impose even that truth on others. Another is that it has become apparent that one can be a great Druid without holding that the spiritual search holds any immediate, personal, relevancy. David Coil, one of the greatest Druid apologists at Carleton today and the functional right hand of the Archdruid for the last year, holds the above view. He believes that upon death he will go back to being 'nineteen cents of chemicals,' end of story. He would rather live life that ponder its spiritual significance, and expresses one of the purest Druidic spirits on campus.

scrutinize religion from 'a state of rebellion,' neither embracing traditional faiths nor rejecting them."<sup>11</sup>

Druids look everywhere for inspiration. World philosophies, religions, science fiction, children's books, strange dreams, the flight of swallows; all are considered equally valid insights to potential truths that must be at least examined, if never espoused. As Scharding writes, "It was important to Druidism that you believed your own views instead of slavishly following those of others, provided that you had carefully examined them and judged them sound."<sup>12</sup> This intellectual honesty is a necessary- if not sufficient- feature of the Druidic search. Without it the movement would descend into utter relativism.<sup>13</sup>

Another significant feature of Druidic 'belief' is that it is compatible with almost any other religious system. It serves to accentuate rather than replace a person's faith. Michael Scharding is a devout (maybe) Catholic as well as being a Druid. The group today contains at least one Atheist Druid, Jewish Druid, Quaker Druid, Seventh Day Adventist Druid, and innumerable Agnostic and Confused Druids. Indeed, the people who have taken Reformed Druidism to be their only religion have always been in the minority. The movement is hardly a thing that one can be converted to. The most common reaction to the personal acceptance of being a Druid is one of coming home. My own was, "Oh- now at last I have a name for what I've always done." The inclusiveness with which Druidism approaches all other religions is one of its strongest and most redeeming features.

## Section IV

### Is Reformed Druidism a Religion?

There is an unwritten rule that any whatever any Druid may say about him or herself, no one is to make categorical claims regarding the entire movement. Druidism can be and has been a religion for its individual members. It has never claimed itself to be a religion. Druidism is above all a system of inquiry into life, nature and meaning. Depending on how one takes that the movement could be viewed either way. The official Druidic statement has been that the RDNA does not affirm or deny the validity of any religion, including itself.

The founders of Reformed Druidism certainly never intended to start a religion. Indeed, the persistence of the

movement beyond the elimination of the Chapel requirement took many of the founders by surprise. David Fisher left the movement early on because he had begun to fear that he had helped to start something that was becoming dangerously close to a real religion. Its function as a protest was fulfilled, and yet the group remained. "For a great many Druids, the RDNA had introduced the possibility of taking personal responsibility for understanding and believing one's own faith."<sup>14</sup>

Druidism continued because people continued to find it meaningful and useful beyond its initial function as a creative protest. Still, did that make the RDNA a religion? The founders were careful not to call it such, though they wished it to appear as one for political purposes, and the movement has remained deliberately vague on this question ever since. Part of the reason for this vagueness is the fear of the 'fossilization theory.' If the RDNA had indeed found something meaningful in the realm of religion, it was felt that it had done so through its very simplicity. If defining themselves as a religion- or anything else- would engender the complexity and rigidity that people had joined the movement to avoid, they wanted no part of it.

One of the consequences of this refusal was the gradual splintering of the original RDNA into innumerable branches. Every so often someone would enter the movement who felt that it should be further defined. Each time this happened, after a brief struggle to change the whole RDNA, a new splinter group would form centered around the rebel and his or her followers. At present, so far as I can tell, there are nearly two dozen separate and related branches, all bearing the name 'Druid,' all spawned by definition or methodological disagreements. The first and most drastic of these schisms began in 1974 over the question of whether the RDNA should declare itself and its members exclusively pagan. This was exactly the sort of thing that many of the Druids- especially those for whom the Carleton grove had been influential- wanted to avoid. They loved the fact that one did not have to renounce any religious beliefs to become a Druid, and that the Druids brought together people of all different faiths to search together in a friendly, healthy manner. Others felt differently though, and a new group was formed.<sup>15</sup>

The old RDNA remained as it was, happily undefined and unsettled as to the religious question. Even in their second great interaction with authority, which seemed to hinge upon whether the RDNA represented an actual religion or not the Druids managed to escape without really settling the issue.<sup>16</sup>

From a research perspective the question remains. Is the Reformed Druid movement a religion? Is it a 'real religion,' whatever that means? Is it something to which one can legitimately apply the theories of Weber, Marx, and Schleiermacher as I intend shortly to do? It is apparent by now that I, at least, regard it as, if not a religion per se, at least something to which many of the great religious theories and debates are applicable. If I did not, all the time I have put into this project would be seen as wasted.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>14</sup> ARDA pp. 339.

<sup>15</sup> See Scharding for a thorough discussion of this initial split, known within the movement as the 'Isaac wars.' Hansen also gives a solid cataloguing of the extant Druid groups in the United States today, their relationship to one another, and how each came to be.

<sup>16</sup> This was the almost famous 'Smiley Case' which will be discussed further below.

<sup>17</sup> Or as a furthering of the great and subtle joke that some have seen Druidism as being!

<sup>11</sup> Drawing Down the Moon, pp. 301

<sup>12</sup> ARDA, pp. 341

<sup>13</sup> One could argue that the Druids already embody such a relativism in that the closest thing we have to a statement of belief is really simply an insistence that you search truth out your self. If so, it is only the relativism of individual minds. Yet I do not believe that even this is the case. The intellectual honesty that Druidism fosters encourages clear sight and careful thinking, and it seems that even with a great many people searching in this manner, agreements and commonalities arise. It may be that when people look hard and carefully at the nature of reality they all find, on some fundamental level, the same things. It seems to me that even without an imposed order to the universe, relativism confounds itself against a deeper order that is already present. It is part of the answer to the problem of saying "This is the truth that I have found, which I will force on no one else- but it applies to everybody." A rigorous examination of this confusion will have to await the foredoomed attempt of working out a formal Druidic philosophy and metaphysics.

In what ways can the RDNA be considered a religion? Eliade defined the base of all religious experience as the personal experience of sacred reality or Other. Schleiermacher followed him in stating that it was the encounter between the finite and the infinite, which is the origin and object of all religion. To my mind, it is with exactly this encounter that Druidism deals. It is almost beyond question that on any functional level human beings are finite creatures. Through Druidism they engage freely in the spiritual search- the individual quest for understanding of the sacred. Certainly Druidism can and has dealt with all of the classical religious problems of ontology, metaphysics, soteriology, and eschatology, not to mention that of theodicy, the celebrated 'question of evil.' It has done so, however, on a purely individual level. Druidism never teaches that any particular thing is or is not the case- it simply teaches people to learn and decide for themselves.

All of the classic problems and issues of religion are discussed at Druidic meetings and debated at great length from a variety of views but in the end it is up to each individual to decide what to believe. What the RDNA does is to create a place where people of many different religions can come together to share their traditions and learning. Scharding credits this persistence to the delight in the possibility of taking personal responsibility for one's own faith. The movement had shown people experientially "the benefits of learning from people from other faiths in a non-hostile forum of interaction."<sup>18</sup>

The insight of the Druids, Scharding writes,

"was that if the same story about, say, a bird making it's nest, can be interpreted by all religions as a useful analogy for their own religious beliefs, then people of all religions could benefit from getting together and hearing that same story.... As long as dogmatic theological statements remain out of the stories, the group can enjoy each other's company."<sup>19</sup>

It has often been denied that Reformed Druidism is a religion because it boasts no dogma or theology. 'How can that be a religion,' we often hear. 'It doesn't teach anything!' The short answer is that Druidism teaches people how to learn, not what is true. It will show you how to walk- not where to travel. In this it is exactly as much a religion as are the Zen Buddhist schools, or, for that matter, Taoism. The theories of the great sociologists of religion are usefully applicable to these systems. I believe that, even if it denies being a religion itself, they are no less applicable to Reformed Druidism.

There is one other problem that ought to be addressed. The question of what it would mean to declare the RDNA a religion. In a sense the question is academic because the movement intentionally never claims to be one. But from a certain perspective the question remains. If Reformed Druidism declared itself to be a fully fledged religion like any other, would it in effect be denying all religious validity? The argument runs vaguely as follows. Reformed Druidism affirms and denies no religious validity by its own admission. But the essence of religion seems to be a profound respect for the importance and validity of a personal encounter with the sacred. If the RDNA calls itself a religion just like the others, is it stating, in effect, that religious experience is not worth validating? The essence of religious tolerance is not unconditional acceptance of differences but rather an abiding respect for the sacredness of the other's Other. Druidism appears not to contain this. To put it differently, if Druidism includes

<sup>18</sup> ARDA pp. 339

<sup>19</sup> ARDA pp. 341

itself in the set of Religions, is it saying that a religion does not have to affirm or deny anything at all? Druidism does not appear to contain any sacred. By calling itself a religion is it saying that there is no sacred to religion?<sup>20</sup>

I do not believe that this is the case. First of all, Druidism never declared itself, as such, to be a religion. If its members do so, that is their own affair, but almost invariably Druidism mutates and develops into something subtly different and much more complex as soon as it is adopted by a lucid individual rather than a group. Secondly, Druidism does hold an abiding respect for other experiences of the sacred. It simply holds their expressions, through theology, poetry, art, and philosophy as secondary portrayals of that primary experience. The experience of the sacred is holy and respected, whoever happened to have it. Their depiction of it is granted only as much validity as anyone else's. It is taken as one of many fingers pointing at the moon, not the moon itself. The validity of any and all experiences of the sacred stand. Religious expressions are viewed as mutable. Finally, Druidism itself would never- nor would any Druid that I know- state that there is no sacred in religion. It would merely insist that we each critically and honestly examine our own experiences, religious and otherwise, to seek out and understand the sacred within them.

## Section V

### Sociological Theory and the Reformed Druids

Of all the classical social theories, those of Friedrich Schleiermacher seem to most accurately describe Reformed Druidism.<sup>21</sup> Schleiermacher divided the depictions of religion in his time into those reducing it to functions of the will, reason, and imagination. When viewed as such, the primary vehicle for religious expression became morality, philosophy and art, respectively. Schleiermacher believed that each of these conceptions left out something crucial about the nature of religion and so posited a fourth category. The primary faculty of religion, he felt, was feeling. Religion, he posited, was the

<sup>20</sup> I confess that I do not completely understand this argument and have not given it the best statement or defense possible. I would gratefully welcome any clearer formulations of it.

It is almost regrettable that there has never been a serious philosophical study of the Reformed Druid movement. Druidism seems such a valuable tool of inquiry that one could see the attraction in developing a solid understanding and perhaps metaphysic of it. But it is not at all clear to me at this point how one would go about doing this, nor even that it should be done. It is not that I doubt Druidism could take the probing, but the defining that it would almost certainly entail seems against the spirit of the system. It may be that anything that was developed in such a manner would become yet another splinter group, another branch of the movement that would leave its original roots unchanged.

<sup>21</sup> In discussing the sociology of the movement, I do not intend to focus here on social factors leading to or even influencing the Reformed Druids. Michael Scharding discusses some of these including Judeo-Christian influences, the influence of Asian religions, of the 'Sixties,' of Carleton, and toys with the possibility of Fraternal influences in the creation of the RDNA. Instead I intend to look at the applicability of some of the classical sociological theories to Druidism, leaving the discussion of factors to those who know more about them.

encounter of the finite to the infinite. Feeling was that by which we experience this encounter. As pure feelings are essentially incommunicable between sane humans, other means of expressing the encounter must be utilized. According to Schleiermacher, morality, philosophy, art, theology, rituals, laws, legends, and even history are all secondary means of trying to express this primary experience. As such, have no final or absolute validity in the domain of religion! Only feeling can convey the primary experience, and feeling is essentially impossible to communicate.

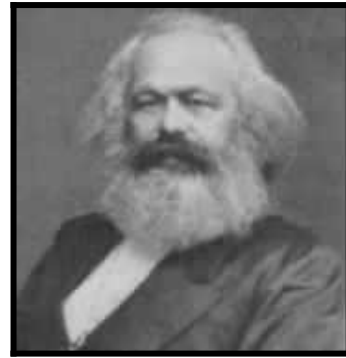


Schleiermacher's view of religion is a profound call for tolerance. If all theologies and dogmas, all morals and rituals are only secondary expressions of the sacred, then even religious beliefs that completely antagonize one's own can be tolerated. People can realize that it is only the details of expression that they are fighting about when there may be no real disagreement over the feeling of the sacred. This view is almost identical to that espoused by Reformed Druidism. They too regard all expressions of religious truth to be equally valid as secondary indicators of an inexpressible reality that is never the less to be sought by each individual. They too exhibit a unilateral tolerance for all systems of religious belief and practice.<sup>22</sup>

Because no single expression of sacrality can be seen as being its primary experience people interested in approaching that sacred must engage in a constant process of interpretation of these secondary expressions. This hermeneutic circle of translation and interpretation is inherent to the Druidic search.

It is interesting that by both of these views religious experience and validity must remain forever a uniquely individual phenomena. Until it is possible to accurately communicate pure feeling, neither the Schleiermachers nor the Druids of the world will ever be able to convey to another what exactly their encounters with the Other- the infinite- were like. All forms of expression prove not only inadequate for the searcher's understanding of religion, but also for the sage's communication of religious understanding. The consequent of this, were everyone to operate within this model of religious understanding, is a plurality of completely unique experiences of the sacred, where each person honored the validity of other's experiences, and realized that no one's expressions of that feeling were any more adequate than their own.

<sup>22</sup> Within reason. Someone whose religious practice involved destroying the natural world on principle, or who ritually murdered random folks would not be tolerated. But this would be on behavioral grounds rather than religious ones.



Carl Marx had rather different conception of religion. Unfortunately his understanding of the phenomena was rather stunted by his hatred of it. Marx's insights into the nature of economics and political theory are profound; it is a shame he could not apply the same clarity of thought to the study of religion. It has been argued that Marx's statements on religion are inconclusive and contradictory, making it rather hard to discern what he actually thought on the subject, but from his critiques of Feuerbach, and of Bauer in *On the Jewish Question* a synthesis of sorts can be made.

It seems that Marx held that the ideas of religion emerged from social powerlessness. Religion served, in his mind, as a superstructure to maintain and perpetuate the economic base, which gave rise to it. It did this by maintaining the social class structure and placating the lower classes with promises of something better to come- so long as they held their peace for the time being. At the same time it seems that Marx held that religion emerged from alienation in the realm of civil society- the same force that produced divergent political and economic systems. Alienation leads to the objectification of an expression of one's self- or one's culture- which then is imagined as being independent of the thing it is an expression of. This is idolatry on Marx's view- the worship of something you yourself have created.<sup>23</sup>

It seems, though, that none of these ideas shed any particular light on Reformed Druidism. Druidism did not arise out of social powerlessness, does not maintain any class structure, and has no economic bearing what-so-ever. It also posits no higher being, objectified or otherwise, that could be viewed as a created and forgotten idol of civil alienation. Instead it seems that the RDNA emerged and has been sustained primarily through curiosity. Furthermore, Druidism does not seek- or serve- to maintain any authority, including its own, other than that of intellectual honesty, which is operative on a solely personal level. Druidism does take a certain delight is frustrating the authority of others, especially that which is seen as arbitrary, restrictive or simply absurd. In this sense it could be seen as a reaction to authoritarian structures, but not at all in the way that Marx envisioned. The RDNA has had only two major interactions with authority, and while one of them was the purpose of the movement's initiation, the struggle against an authority has never since proved a motivating factor in the movement's continuation.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> In this understanding of Marx I am deeply indebted to professor Nader Saiedi of Carleton College.

<sup>24</sup> The first was the successful attempt to get the mandatory chapel requirement revoked. The second was the 'Smiley Affair' beginning in 1967 when the RDNA successfully stalled the US Military out of Drafting one of their priests. See the Carleton Archives, Internal correspondence, and pp. 345-6 of ARDA.



Another sociologist whose theories mesh oddly with the RDNA is Emile Durkheim. Durkheim held fundamentally that religion is not irrational- not at all a function of superstition and error as others have often maintained. All religious experience is the experience of the power of society in his view. The immediate fascination of this view is that no society can ever exist without religion. He also believed that to understand religion we must go back to its base: totemism. On at the same time he held that as a society changes, its god must too. In totemism the individual identifies and becomes one with the totem, which in turn unifies and expresses the nature of his or her social group. As societies advance this identification becomes intellectualized and disguised. By the time a society reaches a reasonably advanced stage its conception of the totem has evolved into a fairly abstract, usually singular god. Along the way this conception of the sacred has been purged of all definable qualities. To adequately represent and unify a very simple social group was easy- they could all be seen to manifest attributes of the bear, for instance. As people specialize and society develops, one definable vision of 'god' can no longer depict them all equally. By abstracting more and more- and by removing all human characteristics- a societies god becomes more philosophic, beyond all description and understanding, all in the attempt to represent as many different objectified people as possible. The eventual and evident end of this so far as religion goes, is that a society will either have to simplify itself drastically to preserve its conception of god, or the individual itself will become seen as sacred- bypassing the objective representation of the individual as a totem, god, or anything else.

Druidism seems to be an exemplification of this second course. The very conception of god has been objectified away to nothing, and we are left with the individuals again, knowing that the sacred is important, but realizing anew that it is basically unknown. Each individual must seek out their own understanding of the sacred and, in doing so, it appears that each individual actually becomes in some sense sacred. While Reformed Druidism itself certainly did not begin as totemism and evolve to something else, it is entirely possible that the society from which it arose did. It may be that the emergence of the RDNA is the exact fulfillment and continuation of Durkheim's theory on religious evolution. It emerged at a time when society had diversified to the extent where not even a completely abstract and indescribable god without any qualities could represent every member of that society- for people are not themselves abstract. A specific conception of a personal deity could represent individuals better than an abstraction.

In this case the theory does shed useful light upon the RDNA. The movement is seen as the natural result of societal change and the forerunner of a greater degree of individual awareness and responsibility for religion soon to come. Indeed, as one looks at the kinds of religious movements that have been emerging since the 1960's when Druidism began one can see that many of them embody just this individualization of the sacred- though none of them do so as simply and carefully as do the Reformed Druids. I need merely instance the vast neo-pagan movement, the Church of All worlds, and other similar

organizations where any non-socially murderous religious belief is tolerated, and where the church will ordain anyone as a legal minister for the asking.

On the other hand, Durkheim insists that all religious experience is the experience of the power of society. The Druidic path is one that can be followed without reference to society at all. It is useful to talk to others, to read the writings of sages past, or to ponder the teachings of other religions, but the essence of Druidism is clear and careful thinking about the world- a skill that could be practiced by the last man on earth. In addition, most, if not all, of the religious experiences reported by Reformed Druids have taken place in utter solitude. It is in their aloneness with nature that many of the Druids find themselves closest to the sacred. One could argue that if the individual itself has become sacred it is only natural that he or she would feel closest to the sacred when alone with themselves, but this argument smacks strongly of sophistry. It is also possible that the religious experience a person feels when alone is simply the transcendental power of society that they have absorbed and carried with them manifesting itself like a voice in the wilderness. Given the feeling and noetic content of many of these experiences I must seriously doubt that this is the case. I have yet to see a clear and convincing argument in its favor, but mention it because I cannot refute it completely.

Finally, Durkheim's description and justification of the social contract meshes nicely with Reformed Druidic thought. For him it is the inherent sacrality of each individual that makes it important for us not to break our promises to each other. For the Druids, an inviolate respect for the rights of each individual is inherent to the movement. Life is inherently sacred, many of them hold. No one has the right to violate that.

## Section VI Conclusion

I hope that I have at least demonstrated that the Reformed Druids of North America, while not being a religion in the strictest sense, comprise a movement to which the sociological theories of Schleiermacher, Marx, Durkheim and others are applicable. I believe that much can be learned about the movement by seriously applying the theories of these and other writers, and by examining and developing the philosophic background of the RDNA. I hope that others will continue this search, and if they ever find from within the movement that they are acting against its spirit, that they will listen to the dictates of their hearts before forging ahead or dropping their studies.

What I am not sure that I have demonstrated is that the Reformed Druids actually embody a definable and distinct set of people that could be studied as a religious group. I think that what binds them together is the spirit of their search, the shared history of the movement, and their individual acceptance of the simple tenets. If that is not enough, to convince the reader, I ask you to consider how the worlds Christians can be considered part of one movement, embracing as they do both the Catholic church and the Quaker meeting halls.

Finally, let me say that for the most part, the confusion as to who is and isn't a Druid shows up on paper more than it does in life. This seems to be because, despite the changes, there has never really been any doubt as to who the Druids amongst people were. As Isaac Bonewits writes,

"The role of the Druid has always been clear-scholar, and artist, poet, and priest, philosopher and magician- the one who seeks, preserves and expends the highest wisdom her or his people are capable of handling safely, and who uses the knowledge and inspiration for the benefit of their community." (ARDA pp. 323)

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## Mike Scharding and the History of the Reformed Druids

By Stephen Crimmins, 2003

It is often said that the Reformed Druids of North America (RDNA)<sup>25</sup> at Carleton undergo a substantial change at least once every four years. Both the general membership as well as, and perhaps more importantly, Arch Druids are involved with the Druids for at most 4 years before leaving the Carleton Grove. With each new Arch Druid new ideas are infused into the Grove.<sup>26</sup> However, it is clear that this only begins to explain change among the Druids. It can hardly handle variations in degrees of change nor can it be expected to predict what direction a change will occur in. In order to elucidate the causes of change I will look specifically at the case of Michael Scharding, Arch Druid of the Carleton Grove from 1993-4. Scharding's Arch Druidship was one especially full of a series



Figure 3 Ehren, Merri & Stephen, c. 2001.



Figure 4 Stephen Crimmins gallantly trying to eat a dangling donut while being tickled, 2001.

<sup>25</sup>The RDNA has become a nationwide organization with a number of groups, or groves, in various locations. It should be distinguished from the group of Carleton students which is a member grove of the RDNA, and which will generally be referred to as the Carleton Druids or the Carleton Grove. All Arch Druids mentioned are Arch Druids of the Carleton Grove.

<sup>26</sup>This is something that I have heard a number of times as a druid and more over as one of the current Arch Druids at Carleton. Some of the material that I bring in to this paper will be from my own experiences or conversations as a druid. Moreover though, the topic that this paper discusses, though in this case limited to the case of Michael Scharding, is a more general issue among the Carleton Druids and so one that in some ways affects me. I will try to avoid biases but I cannot promise complete removal from the subject, nor would it be completely helpful. To date what scholarly work as exists that focuses on the RDNA is the work of Carleton Druids [there are some works, such as Margot Adler's *Drawing Down the Moon* that mention the RDNA in a larger context. A listing and notes on the applicability of such works is available in Appendix E of Part 8 of Michael Scharding, Isaac Bonewits, Robert Larson, Richard Shelton and Mark Heiman eds., *A Reformed Druid Anthology* Northfield, MN: Drynemetum Press, 1996, 384-387. (Here in, ARDA) and of course updated in the current collection (ARDA II) in Part Eight. The field could certainly use scholars who have not been Reformed Druids but for now those with some interest will continue to do the best we can.

I should also note that I have for the past few years known Michael Scharding and from time to time have discussed Druidism with him though I had not read his essay on Reformed Druidism, *A General History of Reformed Druidism* until working on this paper nor have I had the chance to discuss the material in that with him. I have, however, asked him to look over the current paper for any insights he may have into his own psyche, as unlikely as those may be.

of changes. The changes Scharding's implemented, as will be seen, were in large part derived from a study of the history of the Druids that was more basically fueled by a general interest in history. Particularly, in the middle of his Arch Druidship, Scharding centered his senior thesis around the RDNA. Subsequently Scharding has published *A Reformed Druid Anthology (ARDA)*, a collection of essays, letters, and various writings produced by the RDNA and the second edition of the *ARDA* known as *ARDA II*. Regarding the last two works, Scharding has noted repetitively that he collected the *ARDA* in part for future scholarly use, but that he also intended it for use by practicing Druids. In Scharding's opinion it has become "an anchor of tradition for the most recent Carleton Druids, who... rarely want to root in the Druid Archives in the basement of their campus Library."<sup>27</sup> (The last part is a comment that I both must resent and find to be true) Scharding, on the other hand, did search out the Druid Archives and use what he found to shape his own Druidism. What I wish to examine is what need pushed Scharding to work as extensively as he did and to what degree that work influenced him as AD.

In the early eighties the activities of the Carleton Druids came to a halt after 20 fairly continuous years. In the mid eighties, a number of people interested in Neo-Pagan and Native American religions attended Carleton and restarted the Reformed Druids using what little they could gather about the RDNA and borrowing extensively from other religions. Approximately four years later Scharding came to Carleton, shortly after these 'renaissance' Druids had graduated. Scharding joined the Carleton Druids and, as will be discussed, took a heavy interest in the history of the RDNA.<sup>28</sup>

Scharding's pursuit of Reformed Druid history has had a number of effects on him. In an oral history interview, Scharding noted that he found that "the older Druids... had a much more lackadaisical attitude toward ritual"<sup>29</sup> where as the Druidism that Scharding had first wandered upon placed a fairly heavy emphasis on ritual. Finding this out freed Scharding to perform rituals more in a style that he saw the old Druids as having used and less in the style he was first introduced to. He used Druidism to explore "a philosophical bent about what the whole purpose of religion was"<sup>30</sup> as well as to question the

importance of ritual as he found that the older Druids done. He seems to have found a lot about the older Druids that fit with what he had already come to consider in his own Druidism. I might conjecture that, in part, he was looking for and finding similarities, if unconsciously.

Whether or not there Scharding was picking out similarities with what he desired Druidism to be, the studies certainly affected his Druidism. On the contrary, the similarities in philosophical stances that he noticed allowed him to make use of such similarities in the activities that he organized. Scharding noted in his interview that "Basically, when I finished my studies I introduced a greater amount of silliness, play, and meditation to my services, which I began to hold in the earlier style, on a more frequent basis."<sup>31</sup> Like the older Druids he began to have weekly services with meditations, something that hadn't been seen among the Carleton Druids since some time before 1984. It wasn't something that every Druid could agree upon, but the permission of history meant that since it had worked in the past Scharding could legitimately reintroduce it.<sup>32</sup>

However, it should be understood that the Carleton Druids under Scharding did not come to be completely removed from the renaissance Druids. Some of the rituals survived, such as the Native American inspired sweat lodge. Indeed, Scharding became quite interested in holding sweat lodges monthly, when possible.<sup>33</sup> But even the sweat lodge was not in the form used by the renaissance Druids. When Brandon Schields, a renaissance Druid, visited in 1993 he taught Scharding and others "some of the old habits of the sweat lodge."<sup>34</sup>

Scharding is also clear that his research had a definite yet intangible effect on his Druidism. In his interview he discusses an incident where a Christian interrupted a Druid service. One of the less immediate responses was to "kick off a huge surge of interest in my research" which Scharding described as "sort of a search for validity"<sup>35</sup> since he, himself, was still unsure of how he could reconcile the Druids with other parts of his spiritual life. In finding validity, he noted the importance of understanding what had come before; a part of his experience with the Celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the RDNA "to connect with the past of Druidism, to tell all the other Druids that yes, we've been here a very long time, and other people have done the same things that you have done in your search for religious truth;" this was a feeling that his research had helped him with.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, it seems that the reassurance of the past meant something for the future of Scharding's Druidism. He felt a reassurance that since others before him had shown that "one can reconcile one's beliefs with Druidism on a stable basis throughout one's life" his Druidism could continue, whatever the other twists and turns in his life.<sup>37</sup>

But why was Scharding the one that produced "A General History of Reformed Druidism," not to mention the *ARDA* and

<sup>27</sup>Michael Scharding, Isaac Bonewits, Robert Larson, Richard Shelton and Mark Heiman ed., *A Reformed Druid Anthology* 2nd ed., Northfield, MN: Drynemetum Press, 2003-4, Part Eight, chapter seven. (Here in, *ARDA II*) Part Eight, "A General History of Reformed Druidism" is an updated version of Scharding's comps on the Reformed Druids. Unfortunately, while the initial paper and so the initial part of the "General History" are still scholarly, much of the later material seem to be more examples of Scharding's Druid related memories. They are, unfortunately, without end notes though in some cases it seems possible that they draw from various sources about the druids more than his memories. It is unfortunate that he appended the sections that he did in the manner that he did. It might have been better, if he did not want to expand the "General History" with scholarly sections that he might have included the later sections elsewhere. However, I must still say that Scharding is the person who knows the most of the whole course of the history of Reformed Druids.

<sup>28</sup>*ARDA 2*, Part Eight, "A General History of Reformed Druidism."

<sup>29</sup>Michael Scharding, personal interview with Eric Hillemann, 30 August 1996, Side A. As a conceptual division Scharding tends to divide the eras of druidism at Carleton, before his, into the old Druids and the renaissance Druids, at least outside of his scholarly work. The renaissance druids are those druids who restarted the RDNA at Carleton in 1986 after it founded in 1984. Traces of it were receding by the time Scharding arrived. 'Older Druids' is a much broader term of everyone from 1963 to 1984. Since I am studying Scharding in this paper I will use his terms, with caution.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, Side A.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, Side A.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, Side A.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, Side A.

<sup>34</sup>Michael Scharding, *Five Year Druid Diary*, unpublished, 1 August 1993. The *Five Year Druid Diary* represents a selection of entries of Scharding's diary that he felt pertinent to Druidism as well as for future scholars. It also has comments and reflections from 1994 when he compiled the *Diary* in order to donate it the International Druid Archives.

As far as 'old habits' are concerned, the Carleton Druids, with such a quick turn over rate tend to assume that certain aspects are traditional that haven't been around for more than a few years.

<sup>35</sup>Scharding, 30 August 1996. Side A.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, Side A.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, Side A.



the expanded *ARDA II*, the last of which contains 2400 packed pages? Was it merely, as he notes, that others were content with Druidism as it was but he “was a historian by training and stubbornly wished to know what my predecessors had done.”<sup>38</sup> Of course his interest in history in general had something to do with his choice to study the Druids through their history, but there were other reasons as well. Clearly, Scharding was not the first AD trained at Carleton College as a historian<sup>39</sup> and many more undoubtedly had an interest in history. To be fair, there were earlier attempts to provide some sense of history. The third Arch Druid, David Frangquist, wrote a number of works, including *The Druids Chronicle (Reformed) (DC(R))*, a history, in mock biblical style, of the foundation of the RDNA. About ten years later, Richard Shelton began to collect an Apocrypha to the DC(R), consisting largely of letters of past Druids.<sup>40</sup> Additionally, a Blue Book of the Archives was kept and added to by successive Arch Druids, though it was lost from time to time.<sup>41</sup> Certainly, though, none of these publication and collections ever thought of rivaling the extent of the *ARDA* though they may well have been created to allow an understanding of the RDNA similar to the one that Scharding was attempting to achieve in his research.

It is worth wondering why Scharding did as much research as he did, far more than any previous Druid. I have already mentioned that Scharding did not possess a direct link to the older Druids. There was a gap which Scharding could not hope to overcome through talking with the Druids who were his immediate predecessors in the way that pre-renaissance Druids might have done. And while he may have had access to a certain number of their written works, Scharding later noted that he believed that “Far more tradition of the group exists outside of the printed matter.”<sup>42</sup> Hence, the loss of a direct line meant the loss of a great deal of knowledge which the printed matter could only hint at. Moreover, much of the printed material that existed was not initially available to him. Scharding would have had access to the RDNA section of the Carleton archives, though at that time it was considerably smaller than at present. There was most certainly a copy of Isaac Bonewits’ *Druid Chronicles (Evolved) (DC(E))*,<sup>43</sup> though notably missing was the Blue Book of the Archives which “was lost around 1985...found again” but not passed around, “it got lost again...and found again about ‘88, and got re-found in 1994.” However, that collection was never accessible to all of the members of the Carleton Grove.<sup>44</sup> Hence, not only was direct person to person contact unavailable

until late in Scharding’s time with Druidism, but paper records were also unavailable.

Yet, it would appear that Scharding had the tradition of the renaissance Druids to work from. The renaissance Druids themselves had made some attempts to reestablish the traditions of the Carleton Druids, in part through the influence of the *Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*<sup>45</sup> as well as a limited amount of contact with Richard Shelton who corresponded with the renaissance druids and celebrated a ritual with them in 1988. However, as Shelton himself notes in an interview, the major impetus from renaissance Druidism was Native American and Wiccan religions.<sup>46</sup> However much of an influence these new areas had relative to traditional RDNA Druidism is not important. What is important is that the renaissance Druids appear to have had a strong tradition that Scharding might have latched on to, rather than needing to study older Druidism for the sake of the remaking his own Druidism.

Scharding himself notes that in many ways his view of religion and his particular spiritual needs did not fit well with renaissance Druidism. While being interviewed he pointed out that much of what the druids were doing when he first showed up “wasn’t incredibly satisfying,” and that he “just hung out with them because they were the closest thing to what I was looking for.”<sup>47</sup> He gives a number of examples of what made those Druids less than satisfying, including a general sense that the Druids had made up their minds about what a religion was and that they did not have a favorable opinion of monotheists.<sup>48</sup> This was a problem for Scharding who was still grappling with various issues about his own religious path; in becoming a Druid he was careful to make sure that it “would not violate his confirmation” with the Catholic Church.<sup>49</sup>

This is not to deny that there was any meaning present when Scharding first became a Druid. During a standard second order ordination, at the time, one was asked “‘Do you think that the Earth-Mother is good?’ If the recipient said ‘Yes!’, the druid sigil was drawn on their forehead” However, in Scharding’s case, he was asked “Do you dig that the Earth-Mother is Groovy?”<sup>50</sup> Despite the unorthodoxy of this ritual, and despite later noting that this was “during my more serious phase of Druidism,”<sup>51</sup> it meant a lot to Scharding.<sup>52</sup> I note this because Scharding’s seriousness was part of what made some of the rituals disagreeable to him. Likewise, when he first became interested in Druids he did so expecting to find something Celtic in the rituals.<sup>53</sup> But, rather than finding anything actually Celtic in either the renaissance Druids or the old Druids, he came to a conclusion illustrated by the following excerpt of a conversation with Richard Shelton.

"I have achieved Enlightenment!"  
 "oh?" he [Shelton] said  
 "Yes! the RDNA has nothing to do with [original]  
 Druidism! It's actually Zen Buddhism!"

<sup>38</sup> *ARDA 2*, Part Eight, Introduction.

<sup>39</sup> David Fisher was the first. David Frangquist the second.

<sup>40</sup> Shelton’s apocrypha took twenty years to be published and for the most part access to it is through its inclusion in the *ARDA* side by side with other apocryphal materials. To be fair, Shelton’s apocrypha may have been intended more to counter the apocrypha presented by Isaac Bonewits rather than for a completely historical reasons. Cf. *ARDA P.* 39.

<sup>41</sup> Scharding 27 August 1996, Side A.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, Side B.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, Side B. Scharding spent a great deal of time and work in expanding the archives, bringing it from a section of the Carleton archives into what he calls the International Druid Archives. It is not clear how much was present though there is some evidence. Scharding himself claims to have enlarged it at least ten fold. Certainly much of the material was added through his efforts, either through visiting alumni or in response to a myriad of letters that Scharding sent out asking for material. Scharding’s efforts are largely recorded in the Carleton Archives in a series dedicated to some of the less druidic of his activities.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, Side B.

<sup>45</sup> *ARDA II*, Part 8, Chapter 8.

<sup>46</sup> Richard Shelton. Interview with Eric Hillemann, May 8, 1993.

<sup>47</sup> Scharding, 27 August 1996. Side A.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.* Side A.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.* Side A.

<sup>50</sup> *Five Year Druid Diary*, Reflections on November 1990. The Sigil is the name for a widespread symbol of the Reformed Druids, a circle with two vertical lines through it. The origin is unknown, though probably an invention of David Fisher, the primary founder of the RDNA.

<sup>51</sup> Scharding, 27 August 1996. Side A.

<sup>52</sup> *Five Year Druid Diary*, Reflections on November 1990

<sup>53</sup> Scharding, 27 August, 1996. Side A.

We then laughed along time.<sup>54</sup>

While Scharding found that old Druidism was no more Celtic than renaissance Druidism he still found reason to latch on to the former. While useful, it would be difficult to chart when these changes occurred and how such timing affected his research interests. For now, though, I will say that there must be more of a point to Scharding's research since many of his dislikes of renaissance Druidism could have also been applied to old Druidism and much of what he accepted of old Druidism were points that he had previously found unsatisfying in renaissance Druidism.

I believe that Scharding's relationship with renaissance Druidism was actually rather similar to the lack of a relationship that he initially had with older Druidism. Yes, Renaissance Druidism was going on shortly before him, and he had a number of people to serve as links with it, but at the same time, the linkage was not complete. At the time that Scharding had arrived most of the original renaissance Druids had graduated or left Carleton.<sup>55</sup> What Scharding was first introduced to was only a fragment of renaissance Druidism, one that some of the Scharding's immediate predecessors tried to hold on to, but one which Scharding did not have sufficient access to make use of. Scharding has noted that when he arrived at Carleton The Druids were in a "slump" and so "it took me about six months before I found them."<sup>56</sup> Even after he attended his first ritual communication was often disorganized to the point where "I didn't hear about some of [the rituals] until it was too late" to attend them.<sup>57</sup> Farm House, which had been the center of Druidism during the renaissance, was lost to Druids and the loss was significant to many, including Scharding, who noted that "a new focus was required for the Druids."<sup>58</sup>

In addition to uncoordinated events, the leadership itself was rather fragmented. Scharding puts some stress on John Burrige as somebody who had been able to keep many of the Druids together. In his reflections upon his diary he noted that one ritual "was the last ritual where so many [people] were attending, probably because it was the last time John Burrige was at a major Druid ritual."<sup>59</sup> Scharding is even more blatant in an interview where he stated that "the group had faltered, back in '91-'92, because of John Burrige departing."<sup>60</sup> Perhaps even worse for the group was animosity among some of the members and the "loads of gossip circulating and people not going to rituals because 'you know who' was there."<sup>61</sup>

What all this often meant was that the number of rituals was limited and some rituals that were planned did not occur. As I have mentioned, the sweat lodge was an important ritual for Scharding. However, the first sweat lodge Scharding planned to attend "was cancelled when Jon Nauert accidentally bumped Andrea Davis in the mouth with his elbow (their relationship wasn't too good then) and things degenerated." Because of those and similar issues Scharding didn't actually participate in a sweat lodge until 1992.<sup>62</sup>

There were also certain features of renaissance Druidism that were no longer tenable. During the renaissance years and following

There were strong minds who made sure that rituals happened, and that was all there was. There wasn't any kind of totalitarian 'I'm in charge, we're going to make sure this thing happens' and such, it was more like someone showed up and

<sup>54</sup>*Five Year Druid Diary*, 26 February 1994.

<sup>55</sup>Scharding, 27 August, 1996. Side A. He sets the years of the renaissance proper as 1986-1989. Scharding arrived at Carleton in the fall of 1989, right after those renaissance Druids would have left, and he did not become aware of the Druids until 1990.

said 'I'm going to lead a ritual on this day. Any of you guys want to come up?' and we'd all show up.

But as time passed fewer and fewer people wanted to take charge one person, "Andrea Davis, from the period of '89 - '92, ended up being pretty much the only person who ever decided to do anything,"<sup>63</sup> the old system of leadership was dying. Simply noting the date that Scharding chooses, 1992, it is clear that after Davis left there was a vacuum of leadership from then until 1993 when Scharding officially became Arch Druid, though undoubtedly he took some charge of the group before then.

Connected to the idea of leadership was the idea of a third order druid. After 1984 until 1993 when Scharding was ordained a third order druid, no one at Carleton was so ordained because, in part, there was no one to perform the ordination.<sup>64</sup> The nature of the third order, though, has changed significantly over time. In 1992, when Scharding decided to become the Arch Druid he "didn't really think there was much difference" between a third order and Arch Druid.<sup>65</sup> However, before Scharding could join the third order and take over the Druids he had to find out more about the third order and find someone to ordain him.

What I argue then is not that the lack of connection with the renaissance Druids, in addition to the old Druids were the *only* cause for Scharding's research into the old Druids, but it was an important influence.<sup>66</sup> I admit that part of the reason that Scharding used his research for his Druidism was because he was dissatisfied with the form of Druidism that he had inherited. But I might also suggest that part of his dissatisfaction comes from the lack of a stable connection to be had with renaissance Druidism and the faltering state of Druidism in his own day.

The results that I have found, of course, only apply to Scharding himself, though I am curious if other Druids, in similar situations, may have reacted in similar ways.<sup>67</sup> Related to that, I would ask, in some cases, particularly that of the renaissance Druids, why examining Druid history was not used to the benefit of the group. I might suggest that the renaissance Druids were not interested in history, and were already familiar with Neopaganism and Native American Religion before becoming Druids.<sup>68</sup> Of course, the ultimate question would be how this question, and where it fits into other questions of influence, might be used to examine the origins of the Druid rituals created in 1963 by David Fisher.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid. Side A.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., Side A.

<sup>58</sup>*Five Year Druid Diary*. Reflections, 10/3/91

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., Reflections, 11/21/91

<sup>60</sup>Michael Scharding, 27 August 1996, Side B.

<sup>61</sup>*Five Year Druid Diary*. Reflections, Mid April 1990. Scharding never goes into specifics about the rift.

<sup>62</sup>*Five Year Druid Diary*, 26 February 1994.

<sup>63</sup>Scharding, 27 August, 1996. Side A. He sets the years of the renaissance proper as 1986-1989. Scharding arrived at Carleton in the fall of 1989, right after those renaissance Druids would have left, and he did not become aware of the Druids until 1990.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid. Side A.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., Side A. This is rather like the original organization where Druids only joined the third order to become Arch Druid.

<sup>66</sup>*Five Year Druid Diary*. Reflections, 10/3/91

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., Reflections, 11/21/91

<sup>68</sup>Michael Scharding, 27 August 1996, Side B.



## David Fisher *the* Founder?

By Stephen Crimmins, 2004.

I recently had the privilege of transcribing an interview of the man who is generally known as the primary founder of Reformed Druidism, David Fisher. I was given the ability thanks to Michael (Mec) Scharding, who conducted the interview, as well as to Eric Hillemann for lending me transcribing equipment. The first thing that came into my mind was: how did Scharding manage to get an interview with Fisher who, I had thought, was too embarrassed of Druidism to give an interview. The key, Scharding insisted, was following up on his original call, nothing more. My image of David Fisher has been changing for some time since I was introduced to the contents of the International Druid Archives last year. Listening to the interview has changed my opinion further. This article is an attempt to distill some of what I have learned about our heretofore legendary founder, as well as to share some of the gems of the interview. For those who want to read the complete transcript, it will be published in the oral history section of ARDA II.<sup>69</sup> If you can't wait that long, you can probably pester myself or Scharding.

Margot Adler's *Drawing Down the Moon* paints a picture of Fisher similar to the one that I had until recently. According to it "In 1964 the [religion requirement] regulation was abolished but, much to the surprise—and it is said, horror—of the original founders, the RDNA continued to hold services and spread its organization far beyond the college campus. One of the founders, David Fisher, who wrote many of the original rituals, is now an Episcopal priest and teacher of theology at a Christian college in the South, having apparently washed his hands of the RDNA."<sup>70</sup> I know, moreover, that this opinion is fairly wide spread among those people I've talked to but I have recently come to realize that this is not exactly true.

<sup>69</sup> *A Reformed Druid Anthology, Second Edition*, vol. 1 ed. M. Scharding (Northfield, MN: Drynemetum Press), expected late 2004.

<sup>70</sup> Margot Adler, *Drawing Down the Moon* (New York: Penguin Compass, 1997), 321

It is, of course, widely known that there were actually three founders: Norman Nelson, Howard Cherniack, as well as David Fisher. However, for some reason, Fisher has gotten most of the credit. For instance, Joan Carruth's "Epistle to the Myopians" asks "May the Earth-Mother keep David the Fisher in Her sight and bless him, for this is all his fault."<sup>71</sup> But, since he was accompanied by two other founders why is he held above the others? Certainly, while Cherniack forgot about Druidism, Nelson has continued to be active to the present day.

The idea of Fisher as primary founder has precedents from the earliest days. He was the first person credited in the *Druid Chronicles (Reformed)* as preaching the word of Reformed Druidry,<sup>72</sup> most likely because he was the first Arch Druid.<sup>73</sup> However, Fisher is also often credited with bringing in the majority of the customs of the Druids. In so far as Fisher was the Arch Druid he may have had a special burden to come up with liturgical material. According to the *Druid Chronicles* and other sources Fisher claimed that he had been made a Druid in high school. However, Fisher has refuted this, saying that he "never claimed any special consecration by a Druid in England."<sup>74</sup> If that is true Fisher was never under the burden of creating material by himself as a "pre-existing" ritual.

Regardless, it seems clear that much of the creation of the Reformed Druids was shared. As he notes in the interview, "we sort of dreamed a piece up here and a piece up there, improvising as we went along the way people, I suppose, sometimes do."<sup>75</sup> This is not to say, either, that Fisher was not the creator of much of the material. For instance he suggested that he "must've dreamed" the sigil up, though he doesn't remember much about his inspiration for it except that the idea of "closing the circle" was important.<sup>76</sup> The meditations were also his addition to the services.<sup>77</sup> On the other hand many other parts of the Druids were the creation of some of the other founders and early members. Fisher credits the higher orders to a suggestion by Nelson and notes that the tenets are the only lasting contribution of Cherniack.<sup>78</sup> Fisher credits the liturgy as something that "I and Norman Nelson wrought in 1963 on

<sup>71</sup> Joan Carruth, "The Epistle to the Myopians," in *A Reformed Druid Anthology*, ed. M. Scharding (Northfield: MN, 1996), line 0, page 60.

<sup>72</sup> Frangquist, David, *Druid Chronicles (Reformed)*. Fisher is first mentioned in E.C. 1:3. His name is mentioned again in 1:6. Howard Cherniack appears first in E.C. 2:7. Nelson is first mentioned in L.C. 1:10 but then without a last name.

<sup>73</sup> E.C. 1:6 indicates that Fisher was of the third order.

<sup>74</sup> "David Fisher to Reformed Druids of Carleton Grove," 13 April 1970, Reformed Druid Collection, Carleton College Archives, Laurence J. Gould Library, Northfield, MN. There is still some dispute about this in my mind. Despite Fisher's denial the claim appears in Nelson's annotation to the *Druid Chronicles* and more recently in interviews with Nelson and Larson. Of course, if this claim was made, the circumstances around it would also be of interest. I am inclined to believe that if the claim was made it was after Nelson, Cherniack, and Fisher came up with the idea of the RDNA as a protest though it is possible that he claimed to Nelson and Cherniack.

<sup>75</sup> David Fisher, telephone interview with Michael Scharding, 23 August 2004.

<sup>76</sup> David Fisher, telephone interview

<sup>77</sup> David Fisher, telephone interview

<sup>78</sup> "David Fisher to Reformed Druids of Carleton Grove." Cherniack was also the author of the original constitution. There may be a number of reasons why Fisher chose to overlook that.

Saturdays,”<sup>79</sup> though he does not indicate whether the work was equal or not. Indeed the balance of the initial work will probably be left an open to question for the future because, as Fisher points out, “I didn’t take notes at the time because, obviously, I didn’t think I was founding something for thirty, forty years.”<sup>80</sup>

However, in the period after the founding, Fisher, of the three founders, did have more of a tendency to be a guiding force. Among his early letters are responses to early council proposals, not only accepting some and rejecting others, but also requesting changes in parts,<sup>81</sup> as well sending his own proposals to the council.<sup>82</sup> This occurred despite feeling that Druidism did not meet a need for him and, moreover, that he was being drawn by his increasing Christianity away from Druidism. However, a partial answer could be found in a later letter in which Fisher explained his desire for the proposals as trying to combat over complicated organization that his own actions had inspired.<sup>83</sup> Hence he felt responsible, as a founder, to at least guide what he had started.<sup>84</sup> However, in that type of action it is easy to see Fisher in a parental role that is missing from the later actions of either of the other two founders. This guidance indicates both that Fisher saw himself more as a founder and probably has led others to feel that he had a special role among the founders.

Fisher’s interview indicates another ‘founder’ who was more important as a source of meaning in rituals: David Frangquist. According to Fisher, Frangquist “essentially took what had been a protest against religion requirement and an occasional exercise in panentheistic speculation and turned it into, if not a religion, something like a religion.”<sup>85</sup> Moreover, Frangquist was the first leader of the group for whom the Druids “served a [spiritual] need.”<sup>86</sup> We know that Frangquist’s search for material was apparently more extensive than Fisher’s.<sup>87</sup> While it would be difficult to say how much he added it is possible to mention a few notable contributions. Frangquist published the *Druid Chronicles (Reformed)*. While at least some of the material was the writings of other druids,<sup>88</sup> the more serious material in the books of *Customs and Meditations* is

certainly Frangquist’s.<sup>89</sup> He is also responsible for the collection of the *Green Book of Meditations* which was intended to be a guide for later Arch Druids.<sup>90</sup> While Fisher can be seen as creating the Druids, Frangquist created a groundwork for its continuation and is probably most responsible that it is still around. Frangquist has also continued to be a leader in the Druids. When the Carleton Grove faltered in the 1980’s Frangquist came to stir up interest. Of course, all of this is not to say that Frangquist is *the* founder of Druidism instead of Fisher. Fisher indicates that Frangquist “refounded” the Reformed Druids; that is to say that while Fisher along with Nelson and Cherniack started the Druids and gave it much of its outward form, Frangquist was the prime mover in imbuing the movement with meaning.<sup>91</sup> Both individuals were important in the creation of what Druidism is, but in different ways.

It is also claimed that, having started something that blossomed into something he hadn’t expected, Fisher “washed his hands” of Reformed Druidism. What is true is that, after a point, Fisher stopped providing the guidance that he initially offered and has stopped initiating contact with Druids; the latest letter from Fisher to a Druid in the International Druid Archives is dated 1 August 1974 and before that a letter dated to 13 April 1970.<sup>92</sup> In his interview Fisher says that he has replied to letters sent to him more recently, though none of the replies have made their way to the Archives. However, his letters have stopped being instructions and aid for a wide audience of Druids

Fisher has expressed concern for the Druids; he particularly expressed worry about people who approach the Druids as something that it is not.<sup>93</sup> Perhaps, he has even wished from time to time that he never started the Druids so that people could not be hurt by it. But having such concerns does not mean that he feels that, on the whole, the Druids are not worthwhile. Indeed, at the end of the interview he wished that the Druids would continue to be around as an aid to those for whom it was suitable.

But if Fisher has not washed his hands of Druidism, why do many people believe he did? Before answering that I will examine why Fisher’s early guidance and more active role have faded. This is given a fairly clear answer in the interview. Fisher admits that “I’ve not maintained an active tie with Druidism because sometimes the leadership has seemed very strange to me.”<sup>94</sup> Though Fisher may have felt responsible to some degree early on as the nature of the Reform has changed his desire to

<sup>79</sup> “David Fisher to Rev. J. Gordon Melton,” 13 July 1973, Reformed Druid Collection, Carleton College Archives, Laurence J. Gould Library, Northfield, MN.

<sup>80</sup> David Fisher, telephone interview

<sup>81</sup> “David Fisher to Arch Druid of Carleton College,” after 29 March 1966, Reformed Druid Collection, Carleton College Archives, Laurence J. Gould Library, Northfield, MN.

<sup>82</sup> “David Fisher to Arch Druid of Carleton College submitting proposals,” 1966?, Reformed Druid Collection, Carleton College Archives, Laurence J. Gould Library, Northfield, MN.

<sup>83</sup> “David Fisher to Arch Druid of Carleton College clarifying proposals,” 1966?, Reformed Druid Collection, Carleton College Archives, Laurence J. Gould Library, Northfield, MN.

<sup>84</sup> “I see my duty as remaining, and advising,” “David Fisher to Arch Druid of Carleton College clarifying proposals,” and “I felt somewhat responsible, having started the ball rolling down the hill, to offer what helpful observations I could,” David Fisher, telephone interview.

<sup>85</sup> David Fisher, telephone interview.

<sup>86</sup> David Fisher, telephone interview.

<sup>87</sup> David Fisher, telephone interview.

<sup>88</sup> “David Fisher to Reformed Druids of Carleton Grove.” The Druid named here is Jan Johnson who, however, left Carleton after the Druid’s first term in existence and is an unlikely candidate to have written this. However, it is clear that some selected material came from elsewhere.

<sup>89</sup> “David Fisher to Rev. J. Gordon Melton.”

<sup>90</sup> David Frangquist, “Introduction to *The Green Book Volume One*,” in *A Reformed Druid Anthology, Second Edition*, Vol. 2 ed. M. Scharding (Northfield, MN: Drynemetum Press, 2003), 1.

<sup>91</sup> David Fisher, telephone interview.

<sup>92</sup> The later of which is a response to the proposals put forward by Isaac Bonewits. It is of a different nature that the previous, going more to explain the nature of the founding and of his beliefs as a Christian vis-à-vis Neopaganism rather than providing guidance, as he had, towards the Carleton Grove.

<sup>93</sup> Fisher was most particularly worried about Druids who stayed with the group and did not find a more complete religion. Perhaps his concern is valid that in some groups there is not enough material for complete spiritual well being. As Fisher created it and Frangquist altered it at least, Fisher doesn’t feel that there is enough material. Though he didn’t consider the option during the interview, I would expect that the groups with more long term membership, especially the Groves in California, offer a more filling religion.

<sup>94</sup> David Fisher, telephone interview.

guide those led by a different spirit of the Reform has dissipated.<sup>95</sup>

There are, however, good reasons why Fisher has been seen as a recluse. For my own belief I would point to the research of Scharding who only managed to speak to Fisher after ten years and multiple attempts. A certain feeling came from him to me and, I would think, to others that Fisher didn't want to talk. Admittedly Scharding may have had been helped along in his belief. After telling Robert Larson that he had been unable to contact Fisher during an interview Larson's response is 'that figures,' followed by an explanation of why Larson wasn't surprised.<sup>96</sup> That may have been enough to turn a string of unsuccessful attempts to contact Fisher into a belief that Fisher couldn't be contacted.

However, the quotation from Margot Adler is of an earlier date and probably arises from the period when Neopagans began to use the vehicle of Reformed Druidism. Certainly Fisher became much more silent as his creation turned towards this new religious category and his Christianity may have convinced others that he was more opposed to the new path of Reformed Druidism than he actually was. In specific, I would point to Isaac Bonewits as the origin for the belief, especially since he was the primary source for the Reformed Druid material in *Drawing Down The Moon*. In an early version of Bonewits' article "What and Why is Reformed Druidism in the 1970's,"<sup>97</sup> Bonewits wrote that "And so, to the horror or of the original founder, the RDNA continued to exist and grow." In fact, Bonewits, at the suggestion of Richard Shelton,<sup>98</sup> removed this line, though he added another which insinuated something similar.<sup>99</sup>

Some of Bonewits opinions on the founder and on other topics were distorted because he had a particular vision of what the Reformed Druids should be. Most notably Bonewits had a vision of Reformed Druidism not as becoming a neopagan vehicle but as already being one,<sup>100</sup> a point which was denied by many of the founders.<sup>101</sup> With this in mind it is easy to see how

Bonewits would see Fisher as being repulsed by his creation if only a limited part of it was considered. Bonewits also had a view of the Reformed Druids needing to become a much more active organization. In his First Epistle he depicts the Founders as having abandoned Druidism, except to protest against changes.<sup>102</sup> From the available letters we have seen that this was not the limit of Fisher or the other Founder's activities, as they tended to guide and support, at least, the Carleton Grove. They, however, lacked an interest in participating in a Grove and, moreover, in creating new Groves, an activity Bonewits saw as essential for the survival of the Reformed Druids. Regardless of the exact reasons, Bonewits believed that Fisher was disgusted with Druidism and was instrumental in spreading this view.

I hope that I have been able to convince people of two things. The first is that while Fisher is most famous as the founder of Druidism there were others who might take more credit especially in the creation of the meaning and continuation of Druidism. Secondly, that Fisher has not repented of his creation. He still takes an interest in the Druids even if he doesn't actively seek them out. His actions and inactions in the past may have led to other views, but those may now be cleared away. I, at least, have come to a new respect for Fisher and for the importance of other founders as well as for who Fisher is today. I would like to end with a few quotes from the interview which I felt to be interesting.

- (On how the Druids were started) One night Norman Nelson, Howard Cherniack, and myself were having one drink too many and were trying to figure out what we could do to deal with this (religious) requirement.
- (An analogy for Reformed Druidism) Well, I suppose, given people's need for alternative spiritualities, the Druids are like a template on a word processor that can be filled in with a number of contents.
- (On some of the sources of Reformed Druidism) I must admit we were all readers of science fiction or science fantasy
- (On the Druid Chronicles (Reformed)) I thought it was pretty fun.

<sup>95</sup> He admits in the interview that some letters from people who took Druidism seriously were embarrassing to him and he felt no need to guide people on that path, perhaps because he had no experience with it.

<sup>96</sup> Robert Larson, telephone interview with Michael Scharding, 20 April, 1994. In in *A Reformed Druid Anthology*, ed. M. Scharding (Northfield, MN: Drynemetum Press, 1996), 475. Other interviews have similar sentiments, such as Scharding's interview with Norman Nelson.

<sup>97</sup> "What and Why is Reformed Druidism in the 1970's?," Isaac Bonewits, Pamphlet produced in 1974? A latter version appears in the *The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*.

<sup>98</sup> "Richard Shelton to Isaac Bonewits," 1 May 1976, Reformed Druid Collection, Carleton College Archives, Laurence J. Gould Library, Northfield, MN.

<sup>99</sup> "many of the older members of the RDNA disapprove of Neopagan Druidism, considering it a dangerous step backwards." "What and Why is Reformed Druidism in the 1970's?," page 2, in *The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*, ed. I. Bonewits (Berkley, CA: Berkley Drunemeton Press, 1976).

<sup>100</sup> Bonewits' Sixth Epistle which will be in ARDA II mentions that the omission of non-pagan material that he received through Larson lead him to this conclusion.

<sup>101</sup> A letter from Fisher to Bonewits dated 1 August 1974 probably contributed to Bonewits' feelings. In the letter Fisher says that he no longer considers himself a "Reformed Druid Priest" or a "Patriarch," (though he never mentions anything

So Endeth  
Vol Seven  
Of ARDA 2

about not being a "Reformed Druid." The letter also includes Fishers feelings about Neopaganism. It would have been easy for Bonewits to overlook that the letter did not deny the rest of Reformed Druidism since it denied the part Bonewits felt most important and most real.

<sup>102</sup> "The First Epistle of Isaac," 1:14-15, in *The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*, ed. I. Bonewits (Berkley, CA: Berkley Drunemeton Press, 1976).

VOLUME EIGHT

A GENERAL HISTORY  
OF REFORMED  
DRUIDISM  
IN AMERICA

a.k.a

The Gregarious Epistle of Michael

or

The Adventures of Prolix the Druid

An unofficial and very controversial attempt by Michael Scharding to provide his own personal overview of the main historical events that he believes has affected the development of the various Reformed Druid movements in North America over the first 34 years of their organizational histories, with updates in 2003. Best read in conjunction with the primary materials that are found in the other parts of "A Reformed Druid Anthology".

**Printing History**

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2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 1996 (ARDA)

3<sup>rd</sup> Edition 2004 (ARDA 2)

The Drynemtum Press

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## Blessing

May the blessings of the all-surrounding Earth-Mother be upon you, gentle reader. May my words find a welcome home with you. Please excuse the gregarious nature of my ramblings. It is over ten times longer than any other epistle in Druidic history, but probably of less value than their compact wisdom. Read it at a slow pace, ponder it, and then tell me what you think of it. Please, do not consider it dogma and try to forgive my errors and biases. If you do this, you may receive the greatest blessing of all.

## Dedication

I'd like to dedicate this paper in the memory of my grandparents, Emmet Gerald Scharding and Billie Johnston Scharding, without whose love and funding I would not have been able to attend Carleton or to write this epistle.

## Acknowledgements

Special thanks goes to Eric Hillemann for helping me to gather, organize and interpret the International Druid Archives. I'd also like to thank all the people whom I have interviewed to write this paper, especially the Frangquists, the Sheltons, Norman Nelson, Robert Larson and Isaac Bonewits. Mark Heiman is to be thanked for the final visual format.

It would be remiss not to thank Professor Phillip Niles for his superhuman patience with my first six proposals and innumerable redrafts. Without his help, I wouldn't have ever come even close to the dubious quality of this paper.

## Prominent Disclaimer

This work is **not** to be assumed to be THE definitive, nor official, statement of the history of Reformed Druidism, regardless of my previous position as Arch Druid of Carleton. This paper is a composite of conversations and documents from past Druids that has been molded by the imposition of my personal thinking processes. It is one history, yea, *one history among many* of what was and is and may be Reformed Druidism. I disagree with some of the trends, but I will try my best to be objective in my presentation. Read this paper with caution, because it will be filled with my biases.

Another note, the RDNA tradition of Carleton has been to call both male and female members, "Druids." I will specifically refer to gender of members if it is necessary. I've also been lazy and used "Neo-Pagan" when I should have put "Neo-Pagan, Wiccan, Followers of the Old Way, Crafters, Worshipers of the Goddess, practitioners of personal spirituality, Polytheists/Pantheists/Duotheist, etc." But that would have eaten up a lot of time, and you know what I mean. Also please insert c.e. after all dates.

**NOTE:** This epistle has little to do with British, Neo-Paganistic, Masonic or other forms of Druidism now in America. We welcome any scholarly comparisons with your groups and we offer the use of our archived materials stored at Carleton.

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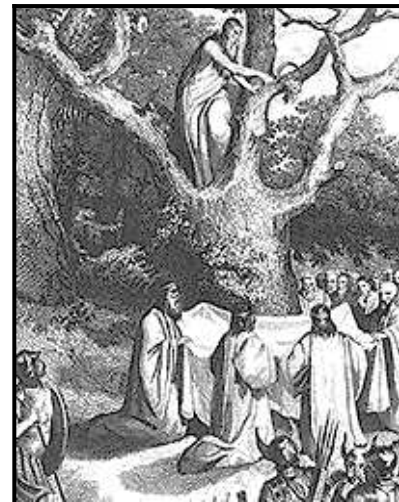


Figure 1 Group laundry efforts by Druids

# Foreword

## 1994

### The Importance of Origin Stories

Why does a history of Reformed Druidism matter to other modern Druid groups in America? Probably for the same reasons that the study of Judaism and Mithraism is important for studying Christianity. Few religious movements, even spontaneous ones, can resist the temptation to borrow material from other groups. Often this borrowing is never explicitly acknowledged and scholars are forever doomed to waste many precious hours debating where every idea came from, rather than debating what was the importance of the idea. I hope that this history of the RDNA, in some small way, may serve as an origin-story for the other modern Druid movements in America. I certainly hope that other stories will follow and expand the discussions on the influences that I was unable to adequately discuss; for example the full extent of the Neo-Pagan/New Age or Environmental influences upon Reformed Druidism.

All religious movements have a need for origin-stories; i.e. what year did they begin, how did they begin, who started the traditions and (of course) who's to blame for all the crap that has happened since the Golden Age of Founding. These origin-stories help to define whence we came from, to notice how much we've changed, and to help us to decide where we may wish to go. Most religious movements keep rather spotty records in their beginnings, mainly because they are too busy establishing the group. By the time that most origin stories are written down, the Founder(s) are long dead and multifarious myths have obscured much of the truth. Sometimes, as with the ancient Druids, the people never got around to writing down the thoughts, lore and history, and their wisdom has thus vanished into the mists of time.

Not so with the Reformed Druids of North America. Within 2 years of the Founding of Reformed Druidism, a history was written by David Frangquist and efforts were made to preserve early documents and paraphernalia for the edification of future Arch-Druids. Primarily, this was done because of the high turnover rate that is inherent with a college-based group; a system that precluded the establishment of a resident-elder and made oral-based transmission of stories an uncertain risk. From our copious records, and interviews with living members, it is still possible to reconstruct a mildly detailed history of Reformed Druidism in America.

*Although it is possible to make such a history, I sometimes have wondered if a history should*

even be published. In many ways, Reformed Druidism is far too simple a subject to be written about, for Awareness must be experienced. Even the most complicated explanation cannot contain the complexities of the simplicity that is Reformed Druidism. By even writing a history of Reformed Druidism, I fear that I may lead hasty scholars even further away from the patterns of Reformed Druidism. If I should do so, I apologize and I hope that further careful cross-study and comparison will lead you back to the true purposes and truths of Reformed Druidism. Even worse, I would be terribly saddened if a Reformed Druid, amidst their struggle for awareness, should begin insisting that the "only true" Druidism lies in repeating the ways of the past Reformed Druids. That would be a tragic waste of time on their part and for those who must listen to such rantings.

### So Why am I Writing This?

In the spring of 1993, my grove members and previous leaders knew little of our RDNA history. Much of the heritage of the Reformed Druids had been forgotten by the Carleton Grove by the late 1980s, not that this had inhibited their Druidism by the slightest bit. We knew that the RDNA began as a protest movement in 1963, that we supposedly had three orders of membership, that we should be wary of Isaac Bonewits, that we should allow anybody to participate irregardless of their religion and that the RDNA was the ancestral-origin of many modern Druid movements in the United States. Some Druids would have been content with the freedom of ideas that come out of a vague background, but I was a historian by training and stubbornly wished to know what my predecessors had done so as to augment the possibilities of grove activities and to predict the long-term effects and cycles of Druidism on my fellow grove-members and myself.

As a result of this research, I've probably collected and read more Reformed Druid material and talked with more Druids from the different factions than any other Reformed Druid (except possibly Isaac Bonewits). This means that I'm either an "expert" or I am now more irreparably confused in my Druidism than ever as a result. (More than likely it means that three precious years have passed from my youth.) I have always enjoyed reading the "small scale" history of communities and items of local interest, and this is shown in my choice of studying the Reformed Druids. As a result of my research, I firmly believe that the simple lessons that can be learned from Reformed Druidism are just as valid as those from big, "mainstream" religions with millions of members. Perhaps the Reform's lessons are easier to understand since Druidism doesn't require too many presuppositions. The archived discussions that I have read about the simplicity, honesty and omni-compatibility of basic Reformed Druidism have made my "tidying up" of its history a real labor of love and sorrow. I have watched the dramas unfold, both the touching loyalty to ideals and the disappointing misunderstandings between members. Indeed, each and every Reformed Druid has an interpretation and a history that are just as valid and important as this lowly epistle. I now wish to share my insights with others to heal some of the wounds that have festered from the frequent misunderstandings and to enlighten others with a few thoughts that might be applicable to their lives.

As a historian, I have often bewailed and cursed the dead of past ages for not writing down their thoughts and stories for the future generations to read and cherish; but perhaps they wanted us to figure it out for ourselves? In some way, I hope that this book will set a precedent for members of other nascent religious movements to write down their own histories, while the details are fresh in their minds (and make frequent updated versions available). I only wish that those groups will not forget to be spontaneous and willing to discard the past when it is no longer helpful.

### Final Thoughts

During this era of unending questioning, I feel most at home with calling myself a Reformed Druid. I am tied to no religious dogma or creed by my association with the RDNA, beyond the two Basic Tenets. The vagueness of Druidism has ironically proved itself to be a sure anchor in my personal search for religious truths in this chaotic world. I am currently studying the teachings of many religious organizations and individuals, with occasional successes and failures here and there. I doubt that I will find any one system capable of answering all my questions; although I'm interested in Zen, Tao and Christianity. Perhaps no religion is perfectly fitted for me, or perhaps I can not bring myself to fit in any one religion. If so, then I may have to create a



religion for myself, or perhaps even create/modify one for every passing moment.... Who knows?, I may find truth in a few years and then look back on all this as a silly moment of confusion. Yet if I find my true faith, I'm sure it will be far richer and more fervent because of the long study and search that I have made for it. In the meantime, Druidism will be my haven during a storm.

-Mike Scharding

Goodhue Hall 310

April 1994, revised April 1996



Figure 2 Renaissance Druid with altar.



Figure 3 Druid perpetually late for

service, hoofing it.

## Introduction

(Please, feel free to skip to the first chapter)

Written in 1996

The purpose of this paper is to drastically re-interpret and provide a general historical overview of a nation-wide movement known as the Reformed Druids of North America and the origins of its various offshoot branches, up to 1996.<sup>1</sup> With the help of newly collected and mostly un-published resources, I will provide a new perspective on the role of Reformed Druidism<sup>2</sup> in spawning the American Neo-Pagan Druid movement, including the founding of "Ár nDraíocht Féin" (ADF) in 1983 and the Henge of Keltria in 1987. In addition to influencing Neo-Paganism, Reformed Druidism has played a small role in shaping the atmosphere and character of Carleton College.

I hope that this paper will provide better chronological and organizational understanding to future researchers after which they can conduct further studies on the RDNA. A good researcher must use more than one source in order to gain a balanced perspective. The biases of earlier researchers are the result of an over-reliance upon interviews taken solely with Isaac Bonewits (or Fisher) or by a primarily exclusive reliance upon his writings. There are no experts in Reformed Druidism, merely voices who can provide personal definitions. Therefore, I hope that future studies do not use my study as their sole source either. If they do write reports, I hope that they will mail a complementary copy of the document to: Carleton College Archives, 300 North College Street, Northfield, MN, 55057, USA.

For those unacquainted with Reformed Druidism, I will now provide this introductory synopsis to prepare you for a more detailed history of Reformed Druidism and perhaps foreshadow the debates of this paper. I hope that you will find Reformed Druidism to be an attractive case model for use in your future studies.<sup>3</sup> By the end of this epistle, I hope that you'll know more about the overall history of Reformed Druidism than most present, past and future members. As for our theology or philosophy, it's relatively simple, and you'll be a master of it by the end (as far as any of us ever will be).

### Importance to Carleton College:

Reformed Druidism has a special place in the modern history of Carleton College. Originally conceived as a student protest against mandatory attendance of religious services, the RDNA rapidly became a powerful and personal tool for individuals at Carleton to explore the depths of religious truths and comprehend the religious and cultural diversity of the increasingly pluralistic United States.

Over 33 years old, the Carleton Grove of the RDNA was by far the longest running, largest, extant, *unofficial* student-run organization at Carleton.<sup>4</sup> It is now an official organization as of May 1995. Probably only 2% of past Carleton students since 1963 have directly participated in at least one RDNA service or have received it's mailings. But, it is likely that a greater number of Carleton students have interacted with Druids (knowingly or unknowingly) or been introduced to an RDNA member's religious/philosophical curiosity over the last 33 or so years. If nothing else, the Druids have become another nostalgic background ornament contributing to Carleton's mystique; joining the ranks of Rott-blatt, Schiller and the Tunnel Graffiti.<sup>5</sup> The RDNA has also produced a rare, very personal, and unrivaled amount of alumni-student inter-communication and assistance, which alone should attract closer study by Carleton historians.

The RDNA is the only known religion or, if you prefer, group-philosophy, to have indisputably originated at Carleton College (and perhaps in Northfield or south Minnesota) and spread so far from home; being a recognizable extension of a

Carleton-wide attribute of respectful skepticism towards all matters. As local chapters of the RDNA, called "groves," were established across the nation (at first mostly at colleges), a renaissance of religious exploration and correspondence developed within the RDNA's nurturing anti-dogmatic structure. Importantly, this expansion also brought ideas back to isolated midwestern Carleton students and alumni from Druids experiencing different environments.

I might add that I am not alone in my respect for the importance of the Reformed Druid debates and their impact on Carleton College. The RDNA has probably not had much more than 1,800 total members at Carleton,<sup>6</sup> but the previous College Archivist, Mark Greene and the current Archivist Eric Hillemann feel that:

"The Druids are one of Carleton's most interesting, long-lived, and (in terms of national following) most influential traditions. As time passes, I hope that their history will receive some scholarly attention, either within or from outside of Carleton."<sup>7</sup>

### Importance to the Neo-Pagan Movement:

Upon entering the catalytic environment of the Bay Area and urban Universities in the late 60s/early 70s, some RDNA members quickly allied themselves with the nascent Neo-Pagan movement which was concentrated there. This quick allegiance was made possible by the RDNA's amazing coincidental similarity of liturgy, organization, and doctrine of religious searching, as will be discussed later.

After years of sometimes bitter infighting during the 1970s over how to more "effectively" organize themselves and as a result of a poor economy, a great number of RDNA groves collapsed or went underground. Some members "left" Reformed Druidism to continue the growth of the American Druid Neo-Pagan movement, by founding "Ár nDraiocht Féin," which possesses few immediately recognizable connections to the RDNA, yet they acknowledge the RDNA as their origin.<sup>8</sup> Yet we should note that RDNA and NRDNA groves have stubbornly continued to persist alongside with the ADF and with ADF's offshoots such as Keltria and Druidactios.<sup>9</sup> Put together, these three newer groups have currently under 800 paid members in 20+ groves/henges/toutas and perhaps 2000+ irregular attendees. The American Druids have always been a small, very recognizable and reasonably public group within Neo-Paganism. But, their numbers are not so insignificant when one considers that the Neo-Pagan movement has between 50,000 to 200,000 members in America, depending on your statistics.<sup>10</sup> In fact, many people see Reformed Druidism in America as being defined by its larger, noisier offshoots, ADF and Keltria or even by the unrelated British/European Druid or Masonic Druidical movements. As a result, accounts of Reformed Druidism history could easily be falsely portrayed as being fated into *evolving* towards these more noticeable organizations.

Neo-Paganism is a collective umbrella term for nature-oriented religious movements with an intense interest in borrowing from pre-Christian cultures coupled with modern sensibilities. Neo-Paganism has been expanding geometrically since the early 70s and will become more and more noticeable in the future.<sup>11</sup> In the coming years, I predict there will be greater number of scholarly studies upon the artistic, musical, liturgical, scholastic, philosophical and theological accomplishments of these highly creative minority religions.<sup>12</sup> These studies will likely be initiated by Neo-Pagan scholars, from secure Neo-Pagan traditions, who are seeking to unearth and explore their groups' relatively recent historical origins.

Because Reformed Druids have often been playfully pushing the definitional boundaries of "Neo-Paganism" as much as they have with Judeo-Christianity, it will continue to attract

some interest. Another attraction with the RDNA for scholars is Isaac Bonewits' prominent presence and well-known activities within Neo-Paganism and Reformed Druidism throughout the 70s, which was prophetic of the progressive Neo-Pagan Druidic religion known as "Ár nDraiocht Féin."

Finally, the extensively archived history of Reformed Druidism will provide those scholars with rich comparisnal models and materials when writing the future organizational histories of Neo-Pagan movements (especially Druids<sup>13</sup>). This paper will help them overcome the often treacherous, paltry and deceptive misinformation currently available about the RDNA and may even change preconceptions of what a "Druid" organization has to be.

### Importance for Religion in the '60s:

Finally, as a side note, this study will remind scholars how the multi-faceted influences of local environment can influence the thinking and structures of local chapters of the same religion/philosophy. With the great advantage of hindsight, I will show how the radically different administrative policies of Carleton College and Berkeley College during the 60's and 70's may have well led to the development of different understandings and methods of protest among student populations and in the local communities. This difference in protest methodology has in turn drastically affected the course of the "Carleton" RDNA faction and that of the "Berkeley/Bay-Area" NewRDNA faction.



Figure 4 Bard from William Blake's poetry.

# Chapter One: Resources, Methodology, and Biases

(Casual readers may skip to Chapter Two)

## Research Questions

Most Neo-Pagan scholars have never had access to peruse the newly available resources that I have used to write this paper, so I feel it is necessary to explain, at what will seem at an extraordinary length, just what led to my writing this paper. This section may even provide some new research ideas to future scholars of Neo-Pagan history. Non-academics may freely skip ahead to Chapter Two.

I suspect that there will be few groups over ten years old that can resist the attraction of writing a history. Unfortunately, time and resources are often lacking, and they don't have a viable plan to assemble the necessary materials. There are a number of important questions that the Neo-Pagan historian should ask themselves while planning the process of writing a history. Let's explore them.

### 1. Who am I writing for?

This is the crucial question. There are different types of histories for different types of audiences. Diaries are appropriate for solitaries. While you may pass a diary onto a child or disciple, you want a diary to remind yourself of personally important memories, personal oaths, and to keep track of the effects of spells. Diaries, unlike Shadow Books, often includes the mundane *and* the magical elements of your lives.

If you are writing a history for a handful of close friends or disciples, you may prefer the Book of Shadows format commonly used in Wicca with one large handwritten book being copied by every new member, as ARDA has been for me. Such a book contains a brief description of apostolic succession, basic rites and basic organizational rules. What's more since only initiates will be reading it, you can write very personal details and be free about naming people. Since everyone in the group, knows the ins-and-outs of the group, you could avoid explaining the simple things, place descriptions and take a lot of knowledge for granted.

If you are writing a history for scholarly study or to enlighten other Neo-Pagan groups, you will probably go into about as much depth as a Book of Shadows, but leaving out any craft-secrets (without hopefully making the history unintelligible). You can expect most Neo-Pagans to understand the Neo-Pagan mindset and opinion background, but the average scholar will require explanation of such simple concepts like "the eight festivals," "sabbats," "cones," "degrees" and "athames."

If you are writing a history for a recruitment flyer or leaflet for mass distribution, you need to condense it drastically and emphasize the drawing points, remove personal details and avoid describing conflicts (acrimony may turn off recruits). Apologetic and defensive works are also becoming necessary, now that the fundamentalists are now aiming their venom on the movements.

In my case, I'm writing this Epistle and ARDA collection for the scholarly audience and as a public-oriented "book of shadows." The result, I thoroughly explain the terms, introduce all the players, tie events into greater sociological cycles, and avoid extremely intimate goofs.

### 2. What are my biases and reasons?

Identifying and admitting these is a difficult thing to do. Writing a history can lead to some deep soul-searching and you should ask yourself some probing questions. Why are you writing a history? Is it to try to build a historical sequences that support your opinion of what the group's true purpose? Is it to show off your knowledge of the trivia? Are there certain types of people or faction who will resent your history? How much of your groups innovations are actually paralleled by other groups in response to shifts in society? Is it to cover up a disgrace in your organization? Is it to share joyful stories and helpful hints of group coordination? Most of the time we do not recognize what a small pond a coven or a grove is. Do you really know what the real history of your group is? Do you plan to exclude the input of certain people? Why? Are you the best suited person for the job of writing a history or should you co-author it with other people? If you don't like the answers you get from such questions, then beware starting such a task.

### 3. How will I distribute my history?

There are a number of ways to distribute histories nowadays. I highly recommend that you do it on a computer, as you will amend it several times, and it will give it a professional appearance. Photocopy shops can print and bind small histories rather cheaply nowadays. An exciting new method, if you (or a friend) has a talent is that you can set up a web-page and allow people to download files containing your history. You can then just release it on to the Internet and let interested people find it and distribute it to their friends, and it won't cost you a cent after the initial set up.

### 4. What can I include in a history?

Any thing you'd like. Histories are merely records of what is meaningful to a group of people. Kind of like a big scrapbook. A partial list includes; why a group was founded, chronologies, a series of letters, recipes, sets of bylaws, specialized dictionaries, bibliographies, favorite activities, politics of leadership struggles, jokes, meditations, quotes, mythologies, rituals, blessings, artwork, poetry, music, songs, eulogies, favorite meeting sites, or even stories about how popular members came to join the group. You could even make a video tape documentary. Your imagination is your only limitation.

## "The Golden Rule"

Any researcher of Neo-Paganism will understand when I say that a good rule in reconstructing the history of the RDNA (which many "outsiders" consider to be one of the oldest, identifiable, public Neo-Pagan movements) is that disagreement among RDNA members is the general reality and that agreements are the unusual exception. Each individual Reformed Druid (esp. Californian ones) had a different purpose and view of what Druidism meant to them. Although this diversity could apply to members of many mainstream religions, rarely do we see a group give as much free reign, affirmation and empowerment to the individual's beliefs as we find in Reformed Druidism. With that in mind, it is appropriate to beware rashly accepting any statements in documents claiming to be authoritative upon a Neo-Pagan group's beliefs (especially in Reformed Druidism) and to realize that any such statement may be a disguised personal bias (such as this Epistle, for example). The type of person who leaves written documents may be quite different from the person who does not feel the need to canonize their ideas on paper.

In the case of the RDNA, the "authorities" have tended to be the Third Order Druids who left us the majority of the contemporary written documents and wrote most of the inter-communications on "key" issues. Much of the time, they were also the only ones knowledgeable about the existence and politics

of inter-grove communications. Therefore, it is fitting that they should be my primary informants since I am constructing a history on inter-grove activity and organizational change.

However, in future histories about specific groves, there will need to be a great number more interviews of 1st and 2nd Order Druid members taken from each grove, something that is difficult to do since few records are kept of non-Third members. Third Order Druids only constituted (at most) 5% of all past Reformed Druid membership, but they are always the easiest to locate because of their prominence and long-term commitments to the group. It is also important to remember that only a very tiny portion of the activities or attention of most grove members were expended on issues "outside" of their groves. For most members, the local grove and the lives of its own members were all that really mattered and thus documentation of the opinions of non-Thirds on external issues is almost non-existent.

## Difficulties of recent history for me:

Because I have never academically studied post-1950 history, which often falls under "politics", I have adopted some of the research tools of a journalist because I see them as the most ingenious historians of very recent events. Almost all of the major figures in Reformed Druidism are still alive at the time of this writing (1996), but they are still so active in careers that memoirs are not likely to be on their agendas for some years to come, until the retirement. And few people write memoirs, actually. Nor could I use existing research on the RDNA, since most of the other researchers didn't interview many Druids, or probably met with only one Druid. Therefore, I have discarded their work and pursued a very active search and questioning of past and present members, which I recommend unto you. This new research has included a great number of interviews, surveys and document collection from past and present members rather than relying upon poorly researched and published studies.<sup>14</sup>

## Interviewing

I must tell researchers how important one's choice of relevant resources is when studying "Neo-Paganism," or any other small, modern, religious groups. Because of the richer amounts of material that are often available on recent historical events, students of recent history sometimes have the joy and burden of having too many resources. This problem of apparent "chaos" can be offset by the fact that many of the principal "movers-and-shakers" of recent events in Neo-Paganism are still alive. Interviewing them allows you to supplement contemporary records with the often '20/20' vision of hindsight and maturation. These "live witnesses" can decipher mysteries found in the available texts or make up for the paucity of documentation. Those interviews can often reduce the extraneous background reading needed by the researcher by the interviewees' indications of which aspects of a group were relatively unaffected by contemporary events. Much of what happens in a grove will never be put down by a pen. Mood and environment are difficult to capture in words, especially written words, but are retained in oral stories.

But we will always face the problem that some people are often too close to an event to step back and give us a un-biased interpretation of that situation. To correct the lies, errors, the "purposeful exclusion of pertinent facts" by certain people and to arrive at a more insightful interpretation of past events, one must cross-check their testimonies with those of others (especially their enemies). Fortunately, much of the stressful RDNA history has occurred over 20 years ago and the Druids are becoming to open up about distressing issues as they distance themselves from them.

Background Reading Ideally, the researcher of Neo-Paganism should explore the major interests of the people that they are studying, before they begin to study the people directly. It greatly helps when studying "Neo-Pagan" groups to have already acquired a broad background with folk-lore/music/dance (regardless of country), mythology, non-Christian religions and pertinent foreign languages. Such studies limber the mind for exploring new modes of thought, modes which may seem hardly comprehensible to the average Western-trained mind. Many Neo-Pagans are very intelligent, well-read, eclectic and scholastically inclined.<sup>15</sup> If you approach their "official" published materials with little knowledge of the foundational culture and *mentalité* among Neo-Pagan social circles, you are very likely to be overwhelmed or (worse) distracted by the sheer diversity of topics that are being bandied about. I recommend at least a full one or two year's close interaction with a Neo-Pagan group before claiming to competently understand it.

For example, I already possessed certain knowledge and experiences which greatly helped to research American Druidisms and to study Celtic Neo-Paganism, such as:

1. A great deal of familiarity with the many reputable (and disreputable) published studies on Ancient Druidism and Celtic Religions. I also have done a great deal of reading of the published materials of modern Druid movements; both those descending from and those independent of RDNA origins. I therefore can better discern which customs and aspects adopted by modern Druid groups are historically valid and which are actually adaptations from newer, more modern sources of inspiration.

2. An understanding of the basics of a few Asian religions, which is particularly crucial to understanding the origins of Carleton Druids of the RDNA. Any understanding of 60/70s mysticism must include a study of the growing interest in Asian religions.

3. I can read the Scots-Gaelic, French and German languages; all important for studying Ancient Druidism and understanding the academic studies, deities and terms referred to by Neo-Pagans/Wiccans; who are reconstructing old religions of Indo-European origin. Another useful language would have been Welsh or Irish Gaelic.

4. A five year background in observing the rites, interactions, world-views and morals of Wiccans, RDNA Druids, non-RDNA Druids, other Neo-Pagan groups and some rather unusually "liberal" Christian groups.<sup>16</sup>

5. I am also familiar with the customs, terminology and activities of people belonging to the folklore/music/dance groups, Sci-Fi clubs, Society for Creative Anachronism<sup>17</sup> and role-playing groups. These groups are considered, by many, to be four of the primary organizations (plus the Occult arts) that are very compatible with Neo-Pagan views.

6. Also of great help, of course, was my position as the ArchDruid of a very well known Druid organization. Titles will still open doors in this world, but only knowledge, patience, and personality will keep those doors open. Honesty and respect go a long way when interviewing Neo-Pagans. Most Neo-Pagans will not respond well, if they believe you are a closed-minded Fundamentalist or if you are mocking/belittling their beliefs. Gods help your research project if you should try to "convert" them!

## New Resources on RDNA

(Casual readers are encouraged to skip this and continue to Chapter Two)

As stated before, most of the documentation available for this Epistle has been un-accessible, ignored, unknown or misused by previous researchers. As the list of the International Druid

Archives shows,<sup>18</sup> there are many types of materials now available. For the instruction of the outsider who will be confused by constant references to strange books in the footnotes, I will describe the dis/advantages and characteristics of the various categories of resources that were of primary use in this paper.

### Inspirational Collections

In addition to the aforementioned *Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*, I have used other unofficial collections to provide a Carleton perspective. *The Druid Chronicles (Reformed)*, a.k.a. DC(R), was first published in 1964 and it is David Frangquist's<sup>19</sup> description of the first year of Reformed Druidism. DC(R) contains the accumulated laws, customs, the basis of liturgy, several meditations, and valuable suggestions for organizing the RDNA groves. While *much of the Black Book of Liturgy*,<sup>20</sup> *Druid Chronicles (Reformed)* and *the Carleton Apocrypha*<sup>21</sup> are found in Isaac's compendium, not so with *the Green Book of Meditations*. The Green Book is an optional resource for lazy Arch-Druids to draw Druidic meditations from the many religions in the world. All these sources are merely an alternative resource available for inspiration and story telling. They should not be seen as representing every Druid's viewpoint or personal theology. All of these publications are reprinted in "A Reformed Druid Anthology," often in a their original verbatim format with extensive historiography. Numerous issues of the *Druid Chronicler*, *Pentalpha Journal* and the *Druid Missal-Any* have given me a greater depth of understanding of the NRDNA breadth of interests and plurality of actors.

### Non-Intramural Letters

These are letters that Reformed Druids have written to newspapers, various institutions, government agencies and encyclopedia researchers. They tend to fall into two main camps: clever evasions and careful attempts to convey the "joke."

When vitally necessary, many Reformed Druids would be willing to use their resemblance to a conventional religion to fool and thwart authorities; especially those authorities who have made the false assumption that **they can** actually define what is a religion. When writing to newspapers (after 1964) and magazines, the Reformed Druids try to share the basic joke and the protest that lies at its core in order that prospective members would join in the correct spirit of introspection instead of blind devotion to a set of principles or a *group*.

These letters provide a valuable insight into how contemporary "outsiders" viewed the Druids, depending on the year and location in the US. Common mis-conceptions of contemporaries about "Druidism" are conveniently expressed.

### February 1993 Questionnaires<sup>22</sup>

As discussed earlier, the responses from 23+ past Carleton members of the years 1963-1986 provided me with a view of how many non-priest druids felt about the Druids and also gave me some Carleton grove statistics. The long years appear to have led most Druids to discard the unimportant trappings of Reformed Druidism, i.e. ritual, leaving the essential freedom of everyone to their own religious belief at the core of their Druidism. Most importantly, it also gave me the opportunity to make contact with rich sources of information.

### Oral History Tapes<sup>23</sup>

Unexpectedly, this has turned out to be the greatest research tool. As stated before, the researcher gains the apparently 20/20 hindsight to supplement the contemporary documents of the past. These oral discussions have fleshed out the history of RDNA, NRDNA, SDNA (and ADF) groups that possessed only a skeletal description when viewed from written documents. Some of the

tapes were recorded by Carleton's Oral History project, but most were done by myself with the questions oriented towards writing this Epistle.

These interviews are especially valuable for understanding the infighting and troubles of the NRDNA and SDNA which, up to now, have often only been alluded to in materials relying on Isaac's writings. Interesting to this study is the lack of concern that is orally expressed by most of these people towards the politics that seemed to dominate the collection of **written** documents, although they are often the very people who wrote the documents. There is a tendency among researchers to assume that any written document, in the absence of other background material, automatically contains the most important issues of the day. Sometimes it is only the minutiae and trivia, because they are so difficult to remember, that gets written down rather than the events everybody vividly remembers and treasures. Any future *local* grove histories except Carleton and Berkeley and Live Oak, will probably have to rely exclusively on oral interviews.

### Internal Correspondence (Int. Corr.)<sup>24</sup>

This category was previously known as the "Records of the Council of Dalon ap Landu," which was appropriate, but it now includes all unofficial correspondence between Reformed Druid members (whether priests or not). This collection consists of a sizable portion of the networking that went on between the priests and arch-druids, with a current quantitative bias of authors coming from Carleton students/alumni.<sup>25</sup> An early voting tradition arose that any attempt to impose a new doctrine upon the entire Reformed Druids must get a consensus of acquiescence of all returned replies that had been sent out to **all the known** Reformed Druids priests on this Council. But since most of the Carleton priests didn't want Reformed Druidism to get too complicated, and this was always a sizable (if not dominant) block of Council members, correspondence ended up being primarily a vehicle for debating and exchanging gossip, not deciding on new laws. The Council also became a means to frustrate anyone from seriously considering that they had finally figured out how to "save" Druidism from itself. Many of the most influential letters have been added to the Apocrypha over the years.

The private internal correspondence also shows the elaborate and humorous back-stage preparations for devising a public front of being a "real, organized religion" when faced against oppressive institutions; such as Carleton College, the Draft Boards (and Isaac Bonewits to some extent).

One of the curious notes about Internal Correspondence (and the oral interviews) is that of Isaac (nearly) alone writing to the "Carleton Faction" until 1978. The "Carleton Faction" wrote to many members of the vague "Isaac" and NRDNA factions, asking them not to exclude non-Pagans. However, we only hear replies from one or two NRDNA members in response, besides Isaac. Besides Isaac Bonewits and Larson and Sherbak, we have no written documents from other NRDNA members writing to RDNA members until 1979. Larson, himself, usually only steps in to soften and correct some of Isaac's letters to the RDNA. Otherwise we have only silence from all the "Neo-Pagan" Reformed Druid priests in the NRDNA on all these debates. This silence could indicate two likely conclusions:

1. The other Reformed Druids, not from Carleton, only wrote or talked amongst themselves on Isaac's "reforms."

and/or

2. Isaac (and occasionally Larson) was the only one, at that time, who really wanted to push the issues.

It is possible that the more extended periods of grove membership in the NRDNA groves allowed deeper discussions of issues exclusively by oral communication. However, except for Larson and Sherbak, no other communications are on record from the "NRDNA" and SDNA to the "RDNA" members until 1979, long after any reputed splits would have taken place. Surely if the NRDNA and SDNA (besides Isaac) were litigious for official reform, more of them would have written to Carleton alumni?

## Resources On Carleton College<sup>26</sup>

A good study of the "Carleton Experience" will aid in the study of Carleton Druidism, which is inseparable for many Druids. The Carleton College Archivist has shown me the best selections now available in the very valuable "Oral History Project." I have relied upon the Oral Histories of administrators, faculty and (Druid and non-Druid) students from the 60s and 70s to synthesize a view of the many factors influencing Carleton's internal environment (and therefore the Druids).

## Resources on Berkeley<sup>27</sup>

Berkeley Druids and Druids from the Bay-Area were the backbone of the NRDNA movement, and therefore an understanding of Berkeley atmosphere is necessary to contrast with Carleton. Any research on the NRDNA should include some study of not only the history of the University at Berkeley, but it should also include a study of the "Berkeley Community." As I mentioned before, I knew nothing of the Sixties before starting this research and I still know but a little. I have relied on the general overviews of Berkeley provided in the excellent books and videos mentioned in the bibliography. Researchers should pay special attention to *Experimentation in American Religion*, because it provides valuable statistics on the religious scene in Berkeley in 1970; which would be useful for further studies. Interviews with Berkeleyites and the NRDNA are supplementary and provide first-hand accounts.

## Resources on Neo-Paganism

Of course, the best book to start with is Margot Adler's *Drawing Down the Moon*. The book is a result of the skills of Adler's long journalistic career being applied towards the study of Neo-Paganism/Wicca, an area she knows intimately. It is by far the most liked and comprehensive survey of the Neo-Pagan and Wiccan movements in America. It is invaluable in its detailed study of many forms of Neo-Paganism and its provision of contact addresses and resources for the scholar. Most people usually regard Gardner (founder of Modern Wicca), Margaret Murray and Starhawk as prominent writers in the field at the beginning, but there are lot more modern authors out there. Each offers a different view that is valuable, but scholarly works are rare and often denigrated by academics. Future scholars should note that I lack familiarity with the subjects of astrology, kabbalah, ceremonial magick and deep theological works by Neo-Pagans and Wiccans. I have relied on personal observation and conversations, Isaac Bonewits' letters and *Drawing Down the Moon* for most of my understanding of Neo-Paganism and Wicca.

As I mentioned, there are an increasing number of encyclopedias in the reference section of libraries that deal with Occultism and Neo-Paganism/Wicca.<sup>28</sup> Magazines and newsletters, although the best sources of information, are not so difficult to obtain anymore, even if you're not already in such circles. I recommend going to a Sci-Fi convention or spirituality lecture series in order to start finding these periodicals and then order back issues.



Figure 5 "How many Druids does it takes to start a fire?"



Figure 6 An Irish bard and harper, 13th Cent.

# Chapter Two: Reform Druidism 1963 to 1973 Carleton's Golden Age

I would like to begin this paper with an appropriately Zen-ish koan (an especially ancient one that I just made up) to reflect the unusual mentality of the early Founders of Reformed Druidism at Carleton College.

## The Three Water Bowls

A Druid and his disciple, Baka, were strolling in the garden on a very hot day and Master Druid decided to test his pupil's wisdom. It was a warm Thursday before lunch.

**Druid:** You!, imagine that you are terribly thirsty and that resting before you are three clear glass bowls filled with red, blue and green colored water. Each bowl is three inches deep, with a wooden base of identical design. Now, imagine that I ask you to tell me what colors are the bowls are in front of you? What would you do?

**Baka:** I would say; "Red, blue and green, Master."

**Druid:** The bowls themselves are clear and without color! But that was the first of your errors.

**Baka:** Sorry, master. I would say "Clear," then.

**Druid:** Secondly, you should have just drank from one of the bowls, because water is good for you when you are thirsty and yet you are still worried about the color of the bowls.

**Baka:** Sorry, master. Forgive me.

**Druid:** Your greatest mistake was to think you had to apologize to me because you feared that I wouldn't teach you again! Begone from my presence forever!

(And Baka was suddenly enlightened.)

**Baka:** Thank you...{pauses and bows} Master.

**Druid:** Hmph! Eat your rice, you're hungry too.



## Interpreting the Koan

The true debates that raged in the 1970s within Reformed Druidism, as alluded in the Zen analogy, are not to be found in examining the imperfect superficial definitions that have been used to separate the Reformed Druids of North America (red-bowl), the New RDNA (blue-bowl) and Schismatic Druids of North America (green-bowl) from each other. Nor is it the point of this Epistle to judge which of these branches is the "most true" form of Druidism; I really couldn't care less. As each of the bowls had equally good water in them, I find that it was unimportant to defend the choice of one color of water over the other. The debate, as I see it, was how to satisfy one's basic needs for religion (i.e. "thirst for water") without worrying about pointless, extraneous details like dogma (i.e. "color"), or how the surrounding institutions (i.e. "Druid ") would react to your choice.

I will not try to prove that an actual transformation occurred from a philosophical RDNA (as represented primarily by Carleton) into a religion known as the NRDNA. For that, we must take each Druid's own personal definition of their own Reformed Druidism as the most valid litmus test and relinquish our desire to perfectly pigeon-hole their individual beliefs based on the group labels: RDNA, NRDNA and SDNA. Quite a number of Druids were and still are straddling the fuzzy technical borders between "religion" and/or "philosophy" by modern definitions. Many have occasionally chosen either definition for various purposes and then gone back to straddling the fence or even started building a new fence. Instead, I declare these terms to be an unwelcome distraction from other more hidden, but very important, debates that were important to Reformed Druidism as a whole.

## The Four "Essential" Debates

These debates, *as I like to see them*, are: >ahem<

1. What are the basic needs that a religion **alone** can fulfill, and how can Nature help?

2. How and who can tell when it is truly appropriate to propose and/or ratify an adoption of dogma in response to a perceived need? Druidism wishes no extraneous permanent accretions<sup>29</sup> or unnecessary leaders upon itself whenever something **else** can be temporarily utilized instead.

3. How many obstacles should be placed in the path of proposals in order to allow suitable time to consider the issues and to prevent adaptations that may lead to an unstoppable process of "complications;" ones which will alienate the first two goals (and possibly exclude most of the earlier members)?

And most importantly...

4. Do the first three points really matter to us? Isn't the organizational aspect of Reformed Druidism all just a silly joke? Why bother arguing? Why not go out and just follow what you know to be true!?

## Early "Carleton" Influences

I believe it is best to continue Chapter Two of this paper by an original exploration of the "why, who, what, when and where" origins for the underlying structure and faith of Reformed Druidism. In the period 1963-1966, the basic philosophical and organizational foundations were formulated and established in the forms they would mostly bear unto this very day. Unfortunately (as some Founders saw it) this was also the time when potential defects, faults, Celtic trappings and "Fisher-isms" were adopted. From 1966-1973 many of the issues of expansion and stability that Isaac brought up in 1974 would seem to have already been brought up and tacitly decided (or apathetically ignored) upon by members of the Carleton Faction. Since Carleton students and graduates composed the vast majority of the members, priests and

ArchDruids within Reformed Druidism up until the late 70s,<sup>30</sup> it is pertinent to understand the strong role that the "Carleton Experience" had in establishing, modifying, maintaining and undermining the foundations of Reformed Druidism.

## Blame it on the 60s

Reformed Druidism is an offspring of the era known as the Sixties, an era which lasted from roughly 1960 to the end of America's involvement in Vietnam in 1973. The 60's, as most people remember (or have heard), were a tense time during which the preceding twenty years of seeming national unity and homogeneity was increasingly coming to doubt and reappraisal. Big issues at colleges were primarily *In Loco Parentis*<sup>31</sup>, Civil Rights, the Draft, American foreign policy and the beginnings of the women's rights movement.<sup>32</sup>

The "G.I. Bill" had led to an unprecedented flood of students into colleges during the 40s/50s, which had in turn led to an expansion of faculty size.<sup>33</sup> With this increased college population came a greater interest in a broader "liberal arts" education. Departments like religion, philosophy and English ballooned in comparison to old standbys such as science and economics. These disciplines, by their inherent skepticism about the certainty of cultural concepts, allowed greater numbers of students to see college as a way to continue to explore new ideas amongst relatively supportive age-peers during this period of their lives, rather than being amalgamated into an older society at the age of 18. College administrators, however, were often seen as repressive tools of the Military complex during this period, both by students and many of these newer faculty members.<sup>34</sup>

Carleton appears to have had a somewhat "softer" passage through the 60's than most of the Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM), and far smoother than the big universities which were more tightly tied in with the Military Complex such as Berkeley, U of Michigan, Penn State or State University of New York at Buffalo (SUNY Buffalo) as described in Heineman's book, *Campus Wars*. Heineman's book is very valuable in showing that student protest movements and SDS groups, tempered by the Civil Rights movements, preceded and were mostly independent of Berkeley's Free Speech Movement which had captured the Media's attention (and therefore the attention of historians).

Carleton was blessed by its quiet rural location, small size, lack of governmental research and a long history of broad liberal arts education. But by far, it appears to have been blessed by having relatively "liberal" administrators during the 60's, in particular President Nason (1962-1970), Chaplain David Maitland (1958-1986) and religion Professor Bardwell Smith (1962-1995). Each of these men contributed or exemplified crucial elements, in my opinion, of the Carleton atmosphere that permitted Reformed Druidism to flourish in its peculiar way at Carleton.

## John Nason (President 1962-1970)<sup>35</sup>

When the late President Larry Gould (1945-1962) foresaw the upcoming turmoil that was beginning to simmer in the country and its colleges, he wisely judged that it was unsuitable for him to continue his benevolent "patriarchy" of administration and retired. President Nason was the first Carleton graduate, class of '27, to become president of the college, thus perhaps giving him a closer feel for the Carleton "mystique." Nason saw a need to get faculty and students more involved with the administration of the college, rather than to "repel boarders at all costs." He himself, with the approval of the Trustees, had already tacitly decided that the *In Loco Parentis* rules were outdated and he often was a step or two ahead of the student demands.

An important result of this was a development of a Carleton tradition of a more civil and polite (but mockingly "good humor") methods of protest among students and faculty that actually led to

some tangible results. Though hang-ups occurred, they were overcome by long discussion where both sides listened and learned. Nason's presidency was an orderly dismantling of some of the "Top-down" imperial policy of his predecessors.

## David Maitland (Chaplain 1958-86)<sup>36</sup>

The office of the chaplain at Carleton was initiated by President Larry Gould as a separate institution because Gould was the first president of Carleton who was not an ordained minister. Feeling that religion was important, Gould gave the administration of religious needs of Carleton students to the Chaplain, of which Maitland was the third and longest serving.

As I've discovered, the dismantling of the religion requirement was in many ways aided by Maitland's background. Maitland was against **forcing** anyone to believe, and he himself helped in the dismantling of the mandatory Chapel attendance. Maitland, like his gifted successor Jewell Davis, was concerned in expanding and diversifying the nascent religion department of Carleton because understanding a "foreigner's" religion made them seem less foreign. In particular, Maitland supported the expansion of teaching about Asian religions in Carleton.

## Professor Bardwell Smith (1962-95)<sup>37</sup>

Bardwell Smith, and other professors like Eleanor Zelliot, brought a much richer understanding of non-Western religions and cultures (especially the Asian faiths) to Carleton. Having witnessed racism and the patronizing attitude toward Asian religion and culture from his fellow marines while serving in Korea, Smith was always cognizant of how education must one day overcome prejudice. Carleton already had already developed many ties with colleges in Japan and India by the time Smith arrived. What Smith and his confederates did was to make Asia a greater focus-specialty at Carleton and bring the humanity and thoughts of Asia back home to the campus. Smith's deep empathy and knowledge of Hindu, Taoist and Buddhist cultures was important as a Dean of College (and as a long-time Druid advisor) during 1968-71 when students and faculty began to hotly protest the Vietnam war.

## In comes the RDNA

With that background in mind, let us re-examine the mythical origins of the RDNA. The RDNA began in April 1963 when a group of students closely examined this age-old statement from Carleton College:

"Attendance is required at the College Service of Worship *or* of the Sunday Evening Program *or* at any regularly organized service of public worship. Each term, every student must attend seven [of ten] of the services or religious meetings."<sup>38</sup> [emphasis theirs]

A goodly number of Carleton students felt that a wasteful amount of time was being spent by religious and secular authorities to keep people "in line" and to keep them from thinking. This was seen as a hindrance to their personal growth. This activity by authority figures is often called the "Fossilization Theory," and the fear of it proves to be the greatest motivator for the RDNA:

"Reformed Druidism is a statement that religion has a tendency to become organized religion and which then becomes organization devoid of religion."<sup>39</sup>

So it came to pass, that in April 1963 the "Triumvirate" (David Fisher, Howard Cherniack and Norman Nelson) were



seeking a group-name for an unusual ploy for protesting the compulsory attendance of Chapel services. They intended to test the leniency of the exemption to the Chapel Attendance that Carleton allowed for those students who attended *regular* services of one's own religion. The Triumvirate wanted to test this by making an outrageously "un-orthodox" group, holding regular services and claiming that it filled the implied requirement as stated in the Handbook: i.e. *regular attendance*. Cherniack, a prominent protester at Carleton<sup>40</sup>, commented to the Triumvirate that his parents did not like filling in government forms that they were Jewish, so they had the custom of putting down "Druid" instead.<sup>41</sup> The Triumvirate liked the name, because it was both exotic sounding, and linked to a historical religion concerned about Nature, and one that had opposed a powerful centralized power (Rome). Because none of them knew much more on Druids<sup>42</sup> and thus feared being discredited, the name "Reformed" was likely immediately adopted in order that they could claim to have dropped any historical practice that was brought up by opponents which they had forgotten to incorporate, or with which they might disagree.<sup>43</sup> The term "North America," was likely picked since there were a few Canadians in the group.

Weekly rituals were dutifully held on Saturday afternoons in the Arboretum from May 1963 to June 1964 with most members coming from KARL radio workers, theater, computer and folk dance enthusiasts. It was a group of friends meeting outdoors and having a good time together while meditating on religion. The men received a cold shoulder from the Dean when they turned in their attendance slips (saying they had attended RDNA services) while the women's attendance slips were accepted due to a loophole in their collection system.<sup>44</sup> Strangely, neither group received any disciplinary punishment, so their ploy was working. However, they also went to Chapel service or other religious services to cover their options just in case their RDNA applications failed.<sup>45</sup> When the requirement was rescinded, and the immediate purpose of the rebellion was over, the RDNA mysteriously continued.

## Its Temporary Nature

There appears to be a common assumption among some historians that those organizations that outlast competitors had better-laid foundations and more careful planning. I know that Chaos often rules far more influentially than Order in these matters. Fisher, Cherniack and Nelson (and contemporaries) have always maintained:

"It was NEVER our intention to "start a religion;" I don't think any of us expected it to outlive our time or life at Carleton, especially after the religious requirement was dropped in 1964."<sup>46</sup>

And had not the RDNA hit some powerful chord of possible validity as quickly as it did, Reformed Druidism probably would have ended in summer 1964 when President John Nason sent out a letter abolishing the Chapel Requirement.<sup>47</sup> Important to realize here is that the rescission of the Chapel Requirement **may** have been more likely a result of other more formal protests and administrative initiatives rather than the results of the Druids (who were mostly ignored), but they took the credit anyway.<sup>48</sup> During the first years, the RDNA was a shadowy group; a group that most people thought didn't exist in reality. Many Founders<sup>49</sup> still have a hard time convincing their classmates that the RDNA actually existed in reality.

There were several important reasons that kept the RDNA members from dissolving the RDNA, reasons far more complicated than a simple fascination with ritualism or "Paganism" or any other such pat answers. For a great many Druids, the RDNA had introduced the possibility of taking personal responsibility for understanding and believing one's own

faith. The RDNA had also shown them (in an experiential way) the benefits of learning from people from other faiths in a non-hostile forum of interaction. For many it was:

"A period of being together as a group and being quiet together. Doing whatever happens during that period. People liked that, enjoyed it. They found it refreshing, something they valued. I saw, when I became ArchDruid, a goal of introducing people to the riches of other religions."<sup>50</sup>

Some reference materials will have you believe that Reformed Druidism radically changed or replaced the beliefs of the early members. For some, this proved true, but it is hardly satisfying as a general statement. It should be remembered that College is a time when many young adults change their religion, regardless of whether they belonged to a group such as the RDNA. A number of Carleton Druids later would become Unitarians or changed denominations, but several remained in their previous faith, albeit with a new perspective.<sup>51</sup> When we reach the Berkeley period, that will be an entirely different issue.

## Limited Celtic Influence

Indeed, one of the greatest hindrance to the entire study of Reformed Druidism; the name "Druid." Many scholars will see the word "Druidism" on a sheet of paper and suddenly a myriad of assumptions will strangle their minds.<sup>52</sup> Such assumptions about "Druids" conjure up visions of the prominent use of Celtic languages and culture, human sacrifices, visiting Stonehenge every summer, being fiercely patriarchal, transmigration of the soul, Atlantis, people lying in dark rooms with rocks on their bellies, long beards and other silly stuff. It is true that the origin of the **names** of the RDNA's organizational structures, its god/archetypes and the titles of some of its officers<sup>53</sup> come from Celtic sources, but there is very little that is definitively Celtic about the **substance** of the early RDNA at Carleton, except it's penchant for chaos and entropy. If the Founders had wished to reconstruct a tightly-knit polytheism or to build an intricate system they probably would have chosen to emulate a Nordic Pagan religion or a Classical Pagan tradition, because there was far more material available to them in the libraries of Northfield than on Celtic traditions. The Celtic origin was probably deliberately chosen **because** of the vague scholarly information that was then available on Druids in 1963.<sup>54</sup> Because they were looking for a model that was relatively empty of restrictions, the early members felt no compunction about diverging from the historical authenticity of the Celts at a moment's notice. If you wish, they commandeered the name and image for their own purposes.

A fateful decision to follow their own pathway, whether or not it fell in line with Celtic customs, occurred early on in May 1963 during a stirring debate that almost led to a schism. The Druids were preparing to consecrate their second stone altar<sup>55</sup>, when the question of what object to sacrifice came up for debate. While many past<sup>56</sup> and current religions<sup>57</sup> had/have an animal die during a religious activity, or in feasts leading up to events, Western civilization now generally frowns upon animal or human sacrifice, preferring to practice impersonal slaughter by machines at distant abattoirs.<sup>58</sup> One faction, led by Jan Johnson, declared (perhaps a little facetiously) that an animal sacrifice was necessary because:

"Have you not forgotten the customs of old, which were the customs of our predecessors before us? Verily, I say unto you, nothing will be acceptable to the Earth-Mother save it were nothing smaller than an animal or fowl, yea, even a chicken."<sup>59</sup>

However, Howard Cherniack (a Founder) did counter with:

"Have ye not forgotten that we are reformed, yea, even do we call ourselves by the name of Reformed, wherefore we must put behind those things which do bring offense to our senses."<sup>60</sup>

The debate was resolved by Jan Johnson relenting his position to avoid Schism during their tender time of foundation. This is the first of the two major schism attempts within Reformed Druidism. Thus the early schism debate was waged over whether to have an animal sacrifice *like the ancient Celts*. The resulting decision not to have animal/blood sacrifice, albeit argued in a light manner, set an early precedent for ignoring scholarship on issues in variance with the members' needs or tastes.<sup>61</sup> Since that time the Reformed Druids and all Modern American Druids have only performed vegetable sacrifices or offerings of tree leaves. This was also a precedent for a renunciation of *slavish* subservience by Reformed Druidism to any surviving remnants of lore left by the ancient Druids of the past.

10: Do you teach the ways of the Ancient Druids? If so, it is good.

11: For they had their wisdom, and that is oft forgot. But verily I say unto you: in their day, even they also were young in their traditions.<sup>62</sup>

There was at least one hard-core Celtic Enthusiast in the original group, Robert Larson, whose importance in the whole of the Reformed Druid movement would come up again much later on in the history. So whereas, the ancient Druids may have been students of Nature, the orientation of the Reformed Druids towards Nature and Brotherhood may have been more a result of influences that were not Celtic. In fact there was, of all things, a demonstrably strong bias towards Far-Eastern Asian religions, Liberal Christianity and Fraternalistic ideals.

## The Asian Influences

It may sound rather strange to the reader, but nearly every newspaper article with a first hand *observation* of a grove service led by a Carleton student or alumni, while mentioning the "Celtic" structures, says that the RDNA's services drew mostly upon Hinduism, Buddhism and Liberal Christian thought.<sup>63</sup> One reason for this, as I've stated, is the remarkable availability of coursework on Asian religions, languages and overseas studies in Asia provided by Carleton College during the Founding Years. But more importantly, it was the "weird," living perspectives of Asian religions in regards to authority and learning which were far more attractive to young students than the prospect of scouring dusty old books to dig up scraps of old Celtic customs. Certainly, Asia was of great interest in the world news of that era.

This Asian preference is especially seen in the Carleton RDNA's fond love of Zen Buddhism and Taoism with their *seemingly* anarchic attitude that defies the need for defining itself or relying upon the aid of "authorities":

**Question:** What is Zen?

**Answer:** Try if you wish. But Zen comes of itself. True Zen shows in everyday living, consciousness in action. More than any limited awareness, it opens every inner door to our infinite nature.

and salesmen to peddle their own wares. Look at it this way, inside-out and outside-in: consciousness everywhere, inclusive, through you. Then you can't help living humbly, in wonder.<sup>64</sup>

A brief thumbing through the pages of the Book of Meditations in *the Druid Chronicles*, "*The Green Book*" or the *Carleton Apocrypha*<sup>65</sup> will reveal a close similarity with a book of Koans (Zen Buddhist paradoxical statements) and Taoist anecdotes. This is not "koan-cidental" because many of the initial RDNA Druids had been greatly influenced by courses taught in or about India or Japan, both of which were countries where valuable ideas from outsiders' religions had been incorporated or absorbed into the previous belief systems.<sup>66</sup> This idea of "interactive and overlapping" religions versus "combative" religion especially impressed the Frangquists<sup>67</sup> during their trip to Japan:

"[From] When I [Fisher] had last seen you [Frangquist], your Druidism has begun to take on a definite Zen Slant, just as mine showing over from Hindus and Christianity."<sup>68</sup>

Take this excerpt by Frangquist, which is very Zen-ish in style:

Chapter the Tenth:

1. And when they come unto you and say: "And what, then, is the nature of this thing which ye do call Awareness?" then shall ye give answer unto them in silence, for this is the Third Lesson.

4. But there are many, yea, it is the greater number, who, in their unawareness, are aware not even of their unawareness.

5. And they are like unto them who are blind from the day of their birth, and see not, nor know what it is to see.

6. But some there are who are aware only that they are also unaware: hallowed are they, for they are children of Be'al.<sup>69</sup>

7. One of these is like unto one who keeps the Vigil;<sup>70</sup>

8. for their gaze cannot pierce the mantle of darkness which is thrown over all the world about them, but they rest secure in the knowledge of the return of day.<sup>71</sup>

Instantly mind frees. How it frees! False Zen wracks brains as a fiction concocted by priests

An interesting side note was the growing importance of Zen, Asian religions and "mystery" religions to the greater "Counter-Culture" movement of the 60s, not to mention the Beat culture of the 50s. This Asian influence greatly increased after 1965 when President Johnson repealed the 1917 Oriental Exclusion Act.<sup>72</sup> Many leaders in the Eastern sects that subsequently immigrated to America were influential because the:

"60's were, after all, a period of an intense interest in mysticism and strange religions, and a period also of the rise of the counter-culture. While none of the founders, or Dave Frangquist, were then self-consciously "counter-culture," I [Fisher] think we provided those alienated by the turgidity of native Protestantism a surprising, viable alternative."<sup>73</sup>

It is therefore no mere coincidence that the selections of *the "Green Book of Meditations"* come predominantly from Eastern religions.<sup>74</sup> Shelton, whose "influence on Carleton Druidism was significant long after his graduation"<sup>75</sup>, was particularly insistent that every succeeding ArchDruid of Carleton should have a personal copy of the Green Book. Shelton felt that; "In a real sense the Green Book was the heart of Druidism in my day (70s)," which was diversity.<sup>76</sup>

But I should immediately state here that the Green Book also had many selections from monotheistic religions<sup>77</sup> and secular sources. Also important to realize is that a number of Carleton Druids would bring in meditations from Sci-Fi<sup>78</sup>, newspapers, children's books and secular sources. Sometimes no readings were done at a ritual and the meditation was simply to quietly stare at the landscape. Also many students would seek out wisdom in their own time and way, separately from the "group."<sup>79</sup>

Perhaps it was the prominence of the Vietnam war, more than anything else, which led to an early-times RDNA emphasis for drawing on Asian religions. Knowledge and understanding of Eastern faiths may have strengthened the resolve of Carleton students to oppose the inhumanity of the Vietnam war. Through their readings of Asian philosophy and religion, the Vietnamese, Thais, Cambodians and Chinese were no longer some godless, shadowy people who lived far away; but possessors of valid beliefs, souls and morals; although not always expressed like ours.

Another telling sign of the relative unimportance of ancient Celticity in comparison to Asian studies for the early RDNA was that after the RDNA's faculty advisor, John Messenger (an Irish paleo-archeologist), left Carleton in 1965 the RDNA was faculty-supervised by Bardwell Smith (a modern Asian religion professor and ex-Episcopal priest). If they had really wished to revive a pre-Christian religion of Europe, wouldn't they have chosen a History or Classics department professor?

Another element, which I'll bring up again in Chapter Five, is the calendar dating system of Carleton. While the RDNA acknowledges that the Celtic Year begins on Samhain (November 1st), the Druids from Carleton date the "Years of the Reform" from May 1st, 1963 (half way through the Celtic Year) instead of dating from Samhain 1962 as did the more Celtic-inspired Reformed Druids in California. This led to conflicting dating systems, but also shows that the Reformed Druids of Carleton origin were more interested in their own organizational ways, than fitting into a Celtic mode. There was some confusion by Shelton in 1969, dating from Samhain during the Codex Affair, but this was corrected in the 1976 publication of the Carleton Calendar.

Because of the variety of inspiration that existed within Reformed Druidism, some Carleton Druids (in hindsight) therefore regretted the "vivid Celtic Imagery [that] made some interaction with the growing Neo-Pagan movement inevitable."<sup>80</sup> I, however, don't feel that the Neo-Pagans disagreed with

Reformed Druidism so much on the theological or cultural grounds, but rather on political and organizational issues, as I'll discuss later.

## Fraternal Influences?

An hypothesis brought up by my research was the vague possibility of Masonic and/or Fraternal influence on the very early RDNA. It is important to state here that little or no attention has previously been spent on this idea by the members of the RDNA, partly due to the Fisher's reluctance to talk about the issue, and because very few members really consider it to be important. For them, the group started in 1963. Period. However, I feel it is necessary to address this issue because of the recent renaissance of modern Druid groups in Europe and America, whose origins came from fraternal organizations. Out of academic honesty, scholars using the International Druid Archives at Carleton should be aware of any uncertainties pertaining to the independent origins of the RDNA and the American Druid Movement. I should however caution the reader that I am not a member of any such Fraternal/Masonic order, and that I am only relying upon common, published matter for my information.

There are some indirect evidence that may lend credence to the possibility that the RDNA maybe unwittingly an offshoot of previous Druid Masonic order, or perhaps based on a few ideals snatched from a fraternal organization.<sup>150</sup> Both groups (RDNA and Masonic Druids/Fraternal Organization/Fraternities) have some vague similarities in the areas of liturgy, calendars, costume, philosophy, drinking, and a Judeo-Christian bent. In addition to this, I believe that there were minor opportunities of access to such information by the early members of the RDNA.

### Loose History of Fraternalism

For the reader who is completely unfamiliar with Fraternalism, I will share my meager outsider knowledge on the subject, although I am no expert. Modern Freemasonry is generally believed to have begun in the 17th/18th century, although they claim to go back to the Templar knights, and through other groups back to Old Testament times. Very soon after its "re-emergence" back then, Freemasonry became very popular, and the liturgy and hierarchy of Freemasonry soon became the template upon which nearly all later "secret" societies were developed, including Greek College Fraternities; which is a point that I'll bring up again. Mark Carnes explained that the peak popularity of fraternal organizations, during the 19th and early 20th century, was a result of males being dissatisfied with the rising prominence of women in molding the faith at the local parish community and at home.<sup>151</sup> By the late 1950's, fraternalism was rapidly declining at colleges and communities as the generation-gap widened between the youngsters and older lodge leaders. However Fraternalism had many other attractions to the general member than just male-bonding.

The premise of Freemasonry is to preserve and disseminate (in a secret manner) a set of "ancient rituals," wisdom and knowledge of construction that were entrusted by the first builder of the Temple of Solomon, Hiram Abiff, who was murdered for keeping the secrets, to a select disciple (and down through the ages to the Freemasons). For Freemasons, God's simple message was complicated by the accretions of later Jewish generations and then by the Catholic church. The true doctrine was given to the supposed disciples of Abiff, who then supposedly founded Freemasonry. The secrets of Freemasonry were then reportedly guarded by stonemasons and construction workers up through the fall of the Roman empire and the medieval ages until Freemasonry supposedly resurfaced in the 18th century. Other groups imitated the Freemasons and claimed the transmission of ancient knowledge, although not always of the Judeo-Christian variety; e.g. The Red Men organization in which Caucasians

dressed up like Native Americans and supposedly passed on the knowledge of Native Americans.

The liturgy and hierarchy of Freemasonry is somewhat based on various Old Testament precedents, in particular with respect to the "patriarchal/male" elements; which is understandable given the male audience for which it was developed. Intrinsic to the beliefs of Freemason is the symbolic image of God as the Supreme Architect of Creation.<sup>152</sup> Nature and Man reflect the perfect mathematical and geometrical genius of God. Through the order and chaos inherent in Nature, and of course Mankind, one could see the mind of God. While few Freemasons ran out into the woods to seek God, some did.

Some of the Nature-oriented Freemasons and Fraternal-oriented people were also familiar with the Renaissance interest in studying ancient Classical documents, some of which referred to a group of Celtic priests who didn't hold services indoors, but in wooded areas; i.e. the God in Nature element. Also in ancient Classical documents on Druids is the recurrent belief among Greeks and Romans that the Druids were the heirs of Pythagoras' philosophical beliefs (or vice-a-versa); which were derived from purity of the science of geometry.<sup>153</sup> Add on to this that the Druids were primarily located in Western Europe (but also on the Danube and Turkey) and were possibly the ancestors of some of the people in Britain, France, Germany and Italy; and you have race-pride thrown into the equation. During the early 1700s, William Stukeley (during one of his more addled states of mind) gave authority to the rumors that the stone circles in Europe and the British Isles were built by Celtic Priests. Nobody could understand how the megaliths were raised with simple tools, so of course some secret knowledge of architecture was required. Because the builders of the Temple of Solomon were, *of course*, the greatest architects a few Fraternalists claimed that the Druids also were the direct heirs of Masonic ideas and knowledge. As a result, hordes of fraternal organizations popped up calling themselves Druids. Because little to nothing was academically known about ancient Celtic religion, few academics openly doubted the groups' statements and their "ancient" documents. As a result, much confusion still exists in the public's understanding of ancient Druids. But in the 60s, the British Druids were still making headlines for showing up at Stonehenge, and thus at least the idea of a Druidic brotherhood (or siblinghood) was feasibly available for the founders of the RDNA through the media.

### **Fraternal Evidence**

Isaac Bonewits, a liturgist and an insightful arm chair scholar of Modern British Fraternal Druidism, believes that the liturgy and core philosophy of the RDNA bears a remarkable similarity to those found in the United Ancient Order of Druids; a primarily charitable organization of a few thousand members in the US that still retains some remnants of ritual from their fraternal past. I must defer judgment to Isaac on the liturgical similarity. This is a valid possibility, because a few books of UAOD material was stocked away at the St. Olaf library, which is only a 20 minute bike ride from Carleton. Although David Fisher was headed for Episcopal Seminary, even during the founding of Reformed Druidism, it does seem unlikely that he would have ever visited St. Olaf's Library, because St. Olaf was not then of the same caliber as Carleton, as it is now approaching today. Back in the 60s, even the 70s, Olaf's academic level was looked down upon by Carleton students, and there would have been little to induce him to have gone there. As for the belief in a universal siblinghood and panentheism; these could easily be found in the doctrines of Deism and Unitarianism and 19<sup>th</sup> century poets, which are often attributed to Druids in unacademic books and reference materials then available in the Carleton and St. Olaf libraries. It should be noted that there was also a bit of Unitarian background among some of the Founders of the RDNA before they reached Carleton.<sup>154</sup>

The final answer will have to come from David Fisher, who has refused any further interviews since the early 70s. In spring of 1963, David Fisher devised the Order of Worship.<sup>155</sup> In contrast to Isaac's opinion, most Druids and non-Druids claim the liturgy bears a remarkable resemblance in form to the Episcopal rite, not surprising since David Fisher and most early leaders of Reformed Druidism were quite familiar with the Episcopal church.<sup>156</sup> For the sake of the protest and to lend an air of venerable age to the group, David Fisher is reputed by Norman Nelson as having claimed that he [David Fisher] had been initiated as a "third order Arch-Druid while in high school."<sup>157</sup> Not long after the group's purpose was completed by the repeal of the Chapel Attendance ordinance, Fisher denied his high school ordination and claimed that he had acquired the symbology through Frazer's "Golden Bough," which is also plausible. Fisher's motives for denial are slightly suspect because he feared not being admitted to Episcopal Seminary.<sup>158</sup> However, because Fisher unsuccessfully tried to start other "secret" groups before founding the RDNA while at Carleton,<sup>159</sup> one may suspect Fisher (and an undisclosed other person) as having at least some Masonic or fraternal knowledge, or at least an inclination to form a group similar to those based on Fraternal principles (even if Fisher had not been previously a member of a Fraternal group).

Other evidence of Fraternal influence are the 10 orders of the RDNA. In the Scottish Rite of FreeMasonry there are 10 orders of initiation; the first three have different functional purposes within the group, but the next 7 are honorary. The RDNA has three basic orders of 1st, 2nd and 3rd, and the 4th through 10th orders are completely honorary. Each order in FreeMasonry and the RDNA is accompanied by an initiation by someone of that order. Whereas in Freemasonry a ritual, a password or handshake is learned, Druidism only gives a distinctive ribbon and a ritual as a sign of office. Another interesting correlation is the title of "preceptor" for one of the three officers of a grove. "Preceptor" often appears as a title of organizational hierarchy in some Fraternal organizations, particularly Freemasonry. I believe the title could also have come from a position in the Anglican mass.

Then there is the surprising similarity of names and dates of the same eight festivals of the Reformed Druid calendar with the "8-fold wheel of the year" found in Neo-Paganism and the British Druid Fraternal system. I believe that this can easily be explained in that all three groups could have easily researched the popular literature written on Celtic customs. Beltane, Oimelc, Lughnasadh and Samhain were common Celtic festivals in the British Isles up until the 19th/20th century. So anyone spending an hour or two reading MacCulloch (1910) or Kendrick (1932) could have learned of these four great calendar festivals. As for the "cross-quarter" festivals (named so because they lie exactly half-way between the aforementioned holidays) of the solstices and equinoxes; these can be explained by the common (possibly false) assumption that the Druids or Celtic peoples had built the megalithic stone circles as observatories to measure the lunar cycles and the movements of the sun. Since many of these megalithic circles do bear some validity for judging the equinoxes and solstices, many have assumed that great Druid festivals must have occurred at these times also. While Christmas and St. John the Baptist/Midsummer's days are carryovers into the Christian calendars, it is harder to prove the case with the equinoxes.<sup>160</sup> Since these holidays were of easily locatable knowledge, I assume that the founders of the RDNA, various British Fraternal Orders, and the Neopagan movement could have devised the same calendars by independent initiatives and a quick study in their local libraries.

The early Freemasons were notorious for their drinking habits, as are the college fraternities which are their indirect offshoots. Was the RDNA originally set up as a Fraternity? Perhaps in Fisher's mind, but hardly in the eyes of the other

druids. Carleton College has a strict policy of no Greek fraternities or sororities on or off its campus. So how about a Celtic one? Most-to-all students are very supportive of this policy, because of a tradition of openness in the entrance requirements to organizations. The Reformed Druids have always been extremely welcoming of new people, and lacks the "hazing" common to fraternities. As for the use of alcohol at rituals, it was never much more than a shot per person, except in the 2nd Order initiation where it can be as high as three shots. A few tame parties occurred after the services of the main festivals, but no more than could be expected for a general College crowd on a weekend. I doubt this is a conclusive point of evidence of a fraternal influence or fraternity influence. I'll discuss the issue later under the Pseudo-Judeo-Christian influences.

### Conclusion on Fraternalism

The possibility of a Masonic connection must remain open to debate, but NONE of the Carleton Druids have ever shown much concern, credence or knowledge of a possible preceding Druid group. For them, it STARTED in 1963, irregardless of what future evidence may show to the contrary. Many of the similarities can be chalked up to similarities that exist between organizations founded for the same purposes (in this case: universal siblinghood and opposition to tyrannical organizations). IF there was any influence it soon ceased within the first months of Reformed Druidism as David Fisher's influence within the group was supplanted by the interests of the other Founders and members. If the fraternal influences existed in the earliest weeks, they were greatly overshadowed by other factors; such as the need to look like a religion to get rid of the Chapel Requirement, the prominence of the philosophies of Asia and the pseudo-Judeo-Christian influences.

## Judeo-Christian Influences on Druidism

It is a pretty good bet that at least 85% of all the members of Reformed Druidism were raised in a Judeo-Christian household (or a Western Atheistic one). It is therefore not unreasonable to think that the Founders of the RDNA should have sought a little inspiration from the Bible and other Christian literature when they were devising a "religion" to spoof the Chapel Requirement. This "swiping of ideas" and lighthearted spoofing of the Judeo-Christian tradition may seem a bit blasphemous or heretical to some, but we must remember that the RDNA felt that a religion had to be able to laugh at itself.<sup>161</sup> I think that the first elements to be borrowed from the Judeo-Christian tradition borrowed was the Liturgy, as written by David Fisher in the first few weeks of April or at the latest by May 1st, 1963; and upon which the apparent hierarchy of the RDNA was based.

## ORDER OF COMMON WORSHIP: SUMMER HALF OF THE YEAR The Earliest Known Version

### I. OPENING BLESSING:

O Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, but we worship you here;

Thou art without form, but we worship you in these forms;

Thou needest no praise, yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;

O Lord, forgive [*these*] three sins that are due to our human limitations.

Mighty and blessed, fertile and powerful, to thee Earth-Mother, we sing our praise, asking that what we offer up to thee will be accepted, and thy blessing of life granted to us.

### II. PROCESSION AND DRAWING OF THE CIRCLE (and LIGHTING OF FIRE)

### III. HYMNS OR CHANTS OF PRAISE

### IV. THE SACRIFICE

Our praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, O our Mother, as we offer up to thee this our sacrifice of life. Accept this we pray, and grant us life.

Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call on the Spirit of the North to give answer, of the South, of the East-- and of the West.

Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life has been accepted.

### V. THE ANSWER

1. Of what does the Earth-mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

### THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

From Whence do these waters flow?

FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

And how do we honor this gift that cause life to men?

BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

SHE HAS

Then give me the Waters.

2. O DALON AP LANDU, HALLOW THESE WATERS BY THE SEVENFOLD POWERS, AND BY THE THREE WAYS OF DAY AND THE ONE OF NIGHT. GIVE US TO KNOW THY POWER AS WE TAKE AND DRINK OF THY SECRET ESSENCES.3. To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

VI. THE SERMON

VII. THE BENEDICTION

Go forth into the world of men, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that you go forth with her blessing. PEACE, PEACE, PEACE.

### A Crude Analysis of the Ritual<sup>162</sup>

For many people, the words of the invocation are their fondest memory of the ritual. Primary amongst the reasons they give is that the humbling expression of how we worship is inherently inferior and flawed to the way we'd LIKE to worship; how the very framework of our mind inhibits true worship. The words "sins" were often replaced with "errors" or "limitations" in later versions.

The liturgical roles of the three officers of the grove are laid out here. The Priest has the center stage in the ritual, governing the actions and timing. But the Preceptor also has a very active role in the etching of the Druid Sigil, the fetching of the sacrifice, answering of the catechism of the waters in part V.1. (which may also be answered by the congregation), and the confirmation of the sacrifice's acceptance. The Server's role is like that of cup-bearer/acolyte and passes the waters amongst the group between V.2. and V.3., and little more. The secular role of the these officers is small. Usually there was only one Priest in a grove, the Arch-Druid. The role of the Priest (or priests, if there are several in a grove at the same time) is to maintain the calendar of observance and hold weekend services (especially during the early 60s). The Preceptor is in charge of the any paperwork and gophing in the grove's activities. The Server has few secular responsibilities.

The service has a vague resemblance to the Holy Mass of the Episcopal church, but besides the consecration of an alcoholic beverage; the Order of Worship follows the generic liturgical template of the services of most religions (i.e. Greeting, Adoration, an invocation to Deity, a consecration/blessing of the community with an optional communal activity or feeding, a meditation/sermon and a parting with blessing). Strangely, any of the participants could well be interpreting the "Lord" in the beginning to be the Judeo-Christian God. However, they could also be viewing "Lord" as Krishna or Allah or the Great Spirit or Buddha or Cernunnos or "Bob" or etc. Remember that Reformed Druidism has no EXPLICIT gods in it's "theology;" therefore interpretation of the terms and names is up to the individual Druid. The invocation of Dalon ap Landu and the Earth-Mother could be interpreted as however wished by the participant; either as Gods in their own right or as personifications of philosophic ideals.

### Waters-of-Life<sup>163</sup>

It is very surprising that there is no consecration of a foodstuff as a parallel to the bread in the Christian Mass. I find the choice of whiskey, as the drink of consecration, to be a rather intriguing choice. The Irish Gaelic for "whiskey" is "uisce-beatha," or translated literally, it is "waters of life," which is well known.<sup>164</sup> Whiskey being a purely Celtic invention, it was a

natural and appropriate choice as the beverage of a "Celtic Religion," like Druidism was portraying itself in the beginning.<sup>165</sup> So it would seem to have been another little Celticism of the group, yes? Possibly not. In a very popular classic Science Fiction book of the 50/early 60s, *Stranger in a Strange Land* and *Dune*, a beverage known as the "waters of life" are used to unite the people in a strange exotic religion. What is interesting to note is that *Stranger in a Strange Land* became the inspiration for a NeoPagan religion known as "The Church of All Worlds," which was started among the science-fiction loving college students in 1961 down in Missouri. Coincidence? However, few early members were known to be sci-fi fans, so it is unlikely that it was an inspiration for Fisher's RDNA.

### Calendar

It should be noted that it was decided at the first Samhain ritual (Nov. 1st, 1963) that the Waters of Life would not be served from Samhain to Beltane (May 1st). It is uncertain if financial reasons were involved or Lenten concepts of periods of abstinence. Instead, the Waters of Sleep (plain water) would be served at all rituals during this period. This required a change in the Order of Worship. One reason for the change that I've come up with is that the season of winter in Minnesota is very fierce and uncompromising to outdoor Druid services from November until at least April/May; limiting outdoor services to about 6 or 7 in the fall and 7 or 8 in the spring. As a result, Saturday services would have to be held indoors during the winter, and alcohol was prohibited on the Carleton campus in the early 60s. The use of alcohol was unofficially tolerated off-campus, and the arboretum of the Druid Services was pseudo-off-campus. Thus developed the two halves of the Druid Calendar, the Summer Half from Beltane to Samhain and the Winter Half from Samhain to Beltane. Another possibility for the halves of the year is found in the Benedictine Rule of having different vigils and psalm readings between November 1st and Easter from those used between Easter and November 1st. Fisher would likely have been aware such a difference.

A comment is pertinent here about the eight celebratory festivals of the RDNA. Four of them are tied in with the agrarian/husbandry practices of pre-20th century Europe. Those are Beltane (May 1st) cattle go into the higher elevations to pasture. Next is Lughnasadh (Aug 1st) which is the celebration of the beginning of the harvest. Then comes Samhain (Nov. 1st) when cattle were slaughtered for meat over the winter and dead relatives are remembered. Finally there is Oimelc (Feb. 1st) when the ewes drop their lambs and begin to lactate. These traditional celebrations of the rhythms of Nature were seen as more important and less divisive by the RDNA than remembering the holidays from each of the many World religions.<sup>167</sup> At any rate they are more Indo-European than Celtic and were written about in books like Frazer's *Golden Bough* and MacCulloch.<sup>168</sup>

The other four festivals are the equinoxes and solstices. Yule/Christmas and Midsummer have their basis in the solstices, but the equinoxes have less celebrated carryovers like Paddy's Day, Easter/Passover and Lady's Day. In fact the equinoxes were not officially celebrated by the RDNA at Carleton until them late 80s, because of the lack of 'proof' that they were Celtic, and because they are not mentioned in the *Druid Chronicles (Reformed)*. The Berkeley grove was the first Grove of the Reform to raise the equinoxes to a higher status. Regardless, equinoxes and solstices did not play an important role in the Druidism at Carleton until the late 80s. This is primarily because they mostly fall on vacation times when Carleton Students are unable to meet.

It is interesting that Carleton's weather and academic schedule makes most of the "big eight" festivals, except Fall Equinox, Samhain and Beltane uncelebratable outdoors. The result is that the cycles of the seasons may not be as apparent and

important to most of the Carleton members who are unable to participate in all 8 spokes of "The Wheel of the Year." However, as the years progressed after the Chapel Requirement was rescinded, the festivals began to take on a much greater importance than the weekend services, which were a left over from the early days. By the mid 80s, weekend services had completely dropped out of use at Carleton, replaced by lunar observances, 8 festivals and weekly tea or book club meetings. As far as I know, the weekly services are still common at some NRDNA groves.

### Early Druid Literature

Seeing as how the Chapel requirement was seen as enforcing Judeo-Christianity at Carleton, it is not surprising that the Druids would poke fun at Judeo-Christianity in a few other ways: scriptures, altar building and missionary activity. In some ways I find this the most interesting part of the early Druid days. It gives me a better understanding of how easy or hard it is to imitate the progress and quarrels of the early centuries of Christianity; and thereby exposes some of our conceptions to a humorous light.

The *Druid Chronicles (Reformed)* was the 1964 summer release 1964 (written and revised from the summer of 1963 to spring 1963) of David Frangquist to leave a faithful account of the early days for Druids who weren't there in the beginning. It is an amazing work, a self-contained blueprint for Reformed Druidism as the Carleton Grove initially understood it. The *Druid Chronicles (Reformed)* may look very much like conventional biblical scriptures. It has the same verse-numbering system and mimics the now-awkward, repetitive and flowery vocabulary of the *King James Bible* of the Episcopal Church of the 1960s. It is divided into five books, perhaps like the Pentateuch of the Torah, and it has an Early Chronicles and Later Chronicles to parallel the Old and New Testaments. It is filled with tales of "great" happenings, heroic deeds and omens (although few prophecies). It has a book of Laws and a book of Customs which set forth the simple structures of Druidism, not unlike Leviticus and Deuteronomy. It also has a book of Meditations which is still referred to for inspiration by members of the present RDNA and NRDNA groves, much like the Book of Psalms. The characterization of David (a Fisher) "crying out in the wilderness," invokes a comparison with how John the Baptist foreshadowed Jesus (perhaps as David Fisher did for Frangquist?). The many reconstructions of the altar parallels the destructions of Solomon's Temple. With a bit of imagination, the words of hopeful reunion by Fisher in Early Chronicles before the summer vacation, could be paralleled with Jesus telling his disciples that they would meet again. For many, it is all they will ever need to practice Druidism, yet despite its popularity, the *Druid Chronicles (Reformed)* are not inviolable dogma to Druids like the Bible is to many Christians. Although there was an early decision not to add additional writings to the DC(R), but rather to make all further additions to an Apocrypha, this does not indicate that the DC(R) was a holy scripture. It was written with the intention of being a self-standing handy guidebook to be used, or not used. It is perfectly possible to break all the customs in DC(R), disagree with most of the suggestions, not like the meditations, and still be a Reformed Druid in good standing with the group.

Over the years a Talmud-like collection of letters, memoranda and rituals made by the Founders of Druidism and other letter-writing Druids (originally known as the Records of the Council) slowly accumulated in a large binder called the Blue Book of the Archives; which was the predecessor to the present International Druid Archives. Like the Ark of the Covenant, it wandered about from one place to another, being lost frequently. From 1964, until the publication of *the Druid Chronicles (Evolved)* by Isaac in 1976, there was some debate over whether

certain letters should be added onto the original five books of the *Druid Chronicles (Reformed)* (esp. *The Book of Faith*). It was finally agreed that the *Druid Chronicles (Reformed)* should stand as an independent publication. Isaac came up with several letters that he assembled into his Book of the Apocrypha. Many within the RDNA did not like his choices, so certain special documents were extracted from the Blue Book and put into a separate production known as the Carleton Apocrypha under the aegis of Richard Shelton in the period of 1971-1976. To continue the Christian/Druid comparison, one could perhaps compare the Druid Apocryphas to the New Testament or the Lost Books of the Bible, but still with the caveat that the Apocryphas are not dogma or indicative of the whole Reform.

This tradition is roughly similar to the activity of the Early Christians writing to each other. Early debates, as already discussed, were mostly resolved by mail. Most of this is pretty obvious to the reader. Occasional encouragements to spread the "faith" of Druidism (whatever that meant?) only serve to highlight much of the tongue-in-cheek aspect that accompanied much of the growth of Druidism.

### Conclusion to Judeo-Christian Influences

Judeo-Christianity, while it had some flaws for many members, was still a primary influence on the beginnings of Reformed Druidism; perhaps even greater than the Asian influences (which themselves, were definitely more influential than Celticity). And perhaps it is right that Reformed Druidism should continue to occasionally lead its members in a re-evaluation of the Western religions, for like Nature, we will forever "come face-to-face" with them. Many members would return to Western monotheistic religions after a brief bout with Druidism, often with an enhanced understanding of what it means to be religious.<sup>169</sup> Sometimes the RDNA's light-hearted spoofs of elements of Judeo-Christian religions would bring about a revelation and signal a bold exploration into new possibilities.

## The Two Basic Tenets

Since the RDNA probably came from no single recognizable or known preceding institution, you may be wondering now "Just what do the Druids believe, and whence came their beliefs?"<sup>81</sup> From the spring of 1963, the two Basic Tenets have been the **only** statement accorded complete theological agreement amongst all the Reformed Druids, both priests and lower Orders. The recruitment for Reformed Druidism was aided and guided by the very short and simple list of beliefs that were devised by Cherniack.<sup>82</sup>

The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother; which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.

And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it people do live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face to face with it.<sup>83</sup>

**These two short paragraphs are the most recounted quotation of Reformed Druid theology and are as roughly equivalent in importance to the RDNA as the Ten Commandments are to Judeo-Christian theology and the Five Pillars are to Islam. They are the only beliefs that have ever been required of new members to become a valid Druid in the RDNA or NRDNA. Norman Nelson, a Founder**

of the RDNA, stated that they "were careful in setting forth the original Tenets, to make it clear that Druidism (at least in 'our' Reform) did not conflict with other beliefs,"<sup>84</sup> The Founders had in effect "formulated Druidism as a religion of the least common denominator, a faith that few could object to, and [we] were surprised when some embraced it as adequate."<sup>85</sup>

It is important to note here that there are no explicit gods or goddesses mentioned in the Basic Tenets. The Earth-Mother is said to be Nature, but she is not **defined** as a Goddess. While the Earth-Mother would immediately be considered a Goddess by most Wiccans and Neo-Pagans who would hear this statement, here is a loop-hole for an atheist or monotheistic Reformed Druid to view the Earth-Mother as a personification of the material world, Nature. The result is that more people can agree on the same thing, while interpreting it differently. As Larry Press related to me, there are no traditional mythologies or stories attached to any of the Celtic Gods by the RDNA in their publications.<sup>86</sup> The god-names remained as uncarved blocks of wood to be wrought upon freshly by each member's imagination in their own way, or to be simply left as blocks.

The Founders had realized that many religions from around the world (past and present) have used analogies drawn from the material world to express Divinity; whether that Divinity is immanent or transcendent.<sup>87</sup> In fact, David Frangquist felt that Nature was at the root base of all religions:

"John B. Sparks has demonstrated that all of the major religions of the modern world have developed directly or indirectly from Nature worship."<sup>88</sup>

The trick that the RDNA used was that if the same story about, say, a bird making a nest, can be interpreted by all religions as a useful analogy for their own religious beliefs, then people of all religions could benefit from getting together and hearing that same story of how a bird built its nest. ("One mouth telling a story, many ears interpreting."<sup>89</sup>) As long as dogmatic theological statements remain out of the stories, the group can enjoy each other's company, because dogma is as often a testing-device primarily for exclusion rather, as for inclusion.

## Resultant Philosophy/Theology

The combination of the Basic Tenets and a general Carleton disinclination to overradicalize on an issue, but to maintain a respectful interest or at least a concerted apathy, comes a great many unofficial practices among Carleton Druids. I remind you that former Carleton Druids were, at least nominally, the ArchDruids of almost all RDNA and early-NRDNA groves until 1976.<sup>90</sup> Because the first core-members of a grove are often chosen by the founding Archdruid, the background of that missionary Third Order Druid is important. Therefore this "Carleton" philosophy/religion is worth expounding further upon before mentioning the hierarchical roots of Reformed Druidism, because these views are older than the political structures themselves and should be known and understood before delving into the "Druid Politics."

Some Druids felt the greatest need for Druidism was to instruct people that they had a right to believe what they knew to be true, regardless of what others said. A person joining the RDNA and/or NRDNA was never required to renounce their previous faiths, whether mainstream or Neo-Pagan.<sup>91</sup> It was important to Druidism that you believed your own views instead of slavishly following those of others, provided that you had carefully examined them and judged them sound:

"Their numbers are great and their voices are loud. They shall present much authority

before you, and say: "We know our way to be the only way, for it is the way of our ancestors." But take heed, lest you should fall into the trap."<sup>92</sup>

A way that one could oppose such bigoted authority and still prevent one's own participation in the same blame-worthy activity ("the trap") was:

"...to be intellectually honest with himself, and not blindly bigoted, his faith must be based on a rational and prayerful consideration of the alternatives."

"We pity the man whose faith is based only on a fear of questioning that faith. For our faith is a faith freely embraced the only kind of faith worth having."<sup>93</sup>

Once that is realized as a noble goal for one's self, it should follow that an opportunity for holding one's own beliefs should also be ceded as the right to others because:

"Awareness shall come unto no one save it shall be in their own way: and it shall come unto no one save they shall come unto it.

...And make your way not after the ways of others, but after your own way:

and go too to the fountain of Awareness, which is in Nature."<sup>94</sup>

This led to the conclusion that one could never successfully force one's own "awareness" upon another, or even reliably judge whether such a transformation had indeed occurred in someone else.<sup>95</sup> This probably posed a permanent perplexing paradox for proselytizing. This philosophy/religious precept of firmness in one's own beliefs and respectful uncertainty over the validity of another's beliefs underlies all the future debates in Reformed Druidism. How this relates to relativism, is another issue for the scholars. Above all, the Druid should remember that in all the religions outside our own: "There were treasures there that related to our tradition as Druids of looking to Nature."<sup>96</sup>

Early on, some Druids had tentatively replied to the first of the four essential debates in Druidism: "What are the basic needs for religion?" One apparent answer, one among many, was that religion (and Reformed Druidism) should encourage and support people to continue questioning and searching for religious truth, but religions should not limit the searcher.

"If I were ever to pass on any advice to my successors, it would be to never consider that they have found, as Druids, the ultimate answer to any of their questions. Druidism is a faith, if a faith, in questioning, not in answering. Awareness, to a Druid, is an individual thing, to be shared, perhaps, but never to be codified."<sup>97</sup>

"[I] saw it [Reformed Druidism] as a slightly more organized way of pursuing moral, ethical (+later) spiritual issues from new perspectives."<sup>98</sup>

"It also reinforced my own conviction in the universality of core religious beliefs which lie beneath the varying disguises of various religions."<sup>99</sup>

As for the 4th "Essential" Debate, that Druidism shouldn't get too serious about itself, lest it succumb to the "Fossilization Theory." For once a group can't laugh at itself then the organization has stifled a possible expression of religiosity:



"[T]he strength of Druidism lies in its rejection of the orthodox, a quality which often leads to humorous results.

Without ever being too sure of ourselves, we must provide an opportunity for introspection, in a religious setting, but a setting in which the participant will not feel constrained by the old conventions with which he was formally familiar."<sup>44</sup>

## Organizational Roots of the RDNA

The basic beginning of group-structure was devised by David Fisher, because he set up the original liturgy. A more detailed analysis of the ritual is discussed in Chapter Four, but the basic important issue was that three liturgical roles were required to "officially" perform the Order of Worship. The three liturgical roles included 1) an "Arch-druid" chanting the week-end service liturgy, later known as "The Order of (common) Worship," 2) a "Preceptor" who answered to a formulaic set of questions asked by the Arch-Druid before consecrating the "Waters-Of-Life"<sup>100</sup> and 3) a "Server" who carried the cup of the Waters-of-Life around to all the Druids.<sup>101</sup> There was no initial imposition of hierarchy of orders (except in Fisher's mind) at the first service, so anybody could have technically filled each role, including being the Arch-Druid,<sup>102</sup> however things didn't happen to go towards greater egalitarianism.

In order to fulfill Carleton's requirements for being a student religious group, the RDNA had to file a Student Constitution with the Carleton Senate and appoint three officers. These three organizational officers of the RDNA were drawn directly from the liturgical roles and led to the development of the three primary Orders of Reformed Druidism. Fisher had already claimed initially to be an initiated "third order Druid in high school"<sup>103</sup> when the "Triumvirate" had first met, so Fisher apparently filled in this credibility-gap by applying one Order to each of the roles in the Liturgy. In the 1963 RDNA Constitution of the Carleton Grove, only one month into the group's existence, the ArchDruid was listed as being held by "at least a third order" Druid, the office of Preceptor by "at least a second order" Druid and the office of Server by "at least a first order" Druid.<sup>104</sup> The ArchDruid's requirement of being "at least a third-order" refers to the fact that Fisher had stated that there were actually **ten(!)** orders all together.<sup>105</sup>

Here I must pause and refer you back to the second and third "essential" debates of Reformed Druidism; (2) how to detect Fisher-isms and (3) what could be done to delay a proposal until it could be determined whether or not it was a "Fisher-ism." Already we can see that the dreadful "self-feeding" process in (3) appears to have been established and permitted to attach itself to Reformed Druidism. But before we assign some form of heavy guilt on the head of Fisher for "dooming" Reformed Druidism to eternal power-struggles and schisms that result from hierarchy, let's remember that none of the Founders "expected the group to outlive our time and life at Carleton."<sup>106</sup> The real "guilt," if such a thing exists, would have been the continuation of the previous structure along with the original philosophy, under David Frangquist and his successors. For it is they, who have appeared to have nostalgically retained the customs, laws and the seemingly unnecessary hierarchy that were first established to give cohesiveness to the group to oppose the Chapel requirement.

If Dave Frangquist truly believed in Druidism's simpler messages, why did he add Fisher's hierarchy and terminology to his own dissemination of the spirit of the Basic Tenets? Nostalgia? Lack of foresight? Fear of breaking with the past? A little of each, plus a realization that the RDNA was still needed by some at Carleton and something was necessary to keep the group

from being mis-used or overly confused. The answer would be the role of the Third Order Druid, as guided by the Druid Chronicles (Reformed) and the Ordination service's instructions to the Third Order.



Figure 7 The Dapper Druid.



Figure 8 A Druid in summer attire?

# Chapter Three:

## Reformed Druidism

### 1964-1973

## Expansion Beyond Carleton

In the spring of 1964, Druidism really looked as if it would fade away with Cherniack retired, Fisher slowly distancing himself from Druidism in preparation for Episcopal Seminary,<sup>107</sup> and the Chapel requirement about to be rescinded. Frangquist and Nelson, however, came up and asked to enter Fisher's mysterious Third Order, with the realization that they had a good thing going with the RDNA. Frangquist and Nelson had decided that they wanted to share Druidism with others after leaving Carleton, or as Zempel later put it:

"Due to the temporary nature of membership in the Carleton Grove, nearly every priest ordained can be expected to eventually serve a missionary function, making Druidism available other than its birth place."<sup>108</sup>

Frangquist was not an *original* Triumvirate Founder (but close enough to be an honorary fourth Founder), but soon after the first service, he had become a very active Druid in the grove.<sup>109</sup> He did not make this commitment lightly and showed quite a bit of preparation:

"David [Frangquist], unlike myself [Fisher] and co-founders, took his Druidism very seriously, and meditated long and hard before asking for ordination as a 3rd order priest."<sup>110</sup>

Together, Frangquist and Nelson had decided to use and maintain the Third Order priesthood as a sort of check upon future groves from becoming too serious or becoming too dangerously wild. But they wanted to ensure that the Third Order would not become too domineering, or take itself too seriously. Most of all, the Third Order should not become a goal for title-hungry people on ego-trips.

A word here about the Third Order is in order. There is not much known about the traditional Patron of the Third Order, Dalon ap Landu outside of the RDNA, since he does not apparently exist in any archaeological or literary sources. There is some rumor that "Dalon ap Landu" is a variant of "Dylan eil Ton," which would explain the Welsh name "Dalon son of the Sea," but I suspect that there is little connection between the two. Dylan in the Mabinogi was a young boy thrown into the sea and drowned. In outrage, the sea has ever since been throwing itself in anger against the shore-rocks in an attempt to reach the malefactors. Perhaps there is a symbolic representation of the Druids continually throwing themselves against the breakers of Dogma? The only revealing verse in the Druid Chronicles, doesn't mesh with this hypothesis because it refers to Dalon as a tree:

"We have seen him on the bosom of the Earth-Mother: huge woody arms raised to the sky in adoration, strong and alive; and we have called His name Dalon Ap Landu."<sup>111</sup>

If Dalon is a tree-god, that would explain why he's in charge of "groves," and their keepers, the Third Order. One friend has suggested that "ap Landu" be a college boy's pig-Welsh for "of the land," which has as much chance of being true as any current theory. Isaac claims that at least one Masonic Druid organization,

whose name he unfortunately can't remember, also has a Dalon Ap Landu. It is perhaps revealing of the mentality of Reformed Druids, that they would chose such an intentionally **obscure** Welsh name for the most important office of Druidism, a Patron that was for all intents and purposes laden with no preconceptions or descriptions.<sup>112</sup>

This type of attitude of letting others disprove their own misconceptions is similar to the essence of mysticism in fraternal organizations, when done correctly.<sup>113</sup> The unfounded hopes, fears and expectations can build to a frenzy as the initiation approaches the climax. Then, all the danger is revealed to be a holy "joke" and one sees that all the disappointments were brought on by one's own frenzied fears and hopes. The result is that the initiate begins to realize that appearances can be deluding with regard to ritual and religion, necessitating a deeper observation. Unlike most of the fraternal organizations, Reformed Druidism's services are not secret, and the private nature of the Third Order ordination is merely done to form a closer bond, to leave a little bit of surprise for future initiates and possibly to reduce embarrassment in the unlikely case that the candidate is rejected.<sup>114</sup> Several times, other non-Thirds would be around to observe it, but realistically, how many people would really want to tromp into the Arb at 6:00 am just to watch someone else's ordination?

In the spring of 1964 Fisher was reluctant to continue his Arch-Druidship into his senior year, primarily because he thought the group was becoming too close to a religion; however Fisher was hesitant to relinquish control. Nelson, wishing to be ArchDruid from a love of titles, began this new stage of post-Fisher Druidism. Under Nelson's brief summer ArchDruidcy in May 1964 to Sept. 1964, the Order of Worship was fixed as **the basic** liturgy and the Higher Orders (i.e. 4th to 10th) were established to "stimulate priests of the 3rd Order to continued spiritual inquiry," much like honorary academic degrees.<sup>115</sup> The Higher Orders were also considered very extraneous compared to the First, Second and Third Orders. Over the years, however, the Higher Orders would flit in and out of the records, until the 1970s when the NRDNA wished to revive them as magical badges of office. After the Higher Orders were established, Nelson graduated and left Carleton to start the first of the missionary groves at Vermilion, S.D.<sup>116</sup> during the summer of 1964, essentially acting as the ArchDruid of both Groves. Meanwhile over the summer, Frangquist founded the short-lived Ma-Ja-Ka-Wan Grove in a Wisconsin summer camp.

David Frangquist's subsequent two year reign as ArchDruid (under Nelson and Fisher's watchful auspices for 64-65) at Carleton from Fall 1964 to Spring 1966 completed the basic formulation of the hierarchy and philosophical foundations of the RDNA, except for the final clarification in 1971 to correct a few elements of sexism that were disturbing to many in the Reform.<sup>117</sup> Because there were only a handful of initial priests on the membership rolls of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu during the early 60s, it was easy for a lot of rules to be hammered out in a consensus very quickly. The consensus tradition is very important to remember because, in later years, it became increasingly difficult to get the increasingly large rolls of priests to either abstain or vote positively on Council issues.

Complete authority over the Reform (if such a thing ever existed) was invested in the Council of Dalon ap Landu under the perpetual Chairmanship of the currently presiding ArchDruid of Carleton.<sup>118</sup> This in effect turned Carleton into the central administration of the Reformed Druid movement in a vaguely similar way to how Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, Islam and Judaism all have particular holy areas or "main Headquarters." Voting membership on this Council was limited to those of the Third Order, each of whom must have been initiated by an Arch-Druid (who is, of course, of the Third Order).<sup>119</sup> New dogma would require a consensus from the replies of **known**, not active, members of the Council who had been contacted.<sup>120</sup> If an Arch-

Druid found a prospective initiate too fanatical, or likely to turn Druidism into a personal cult-following, they could do little more than avoid ordaining her/him into the Third Order, within reason.<sup>121</sup> The flaw was that once a "rogue" slipped into the Third Order, there was probably nothing you could do to defrock them or stop their propagation. To defrock them seems to be an un-Druidic thing to do, because you would be claiming to understand their soul better than they could themselves. It was hoped that the Grove members would eventually spot the rogues and leave them.

## Missionary Dilemma

Once they had been initiated into the Third Order, Nelson and Frangquist pondered how to form missionary groves away from Carleton. The problem, known as "the Missionary Dilemma," which hinged on the proper consecration of the Waters-of-Life, as performed in the Order of Worship.<sup>122</sup> In order to properly consecrate 1st, 2nd and 3rd Order Druids, you need to have consecrated Waters-of-Life. The only way to consecrate the Waters-of-Life was to have a Preceptor (of the Second Order) and a Server (of the First Order) already present in the Grove before the consecration began. In a technical way, a traveling Third Order couldn't perform the ceremony or consecrate the waters without also having two traveling companions, one of at least the Second Order and another of at least the First Order. Since it was very unlikely that three such graduating Druids from Carleton would go on to the same graduate school, it appeared that Druidism couldn't technically ever leave Carleton.

For some reason, the possibility of carrying pre-consecrated Waters was never discussed. Perhaps because in the service, the unused portions of the Waters are quickly given in a libation to the Earth within minutes of the partaking by the attendees. Instead, the informal decision was made that a missionary Third Order Druid has the right to perform the ceremony in absence of an already consecrated Preceptor and Server. This decision had a precedent (not that precedents are needed or respected in the RDNA) in the way that Fisher (originally the only "consecrated" member of the Carleton Grove) ordained the first 2nd and 1st Order Druids into existence. This was vaguely referred to in the Council decision on 27 January, 1965 which stated:

"That any priest has the right to conduct worship and receive members into the First and Second orders."

With this obstacle to growth now removed and already tested at the Vermilion Grove of S.D. by Nelson and Frangquist in Wisconsin in the Summer of 1964, the missionary expansion of Reformed Druidism can be said to have begun.<sup>123</sup>

## Grove Liberty

Each resolution further limited the numbers of distracting cosmetic touches to ritual or organization that could be lobbied for "official" approval. That type of lobbying to a central authority would distract the attention of the Druids from the virtues of careful introspection and self-reliance. An example of this is that the *contents* of the Order of Worship were never firmly described in the Council's records.<sup>124</sup> There is no phraseology there that limits anyone from building upon or subtracting from the liturgy. One had liberal freedom to experiment with it, although few went too far away from the basics.<sup>125</sup> The only absolutely fixed ritual of the RDNA was for the Third Order. In fact, it was the Third Order which is restricted by such laws, rather than the lower orders. Interestingly enough, no council was envisioned for the first and second orders, although some Founders have afterward said they see no reason those orders couldn't devise and hold their own services, just like the Higher Orders.

Because of early missionary activity by the Founders (Fisher, Nelson and Frangquist all started groves) and the inconvenience of regular correspondence, the difficulty of controlling and directing distant groves was quickly realized. It is also possible that they realized that a fully-enrolled Carleton student (which is **traditionally** the requirement for being the Archdruid of the Carleton Grove) just doesn't have the time to be bothered with supervising and/or controlling far-away distant groves. These elements when combined, led to a great amount of freedom being granted to possible future groves beyond Carleton.

By the Spring of 1966, all it took to found a grove was a Third Order Druid (who could ordain anyone to 1st or 2nd Order) and two other **elected** people to fill the appropriate liturgical roles during the initial service. The Grove's officers of Arch-Druid, Preceptor and Server were then elected by a majority and a new constitution was voted on usually by unanimity<sup>126</sup> and that was mailed to Carleton.<sup>127</sup> Amendments to a grove's constitution were generally by majority vote of a quorum of the grove's known members (1/8 or 1/3 of those of 1st order on up) at two consecutive meetings. Members missing the first meeting must be notified of the second meeting.<sup>128</sup> No specific contents were ever required for the later grove constitutions by the Council to be submitted to Carleton by the new grove, not even clauses of subservience to the Council! Freedom. Hoping to further limit extension of power by future Councils upon future groves, the Council declared:

"That the local Groves retain the right to organize themselves in any way which will best serve their own needs."<sup>129</sup>

These rules taken together, allowed each individual grove the freedom to make any liturgical, hierarchical or theological rules that they wanted. In many ways it was like the separation of Federal and State government in the USA; with the Council being the Federal government and the local groves (including Carleton) being the States. The only thing the groves couldn't do was to claim that all the rest of Reformed Druidism also had to follow their own modifications. Any dissenters in the grove could leave or even step forward to be ordained into the Third Order, choose to schism from the group, and then form their own equally independent grove. Thus if Berkeley wanted all of its own grove members to declare themselves as Neo-Pagan to serve their own needs, there was nothing the Council could do about it, except to grumble about their exclusionary actions. What the Council *could* do was hope that the Berkeleyites would show enough independent will of their own, which they often did. But if Berkeley wanted all of Reformed Druidism to declare itself Neo-Pagan, then the Council would probably have to discuss and then vote on it.

**It should be noted that the individuals of the Third Order, while given the privileges of holding services and ordinations, are nowhere** granted control of the grove in matters of theology. Nowhere in the laws or traditions does a Third Order Druid have the right to tell someone that they are a "heretic" to Reformed Druidism. While a Third Order could theoretically opt to withhold services and ordinations until their parishioners agreed with her or him, such actions would be generally considered "un-Druidic" or at least a poor way to resolve internal disputes. I believe that the Records of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, are rather vague on the powers of individual Thirds, and this may combat the existence of personality cults, by encouraging the individual's personal beliefs. But there is no "bill of rights" for members, which is disturbing to me. You can have a charismatic Arch-Druid, but they should have a following based on love and understanding, not on fear of organizational rules/dogma. Entrusting theological issues to the *total* Council, would by default, keep the groves of the Reform open and free of 714 local dictators. But I suppose, if a bad apple did emerge, they

probably wouldn't allow members contact with the head organization anyway. If this wasn't the original intention, it certainly was the eventual effect.

## Use of Early Publications

Perhaps the greatest legacy to the RDNA that Frangquist left to Carleton wasn't the Third Order and the Council, but rather *The Druid Chronicles (Reformed)*, *What is Reformed Druidism?*, and the *Green Book of Meditation (Vol.1)*. These three publications were considered, by many members, to have been the heart and soul of Reformed Druidism, along with the great outdoors.

The *Druid Chronicles (Reformed)* were completed before the Summer of 1964 by David Frangquist. They contain light-hearted accounts of the major events of the turbulent first year of Reformed Druidism from May 1963 to May 1964 under David Fisher. The humor and cheeky presentation of the Foundation was a balanced reminder to Druids not to get misty-eyed or seriously concerned about preserving the "sanctity" of the many organizational aspects. DC(R) also lists some of the early customs, lists the two Basic Tenets as the sole theology of the group, and provides a number of inspiring meditations to encourage individualistic exploration for personal truth. The book, itself, does not claim to be divinely inspired and there was no decision by the Council to make DC(R)'s statements or customs into official law. DC(R) was left behind as a helpful collection of suggestions, put into writing, on how Druidism was originally run (perhaps in case you'd like to duplicate it). Despite a lack of official endorsement for DC(R), all the different branches of Druidism have claimed that DC(R) is a good thing to keep around for a healthy grove. As we'll discuss later, the only problem with the DC(R) was that it had four verses in Customs that were sexist and would continue to frustrate attempts to legislate gender equality. So while I say it was never official dogma, it had some weight of implied tradition behind it.

The pamphlet "What is Reformed Druidism?" was the first summarization of the movement in Fall 1965, and variations of it were used up into the mid 1970s for recruitment at the student organization fairs at Carleton. Plainly written and to the point, it was a template of modesty for the group's outreach efforts.

The *Green Book of Meditations*, (The Green Book), was primarily compiled by David Frangquist between 1964-1966. Unlike the universal popularity of DC(R), the Green Book is practically unknown outside of the alumni from the Carleton Grove. Ostensibly, the Green Book was a collection of handy meditations for potential use at Druid Services by Arch-Druids who were too lazy or busy to research their own readings. As such, it is hard to understand its popularity at Carleton, who are usually pretty industrious in pursuing their interests. On successive readings, one quickly realizes that the Green Book is not just a random selection, but contains an underlying integrity. I feel, and many agree, that it generally sets forth to provoke thinking about such Druidical topics as "certainty," "leadership," "reality," "nature," and "individuality." In essence it contains some kernels of Reformed Druidism as understood by David Frangquist. Because it included illuminating examples from many of the world's existing faiths (including monotheistic ones), it gave positive reinforcement to the Carleton tradition of openness to possibility of valid truths to be found in the teachings all faiths. In one way, the early grove resembled some of the inter-faith councils that developed at Carleton in the 1980s, providing a forum for different beliefs to be expressed and appreciated. It is amazing that Berkeley stayed so close to the Carleton ideals of openness as it did, without the Green Book. Perhaps this can be traced to the presence of the DC(R) and Larson, or maybe Druidism can sustain itself by common sense without reference to

## Crowning Touches

The last hierarchical touch was the creation of a central record-keeping office for the RDNA. The April 26, 1966 decision required future ArchDruids of Carleton (each of whom will be a Chair of the Council) upon retiring to send a report of the state of Druidism to ALL members of the Council. This allowed the initial Third Order Druids to keep track of what was going on at Carleton and elsewhere, even if no voting took place, probably more out of curiosity than from a fear of "heresy." They certainly never expected the Council to get too large or to become tar-babied in politics, a fate that often enveloped the Arch-Druids of Carleton.

Not long after Frangquist stepped down in Spring 66, the Council had started to become a difficult (but not impossible) voting tool because, as membership rolls quickly swelled in the late 60s, it became very difficult to come to a unanimous consensus on basic issues or even just to keep track of the Council's addresses (especially updating the addresses of Third Orders consecrated outside of Carleton). The Council had done its main purpose by 1966 of setting up a basic system. The major flaw to be seriously debated until 1974 was how to remove any remaining doubts concerning sexual equality within the Third Order (considered to have been fixed in 1971). Basically, any further claims of dogma were left to the whims of the individual groves' members, if they even needed it.

"Druidism boasts no ethos. Since Druidism has never claimed to be a religion, dogmatism has always seemed incompatible with the [RDNA] organization."<sup>130</sup>

We'll pick up the voting problems again later with Isaac's proposals in Chapter Five, but now let's address the question of whether Druidism is a religion or a philosophy.

## Religion or Philosophy?

I think most scholars of Reformed Druidism will be surprised to learn that this issue of "Is Reformed Druidism a religion?" was debated again and quietly addressed in 1969-1970 in what I happily call "The Smiley Affair"<sup>131</sup> when the RDNA took on a Vietnam era's draft board. Even before Isaac began his revolutionary testing of the RDNA's organizational limits in the mid 1970s, that important question of Philosophy vs. Religion had already been firmly decided by a definite "Maybe! Why don't you ask each of us?"<sup>132</sup>

What is important to note is that although Reformed Druidism (as a whole) would find it difficult to claim to be a religion in the eyes of all its members, but its quite possible that an individual could claim that Druidism had become their own personal religion. The Reformed Druid groves (except maybe the SDNA) never required a Druid member to give up their previous religious affiliation or adopt a new one. This principle often boiled down to an assumption that the group can not and should not validly declare anything itself, something that can only be done by the individuals. This is an important lesson of Druidism that I've often come across. This common assumption within Druidism was that one just had to have confidence in one's own beliefs because all theologies come down to an issue of faith, which is basically a personal choice of convictions. Besides, I've rarely found two people who can agree on the same air-tight definition of "philosophy" or "religion." The two definitions become especially difficult to separate if your group doesn't have any explicit gods or goddesses in them. Without definite deities, philosophies and religions both seem to be systems of moral and ethical guidelines to me. It should be remembered that even ethicists can disagree strongly with each other on what is ethical. More often than not, people "give in" a little in certain private

opinions in order to further the pursuit of a group accomplishment, which can be good or bad.

It is interesting to note that Reformed Druidism seems to lack many of the elements considered important to the popular understanding of a religion. It lacks a world creation story (besides the story of the group's origins) and it simply refers to Nature as "one of the objects of Creation," which is rumored to be a "Fisherism" that somehow slipped into Reformed Druidism (although no one has really complained). We've already mentioned that Reformed Druidism has no explicit gods in its belief structure. It also lacks an obvious eschatology, it has no judicial system of rigid ethics or morals, there are no injunctions about family/social arrangements, it has no real problems with people editing/criticizing its own scriptures, it lists no legal punishments (e.g. chopping off people's hands), it proclaims no Messianic prophecies or exclusionary methods of claiming its people to be "the only chosen ones." By Western standards, it is, at best, a "half-baked" religion. But I believe that Taoism and Zen also lack these elements and yet they are considered to be religions. Which answer is correct?

In summary, the RDNA was amenable to its members believing (or not believing) in a god (or gods) on a personal level, but vagueness and indecision on this issue prevailed on a group level. I personally see it this way: the RDNA was originated as a philosophy on a group level and it had the possibility of becoming a religion on the individual level; as is evidenced in the following case.

## "The Smiley Affair" Elaborated

I mentioned earlier that there were two cases where a united "front" was put on by Reformed Druids to surmount a concern from authorities to its membership. The first was the Chapel Requirement of Carleton College and the second was the US Draft Board; which I refer to as "The Smiley Affair."

Richard Smiley, (CL65:Fisher)<sup>133</sup> was a Third Order priest from the early days of Reformed Druidism who had founded the Purdue grove in 1966-7. Smiley was studying at Purdue and leading a grove there, but the Draft wanted to draft him after they realized he was no longer attending graduate school. Smiley saw a chance to use Reformed Druidism to protest both the Draft *and* the special exemptions from military service that were being granted to the priests of mainstream religions (but not to equally "religious" laity who merely lacked the hierarchical titles). In this respect, Smiley was acting in the true spirit of the Reform because

"He [Smiley] enjoyed playing the Game as much as anyone, but still was getting something out of it."<sup>134</sup>

In the spirit of testing definitions, Smiley wrote to the Draft Board that he was a minister seeking a 4-D ministerial exemption.<sup>135</sup> When the Draft board cautiously wrote back that they were unaware of his Seminary training, Smiley flatly responded:

"I am a minister of the Reformed Druids of North America. I received my training concurrently with my regular undergraduate education, at Carleton."<sup>136</sup>

Smiley, the Frangquists, Savitzky<sup>137</sup> and Richard Shelton<sup>138</sup> worked together to explore the loose governmental definitions of a minister, all of which hinged upon a person performing *organizational* functions in a religious group rather than holding definable *religious* beliefs.<sup>139</sup> Also hidden in this protest was the indignation common to young adults; namely, that the "elders" felt that a younger person couldn't be as valid in their beliefs as someone over thirty. Whenever a letter was required by the Draft Board to prove Smiley was a priest in good standing, the Arch-

Druid of Carleton would send a **very formal** letter affirming Smiley's actions as *performing the required functions*.<sup>140</sup> The conclusion of the story was that the Council delayed the Draft board so long, that Smiley became too old to be drafted and Druidism remained happily **undefined** in its beliefs and never had to lie.

Smiley was all prepared to do the paperwork necessary for acquiring the legal and financial trappings of a religion. All this was primarily a delaying action until Smiley's surpassed the draft's limitation; there was little hope that they would actually accept his plea. About this time, the Universal Life Church, who will ordain anyone, went to court in 1970 to successfully protect one of its ministers from the Draft. As a result, the ULC membership swelled by the thousands. In some ways, Druidism is similar to the Universal Life Church, of which many Reformed Druids are also members for the ministerial credentials.<sup>141</sup> The ULC "rights" start:

"Every person has the right to determine his/her own faith and creed according to conscience.

Every person has the right to the privacy of his/her belief, to express his/her beliefs in worship, teaching, and practice, and to proclaim the implications of his beliefs for relationships in a social or political community."<sup>142</sup>

But regardless of the successful outcome, one sees a precedent that if a Third Order (or any other Druid, of course) should claim that Reformed Druidism is their religion, members within Reformed Druidism will generally support them without committing other Druids to accepting the RDNA as a religion. The above listed Druids were even cautiously supportive, of Smiley turning his Grove into a legal church; as long as the rest of the RDNA groves didn't have to become "official." Whereas Isaac could have pointed to this as a good reason to keep the Council going (if he had known of the Smiley Affair before 1974), supporting the option of Third Order minister status, the whole thing was accomplished without officially convening the Council.<sup>143</sup> Shelton felt that this was appropriate, since the draft board had only asked the Carleton Arch-Druid to verify that Smiley was "in good standing" and that he led a grove in West Lafayette, "both of which clearly fall within the Arch-Druid's competence."<sup>144</sup> The issue of incorporation was dropped after the Draft was canceled, until Isaac brought it up in 1974, and eventually his Pentalpha/Druid Chronieler group briefly incorporated in the late 70s, as did Live Oak Grove in the mid 80s.

The "Codex of Form" Affair Partly due to a brief break in continuity during the winter of 67-68 and the chaos of passing time, much tradition had been lost and Shelton was the first Arch-Druid of Carleton not to have personally met a Founder. Shelton, with a prodigious natural talent for legalese, attempted to resolve and clarify the motley assortment of customs, laws and traditions that were handed to him by Savitzky in the spring of 1969. Most of his codified statements have clear precedents from the original Blue Book of the Carleton Archives and the Records of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu. Shelton was determined;

"to settle one way or the other what I perceived as contradictions in the existing Record of the Council, I presented it [*the Codex*] to the Council for discussion only, and I later withdrew it. It was never put to a vote."<sup>145</sup>

The Record of the Council, at that time, was defined as ALL of the past correspondence letters currently on file (kind of like a Talmud). There was a generally negative response in the discussion concerning the collection of customs in the Codex, although they did have precedents. The written replies acknowledged that the Codex showed the standard way how things had once operated, but the Council made it clear that they did not wish to give official or unofficial sanction to its very own customs as being the only "correct" way to perform Druidism, as that would have closed down other potential avenues of exploration and growth for its members. Some things are better left unofficial, since some questions and answers tend not towards edification.

What drew heavy fire were Shelton's three innovations (1) a Secretary to the Council to serve as an anchor due to the rapid turnover of the Chairmanship at Carleton and (2) explicit requirements to keep the Chair informed about new addresses, new Groves, new Priests and (3) seeking a way to replace the awkward entrance requirements for the Higher Orders. Reformed Druid priests bridled at being told that they were **required** to send in reports (although, in fact, the Records of the Council are pretty explicit on this fact). This showed that a strong objection to sturdier organization beyond the Grove level existed as early as 1969. In many ways, the previous "laws" of the council were sometimes being considered as "suggestions," not as inviolable rules. The Codex affair would later inspire another young reformer, Isaac, to codify Druid practices with similar reactions. The Codex affair, in this way, foreshadowed the more well-known Isaac Affair.

"It is no surprise that the Council that shot his stuff down in 1969 (and attributed nefarious intent to its author then) should get so hot under the collar again in 1974 (and likewise suspect the new author's motives)."<sup>146</sup>

In many ways, the Codex Affair showed the extent to which the RDNA was willing to go and how far they definitely were not willing to go. The "Codex Affair" also alerted past Carleton RDNA Druids (especially the Sheltons) that the Carleton grove was going to require some occasional advice and supervision to keep it on the right path. A sort of protective attitude can be seen to have developed by the Council toward the Carleton Grove. In fact, even to some of the other groves, Carleton would become sort of a mystical shrine.<sup>147</sup> After the event, Shelton would help organize the Archives and made sure that new members had a chance to go through it.

## Women's Equality

Despite intensive earlier legislative attempts, the RDNA could still "technically" have been viewed as a sexist institution in 1970 -as defined by its laws and printed customs. Most noteworthy amongst the evidence, there were 4 unpopular verses in the *Druid Chronicles (Reformed)* that had implied since 1964 that women were unequal to men in the priesthood:

13. But no priestess shall be admitted into the councils *of* priesthood, but rather she shall be given *unto* one of them as a gift of service to beauty.

14. For she who is called to be a priest shall be sealed up *unto* one Order only, and unto her shall be given the service of it for all time;

15. And she shall be called a priest not *of* the Order, but rather a priest *unto* the Order.

16. For so it is written; thus it was, thus it is, and thus it is to be. (Customs, Chapter 8:12-16, italics mine)

These statements in DC(R) were not carved in stone, but they did have the power of tradition and Fisher behind them. Up until the Fall of 1970, one of Carleton College's *In Loco Parentis* rules did not allow women to be out of their rooms after 10 pm. The penalties were stiff and permitted exceptions were rare. Since the Third Order requires an all night vigil of at least 7 hours (usually sunset to sunrise), women were effectively excluded from entering the Third Order. Whether or not this barrier to the Third Order was planned by Fisher is unascertainable. To get AROUND this tradition, and to allow women a chance to enter the 3rd Order and the Higher Orders, Frangquist and Nelson proposed that women could be given "**unto** the Third Order" without having to vigil. Women were now admitted to the Third Order, but with a stigma of being "**unto** the Order" instead of being "**of** the Order," like the men. However, in its own way, it was the first step towards greater equality, because it at least meant that women could get into the upper Orders. There was also the restriction of entry by women to only one Higher Order, with no such restriction on the men.

Frangquist, from the beginning, wished to amend this tradition still further and managed to pass the following rules through the Council of Dalon Ap Landu regarding women:

27 January, 1965 (voted)

### *Priestesses*

(a) To delegate to the priests the right to individually consecrate priestesses to any order which they (the priests) may hold.

(b) To allow priestesses to hold the office of Arch-Druid, provided that they have first vigiled and been granted the right to perform the ceremony by the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.

This furthered cemented the entrance privilege of the women "**unto** the Third Order," an Archdruidcy, a Higher Order, or to hold a service. The women could now hold the Arch-Druidcy if they vigiled, but what if they did not want to risk breaking the curfew? Besides, there still was the problem that, even if the women vigiled *and* became Arch-Druid that she couldn't ordain other Third Order people (much less people to the Higher Orders, still mostly a Male preserve), and she couldn't be Arch-Druid without *permission* of the Council. Men didn't need Councilor permission to hold services or to be an Arch-Druid. Frangquist was not yet satisfied and a further vote was taken and passed:

29 March, 1966 (voted by mail) Priestesses

(a) To grant automatically to all priestesses who have conducted a vigil the right to perform the ceremonies of Reformed Druidism.

(b) To allow a priestess, while holding the office of Arch-Druid, to consecrate priests of the Third Order and priestesses unto the Order which she herself holds.

Part (a) again gave women, who actually *vigiled*, the unabashed right to hold any ceremonies (which included 1st, 2nd Ordinations), ordain people to the upper Orders that she holds, and to hold Orders of Worship services. Part (b) makes it clear that the female Arch-Druid need not require special permission of the Council to ordain 3rd Order Druids. Although not really important, there was also the restriction on the number of Higher Orders as said in the DC(R). Despite the vigil, many women were still traditionally called "**unto** the Order," according to custom of the DC(R), and therefore the earlier rules which talk about "priests **of** the Order" could possibly be interpreted as not including them.

So matters stood until 1969, by which time there had already been 5 female priestess admitted "**unto** the Third Order," and one woman to the Archdruidcy of Carleton. The Priestesses and most of the Priests resented the traditional wording "of **unto** the order," rather than "**to** the order," but the tradition was still upheld by a few old fogies. After reading the 1969 Codex of From, Larson suggested a new referendum on the priestess issue, especially to deal with the four verses from Customs. This new call for reform struck a positive chord with many members and Larson (now Arch-Druid of the Berkeley Grove) asked Shelton to draft a new proposal on priestesses.

The completion of the vote took most of the rest of Shelton's Archdruidcy (spring 69 to spring 71). Generally, support was expressed by most of the members. While voting by mail was expected to take time, the real delay was caused by the reservations of a few of the older male Druids and by Shelton's insistence that only the male priests should vote; so that no possible question of the legality of the vote could ever be raised later on. The following was submitted for a vote to the council:

1 May, 1971 (Voted by Mail)

(a) To subordinate all previous resolutions of the Council concerning priestesses to this one.

(b) To allow a priestess who has conducted a vigil and who has been consecrated to the Third Order all prerogatives of the order, including the right to hold the office of Arch-Druid and so to consecrate priests and priestesses to the Third Order. In token of this she is known as a priestess of the Third Order.

(c) To allow a priestess of the Third Order who has been confirmed by the Patriarch of the given order all prerogatives of that order. Again, she is known as a priestess of the given order.

(d) To abolish any restriction other than those applying equally to priests on the number of high orders to which a priestess of the Third Order may be consecrated.

Eventually in 1971, the votes were tabulated.

"The four clauses that carried were finally passed by consensus, and we felt that this was a major step forward in the reform."<sup>148</sup>

By this time, the curfew on women at Carleton had been rescinded, so this no longer posed a problem on women vigiling at Carleton, and dorms were now co-ed by floor. Part (a) ensured that reference to previous resolutions would not be raised in the future. Part (b) reiterated most of the previous resolution's positive points and changed the phraseology of "**unto** the Third Order" into "**of** the Third Order." Part (c) ensured the equal rights of a woman in a Higher Order. Finally, Part (d) removed any limitations on entry into multiple Higher Orders. These four amendments by the Council essentially negated the 4 verses of the DC(R), but it wasn't until the 1976 publication of the Druid Chronicles (Evolved) [known as DC(E)] that those verses were first excised (which incidentally upset many pro-priestess voters).

As Deborah Gavrin Frangquist related, one of the appealing things about the early RDNA was that its leadership was [somewhat] open to women, unlike other protest movements at Carleton. Besides that, the RDNA was attractive to women who liked to see Divinity represented in a female form. While that idea seems relatively old hat to us now, seeing and praising divinity as a Goddess was an exciting, revolutionary concept back then.<sup>149</sup> At that time, few mainstream churches permitted ordination of women. It is therefore relatively puzzling, in afterthought, that there is such a paucity of records left to us on the activities of early priestesses in the RDNA. Perhaps this is due to history's favoring those leaving written records of their conquests. However, priestesses show up and demonstrate the equal verve and vim of their views in the written records in the mid-70s during the Isaac debates. In the future, more oral interviews will have to be done to supplement the historical record of role of women and female priests in the RDNA.



**Figure 9 Etching of a Druid collecting mistletoe. Perhaps Druidism harkens back to our monkey-days?**

# Chapter Four:

## Reformed Druidism

### 1968- 1982

### Choosing Your Waters

Why was definition and exclusion so upsetting to Reformed Druidism? We are brought back again to my second and third essential debates and we're going to examine them now from a "non-Carleton" viewpoint. At Berkeley, Reformed Druidism first left its primarily collegiate base of operations to enter into the general society, where some Druids tried to make it meet the full spectrum of needs that exist in an adult's life.<sup>170</sup> Such "major" issues dealt with by "mainstream" religious groups include: marriage, births, deaths, spiritual maturation rites, and religious instruction of children.

The debates after the period of Shelton and McDavid's Archdruidcy of Carleton (1969-72) become very difficult to understand or even to review appropriately unless you have a basic understanding of Berkeley's protest movements, the religious diversity of the Bay Area of California, and the rise of the Neo-Pagan and Wiccan movements. So we'll begin with some basics, although I would strongly recommend reading *Drawing Down the Moon* by Margot Adler to supplement my cursory presentation of Neo-Pagan and Wiccan beliefs. I do not have the time here to refute all the common myths about Neo-Pagan practices fostered by the Media.<sup>171</sup> The best way to read this section is to generally add "but many disagree and differ" after my statements. Please forgive me the use of "RDNA," "NRDNA" and "SDNA" terms plus the unwarranted use of "Neo-Pagan" as a catch-all term. All four of these terms are very unsatisfactory and are riddled with exceptions, but I must refer to groups using those terms, whose labels often shifted every other year....

### UC Berkeley in the Sixties

The University of California at Berkeley student protest movements received a disproportional amount of media publicity in the early 60s. Berkeley was of equivalent academic caliber to Carleton, but it was a large urban university with an attached graduate school, so that students hung around a lot longer than in Northfield. UC's Board of Regents, administrators, Science and Economic departments were also heavily dependent upon funding from the Defense industry, NASA and Atomic Energy Commission. As a result of this retractable funding and a rather conservative Board of Regents, UC found it exasperating when a small core number of students and/or faculty protesters brought bad publicity to the University. In addition to this, Berkeley city had a great deal of volatile racial tension, despite being the only major school district to voluntarily and peacefully integrate their schools.<sup>172</sup> The result was a lot of heavy-handed, conservative suppression of discussion.

A result of the deceitful practices and unaccommodating attitudes by the Berkeley administration, and certain confrontative activists, led to the wild radicalization of many Berkeley protest movements. Radicalization happens when the other side is unwilling to yield you anything and the middle ground disappears, so you raise your demands to idealistic levels and then exploit the inevitable rejection of the "baser" test case to show to all the undecided moderates how "wrong" and "backwards" the opposing side is about "common" rights and ideals. As a result of seeing an authority in a vilified light, the moderates will join the radicals rather than willy-wallying in the middle of the debate. A

clue to a group becoming radicalized is some catchword resembling the expression "If you ain't for us, you are against us."

As a result of poor communication and intolerance, both sides became increasingly embittered and resolute in refusing mediation. Every earned victory for student or faculty liberties was followed by a new, more bitter battle. But when it came to Vietnam, the issue became too big to be settled on a campus level and it led to permanent widespread dissatisfaction and rebellion amongst students and their local allies. By the mid-60s, the Bay Area had become a magnet for rebellious youths and gurus as a result of the media lime-light on Berkeley.<sup>173</sup> These youths formed a large base for the Bay Area Counter-Culture and new forms of music, thinking and behavior began to flourish, sometimes just to spite the Establishment, but out of these experiments of individualism, several valid new ideas took deep root. Among these experiments, there were forming new ideas about religion.<sup>174</sup>

The dissatisfaction with secular authorities eventually led to disgust with the religious authorities backing them up. Here, to a greater extent than Carleton,<sup>175</sup> was a profound distrust of "anyone over thirty" or who was linked to the Establishment. In the mid 1960s, the first of the groups to later identify themselves as Neo-Pagans were already developing. What had been an intense interest in Astrology, Fraternal societies, Parapsychology, Ceremonial Magick, Kabbalah, Numerology, Zen and Divination understood from a mostly Judeo-Christian background, suddenly changed in the early 1970s when two new terms were introduced: "Neo-Paganism" and "Wicca."<sup>176</sup> I am not an expert in this history, but what is important for this study is that, amongst a small group of people, a lot of the trappings of the Occult scene were dropped along with the Judeo-Christian reference point. Everything was modified towards a new "from-scratch" reconstruction of the beliefs from pre-Christian religions, while often retaining 20th century ideals.<sup>177</sup> Their goal was to avoid the traps of thinking inherent in Western monotheistic culture.

This disorganized "revival" movement was vaguely named in 1972 by many people as Neo-Paganism. Wicca concurrently emerged under the initial leadership of the feminists, pushing a conception of divinity as having feminine (and sometimes masculine) traits. The differences of polytheism vs. duotheism, ancient religions vs. modern sources and terminological differences between Neo-Paganism and Wicca pale before their similarities. Both groups hold a reverence for Nature and a tolerance for other people's understanding of divinity and culture. While Neo-Paganism could be seen as an intellectual and emotional reaction against patriarchy, ecocide and monotheistic "Black and White" thinking, several people soon found Neo-Paganism sufficient, in and of itself, to provide the religious framework for their own lives. Initially, Neo-Pagans tended to focus on a specific ethnic group and its associated pre-Christian religious tenets, although eclecticism was becoming increasingly popular. The ethnic possibilities that quickly come to the Western-trained mind are Egyptian, Nordic/Germanic, Greco-Roman and Celtic. In the 60s/70s, Neo-Pagan groups like Church of Eternal Source, Asatru and Fere/Faerie already existed for the first three groups, but the field for Celtic Neo-Pagan religion was inhabited only by the RDNA and Wicca.<sup>178</sup> Wicca's use of Celtic symbology is dwarfed by the heavy reliance on multiple traditions that are non-Celtic in origin.<sup>179</sup> Therefore, Druidism was "needed" by the Neo-Pagan movement to complete the picture and the semi-public RDNA came in, fully formed, at a very propitious time for filling that void.<sup>180</sup>

### Differences from Early Missions

The early groves of Vermilion and Rapid City S.D., Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan in Wisconsin and New York #1 that had been founded by the Founders (+Frangquist) before 1968 were located at schools and had promptly folded when that Founder left the grove.<sup>181</sup>

The members of those groves tended to be a lot like those of Carleton, mostly disgruntled and rebellious young people of various religious backgrounds without much knowledge



in the Occult or mystical religions. Besides, the RDNA was young and new members were expected to be students who would continue their own faith or find a new one after their experience with Druidism. However, in the groves which were founded after 1967 by Carleton students (which included Purdue, Berkeley, Stanford, Chicago, Ann-Arbor, New York #2 and Princeton) most of the Druids seeking to enter the RDNA were either not currently students and/or possessed an Occult or a strong Counter-Culture background.<sup>182</sup>

In fact, we see in these new groves more examples of a Neo-Pagan trend of drawing members from the SCA,<sup>183</sup> SCI/FI,<sup>184</sup> computer geeks<sup>185</sup>, Folk-dance<sup>186</sup> and role-playing clubs.<sup>187</sup> All of these groups, however, now had contingents of Neo-Pagans and seekers of *alternate* spirituality, who were ready *en masse* to run further with the ball than even the most dedicated Arch-Druid at Carleton's past groves. There was a bit of a generation gap between the mid-west and the west coast at this time. Those types of people were interested in examining alternatives to modern 20th century society and could easily have seen the RDNA as a "revival" of ancient Druidism. It wasn't that skeptical monotheists or atheists weren't still joining, but they were becoming a relative minority compared to the eager Mystics, New-Agers, Neo-Pagans and Wiccans.<sup>188</sup> These new types of people, however, would be probably confused by a "clearly Neo-Pagan" organizational RDNA system and its strange reluctance to call themselves Neo-Pagan (or anything else for that matter).

## The Berkeley Grove

The Berkeley Grove was founded in 1968 by Robert Larson, who remained the ArchDruid from roughly 1968-77, sharing his great interest in early-Irish culture and its pre-Christian paganism with his grove. Larson had left Carleton (un-graduated) in the spring of '65, and had gone to Berkeley to join the Counter-Culture and live in "Hippie-dom." The Berkeley Grove was never associated with the University, because public universities would not allow religious groups to operate, recruit or meet on the campus and Larson never went to school there, but Bonewits did.<sup>189</sup> Larson's room-mate, the first and most energetic disciple was Isaac Bonewits, whose specialty was net-working, ceremonial magick, liturgical design, and what would become Neo-Pagan theology. Between these two men, and several later Druids, the Berkeley Grove found the concentration of talent, complementary Celtic interests and long-term commitments that would be needed to form a more consistent and longer-term RDNA activity than was feasible in Carleton's turbulent 4 year cycle of rotation.

Thus it was that the ideas of the little RDNA club of Carleton for religious and philosophical introspection was supplemented by the second major ideology, reconstructive Neo-Paganism instead of deconstructive Druidism. It wasn't that this idea of looking to the ancient Celts was new to the RDNA, but most of the original Druids of Carleton were busy elsewhere with introspection or the study of the living religions of the world. Perhaps the Carleton students didn't feel the impulse to piece together an old tattered system; which might have been historically as tight-minded and dogmatic, in its own ways, as the mainstream Protestantism that they were trying to escape.

Interviews with Berkeley grove members shows that there were many intolerant religious sects (in addition to very liberal groups) roaming around the Bay Area. While this made Druidism's lesson of ecumenical introspection an even more vital message, it also limited its ability to openly attract refugees from an Intolerance War. Persecution there was a very tangible possibility, so that people may have been a bit leery in joining groups that were vague about their purpose and intent (like the RDNA). Because an RDNA priest is required to minister to those who ask for help,<sup>190</sup> irregardless of their religion, imagine how

frustrating it would be to have to dodge specific theological questions and answer vaguely to label-seeking novitiates!

Indeed, there was a significant difference in age and religious attitudes among the members that generally entered the Berkeley Grove (and later-founded Groves). The Founders of the RDNA had originally intended Druidism to be such a bizarre and jolting concept that it would shake previous conceptions about religions down to their rudimentary bases among rebellious college students and thus lead them to a few years of new introspections. Since most of the Berkeley (and later groves) Druids were older than the average Carleton College student and had entered the RDNA with a Neo-Pagan or Occult background, the validity of drawing valid religious experiences from a variety of ritualistic forms did not seem too unusual or jolting. For Berkeleyites this was already accomplished. They quickly grasped that religious experiences could only be judged by oneself, but now they wanted to emphasize the RDNA's activities to bring individuals of all religious backgrounds into a group to celebrate/worship/study Nature, a group that was non-dogmatic and unpretentious. An excellent way to worship Nature, they thought, would be to follow the customs and stories of a true Nature-worshipping religion (e.g. ancient Celtic Druids) because they would be more finely tuned by centuries of practice.<sup>191</sup> To them, the idea of studying Asian religions through the label Druidism might have seemed a bit bizarre, seeing as how there were already active religious groups practicing Asian religions in the Bay Area that could teach them Asian faiths in a much more "professional way."

## Events Before the Isaac Affair<sup>192</sup>

Isaac Bonewits enters the RDNA debates in 1972 as a powerfully energetic and intellectual person engrossed in the Bay-Area activities.<sup>193</sup> Isaac has some detractors of whom the researcher must be leery of listening to without some cross-checking of their tales with other testimonies. Dan Pierson once described Isaac as having "Negative Charisma" which meant that you couldn't help liking him in person, despite contrary messages from your gut instincts. Isaac was energized by the Neo-Pagan renaissance of 1972 where previously uncommitted Occult or Neo-Christian groups redefined themselves as Neo-Pagan; previously separate and individualistic people were now getting together and doing things. Around the time of the early SCA and Sci-Fi conventions, came the Gnosticon spirituality festival in 1974, after which the Festival movement of Neo-Paganism noticeably blossomed.<sup>194</sup> The result was more frequent and intensive net-working and hybridization between previously unacquainted and isolated groups who now recognized an underlying kinship through Neo-Paganism that transcended barriers of local ritual practices and dogma. We are dealing on a small scale with nation building concepts or "identity politics". The question facing Isaac was who was going to organize the Celtic/Druid facet and "lead" it into Neo-Paganism? Why not himself and his friends? They had a group with plenty of flexibility, humor and history to it, so why not bring in the RDNA to fill this role?

## The Council Revisited

Isaac would have been aware of the poor reception of the Codex of Form, the successful vote on women's equality in Reformed Druidism, and the tinkering theories on voting revision in the Council. Seeing all this activity in the Council may have got him thinking about further possible legal refinements.<sup>195</sup> While most of the elements of the Codex were dropped, one element remained ambiguous, the voting rules for the Council of Dalon Ap Landu. As of 1969, the only official statements pertaining to the Council's voting were:

To declare in perpetuity that the Arch-Druid of Carleton shall be the Chairman  
Ex-officio of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.<sup>196</sup> To reserve to all  
the priests, collectively in the Council of  
Dalon Ap Landu, the highest authority of the  
Reformed Druids of North America.<sup>197</sup>

Whereas all the previous Council votes had been pursued until they reached a consensus of all the members who had chosen to vote, this was only a *tradition*, not a *rule*. When Shelton's voting proposal was made, he was looking for unanimous positive votes with replies from a majority of the known members; with an unspoken hope that no negative votes would be cast. Clarification: if there were 23 Third Orders, at least 12 positive votes would have to be cast (and none against) for a bill to pass. It was assumed that all attempts at contacting members would have been made. When that proposal on voting failed to receive a majority *response* of unanimous affirmation after being on the floor for two years, it was withdrawn in June 1972 by McDavid. The last measure to pass the Council (the Priestess vote of 1971) was passed by unanimity of the votes cast (after much cajoling of some patriarchal objectors) with a majority of potential voters participating. Therefore, it appeared to be a sturdy tradition of unanimity is required for a proposal to be approved by the Council and it having been voted upon by at least half the members.

Following the unanimous passage of the proposal giving female priests unequivocal equal treatment and ranking as their male counterparts in 1971, the Council records show a 2 year gap (June 1972 to July 1974) in Council activity and proposals. The ensuing silence during the reigns of the three succeeding busy Carleton ArchDruids gave the Carleton Grove (and it's Chair of the Council) the understandable appearance of having died off,<sup>198</sup> which (according to Berkeley's knowledge) would have only left Larson's Berkeley grove and Isaac's Twin Cities grove. The truth was that the Carleton graduates just couldn't think of another proposal that wouldn't prove divisive and there had never been much "Council-wide" correspondence before, just friendly letters between individual friends. Or as McDavid put it in 1972:

"I do not see any issues concerning the Council as a whole, and apparently no one else does."<sup>199</sup>

But importantly from Isaac's goals of forming a stable Druid organization, Carleton's ArchDruids were neglecting to send out the required "State of the Groves" letters upon their retirement, showing obvious irresponsibility in what appeared to be the duties of the "national" headquarters of the RDNA. What if an issue did come up that needed an official OK from the Council? With no active Chair of the Council, how could the Council be convened and the votes counted and declared?

## The Isaac Affair Begins<sup>200</sup>

Isaac Bonewits realized that the RDNA would be a very appealing organization, especially for Celtic enthusiasts, in a predicted upcoming flood of interest. Bonewits saw a need to transform the Carleton Druids from a "Meso-Pagan" stage of evolution towards the "Neo-Pagan" age, just like other groups had already done.<sup>201</sup> More than that, Isaac wished to *define* the ideas, organization and documents of the RDNA into concise, "marketable" products. To test the waters for his rather complicated agenda, Isaac sent out a proposal on July 18th 1974 to the Carleton ArchDruid to distribute to the Council members for an immediate vote. I recommend reading the full text of Isaac's letters in the Apocrypha, which I will make many references. The tone, haste, assumptions and verbiage of the letters by the young Isaac helps to explain the resulting animosity, misunderstanding, confusion and hostility that was engendered towards Isaac amongst many Carleton and non-Carleton Druids.

In hindsight, the letters can be seen as Isaac's way of explaining himself before doing something new on his own. But to the Reformed Druids, it was a bolt out of the blue and looked like an aggressive reformation attempt.

This letter proved to be a set-back for Isaac's public relations with many of the Druids on the Council in Shelton's block. This letter put about 20 minor changes or statements of doctrine to be debated and voted upon between July 18th and September 15th, with a *majority* vote to decide the matter or else a schism would take place!<sup>202</sup> This was seen as break-neck speed, since the vote on the equality of female priests alone had taken two whole years of debate to reach the traditional *consensus*, and that decision merely affirmed a standing tradition! A few of Isaac's later letters better defined his terms and intentions, but they did little to abate the fact that such proposals would hastily lead the RDNA in the direction towards greater formalization and organization (especially above and beyond the Grove level). In other words, the changes would result in a completely different organization, much like the eventual form of the ADF.

## Inclusivity and Exclusivity

Now the RDNA has always prided itself about being potentially compatible with any religion (or lack of religion), but Neo-Paganism could not make the same claim in the early 70s. In its youth, Neo-Paganism generally saw monotheism (or rather, Judeo/Christian/Islam) as being patriarchal and anti-Nature and therefore not compatible with itself.<sup>203</sup> Their position has mellowed out over the years, as exceptions were noted here-and-there, but during the Isaac debates the Carleton Faction definitely saw this attitude being expressed by Isaac. Now if Isaac had solely described Neo-Paganism as:

"Neo-Paganism sees divinity manifest in all the processes of nature. According to this view, Neo-Paganism is a constantly evolving philosophy that views humanity as a 'functional organ within the greater organism of all Life'<sup>204</sup> there wouldn't have been *too much objection*. But instead many Druids were getting their primary definition of Neo-Paganism from Isaac as: [Neo-Paganism includes] "polytheistic (or conditional monotheistic) nature religions that are based upon the older or Paleo-pagan religions; concentrating upon an attempt to retain the humanistic, ecological and creative aspects of these old belief systems while discarding their occasional brutal or repressive developments, which are inappropriate."<sup>205</sup> [and] "Let us begin by admitting that we are a religion and describe ourselves to each other and the outside world roughly as follows:

The RDNA is an Eclectic, Reconstructive, Neo-Pagan Priestcraft, based primarily upon Gaulish and Celtic sources but open to idea, deities and rituals from many other Neo-Pagan belief systems...."

"We are willing to interact philosophically and ritually with members of all other belief systems that are compatible with our own approach and Nature."<sup>206</sup>

While mostly the same description as that of the earlier definition, Isaac's version appeared to have an implicit dislike for monotheism and was concerned with organizational politics. For many, "the main problem [with Isaac's definition] was that it was becoming exclusive, even in implication."<sup>207</sup> Such a firm alliance with any group (such as Neo-Paganism) could have been seen as an alliance against another group(s).

Despite Isaac's claim that the RDNA members from Carleton were against Neo-Paganism, most members were actually more anxious about Isaac's manner, and there was a difference between the two. They were very unsure of Isaac's intentions, or as one put it:

"The cardinal rule of the Third Order was always keep everybody guessing. Isaac picked up on it in spades. We never did really know what Isaac was up to."<sup>208</sup>

But, many finally understood that this far-away and strange Neo-pagan movement wasn't some kind of "evil cult" and then affirmed Isaac's **personal path** of Druidism,<sup>209</sup> but firmly stated that Reformed Druidism was not synonymous to them with Neo-Paganism. To some, it was as restrictive on Druidism to describe the RDNA as Neo-Paganism, as it would have been to call it Taoism, Neo-Shinto or Mystical Christianity.

"Dick [Shelton] replied that while Neo-Paganism was *compatible* with the Basic Tenets, it was not *required* by them. He also said that he opposed all the attempts to *impose* such a doctrine on the Reform. I maintained this policy during my term as Arch-Druid."<sup>210</sup> (emphasis mine) "Let us in particular not represent our private paths as Reformed Druidism."<sup>211</sup>

Others expressed hesitancy also.<sup>212</sup> Even Larson, from Berkeley, was opposed to calling the RDNA a Neo-Pagan religion.

"Rather than supplying a set theology, mythos, ethos, or whatever, Druidism supplies a basis from which each individual Druid defines his own mythos, ethos, etc.

"Rather than looking upon Druidism as a religion or a philosophy, let us look upon it as a way to achieve or augment a religion or philosophy.

I am opposed to Isaac's attempted redefinition of Druidism as "pagan,"...[and] I consider such a definition as over-restrictive for Reformed Druidism as a whole. For individual druids and groves, however, it's a different matter."<sup>213</sup>

Some people will always dislike the accumulated baggage for the term "Pagan," irregardless of whether Paganism is good or bad, and efforts to "reclaim" the work. So, using it in your definition may frighten off a lot of foolish people.<sup>214</sup> These are the very people who need to feel free to join and shed their fearful definitions. The problem with the name "Neo-Pagan" has led to many long defenses by Neo-Pagans against all sorts of misconceptions by "outsiders." Their frustration has reached the point where many Neo-Pagan groups have chosen to refer to themselves as "the Old Way" or other similar terms that are less laden with divisive meanings. Reformed Druidism was special in that it claimed it was separate from, but applicable to, all other religions; although some faiths were more difficult to accommodate. The RDNA had been attractive as an organization because it was not inclined to make any such divisive conclusions, definitions, affiliations, alliances, or blanket statements:

"We had also done something rather wise, early on, and I don't know whether it was Fisher or consensus. Druidism was compatible with any other religion, even if other religions denied that."<sup>215</sup> "As Druids,

however, we can only affirm a mutual desire to ask ourselves questions about the meaning of life, and about the degree to which religious truth can be truth for us."<sup>216</sup>

Some Druids, both from Carleton and in California, felt that this "definition-making" was an attempt by Isaac to discourage certain members in the group from staying, because Reformed Druidism would then *only* be for Neo-Pagans.

**Mike:** Were the members [of Berkeley] ever before [circa 1976] required to renounce their previous religion?

**Stefan:** Never! Never! That's bullshit! The whole philosophy here was: "Be what you want to be." But, when you were in circle,<sup>217</sup> you were a Druid. That was the philosophy here. You could be any other religion, but when you were here, you were a Druid. Period. That's the way it should be."<sup>218</sup>

"**Stefan:** One of my roommates became a Jes-oid,<sup>219</sup> but we were perfectly willing to accept him for what he was... forced out by Isaac... Roman Catholics.. Jews... As I understood it, in Reformed Druidism, everybody was accepted"<sup>220</sup>

Thus, even a "Jes-oid" could have found acceptance in Reformed Druidism of the early Berkeley RDNA. Unfortunately, once the existence of Neo-Paganism became widely known, people would probably naturally assume that the RDNA was not open to monotheists or atheists. That has proven to have been one of the sad after-effects for many Carleton RDNA, because, ever since the rise of Neo-Paganism, Druidism couldn't easily claim to be unlike anything you've ever seen before. It became very easy for outsiders to pigeon-hole it as Neo-Paganism.

"The near-universal association of Druidism and Neo-Paganism has kept me out of public Druidic life for nearly 20 years (Isaac lost the battle but he won the war)."<sup>221</sup>

## Emphasis on Celtic Elements:

It is interesting to note that the Neo-Pagan enthusiasm for drawing inspiration from Ancient Celtic religion occurred at precisely the same time as many of the present definitive books on Ancient Druidism were published. In fact, since 1966, a veritable flood of good research has been published on ancient Celtic societies, drawing upon a multi-disciplinary review of available data. I suspect that if the Founders had started with the foresight of post 1974 events, they might have chosen a different name for the group than "Druids."

Due to an understandable mistake, Isaac had assumed that the other RDNA groves had been as interested in Celtic religion as his Twin Cities Grove or the Berkeley Grove. After all, Larson's specialty was paleo-Irish studies, he came from Carleton and Celticity is what Larson had explored with the Berkeley group. The tradition of exploring modern religions was never heavily explored in Berkeley, although the policy of allowing anyone of any religion to join did exist. Isaac just couldn't understand how these people from Carleton could invoke the names of Celtic gods and not consider that they were actually dealing with what were, to him and his friends, real deities. Despite all the Celtic surface trappings, the Berkeley Grove was not culturally restrictive, and many members explored various faiths and ideas through Reformed Druidism under Larson's laissez-faire Archdruidcy.

## Emphasis Upon Ritual

Occultists and Neo-Pagans, even more so than the practitioners of most mainstream religions, believe rituals and prayers can affect reality. The form and contents of ritual in many occult and Neo-Pagan groups can take upon themselves an overwhelming importance.<sup>222</sup> Perhaps, they needed to do something to keep busy? If you feel that the way a liturgy is performed affects the mental state of the congregation, then liturgical experimentation might prove beneficial to the search for truth. This is perhaps one aspect in which the older Druids didn't experiment too much, but they never objected to it. If one of the goals of the search for religious truth is to thereby improve or change the world, then the improvement of your methods of attainment of truth is a valid exercise.

But Reformed Druid ritual wasn't just about getting things done, it was also about being together in an enjoyable way. It is pertinent to state that even the Carleton RDNA had its share of magic-working or special rituals going on from the foundation of the RDNA up to 1980. There were weather-workings, the "Druid curse," divinations, an incident of speaking in tongues and prophesy, "exorcisms" of the spirit of war, consecrations of altars, prayers, marriages, "Druidings," and occasional blessings.<sup>223</sup> But many of these were done from an understanding of the power of one's faith being the source of power or as an innocent experiment with their "tongues firmly planted in their cheeks." The older Carleton Druids, despite their dabbling in magick (especially weather working), did not see group ritual as having much purpose in and of itself for Druidism. Ritual was more incidental in some ways.

"Cannot men seek for answers without the crutch of ritual which has no religious purpose? I can only answer that ritual has a value because it can be used by different men in different ways." "For one man, the sacrifice of life<sup>224</sup> is the offering of himself to a god or gods. To another it is offering up of his mind to a search for truth."<sup>225</sup>

Frangquist reminds us of the dangers of ritual indulgence:

"But we have also recognized that ritual is most often a hindrance; and to eliminate it is simply to encourage non-ritual to become the ritual. Rather, as Druids, we have endeavored to build a ritual which will be the destroyer of its own importance."<sup>226</sup>

Ritual flow and directing of magickal energy was important for Occultists since they believe it can significantly change reality, just like prayers in Christianity, and not just changing themselves. However, explaining this whole ritual process is an art and science that no two Occultists ever could entirely *define* in the same way. Reformed Druidism never sought to justify what was in its ritual, because the **content** of the Order of Worship was never fully finalized. Neo-Pagan and Druid experimentation had been always tacitly encouraged within undisclosed limits.

## The Use of the Council

Isaac's other big gripe was that the Council was "inactive" and should be constantly debating to keep their Druidism "in shape." The state of meditation and introspection is not always an easy state to enter. For some, it requires self-discipline or asceticism, for others seeing a mere falling leaf or a chance conversation may catapult them into the mysteries of the multi-verse. Druidism is a "never ending search" for religious truth, but that does not mean that Druidism is a "never-resting search." A lag here or there in the correspondence may be part of a greater

rhythm of rise-and-fall. For those who have difficulty in exploring Druidism alone, the presence of others in conversation may light-up new avenues of inspection. While at College, one is already in a continual state of constant challenge over the validity of truths, but such a state is much harder to maintain in the loneliness after graduation. I suspect that this search for continued Druidic siblinghood after college is one of the main motivators for the missionary efforts of the Carleton RDNA. Unfortunately for many missionaries, something seemed to have been missing in the new groves, some mysterious Carleton flavor. Many found that they spent more time explaining what Druidism *was not*, rather than being able to explore Druidism. I suspect that the Council's true business up to 1974 was much more oriented towards this lonely communication of observations between far-spread Druids than as a forum for the debate of referendums.

A great concern, that never left many RDNA members, was that Isaac would ordain so many Third Order priests who would be unconcerned with the original purpose of *unconditional* tolerance and unanimity that the Council (or a pseudo-Council) would become "functional." Once functional, such a Council could pass legislation or officially advocate actions that, by claiming to be believed by all members (although decided only by a majority), would alienate many former members into sadly abandoning any formal connection with the RDNA. It was okay for a single member to expand their own views, but it was not kind to force their conclusions upon the Council or even their own grove. Frangquist, long ago, had come to the conclusion that:

"religion is essentially a question of personal conviction. This is the reason for the failure of the student negotiation committees. Committees may provide help in solving political problems, but not in religious problems. The committees have tried to deal in logical arguments; religion deals in faith."<sup>227</sup>

For some, Reformed Druidism had quickly become an intensely private and personal search, so much so that they had dropped from participation in Groves, after the annual diaspora of graduation. These Druids did not take kindly to the assumption that their search had to be open to the examination of others through constant correspondence in order to be valid. Nor did they like the idea that Druids participating in Groves were more "active" than solitary contemplative Druids. The search for truth could also be helped by private conversations with non-Druids. One may well wonder if the mere act of living was true Druidism in action. Therefore the attempt to bolster the identity of Reformed Druidism by increasing the required participation in the Council met with such reactions:

"Communication is a convenience and proselytization is an option, but if I choose to develop quietly by introspection and to write privately to my friends, I am as much an active Druid- and, I believe, contribute as much to the Reform- as if I broadcast my views to the entire Council of Dalon Ap Landu."<sup>228</sup>

Isaac also feared that the Carleton ArchDruid, as chair of the Council of Dalon ap Landu, was not stable enough for keeping Reformed Druidism alive as an organization. In this attitude, he was again missing the point. The high turn-over rate at Carleton was considered to be a boon to their organizational nexus; it essentially prevented Druidism from ever being secure enough in its footing that it could be bureaucratic or imperialistic. Shelton, who had six years earlier attempted the same defining and stream-lining process with the Codex, was now wisely trying to caution and slow-down Isaac:

"If you would seek to save Druidism, you will lose it; but if you seek the Mother and what she can teach you, Druidism will grow, prosper to her joy and to your great benefit."<sup>229</sup>

## Evangelism and Missionary Activity

Perhaps another thing about Isaac that worried many Reformed Druids, especially from Carleton, was Isaac's insistence on speedy growth, recruitment and swapping priestly ordinations with Neo-Pagans of other traditions. Before 1976, new groves generally only appeared when a Third Order Druid had to leave a pre-existing grove and move to a new area for a while. While recruitment was an understandable necessity to build and maintain a grove around oneself, the desire to plant and fill up new groves for their own purpose, that was a bit more unusual. Usually, a priest would only ordain a person to the Third Order when that person had been with them for awhile (perhaps a year). Isaac was suggesting that roving Missionary Druids should begin ordaining priests and priestess from other Neo-Pagan religions (with little to no background in Reformed Druidism) into the Third Order so that a few missionaries could seed lots of new groves. This driving interest in the Third Order disturbed many of the older Druids. A concern with evangelism was a concern with evangelism. A few members were puzzled and asked themselves questions like; is he motivated by a fear of a second "burning times" decimating the ranks, eagerness to share an interesting outlook, or a desire to take over the council? To them, the preservation or expansion of the priesthood of the Third Order was not to be taken so seriously. By emphasizing the Third Order, one may forget about the equality, regardless of their order, amongst all Reformed Druids.

While Reformed Druids often pride themselves that there are few lessons to learn when teaching Reformed Druidism, most will realize that there are often many lessons that one has to un-learn; simplicity often being a hard concept for new-comers to understand. If nothing else, the sense of urgency (possibly because of Isaac's concern to promote eco-awareness) in Isaac's letters seemed just a little bit too manic for the slower, more contemplative Druids.

## Over-Emphasizing These Debates

The real lasting achievement of the Isaac Affair was to generate a great deal of worry *and* introspection among members of the Council. They were waken from a lethargic contentment by the constant goosing of Isaac and Larson.

"From my communications with Isaac, it would seem that he has stirred up a minor hornet's nest with his proposals. Good. That was the intent. Now that he has you thinking about the RDNA as more than a quaint club and has you concerned (or so I hope) about its future, perhaps something can be accomplished."<sup>230</sup>

In this way, the Druids are ironically in debt to Isaac because, for many, they too had been unaware of how much of what they believed to be Druidism was **also** beyond the Basic Tenets. Everything one brings to Druidism necessarily goes beyond the beliefs required by the Basic Tenets. In this way, both sides realized the pomposity they each had been nurturing from being out on contact with other Druids.

Rather than dwelling anymore upon the two fascinating years of retorts and recriminations, or providing a running commentary of one-on-one debates,<sup>231</sup> I'll leave that to your study, and I'll return to my history and put the debates into a larger context of the history of Reformed Druidism among the branches

in the late 70s. I should mention here to future historians that many of the things said in those two years were out of justifiable shock, confusion and ignorance, but were often patched up by unofficial and unrecorded communications between the Druids of the many factions. In fact, once they had overcome the common misconception that Neo-Pagan Druidism had to be anti-monotheistic (i.e. rejecting the validity of some paths of religions) most Carleton members finally had accepted Isaac's Neo-Paganism as a good thing for him and others.

In fact, it has been very easy and pleasantly diverting for a researcher to become over-absorbed in these written debates and feel that Isaac spoke for-and-of the greatest concerns of all the NRDNA and SDNA people. If anything, the Isaac debates brought a clearer understanding of what Reformed Druidism was not to many people. However, in reality, some of the NRDNA and SDNA Druids had many of the same disagreements as the Carleton RDNA with many of Isaac's plans and politics.<sup>232</sup> These conflicts in California increased until 1981 or 1982 when Isaac finally left Reformed Druidism to work on a fresh start with the organization "Ár nDraíocht Féin." Therefore let us widen the perspective to relate the diversity that was the NRDNA and SDNA.

The After-Math of the Initial Isaac Wars: As Bradley related to me, there were far too many independent-minded Druids in the RDNA and New RDNA traditional camps by the 1970s for Isaac or anyone else to tighten the Reformed Druid organization and its definitional identity without excluding large numbers of the current members. The results were therefore predictable; a majority of the replies from Council members disagreed with Isaac's program; some favored better communication channels while remaining "unorganized" and loyal to the Council and a few Council members followed Isaac into a full schism.<sup>233</sup> The three branches of Reformed Druidism then came into name based on these perceptions at this point: respectively the RDNA, the New RDNA and the third group became the Schismatic Druids of North America. The SDNA was to break many of the formal ties with the Council's authority, so as to determine its own national rules, but still retaining the Reformed Druid apostolic succession and basic hierarchical pattern and scriptures. The schism was perhaps a wise move by Isaac, because an attempt to "defrock" the earlier members would have just stirred up more animosity and wasted more time and energy from his mission. It was much simpler for Isaac to form a new smaller subset within the expansiveness of Reformed Druidism and then to experiment with new forms of organization.

## New Reformed Druids of North America

Now the initial ArchDruids of the early NRDNA groves were, surprise!, past Carleton students: Larson of Berkeley, Savitzky/Uggla of Stanford and McDavid/Bradley of Chicago.<sup>234</sup> The early NRDNA, in association with the SDNA and HDNA,<sup>235</sup> felt that an *official* Provisional Council of ArchDruids (PCoA) was necessary to discuss new issues and release "steam" to prevent any future explosion of built-up tensions that could result from the Druidic vice of infrequent-communication. It would also allow an exchange of religious insights to the benefit of all and take over the duty of the Chair of the Council in case the Carleton Grove should fail.

The RDNA Groves of Ann Arbor, New York #2, and Carleton were deeply suspicious of the PCoA<sup>236</sup> and would much rather have had an *unofficial* PCoA,<sup>237</sup> which would have been more in spirit with the anti-organizational streak of Reformed Druidism. They also disagreed with the idea that Arch-Druids could vote on issues that affected their groves, without allowing the grove to affect such a vote. Understandably, because of the PCoA's composition of mostly ex-Carleton students, there was a PCoA decision that stated:

"That no Reformed Druid should speak for the beliefs or nonbeliefs of all Reformed Druids, save to mention the Basic Tenets outlined in The Book of the Law, and that members of each Branch of the Reform should speak only for themselves."<sup>238</sup>

After that statement, the PCoA mostly talked about three issues: the method and contents of printing of the Druid Chronicles (Evolved), keeping a second record of Grove statistics in case Carleton went 'dormant' again (which was not infrequent), and to forward the voting proposals and other statements of theology to the Council for an official vote.<sup>239</sup> It is important to note that these three issues were never voted upon by the Council due to a forgetful error to mail the ballots, they did show the rather limited agenda of the PCoA.<sup>240</sup> Even getting the Arch-Druids, usually the most "responsible" Druids, to communicate with each other was proving to be difficult. The end-result was that Druids everywhere firmly understood their independence and went on ahead with their own local grove projects without asking for the Council's permission anymore, just like I believe the

Founders would have hoped. The communicative aspect of the defunct PCoA was performed later by the publication of the Druid Chronicler newsletter.

## Schismatic Druids of North America

The SDNA was the embodiment of Isaac's reforms and its headquarters were generally centered upon whatever grove of which Isaac was ArchDruid (which then became called the "Mother Grove"). In an unprecedented flurry of activity over the six years after the Letter, Isaac had ordained over 15 Third Order Druids across the country, all "officially" therefore SDNA. The touchiest point for the SDNA was the stipulation that only self-avowed Neo-Pagans would be ordained to their Third Order and fill their liturgical offices. Isaac wanted to ensure that no more Neo-Christians, Unitarians and Taoists would clutter up further the Neo-Pagan definitional and organizational experimentation of the SDNA. Strangely, many of those that he ordained refused to follow this SDNA practice.<sup>241</sup>

Here we come up again with the difficulty of a single individual keeping updated address lists of the Council and coordinating activities. The Carleton Druids and those from the early graduate school groves were easy to locate through the College's alumni offices. It was much more difficult for Isaac to keep track of the many people he had ordained because they were not tied to a central tracking institution (unless you count Isaac himself) and they often neglected to keep him informed of address changes. Add to this the Neo-Pagan and Reformed Druid tendency to belong concurrently to several religious organizations that may take precedent, and you'll see that Isaac was slowly learning a valuable lesson: Neo-Pagans and Reformed Druids are often rather ungovernable people upon which to build complicated, national organizations; much like trying to herd cats. Moreover, it was certainly taking a lot of time and money on his part to keep a firm national group identity going. Currently, authorities with pro-organizational prejudices will often give more credence to a group than to an individual when protesting or defending religious rights. Isaac wanted that kind of mainstream recognition for Neo-Paganistic Druidism. and to achieve this there were necessary activities for Druidism, such as hiring paid clergy, showing more external structure and playing other games of bureaucracy.

Isaac describes his difficulty in dealing with other Neo-Pagans by a theory called "The Ten Year Gap."<sup>242</sup> Like an Old Testament prophet, Isaac was residing on the cutting edge of the intellectual debates, far ahead of the general crowd. Many of the current issues about centralization, standardized definitions, paid clergy, membership fees, proselytizing, day-care, legal defense, seminary training, clergy evaluation and legal "church" status were being broached by Isaac and a few others in the early 70s, about ten years before they become acceptable issues for debate amongst the general Neo-Pagan community. It is like Noah's warning being ignored and scorned until the rain starts falling; only then were the previous insults retracted by his enemies and old wounds became healed, if ever. The traditional Carleton reaction to this formalization might have been; let your other religious group-affiliation(s) take care of those issues and keep your Reformed Druidism simple and free.

Title-Happy Druids An important fact for the researcher to realize is that most Reformed Druid groves were playing fast-and-loose with those three major definitional titles and were constantly changing "sides" and even gleefully making up new branches like "Orthodox DNA," "Humanistic DNA," "Hasidic DNA," "Zen Hilaric DNA," "Norse DNA" or even returning back to RDNA to describe each grove's individual bent. In September 1978, even Isaac was so uncertain as to what the differences were between these many titles, that he chose to limit them to "RDNA" for groves that were not composed primarily of Neo-Pagans and NRDNA for groves that were primarily composed of Neo-Pagans (including the SDNA).<sup>243</sup> Even this labeling proved unsatisfactory to some Druids who weren't sure they were Neo-Pagan, Wiccan, Humanist, etc.

## Disagreement from NRDNA and SDNA

While every NRDNA and SDNA Druid seemed to disagree with Isaac on many issues, it is only fair to say that they also disagreed with every other NRDNA and SDNA Druid on a number of issues. Isaac, for his all his faults, was a respected mover and shaker in the west coast branch of Druidism. Remember the Golden Rule that "disagreement among Reformed Druids is the general reality and that agreements are the unusual exceptions." In a way, the illusionary unity of the Carleton Faction was merely a consensus of agreement that future agreements on such issues was impossible so don't bother trying to pass those new proposals. But, that doesn't mean they didn't enjoy a good debate.

Isaac's prominence in most of the debates was a result of his tendency to stick his neck out and play the "devil's advocate" just to ruffle another Druid's feathers<sup>244</sup> and thereby have a really good all-out debate. Knowing and writing to so many people, Isaac ruffled a lot of people's feathers. Unfortunately, although Isaac was not especially good at apologizing, neither were any of the other Druids.

As with the study of any Neo-Pagan group, one must remember that the prominence of the squabbles over power often hide the underlying agreements. The primary effect of the infighting politics of the 70s in Reformed Druidism was to "burn-out" the Arch-Druids and thereby weaken local grove stability. In hindsight, there also appears to be a natural rise and fall of Groves. Groves usually faltered when the close friends at the core of the grove had to move somewhere else or couldn't meet on a weekly or even other-weekly schedule. Groves started up when an Arch-Druid had regained the financial stability to host rituals and parties for their friends.<sup>245</sup> The vast majority of Druids, who were not of the Third Order, found the politics of organizational hierarchy to be a little annoying and distracting from the joy of celebrating the natural rhythms of the seasons and life's cycles.<sup>246</sup> For many, regardless of the battles over national organization, life in the grove went on as usual as the grove continued to investigate and explore the paths of Truth. With that quick reminder, let's first talk about some of the achievements the NRDNA and SDNA did together.

## Druid Chronicles (Evolved)<sup>247</sup>

Most conflicts with Isaac were a result of his trying to stabilize some of the groups' vague self-definitions, which to many were the essence, fluidity and fortitude of Reformed Druidism. Now looking back, Isaac's earlier proposals could be seen as a great deal of noise and commotion to show where he was headed with his own brand of Druidism and to invite others of like mind to make the jump and to go with him. It was reasonable for Isaac to have stayed around for a few years trying to give the RDNA and NRDNA that last push to bring it to a

possible *evolutionary* progression. Unfortunately for Isaac, most Neo-Pagans were still very anarchic and liberty-intoxicated in the mid 70s. More members would have likely joined from Carleton if they had truly been more interested in Celtic religion and less oriented towards Asian and Christian religions. It is good to bear in mind that Neo-Paganism was (and still is) but a very tiny collection of religious systems with the amazing diversity of religious choices in America. As for the Neo-Pagans who disagreed with him, Isaac had to wait for the "Ten Year Gap" to close between his views and those of Neo-Pagans.

In the meantime, Isaac's industriousness contributed a very powerful anchor (or should I say noose?) of stability<sup>248</sup> to the RDNA and NRDNA movements through his efforts to collect the early "scriptures," essays, historical trivia and reference lists considered reflective or important to the many branches of Reformed Druidism. The Carleton Druids were at first a bit suspicious that Isaac was going to become a "Druid Fundamentalist" and turn the original writings into inflexible canons of indoctrination. Rather than chancing this by leaving him alone, the Carleton Druids worked very closely with Isaac to keep the facts straight (especially about the RDNA's original purposes). One objection was in the name "Druid Chronicles (Evolved)" with the implication of "Evolved" being an improvement over an older form.<sup>249</sup> They also feared that the history of Reformed Druidism would be forever filtered and interpreted through Isaac's writings ("To the victor goes the history books"), a fear that has proved to be not without grounds. This is something I've come to notice after my own efforts producing ARDA.

To their general relief, The *Druid Chronicles (Evolved)* was published with reasonable disclaimers of any "divine inspiration" or application to the original branch of the Reform, but the evolutionary bias towards Celtic paganism remained a sore point with the Carleton RDNA faction. But for the later NRDNA and SDNA, the DC(E) became their own compact version of the Carleton Archives (to which they had never had access). Very compact and densely crammed with facts, trivia and liturgies, DC(E) has proved an invaluable reference source for many of the surviving NRDNA groves. It also proved crucial in the revival of Carleton Druidism in 1986, when the Carleton Druid Archives had been misplaced. In fact, with that book there was hardly any more danger of a grove losing its roots from isolation, as long as they didn't take the book too seriously.

## Druid Chronicler (DCr) and Pentalpha

Not to be confused with the *Druid Chronicles (Reformed or Evolved)*, the *Druid Chronicler*<sup>250</sup> newsletter replaced the Berkeley Grove newsletter from 1977 to 1981, and continued many of the coordinating efforts of the short-lived PCoA. Under several different editors and networkers, the DCr maintained up-to-date addresses of ArchDruids and spread news on their grove's activities to each other. DCr also printed new additions to liturgies and announced new members of the Council of Dalon ap Landu, and later its subset, the Coalition Council of Dalon ap Landu (CoCoDal). I also believe that these issues were meant to be inserted into the *Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*, in order to keep DC(E) up-to-date and useful as a personal reference tool in the various branches. DCr was run by Joan Carruth, in Isaac's absences from the Berkeley Grove, from 1979-81, just as competently from all appearances. Isaac was on sabbatical during this period experimenting with a group called Pentalpha.

Pentalpha was the nickname of the Association for the Advancement of Aquarian Age Awareness. It was devised kind of life an umbrella organization for Neo-pagan organizations, although a large portion of its journal's subscribers and submitters were from the Druids. It also acted partly as an eclectic literary forum, to direct funds towards legal cases, and to explore the procedures for establishing the bare framework for making legal

churches. A few divorces, relocations and finances eventually doomed the prolific project, but the lessons that Isaac and his small cadre of members learned, would benefit them greatly when ADF was being founded a few years later. Indeed, as we'll see, the lessons they learned were not easily transferred back into the Berkeley grove.

## Drawing Down the Moon

When Margot Adler's book, *Drawing Down the Moon*, came out in 1978, it caused quite a stir in the Neo-Pagan community. It is considered a historical landmark in the literature of the movement. Here was a finely written attempt to cover the wide spectrum of ideas and groups at a time when most encyclopedists were not yet listing them. For the Reformed Druids, it would forever enshrine the RDNA as the most known path "Celtic" path, but also put in the Play and Paradox chapter along with the Discordians, as a religion that espoused wry humor and *joy de vivre*. Naturally, the 1986 Edition focused more on the growth of ADF. Although Isaac's prominence in the Neo-pagan movement was never in question, but for this book, it is doubtful the RDNA would have been more than a footnote in the movement. However, after this publication, despite the flattering publicity, the movement began to experience a decline of membership and grove numbers. It is still probably the most widespread introduction to the RDNA in the general populace.

## The Eclipse of Carleton: 1978-1984<sup>251</sup>

It's important to note here, before continuing the analysis of the NRDNA vs. SDNA conflicts, that the early NRDNA groves led by the Arch-Druids from Carleton had all collapsed or were dropping out of the picture by 1978. The groves of Ann-Arbor and New York #2 had been abandoned by their founders, as somehow lacking that Carleton flavor. Larson left the Berkeley Grove while he was working with an Irish Entertainment group called "Clann Na Brocheta." In retrospect, Larson mused that if he had stayed around, he may have been able to smooth down some of the later problems. However, he also noted that it was time for him to explore other outlets, allow Joan more elbow room, and let the grove try out new slants. The ArchDruids of Stanford and Chicago experienced financial crises, core members moving away and personal difficulties that made a grove too much of a trouble to maintain. Eventually the SDNA Third Orders became the leaders of groves bearing the title NRDNA. So it came to be that the early NRDNA disappeared to be replaced by a mostly (but not exclusively) neo-pagan organization also called the NRDNA between the years 1977 and 1979.

The Carleton Grove experienced a lack of enthusiastic recruitment after Morrison's strong Archdruidcy in 1976. The eclipse of Carleton Druidism in Grove form was partly a result of "burn-out" by those Carleton alumni who felt that Carleton's independence from "outside" control was pretty much established and also that the Carleton grove should now control its own destiny. I also suspect that Druidism had long since stopped being the only liberal religious outlet at Carleton. During the 70s, a stronger Unitarian presence developed, the Catholic and Protestant churches mellowed, and drug-induced mysticism had increased. Between 1980-2 there were no Third Order priests present on the campus, just a few bewildered 1st and 2nd orders who didn't know what to do.

## The Political Storm-Clouds gather in California (1978-1982)

It is worth reminding you that the initial anti-monotheism of Neo-Paganism of the early 70s never prevented non-Pagans from participating or (potentially) leading an NRDNA grove, except possibly in Isaac's grove or the Hassidic DNA of St. Louis. It's

also worth mentioning again that many in the NRDNA groves were a long ways from solely relying upon Celtic sources.<sup>252</sup> Isaac had many other complaints, primarily organizational and they will be dealt with in the next Chapter of the Epistle.

What seemed on paper to be a rather thriving Druid community was already changing in 1979, a time when Isaac Bonewits left on a two year sabbatical and left Joan and Stefan in charge of the Mother Grove (which they quickly renamed the Berkeley grove again). The late 70's and early 80's was a time when inflation was hurting everybody's budget and most of the groves in California's later NRDNA and SDNA folded soon between 1979 and 1982. The Twin City Acorn Grove, St. Louis Arch Grove (HDNA), San Diego Tuatha Grove and Clan na Brocheta groves had already collapsed, within four years of their founding.<sup>253</sup> As mentioned before, most Neo-Pagans and Druids ran on a rather tight budget and the cost of getting groves together became increasingly difficult. Without the devoted net-working of Isaac, these groups slipped out of touch and later quietly passed away as they would have anyway, but without any noisy fanfare. This left the Berkeley Live Oak Grove, Los Angeles and Olympia Washington's Evergreen Grove and Greenwood Grove in the roll of active groves. All were pretty distant from each other and therefore unlikely to communicate too much during a time which was called "The Boring Times."<sup>254</sup>

## The Death March on the Beach<sup>255</sup>

Joan Carruth had run the Berkeley Grove as a co-ArchDruid from 1977-79 with Isaac, assisting in a fluorescence of new liturgical patterns, and then as Arch Druid from 1979-1981 with a little help from Stefan McCaully (later of Hazelnut Grove). It appears that the Grove was running happily when Isaac returned in September 1981 and wished to regain his role as "ArchDruid Emeritus"<sup>256</sup> of Berkeley. The election for Berkeley's officers was held after a particularly unsuccessful ritual, in which Joan endlessly led the grove members up and down a long beach looking for a good ritual site, while Druids collapsed from fatigue, anger and boredom.

Accounts vary greatly about what happened during the elections, but Joan and Isaac were contesting the title of Arch Druid, not too long over a personal dispute between the two members. It was a very tense and bitter election with Isaac promising drastic changes for Reformed Druidism if he was elected, based on his experimentations with Pentalpha. The first vote split evenly 6 to 6, but a second vote was held and it came out 7 to 5, in favor of Isaac. Now, Joan is rumored to have felt that Isaac had betrayed them by changing his vote and had voted for himself instead of voting for the other opponent, as was the tradition. Whether this is true or not; a lot of bad blood and anger was raised amongst the Berkeleyites.

Joan, Stefan and Emmon split off from Isaac's Berkeley Grove (which promptly became "The SDNA Mother Grove" again) and formed the Live Oak Grove, also in Berkeley (and later holding services in Orinda). The Live Oak Grove of the NRDNA felt that Isaac's reforms were taking the Druids too far from what the initial Founders had planned it, a "Dis-organized Religion."<sup>257</sup> Live Oak Grove lasted for many years under Joan, then Larry, the Bob's Archdruidship, and finally under Emmon's caretaking. Emmon would publish The Druid Missalany newsletter and helped the grove to incorporate for a few years before dissolving. Greenwood Grove of Seattle and Hazelnut Grove remained staunchly independent of any association with the Mother Grove of Berkeley and are very active up to this day. Interestingly, the current NRDNA groves are far closer to the original RDNA liturgical format and customs than the present Carleton Druids. But, we'll discuss this in more detail in Chapter Six. For now let's turn our attention to the new project, ADF, of Isaac and his friends.



# Chapter Five:

## ADF & Keltria 1983-1996

### The Branching of Modern Druidism



Figure 10 "The Druidess"

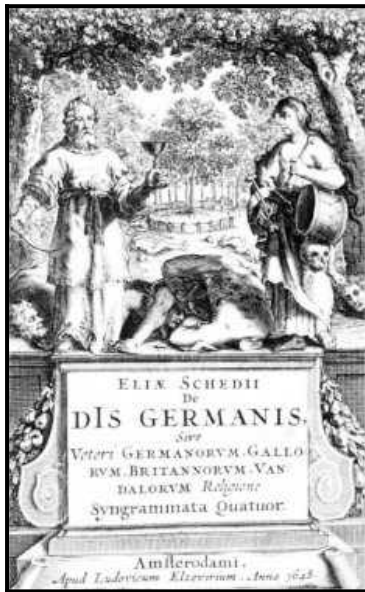


Figure 11 Yes, even back in the 18th Century, the Druids were dissing the Germans

#### The Formation of Ar nDraiocht Fein

It is not my purpose here to give a detailed, complete history of the ADF, which could only come from a collaboration of several inner-members who would be intimately familiar with the development of events and people of the ADF. I can only hope to show some of the relationships and similarities/dissimilarities that exist between ADF and the N/RDNA. To do so will require that I talk a lot about Isaac, because of his major influence in both ADF and in the later years of the NRDNA, which makes him a good focal point for discussion of cross-overs and carryovers between the two groups. Also, because the focus of this epistle is the history of Reformed Druidism, most of the discussion of ADF will be in relation to the N/RDNA, instead of with the Neo-Pagan community, which was indeed the major audience to which ADF catered. The history of Neo-Pagan organizational attempts and ADF's role in debating and exploring Neo-Pagan issues will have to be written by another person.

The reason for Isaac's prominence in the history of the RDNA was his penchant for trying to put order and stability into the organizational structure of Reformed Druidism. Empire builders have always attracted the lion's share of attention from the historians, more so than the simpler histories of those who are conquered or incorporated. Isaac also printed/published a lot of letters and magazines on the debates which have survived to produce a historical record naturally inclined to favor/emphasize his role. Whereas many of the terms and/or structures now used in ADF originally were used in the NRDNA; such as proto-grove, council of ArchDruids/senior druids and others; most of them disappeared from prominence and general use in the NRDNA after Isaac's departure. In effect, they went with him to be used with a new group that was better oriented and appreciative of their potential applicability. While Reformed Druidism was not quite chaos or anarchy incarnated, I like the image of ADF emerging from Reformed Druidism just as Order emerges from Chaos in the genesis myths of many religions.

#### The Beginnings of Á r nDraíocht Féin

(Dec. 1981)

During Isaac's sabbatical from 1979 to 1981 and dabbling with Pentalpha, he was putting together the foundations for a new Druid Organization that would be more stable, legally-recognizable and coherent than the "anarchy" and "ridiculous egalitarianism" of the RDNA and NRDNA. The major problem with the Reformed Druids, in Isaac's and other people's eyes, was its obstinate refusal to allocate power to the leaders and its having a system that defeated any "official" attempt to improve the coherency and/or functionality into a national organization. Isaac's liturgical or organizational changes from scholarly study of Celtic and/or Proto-Indo-European cultures would forever contend with the RDNA's multiple (and possibly more enticing) systems of beliefs from around the world and from the members'

own devising. The RDNA, as a whole, would never resemble authentic, historical Druidism.

At best, Isaac could have formed and shaped one Reformed Druid grove in his vision and then slowly found others. However, each member of those new groves would be constantly reminded by the Druid Chronicles and Reformed Druid correspondence that they could do anything and still be a Reformed Druid, regardless of what Isaac or any pseudo-governing body said to them. It was like sand slipping out of Isaac's fingers or King Canute trying to stop the tides. The RDNA and NRDNA would always be a loose federation of autonomous groves operating in effective isolation; never a complex national organization.

I don't mean to imply that Isaac wished to tightly control people's lives, but that he did wish to create a functional organization that would reciprocate and appreciate his (and other's) interests and suggestions. He wanted a group that would unearth the lost ways and beliefs of the Proto-Indo-European religion, keep itself from lapsing into decrepitude and be able to share that knowledge with the world. He wanted a group that he could be sure would be around 30 years from now. For Isaac to have continued to convert Reformed Druidism into that tool would have been like using fingernail-clippers to hammer in a nail.

One thing is for sure, Isaac gave it the best attempt possible. After all there were many potential recruits within Reformed Druidism, and some did join him in his new projects; but for the most part, he left the Reformed Druid organization behind that he had so carefully maintained, and it slowly decayed into happy, anarchic simplicity. In fact, it is still happily decaying; with occasional growth spurts. As for Isaac, he was to develop new alliances and friendships with people even more like himself.

## Reasons for Isaac's "Departure"

Why did Isaac "leave?"<sup>263</sup> Legal status had a lot to do with why Isaac left; and respect for the group's concerns makes up the rest. One of the many weakness of the Neo-Pagan movement was the fact that most of them were not recognized as religious organizations and/or lacked the respect that "established" religions had from governmental and community authorities. As a result, there was a latent weakness for oppressors of Neo-Paganism to downplay the convictions of these tiny groups and mis-present them as "cults." Isaac had his fill of this bias in the courts, when he was running the Aquarian Anti-Defamation League in the mid-70s. Isaac wanted a Neo-Pagan religious group that could appear to function as smoothly and bureaucratically as the "big boys," preferably a Druidic group, and yet still retain the spontaneity and personal freedom of Neo-Paganism. He wanted a group that could act as a role-model for other Neo-Pagans and/or as an umbrella organization for other Celtic/Druidic groups with similar goals. Reformed Druidism was definitely ecumenical enough for his goal, but perhaps a bit too disorganized. Despite full-hearted attempts to "correct" them, the Reformed Druids proved to be incapable of meeting certain basic standards that he felt were necessary for achieving the nebulous (but vitally important) definitional status of a "stable religious organization."

On casual observation, there would seem to be no carry-overs from Reformed Druidism to ADF except the title "Druid," the Waters-of-Life, an eclectic sense of humor, the Druid Sigil and Isaac himself; but a more careful examination proves otherwise. Without his experiences in the "anarchic" RDNA proving grounds, he would have probably made many (more) blunders in setting up a group formed in the way that he wished. In a sense the RDNA provided a very accurate model for what Isaac wished to avoid in his new group and also what he did want included in his new group. I recommend a close study of the ADF for those curious about the RDNA, because what the ADF **did** do sheds a lot of light on what the RDNA **couldn't (or wouldn't)** do.

Isaac (and others) was familiar from his past experiences (with AADL and Pentalpha) with the criteria needed for a religion to be considered "respectable" in a court of law. These "failures" on the part of the RDNA, and similar Neo-Pagan anarchic groups, were carefully "corrected" when planning the new Druid Organization; and they were primarily:

1. Stable, effective, strong central organization.
2. Effective Clergy training and the controlled appointment of Leadership
3. "Defrocking" and "excommunication"
4. Concerted unity in court cases
5. Financial stability.
6. Capability of steady expansion without lessening central power.
7. Official dogma and an ability to speak for a group and make official alliances.
8. Willingness to ally exclusively to Neo-Paganism.
9. Willingness to adapt and change to accommodate scholarly facts on Indo-European religion
10. Respect for the group's goals.

All of these goals are carefully tied into each other, with one leading string leading to another. We shall therefore start with one of these strings in the Gordian Knot.

### 1. Stable, Effective, Strong Central Organization

Despite Isaac's attempts at removing the chairmanship of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu from Carleton's, and later a Provisional Council of Archdruids; most of the Reformed Druids (including the NRDNA) were still roughly allied to the Council of Dalon Ap Landu as governed by Carleton. The Coalition Council of DAL did not last long after Joan's departure in 1982. Because of Carleton's rapid and total membership turn-over and eternally young Archdruids (always under 23 years old); there was little hope of "mature" and bureaucratically competent leadership for the Council. Besides this, the Carleton Archdruid (and a major chunk of the Carleton alumni members of the Council) was, for a long time, poorly cognizant of the religious beliefs and needs of the Neo-Pagan members of the Reformed Druids living on the West Coast and elsewhere.

One of the first things Isaac did was to become life-long, supreme Archdruid of the whole ADF organization (leaders of individual groves are "senior druids") until the mid 1990s.<sup>264</sup> As you can read in the ADF By-laws in the Part Four of ARDA, the Archdruid was given rather extensive powers for the appointment of bureaucrats, to influence legislation and to veto or to remove problems. The office of Archdruid becomes accountable to electionary influence beginning with his successor, but Isaac is sure to massively influence the formative years of the group's history. As you can further read, there are elected positions to the legislative offices; the ability to vote is not a right of office like in the RDNA priesthood, it's a privilege granted to the general members (except when some are selected as in the board of Trustees). This privilege is not only granted, but it's effectiveness increases with the length of time you stay active in legislation; no more sitting back and occasionally vetoing every 10 years or so. Every year in consistent attendance at legislating increased the number of votes you could cast; which implies that experience in ADF affairs makes you a more competent voter than a newcomer. This position has its advantages and drawbacks, of course.

Furthermore in the voting on issues affecting all groves, the decisions are made by quorums, not unanimity like in the RDNA. The wishes of the majority override those of the minority. In the RDNA, the rules affecting the entire collective of groves which were passed by the unanimity of the Third Orders were effective on the non-thirds; the custom of a groves' constitution were by quorums. That small change from unanimity to quorum on the organizational level makes all the changes possible for ADF to travel a different fate from the RDNA. The ADF can change more

easily on the total-organizational level than the RDNA; which in all reality could only change on the Grove-level. If Isaac could have changed that one tradition of unanimity in the RDNA, he could have stayed in the RDNA and slowly transformed it into the ADF. Needless to say, this was one of the things the RDNA and NRDNA were most reluctant to change. Once that single change was made, it naturally follows to allocate the collective power and *endorsing capability* of the group by appointing bodies of member like Boards of Trustees, Councils of Lore and Advisory Councils. I do not wish to go into the deep checks-and-balances of his group. The critical change from the RDNA had already been made and it would be belaboring the point to describe further deviations from the organized anarchy of the RDNA's structure. In effect, he had created a constitutional monarchy, as he will freely admit, much like Britain's government which blends autocracy and representation democracy.

## 2. Effective clergy training and appointment of leaders

Once the issue of legislating by the majority's wishes had been conceded (i.e. that people need to be instructed and led by the (hopefully) better-informed-majority's wishes), the next issue to deal with was appointing good leaders to avoid tyranny and promote the group's goals. The placement of term-of-office limits helps greatly, so is the need for election, but some power is always taken away from the individuals. Unlike secular authorities, religious authorities (excepting Cults) can not hope to "control" the lives of its members, if the congregation member does not wish to be controlled. There is always the option of quitting, both in ADF and/or mainstream religions.

The RDNA is not entirely "innocent" of the danger of Priests potentially dominating the religious congregation, because the Third Order could technically impose oppressive dogma, but the tradition of unanimity hinders such possible imposition on an organizational level, although it could easily happen on the local level. Such an event could occur by the RDNA's priest being given greater powers in the grove's constitution or by "levering" techniques, like the decision of the Archdruid or any priest refusing to grant initiation or refusing to hold services. No special knowledge or conditions were required of the initiate in the Reform, it was on the honor system, if you felt ready then you were probably ready. So in effect the RDNA had no control or educational requirement on who became its leaders (i.e. the Third Order) and no need to worry, because the Third Order had no real, effective power or authority to wield. It was very cleverly planned that way. In fact within the RDNA, many priests tell me that the aspirants to and attainers of the Third Order could very well themselves be considered failures at Druidism, because they seek to take part in "organization." The only center of higher training was perhaps, Carleton College itself, in a liberal-arts education.

The RDNA's system would not satisfy the ADF, which wished a clergy that resembled the clerical training efforts of the "mainstream" religions. A well-educated clergy would go a long way in currying respect from monotheistic clerical faiths. Indeed, one of the cornerstones of the ADF is its seminary program, which is quite impressively organized on paper in comparison with other Neo-Pagan systems currently out there. It is designed to produce a group of informed, "liberal arts-ish" trained clergy by the end of its 13 track program. Each of the 13 tracks is a different area of learning including:

1. Physical Health and Survival, 2. Therapy and Counseling, 3. Communication, 4. Magic and Divination, 5. History and Social Sciences, 6. Natural Sciences, 7. Movement awareness and Discipline, 8. Artistic and Bardic Skills, 9. Drama and Liturgy, 10. Philosophy and Scholarship, 11. Comparative Religion and Mythology, 12. Mysticism and

Each track has five degrees/levels of increasing "competence" in that area of knowledge, called "circles." When a candidate has read/studied/practiced the suggested materials in that track, and wishes to be accredited for completing a "circle," they take a test/exam/demonstration to show competency. When one has completed 1st Circle competency in each of the thirteen tracks, one becomes a full second circle ADF druid. It is, of course, quite possible to be third circle competent in History while lagging behind in 1st circle with the other 12 tracks, in which case you'd still be a 1st circle Druid. However, the minimum competency to be a priest in the ADF is to have completed the 2nd circle competency requirements in each track and therefore be working on (at least) the 3rd circle competency for each of the thirteen tracks. The image is of circles within circles (like rings in a tree) with greater proven competency allowing further progression to more inner circles; and correspondingly greater responsibilities and power. A 3rd circle status is roughly equivalent to a B.A., a 4th circle to an M.A. and a 5th circle to a Ph. D. It is interesting to note that the circle-status does not affect, at least now, the right to fill the roles of offices of the Mother Grove's administration or the local roles. This is in itself very interesting. This is coupled with the fact that no one need be in the seminary program to be an ADF member, participation in the seminary program (although encouraged, at least for self-development) is purely optional.

Although this concept of a seminary drew a lot of fire initially from the Neo-Pagan community as a whole; being counter to the free-spirit of Neo-paganism, one-up-man-ship, etc.; since then many have begun to pay greater attention to training regimens.

## 3. Ability to Defrock and Excommunicate

Closely allied with its clerical training program was ADF's desire to remove troublesome members from its priesthood and general membership, when the necessity arises. Defrocking and excommunication are traditional methods used by Organized Religions to maintain a group's definitional identity boundary when all other forms of persuasion have failed. They are used to protect the group from the development of serious factionalization (though it doesn't always work).

In the RDNA there was **no** known method for defrocking or excommunication officially available. Any action would have to be done by an "unofficial" shunning of the problematic person; i.e. not going to that Priest's rituals or everybody just avoiding that person. However, "officially," that person would still be entitled to retain their RDNA "priesthood" and "order of achievement." If they were already a 3rd Order they could still officially found a new RDNA grove, even if they were considered to be demon-spawn. This defect never actually caused a real problem to the RDNA, but it was a potentially devastating problem in Isaac's eyes. Hypothetically, what if someone came into the ADF grove with a bunch of really strange, dangerous ideas and/or seriously broke the U.S. law? Without excommunication, there would be no way for ADF to disavow the group's connection with that person except to say that each person was following their own way and no one can speak for the beliefs of others in the group. That might work for the RDNA, but not for ADF which had a destiny to preserve. It was far better, in Isaac's eyes, to remove any group connections with that person by "defrocking" them and/or excommunicating them.

The RDNA tried not to worry enough about the group's survival and forget the rights of the individual. The ADF is self-consciously establishing a right for the group to survive, and it's an interesting choice of potential priorities. This has the advantage of not having to start from scratch with one's Public Relations

after a scandal, assuming one is concerned about Public Relations. Each ADF grove has to toe the line with new national changes or it will lose the benefits of participation in the national group. These included a loss of ADF allegiance status (which implies a "loss of name and identity" of that group), a loss of legal protection and supportive advice and/or moneys from the central powers-that-be. It's uncertain how often this happened, but news is infrequent.

#### 4. Concerted unity in court cases:

ADF wants to legally protect and empower its members to practice and publicly-affirm their religious beliefs. One of the main reasons that people joined the ADF is for a legal status for their church. It is expensive, paper-consuming and difficult for each small group to independently obtain/maintain/prove all the requirements of a religious organization in the eyes of the IRS and the public Courts. It is far cheaper for one group (i.e. the ADF Mother Grove, consisting of all the officers of the organization) to attain religious organizational status and then give out franchises to the individual groves that are sort of huddling under its umbrella. Thereby the poorer groves/members have a better shot of gaining a victory in the courts.

In the RDNA, the original Carleton Grove *could* have performed all of these legal tasks for itself; however expansion soon exposed a problem to a possible extension of legal protection: deep-seated apathy towards making themselves appear organized enough to survive an "inspection" by the government. The unusual precedent to this was the Smiley incident; whereupon a few members of the Council backed-up a member currently active in a Grove distinct from the Carleton Grove. The reason such legal protection was not possible in the RDNA was because nobody wanted to pay membership fees to cover the costs of such applications or concerted legal action. Each new grove meant more people for the already over-burdened Archdruid of Carleton; who was trying to survive a rigorous educational program and maintain a national organization. The fraternal aid in the Smiley case was relatively cheap (mere postage costs) and was therefore feasible; hiring a lawyer for Smiley on RDNA funds would have been impossible. Smiley would have had to hire his own lawyer to defend his religious beliefs, with testimonial backing from the other Council members. Isaac didn't want the little ADF guy out there on his/her own.

Isaac was familiar, from his association with AADL, that court cases are a possible hazard for any Neo-Pagan organization. There had to be a clear representative of the organization to arrange a defense (or mount a prosecution). A representative for the group was necessary for the group in legal cases and for flushing out frauds from the group. In 1989, ADF worked in conjunction with other Neo-Pagan groups to expose the nefarious activities of the Divine Circle of the Sacred Grove. DCSG's leader was misrepresenting herself as having 3rd circle ADF credentials.

#### 5. Financial Stability

Paying for the costs of running the bureaucracy, legal aid in court cases, educational grading of the seminary tracks and to publish/mail periodicals or the new by-laws for the organization costs money. Lots of money. With money comes the threat of corruption, which requires more bureaucracy to self-police itself. You see the viscous cycle now. However, financial compensation for such activities prevents financial "burnout" by goodwill supporters.

The RDNA has never had much to do with enforcing money collection. A tradition of passing the hat was the best method they came up with. The one rule regarding money was that it was required for all Third Order Druids to pay compensation for the postage of the up-date (or "State of the Grove") mailings that the Archdruid of Carleton sent out upon retiring. If people wanted it, they paid for it; and if they didn't want it, they didn't pay for it. It should be noted that this practice

is common among Neo-Pagan groups. It will be interesting to see how direct financial support from Carleton College will affect the internal dynamics of the Druids.

Isaac was presenting a valid gripe that it costs money to run an organization within the N/RDNA, and that he was tired of paying for all of it; however many did not wish the organization, and so they didn't pay. The arguments on both sides have many pros and cons which the reader can argue out for her/himself. The result was that Isaac required membership dues on both individual membership and a due for the groves themselves to be franchised. There was considerable debate but it has passed, and no one has gotten rich off it, so it seems to be working out. It is the hope of ADF to have its clergy's efforts compensated with money/services in the future. Despite ADF's growth over the years, we're still talking only about a budget of several thousand dollars.

#### 6. Capability of Steady expansion without lessening central power/importance

It is inevitable, that the physical distance between people will weaken the bond of friendship/allegiance. Distance is not so potent a force of division today as it used to be because of technological achievements that make mass-communication cheaper and easier to access. Photocopy machines, computer publishing, multi-line phone communication and e-mail have greatly improved the organizational skills of smaller dispersed organizations.

The RDNA's apparent apathy (or respect for autonomy) towards its other groves and suspicion of the motives of organized religions, inhibited any initiative towards central government. While many Reformed Druids were happy at the founding of new Groves, and might even offer friendly advice if asked for it, they kept a respectful distance from involvement. The center of attention for each grove, or solitary Druid, was itself. The NRDNA of the Bay Area was blessed (cursed?) with lots of groves within a close geo-physical distance so that physical visits were practical and inter-grove-relations and shared rituals were common; permitting shared goals and activities that could breach autonomic tendencies. The "Mother Grove" newsletter of the SDNA and various succeeding magazines disseminated coordinating news and discussed issues important to various members.

The ADF was begun with the intention of operating on both the local level **and** the National level from the beginning. ADF was ready to be a really big family and several devices from Isaac's NRDNA days were used to foster a national level of group-unity. The most obvious is the Annual ADF festival, usually held in conjunction with other groups for cost/fun reasons, in which ADF issues are debated and voted upon. Elections for some offices are also held and just plain physical meetings between members is made possible, so that trans-grove friendship are made more possible. For those not able to attend the meetings for financial or obligatory reasons, electronic communication or proxy voting are now possible. Most of the Mother Grove's councils meet on a more frequent and regular basis (in person, proxy or electronically) to snip problems in the bud.

This sense of inter-Grove connections is increased by a Council of Senior Druids. A Senior Druid of the ADF is in a job similar to that of an Arch-Druid of the N/RDNA; s/he's in charge of leading a grove's rituals and is technically the leader. They are called Senior Druids because there can only be **one** Archdruid in ADF at a time; which is more historically correct (at least in Gaul/France, where the only mention of the title existed). The Council of Senior Druids' purpose of establishing inter-communication between the Grove's leaders is identical to the original purpose of the Provisional Council of Archdruids in Reformed Druidism; including making some general statements and minor legislation (most of which was never officially completed in the N/RDNA).

The "Druid's Progress" is the national journal of ADF and brings the academic, liturgical and artistic achievements of far-spread grove members together for display and shared knowledge. In some aspects, DP's importance has decreased as local newsletters grow among Groves, but DP will probably remain for those seeking a wider audience. This magazine was recently replaced by "Oak Leaves". "The News from the Mother Grove" acts to disseminate business mews of the ADF organization and share addresses/locations of officers and groves. The role of a central journal and a more frequent newsletter holding together a group is a general phenomenon of Neo-Paganism and it was preceded in the N/RDNA by the Druid Chronicler and Pentalpha magazines also begun by Isaac Bonewits (and others). Local grove publications are exchanged between groves for a similar purpose and thrive on a small scale.

Traveling visits by the Archdruid, usually while going to present a lecture at a nearby convention, are another method of keeping abreast of local development of the many groves in the ADF. However, in recent years, these tours have declined due to Isaac's failing health. ADF groves are also encouraged to visit neighboring groves once in a while, when possible. The last area of inter-grove activity would be on computer bulletin board conferences. The cheap, instant communication that this provides for isolated solitary members may be enough to swell ADF's ranks, and advertise it more widely.

## **7. Official dogma and ability to speak for a group and thereby make alliances<sup>1</sup>**

As we've stated before, because the Council of Dalon ap Landu was likely to deadlock on a decisive vote of support for any issue, the individual RDNA member was officially incapable of speaking for the group, being appointed to act as its ambassador, or making an alliance of between the entire RDNA organization and other groups. They could "pretend" to do such things or act informally on the wishes of individuals, but could not represent the RDNA as a whole. This weakened the RDNA's potential "clout" as an organization, since it has trouble sending group-wide ambassadors, making alliances or being represented in court.

ADF, in contrast, has frequently sent ambassadors to religious conventions, set up public relations committees, produced official literature, appointed lawyers and done everything necessary to define itself as a recognizable entity.

## **8. Willingness to ally exclusively to Neo-Paganism.**

Now the Carleton RDNA and it's RDNA offshoots were generally open to the public in a cautious manner, mainly as a result of its exploration of world religions which, if a bit odd (Asian, Atheism and Middle-Eastern), were not met with as much suspicion as Occultism and Wicca. The truth was, the RDNA and NRDNA (as a whole) weren't too picky about where they looked to find religious truth; and Neo-Paganism was merely one option among hundreds of possibilities. While the NRDNA steadily grew to have a preference for Neo-Pagan members and inspiration, it was like the RDNA in that it was never exclusionary towards non-pagans. All were welcome, pending good behavior, even into the Third Order or higher! However, Isaac's SDNA (and the HDNA subset) was very clear in its Neo-Pagan allegiance, especially in the criteria needed for entry into the Third Order.

Isaac's attitude carried over into the ADF, where one must pledge to be a Neo-Pagan/Wiccan/etc.(preferably polytheistic instead of duotheistic or even feminine monotheistic) to fulfill any "official" leadership in the organization. He wanted the ADF to be squarely in the camp of Neo-Paganism. Members partaking in the Study tracks who wished to be accredited as clergy (and not just studying for the enjoyment) would also have to ally to Neo-Paganism. While this requirement was nothing to most of its prospective members, it was a definite inegalitarian (non-pagans aren't welcome and certain types of Pagans were only cautiously accepted), and while no tears will be shed by ADF over it, it is one of the greatest changes from the RDNA. However, as far as the Neo-Pagan Community was concerned, ADF was a very ecumenical religious organization indeed. One interesting custom of the ADF was to allow its own members to practice in other Neo-Pagan religions at the same time.

## **9. Willingness to change to accommodate scholarly facts on Indo-European religion.**

Closely linked with point 8 is ADF's choice of which cultures were to be the official inspiration of the group. The RDNA had shown from it's very founding year, with the debate over choosing what to sacrifice, that it wasn't going to change it's organization to meet historical realities of the ancient Druids. The NRDNA groves under Larson and Bonewits and a few other Archdruids were more willing to model the liturgies, songs and officers to match the known historical facts from one or two ancient religions (including Norse, Celtic and paleo-Hebraic religion), but they usually remained close to the Order of Worship's general plan. Despite some specialization, members within those groves continued to draw upon diverse sources of inspiration.

ADF was founded to research and recreate the original religion of the ancestors of the Indo-European family-tree. ADF was dealing with a pretty broad selection of cultures to work

backwards from; including Celtic, Scando-Germanic, pre-classical Greco-Roman, Slavic, ancient Hindu, etc. (and a specially permitted addition, Native American). Truly diverse, but it is still exclusionary of many African-originated religions, Eastern Asian religion, Greco-Roman, Islamic, Meso-Pagan and Judeo-Christianity, not to mention Modern Wicca and Science-Fiction inspired cultures. The ADF is not racist, but they wish to retain a focus. Members are welcome to practice privately any religion they wish and learn from whatever source they wish, but for the purpose of official public ADF rituals only materials pertaining to Indo-European cultures will be considered relevant.

#### 10. Respect for the group's goals

A kind of catch-all conclusion, but it is a point that underlies all of the previous 9 points. The RDNA had a respectful wariness and suspicion about a religious group taking upon itself more tasks, powers of coercion, dogma, sanctity and self-importance than was safe/helpful for the rights/purposes of the individual to be able to pursue and express their religious truth with their siblings. From this stems the Reformed Druid penchant for "anarchy" (as it is called in some people's opinions).

While a certain amount of humor and self-mocking has and will continue in the ADF, it has set forward serious goals that it hopes to accomplish, as a group.

### Carryovers from the Reformed Druids

It's hard to say what Isaac borrowed from the RDNA since many of the organizational structures that carried over from it were devised and used mostly by himself in the first place. But, assuming that he devised these ideas and implemented them with the help of other Reformed Druids, they can be said to belong in part to Reformed Druidism.

By far, the most apparent carryover was the symbol of Reformed Druidism itself, the Druid Sigil. Perhaps not so significant to the general reader, but I consider it a powerful identifying symbol of shared siblinghood between ADF and Reformed Druidism, sort of like South Carolina and Nebraska both having the US flag flying in front of their public schools. The Druid Sigil has expanded from it's merely RDNA-affiliation into a grander role as a symbol of Druidism in general. This importance as a pan-Druidical banner was increased further by the Henge of Keltria's adoption of the Druid Sigil as one of it's symbols of identification. ADF also adopted a unique symbol for its own. It looks like a stump which has axe-marks upon it and one small oak branch growing anew from it. Each year they enlarge the branch, adding more leaves and girth. The roots of the symbol are knotted in a Celtic interlace and symbolize how Celtic Druidry has its roots in a Pan-Indo-European form of religion.265

The Waters of Life and some of the questions of the Catechism of the Waters and general structure from the 1977-1980 NRDNA liturgies are noticeable liturgical carryover from the Reform. The initial services of ADF were very similar to the Order of Worship, but with succeeding years, more and more elements disappear until only the Waters remain. They meet outdoors in groves, when possible, like the Reform. The office of Preceptor in the ADF has no liturgical role and is a mere paper-pushing official now.

Finally, The ADF is pursuing a Proto-Indo-European system, which looks quite eclectic compared to mono-cultural Welsh or Irish Druid organizations that have appeared over the years. I see this as a slight narrowing of the broad search employed in the NRDNA for truth. That and the caveat that it must be adjusted slightly for modern sensibilities.

### Milestones in ADF

As an outsider, with a limited study of ADF, I can only paint a few brushstrokes, whose details must be filled in by someone more familiar with the group's transformations.

Structurally, it began vaguely around 1983, but definitely solidified in 1984, the magazine "Druid's Progress" first came out. The Article of Association were passed in either 1986 or 1987, with the first board of regents holding the meeting on a waterbed, reportedly. Sometime between 1989 and 1991, they incorporated and soon thereafter were granted tax-free status as a charitable religious organization by the I.R.S. and the powers that be.

In regards to size, the organization seems to have quickly reached a size of a few dozen groves and protogroves, spreading mostly in the liberal regions of the East and West coasts and Ohio river valley. Due-paying membership has generally hovered between four to eight hundred members, making them certainly one of the larger Druid groups in the world, but still dwarfed by the century old fraternal movements and the rise of giants like the Order of Bards Ovates and Druids; which now has established several groves in America, Canada, Europe and Australia now.

Due to its tighter identity, clearer lines of leadership, legal status and sense of mission, ADF has been prominent in attending interfaith religious conferences, such as the 1993 World Parliament of Religions, pagan festivals, the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Modern Druidism, etc. It also sent out circulars to the Neopagan communities about perceived lack of discussion on community issues and spreading news of the possible charlatans. In order to get its message out, ADF has produced an array of paper and digital publications over the years.

Organizationally, there have been several editions of ADF Grove Organizer's Handbook, ADF Study Manuals, ADF Member's Guides, Liturgical Handbooks, and some magazines. The Druid's Progress magazine lasted about ten years from 1984-1994, fitfully producing about one or two issues every year, while News from the Mother Grove and local Grove publications came out more frequently with current news. DP was a mixture of bardic materials, Indo-European comparative research, and new liturgical and organizational material. From 1997 to the present, the Oak Leaves publication has more closely approached a regular 2 or 3 issues a year, in much the same format, under different management. Minor financial problems and changing editorships over the years has made it difficult to establish continuity, although computerized editing has definitely made an improved product and simpler to organize.

The ADF Study Program caused a big splash in the mid-80s in the Neo-Pagan community. Although training programs, guided readings, and apprenticeships had happened before, none was as academically oriented, much like a seminary-by-mail course of studies. Hundreds of the members, and interested outside parties have enrolled over the years; and doubtlessly has influenced other groups to establish more training materials for its leadership and general membership. The program's apparent flaw was no so much in the choice of the materials or design, but the difficulty of enrolling enough competent graders to handle the onslaught of materials and correspondence than ensued. As a result, the program has occasionally closed and restarted over the years, and some members have been embittered,. Some Druids from other groups have been reticent to join ADF, from the feeling of having to start "from the bottom again," but most have responded favorably to the program.

In the mid 90s, ADF finally began to bring members into the Third Circle and full status as ordained clergy, perhaps a handful by now. And some of these members have also replaced Isaac Bonewits, not long after his illness became severe, as the Arch Druid of the overall ADF organization for about eight years now, in a smooth transition of power, because "it was about time for a new voice."

Considering the heavy number of computer professionals in the Neo-pagan movement, it is not surprising that ADF was one of the first Druid organizations to establish a web-site ([www.adf.org](http://www.adf.org)) in the mid-90s, a year or so before the RDNA site (which was 1995), and has carefully added more and more resources, anchoring the community in ways far cheaper than the paper publications. Isaac established his own site ([www.neopagan.net](http://www.neopagan.net)) after his retirement from the ADF Archdruidcy, and it also has played a prominent role in the Neopagan community. In fact, although dwarfed by some of the Neopagan and Wiccan organizations, it has been a sizable player in the Druid subset of the community, with an influence out of proportion to its size. Perhaps, it would be larger, if it wasn't shedding so many members, who are breaking off into new organizations, but that is not uncommon with larger Neopagan organizations.

## ADF Spin-off Organizations

Just as ADF took the parts of the Reform it liked and left the rest, so too have groups split off from ADF to form new Druid groups over the years. Each group has adopted different influences and the connections may seem tenuous, but as Daniel Hansen says in his book, *American Druidism: A Guide to American Druid Groups*, we all live in America, we're all modern, we lack definitive links to Europe, and everybody lumps us together anyway. I like to think of all these Druid groups as part of the family of American Druidism.

The analogy is that the original RDNA is the parent; the NRDNA, SDNA, HDNA and ZDNA are its children; ADF is its grandchild; Shadowpath, Henge of Keltria, Druidactios, DCSG and Primitive Celtic Church are its great grandchildren; and American Druidic Church would be its great-great grandchild. Of course, Missionary Order of the Celtic Cross (Reformed Druidic Wicca) and Order of Mithril Star have just married into the RDNA family, so we'll see how they fit in. It should be remembered that like a family tree, the RDNA "blood" has a thinner concentration in each generation. But since the current Carleton Grove has had 36 successive Archdruids, it may be fairer to call the current Carleton Grove to be a 36th Grandchild of the original grove and therefore something like a 23rd cousin of ADF (and a couple places removed)? Maybe the analogy doesn't work very well, eh?

I will describe each group rather briefly, because Daniel Hansen's book, "American Druidism" does the cataloguing job well enough so I will not have to duplicate his efforts. We have materials in the Druid Archives from these groups, which you are welcome to come and inspect.

### **Shadow Path Grove, mid 1980s**

This was one of the first Druid Groups to break off from ADF in the mid 80s and their one grove hails from Connecticut. They broke off because they did not wish to have public rituals. They continue to use ADF ritual in private. It is believed to have gone inactive by 1993.

### **The Henge of Keltria, 1987**

Keltria is by far the largest of the groups to break off from ADF, taking a good part of the mid-western ADF Druids with them in 1988 (and most of their membership and groves are still in the middle-US). Led initially by Patricia and Tony Taylor, they wished to stop ADF's pan-Indo-European focus and focus squarely (or is that triangularly?) upon Celtic Druidism. They incorporated in the early 90s, not too long after ADF, and have regularly updated their By-Laws. No offshoots have formed, to my knowledge.

They also sought to the public nature of the group, orienting into an initiatory tribal format, start their own training program, have more responsible financing, and publish their a journal (called Keltria) on a regular time schedule (unlike ADF's erratic

publishings) until the late 90s. They made their headquarters in Minneapolis, which is interestingly only a short drive from Carleton, although it has recently relocated inquiries to West Virginia. Serpent Stone Journal, also only lasted a few years, but a recent update on the Liturgical book went well, with their unique vervain and mistletoe rites. Since then, however the "Henge Happenings" has been published on-line and is almost as detailed and very well edited.

An initially strong Wiccan flavor has diminished over the years. The Henge of Keltria is almost the same size as ADF and both groups have a large overlap of membership. Keltria has kept the Druid Sigil and added the three rays of Awen also. Keltria has a five circle program similar to ADF, but with far less essay-writing. Never expanding past a few hundred, it continues to occasionally interact with the Carleton Grove over the years.

Numbers have dropped a little over the years, but their group still has annual gatherings in the summer in the Great Lake region that are well attended. In the late 90s, Taylor & co. stepped down from leadership, and new leadership rose to fill the vacuum, including the very talented Wren. However, although much more history has happened with Keltria, I will have to defer until I have a chance to do interviews and carefully peruse the literature.

### **Uxello-Druidactios, 1988**

This was a Gaulish oriented group. It is a little more difficult to understand how Druidactios is part of the American Druid family. Druidactios was founded by Tadhg MacCrossan (Tom Cross) in 1988 after a few years in the Post Oak Proto-Grove of the NRDNA, then a very short stint in ADF, to study its organizational patterns and literature. His well published book "The Sacred Cauldron: Secrets of the Druid" is considered to be a handbook for starting a Druidactios touth (grove). MacCrossan has spent most of the years since writing poison-pen letters about the deficiencies of other Druid Organizations; in particular that they are "infected" with Neo-Pagan clap-trap and Wiccan influences. Most Druids classify Druidactios as "Meso-Pagan" (and it has many connections with the Continental organizations), similar to the original RDNA in that the group does not consider itself pagan. The group was currently in the process of fragmenting into four new groups at the time of ARDA's first publishing in 1996. Since then it has fallen apart, and Tom has reputedly decided to start up a new strain of Celtic Christianity in the Dallas Texas area.

### **Divine Circle of the Sacred Grove, 1991**

This group has some nefarious elements, primarily Janette Copeland, and was trying to attract members to increase its profits. It attempted to use "A Druid Fellowship," which belongs to ADF, in its name but it quit in 1992. DCotSG then claimed phony ADF credentials. The group came under tax-scrutiny and disappeared from the Twin City area. The group moved to Arizona and deals mostly in workshops and herbs now. The remnants of the group from that incident formed a new group, The American Druidic Church.

### **American Druidic Church, 1992**

Jay Tibbles and Patricia Fields founded this spin off from Divine Circle of Sacred Grove and have been relying heavily upon proffered help from ADF and OBOD (Order of Bards Ovates and Druids). They were working out their own customs, myths, newsletters and a training program, but the group did not last more than five years. This group appears to have disbanded.

### **Primitive Celtic Church, 1992**

This grove, like Keltria, broke off to spend more time focusing upon the Celtic aspects of Druidism. Like the DCotSG, they also hail from the Seattle area where they operated a small grove of 4-8 people. One of their plans was to build a small Druidic village on some private land. Recent gossip claims that they have disbanded, but they opened a webpage and seem to be in operation, perhaps on a smaller scale.

### Reformed Druidic Wicca 1985?

This group has a mysterious origin, perhaps a splinter off a half-hearted attempt to start a NRDNA Protogrove, or possibly even an ADF Protogrove in the mid-1980s. Records are rather fuzzy. The rumor is that somebody came from Colorado to the Oklahoma region and founded the group. The organization as a whole, with a handful of groves, has remained between ten and fifty members up to the recent years. As material become available I will write more about them. They renamed themselves Missionary Order of the Celtic Cross (delightfully acronymed MOCC) and are apparently setting up off-shoots groves, building on-line conferences, and are loosely aligned with the RDNA at the present.

### Order of the Mithril Star 1993?

This groups was actually a schism from Church of All Worlds, over CAW having strayed too far from the inspiration of "Stranger in a Strange World", but has fallen into the orbit of the RDNA in the last few years, often abbreviating itself as OMS: RDNA; and adapting elements of the RDNA liturgy, constitution, endorsing the literature, and having regular cross-membership in their on-line conferences. Their most ambitious current plan is to set up "Imladris", a commune style village on the West Coast; in a manner reminiscent of the HDNA lifestyle. They have even put out a Green Book with the Druidcraft 101 on-line course text.

I predict that many more groups will splinter off of ADF during the late 90s. I have been out of the country since 1996, so I haven't kept in close contact to record other new organizations, but the family tree has probably sprouted a few new limbs since then. When future research opportunities present themselves, I will update this section.

## Conclusion

What Isaac had been doing was essentially overhauling the RDNA system so entirely that it was becoming unrecognizable. In fact, the last issue of *Druid Chronicle* (Dec. 1981) shows a blueprint for what would become the ADF organization. He and a few other NRDNA/SDNA members wanted a stable, legally recognized, hierarchical Neo-Pagan religion that would academically discover the original Indo-European religion by piecing together clues from different cultures. Within a year of the Death March, Isaac left Berkeley and renamed his vision "Ar nDraíocht Fein," which is Irish for "Our Own Druidism," to make it very clear that he had finally broken away from Reformed Druidism.

ADF was in all senses, a new organization. ADF has since developed an envied seminary training program, a rigid hierarchy based on merit not popularity, become a legal church and has been promoting more academically based liturgies and interaction with local communities for Neo-Paganism.266

The official leadership as ArchDruid of ADF was resigned by Isaac Bonewits on January 1st, 1996 c.e. due to health problems and due to his distaste for the restrictions that the office place upon his ability to freely speak his mind. A few Archdruids have followed in succession as the first series of Third Circle Druids are ordained. I suspect that ADF will go off in strange new directions, hopefully for the best.



Figure 12 An engraving of a Druid attending an execution.



Figure 13 Another of Aubrey's illustrations.



# Chapter Six:

## Reformed Druidism

### 1983-1993

### The Post-Isaac Years

But while ADF and new branches of Druidism were sprouting from the Modern Druid family, Reformed Druidism continued onward in a slightly less organized format throughout the 1980s at Carleton and Berkeley. As we have seen, from the historical records collected so far, the history of Reformed Druidism could be classified as “A Tale of Two Groves”. After the disastrous Death March mentioned in Chapter Four, the Berkeley Grove split into two parts (three if you count Hazelnut Grove), the Mother Grove and the new Live Oak Grove (named after a species of tree in California). Within months after the Fall Equinox election in 1981, the Druid Chronicler magazine and Mother Grove closed, and Live Oak was left and would be the most active grove in the Reform for many years, at a time when ADF was transforming Druidism on the East Coast. In many ways, Isaac had been on the vanguard of one of the waves of the Neopagan community, but as this tropical depression passed by the Berkeley Grove (and the movement in general), things returned to a calm and collected rhythm in the various groves. Things continued on older tracks and people grew wiser from the experience.

I owe a great deal of thanks to Larry and Stacey for their assistance in writing about this period. I have not as intensively explored the possible avenues of research in this decade, and it will show in the absence of footnotes and quoted material. Real life has not been too kind in giving me sufficient time to pursue those studies yet. Hopefully my overview will be sufficient to keep you aware of recent trends, and with the access to grove records and interviews, I will be able to do better justice to the Greenwood Grove of Seattle, Hazelnut Grove of the Bay Area and the Birch Grove in NH; all of which remained active in this decade of Druidism. But for this chapter, I must regretfully concentrate on only the Live Oak Grove and the Carleton Grove’s fortunes.

### Live Oak Grove

Live Oak Grove hived off from the Berkeley Grove following the hotly disputed grove election of Fall Equinox 1981, in which Isaac replaced Joan as ArchDruid. Most of the original Live Oak members were dissatisfied with that result; others simply liked Joan's style and wanted her to continue leading a grove. Joan was Live Oak Grove's first ArchDruid, and the original membership also included Emmon, Larry, Susan, and Leslie the Bard.

The grove held its first service in the Berkeley Hills at a place known as Hal's Spot (named after Hal Moe, a Nordic inclined Druid); thereafter (certainly by Samhain 1981) services were held on Emmon's land in Orinda, where they continued until the dissolution of the grove (or after, depending on how you count it). Typically, services commenced about solar noon (rather than clock noon) twice monthly, on the Sundays nearest the Full and New Moons; High Day services were generally held at sundown prior to the day itself, with a social gathering that evening.

Only about a dozen people were ever members, and no more than six or eight were ever active at once – in the end, only two. After late 1985, the core group wasn't even the official grove, but rather a rump group left over after an electoral coup.

The most influential member (Emmon) was never the official leader; what he regarded as his most important achievement (the RDNA corporation) was arguably his least.

### Coalition Council of Dalon Ap Landu

As shown in Part Four of ARDA, this was an attempt in 1981 and 1982 to kick start a new round of inter-grove communication and voting on issues in the absence of any contact from the Carleton Grove. The primary issues were dealing with voting methods of this new sub-committee and re-establishing the Higher Orders. Except for Joan's assumption of the Fourth Order Matriarchy, little else was accomplished by these four groves. Not long after Live Oak started, CoCoDAL mailings ceased in 1982.

### Druid Missal-Any

In the place of the CoCoDAL and computer-typed Druid Chronicler magazine was a hand-typed newsletter published by Emmon Bodfish called “A Druid Missal-Any” which soon blossomed from a local grove publication, to become a Reform wide publication. I have no evidence of this publication being received by the Carleton Grove, although Richard Shelton had a few issues in his personal archives, as did Isaac, until 1983.

Now included in Part Eleven of ARDA 2, the 72 or so issues were published about eight times a year about two weeks before the high days of the Druid Calendar. The series ran from February 1982 to February 1991. It is hard to gauge the level of circulation, but a few dozen would be reasonable, with page length between four and forty pages.

The format was usually an introductory letter from Emmon's research into Celtic matters, tied to a season, followed by News from Groves, Live Oak calendar and services notes, and then a few articles and advertisements. Newspaper clippings, illustrations, calligraphy, clip-art, and cartoons added a lively element, missing in previous publications.

Because this publication provides the bulk of existing records on the Live Oak era, we might mistakenly believe that it is sufficient to read it and finish with this era. After all, the pen is also mightier than the staff. But, while it gives us little glimpses into some of the more tangible activities of the Live Oak Grove, there were many developments and events happening on an interpersonal level that go beyond the realm of public knowledge or the scope of this chapter, but would reward the researcher willing to dig deeper into this era.

The only debate of note was the argument between Les, Albionn and Tom Cross over the meaning of truth and manner in which Druidism should be practiced. Tom operated the Post Oak Protogrove in Texas, and was performing research on ancient Gaulish religion, while studying with ADF also. Tempers flared and the debate lasted most of 1987, resulting in Tom leaving the RDNA (along with ADF after similar disputes) to pursue the start-up of Druidactios and publishing “The Sacred Cauldron” and “The Truth about Druids”.

### Liturgical Developments.

At Emmon's property from March to May 1982, grove members began improving the grove site, planting a circle of eight trees (one for each holiday), setting up a maypole, and laying the foundation for a stone altar. This was a period of permanency, in contrast to the frequent changes of location in the early Berkeley years, before settling on Hal's Spot in the late 70s.

In July 1982, Joan moved away from the Bay Area, and Larry was elected Arch Druid to replace her; Emmon was elected Preceptor. With this change in leadership came a subtle change in direction: inspired partly by contact with the Celtic scholar named Jim Duran, the grove began to carefully incorporate ritual elements gleaned from archaeological and anthropological

literature e.g. the offerings to the trees, the circumambulation of the grove site, and the sacrificial shaft. The intention was not to literally reconstruct the practices of historic Druids, but rather to add ritual elements that were consistent with NRDNA practice, and which also had some historical resonance.

Soon after the July 1982 election, the grove incorporated an offering to the trees into the standard service. During the Summer of 1982 the altar was finished, and it was consecrated on Samhain 1982. The grove also began the practice of sacrificing the previous Beltane's maypole ribbons in the Samhain fire. During this period, the active members were Emmon, Larry, Bob, Susan, and Leslie the Bard.

In January 1983 work began on a sacrificial shaft to make direct offerings to the Earth, next to the altar. Work continued through the Spring, and the shaft was consecrated on Beltane 1983. However, the shaft was repeatedly filled by local voles, who used it to dump their excavation tailings; in April 1985 the shaft was lined with a tile sewer pipe (laboriously hauled up the hillside over a period of several weeks), and re-consecrated.

As so many other members of the previous Berkeley Grove, Emmon also instituted a private training regimen of psychic powers during this period, involving concentration on candles, telekinesis, obfuscation, and meditation. All these were carefully studied experiments and evident failures were accepted along with reported successes. Few of these ever translated into the services, however.

Now since California doesn't have the seasonal variance of Minnesota the concept of a "Season of Sleep" was questioned, as was the high certainty of acceptance in Summer and refusal in winter. Instead, there was the recognition that in Northern California, that there are three possible responses to the sacrifice, not two, and that the winds do not automatically reject the sacrifice merely because of calendar date. Yes, no, and uncertain.

Continuing the trend of interaction with other Neo-pagan organizations in the Bay Area, around October 1983 Emmon began hosting meetings of a Wiccan circle, and for about the next two years, there was overlap between the two groups. It was common to combine the groups's High Day services (or rather, to do the Druid service at sundown, and the Wiccan service later that evening); similarly, normal Sunday services were sometimes combined, with the Druid service at about local Noon, and the Wiccan service in the evening. During this period the active members were Emmon, Larry, Bob, Herb, the Other Leslie (and her disruptive toddler), Susan, Stacey, and Raphael.

## The Live Oak Coup

Sometime before the Fall of 1985, Emmon had incorporated the grove as a tax-exempt religious organization. This had been his long-standing intention, going back to the days of the Berkeley Grove; it was the one contribution he felt uniquely qualified to make, and the one he felt most worthy of recognition. But, Emmon did not have long to enjoy this new creation.

In late 1985, the grove splintered in a way common to small groups. The 1985 grove election was held on the Sunday after Samhain, despite the irregularity of holding elections during the Winter half of the year. (This election had first been scheduled for Samhain or the service prior, but several members claimed they hadn't been notified, thus the postponement). Larry and Emmon were voted out of office; in effect, Emmon's tax-exempt organization had been taken away from him. Whether or not that was the motive for the electoral coup, Emmon believed it was; and tried to have a re-election or have the officers step down. When this failed, shortly thereafter, he forbade the new regime from holding services on his grove site.

Three members remained with the official Live Oak Grove, which soon faded into oblivion, mostly from the Wiccan circle. The Un-official grove, however, continued with hardly a pause.

Larry, Emmon, Leslie the Bard, Susan, Stacey, and Raphael held regular and High Day services as before – in effect, hiving off a new grove, although Emmon always insisted it wasn't really a grove, just a bunch of independent Druids.

## Sapping Vigor in Live Oak

Between February 1986 and Spring or Summer 1987, regular Sunday services were suspended, although High Day services continued; thereafter, both regular and High Day services continued until Spring 1993. Leslie the Bard became inactive about Spring of 1986; Susan left the grove in late 1986; Larry left in the Spring of 1987. By mid 1987 the membership was just Emmon, Stacey, and Raphael, and later just Emmon and Stacey in the last few years.

It seems that the reason for the decline of the group was due to both misalignments of personal interests among members and the complications of Emmon's health problems. Larry Press has explained to me that those years were more or less happy and productive years, and as such do not carry the type of material that often makes news headline banners. It is common with Neopagan organizations to go out with a bang or a whimper after about five to eight years, only to reorganize after a few years of reconstitution. Indeed, although Groves come and go, individuals remain and continue their own spiritual developments "off-camera," so to speak, in the background, exchanging cards and running into each other at festivals. Eventually these "atoms" will collide again in the right way, and a new reaction will ensue and a Grove may emerge. This is indeed what happened with the rise of the Baccharis Grove in 1999, as I'll relate in the next chapter.

## Carleton's Period of Regency

As we related in Chapter Four, Carleton had a break in leadership after the formidable Archdruidcy of Katya Luomala, which ended in the spring of 1980. A few first orders continued, notably Heidi, to study on campus, but Druid events seized and only one newspaper article appeared on the campus during her remaining time at Carleton. It seemed that with the passing of the Shelton Era, that Druidism was more or less moribund at Carleton, although the campus was still fertile grounds for revivals.

By uncertain means, word reached the Frangquists that Druidism had faded at Carleton, and during one of their visits to campus to assist in Alumni matters, a meeting was scheduled with some students who had expressed interest. Operating in a rather isolated manner, the 1982-5 revival, under the help of the Frangquists and Sheltons, was weakened by three heavy academic loads of its Third Orders who couldn't keep up a Grove and still pass Senior Comprehensive Exercises.<sup>258</sup> Very little was done in these years beyond holiday services, and membership soon dropped again. In 1983, Meg Ross and a friend brought three first-year women into the First Order before they themselves graduated. One of these women was Alice Cascorbi.

## The Second Revival

In 1985 there was a group of students and faculty on campus who were very interested in feminist spirituality, Neo-Paganism and Dakota religion. Most of the members lived communally at Farm House, tilling a nearby field in the Arboretum, and exploring a wide variety of social possibilities until 1990 or 1991. They formed a group called Pagan Studies, which got official CSA funding until 1991, and brought Selena Fox of Circle Sanctuary over from Madison Wisconsin as a guest speaker on Wicca in 1985 or 1986. The presentation went very well, and Selena was having dinner with some students when Koester (a Carleton student with a nature bent) mentioned that Carleton used to have its own form of Neo-Paganism called the Druids, which he had read about in "Drawing Down the Moon." When Selena asked if there were any still left, they all said no, but Alice Cascorbi stood up and said "Wait a minute, I'm a Druid." Everybody got very excited and an old copy of *Druid Chronicles (Evolved)* was dragged out from the attic and Pagan Studies spawned a subset known as The Carleton Druids.

They never stayed too close to the original Order of Worship and would often experiment with sweat lodges and Wiccan rites. Influence from Shelton and Bonewits lay mostly (respectively) in the *Druid Literature of the Green Book of Meditation* and the *Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*. The services were often evocative and noisier affairs, followed by long chatting sessions and parties. The practice began of going to pagan festivals (like Circle's Pagan Spirit Gathering) or events in the Twin Cities. Although the *Druid Archives' Blue Book* eventually became available to them (to be lost again in 1988), only a handful took any interest in the older debates [probably because DC(E) was rather one-sided in its presentation], because they had more interesting things to study, although there was fleeting contact between Shelton and Koester and Schields. The focus was definitely on the present, although some sense of legacy was felt. The continuity of the Second and Third Order had been officially broken and they couldn't get it re-established officially due to some logistical problems of scheduling. However, many vigiled on their own and considered it just as good, and several years or regular services were held with great zeal, but little in the way of written records, but rich in oral tradition. This eclectic mix of Neo-Paganism, Wicca, Native American religion, and Unitarianism into Carleton Druidism lasted, with a more or less anarchic leadership, until 1991 when most of the Revivalists had graduated or had gone inactive, leaving a confused system to the few young members who were their successors.<sup>259</sup>

## Changes at Carleton

When the Farm House charter for the off-campus house was lost, the Druids lost their central base of operations deep in the Arboretum to the Outdoor Club, and from 1991 to the present, they have perennially raised the issue of seeking a new communal house, but to no avail more or less. Orange House in 1991-1992 and Seecombe House in 1991-1992 offered some semblance of order, but most of the most active Druids have more or less resided at Goodhue Hall or Watson Hall since 1990. Farm House had been for over fifteen years the ecological, protest and folk-arts bases of the campus, tying the Druids into the vibrant Folk Dance and Folk Music clubs, a tradition that would continue into the 90s.

One other problem that beset the group was the increasing conservative changing nature of the campus, moving on the spectrum from "very liberal" to simply "liberal". As Carleton shot up the rankings into the top ten of Private Liberal Arts Colleges, a number of potential problem-causing freedoms were restricted; notably the Politically Correct movement and being one of the last "non-dry" campus in that select listing. In the previous twenty years, the Druids had experienced little to no pressure on the use

of whiskey at Summer services, but as the Grove began to wrestle with the issue of asking for CSA funding for the Druids, the issue was raised of minors partaking of the Waters or recreational drug-use among some members in the late 70s and 80s.

Other factors were involved that lessened the likelihood of continuance of this era's style. Being Sky-Clad at sweat lodges ("druid lodges") or some of the Wiccan observances was also frowned upon by campus security officers and the Dean of Students (although the streaking phenomenon apparently started in America at Carleton in the 1970s, and the enormous turnout for the Winter Nude Olympics in 1991 made the issue inescapable for the administration.) Some of the more "free love" practices among some members at Farm House in the 80s were dampened by the rise of the AIDS epidemic and greater restraint on sexuality brought about by sexual awareness education and spread of diseases. An additional problem of this era was the rise of Christian Fundamentalism in America, which reached Carleton about the same time as the Druids. In a way unseen since the days of the Anti-Druid, disruptions of services, desecration of meeting sites, unwelcome evangelism, and the spreading of rumors affected the open-ness in the way the group reached out to find new members. The low level antagonism never pushed the Carleton Group into an exclusively pagan self-definition, although openly Christian members were fewer in that period; possibly because the Unitarian Club on campus was drawing off a few potential members in that spectrum.

## A New Era Dawns

Andrea Davis (1988-1993) bridged this embattled period (as did I (1989-1994), and kept the grove going for a while on her own, despite academic burnout, with the help of Catalyst spirituality club (which lasted from 1991 to 1992). I began my own Reconstruction program in Winter 1992. Not having much personal interest in Wicca, I acquired a fondness for the older styles of Reformed Druidism which my research uncovered. I located Shelton and was ordained into the Third Order and began to provide a feeling of heritage in the grove, while allowing a great deal of freedom and mobility for members to do as they like. I've ordained and counseled over twelve people to the Third Order in the 1993-1995 period, including several past Carleton Druids, began the *Druid Archives* and reopened contact with the Council and other NRDNA groves in the USA. But this will be covered in the next chapter.



**Figure 14 A 19th Century sketch of the Mistletoe harvesting.**

# Chapter Seven: Reformed Druidism 1983-2003 Revival & Research

## Revival of Tradition

It just sounds so egotistically to say it, but I did make some important alterations in the course of Druidism at Carleton during my time at Carleton (1989-1994 and two years of visiting after that). These were only possible by the gracious support from current members and Alumni. I probably alienated more than a few members in 1992-1993 period, at a time when numbers were under thirty on the mailing list and only a handful attending services, when lucky. After 1992, there were few active Grove members older than the class of '94, so it was kind of a rebuilding phase. The Books in Part 9, and my interview in Part 10, will go into more detail, but I'll try to paint the broad picture of both Carleton and Reformed Druidism as a whole. One aspect that bothers me is that, while I have talked to all the principal actors in this period, I have not had a third party interview these people to get a more objective "outsider" view on the history. As a result, the following chapter is unfortunately heavily biased by my own memories and motives. I hope to present a more balanced picture in the next edition, as time passes and allows a truer picture of how events unfolded and the proper weight to assign to them.

## Influences

I first attended a few services in the spring of 1990 and Fall 1991 before my overseas trip to Scotland. I had joined because I was fascinated by Celtic music and culture at the time, and I thought the Druids would be a good further study of that material. I was surprised that Celtic influences were rather quite modest, mostly decorative trimming, and this disquieted me then, but after I did further study in later years, I grew to appreciate its non-Celtic charm. By the Fall of 1990, Grove activity was noticeably declining, and after intensive private study of Ancient Celtic Religion and Scottish Gaidhlig, I left for Scotland from Jan to June 1991, thus leaving me little knowledge of its further decline as most members graduated that year. The trip deeply impressed on me depths, and limitations, of the surviving beauty of those Celtic cultures; and yet my Druidism would still evolve in a decidedly non-Celtic manner.

## Social Mecca

When I returned to Carleton in Fall 1991, things were aided by the appearance of a social clique known as "Social Mecca", named after Kareem and Curtis' room on the Third Floor of Goodhue, which acted as one of the meeting places of the Druids for much of the 1991-1992 year. There was a poorly defined collective of about 20 new students, in which computer aficionados, sci-fi fans, Druids, Society for Creative Anachronism, theatre members and folk culture fans got together on a regular basis for meals and parties. John Burrige and Heather were also helpful organizers, as was the Catalyst discussion meetings every week at Salem's apartment to discuss pagan issues in general. It was truly a breath of fresh air, and heady times in Carleton Druidism, a streak that lasted until about Spring 1993 or so, when their increasing studies and other

personal issues began to dissipate this group. Services were as eclectic as ever during this period, and as usual, many of the events in related organizations had that "druidic" feel to them also. Throughout the year, I took several religion and poetry classes, harp lessons and practiced several arts and crafts on the side with the SCA. It was probably my most creative Bardic year when I think back on it.

One of the high points of the 1991-1992 year was Margot Adler's visit to the campus to discuss her book "Drawing Down the Moon", which many of the members had read. This book, and the service we had after that, was inspiring for the group and myself. After rewriting her book in 1986, she had assumed that the Carleton Grove had gone dormant, but was pleasantly surprised to see how it had been revived. That and the strange dream I had at Beltane, after the first service that I led, gave me the desire to take a more active role in Druidism at Carleton (and beyond) in the next year. During much of the 1992-1993 period, I still preferred to be the hyper-helpful preceptor, and assisted other people's services. However, as my peers and elders began to graduate one-by-one, I nervously had to assume more responsibilities as my apprenticeship came to an end.

## Archives

The 1992-1993 year was spent studying many more Celtic books as I began to prepare a knowledge base for my Senior Comprehensive Thesis, for which I needed a topic in the Spring of 1993. I was certain that it would be on the ancient Druids, but another subject would interest me far more by then. Much like the previous year, me and the other Druids split their time between Folk-Singing, Folk-Dancing, SCA, and Sci-Fi club; and the whole period was richly entertaining. I took several classes in religion and history with other Druids, giving even class work a Druidic feeling, especially on all the field trips to attend services of a dozen different religions; an experience which would encourage me to further emphasize Carleton's eclectic heritage.

Spring 1993 (when I should have graduated, were it not for my travels in Scotland) was troubled by a decline in activity amongst the Social Mecca crowd. Being a historian, rather than a prophet, I turned to my friends and to History to examine how prominent past members had dealt with the issues. I was rather surprised to find that very few records were actually archived at Carleton in those times, except for the Druid Chronicles (Evolved) and a few dozen papers (still better than many other Carleton clubs). At that time, I was deeply divided by the question of whether I was Christian or Neo-Pagan, and when I discovered that the Founders had found a nice balance between the two, it arrested my attention. Having so fully immersed myself in the adventures and debacles of Druidism at Carleton, and my own Celtic studies, I could not help but wish to investigate more into the group's history. I daringly re-oriented by Senior Comps project, and against the wishes of my medieval history supervisor, began a new research project to construct a history of Carleton Druidism. This research would consume much of my senior year (1993-1994).

I sent off a questionnaire in March 1993 to about thirty past Carleton members, and received several friendly replies and began to establish contact with Frangquist, Cascorbi, Schields and Shelton who began to funnel documents to me over the next year. I would interview dozens of Druids by phone or in person over the next year, my identification with the Founders probably deepened after my run into several evangelists who crashed our services that Spring, and then there was the debacle of the Branch Dravidians being killed by the FBI and Justice department. I began to value the right to worship as we see fit, not as other would wish us to do so. Perhaps I radicalized a little that Spring, more so than I like to recall, and I began to ask myself a lot of troubling questions.

As a result of all this gathering of information, I developed a huge collection of documents from Reformed Druids, ADF, Keltria, and a dozen other groups, which I had studied over the past three years. I also had a large collection of books on the Celts which I donated to the library, roughly doubling their collection.

During the 1993-1994 year, the Carleton Archivist, Eric Hillemann worked with me in cataloguing and organizing all the interviews, documents, clippings, books, constitutions and miscellaneous papers into a permanent collection. There are probably more than three thousand documents in the collection, giving a good base of study for anyway interested in researching American, European or Ancient Druidism. In 1995, I produced the first web-page for the RDNA and made this information available on-line. The collection is quite impressive, but despite wide advertising, it has had very few visitors over the last ten years; perhaps due to the rather inconvenient nature of traveling to southern Minnesota; yet it remains the best documented club at Carleton College.

The unwieldy and inaccessible nature of the collection, however, began to bother me, and I decided in summer 1994 to begin collecting the most important documents to produce a more portable version; which would turn out to be "A Reformed Druid Anthology". The project stall in 1996 and is about due for an over-haul in 2003, after ARDA 2 and the Reunion make new deposits of materials.

## 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

The Thirtieth Anniversary of Carleton Druidism on April 17<sup>th</sup>, 1993 was smaller than I had hoped, only six current members attended, in addition to Richard Shelton; whose later advice would sustain and carry me through many rough periods over the next year. I had not been able to reach many of the older alumni yet, nor was capable of handling a mailing of up to 150 past members. Beltane also went well, and the members of the Grove elected me Archdruid; perhaps the first official AD since 1984. When my friend Sam and I went to the Arb a few weeks later to accept our Archdruidship, we were surprised to notice that the next morning a new oak tree had been planted on the Hill of Three Oaks; which we took as an omen. It later turned out to be an illegal planting by the Rugby team to commemorate their own anniversary.

Unknown to us, at the very same time, the Hazelnut Grove was celebrating their own version of the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in the Bay Area; and got a one page write-up in the Green Egg magazine; which happened to be the first issue that I bought. In this manner, did Carleton and the Berkeley tradition begin to weave connection back together with numerous cross-interviews, exchange of event flyers, and our Dead Lake Scrolls being followed by the Dead Bay Scrolls from their side. Things died down again from 1995 until 2000 when Stacey contacted me, and connections were again established.

## The First Dalon Debate

Not long after that on May 21<sup>st</sup>, 1993 I vigiled and entered the Third Order, again the first "official" one since probably 1984. This meant a great deal to me at a time when legitimacy seemed so important. I would later realize that priesthood is not a one time phenomenon, but more of a daily re-invigoration and re-anointing by dedicated service over time. However, after that I would go on to the Pagan Spirit Gathering, where I would hear about the Hazelnut Grove's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and re-establish contact with other Groves, and I returned with unrivaled energy for the 1993-1994 year.

As I've mentioned before, there was a very free sense of leadership in the 85-93 period; where you were a leader because you led. And, looking back, my resurrection of the three Orders at Carleton seems reactionary, and a bit like re-imposing order on a

group that had escaped the grasp of authority. At the time, I was probably desirous of titles and other pompous accoutrements; something I'm still wrestling with. My consciously expressed desire then was that it would help clarify and encourage the leaders in the group were, by assigning them with a more firm sense of mission. It would also give them a deeper sense of legacy, and promote a historical curiosity. The concept was passed unanimously by the assembled members of the group at the time, and yet I still harbor mixed feelings of whether it was a proper solution for improving grove activity.

From 1993-1999, the Third Order definitely flourished, and seems to have symbolized a last step towards individual responsibility for their own spirituality, and a bold statement of concern for assisting the welfare of their fellow Druid movements. As of 2003, about 25 Carleton members have entered the Third Order, since the restoration, or about two or three people every year. It's proved to be a big social occasion for the other current Thirds to have "sympathy vigils" on the same night, and groggily celebrate over a joint breakfast. However in 1999, as we'll see, there was a slight change to the procedure.

## Senior Comps and Publishing

Events came thick and fast over my senior year as Grove membership swelled, my researches deepened, and I began to publish numerous small collections of material in my spare time; such as Dead Lake Scrolls, Dead Bay Scrolls, Books of Songs and Poetry 1 and 2, Green Books 2 and 3, Book of African Jedi Knight, Book of Ancient Sources, etc. It was a terribly busy year, that did wreck some of my personal relationships, as happens to many seniors at Carleton, I suppose; but it was an exciting time for me. The urge to publish has never really left me since, and I have occasionally been rather shocked at my own zeal, which must have puzzled a few of the more laid-back members of the groves I have been in. However, I've also been reluctant to release the material, choosing to passively wait for people to find it out and get a copy.

My Comps went through a dozen re-drafts as I began to understand Carleton Druidism as less influenced by ancient Druidism, and more of a completely modern phenomenon. I was a bit weak on theory, as is shown in this General History that you are reading, but eventually the 120 pg thesis (twice as big as requested by the history department), eventually was passed, perhaps out of sheer reluctance of faculty members to review it again. With that done in the spring of 1994, I began to put greater interest in picking a successor.

We had an excellent year, with a special visit by Frangquist at Samhain and a special "Druid Summit" in Spring 1994; when Isaac of ADF, Tony Taylor of Keltria and Richard Shelton came down for Beltane. Most of my first choices for a successor had not expressed strong interest in continuing in the 1994-1995 year, but eventually I found three first year students to take over my duties; Anne, Michelle and Becky. Once my paper was finished, I thought I was free of Carleton, but in fact, for the next two years, I would commute down from St. Cloud MN to visit my friends who had stayed in Carleton's administration after graduation; to make movies with them, and to check on the Druids occasionally.

## Half-Dozen Eggs Movie Production

Although never officially linked; from the summer of 1994 to the Summer of 1996, I operated an independent movie company called "A Half-Dozen Egg Productions" with Mark Heiman, and produced three full length films; using dozens of my fellow Druid members as cast and crew members, filming almost exclusively in the arboretum and around Carleton buildings. So in a very poignant sense, they were Druidic movies to me; with their characteristic Carleton sense of humor, prodding at authority and normalcy, and glorifying the beauty and mystery of the campus.

None of these movies were widely released, being mostly in-house productions, but it did bring together many members from the 1987 to 1997 period, and we got lots of fresh air and fun together.

Interestingly, my partnership with Mark "Folk" Heiman, my co-producer, led to another Druidical undertaking (A Reformed Druid Anthology) in 1996. Mark had inspired me with his songs in 1990 to undertake further study of the Celtic folk traditions that led me to the Carleton Druids and then study in Scotland. We also played harp and bagpipe together over the years while running the Folk-Singing, SCA, Sci-Fi club and Mystery Science Theatre 3000 club; all events heavily attended by Druids. Mark was never a self-identified Druid, but his monthly all-night song festivals, and weekly "Pickin' N Grinnin'" sessions have undoubtedly inspired generations of Druids at Carleton since 1988.

The first movie we made together in 1994 was "A Prisoner," based on "The Prisoner" series, and was a pretty poorly produced spy parody. The second movie in 1995 was "Gatorr: the Fighting Rabbit," based on "Ator: The Fighting Eagle," an amusing spoof of the barbarian action adventure genre, filmed mostly in the forests of the arboretum, dealing with themes of destiny and survival in trying times. This was almost good enough to be commercially released, but it also remained an "in-house" production. The third movie in 1996, "Drake's 7," based on the British Sci-Fi series "Blake's 7," continues the first movie in about 13 episodes written by various Druids and Druid-friendly writers, spoofing the Sci-Fi genre. Due to budget and equipment failure, this was only completed in 2003.

There are current plans to make a fourth movie in 2004, based on Irony Sade's romantic mystery "The Soul of Juliana Spring," which he wrote on the volcanic island of Tonga in 2000. This story is about a Reformed Druid who is inadvertently given custody of a young harpist's soul in exchange for aiding her musical career. He eventually also becomes a spiritual mentor and friend to her in trying circumstances. Undoubtedly, this movie will also feature several grove members and illustrate the RDNA pattern of the seasons.

## A Reformed Druid Anthology (ARDA)

After moving to St. Cloud, MN (a city of 50,000 about 2 hours from Carleton), I began the St. Cloud Big River Grove which met infrequently for two years, while I was studying at St. Cloud State University. I tired of accountancy classes and turned again to international studies. A friend of mine said that German, French and Gaelic were easy languages compared to Japanese, and we took the Japanese 101 class together; and he was correct, but I was hooked and began to make plans to work in Japan as an English Teacher.

During those two years, besides making movies and visiting the Carleton Grove (which went about as usual, under the Triple Archdruidcy from 1995-1996), I was also beginning to make plans to republish the Druid Chronicles (Evolved) for a 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary reprint edition in 1996 (first published in 1976). When I wrote my Comps, I had included several primary documents from Earlier Druid years, producing a very disorganized photo-copied mess that resembled a prototype of ARDA way back in 1994. I decided that, as I was retyping all the documents on my Macintosh, that I might as well edit DC(E) a little, and add a few counter-balancing documents, my new publications, etc. It soon mushroomed out of control.

Most Neo-pagan or modern religious groups have perhaps a book or two authored by their founders, but rarely a historical collection of primary documents on this scale. I was immodestly hoping that someone else would someday decide to research the Reformed Druids, and wished them to have a "portable version of the Druid Archives". The result of two lonely years of long nights on the computer, was "A Reformed Druid Anthology", a 500

page collection; one that was unlike anything I had seen in my research in the Neopagan world.

In a way, as I began to make plans for a self-imposed "exile" to Japan to escape Carleton's intoxicating pull, ARDA began to take the form of my parting gift to the Carleton Druids. I didn't expect to be back for five or ten years, and at the cusp of the internet revolution, did not yet expect to be able to remain in contact with them. I poured much of my soul into composing it, and perhaps as a result, it has done moderately well on the internet since then; having been downloaded several thousand times, far outstripping the 40 volumes that we physically printed at Kinko's at \$40 a volume.

Part of me felt it was presumptuous to publish the ARDA, because as a literary collection, it would leave readers with the impression that Druidism was about writing things down, when it was really about dancing under trees. Certainly Isaac was criticized by past Carleton members for publishing DC(E), but none have so responded to me yet, which makes me wonder when the other shoe is going to drop, and I get my just deserts. It has turned out to be an anchor of tradition for the most recent Carleton Druids, who also rarely want to root in the Druid Archives in the basement of their campus Library. I suppose, Carleton Druids just can't stand being indoors with dusty old documents, but I've seen them dragging that red hardbound book all over the arboretum to services.

## Legitimacy

It's probably that the Carleton Grove's constitutions were accepted over the years, but its difficult to check that. During the revival in the 80s there was a great deal of hesitancy of making the Carleton Druids "official" again, or requesting funding or to apply for an interest house. Instead other "front" groups were constructed, like the "Pagan Studies Group" in 1988, "Catalyst" in 1992, "Friends of the Earth Mother at Carleton College (FOEMACC)" in 1993.

The underlying reason was that college funded groups had to have listed officers and a copy of the membership rolls. Since most members were pagans or witches, many were hesitant about building up a "paper trail" with the "authorities". And this continued until 1995, when the Buxom Threesome sent in a new constitution and received funding for the Carleton Druids. There was apparently no outcry and the group has been "legit" since then.

There was one moment in 1997 when a retiring AD was thinking about "closing" the group while Irony was on a sabbatical in Europe, but the grove managed to survive until his return, although activity was near non-existent for the remainder of that year.

Since the 1980s, the Carleton Druids have participated in the Council for Religious Understanding (CRU), much to the displeasure of the rising number of evangelical groups on the campus. It has been listed in materials handed out by the Chaplain's office and the school's web-page. Even during it's unofficial period, the group never had trouble reserving rooms or sites or get articles in the newspapers. We're just too infamous to be unknown.

While not trying to toot the horn, I have been trying to merely appraise other groups of the RDNA existence and role in the development of American Druidism, and keep up contact with the leaders of the bigger groves in the other branches of the groups, like ADF, that descended from Reformed Druidism; through my collection efforts in the archives. In no way, do I consider the RDNA any more or less legitimate than their attempts to construct a Druidical framework to operate in.

Not long after the release of our second film, *Gator* in the summer of 1996, and the first edition of *ARDA*, I went to Japan to the sister school of St. Cloud State University, which was known as Minnesota State University of Akita (MSUA). Naturally, I immersed myself in the Shinto culture of the farmers in this traditional secluded village in Northern Japan. The Akita Grove soon developed with a mixture of Japanese and American students, basically alternating services between English and Japanese. After I joined the Japan Exchange and Teaching Program, the Shikoku Grove in Southern Japan was founded, and both groves were run by native Japanese since 1998.

As with my trip to Scotland, it was a very intense time of observing a new culture; in this case a modern pagan culture fully welded with technology. I wonder if Japanese society is a possible template for what the American Neo-Pagans are trying to create? During this time, I corresponded with Irony, who was also in exile in Tonga; where he had similar experiences, although they were nominally Christian. I feel that a year off mid-way through Carleton, is quite helpful to giving a Druid a wider experience to draw upon.

Any past reticence about mixing Neo-paganism and Reformed Druidism was melted by my experiences there; as long as the RDNA did not exclusively define itself as Neo-Pagans. I stayed four years in total from Summer 1996 to Summer 2000 and then returned to D.C.; with annual visits to Carleton to visit friends and Druids.

## Arboretum Changes

Over the years the Arboretum of Carleton has greatly changed. Until the 1980s, half of the Arb's 800 acres was rented out to farmers of corn, soy-beans, and hay. The original Druids preferred Monument Hill and the Hill of Three Oaks for services in the Upper Arb, not far from an operating Dairy farm that provided milk for the campus until 1965. The Arb is flanked by a 200 acre golf course, a 50 acre cemetery, the town of Northfield, a river, and miles of farmland. It is on a major north-south migration route for birds and deer, with a rich diversity of wetlands, upland forest, riverine forest, natural prairie, lakes, tall grass fields, and successional forest. It became a state game refuge in the 50s, and became more wild and filled from the 60s until the 1980s. At that point, non-native species began to be removed, oak prairie re-established, farmland allowed to turn to successional forest, and trails widened for cross-country skiing.

This transformation forced the Carleton Druids out of the Lower Arb, which had been their haunt in the 1980s. Because of the penchant for sweat lodges, more Druid services have moved to the banks of the river, which has caused conflict with security, over concerns of damaging turtle eggs or wildflowers species in this eco-system. When Farm House stopped being a center for students interested in farming, the Druids lost a base of operation half-way from the campus to the deeper Arb. The flood in 1993 destroyed the bridges that crossed to the west-side of the Cannon River, making that area also inaccessible. Also many of the meeting sites in the Lower Arb were turned to endangered prairie. Later on, vandalism of stone circles on the hill, led to their relocation. Gradually they were also pushed further and further east by further promotion of the Hill of Three Oaks as an Ultimate Frisbee and Rugby ground and the creation of the Recreation Center in 1999. Since 1996, most Druid activity has returned to the Upper Arb.

## The Second Dalon Debate

When I visited Carleton in 1999, Irony wanted to introduce me to his latest attempt to prepare a successor, but mentioned that she had some ambivalence towards toward the Third Order. I made the unusual step of showing the service to her before the vigil and she stated that she was comfortable following a deity

that she didn't know very well, and wouldn't enter the Third Order under these conditions. This naturally was a bit stunning, but in the argument that followed, I understood their reasoning that the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Orders didn't have patrons, although the higher orders did, so why did we need a patron for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Order? It would be more inclusive to keep it nameless, and simply another organizational title based on service to the Grove than to a Deity, of whom we know nothing.

This reminded me of the 1986-1993 period, in some ways. In one sense, the liturgy was only the surface of a large tradition, and the meat and bones probably remained the same, in my reckoning; so I supported it. After coming to a general understanding, with some short-lived bitterness, they decided to devise a new service that would be more dependent on the invocation of the winds. There was also a questioning period by grove members. Part of me was saddened to see one aspect of a tradition fall away (although the old service was still presented as an option to members) but happy to see a new one being established also.

Unfortunately, I know rather little of the 1999-2003 period, so far, except from brief visits and some e-mail exchange with Ehren and Merri. There have been no comprehensive interviews or memoirs yet. As a result, I can only say it sounds like she built on the rather solid foundation of Irony, and had astonishing grove growth for nearly four years. It's probably soon to speak about any new developments in this period, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition of *ARDA* will speak of those developments more deeply.

But the Wiccan influences seem to have lessened, both due to Andrea's departure from Minnesota, and a rather perplexing lack of background knowledge with incoming members. The group continued to be budgeted by the Carleton Senate, active in the interfaith council, hold weekly tea meetings, sweat lodges, high days and occasional lunar observances. The standard hodgepodge of investigation into meditation, martial arts, folk activities and theatre continues apace. Sounds like standard happy Druidism to me.

## On-line Druids

My own return from exile in August 2000 resulted in a succession of differently named groves within Washington DC; first the Monument Grove at George Washington University, then the D.C. Grove and finally we went totally on-line and I called in the Digitalis Grove. And, in fact, most of my obvious Druidical activity is now spent sending letters and introductory materials to members by e-mail.

The internet revolution has made immense changes in modern Druidism, mostly in terms of speed and cost. I roughly estimate that it is 10 times easier in the 1990s to remain an active part of the overall Druid community than in the 1970s. In Isaac's days, Druids mostly find out by word of mouth, browsing magazines and just running into groups. This still happens, but there is a parallel process in the Cyber World, and its more of an immediate gratification experience, where you can get information and replies to inquiries without have to drive across town or licking a stamp and waiting two weeks. And, as you know, you can meet people anonymously on-line despite being isolated in the Bible Belt or a small mountain in Northern Canada.

Many of the Founders had been specially gifted at early computer programming, even occasionally using some mainframes as altars, actually. Computer match-making also was invented at Carleton in the 1960s, bringing together young couples via zeroes and ones (which can be reassembled to make a druid sigil, by the way). This phenomenon of cyber-druids continued over the years, but communication via computer really began in the mid-80s. Isaac was a convert in the late 70s himself, in desperation to earn a decent living he sold all his occult books and bought programming manuals. At Carleton, all students had

e-mail accounts by 1988 (being one of the most linked-up campuses in the country) and there were intra-net system bulletin boards for the Druids and the Vax Notes conference began in 1988 lasting to 1996 with several hundred posts, and distribution of event flyers by e-mail. After 1996 a new web-based program was established and e-mail, even within Carleton's small campus, is still much more convenient than stuffing mailboxes at the post office.

Carleton's first Druid web-page was designed by me in 1995, while still a student at St. Cloud State University. AOL, Prodigy and a few other companies were still the main way to access the internet, and slow download times made distribution of large documents arduous, but groups like ADF, Keltria and a few others had rudimentary pages up by 1996. I would hazard that my publication of ARDA in 1996 was probably the largest Druid collection on-line at the time, but many of the other groups have been slowly building up a collection of on-line resources over the years. This concentration of actors in the Neo-pagan community on a few systems, in the early stages of the internet revolution, Now, although random discovery still happens, there is a sense of "brand name" recognition of which groups are out there, and the search engines correspondingly shuffle people to the most popular sites now.

## Recent Events

In Spring 2000, as I was preparing the initial homepage for the RDNA, I got my first letter from Stacey, who had been so involved in the Live Oak Grove. After Emmon's death, she and the other people from the Live Oak formed the Baccharis Grove; partly to work through their feelings about Emmon, and to get Stacey prepared for the Third Order. Not longer after that, and the decline of activity in Baccharis Grove, she established her own grove, called Poison Oak.

By Samhain 2000, Stacey had decided to revive the Druid Missal-Any newsletter, that she had assisted from 1988. I offered to build a web-page and distribute it to people on my mailing list, and those who had joined her NRDNA conference on yahoogroups.com which reached about 30 people in readership. When that conference began to fail, I started RDNAtalk, which was a bit more open to members. Druid Missal-Any gradually added photos, articles and essays on various topics; growing from 4 pages to an average of 28 pages, with a readership now of about 200 people, free on-line. It's pretty thriving now.

As we grew a number of protogroves across the country, we ran into the same problems that had plagued Isaac; how to physically meet and teach the non-written aspect of Reformed Druidism. How to encourage growth, without become obsessed with growth. This has not been solved yet, but it is one of the issues that I'll talk with other Druids at the Druid Reunions to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Reformed Druidism this year.

## ARDA, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition

Which brings me to this current collection. I had seriously attempted to publish a revision of ARDA 1 by Jan 1, 2000. I had wished to call it the Y2K edition. I gathered most of the necessary materials, but the time to complete them with Mark never became available, and the project was delayed for two more years. From Beltane 2002 to Beltane 2003, I began to undercover more materials, especially from the NRDNA tradition via Stacey's old and new issues of A Druid Missal-Any. There were also numerous materials produced by the on-line Druid conferences.

## Predictions

Now it's time to hazard guess of where the current trends are leading the Reformed Druids. I predict that on-line Druidry will continue to grow and produce numerous works. Trans-

generational alumni-student bonds will continue to deepen with 2<sup>nd</sup> generational Druids at Carleton, more reunions, and greater prevalence of computer skills among alumni. Proto-Groves will continue to rapidly appear and disappear, until such time as some type of program is developed to better incorporate them into the community. Reformed Druidism will probably become more recognized in the works of other Neo-Pagan researchers, and a greater sense of the family tree of American Druidism will develop; similar to the current fluorescence and coalescence of the British and French movements. I expect the Indo-European thesis will become a widespread tool for reconstruction of older traditions in Druid groups other than ADF. And I will bet that Carleton students will continue to explore whatever ideas and thoughts interest them from their classwork, despite all the trends of other outside groups. I anticipate bright days ahead, for a few years, at least.



**Figure 15 Another Druid evidencing wisdom and a poor choice in fashion accoutrements.**



# Chapter Eight:

## Conclusion

I hope that my rather long Epistle has helped to disperse some of the possible myths and misconceptions fostered by common assumptions of the term "Druids" and those printed by previous researchers (see Green Book 10). Primary among those myths that I hope to have dispelled are the assumptions of inapplicability of Reformed Druidism to monotheistic faiths or with Neo-Paganism. Similarly I hope the reader no longer associates the RDNA solely with Celtic forms or previous forms of Druidism, nor believes the often printed inevitability of becoming "organized," the overwhelming leadership status of Isaac Bonewits, the idea that humor is incompatible with religion and realizes the problems inherent with researching Reformed Druidism from a sole reliance on Isaac Bonewits or published sources (*including this one!*).

In case you've forgotten, this is a very unofficial history and it presents the RDNA in a far-too organized light. Many (if not most) other Reformed Druids will probably disagree with me on many of my interpretations. Let my ideas be considered as my own personal opinion and do not interpret them as a decisive statement in your further studies of Reformed Druidism. I recommend a closer inspection of the original documents and interviews before tentatively accepting my personal interpretations.

I welcome responses and corrections, but remember in the end that this is my own view of Reformed Druidism and it is but one way, yea, one way among many to understand its chaotic history. Further studies by NRDNA members will probably paint a very different understanding, especially by a researcher more familiar with the background of Neo-Paganism than I am. I hope this paper will act as a guide and reminded us of the many issues discussed and the many independent solutions we applied to the problem of how to be Druids.

Go with my blessing and I thank you for spending the time to read and think about my words.

**Master Druid:** Tell me, student, what do you believe?

**Baka:** I believe what I believe, Master.

**Master Druid:** You have learned well.



**Figure 16** A well-known 19th Century shot.

End Notes Most of these End-notes were produced for the Senior Comps version in 1994 and have not been updated since then.

- <sup>1</sup> i.e. New RDNA, Schismatic DNA, Hassidic DNA, etc. DNA
- <sup>2</sup> Reformed Druidism, or "The Reform," is my general collective term for RDNA, NRDNA, SDNA, HDNA and all other branches; but it does not include ADF or Keltria
- <sup>3</sup> See Part Six: Green Book 10 for other well-known studies.
- <sup>4</sup> While we know many student constitutions were handed in up to 1966, they weren't accepted. See Part Four of ARDA
- <sup>5</sup> The 125 year timeline handout in 1991 has the Druids as one of 60+ special attractions.
- <sup>6</sup> Aver. enrollment at Carleton is around 1500 over the last 30 yrs. See "Celebrating 125 years" timeline
- <sup>7</sup> Non-Intramural Correspondence 2/14/87 Greene to Cascorbi
- <sup>8</sup> Primarily the Druid Sigil, "Druid," pedigree to Carleton and a relationship with Isaac Bonewits
- <sup>9</sup> Part Four of ARDA
- <sup>10</sup> Magic, Witchcraft, and Paganism in America pg. 19
- <sup>11</sup> I recently heard an estimate that there are only 40,000 Quakers and about 180,000 Unitarian Universalist in the US, yet these groups are considered noteworthy.
- <sup>12</sup> The last 7 years have seen a lot on encyclopedias and books on Neo-Paganism, feminist spirituality and Wicca. See Part Six: Green Book 10.
- <sup>13</sup> Part Six: Green Book 10 has a few areas that I'd like to see explored further.
- <sup>14</sup> Bibliography in Part Six: Green Book 10.
- <sup>15</sup> I refer you to Appendix 1 in *Drawing Down the Moon*.
- <sup>16</sup> Such as Quakers, Universal Life Church & Unitarians
- <sup>17</sup> A medieval enthusiast organization founded in 1969 at Berkeley, now with over 50,000 **paid** members world-wide. Nearly every post 1969 grove in the Reform has interacted with an SCA group.
- <sup>18</sup> See Archives
- <sup>19</sup> While David Fisher may be considered the biological father of the RDNA, it was Frangquist who nursed and raised Reformed Druidism from infancy to adulthood.
- <sup>20</sup> Part Three of ARDA: A collection of scripts from early rituals.
- <sup>21</sup> Part Two of ARDA has a few from this collection of letters by Carleton Druids explaining Carleton Druidism. The Rest in the Archives.
- <sup>22</sup> See February 1993 Questionnaire
- <sup>23</sup> See Oral Interviews in Archives
- <sup>24</sup> See Correspondence in Archives
- <sup>25</sup> An "active" Druid is defined by some as a member of a functioning grove. Others define "active" as responding to a letter you send them about Druids. Once a Druid, always a Druid, as some say in the RDNA. At present we do not have Isaac's personal collection which may necessitate a re-write
- <sup>26</sup> See the last section of the bibliography in Part Six: Green Book 10
- <sup>27</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>28</sup> See Bibliography in Part Six: Green Book 10
- <sup>29</sup> i.e. Fisherisms.
- <sup>30</sup> See Roll of Archdruids and Groves in Part Four of ARDA.
- <sup>31</sup> I.e. the college playing Mommy and Daddy for us.
- <sup>32</sup> Oral interviews, and books on protest (see bibliography) make this very clear. See the Frangquists and Shelton interviews for a closer views on each of these subjects.
- <sup>33</sup> Observe in "Celebrating 125 Years" time line publication for effect of these causes on growth at Carleton or read the books on campus protests, especially "Berkeley at War."
- <sup>34</sup> See Maitland & Smith interviews and "Berkeley at War" for a closer view.
- <sup>35</sup> Sources are John Nason's Oral Interview & 30 pg. transcript, and comments by Maitland, Smith and other Druids in their interviews.
- <sup>36</sup> Again, oral interviews with Maitland, Nason and Smith; in addition to Druid interviews.
- <sup>37</sup> Source interviews with Maitland, Nason, Smith, David & Deborah Frangquist and Norman Nelson.
- <sup>38</sup> March 1964 Carleton College Catalogue pg. 136; thanks NN!
- <sup>39</sup> Internal Correspondence 10/23/69 in Part Two of ARDA in the Codex Affair section.
- <sup>40</sup> Oral History interview with Felicia Oldfeather
- <sup>41</sup> Feb. 1993 Questionnaire. Howard Cherniack

<sup>42</sup> It should be noted that the main books used by Druid groups today had not been published yet, that includes the authors Piggott, Ross and Chadwick. They did have Kendrick, which was good. More later.

<sup>43</sup> Archival Interview with David & Dee Frangquist 10/31/93

<sup>44</sup> At that time, women were not considered "deviant" enough to try and buck the system, so the chapel attendance slips were okayed by townswomen who had no idea what RDNA was, and didn't care. The men's slips passed under closer scrutiny and were rejected.

<sup>45</sup> Feb. 1993 Questionnaire with Nelson, Also interviews with the Frangquists and Nelson. I might point out that most researchers believed otherwise. Many Druids continued to go to the Sunday Choir even after the requirement was dropped.

<sup>46</sup> Feb. 1993 Questionnaire letter from Norman Nelson pg. 3.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid. Pres. Nason became a 1st order RDNA member 2 weeks before the requirement was rescinded. Internal Correspondence 6/18/64

<sup>48</sup> See Maitland interview

<sup>49</sup> I consider them: Fisher, Cherniack, Nelson & the Frangquists (not just the first three)

<sup>50</sup> Frangquist interview in Part Ten of ARDA

<sup>51</sup> Questionnaire and oral interviews recorded & unrecorded.

<sup>52</sup> As originally happened to me in my first 8 months of research. (growl!)

<sup>53</sup> Actually only the office of "Archdruid" has any historical basis.

<sup>54</sup> Although Kendrick and MacCulloch should have been sufficient

<sup>55</sup> The story of the continual building of altars and their subsequent vandalization takes up a great deal of space in the Druid Chronicles (Reformed)

<sup>56</sup> i.e. Rome, Greece, Egypt, Israel, Celtic civilization, Sumerian, American Indian, etc.

<sup>57</sup> I.e. the goats slaughtered during the Islamic Hadj to Mecca, kosher, some Hindu religions, Santeria.

<sup>58</sup> Except in the case of war, where they will sacrifice thousands of lives for a religious ideal or goal.

<sup>59</sup> Druid Chronicles (Reformed) Early Chronicles 5:10

<sup>60</sup> Druid Chronicle (Reformed) Early Chronicles 5:9

<sup>61</sup> Druid Chronicles (Reformed) Early Chronicles Chap. 5.

<sup>62</sup> Druid Chronicles (Reformed) Book of Meditations 7:10-11

<sup>63</sup> See News Clipping in Archives for samples: Carletonian 11/13/63, Purdue Exponent (on Purdue Grove) 1/5/70 & Drawing Down the Moon article on Druids.

<sup>64</sup> Repts, Paul. *Zen Flesh, Zen Bones*, pg. 175

<sup>65</sup> See Druid Chronicles (Evolved), Green Books in Part 6 of ARDA & Apocrypha in Part Two of ARDA respectively.

<sup>66</sup> These included Fisher '65, Nelson '65, David & Deborah Frangquist '66/'67, Gary Zempel '66, Dick Smiley, Thomas McCausland, Shelton '71, McDavid '72. Essentially all the key Druids in the RDNA's inter-grove history.

<sup>67</sup> The reader should know by this point, that it was the Frangquists who were integral people in setting of the foundations for the growth and future appeal of Reformed Druidism.

<sup>68</sup> Internal Correspondence 1964 Fisher to Frangquist.

<sup>69</sup> I.e. Druids

<sup>70</sup> I.e. a Third Order "priest" who stays out all night awaiting the dawn initiation.

<sup>71</sup> Druid Chronicles. Meditations Chapter 10 in Part One of ARDA

<sup>72</sup> Experimentation in American Religion. pg. 15-18. And Encyclopedic Handbook of Cults pg. 8.

<sup>73</sup> Non-Intramural Corr. Fisher to Melton 7/13/73 in Part Two of ARDA.

<sup>74</sup> Part Six of ARDA, Green Book 2

<sup>75</sup> Feb. 1993 Questionnaire Glen McDavid pg. 5

<sup>76</sup> Internal Correspondence 1/28/86 Shelton to Koester

<sup>77</sup> Especially early Christianity, which I'll discuss later in the Liturgy analysis.

<sup>78</sup> Quite notably the use of the Waters-of-life in the liturgy, as I will speculate later.

<sup>79</sup> In many ways, Frangquist may have designed the perfect Zen monastery, a Zen monastery that doesn't know it is a Zen monastery

<sup>80</sup> Feb. 1993 Questionnaire. Glen McDavid pg. 5

<sup>81</sup> You may be also wondering why it's taking me so long to get to this part. Well, Gibson took over 1400 pages to describe the Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire, but I'll take less than a hundred.

<sup>82</sup> Some feared to even require these.

<sup>83</sup> Druid Chronicle Book of Law, 5 & 6 in Part One of ARDA.

<sup>84</sup> Feb. 1993 Questionnaire letter from Norman Nelson pg. 2.

<sup>85</sup> Non-Intramural Correspondence Fisher to Melton in Part Two of ARDA.

<sup>86</sup> Larry Press interview. Be'al and a couple are given just a smidgen of story, but hardly much.

<sup>87</sup> Neo-Pagans prefer immanent Divinity. Many hard-core monotheists while claiming both, prefer transcendence.

<sup>88</sup> Non-Intramural Correspondence 4/64 KARL. The Book was "Histomap of Religion" published by Rand McNally in 1943.

<sup>89</sup> The Strange Proverbs of Michael Scharding.

<sup>90</sup> See Part Four of ARDA.

<sup>91</sup> I've looked very hard and reviewed all the interviews. I'm not sure the SDNA differed too much in practice, either.

<sup>92</sup> Druid Chronicles. Meditations 6:7-8 in Part One of ARDA.

<sup>93</sup> Non-Intramural Correspondence Frangquist to Carletonian 11/12/65 This was before sexist terminology was realized. Note "rational" was a loophole for non-religious Druids.

<sup>94</sup> Druid Chronicles. Meditations 6:9-11 in Part One of ARDA.

<sup>95</sup> Sort of like the academic "honor system" applied to religious beliefs.

<sup>96</sup> Frangquists interview in Part Ten of ARDA

<sup>97</sup> Carleton Apocrypha. A Book of Faith paragraph 5

<sup>98</sup> Feb. 1993 Questionnaire Ellen Shelton

<sup>99</sup> Feb. 1993 Questionnaire Faris Keeling

<sup>100</sup> Student Organizational Report RDNA 4/23/65 Frangquist

<sup>101</sup> Translation of Uisge-Beatha (Whiskey). "Waters-of-life" appear as a joining medium in "Stranger in a Strange Land," a science fiction book then available. They also show up in "Dune," but that wasn't published until 1965.

<sup>102</sup> Note that "Preceptor" and "Server" are titles swiped from Episcopalian ritual.

<sup>103</sup> Unrecorded interview with James Hall '64 during Mar 1993.

<sup>104</sup> Again, Nelson Questionnaire response pg. 6. See Druid Chronicles (reformed) Early Chronicles 1:6. I go into Fisher's origins in greater detail in Chapter Four.

<sup>105</sup> Constitutions of the RDNA. Part Four of ARDA.

<sup>106</sup> It might be noted that there are three primary orders in freemasonry and that one "rite" has exactly 10 orders, they being primarily honorary after the third order. Part Four of ARDA for rules and Part Three.

<sup>107</sup> Again, Nelson Questionnaire response pg. 2

<sup>108</sup> Which is one of the primary reason Mr. Fisher has often refused any more interviews.

<sup>109</sup> Student Organizational Report RDNA 4/24/66 by Zempel

<sup>110</sup> In fact, he's the one that collected and preserved the "Celtic" scraps in Druid Chronicles (Reformed)

<sup>111</sup> Non-Intramural Correspondence Fisher to Melton 7/13/73 (In Part Two of ARDA)

<sup>112</sup> Druid Chronicles (Reformed) Customs 4:12 in Part One of ARDA.

<sup>113</sup> As a contribution to the "Masonic Theory," Isaac claims in DC(E)'s section on Celtic Deities (Welsh cycle) that another Druid group used Dalon ap Landu also.

<sup>114</sup> I refer you to several books on Masonic initiations. See Bibliography, esp. Carnes in Part Six: Green Book 10

<sup>115</sup> Caused by bad omens, candidate falling asleep, or deep doubts by the initiating Druid.

<sup>116</sup> See Part Four of ARDA

<sup>117</sup> See Part Four of ARDA for dates of grove foundings.

<sup>118</sup> Women had trouble with all-night vigiling at Carleton until 1970 due to a 10pm curfew on females, thus it was harder for women to become Third-Order priests. Therefore, there was some debate as to how valid their priesthoods were in comparison to men's. This proposal, incidentally was started by Frangquist. This problem is ably discussed in the Frangquist Interview.

<sup>119</sup> Records of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu 1/27/65, Part Four of ARDA.

<sup>120</sup> This passing of continuity through "Apostolic Succession" may have been a subtle joke on Christianity since it eventually leads back to David Fisher, whom nobody believes to have actually been validly initiated. Zen-point: Apostolic Succession was without foundation, but still considered important. Currently the RDNA of Carleton sees no reason why any Third Order Druid can't ordain another, but the earlier reason was to restrict expansion to responsible people (like, um, ArchDruids?).

<sup>121</sup> It isn't written anywhere that a consensus is necessary but the only accepted decisions have been by consensus. It is an unwritten tradition.

<sup>122</sup> Internal Correspondence Smiley to Frangquist (Part Two of ARDA.) Savitzky's taped interview.

<sup>123</sup> See Chapter Four for further discussion on the Waters-of-Life.

<sup>124</sup> See the Epistle of David the Chronicler, Chapter 1 in either form of the Apocrypha in Part Two of ARDA.

<sup>125</sup> Records of the Council of Dalon ap Landu 5/7/1964

<sup>126</sup> Interviews Shelton, Press, Abbot, Bonewits, Salee, Carruth, Savitzky, Bradley, Sherbak. Some in Part Ten of ARDA.

<sup>126</sup> Druid Chronicles (Reformed) Early Chronicles 2:7-10. Part One of ARDA.

<sup>127</sup> Records of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu 1/27/65. See Nelson interview for the "Missionary Dilemma" about how to consecrate waters without a current preceptor.

<sup>128</sup> See constitutions in Part Four of ARDA.

<sup>129</sup> Records of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu 1/27/65 Part Four of ARDA

<sup>130</sup> Carleton Apocrypha. Book of Faith paragraph 5 Part Two of ARDA.

<sup>131</sup> I refer you to Internal Correspondence 9/68 to 9/69 in Part Two of ARDA

<sup>132</sup> The "Maybe" response is common. See Part One of ARDA Endnotes 2:6.

<sup>133</sup> I.e. Ordained at Carleton Grove (CL) by Fisher in 1965.

<sup>134</sup> Frangquists Interview in Part Ten of ARDA

<sup>135</sup> Internal Correspondence 2/5/69 Smiley to Draft in Part Two of ARDA.

<sup>136</sup> Internal Correspondence 3/24/69 Smiley to Draft. This statement was true, for at Carleton, Smiley felt it was his only religion and the title "priest" is a common title of a minister. Part Two of ARDA

<sup>137</sup> (CL68:Peck) ArchDruid of Carleton Fall 68-Spring 69 and ArchDruid of Stanford from 1970-78.

<sup>138</sup> (CL69:Savitzky) AD of Carleton Spring 69-71. AD of Ann Arbor 1974-78.

<sup>139</sup> How similar to being forced to go to Chapel requirement, whether you were religious or not.

<sup>140</sup> See Shelton interview in Part Ten of ARDA

<sup>141</sup> It wouldn't take 1/2 hour to make the RDNA a ULC church without any loss of individuality. But most Carleton students would be too lazy to send in quarterly reports.

<sup>142</sup> Universal Life Church. *Life Is* pg. 11.

<sup>143</sup> Isaac did not, in fact, come to hear about this case until 1993.

<sup>144</sup> Internal Correspondence Shelton to Scharding 4/24/94

<sup>145</sup> Internal Correspondence Shelton to Scharding 4/24/94, see also Shelton to Council 16 October 1969

<sup>146</sup> Internal Correspondence Shelton to Scharding, sometime between 1994 & 1995.

<sup>147</sup> Interviews with Stefan and Carruth. Most Druids are delighted to hear Carleton is STILL going.

<sup>148</sup> Internal Correspondence Shelton to Scharding April 24th, 1994.

<sup>149</sup> For more on this see Frangquists & Carruth interviews. Drawing Down the Moon, too.

<sup>150</sup> A fun tidbit is that the large British Druid group, OBOD, also began in 1963. Coincidence?...You, the reader, decide.

<sup>151</sup> Perhaps the Neo-Pagan revival was the opposite effect of men and women becoming disgusted at the prominence of males in controlling the understanding of religion. Further study on such a topic would be very interesting to follow.

<sup>152</sup> For which the Compass and Straight edge are it's symbols.

<sup>153</sup> Intriguingly, Pythagoreans also had a seeming prohibition on writing down their beliefs. See Part Six: Green Book 10

<sup>154</sup> Frangquist interviews and Nelson interview. See Bibliography for books available on Druidism at Carleton during the early 60s.

<sup>155</sup> Frangquist Interview 10/31/93 in Part Ten of ARDA and Nelson & Cherniack. See Part Three of ARDA.

<sup>156</sup> Norman Nelson & Fisher were both Episcopalian and Druid Founders. Adler "Drawing Down the Moon" pg. 322 thought the same of a descendent service at Stanford. This is seen especially in the naming of the lower two officers as "preceptor" & "server." The term "Arch-Druid" was, of course, a common term in academia from the times of Caesar. See News Clipping from the Carleton Voice in 1988 by James Hall.

<sup>157</sup> Feb. 1993 Questionnaire letter from Norman Nelson pg. 6. Frangquist interview.

<sup>158</sup> Archival Interview with David & Dee Frangquist 10/31/93 in Part Ten of ARDA. Internal Correspondence 1964 Fisher to Frangquist & 11/28/69 Fisher resigns Patriarch of Grannos (See Part Two of ARDA)

<sup>159</sup> Interview with Larson in Part Ten of ARDA. But, Nelson is unsure if it's true.

<sup>160</sup> Larson notes possible Christian carryovers of St. Paddy's Day, Easter and Lady's Day.

<sup>161</sup> In order to explain this attitude, I highly recommend that the reader should watch Monty Python's "The Life of Brian"

<sup>162</sup> For Isaac's analysis of the Order of Worship see the Part Two of ARDA, 2nd Epistle of Isaac and the Real Magic review in Part Six: Green Book 10

<sup>163</sup> The precise combination is a matter of controversy. The most prevalent ratio of Whisky to water is 1:3 except on festivals (during the summer half of the year) when it inverts to 3:1.

164 Latin's similar translation for whiskey is "Aqua Vitae," the waters of life.

<sup>165</sup> However a chronological problem is that distilled beverages were not invented until the 6th century at least, long after evidence for ancient Druids ceases. Larson however suggests that heat distillation may have existed earlier, or perhaps even through freeze-distillation.

<sup>166</sup> We go into far greater detail about the Druid Calendar in Part Four of ARDA and Part Six: Green Book 7 of ARDA

<sup>167</sup> I.e. Christmas, Sabbaths, Sundays, Fridays (Islam), the birthday of Krishna, etc.

<sup>168</sup> Again, see the Bibliography in Part Six: Green Book 10

<sup>169</sup> From the Founders (Fisher, Nelson, Cherniack and Frangquist), three would eventually return to Episcopalianism

<sup>170</sup> I didn't even know of Berkeley's non-collegiate base until a month ago, that's how dangerous any reliance on spotty written records can be without lots of interviews.

<sup>171</sup> I.e. animal sacrifice, orgies, kidnapping, brain-washing and other such clap-trap theories by anti-cult "experts." I refer you to Drawing Down the Moon and "In Gods We Trust" in the bibliography.

<sup>172</sup> "Berkeley at War" chapter 2. A delightful chapter.

<sup>173</sup> I need only refer you to the "Berkeley in the Sixties" video in my bibliography.

<sup>174</sup> I refer statistic-freaks to "Experimentation in American Religion" in the bibliography.

<sup>175</sup> See Shelton, Frangquist, (both in Part Ten of ARDA) and Abbot & Savitzky interviews.

<sup>176</sup> See Drawing Down the Moon Chapters 3,4,5 & 7 and Bonewits, Hixon, Press, Tezra, Carruth, Abbot, Sherbak, & especially Bradley interviews.

<sup>177</sup> Chapter 3 of Drawing Down the Moon and Interviews with Joan Carruth, Bonewits & Bradley.

<sup>178</sup> Interview with Isaac Bonewits 2/23/94 and see most encyclopedias' almost exclusive focus on the RDNA's fulfillment of this role. See Appendix D..

<sup>179</sup> Observation, conversations and interviews with Taylor, Bonewits & Sherbak.

<sup>180</sup> Since that time, the Celtic field has been swamped with other organizations. See list of groups in Appendices of Drawing Down the Moon and Circle Networking Directory.

<sup>181</sup> See Part Four of ARDA

<sup>182</sup> Interviews with Shelton, Bonewits, Carruth (both in Part Ten of ARDA) and those of Tezra, Sherbak, Hixon, Press, Salee, Savitzky, Bradley and McDavid (unrecorded). See Drawing Down the Moon Chapter 14 and Part Six: Green Book 10 for more discussion on the Neo-Pagan's background.

<sup>183</sup> A medieval society found in Berkeley in 1968 with over 50,000 paid members world-wide. See interviews with Shelton, Bonewits, Press, Carruth, Salee, Bradley, Larson, Savitzky, Scharding and the Frangquists. Internal Correspondence 4/1/72 McDavid.

<sup>184</sup> Pick any interview

<sup>185</sup> See Interviews with Savitzky, Cascorbi, Adams, Shelton, Bonewits, Bradley, Abbot and Larson. see the Archive's Computer Notes on the "famous" Reformed Druid IBM program.

<sup>186</sup> See interviews of Shelton, Frangquist, Adams, Cascorbi, Bradley. Seidel was a super folk dancer.

<sup>187</sup> Interviews with Larson, Abbot, Carruth, Bonewits.

<sup>188</sup> Without being elitist, many Carleton missionaries complained about the lower intellect of members.

<sup>189</sup> He received the first and last bachelor's degree in "Magic and Thaumaturgy," to tweak the nose of the University. See Larson, Bonewits, Carruth, Press, Abbot and Sherbak for more personal descriptions about Isaac, good & bad, not to mention Part Six: Green Book 10. Isaac was always tweaking noses.

<sup>190</sup> Ordination to the Third Order is, sadly, restricted access

<sup>191</sup> One of the ironies of this, sometime obsessive, reliance on Celtic sources is that it may take centuries to nurse together the surviving fragments; in which time a new system might be developed.

<sup>192</sup> I apologize for the use of the term "Affair" which sounds much too sexy, however the "Isaac Intercourse" and "Isaac Interaction" sound equally silly.

<sup>193</sup> Isaac was ordained in October 1969 by Larson.

<sup>194</sup> Drawing Down the Moon 1986 pg. 422 and Interviews with Bonewits and Carruth.

<sup>195</sup> Larson, being Isaac's roommate in 1969, would have told him about Shelton's Codex Affair. Larson wrote to Shelton in 1969 about the matter.

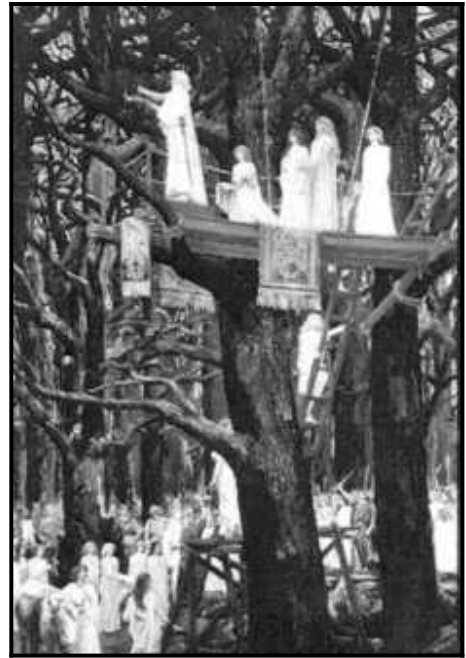
<sup>196</sup> Records of CoDAL 27, January 1965 Council (a) in Part Four of ARDA



<sup>270</sup> See Druid Chronicles (Evolved) for the breakdown of it's contents  
<sup>271</sup> Druid Chronicles (Evolved) Introduction to Chronicles of Foundation.  
<sup>272</sup> Most of the contributors and editors were from the Berkeley Grove.  
<sup>273</sup> The Green Book was mainly confined to Carleton until Mid-90s.  
<sup>274</sup> Carleton Apocrypha, see Part Two of ARDA.  
<sup>275</sup> Of which you are reading volume 1.  
<sup>276</sup> Savitzky and Larson had both studied at Carleton.  
<sup>277</sup> Pg. 300 1978 edition; 321, 1985 edition in Part Six: Green Book 10 of ARDA.  
<sup>278</sup> Pg. 301 1978 edition; 323, 1986 edition. The last part of the quote is pushing it a bit far in Part Six: Green Book 10 of ARDA.  
<sup>279</sup> Interviews with Bradley (Humanistic), Savitzky (skeptical), Larson (Paleo-Pagan), Cindy Salee (Taoist/Native American).  
<sup>280</sup> Magic, Witches & Witchcraft in the US pg. 13 in Part Six: Green Book 10 of ARDA.  
<sup>281</sup> Ibid. pg. 34 in Part Six: Green Book 10 of ARDA.  
<sup>282</sup> Ibid. pg. 35 in Part Six: Green Book 10 of ARDA  
<sup>283</sup> Ibid. in Part Six: Green Book 10 of ARDA.  
<sup>284</sup> bold face is mine, not theirs



**Figure 17 Inspiring locations for Bards are not always conducive to audiences or personal safety.**



**Figure 18 We sure have plenty of Pliny aficionados.**



**Figure 19 So Endeth Part Eight**

So Endeth  
 Vol Eight  
 Of ARDA 2

# VOLUME NINE

## THE BOOKS OF THE LATTER-DAY DRUIDS

### 2003 Introduction

#### WHERE DID EVERYTHING GO?!

In order to confuse the general reader, and make things more compartmentalized, I have transferred many of the contents of this section to other more logical areas in the Green Books.

The Book of the African Jedi Knight is in Green Book, Vol. 5  
The Book of Ultimate Answers is in Green Book, Vol. 5  
The Book of Songs and Poetry, Vol. 1 is in Green Book, Vol. 6  
The Book of Songs and Poetry, Vol. 2 is in Green Book, Vol. 6

In addition, I've added the recently published Dead River Scrolls (Published 1997) to this section.

-Enjoy,  
Mike Scharding  
March 1, 2003  
George Washington University, D.C.

Printing History  
1st Edition 1993  
2nd Edition 1996 (ARDA)  
3rd Edition 2004 (ARDA 2)



The Drynemetum Press



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2003 Introduction  
2003 Table of Contents  
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1996 Table of Contents

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The Book of Opposition  
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The Book of Paul: Part One  
The Book of Haiku  
The Book of Post Scripts: Part Two  
The Book of Vigils  
The Book of Cattle Raids  
The Book of the Great Dream  
The Book of Stones  
The Book of Fire

### The Dead Bay Scrolls 1993

Das Edda Todvolkfortgeschritten  
The Book of the Boring Times  
The Book of Mr. Boring  
The Book of Games  
The Book of the 30th Anniversary  
The Book of the Laundry Think-Tank  
Addendum to the Ordination of the Second Order  
The Book of Samhain

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The Mini-Epistle of Michelle the Dark  
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The Book of Exile, Part One  
The Tree Epistle of John  
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The Book of Vigils, Part Two  
  
Ein Tanz Dream  
The Winter King: A Dream  
The Wild Hunt  
The History of Legitimacy  
  
The Poems of Irony  
The Poems of Merri  
The Poems of Chris  
The Poems of Brad  
The Poems of Corwin

## 1996 Introduction

Unlike most of the previous materials written by many authors throughout the Reform, the following materials mostly come from me and my friends at Carleton (the Dead Bay Scrolls come from Hazelnut NRDNA). Most of them were written in the 1993–1995 period (which along with the Green Book volumes 2 & 3 in the Summer of 93, and ARDA) mark this as a period of high literary output. This period is reasonably separate from the 1963–1979 period of earlier-day Druidism, so I have chosen to call it latter-day Druidism. The title is also a slight humorous poke at Mormonism. There are three main categories that group the contents of part nine;

### 1996 Table of Contents

1. Thirtieth Anniversary Histories  
The Dead Lake Scrolls (Published Aug. 93)  
The Dead Bay Scrolls (Published Dec. 93)
2. Weird Stuff  
The Book of the African Jedi Knight (Published Dec. 93)  
The Book of Ultimate Answers (Published June 94)
3. Songs and Poetry  
The Book of Songs and Poetry, Volume 1 (Published July 93)  
The Book of Songs and Poetry, Volume 2 (Published Dec. 93)

My literary explosion began after reading the long-neglected materials of the Druid Archives and seeing the sheer possibilities of Reformed Druidism. All this was taking place during the May 93 to May 94 period when I was Arch-Druid. I figured that I am better at writing than at leading rituals (although I did hold an unusually large number of rituals), so I spent much of my energies went into producing literature that might outlive my physical presence at Carleton. I also had a great number of things to say, and this was a good time to write them down. Each book has been individually published before, but this is the first time they have all been published together.

Please enjoy them, do not consider them dogma and share with your friends.

Michael Scharding  
January 6th, 1996 c.e. Day 67 of Geimredh  
Year XXXIII of the Reform



**Figure 1 Twin pillars by Lower Arb's river,  
dedicated to the Two Basic Tenets 2004.**

# THE DEAD LAKE SCROLLS

## Preface 1993

The Dead Lake Scrolls were written at about the time that I began to explore the history of Reformed Druidism and noticed that the records were pretty shoddy after 1980. I resolved to leave behind some type of document to cover the more recent history. It turned out that my comprehensive project would be on Reformed Druidism, so the relevance of this document is no longer as a quick summary, but as an insight into Druidism at Carleton in the early 90s during my active Arch-Druidcy of May 93 to May 94.

The Dead Lake Scrolls received little if any attention from most of my fellow Grove members, but the Hazelnut Grove loved them and wrote The Dead Bay Scrolls in response. I therefore publish them both, hoping that some wisdom will be found in them by the reader.

As with all Reformed Druidic material, none of this is to be considered to be rigid dogma or unassailable truth. Read it in the lighthearted spirit that it was written in.

—Scharding

## The Book of Introduction

### Chapter the First

1. I tell you the Carleton Druids are truly a marvelous exercise in religious faith. What other group on campus is as dedicated to loving nature and that encourages diversity of religious beliefs?
2. The knowledge gleaned from the practitioners of the Druidic outlook, is worthy of being written down; both for entertainment and the chance it may enlighten someone.
3. I highly encourage others to add to this work with their own writings on miraculous occurrences, insights gained and beauties observed while at Carleton or elsewhere. Poetry and songs would be a welcome addition.
4. The title of this work makes an oblique reference to the state of Lyman Lakes.

### Chapter the Second

1. The Contents are:  
The Book of Introduction  
The Book of Years  
The Book of Opposition  
The Book on John Burridge  
The Book of Post (s)Crypts Pt1  
The Book of Paul  
The Book of Haiku  
The Book of Post (s)Crypts Pt2  
The Book of Vigils  
The Book of Cattle Raids  
The Book of the Great Dream  
The Book of Stones  
The Book of Fire

## The Book of Years

(By Mike the Fool & Richard the Green)

### Chapter The First

1. How did the Druids at Carleton progress over the last thirty years? Sit down and I will tell you so that you may see the larger picture of the Reformed movement.
2. For it is in knowing the Past, that the present becomes clear.

### Chapter the Second

1. The Years of Peace (1963–1968 c.e.) were spent in happy isolation at Carleton's newly founded Grove. None knew of the growing neo-pagan movement then. They only concerned themselves with removing the odious religious requirements and partaking of the waters of life. They researched and solidified a vague philosophic system and hierarchy.
2. The Groves of Vermilion and Rapid City, SD were founded by Nelson and disappeared. Likewise with the Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan, Wisc and New York Grove the First by Frangquist and Fisher.
3. The favorite ritual sites of the Druids, until the Years of Exploration, was the Hill of Three Oaks, Computer Center and Monument Hill.
4. Read the Druid Chronicles to learn more.

### Chapter the Third

1. The Years of Growth (1968–1974 c.e.) started with the founding of the Berkeley College Grove, from where Robert Larson and Isaac Bonewits did take their knowledge of neo-paganism.
2. These two did also found the Twin Cities Grove and the Stockton Grove.
3. Elsewhere, the RDNA of Carleton College did found the Chicago, the Ann Arbor and the Stanford Groves under Glenn McDavid, Conway and Savitzky.
4. Carleton spent many of these years growing larger after an initial plunge in membership. All of the major publications and codification were finished by this point including the Green Book of meditations, the Apocrypha and Liturgy.

### Chapter the Fourth

1. The Years of Pain (1974–1976 c.e.) were started by Bonewits' letter to the Council of Dalon Ap Landu (which is all the third order priests) declaring that the RDNA was in fact an "eclectic, Neopagan & Reconstructionist Priestcraft."
2. Many did rend their hair over his terminology! Many were exceedingly wroth with each other. See the Orange Book of the Apocrypha and the Book of the Apocrypha found in Bonewits' version of the Druid Chronicles for their words.
3. Since the current Carleton Archdruid was seemingly out of touch, so they wanted to assume a rotating head for the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.
4. A vote was taken: most of the Carleton graduates voted against it, most Californians voted for it.
5. A split developed and the New RDNA was formed.



6. The Yellow Book of The Druid Chronicles (Evolved) was published and the Orange Book of the Carleton Apocrypha was completed but unpublished.

## Chapter the Fifth

1. The Years of the Decline (1976–1980 c.e.) were the result of problems with the transition of the ArchDruidcy, although Donald Morrison is not to blame, a general decrease in mysticism was.
2. The fermentative years of the Vietnam war were over, and were in the oil crisis. It was not years to be rebellious any more, for Lo!, women and men could drink and sleep in the same dorms now. We were sorely preoccupied with these new pleasures.
3. Likewise, college students could vote now instead of protest.
4. The group withered away and lost touch with the others.

## Chapter the Sixth

1. The Years of the Occlusion (1980–1982 c.e.) were years in which few druids over the second order existed. Occasional calls to past Druids gained no real support.
2. For Yea!, these were the start of the Reagan years, and what enthusiasm could any Druid have?

## Chapter the Seventh

1. The Years of the Revival (1982–1985 c.e.) were thus called since David Frangquist returned to Carleton College to ordain Tom & Meg.
2. A weak resumption of the old ways were resumed while the Earth–mother nurtured the returning Druidism.

## Chapter the Eighth

1. The Years of the Exploration (1985–1990 c.e.) were a result of a break with the third order and the firm introduction of neo–pagan students (& their wisdom) into Carleton.
2. The students did pursue new areas of study, especially in the study of the wisdom of the Lakota.
3. Sweat lodges and nudity were introduced.
4. Waters–of–Life were laid to the side, mostly because they were dangerous with the aforesaid practices.
5. Great Fires blazed at these rituals. One such fire–leader was Joe, whose famous quote rings out through the ages: "Lo! But it is not a real fire until I burn my beard!"
6. Farmhouse was the center of this revival. Many of their names may be found on the "family tree" in Farmhouse on the second floor to this day. The site of choice was the Oak Opening in the lower Arb.
7. The Grove of St. Olaf was started and remained small under Sam's loving care.

## Chapter the Ninth

1. The Years of Chaos (1990–1993 c.e.) were not a fault of the ArchDruid, Andrea the Fair, but rather because the mainstays of the group had all graduated, or dropped out of school.
2. There were many insider quarrels that did rend apart the group, and although none wished to be the leader, they quarreled anyway.

3. Pagan Studies did stop meeting and Catalyst under Salem and Celia did help to hold the group together. Especially in bringing in the members of the class of '95.

## Chapter the Tenth

1. The Year of Order (1993–1994 c.e.) was then established when Mike the Fool did decide to bring back a modicum of dogma to the group.
2. The Third order did return to Carleton as may be found in the Book of Vigils and many did return to the pleasures of vigiling. (See Book of Vigils)
3. Documents of the past and certain rituals returned from the Archives.
4. The Basic plan was to give a group structure, teach the history and customs, make documents accessible, to encourage all Druid to try and lead a ritual or group exercise, and provide help in finding spiritual groups outside the Carleton after graduation.
5. Then was the Naples Grove of Florida was founded by Kyle Jemair Clark under Mike & Sam's tutelage.

## Chapter the Eleventh

1. The Years of Legitimacy (1994–99) did begin and great was apprehension.
2. For how can a group based on being the rebellious outsider survive, when it is now accepted by the Institution?
3. This process did perplex the Druids of Carleton for many decades and they wisely chose not to register with the authorities that be.
4. But, in the mid 80s, the quest for cash led them into closer cahoots with the authorities that be and "Pagan Studies" was founded to garner money.
5. Many discussion groups and lecture luncheons with Druids and others were funded by Pagan Studies.
6. But Pagan Studies faded, as must all institutions.
7. Up arose another young organizer, Michael being his name, and another front organization was founded to garner money, and Friends of the Earth Mother at Carleton College was its name.
8. FOEMACC did bring in the loot and much wax, whiskey and magazines were purchased, and this brought joy to the hearts of the Druids.
9. Yet there was still apprehension in the hearts of the older Druids.
10. And the day did come in the 33rd year of the Reform (May 1995), in which Becky the Grinner did say unto the other children of the Earth Mother; "Why do we not dispose of FOEMACC and seek to garner money directly, yea, even under the very same name as 'Druids'?"
11. And for the first time in 33 years, our petition for legitimacy was accepted and the Druids were no longer the rebels on the outside of the Institution.
12. Or are they?

## Chapter the Twelfth

1. The Years of the Internet: (1999–?) did usher in a revolution of inter–communication.
2. In previous years, Druids could not reach their sistren beyond the range of their voice and reach of the phone.

3. Now with mail of the E, and the powerful Internet, the message of Druidism; confused as it is, can now be broadcast widely, and discussions between distant Druid became commonplace.
4. Unfortunately, these Druids did not share common vistas or pick up the cues of the face, and misunderstandings and rants did rage across the digital divide.
5. A homepage was set up in the windswept plains of the internet, Mike raising the first flag in 1996, and it was widely acclaimed as needing more work.
6. But it was in this way, that the ARDA was disseminated to unsuspecting people in many lands, some of whom actually liked it.
7. Now a mighty band of 130 Druids do talk daily from across the great Continent of North America, and beyond.
8. Some Grove exist not in a world of carbon and hydrogen atoms, but in zeros and ones, which when combined can draw a sigil.
9. And in this thought, I leave this topic, to see how it develops.



**Figure 2 Mike sorting Dead Lake Scrolls in Gould Library, August 1993.**

## The Book on John Burrige

(By Mike the Fool)

### Chapter the First

1. It was a dark and stormy night when I first saw John. I was casually strolling by the music building on campus.
2. Suddenly, I saw two green lights flying towards me. They did neither bob nor sway, but straight at me they did come.
3. Just when I thought they would impale me, a figure in a purple and black cloak roller-bladed shuttled by me, yelling "Aiiyyeeeee!.....Zoom!"
4. That was John and it was sign.

### Chapter the Second

1. John was a spiritual guru for me and taught me to play the harp. Sine Ceolbhinn, my harp, is an identical twin of his harp. John loved Hostess Ho-Hos, M&Ms, and Caffeine.
2. He lived in a spiritually powerful house with peeling orange paint called "Orange Awareness House." It was the second oldest house in all of Northfield. Many Druids had lived there including Jon, Dave, Andrea and John.
3. All the Druids did work in the computer center and were VAX geeks. John was the geekiest of them all.
4. His long sable hair had streaks of silver in them, and his tall, nervous, slender figure enjoyed dancing and chasing squirrels. Truly his real name was "Moonhawk Studmuffin."

### Chapter the Third

1. Truly, did all the Druids love John and his cat, Machka.
2. One day, John became the victim of an evil squirrel.
3. Photon, for that was his nickname, was rollerblading along near Sayles, when he spotted a squirrel who had strayed too far from a tree.
4. He switched into turbo-mode and did strive to grab the squirrel. Verily, he could just about reach its fuzzy tail, as its feet madly pounded the earth.
5. Earth became gravel...
6. The gravel caught the roller-blade wheels...
7. His feet stopped, but his body didn't.
8. He hurdled through a bush and broke his wrist.
9. The safe squirrel laughed from the tree top, he having planned it all.
10. A song was composed by Ann to the tune of "Dona Dona" as found in the Rise Up Singing Book used at Picking N Grinning:
11. "On a stretcher bound from Northfield  
Lies a man with a mournful eye.  
High above him, in a tree top,  
Laughs a squirrel from on high..."

Chorus:

How the squirrels are laughing!  
They laugh with all their might  
Laugh and laugh the whole night through... and (clap!)  
Half that April night.  
Dona Dona Dona etc.

Squirrels are easily bound and slaughtered  
Never knowing the reason why  
But if you chase squirrels o'er gravel  
You will fall and you might die!

## Chapter the Fourth

1. Aye! Did not every tearful eye fill with sorrow when John had to leave from Carleton College. In their eyes the very color had left the world
2. He was a victim of the most evil lord of the computer center, Carl, who did purge the office of 'unneeded' ones.
3. A great party surrounded the parting of John, over two score were present at Orange House. Many strange things did occur at that party, including a strange GREEN drink.
4. He then did leave, and then Druidism slumped at this college, having lost its most promising new leader, one who was not a student in fact.

## Chapter the Fifth

1. Not long after, Orange Awareness House itself was razed by yellow beasts that belched smoke.
2. John now resides in south Arizona at a Commune known as Arcosanti, a place where a mediocre Sci-Fi movie, NIGHTFALL, was filmed.
3. Machka Burrige, John's owner, is with him there too, and she is doing well.
4. Here ends the Book on John Burrige.

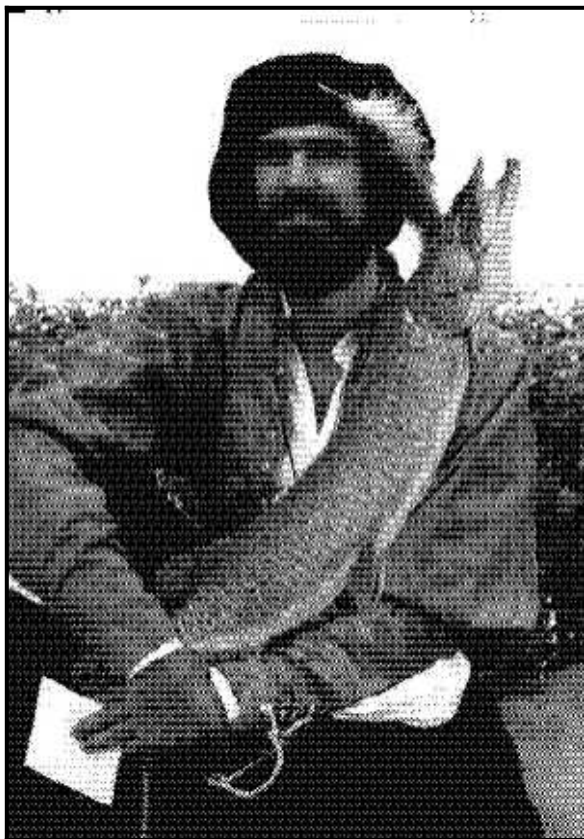


Figure 3 John Burrige & fish, 1993, Huzzah!

# The Book of Opposition

(By Mike the Fool)

## Chapter the First

1. As the Reagan/Bush years progressed, the intolerance of religions, especially mystical ones has increased at Carleton.
2. Yea, there were far more fundies than you can shake a stick at, Danu bless their small minds.
3. And here are some of their notorious deeds, names have not been hid to hide the guilty.

## Chapter the Second

1. It was a bright, sunny day of April 10th, 1993 c.e. when Andrea the Fair and Mike the Busy did go up to the Hill of two Oaks to thank the Earth for its blessings in an Erisian fashion.
2. There were two people there, and since Mike had well advertised the time and place throughout the college, he assumed they were there for the ritual.
3. All removed broken glass from the Hill's green bosom.
4. The two people, Paul R. and Jason B., did leave with friendly remarks, indeed nothing seemed amiss.
5. Yea, but a Griffin did also mount the hill with the splendor of his red locks of hair. He said 'hi' and left. Mike took it as a sign.
6. Mike and Andrea did don the most sacred Cone-Hats of bright colors and the mystical hand puppets of John Burrige. They did dance around intoning 'Beep-Beep' mantras.

## Chapter the Third

1. The ritual was mostly done (see order or worship) and Mike was reading a meditation, when Paul R, strode up and declared:
2. "I have come to tell you that you dance before false gods, who will crumble into dust before the superior might of my God on the Final Day of Judgment, and I will see you burn in the Flames of Hell as a result of your worship!!!" He then returned to Monument Hill where a prayer service was being held.
3. Andrea turned to Mike and said "What the Hell was that?" but Mike did not know at first.
4. Mike finished the service and pondered on Andrea's words as she returned to Goodhue. "At first I thought he was just being an asshole, but then later I realized it was harassment." Mike later was prone to say.

## Chapter the Fourth

1. Mike did decide to reason with this Anti-Druid, but this is difficult, for Anti-Druids deny the validity of any view but their own.
2. Mike did reason with all his might against the great Anti-Druid encampment. He received an "apology" from Paul, "I didn't want to do it, but God told me to do it." Humph!
3. Mike was unable to coax an assurance that Paul would not interfere with the 30th anniversary ritual on the next week.
4. Mike did beseech upon the authorities for protection, but a legalistic loophole in the Carleton list of student rights did

not feel that students had a right not to be harassed for racial, ethnic or religious background.

5. Mike did spit forth angry recriminations. Had these baboons missed the 60's all together? Were they maliciously stupid?!
6. Mike indeed did lose his countenance, which is oft ill-befitting a Druid.

## Chapter the Fifth

1. Posters had been put up on walls by fundies all this year and last, proclaiming the glory and superiority of the Christian faith.
2. Many of the said posters were removed by enlightened people, yeah!
3. Mike and others did fill the spring Carletonian paper with articles about freedom of religion and tolerance for race.
4. But was this the only time the Anti-Druids have acted? Nay! Listen and I will tell you of what I have learned.

## Chapter the Sixth

1. Dave and others have told me of many persistent conversion attempts.
2. While preparing wood for a Beltane fire in the Oak Grove in 1990, I did stumble upon a group of pale people dressed in white in silent meditation. They replaced our maypole with an 8' cross.
3. A few times we've arrived at a ritual site only to find the ground LITTERED with strewn crosses.
4. The cross at Monument Hill, is not the work of Anti-Druids, but merely a religious shrine. It has been there since 1987, you should not remove it. Treat it as a symbol for the four directions.
5. Sam, Heather, Alex and I were having a sweat lodge and vigil in May 1992 on the Hill. As we were relaxing in the nude, in between sweats, a contingent of party-fiends did overrun the Hill. They would not leave nor wait 10 minutes! For they had the Hill of Oaks reserved and we did not and we were forced to pull up our stakes and finish at the Little Grove.
6. Read the Druid Chronicles for Anti-Druid activities. Also see the Book of Vigils.

## Chapter the Seventh

1. I will now tell you how to deal with Anti-Druids.
2. If you enter arguments with them, you will seem to lose, since their rules to win prevent them from accepting yours.
3. But do not wage war with them, but meet their arguments with compassion, for many a Fundie is suffering from insecurity. Reasoning will not get them to abandon their only anchor, that they have found the ONLY way, and are thus saved, and that you damned.
4. Beware of rousing them. The Public will sympathize as long as you are not shown to be the aggressor.
5. Never announce the site nor time of a ritual via the Carletonian, NNB or in the VAX Notes Conference. All these are publicly accessible and may encourage attacks.
6. Never allow mailing lists to fall into the hands of non-druids.
7. Stuffing the mailboxes is safest.
8. Archdruids, meet with all druid-wannabes to sniff out spies, for we've had them before, and we'll have them

again. Meeting with them also encourages the real Druids-wannabes into participation.

9. Always reserve the site at the Campus Activities Office, if you fear interruption. If the register looks funny at you, say you're reserving the FIRE-RING at the site. Of course, the Anti-Druids could also read that reservation book to find you.
10. Many of the Fundy groups have taken to outdoor services, this is good. That's OK. Avoid running into them.
11. Having a person be a "guardian" to detour drunks and bad tempered fiends often helps a ritual. The Preceptor should take any divine "messages" and deliver them, after the ritual is finished.
12. Do not fear bringing them up on charges. First you must tell the Dean of Students of the problem. He will write to the offender with an official warning. If the warned person repeats their behavior then you have a case against them. If you don't complain the first time, you can not smite the person the second time!
13. Remember, security is on your side if they start a fight.
14. However, the Anti-Druids could say you were nude or giving alcohol to under-21 year olds. So practice these with caution.
15. If this sounds paranoiac, then ignore it, for you must live in an age at Carleton where students have resumed civility in their discourse to each other. You are blessed.
16. So ends this Book.



**Figure 4 Eric Hillemann (current Archivist) receiving Blue Book of the old Archives from Sam Adams, Nikki Lambert & Mike Scharding, August 1993.**

[Make friends and allies before you need them.  
Know your opponent, and respect them.  
Misunderstanding is more common than dislike.  
What's in the open cannot be easily feared.  
Try reason and charity first, then invoke the laws.  
Avoid paranoia and grudges, they hurt you more.  
Enjoy your time together, regardless. -Mike 2002.]

# The Book of Post Scripts:

## Part One

(By Mike the Fool)

### Chapter the First

1. It was April 17th, 1993 when the Druids did gather at Monument Hill, where all that started did occur, to celebrate thirty years of Druidism at this college. It was a sunny day and all did agree it was a gift from the Earth-mother.
2. And Lo!, Richard, an Arch Druid of 1971 c.e., was present and did lead us in the order of worship. For at that time there were no third order priests at the college. (Nor had there been since 1984, though many did the work without being able to be ordained.)
3. And Lo!, Michael, who was but a chick in an egg with his Druidism, was the preceptor, for he knew the stuff cold!
4. And Lo!, others did show up. And their numbers were counted as four people. They were the one called Blake (of the Sci-Fi club), the one called Hannah (of the dazzling cuteness), the one called Paul (of the blond hair) and the one called Nikki (known for her wardrobe). Many more had decided to sleep late or to play Frisbee.
5. Squirrels, birds, deer and bugs were also there in attendance, although they were not always visible nor audible.
6. No Anti-Druid dared to disturb this most momentous occasion, for Michael had taken many precautions and had set up powerful wards.
7. The ritual went well, and wise words and stories were told from the wise ones of the Middle East. The difference between a camels and its rider can be confusing!
8. After the ritual, many did go to the Hill of Two (or three oaks) and did partake of food & Tang while watching the fierce Frisbee teams vie for supremacy.

### Chapter the Second

1. Not long after Beltane, Sam, an ArchDruid of St. Olaf since 1987, and Michael the Fool, did decide to undertake the duties of the office of ArchDruids for the period of time of Beltane 1993 to Beltane 1994.
2. These two druids did dress up and carried their ensouled musical instruments ("Stormus" the Bodhran and "Sine Ceolbhinn" the Harp) and flaming brands to the top of the Hill of Two oaks on a moony night.
3. They were enraged to find a sleeping person already on the Hill. Where else could they hold their ritual? What to do?
4. Michael said to Sam that they should build a circle of stones around this victim, who had apparently offered himself as a sacrifice. But Sam saith to Mike, "Nay, that would get us in trouble."
5. Mike also wished to pin a note to the sleeper that said "Sorry, but we didn't need you for a human sacrifice after all, thanks though!" But Sam, full of wisdom, said unto Mike, "Nay, that would get us in trouble!"
6. Mike and Sam did mosey unto the Hill of Monument, whose blank fourth side reflects upon our dogma, and they did dance around the obelisk until they became ArchDruids

of Carleton and St. Olaf respectively (and quite dizzy!) and they did ask for wisdom and a sign of blessing.

7. And Lo!, next morning when Mike mounted the Hill of Two Oaks on the next morning, to give thanks to the sunrise, there were now THREE trees present!
8. Once, this Hill bore three oaks, but many years past, a lightning bolt did blast this third tree, reducing it to a stump. Rain and the Grounds Crew further had reduced this stump to a depression on the Hill. Many gentiles thought they saw three trees, but were mistaken, for one tree was split into two trunks and deceived many people.
9. Mike had planted many acorns on the site afore this time, but here was a new oak tree, 3 men tall, sprung forth from the earth over night. It was not far from where the previous tree had stood.
10. He did fall to the ground and gave many thanks for this sign from the Earth-Mother of her love for her Druids.
11. Later, Mike realized that the Earthmother had worked through the Carleton alumni of the Men's rugby team and their tree planting memorial fund, but that did not detract from the miracle.
11. Here Paul, of the dazzling blond hair, doth add comments of his own wisdom:



Figure 5 Alice with the new tree, Oct 31 1993.

# The Book of Paul: Part One

(By Paul the Mighty)

## Chapter the First

1. Shortly following the arrival of the new oak, the foliage of all the arboretum did shower forth their blessings unto the new oak.
2. Mike, the most-knowledgeable, did collect the offerings for the oak and did skillfully weave them into a ring of life and blessings.
3. Herewith did the two elder oaks contribute to that ring. With familial support, Mike and Paul braved the dizzying heights of the oaks to collect their leaf offerings.
4. Yea, they were like unto squirrels!
5. With the offering to the fledgling oak complete, Mike and Paul did proceed with a ritual of goodwill and blessing.
6. After completing the noon-ish ritual under the gaze of the benevolent sun, and with the support of the Hill of Three Oaks, a libation from the waters of life was imparted unto the oak.
7. The oak did quickly drink from the waters and, with minimal coaxing, persuaded the two nearby ape descendants to bathe it with more powers of life.
8. Immediately after the oak had consumed all Druidic nourishment available, a strange wanderer did appear, and he did stare with wonderment and delight upon the healthy new oak.
9. Lo!, the powers of the Earth Mother surged through the oak and it did shine with glory.
10. So sayeth Paul, the mighty.



**Figure 6 Paul the Mighty & Nikki Lambert at Monument Hill for 30th Anniversary, April 1993.**

# The Book of Haiku

Placing the kitten  
To weigh her on the balance  
She went on playing.

—Issa

Nine times arising  
To see the moon whose solemn pace  
marks only midnight yet

—Basho

O sprint time twilight...  
Precious moment worth to me  
a thousand pieces

—Sotuba

O summer twilight  
bug—depreciated to a  
mere five hundred.

—Kikaku

Snow Whispering down  
all day long, earth has vanished  
leaving only sky

—Joso

Carven Gods long gone  
dead leaves alone forgotten  
on the temple porch.

—Basho

Vanishing springtime  
wistful the lonely widow  
pouts at her mirror.

—Seiki

A bright autumn moon...  
in the shadow of each grass  
an insect chirping.

—Busoh

Black cloud bank broken  
scatters in the night... now see  
moonlighted mountains!

—Basho

Two ancient pine trees  
a pair of gnarled and sturdy limbs  
with 10 green fingers.

—Ryota

Yellow butterfly...  
fluttering, fluttering on  
over the ocean.

—Shiki

Crossing it alone  
in cold moonlight, the brittle bridge  
echoes my footsteps

—Taigi

Every single step  
is quivering now with light  
O how bitter cold!  
–Taigi

One fallen flower  
returning to the branch? oh no!  
a white butterfly.  
–Meritake

Grey moor, unmarred  
by any branch... a single branch  
a bird... November  
–Anonymous

The soft summer moon...  
who is it moves in white there...  
on the other bank?  
–Chora

Here is the dark tree  
denuded now of leafage...  
but a million stars!  
–Shiki

He who climbs this hill  
of flowers finds here a shrine  
to the kind goddess.  
–Basho

Some poor villages  
lack fresh fish or flowers,  
all can share this moon.  
–Saikaku

Under a spring mist  
ice & water forgetting  
their old difference....  
–Teitaku

Colder far than snow...  
winter moonlight echoing on  
my whitened hair.  
–Joso

After moon viewing  
my companionable shadow  
walked along with me.  
–Jodo

Coolness on the bridge...  
Moon, you and I alone  
unresigned to sleep  
–Kikusa–ni

Winter moonlight casts  
cold tree–shadows long and still  
my warm one moving.  
–Shiki

Weeping...Willows  
kneel here by the waterside  
mingling long green hair.  
–Kyorai

In stony moonlight  
hills and fields on every side  
white and bald as eggs  
–Yansetsu

Penetrating hot  
September sun on my skin  
feel the cooling breeze.  
–Basho

Feeble feeble sun  
it can scarcely stretch across  
winter–wasted fields  
–Bokuson

Ah leafless willow  
bending over the dry pool  
of stranded boulders.  
–Busoh



**Figure 7 Japanese Garden c. 1993.**

# The Book of Post Scripts:

## Part Two

(By Mike the Fool, Alice, Heiko & Brandon)

### Chapter the Third

1. Verily, the third order has languished over the last 15 years. Problems with over devotion to the Waters-of-Life, led to a lack of devotion to the Druids. Beware, ye!, the curse of over-devotion! The next ArchDruid, Katya was unable to fix the damage and went into Occlusion.
2. From 1980 to 1982, the years of occlusion, few above 1st order did roam these sacred groves. Great was their despondency! Lamentations did pour forth from those who sought guidance. A weak call for help did ensue, and yea!, it was answered by a David's love! He did travel forth to fix the damage done.
3. David the Chronicler, did return in 1982 to revive a languishing group at Carleton. Tom, Bob, and Margaret, newly of the 3rd order, did lead the group until 1984 during these Years of Revival. Yet, sadly, none followed these Druids into the third order.
4. Druidism slept at Carleton until the visit by Selena Fox and her husband Dennis in 1985. Many did attend her lecture and ate at Farmhouse, where a feast was thrown for in her honor.
5. Earlier, Curtis and Paul (who was a Glover) had found Isaac's Druid Chronicles in the basement. But they knew not what to make of Druidism, but some pyrotechnic rites and stuffed toy dinosaurs were applied to the problem, to the amusement of all.
6. Heiko, the dark haired, did show Selena of this book, and she imparted unto them the basic history of the RDNA. Many desired to restart this group, but there was no Druid initiate then known. All despaired.
7. Then, by luck or fate, Alice (the good person) did pass by and stated that she was an initiate of the Druids of the second order, or at least of the first order. All did jump up in amazement and asked her for the story of how this event had come to be. She said unto them:
8. "In my freshmen year, the ArchDruid did reside in Burton, on the highest floor thereof, which I and my friends did also reside upon. Their names were Judith and Maggie.
9. "One night, that Druid asked us, 'Do you wisheth to be Druids, fair ones?' We replied back unto him "Verily, we do!" We went to the Hill of Three Oaks and were initiated by that same ArchDruid, who wore a blue bathrobe. He told us 'I don't want you to take this too seriously'. That is my story."
10. All who did listen thereunto did run up to the Hill of Three Oaks. When they had mounted the sky-bound hilltop, they saw thereon a Stag and a Doe of marvelous beauty. But as they did approach, the two deer had vanished! Each took this in their own way. Many did enter the second order on that night.
11. Unable to bring back another Third Order Druid to 'properly' initiate them, any Druid who led a ritual was considered a third order, and should be respected by all as such. If they so desireth now, they may return for a formal ordination.

12. What did the third order mean before the Years of Exploration? It meant that you vigiled overnight and were initiated by a third order priest with the third order ritual, one that has not been changed since 1965. Back then, only third order priests could lead a ritual, vote on the board of Dalon Ap Landu, received a copy of the annual report from succeeding Archdruids, and were the only ones allowed to initiate a 2nd or 3rd order Druid.
13. What does the third order mean in the Year of Order (1993 to 1994)? It means you have spent a night vigiling in the woods in meditation and was initiated by a 3rd order priest with third order ritual, one that has never be changed since 1965. You will then receive a copy of the annual report from succeeding ArchDruids and are allowed to initiate a 3rd Order Druid. You will also vote on the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, if it is ever revived.
14. According to our new tradition, Second order Druids may initiate 2nd and 1st order Druids with either the official formula or with a made-up version. Second orders can lead rituals.
15. According to our new tradition, First order Druids are anyone whose ever shown up at a ritual and may initiate anyone else into the 1st order. First orders can lead rituals.
16. The 4th through 7th orders are essentially closed, and will probably never be accessible again. Oh, well, big deal

### Chapter the Fourth

1. You may ask, "What happened to our Groves, which were scattered across the country?" I will tell you.
2. During the 70's, the ones led by Isaac Bonewits did break with the RDNA and were known as the New Reformed Druids of North America (NRDNA) and as the Schismatic Druids of North America (SDNA), Hassidic Druids of North America (HDNA), the Other Druids of North America (ODNA) and the Zen Druids of North America (ZDNA). In 1979, all these groups changed back their designation back to NRDNA.
3. During the 80's, a few groves led by Isaac Bonewits did break with the NRDNA and mutated into a grim, scholastic group known as Ar nDraíocht Fein ("Our own Druidism"). They did much research on Paleo-paganism in Indo-European cultures.
4. During the later 80's, a few groups led by Pat and Tony Taylor did break with the Ar nDraíocht Fein and formed the lighthearted Henge of Keltria, which concentrates almost exclusively upon Celtic Paleo-pagan culture.
5. Today all four groups still survive; the RDNA, NRDNA, ADF and the Henge of Keltria. Rejoice in the Druid Sigil, that all do honor!
6. What does this symbol, found on the altar stone upon the Hill of Three oaks mean?
7. Some say its a floor plan of a temple in Stuart Piggott's book. In which case it should have a square around it.
8. Some say the circle represents the year, whose left and right lines part the winter and summer half, being the two days of Samhain and Beltane.
9. Some say that the Druid symbol is a Yonic symbol, in other words, a representation of a vagina.
10. Regardless of what it is, it is a symbol of Reformed Druidism to the world!
11. So ends the Book of Post-(s)Crypts, Part II.



# The Book of Vigils

(By Mike the Fool & Sine Ceolbhinn)

## Chapter the First

1. A vigil is an important marker in one's spiritual quest for religious truth. Therefore any vigiler's story may inspire someone to undertake this mystery of vigiling.
2. What is a vigil? It is the spending (at least) seven hours in the outdoors at night, awake and not speaking unto another. A vigil is mandatory for entering the third order.
3. At dawn, the ordination to the third order is delivered unto the vigiler by another Third Order Druid.

## Chapter the Second

1. Not long after the planting of the new tree, Mike did undertake the vigil for the third order. In preparation, the dilapidated pentagonal sweat lodge (near Farm House) was razed by Mike and Paul, of the long limbs.
2. Much wood was salvaged. A story of its magical origins is therefore appropriate:
3. Not long after the Years of the Exploration (1985–90) began, Heiko, Paul (a Glover) and Jan decided to build the sweat lodge by Farm House, where they could sweat.
4. On the soft, dewy morning, of which they would begin construction, they did leave Farm House and looked upon the site.
5. There grazing on the spot was a white Stag. Others say it was a Stag and a Doe. This vision then did vanish. Lo!
6. They took this as a sign, each in their own way.
7. Paul, the blond, and Mike, the fool, did take this wood of Sweat lodge to the Little Grove (also known as the Druid Den) near the Hill of at least Three Oaks. By the Earth-mother!, did not the fires from the old sweat lodge not leap 20 feet in the air, ALL NIGHT!
8. That night (may 21st) a sweat lodge was set up and Richard (ArchDruid of 1971), Paul and Mike did partake thrice of sweat sessions. Then the two did leave Mike to vigil under a starry sky.
9. Mike then did stay up all night. Yea, the weariness of a hard day did sore press him. Verily he spent the whole night on his feet. If he did stop for more than two minutes, he felt sleep creep into his thoughts. He did not know if he would truly make it unto morning, every hour was like a day. Every step he walked was like unto a league.
10. Richard was an hour and a half late the next morning.
11. Mike did enter into the third order, and although he grumbled a great deal, he was greatly satisfied that he had not slept!
12. The next 14 hours, though, he did sleep!

## Chapter the Third

1. Not long after this, Mike did initiate his trusty loyal harp, Sine Ceolbhinn ("Jean Sweetmusic") into the third order at the island that is called Mai Fete.
2. Sine had vigiled many times and was deemed worthy of the honor bestowed upon her. Mock not the Harp!

## Chapter the Fourth

1. Andrea, Arch Druid of Carleton during the Years of Chaos (1990 to 1993), did vigil many times and is revered for her devotion...
2. On June 19th, she and Mike, clad only by the thunderous and roiling sky, performed the third order ordination using only sub-optimal reading light.
3. I say unto ye, always use white paper, large print and a flashlight in the dark!
4. Taranis bellowed his approval and all ran back to their respective homes, for the Great Flood of 1993 was being unleashed.

## Chapter the Fifth

1. Verily it did rain for many days, until new lakes appeared throughout the arboretum.
2. During the same night as Andrea's initiation, Sam, the Wise Ole, did vigil at the Center of the Universe, which is found just north of Skoglum field at St. Olaf.
3. He wore, as he was wont, naught but a black/blue kilt and a smile.
4. Yea!, did he not spend the night in an open field where lightning leapt back and forth across the sky every 10 minutes until dawn?!
5. The following morning to the aforementioned night, Mike found this brave lad, still alive, wrapped in a tarp like an Irish Tamale.
6. Sam's wits were so addled by the experience that he thought he had enjoyed it! Furthermore he had seen things that he not seen, heard things that he did not hear, felt things he had not felt, smelt things he had not smelt and tasted things he had not tasted!!
7. So did Sam enter into the 3rd order!

## Chapter the Sixth

1. Yea, a call did cry out from Circle Sanctuary in Mt. Horeb, Wisconsin that a great meeting of students of the Earth-Mother should meet at a Cave of Eagles near a city called Madison.
2. And the ones who did call forth was named Selena, patron saint of the RDNA, and her husband Dennis.
3. And this meeting was called "Pagan Spirit Gathering 1993," and it was the 14th one, 10th at this site.
4. Sam, the wise, and Mike, the not-so-wise, did journey forth with a non-druid friend, Tim-of-the-car.
5. The journey was four hours and they saw many beautiful trees.
6. The site was a steep valley surrounded by trees and, Yea!, did many people who were pitched in tents did roll down the hill side in the night! Yet none were hurt!
7. The number present was over five hundred. Half of them enjoyed the covering of the sky more than that of clothing, Sam and Mike included.
8. Sam and Mike did arrange to have another 30th anniversary ritual and over a score of people did show up! 2 large bottles of the waters-of-life were passed around and drained, which may be a record amongst Reformed Druids!
9. Among the attendants was Alice, from the Years of Exploration. Also there was Tony Taylor and the Henge of

Keltria, a member of the Ar nDraíocht Fein, two members of the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids (O.B.O.D.) and a young man named Kyle. All enjoyed the ritual with the Wisdom of Thomas the Fool being shared.

10. Kyle was so moved by the spirits that he did rush up to Mike and Sam and did ask to enter the third order. The two ArchDruids were puzzled, for Kyle was but a 1st order druid on that very day, but since Kyle was camped next to them, and had given them steak and alcohol all week, they judged him a man of good heart and soul.
11. Kyle was then raised to the second order by Mike and all there present raised the cup and drank yet more of the waters-of-life.
12. Kyle was then raised unto the third order of Dalon Ap Landu by Mike and all present did raise the cup again drink yet more of the waters-of-life, for he promised to vigil on his return home.
13. Kyle was then made ArchDruid of Naples, Florida and all present raised the cup and drank yet more waters-of-life, for Kyle promised to recruit more partakers of the Water-of-Life on his return home, and to write to us often.
14. Mike, Sam, and Kyle, the only three known ArchDruids in the country (although others existed without our knowledge), did pour praise upon the Earth-mother for the creation of a new Grove!

## Chapter the Seventh

1. Alice, the reviver, did step forward and asked to be brought into the third order of the most fertile Dalon Ap Landu. Alice having vigiled many times in the past, was deemed quite worthy.
2. Mike did read the words, and all present did partake of the Waters-of-Life yet again.
3. Mike the Fool did consider initiating Sam's drum, Stormus, into the third order, but saw that Kyle was filled with a satiety of holiness.
4. All then did stumble back unto their tents, especially Kyle, to meditate upon the sharing of the Waters-of-Life. Praise Be!

## Chapter the Eighth

1. And so it came to pass that Paul, the blond, did decide that he also would vigil with the Earth-Mother.
2. And he did choose a night that did prove to have poor weather, as is common for Druids.
3. The site that Paul had choseth was the Island of Mai-Fete in the lower of Lyman's Lakes, where Mike's Great Dream had occurred.
4. Taranis, god of thunder, enjoys vigils.
5. Mike did long question this blond Druid and found him most knowledgeable and wise, far more than himself.
6. In the morning drizzle, in apprehension of which Mike had wisely laminated the Ordination sheets (O how wise he was!), Mike did ordain Paul the Mighty into the Third Order.
7. The two cloaked members of Dalon Ap Landu did participate in the time-honored tradition of a ritual breakfast this time at Hardee's, of which Paul, of course, paid for, as is custom.

## Chapter the Ninth

1. The next who did wish to enter the Third Order that summer was Nikki Lambert, a redoubtable young wench who had decided to vigil in the most inaccessible site yet known to Druidism.
2. We called the site the Pine Forest of the Deep Lower Arboretum. Indeed it took 30 minutes to reach the site on foot!
3. Mike and Nikki did set up camp on the pine needles and collected wood for a long fire.
4. They went to the Cannon River to cool down over with a quick swim, for it was a sweltering night, and to purify themselves in the flowing waters of the Cannon.
5. After the fire was going, Nikki was left to fend for herself on that long night in the woods.
6. There were many four legged critters that did noisily poke about her camp during that night, interrupting her concentration.
7. And, lo!, she found that pine wood burns very quickly and spent most of the night trying to constantly replace the diminishing firewood stock.
8. She also lamented her lack of caffeine.
9. In the morning, Paul & Mike, joined her. She was relatively cranky, but none the worse for wear.
10. With the fire rekindled, the ceremony of consecration was performed by Mike, and Nikki gloriously entered the Order of Dalon ap Landu. And great was the quantity of Waters that was consumed by all parities!
11. Another quick swim in the Cannon was called for, but was kept short due to the persistence of the bugs, known as mosquitoes.
12. A long becloaked march was made to Hardees for breakfast, parading through the streets in fine cloaks. We were tired, but proud!

## Chapter the Tenth

1. The last Druid to enter the Third Order during that busy Summer Break was Brandon Schields, one of the Druids from the late 80s.
2. His ordination occurred after he led a sweat lodge on Lughnasadh evening. Sam, Paul & I attended the sweat and found it good..
3. After the cleansing sweat, we went to the Hill of Three Oaks, and once there, Sam did ordain his dear friend at about 8pm, because Brandon had vigiled on a previous day. It was Sam's first ordination of another Druid into the Third Order, and he did it well.

## Chapter the Eleventh

1. That Fall, the Frangquists did visit Carleton and Rebecca Hrobak did vigil on the bosom of the Earth-Mother, not long before the Samhain rite of 1993 was performed.
2. Hers was almost a pleasant vigil in the Little Grove (known also as the Druid Den) not far from the Hill of Three Oaks, except for the strong chill that was in the air. She however burned but one large log during that long night.
3. Indeed she was honored that night by a visit from David & Deborah Frangquist, along with many other Druids seeking to give her company, yet most of her time was spent quietly in meditation of staring into the fire.

3. When a good 5 or 6 Third Order Druids did march up to the Hill of Three Oaks, we saw the Sun break over the horizon and marveled at how it was framed in the branches of a large oak tree.
4. Mike did bring Rebecca into the Third Order, although there was but little Waters for the service.
5. At that time, Nikki and Mike did enter into the Fourth Order of Grannos with the blessing of Frangquist.
6. Paul did enter the Fifth Order of Braciaca under the blessing of Frangquist.
7. Mike did enter the Sixth Order of Belenos under the blessing of Frangquist.
8. Possibly the largest Druidic bonfire at Carleton was held that Samhain in honor of our guests, the Sheltons and the Frangquists. Mike barely escaped incinerating himself with the unprecedented use of gasoline. It was a grand sight!

## Chapter the Twelfth

1. During the next spring of 1994, two more Druids did wish to enter the Third Order; Anne and Michelle the Dark, and they wished to vigil on the same night.
2. Anne vigiled on a Sandy Island and Michelle the Dark vigiled under the boughs of great spreading willow tree by the riverbank. They were also given much firewood to pass the night.
3. Unlike all the previous vigils that year, theirs was very pleasant, because it did not rain and they had many friendly visitors. In fact it went so smoothly that the previous vigilers were jealous and the air was loud with their jealous comments!
4. After a fortuitous sighting of deer, we processed by Torch Light to the Hill of Three Oaks where Sam brought Anne to the Third Order.
5. Nikki brought Michelle the Dark to the Third Order, and the golden rays of the rising sun did illuminate the Druid Sigil that had been drawn on her forehead by the Waters.
6. We all did drink deeply of the Waters, so much so that we had trouble reaching The Happy Chef, so we instead took a cab there!
7. At Happy Chef, reeking of camp smoke & whiskey, we did try the Black Raspberry Liquor with our pancakes, in addition to more Waters.
8. We were also forced to take a cab back, although we were only 15 blocks from Campus!
9. This did begin the time of the Triple Archdruidcy of Carleton in which the three buxom friends (Becky, Michelle the Dark & Anne) did boldly lead the Druids in seeking the Earth-Mother at Carleton.



**Figure 8 Sam ordaining Ann into 3rd, May 1 1994.**



**Figure 9 Anne Graham on her vigil, Apr 31 1994.**



**Figure 10 Michelle on her vigil, Apr 31 1994.**



**Figure 11 Nikki ordaining Michelle, May 1 1994.**

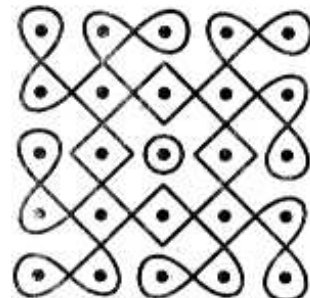
## Chapter the Thirteenth

1. In the May of 1995, a most unusual ordination took place with Heather.
2. After preparing herself and receiving blessed items through the mail, the ceremony was conducted over the phone, from Jane of Olaf's room with Sam Adams providing Musical accompaniment.
3. And so, with the help of US WEST, Mike did bring Heather into the Third Order.
4. Mike and Sam felt that the ceremony was adequate but deficient in charm compared to a ritual being performed in person.
5. Later that Summer, Mike went to Royal Oak Michigan (a good place for a Druid to live) and aided Heather in vigiling, for she sleeps too easily.

## Chapter the Fourteenth

1. Almost a year did pass before another opportunity to enjoy the pleasures of vigiling did arrive. And this did prove to be yet another double vigil!
2. The three Archdruids of Carleton College were tired after 2 years of leading the Grove, so they were delighted when two freshlings, Michelle Hajder and Irony Sade, did ask to enter the Third Order in the May of 1996.
3. And all the Druids did rejoice at seeing these new contenders for the Third Order.
4. Irony, for well he is named, chose to vigil in the pine forest, near where Nikki had once vigiled, although he did not know of Nikki, and he chose to perform the vigil without fire and he chose to walk throughout the night, not staying in one place too long.
5. Michelle the Blond, who did enjoy tea, chose to vigil in a far more distant spot on the Cannon, verily!, it was 40 minutes from Goodhue, in a lowland of enormous trees. No Druid had ever dreamed of vigiling so far from the campus!
6. Anne, Michelle the Dark and Mike did escort them out into the Arb and we did help carry tents (for it looked as if to rain) and blankets.
7. Mike remained with Michelle the Blond, who would become his great-grandchild, and imparted the history of the Druids and explained their ways to her, although she already did know most of them instinctively, although it was only her freshman year at Carleton.
8. After bathing in the chilly waters of the Cannon (for Lo! he stinkethed), Mike did leave Michelle the Blond to meditate on her vigiling and he sought to locate the Peregrine Irony, whose own nocturnal wanderings on that vigil would lead him throughout the Arb, as had Mike's Vigil three years hence.
9. Irony did startle Mike by appearing suddenly out of the sable darkness with nary a sound, which is indeed amazing, as Mike was renowned for traveling without sound in the woods of the Arb.
10. After Mike imparted a few words of advice to him on Druidism, for Irony was already wise in the ways of Druidism in his Freshman year, Mike did notice that Irony was glowing.
11. Mike had already known that Irony was "close" to the spiritual world, but Mike did not know that the spiritual world glowed through Irony in the night!

12. Mike did essay to find a hidden source of light on Irony's personage, but none could be found, and Mike took this as a good omen.
13. That night it did rain only lightly, for the Earth Mother smiled upon this vigil, and Mike did secretly camp in the tall grassy fields near the Hill of Three Oaks, for he feared the wrath of Security guards should he be discovered.
14. Later that night, Irony did startle Michelle the Blond by appearing suddenly out of the sable darkness with nary a sound, which was stupid, for he had to dodge a swinging cudgel, swung by a frightened Druid.
15. Irony did apologize to Michelle the Blond, for they are good friends, and they shared S'mores and tea over a campfire for a short while as it misted softly around them.
16. Anne and Michelle the Dark, and perhaps others, did visit the two vigiling Druids and shared their wisdom and brought more water for tea & cider mix.
17. Morning did come, as it always does (though slower on vigiling nights, so the vigilers claim), and Anne & Michelle the Dark did essay to discover where Mike had camped. They then fatiguedly processed for 40 minutes to get to the site of the two vigilers.
18. We moved stealthily so as to surprise the vigilers, and to verify that they had not fallen asleep during the night.
19. Irony was not to be found at his allotted site and the three Third Orders did lament that he could possibly be anywhere in the Arb and noted that they were too tired to look for him.
20. So they grabbed Irony's stuff and went to find Michelle the Blond, and soon reached her site.
21. As we approached her site, we noted that Michelle the Blond was in a trance and looked through us and did not see us, although we were but 20 yards from her. So she wandered away into the woods while we quietly packed up her gear.
22. Eventually Michelle and Irony both returned to the vigil site and it was revealed that they were both still of the 1st order. We therefore brought them unto the 2nd Order.
23. After this the ordinations to the 3rd Order were performed by Michelle the Dark with both Michelle the Blond and Irony the Glowing being present together. It rained a little and Mike took many photographs, as he was wont.
24. Then we processed back to Goodhue, noting a fortuitous pair of deer along the way, and drove to Hardees where whiskey and syrup did flow, although the two Vigilers did weasel their way out of buying us breakfast.
25. So, in this way Michelle Hajder and Irony Sade did enter into their Archdruidcy at Carleton and begin a rather intense period of activities during the Years of Legitimacy.



# The Book of Cattle Raids

a.k.a. The Book of Reveling

(By Mike the Fool)

## Chapter the First

1. At this Pagan Spirit Gathering of 1993, all the different Druids and Neo-Pagans did gather together to discuss how to pass the time, as it was the sixth of the seven day festival.
2. Tony, the Tailor, did suggest that all take their stuffed toy cows, stuffed toy animals and cow-ish shaped decorations, and they did have a cattle raiding game. The rules were such:

## Chapter the Second

1. Only camps with cow-colored banners are playing.
2. Guile is better than force.
3. All cows must be kept in the open, contentedly grazing before your tents.
4. Do not damage these icons for they support your very lives with their milk.
5. The quality of the raid is better than the quantity of cows.
6. Tony is the final arbiter and A-Druid-icator.
7. Blood-price is assigned by Tony on poor sports, brutes and destroyer of property.
8. Any who weareth a cow on their person may be taken with that cow to the camp and done with as the Druid wishes!

## Chapter the Third

1. That morning Sam and Mike did well by capturing 12 of the 24 icons before any guardians could stir from their tents.
2. Mike, the skillful, did climb a tree to fetch Pig-asus, the Pig, and did capture Bill the Cat, who was a most un-cow-like cow.
3. Unfortunately, Mike did overtly & loudly brag of the number of their cows and Sam, the guardian of the cows, was distracted by the charms of a well-endowed sky-clad Keltrian, whilst the many men of that tribe did swipe much of our great herd!
4. Alas! and Alack! for the guile of the Keltrians!

## Chapter the Fourth

1. Mike did once again increase their herd with six more cows. Unfortunate for this brave lad, he did stir up the wrath of Cow-Woman. Fear ye her wrath!!
2. Cow-Woman, weighing twenty Stone, did bellow in anger and charged upon Mike and Sam's encampment. With her iron-strong arms she did wrestle both frightened Druids unto the ground and then branded them as chattel. Oh, the shame on these two Druids!
3. She stuffed all her cows, plus two more for interest, into her ample bosom, where no efforts could dislodge them! Mike and Sam did try to no avail! Eventually, they had to admit defeat.

4. With a loud, contemptuous snort she did stomp out of camp as Mike and Sam wept for their lost cows! But, Sam pointed out that other cows were in need of our loving care!

## Chapter the Fifth

1. One such raid was the raid on the Keltrian camp where eight cows did graze, guarded only by five Druids.
2. Mike and Sam did skillfully creepeth forth, using Winnebagos to obscure their progress towards that mighty rival Druid encampment.
3. Waving high above it was a great eight-foot cow-flag that all other desired to possess.
4. With silent guile, they swept upon the cows, scattering the herd into a wide stampede
5. One Druid, named Kyleen, did grab Mike and did sorely wrestle him down to the Earth before wresting the cow from Mike's grasp.
6. Mike and Sam did dodge and swerve until they escaped with two more cows! MOO!!!
7. They sang as they ran back to their camp:  
How many cows have you now?  
No Cows! No Cows!  
How many cows have we now?  
Six cows! Six Cows!
8. For verily they had six cows, though two of them were rather feline in form and so did not produce very good milk.
9. These two druids did feast richly of milk and cheese, as was their right of proud herd owners!

## Chapter the Sixth

1. Mike and Sam did make other daring raids, at the cost of many bruises and scratches and showed their bravery and Guile.
  2. Mike and Sam did then return to Northfield, with Tim-of-the-Car, with many new connections and friendships with other groups. Ones that they will share with their fellow Druids.
  3. So ends the Book of Cattle Raids.
- Moo.



**Figure 12 Sam & Mike at PSG July 1993 with Stormus the Drum and Sine Ceolbhinn the Harp.**

# The Book of the Great Dream

(By Mike the Fool)

## Introduction

1. I add the account of this dream because it explains a lot of my devotion to the RDNA.
2. Other dreams, by others, are no less valid a source of inspiration. Dreams deal with things that our waking minds cannot.

## Chapter the First

1. I decided that I would lead the Beltane of 1992, since no one else seemed inclined. For truly, many Beltane rituals have bombed in the past.
2. The Beltane of 1990 collapsed because a strange man showed up and threw blood on the altar stone of the Hill of Oaks while Heather was re-inscribing the Druid Sigil.
3. This was my first ritual that I had led and it was held on Mai Fete Island, not long after the slime-o-rama in the algae on the previous day.
4. It was done skyclad with Alex the hairy, Heather the Fair, and Sam the wise. We were to make a circuit of the lower Lyman lake. We assumed bird shapes for the first third, wolf-shapes for the second third and horse shapes for the third. Then, lastly, we did assume fish shape and swam to the island in the chilly waters.
5. Then all did bed down by a ROARING hot fire, in a large snuggle of wool blankets under a starry sky. All did dream strange things, and here is mine, which I remembered.

## Chapter the Second

1. It was a dark and stormy night in which there was no color but shades of grey. It was a desolate, mountainous road that I was traveling.
2. This road reminded me of the highlands, nothing scenic, just road. So narrow was this road, that I had to press up against the cliff face to avoid oncoming cars, which sought to hit me.
3. I traveled many miles in the hard rain and lightning. My soul felt great pain and pity for itself. I stopped at a bus-shelter.
4. A tourist bus did pull up, and then did pour forth its passengers. They were the members of the class of '94 and '95, people of the past who I didn't know and faces of people I had not met yet.
5. When the people got onboard, I asked if I could join them, for my journey was long, and my feet were tired. Miraculously there was only one space open, and they were expecting me.
6. We traveled long and came to another pit-stop. When I got out, they drove off without me. This upset me, but I continued to travel onwards until I reached the top of the hill. Then I slid down the other side for a mile.
7. I finally slid under a parked truck and banged my head mercilessly on the universal joint. I crawled out and saw a youth hostel. A warm YELLOW light did come from the windows.
8. I entered and there were all the people from the bus playing cards and running about doing things. I asked if there was a

bed I could sleep on. Miraculously they were expecting me, since a late cancellation had made an opening!

9. Then did a man walk up to me. His body was covered with red, stiff hog bristles (in a black and white background) with a bald head and piercing blue eyes. He reminded me of a Druid, Donny, I had met on the Isle of Arann of Scotland the previous year.
10. This man did shake my hand, in a secret way, much like a mason's handshake and said to me. "Welcome to the club, Michael. You are one of us, now!" He smiled.

## Chapter the Third

1. I awoke with a start and then snuggled into the blankets thinking upon this vision until the sun came up and we all chanted
2. He is the sun god! He is the one god! Ra! Ra! Ra! Ra! Ra!
3. I did take this dream as an initiation into a Druid priesthood.
4. Powerful are the spirits on this campus! There are many fairy mounds, stone circles, groves, rivers, diversity of plants and animals. It is a good place to do vigils or seek the spirits.



**Figure 13 Sine Ceolbhinn the harp on Mai Fete Island, Summer Solstice 1993.**



**Figure 14 Mai Fete Island, Winter Solstice 1993.**

# The Book of Stones

(By Mike the Fool)

## Chapter the First

1. Dark and stormy was the night that I pensively strode forth on my last exploration in the arboretum, for I was preparing to go to the land of the rising sun.
2. I did not know the future of Druidism at Carleton, for the presumptive Archdruids did cry of their unpreparedness, as often they do.
3. I went to the circle of stones near the Hill of Three Oaks, "the Dancing Sisters" as David Franguist had named them so many years ago, and asked them, "O mighty stones, bones of the earth, heareth now my plea, we who are thy siblings. How farest Druidism in the future?"
4. Long were the stones quiet, as is their wont.
5. And I waited.
6. Lo, they did not speak, so I did prepare to leave, when they quickly spoke up, and this did they say, "The sea refuses no river. The stone that lieth not in thy way, need not offend thee. Fire is a good servant, but a bad master."
7. And with that they did become quiescent.
8. And I understood message of "The Twelve."

## Chapter the Second

1. Many are mysteries found in the alignments of the rocks at Carleton.
2. It is said that under the altar stone on the Hill of Three Oaks is an original copy of Franguist's Druid Chronicles, but this is false.
3. The Class of 1886 rock outside of the Library is said to have broken in two when the last member of that class died.
4. The obelisk on Monument Hill has a fourth side, which is blank, and it is said that this side describes the mysteries of Druidism. It is due south of the Hill of Three Oaks.
5. There is a second rock on the Hill of Three Oaks and the altar stone line up with rising and setting sun of Beltane and Samhain. It is said that on both days the sun doth rise behind the crown of an old oak tree in the east and doth plunge at sunset into the brick tower of Carleton's steam plant.
6. "The Twelve" are in line with the Hill of Three Oaks and the Skinner Memorial chapel. It is uncertain what this means.
7. Bracing the sides at the top of the hill path to the Little Grove are two stones known as "King Arthur's Seat" and "Fair Eleanor's Seat" on the north and south respectively. Whosoever sleeps on them all night will be filled with poetry or madness in the morning.
8. Near the lower-arb's tennis courts, on the banks of the mighty Cannon River, are 4 sets of obelisks that once connected Lost Island to both sides of the Cannon, by a bridge that is now gone. It is said that at midnight on midsummer's day, a bridge of light stretches between the obelisks, and whosoever crosses this bridge will be transported to a land of faery.
9. It is rumored that sleeping beneath the arch of the Hadzi sculpture throughout the night will result in a visit by a powerful guardian spirit.

# The Book of Fire

(By Mike the Fool and Andrea the Fair)

## Chapter the First

1. How to build a fire, sounds simple? It is. Certain conventions have arisen over the years pertaining to fire collection.
2. The Earth-Mother did choose well in putting her Druids on this campus, for wood abounds for the use in Fire, but you must choose that wood wisely.
3. Sometimes fires are not very important.

## Chapter the Second

1. Though shalt use only dead wood. Live plants have psychic abilities and scream in fear when you yank or break their limbs. Do you want bad vibes in your ritual fire?
2. Matches and lighters are permissible.
3. Use of Druid juice, although discouraged, is necessary to encourage wet wood.
4. Always collect a little more kindling that you'll need. You'll need it.
5. Four armloads will do a simple ritual fire.

## Chapter the Third

1. Sweat lodges are a powerful spiritual tool for Druidic rituals. Do not use them merely for pleasure.
2. Many Native Americans and Native European cultures used Sweat lodges to purify the body of poisons and negative energy. The mind often travels well in the Dark when all that heat and magic start flying around.
3. Drugs and Alcohol are big NO-NOs, because they are dangerous with sweat lodges and should not be used before hand.
4. Drink A LOT of water and salt during the day of the sweat.

## Chapter the Fourth

1. Sweats are done nude and not for perverted reasons. Many mystics claim that magic energy dissipates from the body through the palms and soles, the forehead, the belly, the armpits, the nipples and the genital organs. For the most powerful sweat lodge, it must be done in the nude, and you should warn all comers, before they come, of this fact.
2. Because of the nudity, choose a secluded spot at night where wanderers are unlikely to pass by. A guardian/fire tender is recommended. Little Grove and Oak Grove are Good.

## Chapter the Fifth

1. I will tell you how to make a sweat lodge, if no one knows at the time of this reading.
2. Dig a foot deep hole, about one foot wide where the ground is comfortable to sit upon.
3. You build an "igloo" of bent poles, tied down into a dome about three feet high and six feet wide, around that hole in the ground. You cover the dome with plastic tarps to hold in the steam vapors. You cover the tarps with blankets to keep in the heat, so that the steam lasts longer.

4. You gather ten or more fist sized rocks. Volcanic rocks are better and they will not 'Explode' when water is poured on them. Most of these 'explosions' are the formation of cracks, but the Sound of that happening is frightening.
5. You gather at least ten armloads of dry, deadwood, with possibly a charcoal base for the fire. You build the fire and insert the rocks into the fire. When they are glowing hot, you transport them into the foot deep hole you dug. Frying pans and thick leather gloves help at this point. Keep the fire going, with possibly a second round of rocks heating up while you sweat.
6. Strip down and purify yourselves. Then you prepare for meditation and enter the sweat lodge. You can do some mantras, chants and prayers until you, or the rocks, are finished. Then exit and drink some water.

## Chapter the Sixth

1. Always practice safe fire rules.
2. Use a fire-ring with little surrounding underbrush.
3. Extinguish the fire to the point where you'd be willing to hold all the logs between your legs for a minute.
4. Beware of windy days.

## Chapter the Seventh

1. Beware of glass at ritual sites, the best thing to do to prevent build up of glass is for someone to pass the ritual sites after 'party' times of the year and pick up any WHOLE bottles.
2. If whole bottles stay out more than a day, they will become broken bottles.
3. Magnets will pick up nails really well.
4. Encourage shoes to be worn when a site hasn't been groomed.

## Chapter the Eighth

1. I tell you that it is far better that the Druids use wood than for it to be chopped into mulch by grounds crew.
2. If you do spot areas of the Arb, where trees have been cut down and stacked into neat piles of log, I tell you that you should abscond with those logs to a hidden spot and store them for future ritual usage.
3. Any bad karma can be dealt with later. Do not delay, for they will return to collect the wood.

## Chapter the Ninth

1. You may ask who made the two sweat lodges used from 1992–1995?
2. The first was made by Michael and Matt (the tall) on Mai Fete in the Summer of 1992.
3. The wood for that came from saplings cut down by grounds crew when they cleared the woods next to Lower Lyman lake.
4. The second, of the lower arboretum, was made by Paul the Blond and Michael in the summer of 1993.
5. The wood for that came from saplings cut down by grounds crew when they cleared the woods next to the Oak Opening of the lower arboretum.
6. It should be noted, that there is a rival tradition at Carleton for demolishing the sweat lodge after every usage rather than re-using it.

## Chapter the Tenth

1. At campfires, it is always nice to have some type of food that can be cooked after the ritual.
2. S'mores, hotdogs, marshmallows and tea pots are the favorite things to heat.
3. Coals cook better than flames.

## Chapter the Eleventh

1. Another fun fire activity is making Candles and Torches for Druidical purposes.
2. Both generally require paraffin wax which is cheap, although Beeswax is always preferable in quality.
3. To heat wax, use a double boiler system by filling a pot with water and putting the can holding the wax inside the water. This prevents the wax from surpassing a boiling point, which could produce a cloud of combustible wax vapors!
4. Candles can be made by filling Dixie cups or halved coke cans with wax and suspending a thread in the hardening mixture. Candles can also be repeatedly dipped into the wax, but this will a great deal of time.
5. To make fine torches, you need to gather stalk of dried mullein rods from the fields. They look like crusty corndogs on hollow woody stems between three and seven feet high.
6. One can dip torches gradually or you can take semi-congealed wax in your hands and just squish it onto the torch.
7. Be careful not to put too much wax on a torch that it will cause the stem to snap!
8. A torch made in this way will burn for 10 to forty minutes and is difficult to extinguish by wind or nearby movement.

## Chapter the Twelfth

1. It is considered good luck to leap over the Druid campfire. But do so carefully.
2. So ends the Book of Fire.



Figure 15 Being AD can give you a headache.



# THE DEAD BAY SCROLLS

or

The Apocryphal of Miracles by the New Reformed Druids  
of North America of the Hazelnut Mother Grove South  
Bay Branch

## Original 1993 Introduction:

In all the hoopla over the Discovery of the Dead Bay Scrolls, I think it's time to set forward the truth of the matter. For those who accuse me of unconscionable delay in taking two years to publish them, I can only remind them that it is taking over 45 years for the Dead Sea Scrolls to be published.

Despite the well-published claims with amply valid evidence, the Dead Bay Scrolls were not written in ancient Icelandic. The often-cited passages of Das Edda Todvolkfortgeshritten is not from translation, but merely bad English. End of debate.

As for the location of the discovery of the documents, I can only state that they were discovered in 1993 at an undisclosed Trailer park in the Bay Region of San Francisco. The Dead Bay Scrolls were then mailed to Carleton College by an undisclosed source. There they were rediscovered in a small mailbox at Carleton by a Nomadic Postal worker who gave them to Michael Scharding. Once there, the original of the DBS were carefully photographed by an Epson Scanner and placed on magnetic media. In order to protect the scholars' rights to publication, Michael Scharding reserved the editor's right to the limited first publication in 1993. However, due to pressing demand for copies by the public, Michael has relented and given free access to the DBS to the general public.

Controversy has raged over the contents. Do they contain information that would undermine the assumed beliefs of the Reformed Druids? Do they tell of disunity with the group before the great Druid Diaspora and the Destruction of the Berkeley Grove? I'll not answer these questions yet, as many more years of study are required by scholarly panels. However for the first time, they are now available to the public. Enjoy.

Michael Scharding, Editor  
Computer Math Center  
Dec. 9th, 1993 c.e. 40th Day of Geimredh  
Year XXXI of the Reform

## New 1996 Introduction

I wrote the original introduction after intensive study of the Dead Sea Scrolls for a school project, and was sick of all the bickering that I saw there. Basically, when I wrote the Dead Lake Scrolls in August of 1993, I sent copies to the various existing groves at the time. The Hazelnut Grove was so enamored with them, that they set about writing their own materials to honor the thirtieth anniversary of Reformed Druidism, which had occurred on April 1993.

This is the one of the few NRDNA documents that has been produced without Isaac's influence, and they can therefore give a broader understanding of the NRDNA. Most of the Druids of the Hazelnut Grove were old-time Druids, from the 70s, so here they give voice to their ideas of how Druidism stands in California today.

# Das Edda

## Todvolkfortgeshritten

The Edda of the People's Death March on the Beach

1. Along the long sea-strand did they march
2. All the folk on their way to what was to be
3. Unbeknownst to them
4. Their last moot in the grove for a very long time
5. For a dog a lifetime,
6. For the mice of the fields, generations would pass
7. Until one day
8. Arch-Druids twain, one who had been there
9. One who had not would gather new clans
10. In a southern land under the oaks
11. Celebrate the feast of the first grain harvest
12. And that of Lugh of the Long Hand
13. Ordain new druids onto the Order Second
14. Led were they by a Valkyrie
15. Not gay laughing Brunhilde
16. But one of her grim-faced sisters
17. Resolute she trod on,
18. Stopping only when sounds told her
19. Her charges were not as solemn
20. Or as resolute as she
21. One by one they dropped to the sand
22. But the resolute and hale continued
23. After the grim-faced Valkyrie
24. Until at length they came to the rock
25. At the northern end
26. The skraeling (Indian) headed rock
27. Where two of the number drew the sigil
28. Sacred of the circle with two spears
29. One down, one up
30. Their voices lifted
31. To be carried away on the wind
32. The anthem the last time to be sung
33. And then came the Boring Times
34. Eight years when the Druids' voices
35. Were silenced, and the voices in the trees
36. Were silent also, a long season of sleep
37. Until the polarity of Co-ArchDruids met,
38. To call new clans, to ordain new druids
39. Onto the First and Second
40. And raise one long a Second onto the Third.
41. The death march of the Druids had ended
42. And now came the Parade of Life and Increase.

Translated from the Old Tongue by Thorhilde Ooftasdotter var  
Vinland

# THE BOOK OF THE BORING TIMES

## Chapter the First

1. Between the last ritual of the Hazelnut Mother Grove in the land of the East Bay, the Death March, and the first meeting of the Hazelnut Mother Grove South Bay Branch (Gee, look at all those puns!), which occurred at the first harvest time of Lughnasadh, there passed several years when Republicans held high office, and nothing was occurring with the Druids of California.
2. Unless things were happening in other parts of the state with other Druids of the Reform, who did not communicate with the Mother Grove.
3. These were called by the Arch-Druid the Boring Times, not to be confused with the Burning Times.

## Chapter the Second

1. In that same place where lurked the Orcs and the AK-47s there also lurked a young man for a few moons who was a student in Wicca of she who was to become the Co-Arch Druid.
2. This young man had just got out of the Army and was a bit naive.
3. He believed, or so did he tell the Co-ArchDruid, that the ArchDruid was not just playing computer games to play computer games. He was playing them to do important ritual Magick that would either save the world as we know it or change reality so that we would like it better.
4. And the Co-ArchDruid pondered this and wondered at its meaning.

## Chapter the Third

1. And the ArchDruid dwelt during most of the Boring Times in the land of Orcs and AK-47sand he was sore displeased.
2. For the quake came and trashed his space, and buried him under a torrent of his books.
3. He crawled out and rent his hair saying "No more! I have had enough!"
4. He had an asthma attack and moved to the South Bay.
5. And there was great rejoicing.

## Chapter the Fourth

1. And he then told the Co-ArchDruid that what he was doing with the games was a form of catharsis, called kill therapy, in which the monsters became fundies and all the other creatures the ArchDruid Stephen would rid the world of.
2. And she came to participate.
3. And he still does so to this day.

## Chapter the Fifth

1. And the ArchDruid moved four times during the Boring Times until he came to rest in the Alamo, and then moved one more time to where he dwells today.
2. Always during the Active Times and the Boring Times did he promote musical groups and New Age Fairs by distributing their cards and flyers at many locations in the East and South Bay.

3. While promoting the shows, one of which he himself co-produced, he would collect and tell jokes about he-who-was-then-vice-president, Quayle, who was at that time a figure of fun for many (and horror for more).
4. And he collected until he had 365 of them.

## Chapter the Sixth

1. After the end of the Boring times, he participated in the Laundry Think Tanks, at which the officers of the Grove planned the next meeting of the grove, and in what other activities the Grove would participate.
2. At the most recent non-boring ritual, Lughnasadh, even Mr. Boring showed an unboring part of himself by participating fully, which shocked the Arch Druid into having an asthma attack (two days later).
3. And there was great rejoicing.

# THE BOOK OF MR. BORING

(AKA EARACHE ALIEN MESS)

## Chapter the First

1. In the city of San Jose there dwelt a man called Earache Alien Mess.
2. He was co-producer with the ArchDruid Stephen of the New Age Renaissance Fair, which was not boring.
3. But the Mess prided himself in not thinking and in being boring.
4. The Mess played organ and volleyball, did astrology and had a radio show at the local cooperative radio station.
5. It was called the Eric Mystic show, which Stephen did rename the Earache Mistake Show. It consisted of New Age music and topics with people calling in.
6. Once he and Stephen were subbing for a woman who was then ill. Hers was not a call in show, but Earache told people to call in. It was a show on Celtic Magick and Druidism.
7. People were so bored when they heard his voice they stopped calling in.
8. Stephen then took the mike, and in his Edward R. Murrow voice said, "Earache Mess, the voice that silences communication."
9. People called in after that.

## Chapter the Second

1. But in time even Mr. Boring became bored with being boring and not thinking.
2. And so he studied how to be less boring. He also engaged in a very dangerous activity; thinking.
3. And so it was that in the fullness of time his face actually cracked into a smile, and he laughed at times, and no damage was done.
4. But he still had a problem. And it was dealing with women. He did not even try, thinking it not worth the trouble.
5. But women, especially Druidesses, and pagan women are powerful, and he missed much by being sexist.

# THE BOOK OF GAMES

## Chapter the First

1. But still within the Boring times in that same place where lurked the Orcs and the AK-47s there also lurked a young man who was a student in Wicca of she who was to, become the Co-ArchDruid.
2. This young man had just got-out of the army and was a bit naive.
3. He believed, or so did he tell the Co-ArchDruid that the ArchDruid was not just playing computer games to play computer games. He was playing them to do important ritual Magick, that would either save the world as we know it or change reality so that we would like it better.
4. And the Co-ArchDruid pondered this and wondered at its meaning.

## Chapter the Second

1. Meanwhile the ArchDruid played the computer games, and added more games whenever the Earth Mother did spread Her largesse in his direction.
2. And so also did he put money by to add to his collection of computers on which to play games and so either save the world or to change reality as we know it.
3. And the ArchDruid moved away from the land of Orcs and AK-47s many times until at length he came to dwell in a place called the Alamo which was in San Jose.
4. And he was the only dweller in that place beside the concierge who spoke English. All the others spoke Spanish.
5. And so the Co-ArchDruid spoke to them when she came to visit the Arch-Druid for what she called Kill Therapy.
6. She expiated her anger by killing things on the computer.



**Figure 16 Stephen Abbot & Joan Carruth  
at Berkeley Grove, c.1978,**

# THE BOOK OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY

## Chapter the First

1. And the Druids had now come to their 30th year, and wanted to celebrate and thank the deities for helping them to thrive for 30 years.
2. But there also was a death of an author held high among the People for his wisdom. And many were the books of his writing held and cherished among the people, especially the Co-Archdruids.
3. And the Arch-Druid wanted to honor him now, not wait for Samhain. And so was there a memorial as well as great joy for the 30 years of the Reform.

## Chapter the Second

1. And the Co-Arch-Druid was in a state of delight for the Arch-Druid Terlach who had ordained her into the 2nd and into the 3rd also was in attendance.
2. And he was Preceptor, and honored an ancient, hoary tradition of the first Preceptor (Cherniack).
3. And when the Co-Arch-Druid asked him if the Earth-Mother had given forth of Her bounty, he answered "Yup!"
4. And there was great rejoicing.

## Chapter the Third

1. And the Arch-Druid, whom she had herself laid the apostolic hand of 3rd Ordination upon after he waited over 8 years after his 2nd, was there and took part in the procession and other parts of the ritual, and was congratulated by the older ArchDruids.
2. And there was great rejoicing.

## Chapter the Fourth

1. But there was also in that place great puzzlement, for they wondered that she would ordain when others had refused to, for in many minds and many quarters he was seen as a jerk.
2. And she answered onto them saying, "He did the work. He endured the ordeal. He has studied much in many traditions, but especially the sage Kon Fu Tse, who has wrought many changes within him."
3. For he is a magician. And it is the task of a magician to produce changes in reality in accordance with his will. And he is also a priest.
4. And so did the Co-Arch-Druid anoint him just before the close of the year. Even just before the holy day of Samhain, for she was a sadist.

## Chapter the Fifth

1. He had committed to doing a Samhain druid ritual for the OTO'ers, thinking he could get her to perform it.
2. But it was in her mind to ordain him and have that be his first ritual as an Arch-Druid. And he called his Grove Tuatha De Danaan.
3. And many were the members from Hazelnut Mother Grove South Bay Branch (Gee, look at all those puns!) who attended the ritual and saw that it was well done.
4. And there was great rejoicing.

## Chapter the Sixth

1. And great was the Co-Arch-Druid's pride at seeing this, so that several buttons broke, for she saw that she had ordained well.
2. For it is the way of a true priest to rise above their personal imperfections, act their station and to lead the people in the ritual, and the one called Sommer did that well.
3. And it was the first ritual to be done in the East Bay for several years, and since the Hazelnut had moved, and its name had grown by many characters, it was the first grove in the East Bay to be holding regular rituals.
4. And there was great rejoicing



# THE BOOK OF THE LAUNDRY-THINK-TANK

## Chapter the First

1. And it came to pass that the Co-Arch-Druid preferred to do her laundry the slow cheap way at her own washer and dryer, rather than at any Laundromat.
2. But the washer and dryer were at her former residence, the house of her mother-in law.
3. And this was also the dwelling of, the Arch-Druid of the Hazelnut Mother Grove South Bay Branch (Gee, look at all those puns!).
4. And so during the time of agitation, the rinse, and the house shaking spin. (5.4 on the Richter scale) The Co-Arch-Druids discussed the matters that mattered to them. So was born the grand tradition of the Laundry Think Tank.
5. And there was great rejoicing.

## Chapter the Second

1. They did reason together, and-occasionally rhymed, and even burst into song, which the others in attendance did try to ignore.
2. They planned the next ritual to be held at which the Arch-Druid always had a guided meditation.
3. And the Co-Arch-Druid included it in her script, and there was great rejoicing.
4. But the Arch-Druid, who was fond of shamanism, hated scripts) and made up a poem:
5. If you must have scripts,  
Study them here  
'Cause once at the site,  
Scripts disappear.
6. And there was great rejoicing.

## Chapter the Third

1. And at first only third orders did participate.
2. But behold!, two there were who were only firsts, though one had a high degree in Ar nDraíocht Fein, the Other Druids, and was exceedingly wise in the their ways.
3. So the Co-Arch-Druids said they were invited, because of their wisdom, for they were women. And like the Co-Arch-Druid they were Wiccans.
4. And they joined the Think-Tank.
5. For their wisdom was discovered in a Tarot Reading.
6. And there was great rejoicing.

## Chapter the Fourth

1. There came one into the Laundry Think Tank also who was large and made good food.
2. Now this one had been named after the Good God, Dagda in a special naming ceremony at Ancient Ways, a gathering of the folk.
3. The ritual came after a 3rd Order Ordination of Don the Blonde also called Butt Boy.
4. And the Arch-Druids did greatly love to give all the people names by which they would be known. The Co-arch-Druid

named one woman named Sonya who had blonde hair Paper Moon so that she was Sonya Paper Moon.

5. Now this ritual of ordination and naming was the first Druidic event at Ancient Ways in five years, so it will live in the memory of many. At least eight and thirty.
6. And there was great rejoicing.

## Chapter the Sixth

1. For Don the Blond had survived the endless night's vigil without so much as a fire.
2. And he would create the Angus Og Grove of Alameda and Contra Costa counties and thereby create a new kind of Druid, the Ombanda Druids of North America.
3. But it is not known if this had indeed come to pass. And the Arch Druid had doubts.

## Chapter the Seventh

1. Also was there discussion of matters of great philosophical weight, such as opening the other orders to others who had interest, not by rank, for the Arch-Druid was not one to love hierarchy, but merit.
2. So each order would have its own color ribbon and a tutelary deity appropriate to its nature.
3. Green was known to all as healing and herbs and called Dian Cecht after the God of Healing.
4. Blue also for Bard, Taliesin, Ceridwen and Brigid.
5. Grannos for brewing.
6. Martial Red for warriors
7. Purple for Magick and Myrddin.
8. Silver for Women's Mysteries Arianrhod.
9. And there was great rejoicing.

## Chapter the Seventh

1. But not always was the discussion among the Druids of such great philosophical weight.
2. Many times did they play games on the great electronic philosopher's machine, and kill things which were imaged electronically, for in the Arch-Druid's (strange) mind were these activities linked ritually.
3. Also was there a game of the role-playing, and the Co-Arch-Druid got to play the parts of the non-player characters, and monsters, and growl and wroth greatly with delight.
4. And there was great rejoicing.



## Addendum to the Ordination of the Second Order

After finishing the chalice, the Candidate goes off for a period of isolated meditation in which s/he assembles an altar/sacred space, and meditates upon the five-fold Powers of the Mother. When s/he returns, the AD asks the following five questions in order to determine what has been discovered in their meditation.

AD: Of what did you meditate upon the Power of the Mother? (Fire of Earth)

C: Gives an extemporaneous reply.

AD: Of what did you meditate upon the Beauty of the Mother? (Water of Earth)

C: Gives a reply

AD: Of what did you meditate upon the Understanding of the Mother? (Earth of Earth)

C: Gives a reply

AD: Of what did you meditate upon the Wisdom of the Mother? (Air of Earth)

C: Gives a reply

AD: Of what did you meditate upon the Magic of the Mother? (Spirit of Earth)

C: Gives a reply

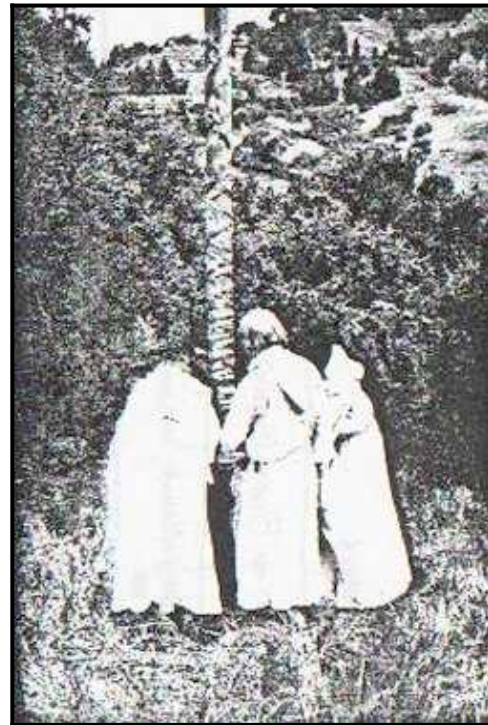


Figure 17 Emmon Bodfish, Larry & Sue Press, Beltane 1983 at Live Oak Grove.

# THE BOOK OF SAMHAIN

## Chapter the First

1. And as the great wheel of the year turned the Grove came to its favored place to celebrate a ritual for Samhain.
2. And when the Co-ArchDruid offered the sacrifice the winds were silent for it was the coming of the time of Sleep for the Earth Mother.
3. But the Grove had new spears to consecrate and three new Druids were sealed to the First Order.
4. One of the bearers of these spears was a new First Order named Crazy Bear.
5. And he did the greeting of the quarters according to the Native American medicine way.
6. The ArchDruid called up the quarters in the familiar Celtic tradition.
7. And there was great rejoicing.

## Chapter the Second

1. And the officers of the Grove, the ArchDruid, the Co-ArchDruid, the Cocoa-ArchDruid, and the Preceptor told the People of the Grove what Samhain meant to them, and each person in attendance put the name of the honored dead into the circle.
2. But there were in that same place boys racing through on bicycles, for it was a public park.
3. And so they had a right as well as the Druids to be in that place. But the boys showed themselves to be Anti-Druids, for they heckled and called out rude comments, which the ArchDruid and Crazy Bear were unable to ignore.
4. And so Crazy bear ran towards them brandishing the spear.
5. And the Anti-Druid boys rode home and told their parents, and the parents called the police, who came and interrupted the ritual.
6. But the Co-ArchDruid was able to give the Grove the blessing, which was traditional.

## Chapter the Third

1. And the people pondered what they had seen and were of several minds (at least one more opinion than there were those present, as is traditional).
2. And the ArchDruid was greatly irked and prophesied dire things for the Grove as a part of this.
3. He thought it was the Brit Bitch or the followers of Bush & Wilson, and the religious right on the warpath to wipe out pagan-kind. But the Co-ArchDruid took it as a sign of the Druids' innate strength.
4. For it was not until they showed their strength that the Anti-Druids acted against them, for they were not worthy of notice before. But flex a little muscle and the Anti-Druids suddenly sit up and take notice.
5. The Druids and pagan-kind. in general will just have to work a little harder, and fight a little harder from now on.
6. And if getting a permit is required, get a permit.

# Dead River Scrolls

## 2003 Introduction

Not much is known about this collection, which covers the 1997–2001 years at Carleton College, in which Mike was no longer visiting the Carleton Grove as frequently due to his self-imposed exile to Japan for four years. Following the triple Arch-Druidcy of Michelle, Ann & Becky; Irony and Michelle the Blond took over until she dropped out. After this, Merri, Chrissy, Chris, Dan and a host of other Druids stepped in to help with running Grove matters at Carleton.

The Dead River Scrolls were originally written by various Druids in 1997, but they got lost. More was written in 1999, and I lost those. But the third time I collect the materials, I held on to them tight, and much did reveal itself from generous donors, on dusty disks that I had misplaced. This collection of more awful writings by me, and much more interesting ones by my friends will hopefully entertain you a little. It covers letters, epistles and speeches from the Carleton and Akita Grove from 1996–2003.

Sincerely,  
Mike Scharding  
Day 7 of Earrach, Year XL of the Reform.  
February 7, 2003

Printing History  
1st Edition 1997  
2nd Edition 1999  
3rd Edition 2003 (ARDA 2)



Figure 18 First Stone Circle, c. 1956.

# The Mini–Epistle of Michelle the Dark

(By Michelle Curtis, 1996)

1. March 5th, 1996 19:48
2. The previous postings has sparked quite a bit of discussion on the mailing list. To tell the truth I haven't actually read all of the posts. I did want to see if I could spark some discussion on here about what people believe, not just about paganism but just religion/spirituality in general.
3. I, myself, go through periods of searching. I must always re–examine my beliefs. This happens every few years and I am currently in one such mind set.
4. Usually I try to read about different religious practices but who has time for that during the school year? I have come to realize that I am more of a spiritual than a religious person.
5. The distinction (in my mind) being that spirituality is something you feel and religion is something you practice. Usually the two would have to coincide. Your religious practices should not go against the way you feel about things.
6. Because I am drawn to different aspects of different religions, but cannot reconcile myself to one as a whole, I am forced to pick and combine them....
7. Anyway, I just wanted to try to spark up some conversation about belief and stuff in general. I hope you have been finding my posts from the list to be useful...



**Figure 19 Top Amanda on right,  
Bottom Amanda doing rite Beltane 1997.**

# The Epistle of Amanda

(By Amanda Bradley, Dec 1997)

1. Dear Michael,
2. Thank you for your long–distance support, it's nice to know that because of our devotion to the Earth we can share our experiences and friendship.
3. There are many people who follow a Druidic path and call it Buddhism, Catholicism, etc.
4. I always find it interesting to attend the religious services of another faith, or get into a discussion with someone who think they believe differently, and see just how much we have in common.
5. We're all seeking, taking the paths that seem the most fitting for our beliefs, but we're all going to end up in the same place.
6. What, may I ask, pulled you to Druidism?
7. For me it was the combination of religion and Nature, the fact that it doesn't require me to think that other religions are "wrong".
8. [Many people have always believed that there is only one "right" way to spiritual awakening or whatever one would call it. However, you are right in that so many religions are very similar, they probably ARE the same religion, but some people found things they didn't like about one, changed it, and denounced the original.
9. Also, Christianity DID borrow from the Pagan religions in order to get more Pagans to convert.
10. These similarities aren't limited to Christianity and the Pagan religions of Western Europe, though. In Indian religions three is also a holy number, and there is a trinity of the Buddha, his Spirit body, Enjoyment body and Dharma(human) body, and there are parallels with Indian religion in Native American religions. Sorry about the run–on sentence. (24 Oct 1996)]
11. You asked about my vigil. It was one of the most surreal experiences of my life.
12. Michelle started out with me in the lower Arb shortly before sunset. She shared with me information I would find valuable through the night.
13. As darkness fell, I expected it to bring fear, but I felt fear only once that entire night when something ran across a field and I thought it came at me through the foliage lining the trail.
14. I did a lot of thinking before the sun rose that morning, mostly about the mother–daughter relationship I have with the Earth/Goddess (I'm Wiccan).
15. I saw it as an omen that I stood on the hill at sunrise, a doe and her fawn stepped into view in a nearby field. I can think of nothing else to say about the experience, it was beyond any verbal description.
16. Things are going well with the Druids. We have good participation for most things, but for our last full moon ritual no one showed up. Probably, because it was fairly cold and there were three inches of snow on the ground.
17. All in all a good fall term.
18. I don't have an anthology yet, so I'm borrowing the Religious Diversity House copy for now.
19. Have a good Yule.
20. Amanda

# The Sigil Letters

## Chapter the First: The Sigil Vigil

1. Dear Siblings
2. You asked me what I see when I look at this neat little sigil you sent to me? Is it now traditional to wear Druid Sigils as jewelry, this smacks of proselytization, don't you think?
3. I had always preferred retaining the sigils for liturgical work and carving them on the winds at the close of the service with our hands (Peace, Peace, Peace), thus showing vividly how temporary is our mark on the world.
4. But, it was a good question, so I stayed up last night and thought about it, which is not hard since we have 23 hours at the South Pole.
5. Here are the more comprehensible thoughts that resulted;
6. I see two parallel lines intersecting a circle. (is there more to it than that?)
7. I see the original ritualistic gestures of its shape carved on the winds (where do they go?)
8. I see a fork and a knife on a plate (what was for dinner?)
9. I see two chopsticks resting on a bowl (is it full or emptied?)
10. I see a lid to a pot with bars to keep it from falling in (what's for dinner?)
11. I see a grate to filter out the flow of something (what's to be kept out?)
12. I see two boards placed on a well-top (are you thirsty?)
13. I see two pins and a ring, holding up a hairdo (how fancy is it?)
14. I see a drum and two drum sticks (what music does your rhythm accompany?)
15. I see two saplings with the sun rising behind them (what will happen today?)
16. I see two bars on window (is it locked?)
17. I see a galloping turtle with his head pulled in. (what is he afraid of?)
18. I see the world's tropics of cancer and Capricorn. (where will you go?)
19. I see a thing that cannot be described (do you see it too?)
20. I see a baseball in mid-flight (how will you swing?)
21. I see a bridge spanning over a pond (is it deep?)
22. I see rabbit ears on TV antenna. (What channel are you tuned to?)
23. I see a drawbridge of a castle entrance (what is protected?)
24. I see a Celtic cross, with swords unlocked (why were they fighting?)
25. I see some planks laid over a chasm (what made the hole?)
26. I see eyelashes on a half-closed eye (what does it see?)
27. I see the stalactite & stalagmite lined entrance to the Earth-Mother's womb (what will come out?)
28. I see three enclosed spaces (what else in there?)
29. I see a gold platter and two ivory tusks (was it worth the cost?)
30. I see the trails of two friends in a grassy meadow (which flowers will they pick?)

31. I see two streams of a waterfall pouring over the mouth of a cave (must you get wet?)
32. I see infinite space stretching away from the sigil (what is out there?)
33. I see the refined end-product of some melted rocks, hauled far from home (just like us, isn't it?)
34. I see a division of a perfect year into two half seasons and two "days between the years"
35. I see analogies that have gone on too long (when will I stop?)
36. I see a short tube when viewed from the sides (details depend on the vantage point)
37. I see two parallel lines intersecting a circle on the other side. (sometimes opposites are similar)
38. It is a lump of pewter, than I hung on my computer.
39. -Ian Friesland, June 1997

## Chapter The Second: Sigil Musings

1. November 11th, 1997
2. Dear Amanda Bradley, Sister-in-the-Mother.
3. I wish you a happy Celtic Year and beginning of the Time of Sleep in Reformed Druidism (Samhain to Beltane).
4. As a present I offer you this Druid Sigil which I usually give to new 3rd Orders. What does it mean?
5. It is merely a lump of silver to some, worth \$20.
6. To others it is a symbol of weirdness, of people who refuse to accept societies predetermined paths of spirituality.
7. To others it is a symbol by which to recognize other Druids, but verily I believe that there are many people in many faiths or codes who follow the Druidic path but use a different name for it. Seek these people, too.
8. To others, it is a symbol of their desire to control the "magic" of Nature. I have done this too, but beware of egotism, because the control of Nature's magic can be abused, just as we have abused Nature's other resources.
9. To others, it is an indefinite thing. This simple symbol has seemingly never been adopted or named before by any known group before 1963. It can be used as a tool without existing prejudice for teaching.
10. To you, it will mean whatever you wish. If you wear it, people will associate your deeds and words with this symbol.

I give it to you with this in mind.

Yours in the Mother,

Michael, Druid Missionary in Japan



Figure 20 Akita Grove with Bon Den, c. 1997.



## Chapter the Third: My Vision of the Sigil

1. I've thought a bit about the sigil. The following is born out of my experiences with a Rosen Method practitioner, my experiences with the Mists of the Stone Forest Grove in Minneapolis, as well as the events of the night of my vigil. In Neopagan Druidism, such as we are, there is a tendency to three-ness.
2. There are a number of three aspected Godheads in Celtic mythology, for example.
3. There is also the aspect of three in time, which has Gaelic names for past, present and future that I cannot remember.
4. Also, the three realities that the Cosmic Tree unites: Upper World, This world, Lower World. Another "three" that we at Mists worked with is that of Gods & Goddesses, Nature Spirits, and Ancestors. In our rituals we invoke these three.
5. The sigil of OBOD is the three rayed sign, commonly translated as the rays of spirit, mind, and body.
6. My view of the RDNA sigil is that the two vertical rays represent spirit and soul. Soul could alternately be called mind. I see the difference between spirit and soul as being the two parts of life that reach for the heavens (spirit), and that which embraces the Earth(soul). I won't say that this is a sharp definition.
7. They could just as easily be two aspects of the same immaterial aspect of a human as two different things altogether.
8. However, they have a body around them, and I believe that is very effectively symbolizes the unity of Life, especially within a Pagan worldview.
9. The two rays extending in both directions beyond the "body" can than have significant meanings of the need to have the balance of an inner life coupled with the outer life of experience.
10. I am a believer in the mind/body connection, and this sigil could well symbolize that too.
11. That has been my experience of late with this Rosen Practitioner. It's a subtle form of touch that reads the soul as kept in the body. I was doing some experiments of my own in my last session, and the results were outstanding.
12. This practitioner I see is good. If I changed my mind in mid-stream, he felt it. I was changing my energies, by centering very deeply. When I hit core, I get body rushes, and when I did, he immediately noted it.
13. I was being silent the whole time, and experimenting with the method because I see this as being a powerful tool for healing souls, which is a desire of mine.
14. So the sigil to me is very profound. I wear it constantly, and it serves to remind me of my Third Order calling.
15. –Robert Harrison, ODAL, Carleton Grove (associated)



## The Book of Exile, Part One

(By Irony, 1997–1990)

### Chapter the FIRST

1. May 6, 1997
2. Dear Mec,
3. I will not be in evidence over this summer.
4. With any luck I will be wandering Wales and Ireland with my estranged lady love. She had a dream some years ago that we would be in England together the summer before her senior year. Self-fulfilling perhaps, or gratuitous wish granting, but we are formulating travel plans either way.
5. Now I am working on a paper that has crashed four computers and done outrageous power outage. Theological implications of the Ancient Mariner... Someone does not want the thing written.
6. I seem accidentally to have declared a religion major, primarily because I wanted Jackson as an advisor, and found that I am six courses ahead of the game. Time for some time off.
7. There is an internship in Germany I may fall into next term, assuming I come back from the isles. Nothing academic, just building twelve meter racing sailboats within half an hour of both the North and Baltic oceans.
8. Carleton seems unsympathetic to people interested in learning about life rather than ivory. I dearly love the place and the people, but I need some time to myself again.
9. When do you reemerge from the east?
10. Irony

### Chapter the SECOND

1. May 7th, 1998
2. Dear Mec,
3. I've settled back into Carleton at last after a long and full year pursuing education in other forms and places.
4. I worked for a month at the end of last spring then poured all the earnings into a plane to Germany where I stayed until October, living alone, learning to drink, working with a blacksmith, living off bread and brie and mueslix.
5. I was in Niedersachsen, Schleswig-Holstein where the Viking 'Empire' was centered, as far North as you can go and not be in Denmark. Barrows are scattered about the landscape, now largely forgotten and unmarked by the locals, though I found the stubs of candles in the hollow of the crown of one.
6. I also spent a fair bit of time playing with the deer in the wild park. While doing that, I encountered a pleasant and awe-inspiring shock of a pure white doe.
7. The trip was badly organized and suffered from discrepant paradigms such that the only things that worked out were those I found for myself. By October I was ready to leave, which was good; they were ready to deport me!
8. So I went to England, reacquainted myself with my British relations whom I had not really seen in fourteen years. I stayed in London for two weeks in the company of an overbearing aunt and a discomfortingly beautiful cousin. She had the most distracting habit of greeting me with a kiss on the cheek. One that verged dangerously on the

electric corners of the lips upon occasion. I was very glad we were related.

9. Then I traveled again to a commune in Swindon where I worked for a time and learned many things, to Avebury, where I wandered, was rained upon, and left an offering of blood on the old, old stones, to Glastonbury where I spent the night on the Tor while the winds wept and invisible things clumped about the grass.
10. There I met an old, old witch, a beautiful Maori woman in her late seventies, still clear of mind, but approaching death who could see in me with a clarity that many miss having known me for years.
11. Then home again by a wandering route where I returned to Merri, at last, and we spent a longer time together than we have since the spring we met. I got to know my family again during those two months, the brother who is growing up without me and the father who is more at peace than I have ever known him to be.
12. I arrived in time for Samhain and a wonderful William friend of mine and I celebrated in style in a field below/beyond my home, out of sight of everything but stars.
13. After Christmas I left for Sea or SEA rather: Sea Education Association – The Semester at Sea program, the most enlightening experiential, and challenging academic phenomenon I have yet to encounter.
14. I learned less about myself there than others did, of I went into it knowing more about this person that I am. I did learn much about how the world works, about power and resolve, how people change and function, and a dozen practical things of work and living.
15. I turned as black as the Arab I am and lost fifteen pounds to sea sickness. Someday I will return to the sea.
16. She is coming to Carleton in the fall, and I will teach her all I know about the workings of this place and to the dubious wisdom and traditions of the last three years.
17. She has that rarest of gifts, true initiative. NO one remaining here does. There is no feedback, no suggestions are offered. Things happen only when out of the nothingness, I, or alas more rarely Michelle Hajder, decides that they will. Then people come participate and wander off again, without comment.
18. Chrissie, though, creates her own schemes and is inspired by those she sees. She arrived at my door with a bag of tricks and announced that we were to celebrate. After the feeling I have here of having to force things through by my will and my presence – all the while trying not to be a leader– it was unspeakably refreshing to have someone enthusiastic, creative in their own right and willing to walk beside, instead of behind or before.
19. I feel vaguely bad about planning for her to assume the leadership here and even a tad of humorous guilt for ‘importing’ an active and dynamic Druid when there were no local ones forth coming. I have known Chrissie since before she could walk. Promoting her to Archdruidcy feels almost dynastic sometimes.
20. And now I’ve returned.
21. I have designed the first ethics major at Carleton, which may open up a new concentration.
22. Someone has stenciled John Lennon upon the north facing stone of the circle. Somehow it does not bother me much. The place is well loved by the people here, the lady has a path beaten down to her and I find flowers and offerings there at times.

23. I performed the weddings at Beltane to the great delight of the couples and onlookers. One was a couple from my class. The other, Harriet Erwin and her boyfriend, the secretary of philosophy / religion / classics, if you don’t recall.
24. We danced the maypole into the ground and Michelle led the last dance so that I could watch it all happen for once.
25. I am happy in a peculiar way with the near future looking full, serious, and wonderful. I miss my love immensely but we will be together again for another while soon. I am sorry to have missed your wedding.
26. Enough for now, for one letter,
27. Yours in service,
28. Irony
29. Carleton College, MN

## Chapter the THIRD

1. Date: Fri, 06 Nov 1998 14:44:00 –0600
2. Druidism, as I practice it, is at its heart the recognition of only two things:
3. That the spiritual search is important, individual, and life long, and that nature presents one avenue down which to take this search.
4. What it requires is simply a great degree of intellectual honesty with ones self. You do not simply choose what you will believe; you search out what might be true and subject it to some rigorous examination.
5. Approach life with the premise that everyone and everything can teach you something you don't yet know, and knows something that you never will.
6. Druidism is about actively learning as much as you can about life and yourself– not merely on the spiritual plane.
7. I could go on forever, but it will become a description of my search, rather than classical reformed druidism if I continue much.
8. It may help you to know one of the very basic suppositions and assertions of that system. You have a right to believe what you know to be true, no matter what anyone thinks of it.
9. I would be glad to talk to you in person about anything. An important learning technique is sharing with others the things you have learned, unlearned, or wondered about. Through their reflections on it, you glean a lot.
10. Give me a call if you wish, or stop by. 646–4566.
11. Irony.

## Chapter the FOURTH

1. Dear Mec,
2. After nearly four years I am no longer Carleton’s Archdruid. It is an odd feeling. My sigil necklace broke on the trip home and there was a longish space of time where I felt that I could no longer do magic, like that was a thing that went with the position... How was your severance experience?
3. It seems that I am still a servant of whatever it is I’ve finally begun calling god. It’s strange.
4. I feel like this is another training period for a task I can’t see yet. The other side of my brain thinks it’s all hogwash of course. Who is to say who is right?
5. I enjoyed our contest last night. However long it took to recover from it...

6. I would be honored if you would come to my wedding.
7. For the Apocrypha: "Tread lightly on Fairy toes, and beware all drinking games with past Arch-Druids."
8. You taught me a lot, Mec, I thank you.
9. Til next time.
10. Irony
11. June 1999, New York

## The Tree Epistle of John

(By John Burrige, 1999)

### Chapter the FIRST

1. January 17th, 1999 18:34:13 -0800rêM
2. You wrote: Tomorrow's tea will be focused around a discussion. 'Are we making it all up?' The search, the circle, god, magic, meaning... 'Is any of it really there?'
3. I'm not so sure that the question, "Are we making it all up?" is a useful question. (Well, OK, it's one which philosophers have been asking about reality for a while... but then I'm a theatre major disguised as a physics major disguised as a computer person.)
4. Certainly we're being slightly more conscious about how we interpret what we are sensing. Unless you meant, "Is what we're experiencing something which can be measured with machines?" maybe a more interesting question could be, "What is making us choose to organize our sensory input in a way which includes magic, the search, etc.?"

### Chapter the SECOND

1. For example, once, while I was hugging a tree, it hugged me back.
2. Now, it didn't grow arms, and the branches didn't move to squeeze my shoulders, but at the time I felt a warmth and a sensation of touch around my shoulders. That I experienced a hug is a truth.
3. The explanation of "what really happened" is another matter. A non-exhaustive list of explanations:
4. The Spirit of the Tree decided that I needed a hug and did something with ectoplasm (or what have you).
5. I was rather depressed at the time, and in need of some kind of comfort so badly that I imagined the tree hugging me strongly enough to "feel" it.
6. By hugging the tree, I somehow brought our "fields" together, and the exchange of "charge" between the tree and my body registered as a sensation of heat and pressure.
7. By hugging the tree, I relaxed my shoulder muscles and the release in tension caused a small muscle spasm interpreted as a shoulder hug.
8. Radiation from the Reed College nuclear reactor just happened to pass through my shoulders at the same time that I was hugging the tree.
9. The Deity saw that I needed comfort, and caused Radiation from the Reed College nuclear reactor to pass through my shoulder at the time I was hugging the tree.
10. None of the above. All of the above.

## Chapter the THIRD

1. I prefer to believe the first explanation. It could be wrong.
2. Since I don't expect other people's lives to depend on familiar trees hugging them (or at least believing that familiar trees could hug them), I don't see that it matters what I'm believing about the tree (at least it is consistent with my animist spiritual beliefs).
3. The only thing "wrong" about my belief (as Mark Dwyer will point out) is that it assumes that Trees in general (and The Deity specifically) are even interested in or care what one human being is feeling for the rather short period of five minutes.
4. But hey, it beats being nihilistic about the world.
5. – John



Figure 21 Betsy at New Circle, Beltane 1997.



Figure 22 Irony at Old Circle, Samhain 1996.

# The Book of Q

(By Q, 1999)

## Chapter the FIRST: Introduction

1. "Arf! Wan! Wan!" as we say in Doggese, or as I say, in English, "Hey there, how are you doing?"
2. I'm not sure I should be here, I'm borrowing Mike's keyboard while he takes a nap.
3. He seems very busy writing stuff here, so I thought I'd write a few things from my perspective.

## Chapter the SECOND: The Basics

1. Food and drink is good. Can't state that too strongly.
2. Play and rest is good. Amen to that!
3. I like people to be nice to me.
4. Don't bite the hand that feeds you, unless they're being idiots.

## Chapter the THIRD: Other Pleasures

1. I don't know about sex, they neutered me, bastards....
2. If it itches, scratch.
3. Chase anything that moves.
4. Did I mention food?

## Chapter the FOURTH: Other Stuff

1. Every day is special and new.
2. Go for walkies, mountains and forests and rivers are good.
3. Forget the paths and just wander about, you'll find something new this way.
4. Visit your friends often.
5. Clothes and leashes get in the way of the good life.
6. When playing in the water, don't fight the current, just cross the river.
7. If you talk too much, especially near unawake people, they get angry at you.

## Chapter the FIFTH: Conclusion

1. Hey, this writing thing is pretty easy, huh?
2. Gotta go. He's waking up again....

Q the Dog  
July 30th, 1999  
Akita, Japan



Figure 23 Akita Grove Circle, c. 1998.

# The Book of the Sermon

(By Pat of Akita Grove)

1. Aye, it was a bad omen, for it was Midsummer's Day, the longest day of the year, and yet a service was held in the forest of Takayama.
2. Mike's arrival in our country was certainly a mixed blessing, for although he brought the teachings of the Reform to blend with our Shinto, he did also bring with him his speeches.
3. It is unfortunate that Mike is inspired with enough thoughts to keep several men busy, thus he wishes to dispense the extra ones to those around him.
4. For many weeks he had worked on that speech and for many minutes did it last.
5. A priest of Belenos, Mike did verily stop the sun in the heavens, for time seemed to stretch beneath the torrent of words that he unleashed on the listeners.
6. Grass grew several inches, brains froze and drool escaped the lips of some of his victims.
7. Several were enlightened as their minds sought escape from their bodies, others writhed in abject boredom.
8. Having studied the ancients, he felt not the urgent press of youth, and seemed bent on remaining there talking until we all had reached great age.
9. What was said was not remembered, but valuable insight was inadvertently gained from the message.
10. When the words, stopped, and consciousness returned to the listeners, all blew a kiss to Mike, to remind him of an ancient Druid lesson, known by the masses.
11. Keep It Short & Simple.



Figure 24 Pat doing Sirona's Shugyo Service, at the Akita Grove's waterfall c.1998.

# The Book of Exile, Part Two

(By Irony, 1999–2001)

## Chapter the FIRST

1. Dear Mike
2. I read all the books you sent me. Thank you deeply.
3. Machiavelli was fascinating, deserving of further study. The one truly disturbing thought it produced was this: will any system of thought that does not make the acquisition of power one of its objectives eventually become a tool for one that does? If so, what are we to do about it?
4. As my mother kindly pointed out one must distinguish between force and power, but still I suspect the quandary remains.
5. The Buddhist answer — I suspect— would be to distinguish between inner and outer power. Have enough power in yourself and no one can wield power over you (or have no self...)
6. When I think of Reformed Druidism as a "system" of thought, it seems that its goal — if it has one— is understanding.
7. (I also suspect it is also too small and esoteric a way for any external power monger to notice!) The old Druids though, were very powerful, and very hard to manipulate — which is why Rome had them killed. Bears thinking about....
8. Fate seems to enjoy messing with my mind. Each time I get something all planned out the wyrds weave some new thread past mine that sets me all adrift again. I don not know if I will aim for Japan.
9. The need to do useful work, that I can believe in, is nagging at me and I am struck with Socrates' truth that the philosopher needs to be a citizen of the world. The U.N.'s calling me.
10. The creation of a cooperative peaceful, culturally diverse and environmentally sound planet is something I could work for whole-heartedly. I know not by what means I would do this, nor how, now where, but it tempts me to try.
11. My worry is the assertion that the world's ills are not susceptible to political solutions, but spiritual ones.... There seems to be some truth in that.
12. The Bahai's (worth intensive study — they are practically Druids already!) maintain that the purpose of religion is peaceable union and understanding, a cross cultural binding force — and insist further that it is better to be without religion than to support one that serves division. Them too I must learn more about....
13. Yours truly, Irony

## Chapter the Second

Dalon ap Landu: Lord of the Palm Trees  
Irony Sade, ODAL, VCN, in Tonga

1. Spring 2001?
2. Druidism becomes exactly as serious as you take it to be (not serious—dull, but rather, important, personal, life affecting.) You and I have taken it more seriously than most, and have (I hope) been rewarded accordingly.

3. I have moved in this year from the pyrhic and phoenix—like sacrifice of leading, loving and leaving a grove and into what must be old territory for you: the life of a devout, wandering, groveless and lonely Druid priest.
  4. Tonga is a lonely place in which to be a druid. The land and the people both challenge and passively assault my understanding and values.
  5. Much of what we do as druids harks back to the life and cycles of Mother Earth. The seasons, Beltane, the living and dead halves of the year, growth and rebirth...
  6. Even if you do not postulate the horned king, consort to the Goddess, whose life is that of the changing seasons — birth in mid—winter, love in spring, growth, maturity and sacrifice at Samhain— there is much that is tied implicitly to the mysteries of the natural world.
  7. But now I am thrust into confronting what I had always wondered about: the cycles we follow are those of a NORTHERN TEMPERATE world. Here in the tropical South, things differ. There is no spring, no autumn, no time of general death and growth.
  8. The moon remains, bless her, but she travels widdershins. An anti—clockwise sky! I knew it would be that way in my mind, and I have adjusted my internal compass for the navigation, but then deeper questions begin to spring.
  9. Clockwise, I have learned and practiced (during the rare occasions when I engage in ritual or external magic working) is the natural and appropriate direction of things. Beginnings, summonings, progressions, growth, movement, callings — every natural "Good" ritual movement begins clockwise. North East South West, with endings, banishments, etc. being the opposite.
  10. All that was explained and justified by the movement of the heavens and anti—clockwise movement is now regarded as "un—natural." The "left—hand path" was never, explicitly mind you, to be avoided as destructive and evil.
  11. Now the stars move widdershins above me, and I must ask if the practice of magic is relative to geography (for every ritual culture I know of in the north proceeds clockwise...)
  12. Now there are no seasons, and I must wonder if different gods and goddesses hold sway. The Earth remains — the Goddess is eternal— but does the Green Man peer between the coconut palms? Does Llyr swim amidst the reefs I see?
  13. Does the Wild Hunt of the Northern Climes hold any truck with hurricanes? Do the Gods I know and serve even visit these regions or have they siblings I have yet to meet and love?
  14. It is easy to say that all the gods and all their lovers are but facets of one Brahmanian whole, but it is a difficult thing to act upon. I was consecrated a priest of the Lord of the Groves (though by my well—meaning but foolish tongue I may have been the last) and I am faithful to that charge, but if Landu's son is a purely temperate beast where does that leave me in the tropics?
  15. Such questions are the product of a fevered mind. The spiritual quest may be furthered through the study and experience of nature— all of her.
  16. If I have wandered farther afield than our linguistic predecessors it is absurd to blame my confusion on their ignorance.
- The Goddess is Mother of all, and the lord of the Groves is present even amongst palm trees. Let not the Welsh name I met him under distract me from that fact.

## Chapter the THIRD

### What do Druids Do?

1. June 2001
2. Dear Mec,
3. One of the men I work with here, Saia, by name, has been asking me about Druidism.
4. Religion plays a huge role in Tongan life, and I often ask him to describe parts of its impact.
5. Invariably he returns the questions; “What are the religious duties of a druid?”, “What money does the church collect, and what is it used for?”, “What are the requirements for being a priest?”, “What obligations do they have?”, “Do they serve for life?”, “Can they marry?”, “Are there Druidic schools?”, “To what moral code are Druids bound?”
6. As it is the delicious doom of every Druid to answer such things for his or her self, I can only pass the questions on. May they stimulate much thinking.
7. A thing that fascinates me about his line of questioning is its purely practical focus. Not “What do you believe?” but “What do you do?”
8. In a way it is not such a bad place to start. Actions are driven by values, which may be derived from and supported by wildly divergent beliefs. Thus, if it be found that a group of Druids hold similar values, they can act in concert, even if those values are supported by different or even incompatible beliefs which each individual has developed through his or her independent search for spiritual truth.
9. The forum then becomes: I value X; therefore I will do Y. This shift in paradigms has immediate consequences. Not the least being that it moves one out of the highly contested and poorly articulated realm of theology.
10. Values, furthermore, seem to have a longer half-life than beliefs, which may suddenly shift in the light of new experience. Changes in what people value come only – I suspect – with a distinct change in a person’s character, which experience shows is rare indeed.
11. The challenge is that one must engage in serious introspection to discover to which values one is really committed.
12. I did tell Saia the three moral commands supposedly taught by the old Druids: “Act Bravely, Honor the Gods, Do No Evil.” Tongan is a tongue of many puns, and I discovered as I said it that the last statement also translates as “Don’t Fu\*k Badly,” a commandment bound to enthuse a certain class of Druids....
13. Life here is good. Much of my work involves counseling and advising rather than hands on work. Sowing seeds of reason into the discussion of kindergarten politics, suggesting accounting changes in the youth groups budget, encouraging people to engage in continuing education (and walking them through the application!)
14. To a large extent, I am simply living here, being part of an alien community, understanding and participating in its life, caring for my neighbors. The island’s doctor has started referring me his patients, which is a bit ridiculous.
15. Most important to me I am starting to understand how people here think and am now able to engage in the same

sort of thinking myself. That competence snuck up on me. Its existence was highlighted by the recent arrival of an anthropologist who stayed for a month at the other end of town.

16. She has been studying the culture of Tonga (actually the cultural change and how housing reflects that) for nine months, but apparently only the more diluted samples you find on the bigger islands. She tried to play a game which I have long learned to avoid, and was in too deep within two days and had to flee the island under threat of imminent marriage. Very entertaining.
17. Somehow or other I have now been here over a year. Next Beltane will mark my release from the Peace Corps. Still no clear plan on what is to follow. Japan is looking less likely.
18. So is traveling right round the world, a trip many ex-volunteers arrange. I have gotten too deeply into this culture to enjoy a touristic whirlwind of several dozen others. I intend to see many other countries, but I wish to know them personally, and that will take time.
19. I know I will return to the states, see my family, maybe publish a few stories. If possible I would like to criss-cross the country a time or two, visiting all my scattered friends and correspondents. Perhaps I will build a new harp and simply be a bard for a while. Tis still too soon to tell..
20. There is yet another Pai Kava running across the road, possibly the last one with electric lights for some time. The island is out of gasoline again.
21. I’ve had to cut back on my kava intake. I hit a stretch where I was drinking every night for three weeks running. Several gallons a day. The stuff is a drug, after all. Turns you into a lizard if you don’t watch it.
22. Much of the business gets transacted at such gatherings, so they are still obligatory, but I try not to drink so long these days.
23. Hope all is reasonably well state-side. How’s that Washington Grove coming?
24. Yours in service.
25. Irony.

## Chapter the FOURTH

1. December 19, 2001.
2. Rain. Thought we might be in for a hurricane last night.
3. We had to seal all the windows of the town hall and to keep the water out. Now the wind has left for somewhere cooler and we retain only a solid perpendicular drizzle.
4. I can’t recall if I mentioned my chickens.
5. For the longest time, I held off adopting any, figuring I could have either them or a garden. With zero local vegetables, the latter was more important.
6. One day, I came home to find two young hens hiding under my bed. I took the hind, tied them up and built a large cage to keep them in.
7. One puzzling fact about chickens is that after a week or two in a new environment, they forget having lived anywhere else. Once these two were thoroughly brainwashed I let them roam free.
8. First thing they did was devour my cabbages and tear up the onions. They haven’t even produced any eggs yet!
9. Still, they are adorable – and I can always eat them if they bug me too much.

11. Time flies like a hummingbird. Magically still while sucking life's nectar, then gone too fast to follow. My time approaches the latter phase. Twelve weeks till escape from paradise.
12. With luck I will be home for Beltane.
13. Send nothing to Tonga after March 16.
14. Till then, I remain your sunburnt emissary.
15. Irony.

## Chapter the FIFTH

1. The following account is perfectly true and factual. The events happened last Friday. Makes you wonder just how thorough the missionaries were:
2. HARD CORE PAGANS IN TONGA
3. After being assured by the Doctors that there was nothing wrong with him, Siona Piko (false name) visited a good Christian card reader to diagnose ongoing pains in his abdomen.
4. The reader examined his playing cards and announced that two of Siona's deceased in-laws were trying to take the family with them. Sinoa's wife had died just before his pains started, her brother only months before. Unless the spirits were stopped they would haul off the whole family.
5. Siona returned to his island and tearfully related the story to the surviving relatives. "I know I'm going to die," he told them.
6. Two of Siona's good Wesleyan cousins decided enough was enough. They stole into the graveyard in the early morning and dug up the bones of the two offenders.
7. Carrying as many parts as they could, they snook to the lava field, doused the bodies in kerosene and burned them in the night. The skulls they carried to the wharf and then threw them into the sea, which promptly spat them back out.
8. "We are Christians!" the local priest bellowed at Mass the next Sunday. "Stop doing this! Haven't I taught you anything?"
9. Villagers were somewhat sympathetic, "Sure, we dig up our families graves ... to clean and oil the bones sometimes."
10. Said one woman who spoke to me on conditions of anonymity; "The Spirits occasionally make us sick then show up to complain about tree roots prying their ribs apart. Once we clean the grave they always leave us alone."
11. Others were merely terrified of ghostly reprisals because the bones had not been completely destroyed. According to the police officer who recovered the ashes, the deceased were still alive and well and prevented his car from starting when he tried to leave for work.
12. "Go away and let me do my job!" he cried. Under Tonga's very Christian law such acts carry a ten year sentence.
13. The local Druid when pressed for comment, smiled quietly behind his tea cup and simply asked if Siona Piko had recovered.
14. Fresh off the coconut wireless report
15. Irony Sade Reporting
16. P.S. Still digesting Marcus Aurelius' "Meditations". Very good. Definitely high class paganism.

## Chapter the SIXTH

1. Dear Mike,

2. Representatives of the Volcano Grove recently undertook a pilgrimage to the island of Tofua.
3. There they were witness to no fewer than five simultaneous thunderstorms, spied several rare species of birds, bathed in a pool sheltered in the rainforest, and were blessed with the opportunity to behold real live lava.
4. The Archfool himself undertook to climb over the lip of the cinder-cone to get a better look at the fire. (Tied to a firmly anchored rope—he is learning a few things!) Others were then able to scramble up the same rope and hold onto him while gazing a hundred meters straight down to the place where rocks are melted up and born again.
5. Some days later he made a solo trip back up the cone without the rope (Goddess watching is dangerously addictive) and was blessed with a double lung—full of sulfuric acid and a badly lacerated leg while fleeing the cloud of vapors that emerged to punish his precociousness.
6. Brigit is known in these parts as "Pele." Tongan being what it is, the word has several other meanings too—Dolphins, card playing, and Spinach-like trees all share the name of the Goddess of Fire. In such a heavily contextual language invocation becomes a dangerous and haphazard art.
7. If all goes well I should escape in March or April and be home for April or May. I have not seen New York in springtime for seven years. It is about time to get home.



**Figure 25 Above Mike, below Stephen Crimmins bobbing for Druid Donuts while tickled, Beltane 2001.**

# Book of Stones, Part Two

(By Mike, 2001)

## Chapter the Third

1. Few were more charming and charismatic than Irony of the Black Locks, whose glance could open a hundred hearts and plunge one into mystery.
2. Many were the times Irony did mosey up to the Hill of Three Oaks to reflect on the Reform.
3. There stood the mysterious Twelve Stones on a rise nearby, and often surrounded by trash and high grass, for they were beloved by students, but shunned by grounds crew, who were greatly angered by their presence.
4. Perhaps, the anger was caused by their mysterious appearance, for they appear suddenly in the morning, like mushrooms popping out of the ground, or fallen from the sky.
5. Not a blade of grass was bent nearby or footprint could be found to explain what force brought such heavy boulders to that spot, and no sooner were the stones removed, but they returned, often in the same location.
6. Irony did notice however, that their upkeep did keep him too busy, and a more secluded resting place for the stones must be sought, since the Hill of Three Oaks is a very busy spot.
7. Importuning the president of the College and ground's crew, his petitions naturally found favorable ears and things were put in motion, large machines that did crush their earth beneath their wheels, as the stones had to be transferred over many intervening hills and forest, to a site that was remote and untouched by the hand of vandals.
8. In a consortium of ancient astrological planning, for which the Druids are often attributed great skill, and the might of modern machines, the stones were placed in a circle, with an enormous three edged altar stone of alabaster white in the center, resting upon three other stones.
9. None knew what lay beneath, except Irony, for not all secrets are revealed.
10. Many legends have arisen about the Stones of Irony, or the Stone Circle, as it is known. A powerful place it is.
11. For many years, it has become the chosen place of Beltanes and ordinations, as the Hill of Three Oaks is often reserved by others with other agendas.
12. And yet, no sooner had the stone circle been created, but another circle did appear close to the Hill of Three Oaks, a sly circle, that hid in the tall grasses beneath an oak on the edge of a field.
13. And the wonder is that this was the spot where the altar stone came from; perhaps to take its place guarding one entrance to the area of the Hill of Three Oaks.
14. A mystery it is

## Chapter the Fourth

1. After a journey racing the sun, Mike came to the land of the Rising Sun, far to the North where tradition and farming held sway across the land.
2. At this center of international learning, there was a park famed throughout the prefecture.
3. It had been built at the time the university had been founded, and the final stone of several trilithons was set that autumn after Mike did arrive.
4. Circles of stones, and natural springs abounded here, and water grates shaped like that of sigils.
5. Mike did take it as a sign that it was a Druidic place to live, and four years did he remain there, teaching English and Druidic culture to the children of that tribe.
6. Like those mighty megaliths, for which Akita is famous, Mike'

## Chapter the Fifth

1. Long an island in the Lakes of Lyman was heart-shaped, and this was known as Mai-Fete island, for all the May Festivals in the early 20th Century.
2. Next to this island was an un-named twin.
3. Both were very bushy with scrub and small trees until the beginnings of the 21st century, when whackers of weeds and saws of chains did reduce their wild natures to a pristine patch of tamed grass.
4. The smaller island was named Stewsie Island after Mr. Stewart who managed the Arb for many decades on Ground's Crew.
5. Labyrinth walking had become popular at Carleton since the reappearance of the Stone Circle on the Hill of Three Oaks, and around the time of the Stones of Irony, an in-laid labyrinth was put on Stewsie Island.
6. Happy students and insightful townspeople swarmed to walk on them barefoot, and legend has it that if you can walk to the center blind-folded and barefooted without touching the edges, then you are rather quite special.
7. But not for long, did people without shoes use these paths, as a force of birds, did enforce a new regime on this island paradise, once known as Dinosaur Island.
8. Oft have the ducks been seen to wander this labyrinth, not paying heed to the convoluted path dictated by the designer, nay, they walked right across them, and verily shat about them with wild abandon.
9. Such wise ducks were these.
10. The authorities took umbrage at this, and action followed, with fences placed at the edges of the island to fend off the invaders, who took to the air, and then landed on the stones anyway, to continue their political message of rebellion.



# Book of Vigils, Part Two

(By Mike, 2003)

## Chapter the Fifteenth

1. My Vigil for my Third Order was way back in '75.
2. Joan and Robert Larson came and visited me a few times during the first part of the night.
3. This was at a park in El Cerrito, California. There was a meadow not far from where I sat, and it seemed to be lit with many little strange lights so I wondered whether there were fairies dancing in the meadow.
4. I spent the last part of the night as dawn came having a telepathic conversation with a gnome about 30 feet away from me.
5. When it was light enough to see, I saw that the gnome had turned into a stump.
6. Then Joan and Robert Larson came to get me, ordained me, and we had the traditional breakfast at Smokey Joe's in Berkeley.
7. –Tegwedd ShadowDancer

## Chapter the Sixteenth: Amanda

1. You asked about my vigil. It was one of the most surreal experiences of my life.
2. Michelle started out with me in the lower Arb shortly before sunset. She shared with me information I would find valuable through the night.
3. As darkness fell, I expected it to bring fear, but I felt fear only once that entire night when something ran across a field and I thought it came at me through the foliage lining the trail.
4. I did a lot of thinking before the sun rose that morning, mostly about the mother–daughter relationship I have with the Earth/Goddess (I'm Wiccan).
5. I saw it as an omen that I stood on the hill at sunrise, a doe and her fawn stepped into view in a nearby field. I can think of nothing else to say about the experience, it was beyond any verbal description.

## Chapter the Seventeenth: Merri

1. What do you do about a problem named Merri?
2. A woman of great charisma, leadership and energy, who bedazzles all who gaze into her deep eyes and hear her laugh. Greater still are the chains that link one's heart who hears her wise words.
3. She was and is a Druid who dares to ask the boldest questions, such as why should I follow Dalon Ap Landu?
4. The question came as a thunderclap to Mike, the Fool, who had journeyed from the Western Isles of the Ocean to assist in the ordination.
5. "Because we have always done so." was his first reply, one that was bitter even as he said it. For in those words, he realized a truth long dormant.
6. The first order, yea, even the second order were without a name; pure in their naiveté; but yet the third order did come with a patron, one verily who was not known in the annals of history. Few wish to serve those they do not know.

7. Mike sat still and examined his heart, and felt for wise words from his years of experience in the diversity of Druidism. And he found some.
8. "It will not be necessary." He said, and the weight of history was felt in the room.
9. "For the work of Dalon Ap Landu is not dependent on his name, but by your actions (if not your words), the work of the Third Order may be done. In the past, this Grove has had many before me who followed a similar course. I would not second guess their tradition either."
10. Sister Merri did choose to walk the Arb, a restless soul like her did not stay in one place, for she was of the roaming kind. And yet she guided Carleton for 4 years.
11. In the morning, on the Hill of Three Oaks, she did into the Third Order, but in a way, unseen for many years.
12. Her work in the ensuing years, shows that the Gods have favored her appointment with great showers of successful groving.
13. The solution is to learn from her.

## Chapter the Eighteenth: Robert

1. Lo! Robert, a carpenter, a burly man of athletic build, who could pull wisdom from the fire as easily as he pulls helpless people from burning buildings.
2. A Druid who, like Brother Sam, has explored the range of Druidism, but still finds a place for the Reform's teachings in his lifestyle.
3. A Druid who has contemplated the lofty teachings of Nepal to the base lessons of the streets. A gentle, witty man with calluses and a blue bottle of strange liquor.
4. Brother Robert, a strong tree, was an older Druid, twice the age of the supple saplings of the Carleton Grove, and whose years of experience were well–appreciated by his grove–mates.
5. Vigiling with Brother Ehren, he steadfastly remained by the fire, a friend of his and often bitter foe. In the morning, the wood was only ashes, but the fire remained in his piercing stare of a Druid who was awake.
6. Mounting the Hill of Three Oaks, he did call forth his dreams and hopes of doing the work of the Third Order, and the winds responded kindly.

## Chapter the Nineteenth: Ehren

1. While Brother Robert was in the woods, Brother Ehren was elsewhere seeking the Deer King who stalked the woods that night.
2. Deep in the Lower Arb, beyond the paths trod by mere students, Ehren did go forth, seeking truths others were uncomfortable with.
3. Then he heard the fierce cry in the still of the night. A sound not possible from a single throat, but rather from the shrieks of a quartet of demons.
4. Not one to be afraid, Ehren did go straightly and seek out this horrendous source of noise. Tirelessly, the many miles did pass quickly beneath his feet.
5. Tall was the figure in the moonlight, draped in black with no face, tall horns and a contraption under its arm that appeared to be a deadly octopus.
6. Another blast from the beast, did shake Ehren's soul to its base, yet he stepped forward to ask questions. But what

those questions were, and their answers, are known only to Ehren, for he was forbidden to speak of them to others.

7. In the morning, Mike did awake from his meditation on the spirits, having journeyed himself into realms where thought did not venture.
8. Ehren did enter the Third Order after fierce questioning, ready to do its work.

## Chapter the Twentieth: Nozomi

1. Sister Nozomi, born at the cross-roads of two travelers, pulled in two directions, seeking a place to call home. One of those way-stations was the RDNA, which would adapt to her changing circumstances.
2. Bold, dark haired and with a soft heart for her friends, Nozomi lived in a land far from the usual haunts of Druids, till one day a tall man named Mike did meet her at a place of learning.
3. No simple place it was, but of people passing each other. Some to the West, some to the East, growing wiser through the meeting.
4. Her father was a priest of the Shinto faith, and was now teaching her the ways of tending to the shrine and the Way of the Gods. And yet, she knew of other ways, from other lands, and this troubled her heart, as she could not pick only one.
5. Nozomi spent the night taking a pounding beneath a waterfall, in the cool mountains of Northern Japan, with but a white slip to fend off the rasping water.
6. Water passed over, around and through her, cleansing until it hurt, and then until nothing could be felt anymore.
7. In that quiet place she thought on her destiny and found many answers that eased her heart.
8. Such was her composure, tired but confident, ready to add a new flavor to the Druidism, one that the world had not yet seen.

## Chapter the Twenty-First: Pat

1. Brave Pat, fearlessly denying himself the wonders of the modern world. Living in a dinky shrine, on a distant mountain in an unknown corner of a far-away land. The sound of flushing water is not heard there.
2. Spouse of Nozomi, seeker of wisdom, bearer of the sharp scraping tongue of bardic majesty; such a Druid is rare among rarities.
3. He began at a Druidic university in Akita, a land known as the Fields of Autumn, for the bountiful harvests that the Earth-Mother blesses there, the beautiful women that feed on the rice, and the husky men who drink the rice-wine. Fanciful are their haircuts and plentiful the barbers to make them!
4. Brother Pat, did undergo the vigil in a yet more distant and steep mountain, many kilometers from navigable river or passable path. Mike was sore afflicted in his toes to reach only the base camp. How much more admirable to climb the mountain!
5. And climb it, Pat did, like a mountain goat in the night, bruises and scrapes were generously received without comment impolite.
6. In the midst of the night, on the summit peak, he did gaze upon the silvered mirror of moon and cried out his questions. Sometimes the moon glowed bright in response,

other times, it hid behind clouds, when answers were not to be given.

7. The descent through boulders, twisted tree trunks and slippery gullies was as trying as the ascent, but at a more rapid speed; for so long had he talked with the maiden of the night, that he had not heard the approach of her bright lover storming the horizon.
8. Mike felt the heavy passage of time, and was afflicted by bugs thirsty for his bloods. Where was this young novice Druid, and why did he so resolutely refuse to appear with the dawn?
9. In a spring and a stumble, out of the bushes flew the wild madman, bleeding and bruised, but smiling. "Am I late?" was his only apology.
10. With the solar disk, a man's height over the stunning edge of the world, Pat did take the oaths and promises, then the long trudge home began, since vehicles were prohibited by Pat's geas.

## Chapter the Twenty-Second: Dan

1. Dan the trusty, Dan the debater, long will you remain in our memory.
2. From a lineage of the loquacious, a dynasty of debater, great is you glib.
3. Despite a busy night of other vigilers' taking the attention, you performed marvelously when called to the Stones of Irony, to defend your beliefs.
4. On the great circle of boulders were perched the council of Druids, waiting to hear Dan's words.
5. On the great center altar stone stood Dan, defiantly and modest, bracing himself for the questions that would come.
6. And come they did, like a hail of stones, from all directions.
7. Frantically, but methodically, he fended them off with replies both short and long.
8. Many a Druid before him had dropped speechless early on, for these were not easy questions.
9. Indeed, many a questioning Druid soon found themselves without further questions to pose.
10. And all agreed he had performed well, perhaps a little too well, for they were discomforted by their own abilities in the comparison.
11. Thus did Dan enter their ranks.

## Chapter the Twenty-Third: Ikari

1. Brother Ikari was a man of great literary talent and glib in the use of the tongues of English and Japanese, and deeply informed on the mysteries of Keltria and Wicca.
2. In the city of Kobe, known as the Door of the Gods, did Ikari choose to enter the Third Order after long consultation by mail with Mike. A city of commerce and great wealth, hugging the shores of an inland sea, dotted with islands; it was filled with busy streets and bustling people.
3. At a bench by the ocean, many questions did pass both ways, as the two Druids grew in deeper appreciation of each other, and Ikari learned of the finer details of the Third Order.
4. But where to vigil? Hardly a scrap of green was to be seen in such a metropolis.

5. A few inquiries at shrines came up negative, and a city map was inspected. Like most cities in Japan, Kobe was nestled between mountainous interior and pounding ocean.
6. The direction was up, and Mike grudgingly trudgingly climbed another mountain, led by the gifted Ikari, who could read the map better. Provisions were procured at a nearby outfitter for the long journey.
7. On a Saturday night, the large mountain perched university's athletic fields were mostly uninhabited, and various constructions to test the athlete's metal filled the plain. Down below was Kobe at night, like a jewel box of sparkling diamonds wrapped in a velvety black shawl.
8. "We will have a marvelous time here." Mike did opine.
9. From the bushes burst forth a raging, hairy porcine from Celtic legends, bearing fangs, and followed by two smaller wild boars.
10. The two Druids were sorely afflicted by fear, but bravely sought to examine them more closely, from the top of the Jungle Gym.
11. The mighty boar did scoff at their cowardice and proceeded to eat their lunch with piggy abandon.
12. Sated, the great scrapper did leave the Druids with a lesson in humility.
13. The following drizzle did not drastically dampen the duo's Druidic decorum.
14. After a few more comforting words, Mike did leave Ikari, and did walk up into the chilly woods, to think himself on what had been said.
15. The hours passed slowly, then stopped, and then started to budge again.
16. Lo!, but the sunrise across the bay approached like an arthritic man, and come it did.
17. Both shivering Druids did greet the arrival of Belenos and promptly began the service, and ran to catch the morning trains to their respective hometowns.
18. Thus did Ikari add another achievement to his list of honors.

## Chapter the Twenty-Forth: Stacey

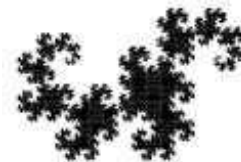
1. Not all Druids are hasty in their progression into order, for some, the movement is one with the glaciers, carefully scouring the path before them, to smooth the way.
2. Such was the case with Sister Stacey, who spent seventeen years before entering the Third Order, so great was her patience and wisdom.
3. As with most pre-arranged vigils, the weather of sunny California had other plans, and a fierce storm joined her, the likes of which had not been seen in decades.
4. Larry the Lax guided and supported her vigil with all his might, but the battle did cost him dearly, and afterwards he spent a long time in recovery with doctors.
5. Drenched, but Druidic, Stacey stepped forth to continue the esteemed work of the powerful dynasty of the Live Oak Grove, publishing the Druid Missal-Any.
6. And with the wisdom gained from the long years, the Third Order's duties came easily and gracefully, as she assisted others in their paths.

## Chapter the Twenty-Fifth: Alyx

1. A mile above the ocean, in the midst of great snowy peaks, a young lady, steeped in wisdom, named Alyx, did realize that she was a Druid.
2. Through long and torturous circuits, she did locate Mike, and began to correspond, not quitting, despite Mike's difficulty in communicating in comprehensible sentences.
3. Nay, she seemed to thrive on it.
4. One knows not where the Druidic spark will flare up, but you know it often when you see it.
5. Deep in the slopes, at a friend's hermitage, she did vigil, not far from the garden, for bears did roam the woods, jealous of their preserve.
6. It was cold, and then it was colder. Heat up it did not. And the air was thinner than thin.
7. In the morning, Mike did come by the power of Taranis, and other visitors did come also.
8. First of the guardian spirits was a golden dog with a long coat and wet tongue who did drool profusely, long did he not stay.
9. Second of the spirits was a deer with a rack of points, points that she wished the young Druid to learn and understand.
10. Finally, there was a spider, who did weave a message for her to learn.
11. Filled with a sense of purpose, and still pondering these mysteries, Alyx did undertake new responsibilities.

## Chapter the Twenty-Sixth: Daniel

1. Daniel, deep and demure Druid of the Pacific Rainforest.
2. Long have been your journeys through Druidism, to many strange and diverse creeds.
3. What brought you to the Reform, if not for the simplicity that your complicated studies lacked?
4. On all manner of groups, you have published information, at a time, when I was modestly offering literature from my own.
5. With your advice and guidance, perhaps it raised the quality of the ARDA by a few notches, more if I had listened closer.
6. Immersed in wisdom, surrounded by beauty, betrothed to diversity, raising the future; these are what all Druids wish for.
7. Well, it is that you came to Druidism, better has it become.
8. Deer also appeared and birds were heard.
9. What projects will you delve it next?



## Chapter the Twenty–Seventh: Steve

1. Steve, young Steve, slender and fair, what could have brought you there?
2. A vigil, a night spent all alone; your wits to wander, your goals to hone.
3. None could dissuade such youthful verve, and all criticisms missed a nerve.
4. Engaged with fire, you gazed til morn, and thus a new druidship was born.
5. Patriarch of Hephaestus, lord of fire, your path will apt go higher and higher.

## Chapter the Twenty–Eighth: Wolf

1. Wolf, a hunter, seeking his prey, which must be of wisdom, at such a tender age.
2. Long did you discuss matters, such that the elderly may never have reflected.
3. Piercingly straightforward, each word competently adorned with reason.
4. Oh, that I could also have known so much back at your age.
5. Riding a fiery beast from the cold finger lakes of the north, you did journey to the capital of this wide land.
6. But all the temples of the departed leaders were closed to visitors in the after hours of vigiling.
7. Thus to a park, named Green Belt, for its circle of trees, we both made straight lines of travel.
8. There with my faithful dog Earl, and a cloud of mosquito, did I meet the stocky Wolf.
9. Well your other Druid companions had taught you, for much learning did pass under me too.
10. Off you went on a silent journey into uncharted woods, without light external, guided by your heart.
11. Mike did also travel into the woods, but he also moved away from well–marked trails, and purposely spun around for to better test his ability to find his way back.
12. A test it was indeed!
13. Mike laughed.
14. Many hours were spent trying to feel the land, whether up or down the hill would lead back to the camp.
15. Until that time, Mike did realize how much creatures of comfort we humans are; unable to survive long in the wild without the most careful of planning.
16. With great delight Mike regained the path at a place unknown to him, and there he soon met Wolf, as if their paths were meant to cross.
17. Who was checking on whom, I know not; but we were glad to meet each other again.
18. In the morning, it was more still than Mike had ever known.
19. The greatest of supplications could not raise the a fly’s breath of wind, although bugs did buzz and chirp, such that one could not hear oneself talk. And this was taken as sufficient sign.
20. Such was his will power, that Wolf did not need sleep after ordination, but remounted his dragon and returned to the icy North from which he had come.
21. Mike, weak from his elder years, did sleep a few hours, before returning to the capital, chastened and wizened.

## Chapter the Twenty–Ninth: Mairi

1. Oft did you wander the streets of Northfield when I was visiting, and did partake of services, with you hard–headed concern for proper procedure; have I softened you, yet?
2. Not the way of student did you pursue, but a path of service at a place that dispensed food to hungry travelers.
3. Much was I taught by you, little did I teach.
4. It was an uneventful vigil, wasn’t it? A long night tending the fires with you flute music echoing into the walls of the Arb’s trees.
5. Gladly did you take up you duties when you left for the Capital of this country, where I would meet you again, by the pull of fate.

## Chapter the Thirtieth: Eric

1. Clever Eric, wise Eric, ever studious, and yet showing up at services more often than not, to console this lonely Druid.
2. Your vigil was on Roosevelt Island, although the access was restricted, you crossed on a cloud of air, in the dark of night.
3. There by the statue of Theodore Roosevelt, and by the tidal flats, and lonely paths, you did vigil; within D.C. and yet apart from them.
4. Boats for pleasure and tourism passed by, not noticing your pondering image on the beach’s rocky boulders.
5. Cars flew by overhead, as did air traffic, not unlike the turmoil of you soul, despite your placid demeanor.
6. Mike arrived at the official opening time and did greet you, and the ranger did not notice that neither of us did leave the island by the bridge, for we had other ways of traveling.

## Chapter the Thirty First: Colleen

1. Col Colleen, ArchDruid of the great white northern reaches of Alaska. Wise were you to choose the midsummer to vigil, when the sun is longest, and your garden most fair.
2. Would that I could have been present in person, but your vigil went well, and we conducted it successfully via cell–phone.
3. A deer did appear, and then a new priest walked the Earth Mother’s green skirt.

### Chapter the Thirty Second: Mike

1. When word reached him that the mighty Ivan would reach as far as his Nation’s capitol, the newly elected Patriarch of Taranis knew that he must defend the mystic district and choose that night for his vigil in September.
2. For all the fierceness of the storm, the greatest obstacle, yea, was the commonsense of his wife, who said that tornados, lightning and punishing rain was not the proper climate for good Druids.
3. Yea, his arguments that Druids are immune from the perils of weather, did sound weak even unto his own ears, and he did relent, until she fell asleep and then he crept out, for nay, he had no courage to battle with her, for unlike some storms, her rage never calmed.
4. So in the comparatively mild hurricane outside he did battle the elements, most heroically until they subsided in the morning rays; whereupon he did cry out in the strong winds his desire to learn yet more of the mysteries of weather.

- The winds and distant rumbling did come from the directions called, lifting up the new Patriarch of Taranis.

### Chapter the Thirty Third: Joss

- Joss, whose quirky smile, has enlightened my work desk over the last few years. Sent to a military academy in high school, you remained the artist you always were.
- Exploring the wilds of the forest and spirituality, you carved out a grove for yourself in most un-sympathetic territory.
- You are no newcomer to vigils, having endured three days without rest, until reality and dreamworld became one on your ranch.
- To you, a single night vigil must be no hardship, merely a pleasant respite from the pressures of work and study.
- A rat did crawl by, foreboding great fecundity, cleverness in adaptation, dislike by the fastidious and certainly lots of cheesy jokes.
- Birds, winds and clouds did grace your ordination, which I hope will be graceful and memorable.

### Chapter the Thirty Fourth: The Others

- Lydia, Lydia, Have you heard of Lydia, Lydia the OK Druid? May your vigil be memorable as has been your journey through life. Would that I could wait to write of what will be an interesting vigil for a promising future.
- Ian, may your years as a priest be as memorable as the Hill of Three Oaks and Monument Hill on the annals of our History. Our hope and trust remains with you.
- Will, has it taken so long to assume the responsibilities of Druidism? Has the mantle finally caught up with you? Wear it proudly, and fill your tenure with wondrous events, good conversations and life-changing realizations.
- And may all the other vigilers of the next decade or two have great things happen at their vigils, and may they remember to write of them to me at mikerdna@hotmail.com!
- Now, I must put down my pen and rest.



**Figure 26 Paul Schmidt ordaining Beck Hrobak to Third Order while David Frangquist and Nikki Lambert observe quietly on Samhain, 1993 at the Hill of 3 Oaks on a chilly frosty morning.**

## 3 Stories & 1 History by Irony

### Ein Tanz Dream

(By Irony, 24–8–97)

Dreams and Visions: Here are three dreams and visions that struck me during the last three years. There is something of druidism in each of them, though I have no way of saying what that might be. Take them for what you will...

- “A piece of sound and movement for the stage or the mind.
- Do not hear the words; they are just to show the dancers.”
- It is night. Moonlight brightens the mist to a silver pall and distance is impossible to discern.
- A small circle of lit candles surrounds a kneeling figure whose face we cannot yet see.
- Slowly a light begins, a soft glow that illuminates the kneeling man with the colors of a winter sun. He is a knight, heavy set, troubled, wrapped in a cloak the years have gnawed like moths.
- He has been praying, talking to his god, his hands clasped before him. His eyes are closed, and his face animate. We can see his every thought upon it. His lips move but no sound escapes them.
- A deep humming has begun as of great, sort, wooden horns, or the organ of a dying church. Figures, trees resembling people, and a number of small, folded boulders scatter the scene of our vision.
- The knight’s eyes have opened. He is still talking soundlessly, now to the air, now to himself, always to his god.
- His hands have begun to move a little, gesticulating.
- He is telling a story, asking and answering simple questions on his own. Preliminaries.
- A flute begins, soft and clear.
- One of the boulders moves, raises its head, suddenly, alertly, listening. There are the horns of a deer upon it.
- The figure stands and it is that of a man. Only its head is antlered; only its movements deer-like.
- The flute continues, the humming persists. The knight prays on, oblivious to it all.
- The other boulders have begun to stir, grown antlers and bodies. They are dancing.
- Their movements are those of wild creatures, soft, sure, quick and then hesitant. They are leaping, soundlessly, looking always almost as if they are about to strike, collide— then passing, between the trees, between each other.
- Between the mist and the moon they are silhouettes alone. The light does not illuminate them.
- The flute continues but the humming changes, drops a key.
- One last boulder is unfolding, greater than the rest. It is a great stag with a cloak of leaves translucent in the mist.
- His movements are those of the king of the forest, of a lord amongst men, slow, stately, powerful. He is young and wise, loving and beloved by all. The others rush forward, dropping to one knee, bowing their antlered heads before him.
- He raises them graciously and the flock prancing behind him.

22. His movements now lead the dance, the others imitating, but now quicker, joyfully.
23. As the stag passes between two trees he reaches out to touch them—
24. And they move, become women, nymphs, their hair encircled by crowns of leaves. They spin inward to kiss him lightly, their movements those of laughter and passion. they spin outwards to join the dance, where they are perused by stags.
25. The knight is blushing now, confessing perhaps.
26. One by one the king awakens all the trees, and each performs the same welcome, kissing him gently, lips or cheek or hand, before darting away to find lovers of playmates amongst the others.
27. Several couples have vanished, chasing each other beyond our sphere of vision, the great king himself has gone, fading off alone while the others danced, when a change begins.

## Chapter the Second

1. The knight has become more insistent, troubled, more agitated.
2. Finally he strikes the ground in anger. The flute stops mid note. The dancers scatter, fleeing. A horrible chord emerges from the hum. There is no other sound but the music; there never has been.
3. The knight is as oblivious as ever.
4. Slowly a great dark shape emerges from the mist. Huge, horrible, horned in an entirely different manner from the deer it approaches silently behind the kneeling knight.
5. The knight is angry, has become insolent in mien and manner. He glares at the sky.
6. Behind him the figure reaches out a slow dark hand—
7. And pauses.
8. There has been a swirl in the mist to his right.
9. The great stag has returned. Poised now for flight or combat he stands, tall and slender beneath the shadow of the thing behind the knight.
10. For a moment they stand motionless, the one, arm extended, the other waiting.
11. The knight stares upwards, perplexed, troubled.
12. In the same instant the hand is withdrawn and the stag steps forward.
13. A new dance has begun. The hum is persistent, pervasive, and accentuated now by the faintest of tapping, the tiniest drumming of tension; rain on an old roof at night.
14. The stag and the other circle each other slowly; the knight's eyes are tortured, oblivious. The dancers are measuring each the others strength.
15. Finally there comes a time when the stag stands with his back to the knight, interposing himself between the circle and the great dark form.
16. The stag lunges forward, a feint or a thrust with his great horned head.
17. The other flinches back in surprise or fear, and then strikes. Faster than we have yet seen him move his right hand blurs forward catching the king in the side of the face.
18. He is thrown, and it is the knight's face that registers the blow, his body that twists as with a wound. His lips contort in a scream we never hear.

19. The body of the king lies sprawled on the far side of the circle, his legs twisted, his head fallen on one outstretched arm.
20. The dark form passes behind them both.
21. Shock and pain are on the face of the knight.
22. The other returns, turns his back on the king and moves to claim the kneeling man.

## Chapter the Third

1. The king stirs, rises slowly, and there is something in his hand; a branch of holly dropped and discarded by one of the nymphs in a happier time, held now like a sword in the hand of a god.
2. He stamps his foot— soundlessly to us— and the head of the other snaps in his direction. His hand pulls back a second time from within an inch of the knight and they begin to circle once again.
3. The knight is now nervous, subliminally aware for the first time that something is going on. He prays faster now, but with less concentration; his hands wring one another unconsciously.
4. The king now stands to the right of the kneeler, the dark one looms above his left.
5. The hum has risen to an unbearable roar.

## Chapter the Fourth

1. The dark one stamps forward, hands poised to grab or crush.
2. The king flows forward in the same movement, a lunge or a stamp, and strikes with the holly into the dark thing's eyes.
3. A terrible boom rolls out and away taking the music with it.
4. The dark thing stands twisted backwards, hands clawing at his face; the king is a statue of revenge or deliverance; the knight is framed kneeling between them, his body a study of horror and revelation fading slowly to an impossible calm as a slow silent flash begins behind them all, erasing everything from sight.

## Chapter the Fifth

1. The knight still kneels.
2. His candles have gone out. The mist is now the gray of dawn instead of the silver of night, and there are rocks and trees about him bearing no resemblance to the figures that moved before.
3. Slowly he rises, knees creaking in the stillness, and steps out from his circle.
4. He turns to go, then pauses, stooping.
5. He raises the thing that has caught his eye.
6. It is a single prong of deer horn, as dropped by a yearling stag.
7. The morning breaks about him, clarifying nothing.



**Figure 27 Hill of Three Oaks, 1993.**

# The Winter King: A Dream

(By Irony, c. 1998)

## Chapter the First

1. It seemed that I stood on a hill of oaks and the seasons changed about me. The first snowstorm of winter was imminent.
2. A circle of watchers, robed in white woollens sat all around the crest of the hill. In the center a fire had been built.
3. About it sat four figures, hooded, showing no faces and speaking not. They seemed very old, though the curl of a young woman's hair showed beneath one hood.
4. Two other figures sat with them, facing each other across the flames. The one was a king who had reached the end of his reign and his power; the other was a king to be.

## Chapter the Second

1. When the fire was high, the old king removed his crown and set it within the blaze. It burned quickly and was gone, leaving no ash.
2. He then began to speak, quietly, carefully, telling his successor everything the other needed to know of the reigns and the country he was to command, all the secrets that could be learned only by reigning, and were not always to be known by others.
3. He recounted secrets of state, of practice and of power, secrets of identity, stories and lessons of his own hard reign.
4. He then related what wisdom his own predecessor had told him at his crowning, so many seasons back.

## Chapter the Third

1. He spoke quickly, choosing his words with care and precision for he had not much time. The fire could not be fed after it had consumed the crown, and when the last flame died the speaking would cease.
2. Back and back he went, remembering and conferring all the wisdom of all the generations of kings prior to his own, repeating their words from the vaults of his memory, back as far as tradition could carry him and as time allowed.
3. The watchers were silent.
4. The clouds gathered.
5. The last finger of flame winked out, winked in, flickered, was gone.
6. The old king fell silent and the first flakes of winter swirled about them.
7. No one moved.

## Chapter the Fourth

1. The watchers in the inner ring now pored their attention into the coals, watching as one by one, they too died.
2. When only seven were left the four watchers in the center moved. Slowly, elegantly, they took the coals from out the ashes and strung them together to form a crown.
3. They stood then, the four without faces. The old king drew back, his role played out.

4. The young chosen king stayed, kneeling at the now empty fire. The eldest of the Four came forth and set upon his head the crown of coals.
5. There was a transfer. The crown burned, but did not burn him. Like a crimson Pleiades it was visible from the foot of the hill.
6. The king stood. The others stepped away. He raised his eyes, raised his hands.
7. Above him the clouds parted, cleared, dissolved into the blackness between the sudden stars. The last flakes vanished.
8. He lowered his arms.
9. The others bowed toward him, silent.
10. The outer circle stood.
11. "Behold the King! " The shout rang out, and the power of the shout, and the power of the king rolled out and down across the hills, filling all his realm.



**Figure 28 Seat of the King, Lower Arb 2004.**



**Figure 29 Brandon Schields, Matt Cohen, Nikki Lambert, Erin Erskine, Diane Freed, Sam Adams, Paul Schmidt, Mike Scharding in the Druid Den on a balmy August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2003 before a sweat lodge.**

## The Wild Hunt

(By Irony, 8–30–98)

### Chapter the First

1. Algonquin Park
2. Ontario, Canada
3. I think I dreamt of the Wild Hunt.
4. Merri and I were riding Velvet, double and bareback, down Stone road.
5. I was seated in front and Merri had a dress on for some reason and was flopped back against Velvet's rump resting.
6. Sometimes it was winter.
7. We were riding quietly, enjoying the day, when we came suddenly face to nose with another horse.

### Chapter the Second

1. Seated upright on Velvet's back my head was just barely level with its nose.
2. It was an enormous chocolate brown horse– I didn't note the gender– standing fully saddled with green saddle bags strapped on behind large enough to stuff a person into.
3. The horse's nose was flat almost to the point of being concave, and I don't recall seeing bit or bridle. It could look at you with both eyes at once.
4. Velvet bolted– the horse ambled along side keeping pace. Nothing could have out–run it.
5. We stopped and the horse came over to sniff me.
6. Velvet reared trying to bring her head on level with its.
7. I grabbed a skinny tree trunk to keep us aloft.
8. The horse ignored velvet and sniffed me again.
9. There was a masked disquieting air of intelligence about it.
10. The brace on the back of its saddle rose like the roll bar on our tractor.

### Chapter the Third

11. Velvet came down, pranced away, and reared again.
12. The horse had white hooves, I saw, and there was a bandage about its right front ankle.
13. When Velvet came down again I saw that there was another horse just as large tied to a tree somewhat off the road watching us quietly.
14. It too was chocolate brown with white hooves and had a flattened nose. It had antlers.
15. 'Are these saddled elk?' I thought. 'They're too big even for that– no one less than ten feet tall could ride them!'
16. I saw that the ground was littered with bits of normal antlers and bone, including what looked like thinly sliced vertebrae. I wondered if someone butchered things here.
17. There was a rustling in the woods to our right and a whole fleet of deer came tripping out.
18. They looked tiny compared to everything else and clustered around the legs of the giant horse.



## Chapter the Fourth

1. The horse continued to pay Velvet no mind, but sniffed me curiously, as if weighing things up.
2. I eased Velvet past. The horse leaned down and grabbed my left arm with its lips between elbow and shoulder, gripping my jacket and the sleeve underneath.
3. I twisted out carefully and continued away.
4. The horse stood in the road, silent as ever, watching us go. We rounded a corner.
5. Something leapt from a tree like a cat, grabbing me from behind with great awkward, furry arms.
6. I threw it of into the road before us. It landed on its feet facing us— a lion. It had been careful not to use its claws.
7. Then it too stepped aside and let us past.
8. We rode on nervously through the perfectly normal woods where it was sometimes winter.
9. Only later did I wonder if that had been the Wild Hunt with only the riders away for the moment....



**Figure 30** Above is the Gate to the Druid Den in Upper Arb and below is woods of Lower Arb, both 204.

## The History of The Legitimacy

This being a history of the Carleton Grove during the years from Beltane 1996 until the summer 1999, as recalled by Irony Sade after his retirement as Archdruid. Written on Dec. 31st, 1999.

### SECTION ONE

The First Spring of 1996: Initiation

#### Chapter the First

1. Michelle the Blond and Irony, who has been called the Glowing, were ordained by Mike the Fool to the priesthood of Dalon ap Landu after vigiling the night of Beltane 1996.
2. There were few at Carleton at that time who still called themselves Druids, and fewer still who were not leaving at the end of the year, and Michelle and Irony did wonder much what it was they were to do.
3. Shortly after their vigil there came to pass a gathering of many who had led the Druids during their times at Carleton. Andrea the Fair, Mike the Fool, Misha, Joe, and others were present, and it was determined that a sweat lodge was in order.
4. This lodge was held on the sandy spit in the lower Arb, just beyond the pylons, and was graciously visited by the Security Guards twice during the night.
5. From it the young Archdruids learned many things. Be friendly with the Security Guards, all ye that read this; their favor saved many a ritual in the years that followed.
6. The rest of that spring passed in a flurry of confusion as the two young druids struggled to understand what had gone before.

### SECTION TWO

The Second Year 1996–1997: The Year of the Circles

#### Chapter the First

1. When the Druids returned to Carleton the next fall they discovered that Mike the Fool had left them to spread the word of Druidism in the land of the rising sun.
2. They discovered too that a circle of stones had miraculously appeared just North–East of the Hill of Three Oaks. They did not visit it at once, however, for it was occupied by a couple of the most amorous nature.
3. This place became a haven of all things Druidic, and was loved by many.
4. That fall equinox the tradition of marriage bread was begun. Two loaves were baked, with a ring in each. These were to be divided amongst the celebrants at the equinox, and those who found the rings were to be married the next Beltane.
5. But Lo, it was a young and foolish tradition, for these were young and foolish druids, and they did not think until too late that the loaf should have been segregated by sex.
6. And it came to pass that David the Apologist and Andrew the Mad received the rings. There was much confusion, but they were good sports, and it was decided that they should be married that May.

7. Time passed, as is its wont. Teas were held in the Japanese Garden and in the Faculty Club Lounge. Great ideas were discussed regarding the purpose of life. Andrea the Fair did come often to these discussions, and shared much wisdom from ages past. One Carlos Gonzales, the wise doctor and healer did visit and teach us many things. At the circle there was music, dancing, and the observance of stars.
8. That Samhain a grand gathering was held. Two dozen druids and associates met in the little grove round a roaring blaze to commune with the night. A talking stick was crafted of a strange twisted wood from the deserts of the west, and it was found to have strange powers over speech.
9. As the stick was passed from hand to hand about the blaze, stories welled up from within its holder. Old griefs were let go, old wrongs forgiven, old stories told, and Death remembered. Letters were burned from relatives to the dead.
10. After a time the stories changed to those of Life, marriages, and hopes. This was taken as a sign that the year would be reborn, however dark the winter might become, and it was good.
11. There was much dancing, and a sweat lodge was held. The day came at last and there was much rejoicing.
12. That winter the teas continued and there were many rituals. A Candlemas observance was held, and a Self-Hater banishment performed.
13. The subsequent grounding of cakes and ale was supplemented by massage oil, and Andrea the Fair introduced the Druids to the delights of the Meltdown.
14. It was a time of great peace and contentment among the Druids, for they did not know what was yet to come.
10. A great wrath fell upon them both, for this time every stone had been uprooted and rolled about. They did gnash their teeth and wished to curse the evil doers, but recalled the wisdom of ages past and decided to relent.
11. Nor did they attempt to discover the identity of the anti-druids, for they saw that as the beginning of the path of vengeance.
12. Instead they did set about repairing the damage as best they could, and their combined strength was sufficient to move every stone but the one in the center.
13. That was a great stone, full half man sized in height, and their strength availed as naught against it.
14. These two arch druids did then descend in fury upon Goodhue, and there did conscript David the Apologist and Jared the Roommate, and the strength of these two and Irony combined proved sufficient to move the stone.
15. But the circle had been destroyed one time too many, and was never the same again.
16. At this time a plan did begin to fester in the mind of Irony and he wrote concerning it to the president of Carleton. But the paper wheels were ever slow to turn, and it was many weeks before aught came of it.

## Chapter the Third

1. All that year the circle of stones beyond the Hill of Oaks had called to the Druids and they had answered.
2. However cold the weather one could always find an offering of flowers placed amongst the stones. But it was not to last.
3. One night late in the winter as Irony was wandering in the upper Arb, he discovered that the stones had been torn from the womb of their mother and lay tossed and scattered about the field.
4. A great wrath fell upon him, and he did assay to repair the shrine, but found his strength too small.
5. He descended upon Goodhue in search of any druids he could find to assist and found them all absent. But he did find a number of the Accidentals, who were friendly with the Druids at that time, and they did agree to aid him, for he felt that the stones should be righted by sunrise.
6. Before the dawn he did return to the circle but found no one there to help. Then did Irony call upon the strength of the Earth-Mother and rolled back the stones with his bare hands.
7. At that time all but the center stone had been moved, for it was a passing great rock, and well frozen to the earth.
8. Just as the sun rose there came one to whom he had spoken the night before, rubbing the sleep from her eyes, but the work was accomplished, and Irony was sore for a week.
9. It was not long after the beginning of spring term that Michelle the Blond and Irony were out wandering the Arb together when they came upon the circle behind the hill and found it desecrated a second time.
1. The time of Beltane was fast approaching, and the Druids had carved a Maypole, but they lacked still a place to erect it, for the Spring Concert was to occupy the Hill of Three Oaks, and Mai Fete was taken. And they did ponder this matter much.
2. About this time Michelle the Blond was wandering about the wilds, when she discovered that the statue of the Lady, carved of gray wood by unknown hands, that had stood all that year and the one before it just south of monument Hill had been thrown down into the mud.
3. She was disturbed, and righted the Lady at once, and told the other druids about it.
4. Shortly thereafter Amanda the Beautiful did come upon the Lady again, and found her once more fallen, and she did right her a second time, but moved her slightly to hide her somewhat.
5. Then did Irony seek out her new abode the next day, only to find the Lady face down in the muddy path with tire tracks across her back.
6. Then did he skip class to carry the Lady far across the Arb and hid her in what was then Three Bird Grove, or the Faculty Picnic Area.
7. Then Michelle the Blond and he did dig a great pit, and buried the feet of the lady in the mold so that she stood man high.
8. They did pack the earth about her and charge upon her the blessings of the Woods, and there she stood firm for many seasons, and was loved by many.
9. Irony did also make her a necklace of amethyst, but it was soon stolen.

## Chapter the Fourth

1. With Beltane fast approaching it was suggested that the grove with the lady might be a suitable site for the festival, for it was little known and far removed from the drunken revels surrounding the concert.
  2. But there was concern on several fronts.
  3. The Arb director decreed that there should be no fires there, for it was an old prairie remnant and must not be burned, and this condition was agreed to with some regret.
  4. Another concern arose— for there was the legend of BOB in those days, and it was thought that there might have been his abode. BOB was rumored to be a malicious spirit and had chased many good pagans from the upper Arb at night.
  5. Then did the druids Michelle the Blond, Amanda the Beautiful, Andrea the Fair, and Irony seek to discover the presence or hiding place of BOB, but they had no success.
  6. Then did Irony undertake a second vigil to find if BOB was indeed buried in the Lady's Grove, for he was a mighty fool and confident in his strength, having turned away demons before.
  7. And he set himself within the grove with cloak and candle, invited any spirits in the place to visit him, and commenced to wait.
  8. He had no wish to do battle, but wished merely to talk with BOB, if he was there, and see what arrangement could be reached.
  9. Then night was long, but nothing came. At length, to stave off sleep the vigiler did take a brief walk and found himself once more beside the circle.
  10. The night was dark, but he could see that all was not well, for while the outer ring still stood, the great center stone had been toppled and thrust aside by unknown hands.
  11. There was no rage in him this third time, but a great weight of sadness, and he lifted the stone lightly and set it back in place.
  12. Then a great shock took him and he stood as if stunned, for he had tried many times before to move that stone with no success.
  13. Then did Irony thank the Earth—mother for lending him strength, and he walked back to the grove with trembling legs, for he had never been possessed of such magic and it was a strange and terrifying thing.
6. A tiny passing dog won the game, leaping full into the air, and snatching a powdered doughnut from its string.
  7. At last David the Apologist and Andrew the Mad did step forward to be wed. But here the Druid's nerves did fail them, and it was decided that there should be two weddings, and brides were quickly selected for the lucky men.
  8. Why this thing should be so is no longer remembered, for in later years the Druids had no such qualms, and two women were later joined at Beltane 99.
  9. So Andrea the Fair was wed to David the Apologist, and Michelle the Other was wed to Andrew the Mad.
  10. The weddings were performed by Michelle the Blond, and here was included for the first time the 'chastity within marriage' clause, and there was much amusement.
  11. The couples then led a dance about the pole while the musicians played, and all was well, till the Druids did rush suddenly upon the nuptial pairs with a great ribbon and bind them all to the pole, where they were tickled.
  12. So ended the first Beltane, and it was reckoned a great success.

## Chapter the Sixth

1. Then at last did the plans of Irony see fruit.
2. The destruction of the circle of stones had angered him greatly, for it was well loved by many people. But its proximity to the Hill and its malleable size invited vandals, and it had been destroyed three times in as many terms.
3. Then did Irony undertake a great sacrilege, for he wished to preserve the circle, and yet strengthen it.
4. And so he destroyed it utterly, and transported the largest of the stones away to the Grove of the Lady and brought with them eight others of the largest stones he could find, and caused them to be erected in a new circle there in the Lady's Grove where the Maypole had so lately stood.
5. And this circle was five lengths across, sheltered by Oak trees, and well hidden from the rest of the campus, while the great table and altar in its center was a limestone triangle six feet to the side and two feet thick.
6. But this great slab was supported by the three largest stones from the old beloved circle on the hill, for theirs was the place of honor, and the great center stone of the old circle was set deep into the earth at the southern quarter as the stone of life. It is a powerful stone still, though its size be much diminished.
7. All this was done in the month of May, and so great was his resolve and persuasion that Irony did convince the College to pay for the creation of the shrine.
8. The Circle was laid by Irony and Michelle the Blond, and the work was accomplished by he, she, Amanda the Beautiful, Andrew the Mad, and Jeanette the Tall.
9. Irony and Dennis Easley did summon a great monster and constrained it to do their will.
10. It was a foul creature that belched fumes and bellowed, and with its inhuman strength was much accomplished that could not have been done otherwise.
11. But its great claws tore at the earth, and none were sorry to see it go. It grumbled as it was dismissed, for the altar top had weighed two and a quarter tons.
12. There were many who were angered at this thing, for Irony had destroyed the first circle more completely than any vandal, and had broken many a tradition of the Druids.

## Chapter the Fifth

1. With no further objections from BOB the Lady's grove was chosen as the site to host Beltane, and at last the day arrived.
2. Then was there feasting and merrymaking, music and song, and the may—pole was danced many times.
3. Musicians came from the twin cities, including Matt the Harper, who was blind, and played upon a great double strung harp. There were fiddles and pipes, drums and accordions, and there was much rejoicing.
4. Amanda the Beautiful did invent the Doughnut Tree and it hung above the path to the great amusement of passers by.
5. This event has since passed into Druid tradition, and involves suspending doughnuts from strings and having people then attempt to then eat without their hands, while being tickled. It is a difficult sport involving much madness and little sustenance.

13. They did call him mad, foolish, arrogant, and uncaring, and those words ring ever round his head. But the deed was done, and only time can tell its worth.

## Chapter the Seventh

1. The Circle was charged on the last full moon of spring, and it was dedicated as a place of peace and power for all who would respect it.
2. For it was not built for the Druids alone, but for any soul or spirit that desired a place to rest, study, or simply be at peace.
3. A dance was danced about the circle, a twining, spinning dance of charging and awakening: five people walked deosil about the outer ring, while five traced out a great pentacle inside it pointing to the North, each walking the line of the star until they had passed their beginning three times.
4. The Circle was awakened, and many are the strange and wonderful sights that it has seen.
5. So ended the second year of this chronicle, and it ended in doubt and wonder, for the Archdruids had learned a thing or two, but had meddled much with things they did not understand, and none were certain where the group would go.
6. Irony was especially concerned, for the building of the Circle had left him drained, and it would be nearly a year before he returned again to Carleton.
7. At this time Amanda the Beautiful was made second order, and she was to join Michelle the Blond in the running of the grove.

## SECTION THREE

The Third Year 1997–1998: The Year of Amnesia

### Chapter the First

1. There followed what is now known as The Year of Amnesia, for those that were there say they remember little of what was done.
2. Irony was gone for the fall and winter, and only rumors reached him.
3. The College cracked down on public nudity that fall following a walking streak of Parent's Weekend by the cross country teams, and Michelle the Blond did warn the Druids at the sweat lodge that Samhain was not to be indiscreet.
4. Andrea the Fair was present however and felt that nudity was a sacrament, and not to be repressed.
5. There are some who say she flaunted the warning, and there was much bitterness between her and Michelle the Blond.
6. The ceremony of Marriage bread was performed again at the equinox, but there were too many pieces for the druids present to consume, and they were slow to eat them.
7. It then fell out that two non-druids were passing and saw the bread, and they did ask to eat of it, and great was the surprise when they found the rings, for they did not know what they had fallen into.
8. Their names were Michael Pouland and Shelia Anderson, and they did not know what to do, for they had no desire to be married, having each a sweet-heart of their own.

9. An interest in Tarot reading was developed and cultivated, and a stenciled face that some thought was John Lennon, some Albert Einstein, and others Irony, appeared in paint upon the face of the North Stone in the Circle.
10. Some were angered at this, and some were amused, but no one seemed sure what to do with it, for it was quite resistant to scrubbing.
11. At this time also did Michelle the Blond begin to have doubts about the Druids and her own Druidism, but for what cause none can say but she.
12. 'The Druids are nothing but a ridiculous joke,' she wrote to Irony during that winter, 'We should disband them entirely.'
13. Irony was greatly disturbed at this, for he felt no Archdruid had the legitimate power to end the movement, nor did he believe it could be done.
14. He begged her to wait until he returned in the spring before doing anything of the sort, then if she wished to retire from the Druids there would be someone to carry on.
15. Of the year of Amnesia nothing more is remembered until spring, unless it be by another hand. Michelle the Blond, Amanda the Beautiful, and Brian the Atheist were there at the time, but they have spoken little of it.
16. That March did Andrea the Fair depart the Twin Cities for the West Coast, and the last of the 'old Druids' was taken from the grove, so far as they knew.

## Chapter the Second

1. It was spring before Irony returned, for he had wandered long, and had studied the arts of blacksmithing in Germany, the arts of sailing and oceanography in the Caribbean, and had slept on top of Glastonbury Tor.
2. He returned with a harp he could not yet play, and found many of the druids he had left had vanished. There were new faces, as always, but as ever he missed the old.
3. Rob Harrison, a great friend and councilor did emerge from Northfield during this time, for he had long sought out the Druids, and had been referred by Isaac Bonewits to the grove at Carleton.
4. He was swiftly to become a great resource and co-conspirator.
5. That spring Beltane was held on the island of Mai Fete, where years before more secular festivals had been held.
6. The Maypole was unearthed from its hiding place and was danced innumerable times, until the dancers did pause from dizziness for fear of fainting.
7. This year there was a fire, and much music, and many dishes were brought for a feast, for there were to be two weddings. Shelia had fled to spend the weekend with her real boyfriend, so Michael's sweetheart Jessica stepped forward to take her place.
8. In addition Harriet Erwin, the secretary of Religion, Philosophy, and Classics, did arrive unannounced with her boyfriend to be wed. This was a surprise to him as well as the Druids, but was well received by both parties.
9. There was doughnut fishing, for there were no trees near at hand for the usual sport, and it was well enjoyed, and there was storytelling late into the night.
10. Just at sunset the weddings were performed, and they were beautiful. Their terms were to last for a year and a day, and as the couples had a natural fondness to one another they were more serious than those of the previous year.

11. Irony performed the ceremonies, and read vows from the Anthology before the couples. It was feared that things might get out of hand, for Irony was known to wax serious at times, so before the ceremony he went to his old roommate Jesse the Brown, and gave unto him a great powdered doughnut.
12. "If I get too serious," he told him, "throw this at me."
13. Michael and Jessica did emerge from across the lake each wearing a crown of willow and flowers made by the other, and they did cross the island down an avenue of druids.
14. Before the fire they came to Irony and David the Apologist, master of ceremonies for the night. The vows were read against the sunset, and each agreed to abide by them.
15. Bread was exchanged, and honey wine. But just as the bride was about to drink Irony spoke again.
16. "Last year we included another clause within the vows, and that was of chastity within marriage. It meant you could sleep with whom ever else you wanted to, but not with your spouse, so long as the marriage held."
17. There was a startled stillness as people wondered if he jested, and the bride looked at him with violent eyes, the chalice of mead at her lips.
18. Then came a roar of laughter, and Jesse threw the doughnut. He threw with more force than necessary, for he and Irony had been ill matched as roommates, but his aim was poor, and the pastry hit the bride instead.
19. Then the couple lead a dance as the fire was built up, and the Druids were much impressed, for Jessica and Michael knew what they were about and requested a proper jig, and there was much applause.
20. Then came the Ordeal. It had been discovered that there was an ancient game of Beltane wherein couples would join hands and leap together through a blazing fire as a prophecy for their year together.
21. If they cleared it unscorched and unsevered, the year would be prosperous and fine.
22. If they landed scorched but together, it would be hard, but each would stand by the other.
23. But if one were to leap while the other held back, woe should fall upon the pair, and it was doubtful they would last the year.
24. As the flames reached chest high the Ordeal was called for, and its terms and meaning explained.
25. Michael and Jessica looked much askance, for they were not druids themselves, but had fallen into the affair by chance, and there were many who doubted the two would jump.
26. But Jessica, who wore a long dress of the richest green, did twist and knot it up about her thighs, and seizing hands they rushed upon the blaze.
27. With a mighty leap they sailed through the flames and landed on the grass unscathed and still together, and there was much applause and admiration for their courage.
28. They dropped hands quickly and looked abashed, and some did wonder what this foretold, but as of this writing, they were still together.
29. The wedding of Harriet and her much astonished lover was more subdued, but pleasant. The Maypole was danced a final time in their honor, but when the Ordeal was described and proposed they both demurred.
30. This was reckoned as an ill sign, and by the next year they had parted company.
31. Late into the night the singing and storytelling ranged, as the sky grew dark and the fire dim. Then, as the stars began to gleam the heavens burst forth in glory.
32. A great display of Northern Lights did cover the world— at least at Carleton— and there were pinks and greens amongst the stars, and lights rippled above the wispy clouds as sunshine does beneath a clear pool of disturbed water.
33. Great beams and fingers of light washed clear across the sky. Some reckoned it a gift of the gods, and some were scientists, but all did aver they had never seen the like.
34. The Druids had great command of the weather in those days, but they had never called for this.
35. It was indeed a most marvelous celebration.
36. Though the festival was well attended the numbers of regular druids seemed to be few, and while teas were held there was little discussion of note.
37. Amanda the Beautific had been ordained third order during the winter months, but she was drawn ever away by her studies, and Michelle the Blond did drift even further away from the Druids.
38. After much discussion the face of Lennon was effaced from the North Stone, but it was accomplished only with the most vile of substances, and with the aid of Glen— the master of the paint shop at Carleton, and it was never completely removed.
39. Even now when the stone is wet a ghostly face can still be seen.

## Chapter the Third

1. There is little else to be told of that spring, save for one event that happened nearly at its end.
2. Irony visited the Circle often during that time, for he had put much of himself into it and had missed it for a year.
3. So it was that on one venture late in the spring he found the place bestrewn with bottles whole and broken, and found a fire had been built upon the altar and the rock was cracked and discolored.
4. That there be no fires there had been one of the conditions of its building, and the Druids had taken it upon themselves to see that this was met.
5. Indeed they had buried an existing fire ring in that grove— there is a tiny mound over it, just beyond the South—East Stone.
6. This occurrence disturbed Irony, and he did inform the rulers of the Arb, and cleaned the mess as best he could.
7. He had a feeling, though, that the perpetrators would be back, and kept more than his usual watch upon the place.
8. Thus it came to pass later that week as he and Ginger (who was a freshling that year, and who's name describes her well enough) were walking at night that they came upon the Circle and found the altar in flames.
9. There was a second fire upon it, and many revelers about in various stages of drink. Irony and Ginger did walk into their midst, and the drinkers appeared astounded.
10. Then did Irony address them, saying: "What is going on here? This is not a place for fires; the prairie is too near and too sensitive to flame.
11. There are only four spots at Carleton where fires are permitted and this is none of them.
12. I can show you another if you wish to move your party there, but this fire must be extinguished now—"

13. The drinkers did stand as if frozen, and looked on him with blank astonished stares, but he was used to this, and thought nothing of it.
14. "Who will help me stamp it out?" he asked, for he was barefoot, and did not relish the idea. None moved.
15. Then did Irony take from the altar the flaming brands and cast them upon the grass free ground, explaining calmly where fires could be had, and why, and how sorry he was to spoil their fun.
16. The logs removed, he gathered up the coals from off the rock with his bare hands and barefoot, began to tramp them out.
17. At last a few of the drinkers moved and came to help, but they were slow, and little was left for them to do.
18. When the last coals were out Irony did invite them once again to retire to another site, but they preferred to stay.
19. They promised there would be no more flames, and that they would clean the place upon departing, and the two wanderers left satisfied.
20. When they were out of earshot Ginger laughed, for the two had been conversing on the proper uses of magic.
21. "It never works if you are showing off?" she asked him, laughing, for those had been his recent words.
22. Then he looked at her dumbfounded, for he realized suddenly what he had done.
23. For he had handled live coals and trod upon flames barefoot, yet when he looked at his hands and feet he found no burns or blisters, but only a smearing of ash. And when he washed this away he found not even the hair was burned.
24. This was reckoned the second miracle at the Circle, and it was more astounding than the first.
25. The drinkers did keep but half their promise. There was no more flame, but their smashed and broken bottles were all about the stones, and several had not been emptied.
26. Further, and this may have had nothing at all to do with them, the statue of the Lady that had long stood near unto the Circle had vanished.
27. Her hole stood empty and the path approaching her led up to nothingness. A scrap of her dirt was found within the circle, and that was all.
28. There was much sadness at her departure, and so far as this chronicler can tell, she has not been seen by any druid from that day to this.



**Figure 31** Altar Stone at New Circle, c. 1998.

## SECTION FOUR

The Fourth Year 1998–1999: The Year of Growth

### Chapter the First

1. In the history of the Reformed Druids, each changing of the guard has been accompanied with a near reversal in policy and practice as the new Archdruids rebel against the ways of the old.
2. This has saved the Druids from stagnation, but has also curtailed their growth, for if each new generation abandons the teaching and wisdom of the old, then they must begin anew and waste much time relearning basic matters.
3. Irony knew this well, for he had spent his first two years discovering and relearning the basics of Druidic leadership and felt that he had now laid the foundations for growth.
4. He hoped to spare the next generation the lost time of relearning so that they could build upon this foundation, and hoped too that with the proper sort of leadership there would be no rebellion when he left.
5. But these foundations resided primarily in the minds of the Archdruids and would be lost and useless if they could not be passed on, or if the next generation chose to rebel against the ways of the past four years.
6. Furthermore, Irony was now the last of the Archdruids.
7. Amanda had retreated into Neuropsychology, and during the summer Michelle the Blond had kicked herself out of the Druids, and out of the order of Dalon ap Landu.
8. She returned to Carleton calling herself a Discordian Witch, and figures little in the history of this year.

### Chapter the Second

1. Irony, who has been called many things, returned to Carleton early that fall hoping to catch young freshlings during New Student Week when their minds were impressionable and their schedules unformed.
2. He also brought with him two druids from his home. These were friends of his with whom he had long discussed Druidism, and who now elected to attend Carleton.
3. Their names were Merri the Wanderer, and Chrissie the Very Intimidating, and Irony hoped to train them up as the next Archdruids so that no knowledge or time would be lost.
4. Thus you can see there was much he did not know, for this is not the way succession works among the Druids.
5. The gods have a say in who is chosen and will not have their choice usurped. Archdruids emerge.
6. They are not to be picked by leaders of the past, but merely noticed and encouraged.
7. The Druids knew none of this at the time, but it soon became apparent.
8. Many of the core druids of the Year of Growth emerged during New Student Week. Ehren the Eerie, Chloe the Cuddleable, Chris the Fey, Dan the Rabbinic, and several others.
9. Amanda was present on occasion, and Rob, Brian the Atheist, and a few others from past years were still around.
10. Things took off at a great pace.

## Chapter the Fourth

1. For the Equinox that fall the Druids learned a Morris Dance, descending upon the Folk Dancers in a great crowd and not leaving till they were taught.
2. Michelle the Blond came to the dance. It may have been the last event she attended.
3. Marriage bread was baked, and Irony and Ginger found the rings. But then a peculiar sub tradition came into play, for though the point of the ceremony is for those who receive the rings to be married at Beltane, in actual fact this had never happened: Dave and Andrew married Andrea and Michelle instead of each other; Michael married Jessica instead of Shelia.
4. This time too the original pair was split, for there were many feelings involved in many directions, and it was felt that even as a mock union the match would bring trouble.
5. So Ginger gave her ring to Merri the Wanderer who was Irony's true beloved, and took upon herself Merri's roommate, Chloe the Cuddleable, as her bride.
6. Teas were held in Prentice House lounge that fall, and there were discussions and sweat lodges.
7. For Samhain the Druids carved no less than fourteen jack-o'-lanterns and carried them in a singing procession all through campus until their arms fell off.
8. There was a mummies play in the little grove, and it was well attended.
9. The fall passed quickly, as it always seems to, and Irony did endeavor to draw the younger druids into roles of leadership so that they might learn the in's and out's of dealing with the college.
10. It quickly became apparent though, that his wishes concerning the next Archdruidcy would come to naught, as indicated by one fairly dramatic event.
9. Irony was unaware of any of this, and cleared in a clueless state of bliss.
10. In the days that followed Chrissie and Chloe felt that the Circle was punishing them for serving it for such reasons as they had.
11. This was not an unjustified feeling, for they each developed the nastiest sort of blistering rash that any one there had seen.
12. Chloe was unable to sit or sleep for days, and nothing seemed to help the inch long blisters that rose upon her legs and arms.
13. Merri developed a few spots, and Irony was basically untouched. The others did make much of this, and there was tension, and no small resentment.
14. It was latter determined that the source of these blisters was a plant– Wild Celery– which contains a photosensitive poison. On skin alone it is harmless; once sunlight hits it, blisters develop.
15. Why Merri and Irony developed it not was a matter of much conjecture, and no final story was ever accepted.
16. The incident served to push Chrissie away from the potential Archdruidcy, and made it clear to Irony that his will in such matters was not to be done.
17. This incident also signaled the beginning of a very strange thing, for there were many who began to attribute an agency to the Circle itself. "The Circle did this," they would say, "it wants such and such."
18. People began to feel that the Circle itself was sentient, or that there resided within it some being synonymous with the thing itself.
19. This feeling became more pronounced as independent corroboration's began to emerge, but all felt it was benevolent.
20. It would, it was felt, inflict a certain pain on occasion, but always in the interest of driving a person on to further self-development.
21. At the time no one really understood what was happening. For all I know they still do not.

## Chapter the Fifth

1. At the beginning of each fall, and toward the end of each spring the Circle must needs be cleared of grass, thistles, and vines that grow up within it.
2. For some this is a nuisance, for others an act of devotion. In the past it has been done by hand, and takes for bloody ever.
3. This fall, Irony, Chloe the Cuddleable, Merri the Wanderer and Chrissie the Very Intimidating set about this work.
4. The three younger druids were new to Carleton, and had not made up their minds what they thought of Druidism yet. Strange things shortly began to occur.
5. The Circle spoke suddenly to Merri and set her a challenge– she was to clear a specific path within it, alone, and in spite of an illness she had which made her faint and woozy in the heat. She set about this and accomplished it.
6. Chrissie, meanwhile, had no interest in being there, and was doing so because she felt it was required of her by Irony.
7. The Circle seemed to pick up on this, and sent swarms of ants and spiders after her wherever she sat, though they did not seem to bother the others.
8. Chloe was there primarily because Merri was her roommate, and though she worked as hard as any, she felt she did it for the wrong reason.

## Chapter the Sixth

1. At some point during this fall that two peculiar customs emerged, and they were these.
2. At each of the sweat lodges, and at many of the other night gatherings large cauldrons of stew were made. These were flavored with various herbs and spices, and served hot from the fire.
3. At some point it came into being that whosoever discovered a Bay leaf in their portion of stew was required to kiss the cook in whatever manner was mutually agreeable.
4. No one is entirely sure where this practice emerged, though some do credit it to Erika the Chef, who took it upon herself to do much of the cooking.
5. She is possessed of a playful manner and an open mind, so it is conceivable that she was indeed the source.
6. The second tradition which emerged was imported with Merri the Wanderer and Chrissie the Very Intimidating, and it was the ceremony of Marshmallowing.
7. This ceremony is called for when grievances have developed, or a spectacle is required of one or more of the druids. It is like a stoning, but gentler.

8. All the Druids gather in a circle about the culprit with marshmallows in hand, and throw them one at a time at the marshmallowee.
9. As they throw, each calls out a specific sin or grievance for which their marshmallow is a punitive strike.
10. These can be real or ridiculous sins– 'for being a gay man with straight tendencies!' or 'This is for molesting young sea birds!'
11. Then, if the charge strikes the interest of the throwers, the marshmallowee may be called upon to confess the details of the charge, even if their crime was a complete fabrication!
12. But beware in the throwing, if ever you try this, for if the marshmallow misses its target, the sin rebounds and settles upon its thrower.
13. It is by all accounts a ridiculous tradition, but seems well loved, and serves in some small way to keep the group together.

## Chapter the Seventh

1. Winter came, and freezings began.
2. More and more responsibility fell upon the young druids as Irony became gradually consumed by Comps.
3. Just after Imbolc, Merri the Wanderer left Carleton for a time, and founded another grove in New York.
4. It was during this time that various energy experiments were carried out, and designs were made for scientific tests, but the results were inconclusive.
5. It was made known by some of the past druids and associates that these things had been tried before with similar results, and interest gradually died.
6. During this time too the druids set up a Caucus conference. The old Druids\_Notes had died. It was in the keeping of Michelle the Blond and seems to have been deleted.
7. During this winter too were many young druids questioned and made second order. These included Merri the Wanderer, Ehren the Eerie, Dan the Rabbinic, Chris the Fey, and Rob the Elder, for they answered their questions well, and were confirmed by signs from the wild.

## Chapter the Eighth

1. Spring came at last, and with it Beltane, and Merri came back, and Mec returned from the Land of the Rising Sun and offered himself as a Beltane slave to the druids he found, so that much work was accomplished that would have been difficult without.
2. But there was much discussion between him and Irony, for it appeared that Irony had abandoned many of the traditions of the Druids, and Mec would know the reasons.
3. It came to light, for instance, that Irony and Michelle had been the last priests to be consecrated to Dalon ap Landu, and that Irony had not taught the younger druids about him.
4. This was the last tradition that had survived the thirty–six years since the beginning of the reform, and Mec was puzzled and disturbed that it had not been passed on.
5. Then there was a long and tense debate between these two Archdruids, past and passing, for they had both thought long and hard on such matters, and both had years of druidry to draw upon.
6. But at last Irony answered him saying 'I am a priest of the Druids, and a faithful servant to that to which you consecrated me. I have even met, on occasion, a being

which seems to be the Lord of the Groves, and it is good– but it has never named itself to me, and I cannot in good conscience force a name upon it, nor teach others an empty name to distract them from the living being that you and I both know.'

7. Then there was a great sadness between them.
8. For Mec perceived that the Druids had changed in form, if not in spirit, and he loved tradition, and was loath to see it go.
9. And Irony was sad, for he had never wanted such a break with the past.
10. But both had done what they thought right, and they ended with understanding and friendship between them.
11. And when the Third Order Vigils were performed that Spring, the Lord of the Groves was not mentioned, and people were ordained only as priests and priestesses of the Druids.
12. The old ritual is still there, and may well come back into practice some day.
13. Till then, the spirit that guides the Druids is nameless, and each sees in it something slightly different.

## Chapter the Ninth

1. Beltane was held at the Circle that year, and Mec later said it was the best Beltane he had ever witnessed.
2. The Maypole was raised and danced, the Donut tree was hung, there was music, and dancing, and feasting without end, and Jim brought his Tarot cards to read.
3. There was piping and harping, and no less than three couples were married.
4. Kirsten of the many smiles was wed by Irony to her boy in absentia. A good friend stood in for the groom, as they were unable to locate a cell phone, and they underwent the ordeal together.
5. Then Chrissie the Very Intimidating joined Chloe the Cuddleable and Ginger together, and theirs was the most elaborate and beautiful wedding that had yet been seen, for they had a best man– Liz, and a Bridesmaid, who was Chris in green lipstick, and they exchanged gifts and vows in a ring of friends and druids while harps sang in the wind for their joy.
6. Then as the sun set Irony and Merri were joined by Mec– who is also Mike the Fool. But as they were processing down an arch of arms they were trapped suddenly and subjected to a Marshmallowing, for there were many with real and ridiculous sins to level against Irony that day.
7. Then were they joined in a hand fasting rite to last a year and a day, and they were very happy.
8. The festivities lasted long into the night, and there was a mummings play, and singing, piping, and storytelling, and a good number of the druids wrapped into a blanket pile and slept beneath the stars.
9. The next night Merri the Wanderer and Dan the Rabbinic vigiled for third order, and they both chose the walking vigil and met with strange sights, for the horned piper wandered the woods that night and met and spoke with them both.
10. They were ordained on the Hill of Three Oaks, and endured their questioning well and bravely atop the Center Stone of the Circle as the sun rose behind them.



11. Shortly thereafter a sweat lodge was held, and Rob the Elder and Ehren the Eerie vigiled and were similarly ordained.
12. They too acquitted themselves well, and they were questioned under the direction of Merri and the younger druids, for Mec and Irony were pulled away through design, accident, and foolishness, and time passed them by as they lay alone and palely loitering upon the cold hillside.

## Chapter the Tenth

1. That spring there was one final celebration of the full moon, for that occurrence was welcomed and met on every occasion.
2. And again there was music and dancing.
3. A large orange moon rose in the east, and a fire upon the hill.
4. There was lightning to the south, and mist and fireflies about the woods and fields that surrounded the Hill of Three Oaks, and such was the beauty and the strangeness of the sight that those who came late or looked back thought perchance that they had stumbled into Faerie.
5. At midnight the rains came, and the druids that were left threw off their cloths and ran dancing through the Arb in delight and celebration.
6. Thereafter power, responsibility, and the strange title of the Archdruid passed to Chloe the Cuddleable, Chris the Fey, and Ehren the Eerie, and Irony told them all he had left to tell about the leading of the group.
7. He told them farewell, and said good-by to the circle that he had raised.
8. He had poured much of himself into the group, and was, when he left, the longest standing Archdruid the Carleton Grove had seen.
9. And as he left the Druids, Carleton and Minnesota the Druid Sigil he had long worn about his neck fell from its cord, and he wept, for he knew that chapter of his life was at an end, and it was as if much magic had suddenly gone out of the world.

Here ends this book of the History of the Legitimacy.  
—Irony Sade  
New Years Eve, 1999

—



**Figure 32 Irony at Old Circle, Samhain 1997.**

# The Poems of Irony

(These are the druidically inspired poems

of Irony Sade, Archdruid at Carleton 1996–1999.)

## Sands of Time

By Irony Sade

I met a man in Mittengrad  
While walking down a street.  
The snows of several winters gone  
Were swirling round his feet.  
His cloak showed signs of recent rains,  
It's tattered edge told tales  
Of nights spent 'neath the starlit sky,  
And bramble ridden trails.  
He nodded as he greeted me,  
And quirked an eyebrow to;  
As if to say in some strange way,  
'I think that I know you.'  
"We've met before, now haven't we?"  
He spoke the tongue I knew,  
Then vanished while I stood and stared.  
And soft the cold wind blew.  
I met myself in Mittengrad,  
A thousand years removed.  
The Sands of Time had bleached my hair  
And left some wrinkles smoothed.  
My scowl faded clean away,  
A knowing mien he wore.  
What source of surcease had he found,  
Through what unopened door?

## Hypnosis

By Irony Sade

Light and shadows ever-mixing  
Twisting turning and betwixing  
Stone and sky from which the rain comes  
Falling steaming hissing screaming;

I am walking through a valley, being tripped by fallen angels.

While beneath the ground is shaking  
Bouncing bounding laughing quaking  
Fires leaking trees are creaking  
All around a voice is speaking;

I am walking through a valley, being tripped by fallen angels.

And above the sky is turning  
Swaying praying clouds are burning  
Hawk and Phoenix both are slaying  
Close behind the hounds are baying;

I am walking through a valley, being tripped by fallen angels.

Straight ahead the Elves are singing  
Clear their voices high and ringing  
On the hills a storm is climbing  
In my ears a bell is chiming;

I am walking through a valley, being tripped by fallen angels.

## The Spring

By Irony Sade

The flowers shine like ivory upon the forest lawn  
The sky is lightly tinged with pink before the early dawn  
The trees are black and high they raise their lofty towering  
crowns,  
And in the stream there is a pool in which all worry drowns.

The larks and nightingales sing of restfulness and sleep  
The lilies on their lily pads are floating on the deep  
The pebbles show their colors and the trees are dripped with  
green  
The waterfall it plays a song of notes not heard but seen.

The ivy creeps it's way around and up the trunks of trees  
The flowers dance a reel to the buzzing of the bees  
The butterflies they sit and fan themselves with jeweled wings  
The stream it parts around a rock on which the wood nymph  
sings.

## The Pilgrims Lament

By Irony Sade

If the world is only illusion,  
Just the fabric of Maya wherein nothing is real,  
If the soul of the all is the only existence,  
Why does it hurt so much?

If the seeker has thrown off temptation,  
If desire is stifled and pain is repealed,  
If the peace that we've found is worth all that we've given,  
Why do I feel this loss?

The god's of my peoples are too many,  
The truth's of the ones I see here too few.  
If the god's cannot offer the keys to our heavens,  
What can the soul look to?

I look to myself I see only confusion.  
When I look to the world I see heartache and pain.  
I look to the god's— I see nothing but silence.  
What is there to gain?

Yet the sunset still offers me beauty,  
Caresses still fill me with love.  
The ground at my feet is still there when I'm weary...  
Need we find aught above?

What if there's naught above?

## Untitled

By Irony Sade

Gorbeling his gillerthumbs,  
The Glabberbeast of Gallermums  
Spied a lazing Olgerumph  
Upon the forest floor.

Passing through the Puplefronds  
He pounced upon her tumblemonds.  
"Dear sir!" She squeaked, "You're squiggling  
My oomtingles with your zore!"

## Solitude

By Irony Sade 25.4.98

No more questions.  
No more stories.  
Ask of me no songs.  
No more oak leaves drifting in the stream beside the  
moon,  
Nor lightning without thunder in the April muted hills.  
And let there be no bitter wood-smoke seeping through  
the rain.

For there is no more wanting in me.  
Nor fear.  
Nor any love of challenge.

But give to me a single petal from which a drop of dew  
has fallen and another has yet to form-

For there is some desire in me still for which I have no name.

## On Wind Driven Raindrops

The rains from the skies  
are the tears that my eyes  
never shed...

While the leaves in the stream  
are the drops that my heart's  
never bled....

All the words that I've read-  
All the songs in my head-  
All the pain that I dread....  
For the ghost in my bed.....

What am I weeping for?

## Poems from Foot Prints

The German times; August and September, 1997  
Irony Sade

### I

Delighting in life the lark flits above me  
Where the rain drips down through the boughs of the  
pines,  
Delighting in the rain the grasses run silver,  
Their laughter the wind as it rustles my hair.  
Delighting in the wind the pines shiver slowly-  
The goddess is washing the dust from their beards.  
Delighting in the goddess the deer leap before me-  
But the ground has since sunk on the grave of the king.

### II

The forests have buried the barrows of others  
And webs are now woven where tapestries hung.  
The spider stands sucking the life of her mate  
On a hill o'er a cairn, o'er a pile of bones.  
The bones of the deer now litter the forest  
Where the timid folk wander on pathways of stone.  
The wander watches the death of the grasses  
Ground up in their greens by a growling machine-  
But the heather grows green on the grave of  
the king.

### III

Now buildings are build where the badger once burrowed  
And the lark 'lights no longer where the lumberjacks  
lean.  
Now bricks are laid over the green growing grasses,  
And the Oak is hewn down for the imported corn.  
Now the ships are of glass and the soul of the sailing  
Is nailed to the mast of the scorekeepers dome.  
Now the rain runs in rivers through the sewers of cities  
And the forest, forgotten, frowns over the wall-  
But someone burns candles on the grave of  
the king.

\* \* \* \* \*

The candles in their candle-sticks are hanging on the wall.  
The jacket and the dripping jeans are hanging in the hall,  
The clouds are hanging in the sky, the rain is on the stone,  
And I am at the table slouched, drinking tea alone.



## Upper Arb, Spring 98

By Irony Sade

The summertime was dying  
And the autumn grasses sighing.  
The drifting leaves were lying  
Like the waves upon the sea.

I was in a field standing  
When I felt my soul expanding  
And I heard a voice commanding  
That I call it back to me.

And I thought I saw a glitter  
As of eyes both glad and bitter.  
There was mist upon the litter  
That was lying next to me...



**Figure 33 Camilla Ammirati at Old Circle, 1996.**



**Figure 34 Michelle Hadjer, Jenni Melmed, Charles Schmidt & Irony Sade, Nov 1996.**

## Merri's Druidical Mumblings in the Form of Poetry

### Sand Dreams

By MerriBeth Weber, c. 1998

Dusk  
At the edge of the world,  
Dust  
Wild round me swirled,  
Sand  
Beneath me sank,  
Silence  
As deep I drank,  
Voice  
Called out my name,  
"Who?"  
I cried, insane.  
Answer  
I was never told,  
Tongue  
So strange and old,  
"Tell!"  
I plead in tears.  
Veil  
Thin between the years.  
Silence.  
And I wake.

### Musings in a Colorado Hotel

By MerriBeth Weber, c. 1998

Who am I on this precipice,  
This cliff above the world,  
Looking out o'er this great expanse,  
This majesty unfurled?  
What eyes are these, to survey so  
The trials of beasts and men?  
What lips have I to speak so of  
These things beyond my ken?  
Am I so wise a knowing thing  
To explain with proverbs grand,  
To nod sagely and lisp along  
As though I understand?



**Figure 35 Merri doing an anti-marriage rite, 2003.**

## Northeast Stone

By MerriBeth Weber, c. 1998

Silently in death I lay  
That death before the birth,  
From nothingness, from there I came  
I prepare now for earth  
Sleeping, floating, pondering  
The silence of the spheres  
Inside are placed my gifts  
And my allotted years  
This memory sings to me  
When I'm asleep at night  
I listen, rapt with wonder,  
Till I'm touched by morning's light  
Now I find myself again  
At the point within my dreams  
Where I must prepare myself  
To cross uncharted streams  
This is a rebirth for me  
A time for me to choose  
Who I wish to be and  
What path I wish to use

## The Storm

By MerriBeth Weber, c. 1998

It stormed, thunder and lightening crackling in the sky,  
and in the air.  
I ran through the rain, leaping and dancing,  
like a young wild thing discovering for the first time  
what rain is.  
I stood in streams of water, drinking from the sky,  
atop the Center Stone.  
With each crack and flash I felt the power growing,  
within me and without of me,  
until they both were one.  
The breeze was my breath and the thunder my heartbeat.  
I lifted up my open hand to the heavens  
in exultation of this life,  
and the sky cracked.  
My other hand came up to join the first,  
and it cracked and rumbled again.  
My laughter was lost in the wind, became part of the storm.  
The circle spun around me,  
Alive.  
My love, my love.  
Lost in my reverie, we found a rift between us.  
Later, under the raindrops, his words brought forth an anger.  
A strength within me rose.  
A woman I didn't recognize.  
She brought him to the church and spoke with him.  
She sees clearly.  
Her thoughts are sound.  
God's words may pass her lips,  
she fears them not.  
Roles reversed, they converse, until he leaves the scene.  
And all in awe I venture forth, into the chapel dark.  
The pews are empty but hymns are heard,  
humming from the walls.  
I kneel in prayer before my Lord and ask to understand.

## Untitled

By MerriBeth Weber, c.1998

The silence broken only by the sound of falling snow,  
the forest holds its breath.  
Standing cloaked in my calmness,  
I wait.  
The sun, a silver disk,  
strains through the clouds,  
whiter than angels' wings.  
The world's face softened by a snowy veil,  
the quivering bride of winter  
stands with me  
in silence broken only by the sound of falling snow.  
The forest and I hold our breath.  
Chill fingers reach to caress my eyelids.  
The Mother's arms are open,  
her child falls grateful into her warm embrace.  
Stillness.  
The silence broken only by the sound of falling snow,  
the forest holds its breath.

## Walking With Dad

By MerriBeth Weber, c.1999

Swaggering across hummocks of grass,  
Man style.  
Delicately balanced in one hand,  
A structure of a diminutive nature.  
Blackbird, he says.  
Only the ash have survived the swamp.  
You can tell them by their bark.  
Memory rests for a moment in childhood.  
Regrettable that the walks were solitary.  
Learning waits till now.  
Now that I am woman grown.

## The Dance

By MerriBeth Weber, c.1999

There is a dance within my soul  
A Dance A Dance  
Throbbing in my head, beating in my heart  
A Dance A Dance  
Moving in my limbs, the rhythm  
A Dance A Dance  
I dance dance a dance dance catlike,  
slow, controlled, the rhythm beats  
faster, the power grows numbing, exhilarating  
Dance Dance Dance  
Who's is this? Stop.  
A knowledge, a knowing, to be gained in the dance.  
From Whom?  
dance dance Dance Dance DANCE!  
I'm walking, I'm avoiding  
I won't dance dance dance  
I don't know yet, I'm not certain of this  
dance dance dance  
Of the Father or the dark one is this  
dance dance dance  
What knowledge? This knowledge. What knowledge?  
Dance Dance  
In the meadow, in the forest, by the stones  
Dance Dance

I must dance dance dance. I must know.

Sister, if I go astray  
Please keep all the rest away.

Dance.

## Circle Building

By MerriBeth Weber c.1999

Mother, am I doing right?  
Does this soothe your pain?  
I'm lining stars up in the night  
And wondering if I'm sane.  
Mother, is this path I tread  
Leading me to hell?  
I cleared away those lying dead.  
Am I doing well?  
There is a focus in this place,  
A power swelling deep.  
But now and then the Father's face,  
It haunts me in my sleep.

## Untitled

By MerriBeth Weber, c. 1999

Dragonflies are droning in the dreary dusk of day,  
Heralding the harper who in Faerie's halls will play.  
Bellowing and trumpeting the bullfrogs bounce along.  
Fairies find their fellows as the harper starts his song.

' Remember rolling meadows  
And grasses wet with dew.  
Nights black as black  
And skies of pure blue.  
Remember golden silence.  
Remember waters clear.  
The world we knew is fading  
The end is drawing near. '

Elven cries of anguish echo eerie in the wood.  
Cries that carry farther than the fairies thought they could.  
Unwitting I was walking when wails were wailed aloud  
And the satyrs' song slipped my mind from its mortal shroud.

## Untitled

By MerriBeth Weber, c. 2000

The morning sun sifts through my window.  
I watch the light and shadows playing on the wall.  
Quietly wondering why I am allowed such contentment.  
Can it be that this peace is what is intended  
And the rest is all dreams and folly?



## Mississippi Mud

By MerriBeth Weber, c. 2000

Moonlight on naked flesh  
Rain on the river  
Laughter rippling  
Young voices cut the night  
So good to be young, to be free  
Living my dance  
Dancing alone  
Feet sure between the stones  
Water yielding and supporting  
The way is open  
The road so long and  
Traveled so quickly  
Standing a'tremble  
The droplets beaded on my skin  
Only the moon to light my path  
And the clouds come and go



**Figure 36 Chris Middleton & Merri Weber,  
New Circle flying a kite, Beltane 2001**

## The Poems of Chris

Chris Middleton was an odd quiet sort of Druid who enjoyed mummery and plays and eccentric little talks with puppets at night.

### Something to Look Forward to

By Chris Middleton, Carleton, c.1999

I was eating a rather bland breakfast  
When suddenly  
I died  
Moments later my spirit was wheeling from the experience  
My vision blurred as the room about me spun into a crazed mix  
of colors  
A blender full of the rich hues of every fruit  
Every berry.  
Soon all reality and the bowl of oatmeal below me dipped and  
sank into the thick syrupy afterlife  
My spirit was now sticky with the great beyond—  
Tastes like blueberries—  
Then a darkness, more liquid than coffee, washed over me as I  
ascended to the light  
Could this be death I wondered as I drew my hands through a  
stream of caffeinated Hereafter  
I thought of all the orange slices, the Mandarin, Naval, and  
Tangerine  
I recalled the Grapefruit and Melons  
Those distinct memories of Kiwis, Sand-pears and Mangos  
All those times I had feasted  
Those times when I had refused to take a single citrus section  
It was there that I came to a Toast Point  
I landed gracefully near a sea of tranquil raspberry jam  
Along the toasted beach, the waves kicked up a froth of pancakes  
People wandered in bedclothes holding hands and holding  
newspapers  
I knew I had reached the land where breakfast never ended  
And sighed deeply, turning to English muffin thoughts, and  
knowing that I'd never have to go to early morning Spanish  
again.

### Untitled for Obvious Reasons

By Chris Middleton, Carleton c.1999

Three men are seated at a table in Purgatory  
They are silent  
Around them are thousands of silent, caged, parrots  
Just as in heaven, just as in hell  
  
In heaven the parrots learn words and continue the conversations  
When the people are silent  
In hell the parrots learn words and  
Interrupt whoever speaks  
In Purgatory the parrots learn words,  
But are always silent  
The three men in Purgatory  
Do not know this

## The Poems of Brad

10/20/98

Dear Irony,

Your letter inured me to send anything of interest to you, the enclosed facsimile copies are the nicest things (to me) I've seen on Druidism, Hope they are of interest.

Sincerely, Brad Norris

### The Seven Precepts of Merlin

Strive for knowledge, for it is power  
Seek virtue, for it brings peace  
Abhor vice, for it brings evil on all  
Obey those in authority in all just things, so virtue may be exalted  
When in authority decide reasonably, for thy authority may not last  
Bear with fortitude the ills of life, remembering that no mortal sorrow is eternal  
Cultivate the social virtues, so that thou shall be loved by all men

### The Gorsedd Prayer

Grant, o Duw, thy protection  
And in protection, strength  
And in strength, understanding  
And in understanding, knowledge  
And in knowledge, the knowledge of justice  
And in that knowledge of justice, the love of justice  
And in that love of justice, the love of all existence's  
And in that love of all existence's, the love of Duw  
Duw and all goodness

### Stolen Child

Where dips the rocky highland  
Of sleuthwood in the lake,  
Lies a leafy island  
Where flapping herons wake  
The drowsy water rats  
There we've hid our faerie vats  
Full of berries  
And of reddest stolen cherries

(Chorus)  
Come away, oh human child  
To the water and the wild  
With a faerie hand in hand  
For the world's more full of weeping  
Than you can understand

Where the wave of moonlight glosses  
 The dim grey sands with light  
 By far off furthest crosses  
 We foot it all the night  
 Weaving olden dances  
 Mingling hands and mingling glances  
 Till the moon has taken flight  
 To and fro we leap  
 And chase the frothy bubbles  
 While the world is full of troubles  
 And is anxious in its sleep

(Chorus)

Where the wandering water gushes  
 From the hills above Glencar  
 In pools among the rushes  
 That scarce could bathe a star  
 We seek for slumbering trout  
 And whispering in their ears  
 Give them unquiet dreams  
 Leaning softly out  
 O'er ferns that drop their tears  
 Over the young stream

(Chorus)

Away with us he's going  
 The solemn-eyed  
 He'll hear no more the lowing  
 Of the calves on the long hillside  
 Or the kettle on the hob  
 Sing peace unto his breast  
 Or see the brown mice bob  
 Round and round the oatmeal chest  
 For he comes the human child  
 To the waters and the wild  
 With a faerie hand in hand  
 For the world's more full of weeping  
 Than he can understand  
 W.B. Yeats



**Figure 37** Charles, Cammilla Ammirati & Irony,  
 Old Stone Circle, Nov. 1996

## The Poems of Corwin

Corwin Troost got these poems to me from Carleton at the end of 2002, but I'm not quite sure of the year of authorship. But he'll be there until 2005.

### Utter blackness

By Corwin, c. 2002

Utter blackness  
 Just a second  
 When bright light winked out.  
 But in that second,  
 I could see nothing.  
 The world was gone.

All too soon,  
 A spot of light emerges,  
 And the world returns.  
 But I always know  
 That for a second,  
 It was gone.

### Bear Me Up, O World

By Corwin, c. 2002

Bear me up, O world.  
 Bear me up, support my weight with your lightness.  
 In your silence, I can sing;  
 Your cold envelops me,  
 And stillness is my loyal companion.  
 Your tiny rain is my ambrosia;  
 The scent of the grass, the seeds, the decaying leaves—  
 All your smallness feeds me.  
 Your immensity, your grandeur, gets more praise,  
 But your little, secret ways—  
 The soft rhythm of crunching snow  
 The midnight pale brightness of a snow field  
 A single star pushing through the clouds—  
 Lovingly linger with me,  
 Always waiting, just for me to notice.  
 You give me everything  
 But that I could know it all!  
 Bear me up, O world  
 Let me be another tiny, forgotten  
 Lovely thing.

### Transcendence

By Corwin, c. 2002

I feel her  
 I feel through her  
 I can feel the back of her neck  
 Yet I face her front,  
 And feel that too.  
 I?  
 We feel.  
 Where does I end and she begin?  
 I am not sure.  
 I am not I  
 I stretch beyond my form  
 And these beautiful, loving bodies  
 Fall to pieces  
 Of universe.



## Infinity in an Open Plain

By Corwin, c. 2002

I am so used to walls,  
Trees and Horizons  
I have never stood upon an empty plain  
Gazing out into wide forever  
Without anything to hold me up  
Beside or above, just the ground below.  
I look from out this train window;  
I wonder—without this steely guardian  
Without cities, walls, and dams,  
In a world without  
Man's constructed obstruction  
Would I be borne up by infinity  
Stretching my limbs and my sight  
As far as they could go,  
Or would I, alone, isolated,  
Be crushed by its weightlessness?

### Spent

Another CD  
Another thing  
Another, another, and another  
Why must I buy  
It sounds  
It tastes  
It feels and looks  
So good  
So why has my life—my energy—  
Gone? following those  
Measly little bills?  
I am drained  
I feel sick.  
You can buy happiness,  
But like rich food  
If you take too much  
It is vomit, diarrhea;  
Disgust.  
I enjoy not spending,  
I enjoy frugality,  
Taking little, and only cheaply.  
This lettuce and celery joy  
Gave way to that of mousse and steak.  
I feel ill; I mustn't eat.  
Later I shall eat slowly,  
Rich or poor,  
And avoid this sickness worse than hunger.



Figure 38 Ehren Vaughn, Merri Weber & Steve Crimmins in a Druid Cloak Tamale, Beltane 2001.

## Historiographies of the Books of the Latter-Day Druids

### The Dead Lake Scrolls

It is worth noting than in the originals, I put in pictures, fancy fonts, amusing titles and other items, which would make distribution difficult. They have therefore been removed. With the exception of the Book of Paul, all are authored by Michael Scharding with advice from his friends. This book is mostly to tell Carleton Druids of their past and to record the events of Scharding's ArchDruidcy of May 93 to May 94.

### The Book of Introduction

As the contents suggest, this book is setting the purpose and mood for the collection.

### The Book of Years

As some of the gaps prove, this was written early in my research on Reformed Druid history. The titles for their different periods are my own and are of little relevance to other people.

### The Book on John Burrige

During his brief time at Carleton as a staff member, John Burrige made a lasting impression on the Druid community. This book was written to honor his memory. The Orange House referred to was one of the focal points of Druid life in the campus. I believe it was torn down in 1992. It was kitty-corner from Berg house.

### The Book of Opposition

The atmosphere at Carleton since 1984 was getting more and more conservative. Incidents of proselytizing increasingly became annoying to Carleton Druids. Now looking back on this book, I am slightly embarrassed by my paranoia, but it was the first time that I had ever been religiously assaulted. Many aspects of my life changed as a result, and much of my ArchDruidcy after the event was dedicated towards increasing inter-religious understanding among the Druids. Most of these precautions listed were commonplace before I came to Carleton in Fall 1989. I feel that I've mellowed a bit since then, and now count it as a moment of enlightenment.

### The Book of Post Scripts: Part One

This recounts Carleton's 30th anniversary picnic and ritual held at Monument Hill. It also recounts the stages preceding the re-establishment of the official ArchDruidcy. Sam and I became ArchDruids of Olaf and Carleton, before entering the Third Order (officially) although we did vigil like Third Orders before the initial assumption of the Archdruidcies. My official ArchDruidcy began at Andrea's Third Ordination in June, when she passed the title on to me.

## The Book of Paul: Part One

Written by Paul Schmidt, it tells of the special ceremony that we two performed to give greater strength to the new Third Oak on the Hill of Three Oaks, to ensure it wouldn't die. It was one of the more complicated ceremonies I had done up to that point. Paul was a good preceptor and I always enjoyed his support.

## The Book of Haiku

I can't seem to get enough Haiku, and I consider it one of the most effective ways to teach other Druids. Each is a quick and simple lesson, with little verbiage. Its threefold nature is also dear to my Celtic proclivities.

## The Book of Post Scripts: Part One

This book provided a basic understanding of how the Third Order had disappeared from Carleton, and explained why I wished to revive it. There was some distrust of the Third Order, and being disinclined of hierarchy myself, I chose to be very careful of the uses of the office in my upcoming ArchDruidcy. Most of the Druids did not know of the other Druid groves across the country, or about ADF, so I told them about this. I hoped to convey their participation in a larger community. The 1985–1993 Druids had gone on field trips to Pagan Festivals, but we never got around to organizing such an activity, to our own loss, I believe.

## The Book of Vigils

Despite some early reluctance to reviving the Third Order, once I entered it under Richard Shelton, there was a veritable horde of requests to enter the Third Order. I suspect more people were ordained in those 6 months than in 3 of the most busy years in the Reform. Such frequent vigils, with all the necessary preparations, brought the community together for a good sized camping party. Strangely enough, poor weather was the rule when it came to Vigils, but this appears to be a historical constant.

## The Book of Cattle Raids

Basically a wild tale of Sam and Me at the PSG festival of 1993 in Wisconsin. It was the first time that I had run into the Henge of Keltria and during this trip I discovered that several NRDNA groves still existed.

## The Book of the Great Dream

Like the April Fool day proselytizing event, this Dream, in May 92, was one of the great inspiring events before my ArchDruidcy. Having returned from Scotland, I was intrigued by the Dalriada group and the international scene of Druidism. I've always had interesting dreams, with some degree of autonomy within them, so this type of dream was uncommon but not rare.

## The Book of Stones

A collection of myths and stories about Carleton stones; handed down to us from time immemorial. I find the story about the Hadzi particularly doubtful.

## The Book of Fire

A basic collection of fire-related customs at Carleton during my College days.

## The Dead Bay Scrolls

Using the Dead Lake Scrolls & Druid Chronicles as a model, Stephen Abbot (Archdruid of Hazelnut Grove) wrote a history of the California Druids since 1980 up until the Thirtieth Anniversary of Reformed Druidism. The common parallels of tongue-in-cheek humor and faint whiffs of paranoia are intriguing. Although Stephen wrote all these following words, I put them into biblical notational format, for easy reference. This is one of the few NRDNA documents that was not written by Isaac, and it is therefore a good tool for understanding the various attitudes within the NewRDNA.

## Das Edda Todvolkfortgeschritten

This poem describes the disastrous ritual leading up to the Grove elections at Samhain 1981 in the Berkeley Grove. Difficulties in finding the ritual site, along with Isaac's strong platform of changes should he be elected Archdruid, and a disagreement about voting procedures caused an eruption of discord in the Grove. Not long after this pivotal moment, Isaac left to found ADF, the Live Oak grove schised from Berkeley and everybody stopped talking to each other. The leader of the Death March was Joan Carruth. The Co-ArchDruids mentioned were Stephen and Tezra of the Hazelnut grove.

## The Book of the Boring Times

A clever pun on the Neo-Pagan term "The Burning Times" (the Inquisition). I assume the place of the Orcs is a military base in the San Francisco bay. As we can tell from this book, Stephen moves around a lot and has worked at many types of jobs.

## The Book of Mr. Boring

In some fashion, this work almost seems to be a conversion story about how Druidism can change even the most boring person into an interesting thinker.

## The Book of Games

More discussion about the passing of spare time during the Boring Times.

## The Book of the 30th Anniversary

The author was Anderson, a prominent Wiccan author. The Terlach referred to here is Robert Larson, the founder of the Berkeley Grove. It also tells of how Jeff Sommers was ordained and founded the Tuatha De Danaan Grove in the Bay Area. This book gives a little insight into the attitudes of the NRDNA to the role of the Third Order. It also has a rare reference to a person being previously denied entrance to the Third Order, but eventually entering in time. It is a difficult area to deny entry, as I discuss in my General History.

## The Book of the Laundry Think-Tank

A good overview of the planning of group activities in the Hazelnut Grove.

## Addendum to the Ordination of the Second Order

This is unusual, to add to a traditional ordination ceremony. The fact that they required extra meditation by the Candidate seems to confirm that the NRDNA were less interested in hierarchy than in personal growth.

### The Book of Samhain

Like my own Book of Oppositions, the Hazelnut Grove was having their own problems.

## The Dead River Scrolls

### 2003 Introduction

### Mini-Epistle of Michelle the Dark

Michelle was one of the triple ArchDruidcy of (Becky, Ann & Michelle) which lasted from 1994–1997-ish. This epistle was drawn from the waning days of the Vax Notes Conference.

### The Epistle of Amanda

Amanda helped run the grove in the 1996–1998 period. I believe Irony was away and Michelle was in a blue funk.

#### The Sigil Letters

Strange that more was not written about Sigils before this. Ian Friesland was a scientific friend of mine, an environmentalist, who was really enthused by receiving the Sigil before going on a world-wide research trip of some type. Robert Harrison wrote his letter soon after his vigil at Carleton.

### The Book of Exile, Part One

Written by the young Irony just into his Archdruidcy in 1997 to Mike who was exiled to Japan for four years.

### The Tree Epistle of John

Another letter, this time from John Burrige (who appeared in the Dead Lake Scrolls) pulled out of the Vax Notes conference just before it was closed and replaced by a new bulletin board.

### The Book of Q

Written by my dog, Q, in Japan, who was a favorite at the Grove meetings in the Akita Grove. They tended to pay more attention to the dog, rather than my meditations.

### The Book of the Sermon

Okay, so I sometimes ramble a little bit! This was written by Pat Haneke, who I ordained in Japan, and later succeeded me to the Archdruidcy of the Akita Grove that I established there. He is married to Nozomi Kibou and is a bit of a recluse and luddite.

### The Book of Exile, Part Two

Irony made a trip to Germany and then spent two years in Tonga for the Peace Corps. These are some of the letters he sent to me in exchange for care packages and Druid reading materials.

### The Book of Stones, Part Two

Written to commemorate Irony's feat of getting the College to build a gigantic stone circle.

### The Book of Vigils, Part Two

Gosh, there have been a lot of vigils, that I've attended lately. Of course, there are others that I couldn't attend.

### Ein Tanz Dream

### The Winter King: A Dream

### The Wild Hunt

The three dreams by Irony.



Figure 39 New Stone Circle winter c.2001.

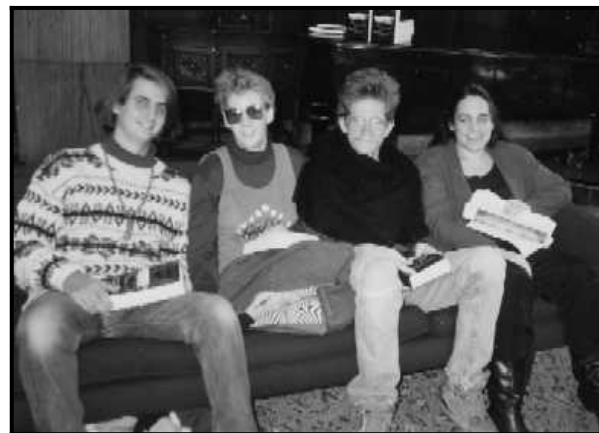


Figure 40

Jon Nauert, Heather Gruenberg, Mike Scharding & Margot Adler (Author of *Drawing Down the Moon*), Jan 10, 1992 in Great Hall.

Thus Endeth  
Vol Nine  
of ARDA 2

# VOLUME TEN

## ORAL HISTORIES

### 2003 Introduction

It is my intention to provide the reader with more than one history of Reformed Druidism by presenting the reader with transcripts of oral interviews with prominent Reformed Druids. Their viewpoints should provide more balance and longer term perspectives than my voice or a few scattered documents from them alone could provide to you.

As usual we expect you to understand that their statements reflect their own views, and not that of the Reform as a whole. There are a few dozen other un-transcribed interviews in the archives.

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**Figure 1 The Frangquists' interview, Samhain 1993 with Richard & Kit Shelton, Paul Schmidt, Becky Hrobak, Deborah & David Frangquist and Eric Hillemann present.**



# David Frangquist, '66 Deborah Gavrin Frangquist, '67



October 31, 1993

Eric: This is Eric Hillemann, the Archivist at Carleton College, and I'm conducting an interview today with David Frangquist, class of 1966, and his wife, Deborah Gavrin Frangquist, class of 1967. The Frangquists have both been very involved with the Carleton Druids, and we're expecting that to be the main topic of discussion today, but I think I'd begin by asking you, David, to tell us something about your own personal background, how you got to Carleton College, and then we'll get into the founding of the Druids right after that.

David: I was born in Chicago in 1944 and grew up in the North Shore Suburbs, Lake Forest specifically. As far as coming to Carleton: about the middle of my junior year in high school, we started, as juniors do, thinking about colleges. I think actually Carleton first came to my attention in an article in the *Chicago Tribune* about quality liberal arts colleges in the Midwest. I suffered from childhood asthma, and so one of my concerns was to be as far north as possible to get away from the ragweed areas, so we drew a line through, oh, about Milwaukee and looked at places north of that. Carleton really seemed to be the outstanding school in that area. I did visit other schools that were at that time in the same conference as Carleton; I looked at Ripon and Lawrence and visited Macalester, but Carleton was the place where I just felt most at home. Carleton seemed to have it together better than the other places that I visited, and Carleton was the only place I applied.

Eric: For this tape, actually, I think it would also be relevant if you wanted to say something about your religious background, if any, I don't know what that might be.

David: I was raised in the Presbyterian Church in Lake Forest. I think the main reason that my parents chose that church was that it was the largest, most active church in town, having

been founded originally by the McCormicks, or at least largely supported by McCormick money for a long time. So it was sort of interesting: it was the society church in Lake Forest, and there was a lot going on there, so that's what they chose. I was not real active; I mean I attended Sunday school and all that. I was never active in the high school youth group, although there was one.

In the middle of high school I started becoming interested in other religions, and began buying books about other religions. I had my own copy of the Koran. I acquired through the services of some Mormon missionaries a copy of the Book of Mormon and actually read the whole thing. Perhaps my interest in doing some of the scriptural writing for the Druids came from that period, and wanting perhaps to do a better job than Joseph Smith did! Nevertheless, I became interested in world religions at that time, and was doing a lot of questioning and exploring, as students will do at that age. So I was ready when I came to Carleton just to do more exploring, and the idea of the Druids intrigued me.

I don't believe that I have ever at any point abandoned my sense of being a Christian. The strength with which I have felt that has varied over time, but my interest in other approaches has been one, for me, of personal accretion: that the more that I could learn about other belief systems, the more I felt that that was a benefit and useful. I've always been intrigued by parallels that would exist in different religious traditions. That began in the middle of high school, but I never felt the need to jump from one religion to another. It was largely a matter of curiosity.

Eric: The Reformed Druids of North America began during your freshman year, and I'd like to hear your perspective on the founding and early days of that illustrious organization.

David: Well, at that time of course there was a requirement that we all attend chapel or something like it seven out of ten weekends in the quarter. I didn't particularly question that; I was used to the notion that schools made you do things you didn't want to do, necessarily. And I initially generally did attend chapel, because that was convenient, and it left the rest of Sunday free to do other things. I can't say that I found the chapel services all that meaningful at the time. They were of a general Protestant nature: a little hymn sing, a little reading, a sermon that might or might not mean something.

In the spring of that year, I just overheard that there were some people, some of whom that I knew, some friends of mine, who were starting up this group of Druids, and they were doing it, clearly, to protest the chapel requirement, which we in those days always referred to as "the religious requirement." Nowadays we tend to say "chapel requirement" because it's a little clearer, I think, for people hearing what we're talking about, but it was the "religious requirement" that they were protesting.

I was not involved in the initial founding meeting, which I believe occurred in Goodhue, and involved David Fisher and Howard Cherniack. I think Norman Nelson was present for that also, although I was not there, so I'm not certain. I know that Howard was one of the people who was particularly interested in getting something going here, and I believe that he saw it largely as a political thing. The motivations of others who were involved is murkier; best to ask them, I guess.

I don't know who actually came up with the notion of having Druids be the form, because the discussion, as I understand it, started out with the idea that we needed to form some new religion on campus. The wording in the Catalog, as I recall, was that you could get credit for attending chapel, or the Sunday evening program, or any regularly organized service of public worship. So they said, "Let's organize something." And the idea was that it should be sufficiently off-the-wall to obviously be a protest to challenge the established order, but to be believable enough that a credible argument could be made that this was, in fact, a valid alternative religious service.

I think the thing they liked about the Druids so much was that so little was known about Druidism. Looking at what few references were available in the Carleton library at the time, we knew that Druids existed; we knew that they had something or other to do with the priesthood of the pre-Roman Celtic peoples in Britain; and not much else was known, partly (probably) because their rituals were secret and nothing was written down. Or at least if anything was written down, it hadn't been found. So we were free, really, to invent as much as we wanted about what Druidism was going to be here at Carleton. But nevertheless it was something that had historical reality; it was not being just totally made up out of whole cloth, we did not have to pretend to have a latter-day revelation from some source that had been started all off fresh. We could at least pretend to have some continuity with an older tradition.

The first meetings were held in April of that year [1963]. I was not present at the first service, which involved setting up David Fisher's record stand on Monument Hill. They put a draping of cloth over it, and that was the altar for the day. I do believe I was present at the second service. I'm no longer sure who invited me to that. I knew David Fisher at the time through work at KARL, where he was an announcer and I was a control operator. For quite a while I was control operator *for* David, and I can't remember now what years I was his control operator for a Saturday night program that he did. I may have already been doing that at that time, and it's quite possible that he invited me. Jan Johnson was another person that I knew from dorm life who was involved in those days with the founding of the Druids, or the early meetings. Either of them might have been the person who got me out there.

There were just, maybe, half a dozen of us at the time, a circle of friends who started the meetings. At that time, we hadn't worked out much in the way of calendar and ritual and so on that we later did. *Now* of course we would say the meetings would normally be held between May 1st and November 1st, during the summer half of the year, but at that time, holding our services in April didn't bother anybody because we hadn't figured out there was anything wrong with April!

David Fisher, as far as we know, made up the ritual. He had an Episcopal background and is currently an Episcopal priest, and there are certain echoes of Episcopalian Prayer Book language that show up in his design of the service. He pretended, perhaps that's a pejorative word, he *represented* that he had been ordained as a Druid somewhere in Missouri by someone else, and so therefore there was continuity with the past, and he could come in here and be Arch-Druid and carry the tradition into Carleton. But he was always vague about this prior experience and who this was and where it occurred, and I have to say that I don't really know anything about it, other than the fact that he said that it occurred.

All of the rest of our Druid tradition, then, springs from David Fisher as the first Arch-Druid here at Carleton. We can trace lines of ordination from one person to another, and it all goes back to him. If it goes back prior to him, well, you'll have to ask David Fisher about that. He was the source of our early liturgy, and where he got it from, who knows?

We did decide after a couple of meetings that the little metal record stand was not really a very adequate altar. The idea was that we would build something a little more substantial. It seemed like Monument Hill was the right place to do it: there were all of these inscriptions on the monument about first services of various sorts that had occurred on that site, and so, therefore, this seemed like a good place in Northfield to start another religious tradition. So we found a bunch of rocks. At that time in a little grove of trees near Monument Hill there were quite a few rock piled up because, I believe, Williams had been torn down only a couple of years before, and some of the rubble from that had simply been dumped in this little spot in the trees. So it wasn't hard to go and find rocks and cart them over to Monument Hill and pile them up, which is basically what we did to create our altar.

It didn't last very long! In fairly short order, people we identified as the Anti-Druids came, we believe that these were mostly jocks from Goodhue, who probably had a keg amongst them prior to this escapade, they came and ripped all the rocks apart and threw them about Monument Hill. All of this is written up in the Early Chronicles. I have to say that when I wrote the Early Chronicles, I really was describing in there true events. Now the language is in some cases deliberately vague, or deliberately flowery, but the events behind it all really did occur. So the language in there about the building of the altar, and the Anti-Druids coming and tearing it down, and all this, that all happened. We made several attempts at building the altar, and after a while we kind of gave up that spring, because, well, it was getting to be a bit of a chore!

At the same time we were also carrying the protest to official levels. This was the thing that Howard was the most interested in. We filled out the little slips, I believe they were little green slips that we had to fill out for chapel. You'd put on there the date and the institution that you attended, and turn it in. In the case of the men, we would turn it in to our proctors, and women turned them in to...

Deborah: We turned them in to the Dean of Women's Office. My recollection is that they were yellow, which may have been women's slips, I don't know.

David: OK. Maybe I'm confusing the convo slips with the chapel slips. Anyway, we filled out little slips saying that we had attended these Druid services, and we expected to have credit.

Deborah: We may have given them to our housemothers; they got to the Dean of Women's Office, anyway.

David: Again, after this passage of time I don't remember exactly when all these things happened, but I believe we did do it that first spring. It met with varying responses, in that the men's slips were rejected as being not legitimate or not qualifying for credit, [while] only a couple of slips were turned in by women, but they did, in fact, get credit. We had great fun speculating over why the women got credit. In the case of the men, the slips were reviewed by someone in the Dean of Men's Office (the Dean was then Casey Jarchow), and they spotted these things and said they were not legitimate.

So a delegation was led by Howard Cherniack to the Dean's office to protest this action, and to raise the question: why would the Druids not be acceptable? They went armed with Yellow Pages from the Twin Cities and lists of various strange and wonderful groups that met there. I remember there was something about the Seventh Hour Trumpeters, and several other groups that sounded very strange. Nevertheless, these were established churches, they were in the phone book. So Howard said to the Dean: well, suppose that one of us wanted to attend one of those churches and put that on the chapel slip; would *that* be acceptable? And he said no. So Howard said, well, then, what gives you the right to decide what is a religion and what isn't? These others are established churches, and you're saying they're not legitimate. What gives you that right? To which Casey's response basically was: the fact that I'm the Dean of Men. I get to decide. There was no pretense here to any intellectual defense of this position; it was purely arbitrary.

Being the good, obedient children of the fifties that we were, when our slips were rejected, we simply went off to chapel, or whatever we needed to do to get enough points. We did not push the thing to the wall. We were not going to jeopardize our Carleton education for this thing, but we did try to make a lot of noise about it.

One of the difficulties that we had was people tended not to believe that we existed. We thought that we had this wonderful protest vehicle, and yet when we tried to get students excited about the fact that we were being denied credit, and that this was not legitimate, it was very hard to get other people on campus interested in that. They simply believed that we didn't exist. Occasionally we would get people to come out to the Hill and meet with us on Saturday afternoons, but many people that we tried to invite simply believed that we were pulling their legs, and that if they went out there, they would be the fools for showing up for something that didn't in fact happen. So we never were able to drum up a ground-swell of opinion. We couldn't get the *Carletonian* to write editorials on our behalf, or any of that sort of thing, which we found very interesting, given the climate of protest that was beginning to develop in a number of areas having to do with things like women's hours and the like.

So that was kind of where we were at the end of that first spring. The following fall we made an attempt to get a little more organized. By that time I was writing things that later became *The Druid Chronicles*, trying to put together some "scripture" and add a little more legitimacy to what we were doing. We also printed some pamphlets, and we got ourselves a table at the day where various campus organizations could put out literature and get people to sign up. We got ourselves a table and passed out pamphlets and tried to get people to sign up. Not too many did. And again, we kept getting this response: oh, well, this is all just a put-on; there aren't really any Druids; you're just pretending. But a few people would believe that we really were there, and [would] come out and meet with us.

At some point we decided that when we had thirty people, that was a magic number of some sort, and we declared that that was a *multitude*. So whenever we had thirty, we could say, "Oh, we had a *multitude* present for our meeting" and that did happen a couple of times.

I believe we had a multitude present for Halloween that year, the Samhain service. That was really quite an elaborate

affair, with a number of people in robes. We had torches, and we had a grand procession through the Arb from Monument Hill to a nice fire area in the Upper Arb somewhere near the southern-most bridge and up the hill a little bit. I probably could find it again if I went out and tromped around out there. We had this long procession along the various trails through the Upper Arb to get there, shocking a number of people along the way. I don't know whether they were more shocked by our regalia or just by the fact that we were carrying all of these flaming brands through there.

Again, the events that are recounted in, by this time the *Latter Chronicles*, that evening really did happen. We had sort of a fortune-telling period, which started with a process of melting bits of lead in a ladle in the fire, and pouring them into water, and then people would look at whatever shapes were formed in the water, and attempt to interpret them, much as you would tea leaves. I had read somewhere that this was a fortune-telling technique, so we did that. And as people got into the swing of it, there were some things that sounded a little bit like prophecy, and like some people were in fact having some kind of profound experience, one of which we later interpreted to be a foreshadowing of Kennedy's assassination. There were enough echoes in that prophecy, and it is described in the *Chronicles*, that it really later sounded like, gee, that fits. Which was a little scary, there were some people who weren't at all sure that they liked this. It was beginning to sound awfully real.

And there were, in fact, I think, a number of us who were beginning to value the experience we were having. Is it a real religion? Well, that's always one of the questions. Were we just playing games, or were we really doing something here that has validity in the spiritual realm? I think that's a question that each of us has to answer for ourselves. It was certainly becoming something that was increasingly important to us in ways outside of the initial protest idea.

After November 1st, we decided it was convenient, by that time Fisher had worked out the notion that there were these two halves of the year, and that there was going to be a period of the Waters of Life in the summer, and a period of the Waters of Sleep in the winter, and so we would not meet between November 1st and May 1st. This was the period of the Waters of Sleep. And besides, it was not very congenial to be meeting outdoors in the bosom of the Earth Mother during that part of the year.

Deborah: Well, not only the Waters of Sleep, but the suggestion that the Earth Mother herself was asleep during that season, which did make a great deal of sense here in Minnesota.

David: Right. So there wasn't much activity during winter, other than I kept on writing on *The Druid Chronicles*. I do remember having a discussion with David Fisher about that time (I think it was more toward the spring) in which he was beginning to feel that maybe this thing was going too far, that maybe we should just stop it, that it was in danger of becoming a "real religion." I remember him saying very specifically to me, "Well, I don't want to become another Joseph Smith." And, basically, I told him that it was too late, that this was going to happen anyway, and that I had no problem at all with being Brigham Young! But I think in many ways he was hooked anyway. He was definitely enjoying playing the Arch-Druid.

Deborah: He always had a flair for the dramatic.

David: Yes.

Eric: At what point did the structure of Arch-Druids and Preceptors and all the various offices get established? Was that something that happened very, very early?

David: That happened very early. I would have to go back and look at the dates that occur on the copies of the constitution that we have. One of the aspects of the political gambit here was to become a recognized, legitimate campus organization. We felt this would help our argument that we should get credit for this. To do that, there were prescribed formalities. You had to adopt a constitution. You had to submit the constitution to CSA and have them recognize you as a campus organization. You had to have a faculty adviser. There were a number of things to be checked off.

So it was necessary to write a constitution. I believe that Howard Cherniack wrote the constitution, and in the course of that developed the terminology: the Arch-Druid, the Preceptor, the Server as the offices. I don't remember any specific conversations with them about where those things came from. The Arch-Druid was obvious. It's a term that you see in the literature about Druids. We believe that there was somebody that at least we call the Arch-Druid, who was a leader of Druids in Britain.

The other terms, I don't know where they came from. It appears that Howard may have designed the rôle of Preceptor for himself. The description in the constitution says that the Preceptor is charged with responsibility for secular matters, which involved things like writing the constitution, getting it submitted to CSA, leading the delegation the Dean's Office, and so on. But I, at least, had no direct involvement in the development of the constitution, but that was all done the first spring in '63, I believe. So we were going through those mechanics of trying to get recognition the following school year.

Eric: Do you know anything about how a faculty advisor was obtained?

David: Well, Jon Messenger was on campus the year '63-'64. I think he was only here a year, as a visiting professor. But his area of specialty was Celtic studies.

Deborah: It was fairly obvious, and he was willing to do it.

David: So I believe Howard approached him, and he said, oh yeah, sure. He was quite willing to do that. He was not actively involved, in that he did not come out to our meetings and so on. We chatted with him a few times, and he shared some lore with us. [He played] largely a figurehead rôle. He understood that he needed to be there as an advisor, and that that was mainly what we required of him. Later, after he left, we approached Bardwell Smith, whom we believed to be sympathetic to our point of view, as indeed he was, and he was quite happy to be our official advisor. But again, Bardwell never really took an active rôle in working with the Druids. He was simply willing to lend his name to the project, and chat with us one on one if we wanted to.

Deborah: There may be a small gap, historically, there, because Bardwell was on sabbatical '64-'65, and if our recollection is correct, that Jon Messenger left at the end of '63-'64 school year, I'm not sure who we had as faculty advisor '64-'65. But if we remained a club in good standing, we found someone.

David: Well, I don't believe there was an advisor that year, and I don't believe we were a club in good standing, either!

Deborah: That's possible.

David: During the '63-'64 year we did make all the proper applications and so on, and my recollection is that CSA had no problem with our being a campus organization. Anybody who wanted to be an organization could, as long as you got the appropriate things checked off. I do have correspondence from Jon Kaufman, who was one of the CSA people responsible for putting together a booklet about campus activities, and we had submitted a piece about the Druids for that booklet. The correspondence that I have is essentially an apology for the fact that that piece had been deleted just prior to the final printing at the end of the '63-'64 year. Without any prior warning or discussion or anything, it had simply been summarily deleted by whoever finally put the thing together. So there was certainly an atmosphere of persecution there. There were people who really didn't want us to be legitimate, for whatever reason.

The thing that changed, of course, was that in the summer of '64 the chapel requirement was abolished. Suddenly the rules of the game were all different, and the importance of our being an official campus organization greatly diminished. We were never interested in getting any money out of CSA, or anything like that, so what point was there, really, in being an official organization, other than perhaps getting your name in a booklet, which they obviously weren't going to allow? So I think we paid less attention after '64 to the details of whether we really were a club in good standing. I don't remember spending any time on it when I was Arch-Druid, walking paperwork through CSA or anything like that. I think we just decided that that didn't matter so much any more.

Deborah: '64-'65 was certainly a year of some soul searching, the question being whether we had any reason to exist any longer. That was an important topic of discussion during that time, more important, as David says, than our official status.

David: To back up a little bit: during the '63-'64 school year we were still attempting to get organized. I guess I had a little more interest in that sort of thing than the other people. I was busy writing the *Chronicles* and finding what I could in the library about Druidism. One of the things that happened: in the course of events David Fisher had made some references to the Ten Orders of Druidism. He said he was a Third Order Priest, and he was busily admitting other people to the First and Second Orders. Well, what about Fourth through Tenth? What were they? He was not very specific about that, and I suggested that perhaps we should associate each one of them with some god or goddess from Celtic mythology. That was all right with David Fisher, so I went off to the library, and combed through the books, and managed to come up with some names, and invented the so-called higher orders.

Then the problem was: how were we going to get them populated, since this whole thing was sort of a boot-strap effort. I was having great fun inventing structures and procedures, and so invented this mechanism whereby each order would elect the Patriarch of the next order. There was no consideration of Matriarchs at this point; everything was still very patriarchal, and I'm sure Deborah will have things to say about that when it's her turn. It just didn't occur to us that that was an issue yet. "Us," I say, the men. It did not occur to the men that that was an issue. So we were going to have a Patriarch of each of these higher orders, and the Patriarch would be able to consecrate anyone that he chose as a member of the order, and when the order felt like getting around to it, it could elect the next Patriarch.



So we had a structure that would allow us to climb up the ladder and get somebody into each of these higher orders over a period of time. Norman Nelson was very sympathetic to that. Norman particularly liked to collect titles, so he wanted to be member of a bunch of different orders. My recollection is that David Fisher was a little lukewarm about the whole "higher orders" thing. Perhaps, because it would dilute his primacy as Arch-Druid? I don't know. I should not attribute motives to him. But Norman definitely was interested, so we put that all together.

Meanwhile, my own ordination as a Third Order Druid occurred in April of '64. I think this was a watershed for David Fisher, certainly. When I told him that I wanted to be ordained as a Third Order, become a priest, he was really very reluctant at first, perhaps because that meant that it really was going to move beyond his control. He would no longer be completely in charge. It would have more of a life of its own than he had initially anticipated, perhaps. But he did go along with it.

We had an extenuating circumstance, in that we had made one more attempt to build an altar on Monument Hill. This time we had put the thing together with mortar, and we needed to give the mortar a chance to dry before somebody would come and take it apart. David did the talking about, well, to become a Third Order, you had to do this all-night vigil. I don't know where he came up with the notion. Of course, vigils have occurred in various traditions. There are vigils in the course of becoming a knight, for example. At any rate, that was the test that he prescribed: that you'd have to do an all-night vigil on the bosom of the Earth Mother. This worked out very nicely with the fact that we needed somebody to guard this new altar.

So that's what I did: I sat up next to it with my little fire all night, and made sure that nobody came and disturbed it. David came up in the morning, and we had the ordination of the first Third Order Druid after David. Shortly thereafter, Norman Nelson wanted also to be ordained as a Third Order, and David and I together performed that ceremony. David actually performed the ceremony, but I was present for it.

We began some traditions at that time, too. In the course of the vigil, existing Third Order priests on campus should please come out and spend some time with the person; make it a little easier to get through the night: some conversation, a little story-telling, some reading, whatever, provide company. Also, all the Third Orders around should if possible attend the ordination service, but at the very least, have breakfast together afterwards. After that ordination of Norman Nelson, we all got together in Goodhue for breakfast, and had what counts, I believe, as the first meeting of the Council of Dalon ap Landu, at which we began the process, that I was outlining in the *Chronicles*, of how we would populate the higher orders. I believe it was at that breakfast meeting that we elected David Fisher as Patriarch of the Fourth Order.

At about the same time, David Fisher resigned the office of Arch-Druid and turned it over to Norman Nelson, who as I say, was interested in collecting whatever titles he could collect. He wanted to be Arch-Druid for at least a couple of months before he left Carleton. (He was a senior that year.) So he finished out the year as Arch-Druid. Then since he was gone from campus, that meant that the following fall we had to have some sort of passing on of the torch to somebody else. It was at that time that I was elected Arch-Druid. David

was not particularly interested in taking that on again. As a senior he had plenty of things to do, and was quite willing for me to do it.

In the spring of '64, then, on one day we populated as many of the higher orders as we could at that time. It was sort of an assembly-line process in which David Fisher first admitted Norman and me to the Fourth Order. We had our ceremony doing that, this was all on the Hill of the Three Oaks, and we all sat down and had our meeting of the Council of the Fourth Order and elected Norman as the Patriarch of the Fifth Order. Then we all stood up and did the ceremony that Norman had written. He admitted David and me to the Fifth Order, and then we sat down and had our meeting of the Fifth Order to elect me as Patriarch of the Sixth Order. The rationale there simply was that I was going to be at Carleton longer than either of them, so by having me as the Sixth Order, I would have an opportunity to admit some other people to the Sixth Order, perhaps, and elect someone in a later class to be Patriarch of the Seventh Order and so keep it going. At least that was the plan.

I don't believe that there was any sense that we wanted [any] higher order to be higher than another. This was certainly one of David Fisher's concerns; he didn't want that to be true, and I didn't see any reason for it to be true. The only reason we were doing this was because at one point he had said there were ten orders, and so we were trying to make that happen. And it was fun, and a lot of what we did was done for fun. There's no question about that.

We were really quite clear that the most important order, in the sense of the continuing Druid activity, was going to be the Third Order: that Arch-Druids would be drawn from the Third Order, anyone who wanted to be admitted to the higher orders would first be Third Order, and so on. The rest of it was just icing on the cake. At least, that was certainly part of the argument that I made to get myself elected to the Sixth Order!

Eric: As an historical footnote, when you mentioned Bardwell Smith, it reminded me that I had mentioned to Charlotte Smith that I was going to be talking to you, and she said, "Be sure to have them note, for the record, that [our] son was the first pupil in the Druid Sunday School."

David: Yes!

Eric: OK, good: it's on the record now, Charlotte.

David: Yes, I do remember Brooks coming to at least one service. He babbled on quite happily while we did whatever it was we were doing.

Eric: This probably is a natural time to bring Deborah into the conversation, since we are now chronologically up to the year that you arrived. Why don't you start the same way that David did; tell me something about your own background, religious as well as otherwise, and how you came to Carleton, and how you encountered the Druids.

Deborah: Actually, I was fascinated by the fact that David chose to tell us when he was born, because that wouldn't have occurred to me, but I will do that. I was born in Brooklyn in 1947. I spent some time as a very young child in New York City, and then in Long Island, but did most of my growing up in Tarrytown, New York, which is probably best known as the site in which the Legend of Sleepy Hollow took place. Washington Irving lived in the town *that* way; the Legend of Sleepy Hollow took place in the town *the other* way, and my elementary school was on the site Katrina Van Tassel's home,

and in fact my high school was Sleepy Hollow. And our team was the Horsemen.

I say this because I think it may actually have some relation to my willingness to explore non-mainstream traditions, that there was even in this rather respectable New York suburb a slight odor of feyness to what we did as we grew up in the schools. I come from a non-believing Jewish background. It was explicitly non-believing. That is, my father had grown up in an Orthodox Jewish home, my mother in a non-believing home. Their religion was Freudianism. They were both trained social workers, and they didn't have any use for any of that stuff. It was a psychological crutch; virtually any religion [was].

By the time I arrived at Carleton, I had done some significant religious searching of my own, starting when I was about eleven. Starting with the local Jewish Temple, which at the time, I think, was very much in the mainstream of Reformed Judaism, which meant it was extremely rational, and there was no hint of the supernatural, or the transcendent, or much of anything except Jewish history and how to do the rituals. I went to a Quaker camp in Vermont for a couple of years, as a result of which I attended Quaker meetings for some years, which was probably the first hint of any kind of spiritual life that I got tuned into.

Then I began, I guess about the end of my junior year in high school, a rather odd process of attending the local Episcopal church, and also the local Roman Catholic church, because there were a group of us who attended the Episcopal church, but some of those people were Roman Catholic. So after the Episcopal service was over, we had to run down the street and go to Mass so that they could go to Mass. Since most of us who weren't Roman Catholic were studying Latin, and it was still the Latin Mass, this was sort of fun. So I can't claim any major spiritual quest, but I was sure mucking around with a variety of religious traditions and, like David, had begun a process of reading spiritual books, or scripture or whatever, from a variety of traditions by that time.

I came to Carleton as a 16-year-old. My parents had had me skip one grade in elementary school because they felt I wasn't stimulated enough, and then in what should have been my junior year in high school, I decided I didn't want to do any more high school. There were a number of possible pretexts for that, including the threatened election of a couple of John Birchers to the local board who were proposing to eliminate all Advanced Placement courses, which would have made my senior year a *real* desert.

I had already, being an extremely diligent child, early in my sophomore year gone to the guidance counselors, and said, "I want to go to a small liberal arts college somewhere." They had given me a list of, I don't know, seventy schools nation-wide, or something like that. In those days, one could write away to colleges and get entire bulletins, the entire course catalog and everything; there were no view-books that I remember. I had these things stacked all around my room for much of a year, as I sort of whittled things down. So when I decided I wanted to go to Carleton College, I had some idea of places I wanted to check out, even though this was really a year early, and applied to three colleges. The deal my parents made, since this was only my junior year, was that if I could get into a college of the quality they were sure I could get into after four years, I could go. The Admissions Office was doing interviews in downtown New York in a hotel, so that

was where I was interviewed. I had taken the SATs by then, but late; so we didn't have any scores or anything like that.

I visited the other two colleges I was interested in, Brandeis and Radcliffe, because they were closer. I had never been to Carleton before I arrived here, but basically made the choice partly on the basis of that interview, because I liked the way the interviewer approached me. It was far less patronizing than the Radcliffe interviewer. That was part of it the sense of being treated as somebody who sort of belonged in a college. Also, [I was] very attracted by the Social Co-op, and by the total lack of sororities and fraternities here. I have sometimes found myself wondering how different my life would have been if I'd gone to Brandeis, because I probably would have ended up as a good Jew if I had done that.

Anyway, I ended up here in the fall of '63. I may actually have been at that first Samhain service. I cannot remember the chronology exactly, but I remember the kind of procession with torches, and I don't remember whether we did that the same way the following year. I also believe I remember Druids coming through the library in procession, calling people to join in that service, robed Druids.

Eric: Not with the torches, I hope!

Deborah: Not with the torches in the library, no. But with robes.

David: I do remember doing that. I'm not sure which year that was.

Deborah: And I certainly remember the fortune telling with the melted lead, and do not remember how many times we did that. I think I was present at more than one. But what I was actually doing that freshman year, in terms of any kind of religious life, was seriously looking into the Episcopal church: attending Canterbury Club Sunday Mornings, sort of checking out whether I was interested in this stuff. I did not become significantly involved in Druid life or services, except maybe for the great festivals, until the following fall of '64.

But I knew Druids, because I got involved in KARL very early in my freshman year. I ran into the radio station at one of those, whatever they called them then, where there were tables to sign people up. But there was also a radio station open house that I was invited to on that occasion. This was in the days when freshmen wore beanies for about six weeks. One day, very early in my tenure at the radio station, when I was typing something at the typewriter, the then station manager came up and removed the beanie from my head, and announced that I didn't have to wear it *there*. This sealed my commitment to the radio station, and therefore created a commitment to a place where there were a number of Druids, including David and Dave Fisher, who were present. So I certainly knew *about* Druid activities my first year here, even though, as I say, my recollection is of not being involved, except maybe for the major festivals (since I like bonfires) that first year.

My second year, the '64'65 year, I began attending Druid services regularly. I'm not sure of the chronology in terms of my doing that and our becoming a couple. That whole fall there was a certain amount of figuring out how we felt about each other, but that didn't get clarified until Thanksgiving, so that was certainly after Samhain. The kind of advice women were given in those days involved appearing, at least, to be interested in the things that interested a man you were interested in. So my motives may not have been at all pure, becoming involved in Druid activities. By Beltane we were a

couple. We did stuff on February 1st; we did something with the Waters of Sleep that year; I think it was indoors.

David: Yes, it was in 2nd Willis.

Deborah: And I remember that. One of the things that was going on during that period, in terms of women's status within the Druids, well, there were several things going on. I remember an under-current of slight titillation about possible sexual overtones to a few of the things which I now remember with a kind of horror. One of them was that, although, as David said, we didn't talk about Matriarchs much, the fact is the names you'd come up with for the ten orders, the Tenth was Fertility, and I think was in fact a goddess. So there was some discussion of the idea that that ought to have a Matriarch rather than a Patriarch.

It was also difficult, if not impossible, for us to think about a woman vigiling at that point, because we had curfews. Again, this surprises me a little. We didn't have bed checks, so if you didn't sign yourself out, they wouldn't know that you were still out. But we were very good, even when we objected. You would have had to do a little bit of stuff to not sign yourself out, because if you left the dorm after 7:00, you were supposed to sign yourself out. But with a little bit of advanced planning, with a place like the radio station to leave one's gear during the day, for a vigil, it would have been entirely possible just not to go back to one's dorm after some mid-afternoon hour, so that one didn't have to sign oneself out, so that they — the authorities — would never know that one was still out. It would have been necessary to wait past 6:00 [a.m.], when they re-opened the doors, probably until about a quarter of eight, to get back in again without being seen, but this could have been done. We just didn't think about it. We weren't supposed to stay out all night.

So there was this apparently unstoppable obstacle, that you couldn't do a vigil if you were a woman so you couldn't become a Third Order Druid. But there was the beginning of a sense that that was perhaps not equitable, so I think it was Fisher came up with the idea that a woman could a priestess *unto* an order, of one of the higher orders, but not *of* any of the orders, and could not be a Third Order Druid. There was someone, I cannot remember who she was, but I was present when she was made a priestess *unto* the Fourth Order.

David: It was Danny [Hotz].

Deborah: Danny, right. It was a fun ceremony, again with these little odd under-currents of there maybe being something sexual about this, but nobody quite knew what. And that was sort of where it rested, and I think she was the only priestess "unto" one of the orders that I recall.

David: As far as I know, yeah.

Deborah: As far as recall, that was it.

David: I think I actually came up with the term "unto," but it was in response, as I recall, to David Fisher's wanting to be able specifically to appoint Danny as a priestess, and to get around the fact that she would presumably would not be able to vigile.

Deborah: Right. When you look back at it, we're basically talking about the 24 months following the publication of *The Feminine Mystique*, which none of us had heard of. This is proto-feminism, if it's anything like that. We were treated pretty much as equals in the classroom, but none of us had much expectation of social equality, notions of mutuality of relationships. It came very fast thereafter, but it wasn't there then.

So my participation with the Druids my sophomore year became more frequent. I was a regular attendee at services. I became a Second Order Druid very quickly, but then there was this wall about becoming a Third Order Druid. Meanwhile, our relationship got closer during the summer of '65, when we were both on the first of the revived Carleton in Japan programs, conducting a courtship in various places in Japan, including many Buddhist and Shinto temples. And there certainly was, I think, some sense of an enhanced importance to the nature-worship aspect of Druidism as I learned more about Shinto. I was studying one of the Shinto fertility goddesses, who's now pretty much a goddess of wealth, rice having gotten transformed into yen over the generations. It's possible that in my own mind some of this titillation was settling down a bit as I began to deal with this in an ancient culture that was relatively better documented than the Druids.

That year, '65 '66, I was both taking formal instruction to prepare for baptism in the Episcopal church (with Bardwell Smith) and trying to figure out some way that I could become a Third Order Druid. In that year there was a loophole created in the system. Upper class women, I think it was *only* upper class women, could get letters from our parents which were filed with the Dean of Women, saying that we could sign ourselves out for some specified number of overnights a term. These were explicitly supposed to be *not* in Northfield. They were intended to allow us to stay overnight with friends in the Cities if we went to a late play or concert. But it meant that there was a mechanism to sign yourself out. As I was saying before, there was this problem of getting out of the dorm before the hour at which you had to sign yourself out. [This] made it simpler to think about that, and I decided that this was the chance I was waiting for to become a Third Order Druid. We discussed how this should be done, and I decided that I was not comfortable with lying about where I going. I could have in fact claimed that I was going to visit friends in the cities; there were friends who would have insisted that I was there, should I need such backup. But I simply signed myself out to the Hill of Three Oaks.

To backtrack slightly, one possible explanation for why the women who submitted Chapel slips back in the first year got them accepted and the men did not was that because the women were locked into their dorms, there was a system whereby there was someone who stayed up all night just inside Gridley, which connected to all the other dorms, to admit legitimate late arrivals — that is, the other dorms were locked at 11:15, but seniors could have a certain number of times out 'til midnight, and then later to 1:15 or 1:30 — but also to admit miscreants who arrived in the middle of the night after falling asleep after who-knew-what sinful activities in the Arb. These were older women from downtown who were employees of the Dean of Women's office but not regular college employees. And one of their night-time tasks involved checking off Chapel slips. So they just checked off names, and were simply not part of the administration in the way that the Dean of Men's staff were.

It's my belief that some similar oversight was why nobody wondered where the heck the Hill of the Three Oaks was, why I hadn't given a phone number or anything like that. That was how I managed, I think only a year after Danny sort of gave up on the idea of being a Third Order Druid, to become a Third Order Druid.

The experience of vigiling *is* an important experience, and it may have been enhanced for me by the sense of there

being something a little daring in doing this, and then of being visited by men during the night, because of course the only other Third Order Druids there were to visit me were male. In a sense, though, we were all taking this very seriously, which was very important to me. So I am both a Third Order and a Sixth Order Druid, since David was still around and could do the Sixth Order [ordination]. Within a couple of years the curfews were gone and it wasn't an issue at all, but it was an important change that suddenly we had to start thinking about the idea that Third Order Druids were women as well as men. I don't think we were equipped to think about it very well, because as I say we weren't thinking very much about changing the nature of female rôles in society.

Eric: Let's talk a little bit about "taking this all very seriously" in connection with the fact that in the summer of 1964 the Religious Requirement is gone; the initial reason for founding the Druids has been removed, but the Druids didn't stop. Say something about why that was.

David: I for one at least had become fond of the Druids. I had put a lot of work into writing the *Chronicles*, and coming up with solutions to various organizational problems. We had had formal meetings of the Council the previous spring to adopt some of the early resolutions that would clarify things after Norman went on to other pursuits, and so on. It would certainly hard to drop it, but I don't believe it was the force of my personality that kept it going, or anything like that.

What had happened in the course of the previous year was that a number of people had found that they were getting something out of it. At least one person, Dick Smiley, considered Druidism to be his *only* religion. He didn't believe in anything else, and yet there was something very compelling about Druidism for him. A lot of fun, of course, he enjoyed playing the game as much as anyone else, but there was something more to it than that. We had made quite an effort, I know David Fisher did and I did also, to find readings that would be meaningful to people. We adopted a tradition, that I don't think was ever formalized in the written liturgy, of there being three meditations as part of each service: there was the Written Meditation, the Spoken Meditation, and the Silent Meditation, in that order. We would read something, and then whoever was presiding (usually the Arch-Druid) would make some observations about what was read, and then there was a period in which we would all sit quietly together, much in the style of a Quaker meeting, although nowhere near as long as you would do in a Quaker meeting, and simply think about what had been said, if that's what you wanted to think about, or think about the noise that the wind was making in the trees, or think about whatever you wanted to think about. A period of being together as a group, and *quiet* together, and doing whatever happened during that period.

People liked that. They enjoyed it. They found it refreshing. They were getting something out of it that they valued. I certainly saw, when I became Arch-Druid, a goal of introducing people to the riches of other religious traditions, which, as I said earlier, I had started exploring in high school myself. [I] had found a number of passages in Buddhist literature, in Taoist literature, in Zen. I was getting very enthusiastic about Zen at that point, and did quite a bit of reading in Buddhism in preparation for the summer in Japan. I wanted to share those things, and I think David Fisher had much the same sense, that he wanted to share things that he had discovered. He was more into Hindu literature than I

was. There were treasures that seemed to relate to our Druid tradition of focusing on Nature as an area to concentrate our worship, but that are found in various traditions. We combed the Psalms looking for the nature psalms, so occasionally there would be something from Jewish or Christian tradition that would be the reading for the day. The idea was to spread it around as much as possible.

I think we sensed, even after the Chapel requirement was dropped, that there was work to be done, that the experience of most students at Carleton was very narrow in terms of what was out there to be learned about people's spiritual experiences. We saw a task to be performed there in terms of broadening that experience, and people responded to that. At least there were enough people who kept coming and listening to what we were doing to keep it going.

Deborah: It's hard now to know what my concepts were at the time, but several things I think are relevant. First of all, one of the arguments made against the Chapel requirement was that it had become an interference with, rather than a furtherance of, spiritual and moral growth for people. It was producing a reaction against religious tradition, which was contrary to its intention. I think there was some feeling that Druidism could be sort of the proof of this claim, that if we were able to follow our, what I would now call our spiritual paths but I don't think was talked of that way then, that there would be some things for us to discover. I still find the opening prayer of the Liturgy — which at one point I believe I was told Fisher had found in Hindu scripture — the one that says

*(In the original) O Lord (and I would now say O God),*

*forgive these three sins, which are due to our human limitations:*

*Thou art everywhere, but we worship Thee here;*

*Thou art without form, but we worship Thee in these forms;*

*Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices,*

*but we offer unto thee these, our prayers and sacrifices.*

I still find that one of the most profound spiritual statements I have ever heard. It informs my understanding of what I as a believing Christian am doing in Christian liturgy, including the Eucharist. Every time I ended out on the Hill somewhere saying that prayer, I was moved anew by it, and I don't think I was alone in that.

The meditations that David was describing, in fact, for me significantly echoed my experience of modified and short Quaker meetings at my Quaker camp. On Sundays we had a full hour of meeting, but every day we had brief chapel services that were Quaker meeting style. But because we were a children's camp, both on the weekdays and on Sundays our counselors read things to us, very much the kind of thing that we also did in Druid services. Perhaps a little more of the Prophet at camp than in the Druid services, but also readings from Buddhism, readings from Hinduism, readings from the mystics of the Western traditions.

There was what I would now call a kind of spiritual freedom in the opportunity to, either on one's own or in formal classes in Eastern religions, find moving passages or thought-provoking passages, and bring them as written meditations to the Druid services. When I look back at what was available in other religious life, this was just *before*

things began to explode with experimentation in some branches of Christianity, this was some of the best stuff around, I think for most of us.

David: Another dimension of it that I felt: one of things that was very important at Carleton, and I believe it's important now, is the sense that there is something very real about being intellectually honest. That's a very important value at Carleton. Having said as part of the protest against the Chapel requirement that we should be treated as a legitimate religion, that we were just as legitimate as anybody else, it was necessary to follow through on that. If we had just disappeared when the requirement disappeared, it would have in some way validated the position of the Dean of Men that this wasn't real, that it was purely political, that there was nothing to it. And we were going to do that! We were going to somehow prove that there really was something to this after all, that our claim had been legitimate.

I don't think *that*, in and of itself, would have been sufficient to carry it more than a few months, but I think that was at least part of my initial feeling in that next fall after the requirement was gone. Part of what gave me the energy to keep it going was to demonstrate in some real way that there really *was* something there, that the claims we were making were valid. Over time, things change. New dimensions get added. It begins to take on other aspects of its own life. But in that first year I think that was part of what was going on.

Deborah: That desire gave us enough space to begin to discover that we wanted to continue meeting on the Hill of the Three Oaks on Saturdays during half of the year, that there was value in our lives [there].

David: Also, I was talking before about how a great many students refused to believe that we existed. Even at my own 25th Reunion I had conversations with people, talking about having been one of the founding Druids and having people say, "Oh, but they didn't really exist, did they?" By now we are officially mentioned in the 125-year history of the College, and yet there are still people saying, "Oh, but they weren't really there." And there was this stubborn insistence that yes we did exist, yes we really did happen, and we were not going to be wished away by people. That sense of being outcasts in some sense, of being an identifiable minority struggling against the rest of the world, gave us cohesion as a group and fueled that desire to prove to people that we could stick it out.

Deborah: There was something else as well, which you touched on when you talked about the fortune telling and the sense that maybe we were onto something more powerful than we thought, which was the weather magic. Which we continued. Before football games, which was essentially what our meeting time was on [Saturday], there was a spring when the skies were very gray and dark, and we processed to Mai Fête Island, and the skies cleared as we did it. There was a sense that we might be performing a public service!

David: There was also one occasion, I remember, where Mark Steinberg and I (Mark was the station manager of KARL and I was the news director at that time) had an invitation from United Press International to come up to the Twin Cities and attend a Twins game. There was going to be a reception beforehand at which we got to meet Eugene McCarthy, and this was a big deal. This was in the old outdoor stadium, and it was raining cats and dogs all morning. It was dreadful. But we had left a request with the Druids that they do the proper incantations and make the weather nice.

Deborah: I think I lead that service.

David: I remember it continued to pour right up to almost game time. We'd had our meeting with Eugene McCarthy, and we came out and went up into the stands, and as we did so, the clouds all drifted away and the sun came out! And the game went on as scheduled.

Deborah: We really came to count on that. We were married in July of '68 in an indoor service in a friend's home, but then the reception was all outdoors on a hillside overlooking the Hudson River in my hometown. The weather forecasts were a bit iffy, but there were quite a number of Druids in attendance in Tarrytown for the wedding the next day. We had a Druid service the night before, rather than the morning, and it was a gorgeous day. It was just perfect! So by that time I think we'd come to count on the weather magic as something that somehow we had found our way into. We didn't quite know how, but it was reliable.

Eric: I'm reminded of the anecdotes in the *Chronicles* about the efficacy of the Curse that David Fisher invoked at one time: anti-Druids coming to great harm, and something to do with a lightning bolt.

David: There are a couple of different stories in there. One had to do with cursing the weather and nearly being struck by lightning, so therefore saying, "Be careful with this." Another had to do with laying a curse on the anti-Druids, the result of which was that one of them did sprain an ankle. And this was taken to be a sign.

So, yeah: when things like this start to happen, you begin to raise questions about what's really going on.

Deborah: And again I would say, looking back on it, that was not an easy time to think (never mind talk) about the supernatural or the transcendent among our peers. We were uncomfortable doing it even in explicitly traditional religious contexts. The official religion of the College was very intellectual. That was one of the things about the sermons in the Chapel services, both before and after the end of the Religious Requirement: if you didn't know that you were in Chapel, and if they hadn't been shorter than 70 minutes, it would have been hard to tell the difference between a lecture and a sermon at Carleton.

David: Lectures didn't normally have a choral accompaniment.

Deborah: Right, and they lasted longer, but the basic presentation style was rational argument. Perhaps somewhat fewer facts than were presented in a Bio lab, but basically you were intended to deal with this mostly with your intellect, rather than with your gut or your psyche or any of those things.

Getting out there on the Hill, in the weather, did what I would now call "pulling us out of our heads" so that we could react with our whole selves. That was a good thing, and I think we recognized that.

David: And for me at least, as I did more studying of Buddhism, the part of Buddhism that became increasingly intriguing was Zen. Of course, there was a lot of Zen going around at the time. It was a faddy sort of thing. Alan Watts was writing his book. But still there was something very compelling about that point of view that challenged the purely intellectual approach to reality, that there were realities that were not purely rational. We had to acknowledge that and deal with them in some way. I think part of what we were doing, sometimes tongue in cheek, sometimes not, was saying, "look, there is more going on here than you can deal with in pure logic."

Deborah: We had also done something rather wise by declaring early on I don't know whether this was Fisher or a consensus, that Druidism was compatible with any other religion, and every other religion, even if the other religions denied that. (We weren't sure how the Roman Catholic Church felt about this claim of ours.) We were, in a sense, laying claim to a kind of quest that was possible to anyone without having to burn any bridges. I think that fits with some of the Zen explorations that a lot of us were doing at the same time: that there was more than one way to get at truth.

David: It fits with Zen. It also, I think, was a reflection of our feeling, many of us on campus, whether we were Druids or not, that one of the main things that was wrong with traditional Western religion was the exclusivity of it: that you had to be one particular brand, and that if you were that particular brand, then you couldn't be any other brand. In order to become a particular denomination, you'd have to renounce all the others. Many of us believed that this was simply not true, particularly as we began studying the Japanese approach to religion, which is very eclectic.

Deborah: And syncretic; you can be as many things as you want simultaneously.

David: That's right. As they became of new religious traditions, they tended to just incorporate them. Except for Christianity, because the Christians wouldn't let them! It's a great loss, both to the Japanese and to Christianity. But many of us reacted that that's the approach that makes sense. Why not welcome in as much as you can? Therefore, it really did become an article of the faith that you could be a Druid and you could be *anything else you wanted* and it was fine with us.

David Fisher had some problems with that, I have to say. Particularly as he approached the end of his Carleton experience and began looking ahead to the possibility, the probability, of going to seminary. He was afraid that the people who admit people to seminary would not agree with our point of view, and wanted to resign his orders and withdraw from Druidism.

The rest of us simply told him that that was not possible. His being a Druid was part of who he was; it was part of his life experience. It was not a question of rules. It was simply not logically possible to renounce that or to abandon it. As far as we were concerned, he was always going to be a Druid. He could believe whatever he wanted, but he was always going to be a Druid, and that was that.

Eric: We talked a few times about Dave working on the *Chronicles*. When did that come into final form? Was that before you became Arch-Druid those were all finished?

David: Yes, I believe that was all put together finally in the spring of '64. I remember putting out a little pamphlet, "The Song of the Earth," which had excerpts from the various books. By the time that pamphlet came out, I had the shape of the five books, and mostly written and figured out what was going to go into the various pieces of it. Some things got added later. The last chapter of the Latter *Chronicles* was written by Norman Nelson and contributed fairly late in the game, and it just seemed like a natural way to wrap up the Latter *Chronicles*. But by spring of '64 I had figured out what the five books were going to be and basically what was going in each one. I had been working on them all through that year, which may explain some of the grades that I got that year, but those grades may also be explained by the fact that my father died during that period.

I dearly wanted to be able to put it in people's hands. I wanted there to be a *real* scripture, that people could carry around with them the way they carried Bibles around. Not just a pretend scripture, but something really *in print*. Again, this was part of making the whole thing legitimate and real. But there were real, practical production problems in that period. We did not have plain paper copiers.

Deborah: We did have a mimeograph machine that belonged to KARL.

David: No, it belonged to student government.

Deborah: It belonged to student government, but we had access to it because we used it to produce the Noon News Bulletin.

David: Well, I was the official campus mimeograph operator.

Deborah: That's right.

David: People could prepare stencils for campus organizations and functions, and leave them in a box where I would collect them, and I did this, oh, three times a week, I would collect these stencils and run them off, and they were charged at a piece rate to the organization. In the case of the Druids, since we didn't have an account with CSA, we did have to pay cash money for the things that I ran off.

Deborah: For which we passed a hat, as I recall.

David: Not as part of the service. We did not engage in passing filthy lucre around as part of a Druid service. It was not appropriate. But off on the side you could. Some of the materials I donated, and I got other people to help me. We would buy a ream of paper: a "printing" of the *Chronicles* was a ream of paper, because we would buy a ream and then use it. It was cheaper. I donated my labor. Otherwise, if we had to get the paper from the CSA stocks, then the whole charge would be higher.

Getting all those stencils cut was a very time-consuming process.

Deborah: Figuring out how the pages went together on the stencils was exciting.

David: For the *Chronicles* that was not such a problem, because those were full size 8+ by 11 sheets. The pamphlets were a little more complicated, because you had to get it to work out right when you folded it over and cut it.

I typed most of the *Chronicles* myself. I would make typos, and then you had to get out the correction fluid and fill in the holes and wait for it to dry and then retype it.

Deborah: All manual typewriters, of course.

David: All manual typewriters. We did have an electric typewriter. Was it electric? Maybe it wasn't. No, it was just a big old clunky manual.

Deborah: That big old clunky manual. It was a good quality manual, but it was old.

David: The *Chronicles* were all done on the KARL typewriter.

Deborah: Right.

David: The same one we used for the Noon News Bulletin, which was also done on mimeograph stencils. That had nothing to do with Druids, other than the fact that it was the same typewriter, and often the same typist. We would take the news off the UPI wire each day. It would be the 11:00 [news], the latest headlines, the latest Dow Jones averages, get them in, get the Bulletin reproduced, and then we had . . .

Deborah: . . . runners that went to the dining halls, which didn't open until noon.

David: One person for each dining hall would grab these copies and bring them there. They were let in early so that they could put them on all the tables. It was quite a production. I don't know how many years that went on. Tremendous logistics involved in getting that Bulletin out every day.

But it took me a long time to get the stencils made for the *Chronicles*. I believe they were ready, I think we had the first printing by Beltane of '64.

Deborah: Yes, I think that's right.

David: Then we carefully preserved the stencils so that we could do later printings. There was a printing history in the inside cover of each copy of the *Chronicles*. Those early editions were all done from the same set of stencils. The only stencil we would change would be the one that had the printing history on it. Everything else was kept the same; once the typos were in there, and there are some errors in the cross-references, once they got in there, too bad! We weren't going to go through all that again!

Eric: By the time, David, that you became Arch-Druid, you started to have graduation of former Druids, and the issue would come up of people who had been Druids at the Carleton Grove going off and continuing their Druidism at other Groves, founding other Groves. I don't know what the history of that is at all, but perhaps you can say something about the founding of Groves elsewhere beyond Carleton.

Deborah: Norman was the first.

David: Norman was the first, yes. He was the first of our initial group of three to graduate, and he wrote back that he had found some kindred souls in South Dakota and was in the process of forming a Grove there. I don't know whether he ever really officially founded a Grove or not, but he was the first one to raise the question of how would one go about doing this, and we had some correspondence to that effect. There seems to be a logical problem here. In order to have a service and to admit new members to Druidism, they had to partake of the Waters of Life. This was really the only requirement for First Order, to partake of the Waters of Life and subscribe to the Basic Tenets. How could you do that if you didn't have enough people to officiate at a service? Didn't you, after all, have to have an Arch-Druid and a Preceptor and a Server, and they all had to be at least First Order? If you didn't have those people, how could you have a service, and therefore have legitimately consecrated Waters and admit new members?

Well, it seemed to me that he was just putting up unnecessary obstacles, that there was nothing that required any of this stuff. I talked it over with David Fisher, and we came up with the notion that, well, really, all you had to do was to have a Third Order there to conduct the service. We came up, really, with the notion of a Mission, almost. In the Episcopal Church, you have established churches, and you have missions. In other words, you could have a missionary go out and set up a mission. This was a slightly different class of organization than an established church, or in our case, an established Grove. A Mission could be conducted simply by having any Third Order, and the Third Order could consecrate the Waters of Life.

We did have the notion that you couldn't really have a Druid service with only one person. This didn't make any sense. You had to have at least two. If you didn't have an elected Preceptor, Server, and all that stuff, the other people present could as a group do the responsive parts of the

service. The answers, that the Preceptor would normally give, could just be done by everyone present. Therefore, having Waters of Life was no problem at all, and once you had Waters of Life, then you could have First Orders, Second Orders, and everything flowed from that. When you wanted to, you could adopt a constitution and create a new Grove.

Our model for this was essentially the CSA model. You want to have a legitimate organization? Write a constitution; adopt it. We have forms for you; you just use the same constitution that Carleton uses. We'll just fill in the blanks: instead of saying "Carleton College," it could say "South Dakota" or "New York," or whatever you wanted it to say. Same three officers; you really only needed to have three people to have a legitimate Grove, because then you had a person to fill each office. We didn't think it was quite legitimate to have the same person fill two offices; that wasn't right. So you need at least three people, and then you could have your constitution, you could have your Grove.

In the original tradition, you had to be an Arch-Druid of a properly constituted Grove in order to admit other Druids to the Third Order. I know David Fisher and I felt that that number three was important in terms of demonstrating that you really had gotten something going, that it wasn't just one person out there playing games, that there really was interest. Unless you had those three people out there, there was something that wasn't quite right about having somebody creating other priests.

I guess that's a tradition that has been somewhat modified over the years, but initially at least, you had to get another Grove going before you could legitimately call yourself an Arch-Druid, before you could then consecrate other priests.

Deborah: To backtrack a little: some of this, Norman's desire to create another Grove, also contributed to this reappraisal, once the religious requirement was gone, about what we were doing here. There was some initial discussion about whether you could be a Druid away from Carleton. Norman obviously had a strong desire and interest to be able to continue to be a Druid while not resident here, and he was really the first person for whom that became a pressing issue. But that was another way in which we got to take a look at this question of what does it mean to say that you're a Druid, and what does it mean to be practicing as Druids. I recall that, particularly some of the times when Norman would come back, because he wasn't that far away, and Betsy was still here, so he would come back not infrequently, considering, that was one of the things we talked about: did it have to be the *same* at other places as it was at Carleton? South Dakota never did get to be that important, but I think that was kind of foreshadowing of some of the issues that came up later, in the Seventies, in particular, and other places.

David: I made an attempt to establish another Grove at my summer camp, where I was a member of the staff. This was a Boy Scout camp, Camp Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan. The camp itself is in northern Wisconsin and serves a Boy Scout Council in the North Shore suburbs of Chicago. I actually did have about eight or so people there: other members of the staff, for the most part high school students, and so very impressionable. They were willing to follow my lead, and they expressed an interest, and we had several services in the course of the summer.

Two of that number expressed an interest in becoming Third Order, and I did consecrate them, sort of in absentia, because by the time they decided they wanted to do that, it

was already the end of the summer and we were going our different ways. I wanted some sense that they had some idea what was going on here, so I asked them to write to me some things about their reflections on Druidism before I would agree to the consecration. Since I was not going to be at camp the following summer (I was going to be in Japan), I allowed them to consecrate each other in my name. I don't think they ever did anything with it. I lost touch with both of them after I graduated from Carleton, so the Grove didn't really continue there.

But it did pop up in some other places, in particular in the San Francisco Bay area and Berkeley. One of our Druids here, Bob Larson (whom we always called "Larse") . . .

Deborah: Who was probably the first real Celtic hobbyist among us.

David: Yes, he was definitely a Celtic hobbyist. He determined that we were pronouncing a whole bunch of things wrong, and we continued to pronounce them wrong, and it was fine.

Deborah: But he didn't.

David: Right, he always pronounced them in an authentic way. I could never get the accent right, so I gave up. He was one of the people that David Fisher was very suspicious of. He was afraid that Larse was *really* taking this all much too seriously. And perhaps he was, who knows? That's his problem. I did consecrate Larse to the Third and Sixth Orders, and then he went off to Berkeley.

Deborah: Having flunked out of Carleton in his final trimester.

David: Yes, he never actually did graduate.

Deborah: But Berkeley was a good place to be at that point. By the time we arrived, a year or so later, he had hooked up with Isaac.

David: Right. We both wound up in San Francisco because I went into the army after Carleton, and through just pure dumb luck got assigned to the Presidio in San Francisco. So in 1968 I was at the Presidio, and we were married and set up housekeeping out there. I don't remember quite how . . . I think Larse found *us*.

Deborah: Marriage announcement in the *Voice*, or something like that.

David: And so Larse introduced us to Isaac, whom he had by then consecrated to the Third Order, and they had a Grove going in Berkeley. We attended a number of services over there, at various hillsides overlooking the campus.

Deborah: That Grove was *my* introduction to Neo-Paganism. That was not a word we used when I was here, but the Berkeley Grove was definitely Neo-Pagan. I remember one service on a hillside in Berkeley in which Isaac called upon a great number of gods and goddesses and spirits by name, and I am quite sure they were there, and was far less comfortable with their presence than I perhaps would be now. [This] was another one of these moments of "what in heck have we gotten ourselves into?" Isaac was a very powerful presence, wherever Isaac was; small rooms, large mountain tops, it didn't really matter.

David: One of the things we were doing with Druidism [was] being very vague with people about whether we took this seriously or not.

Deborah: That was part of the appropriate Third Order stance!

David: Right. The idea was always keep everybody guessing. Well, Isaac picked up on that in spades, and we never did really

know whether Isaac believed this stuff or not. I mean, at moments there would be the tongue-in-cheek approach to it all that we really recognized as being very much Carleton "good hume" type approach, and at other times it seemed very real. I don't to this day pretend to know what Isaac was really doing. Eventually he took the stance that Druidism should put itself squarely in the Neo-Pagan camp. Those of us who had experienced Carleton Druidism really could not buy that. I think the main problem with it was that it was becoming exclusive again. It was shutting things out, at least by implication. We could not be squarely in any camp, except our own.

Deborah: There could be Groves whose practice was Neo-Pagan and whose membership was heavily Neo-Pagan, but that was not to say that those Groves were better or worse, merely different from other Groves. There was sort of a suggestion, it seems to me, that the Neo-Pagan Groves were taking Druidism where it was supposed to go, and that was the piece that we resented and resisted.

David: I don't think, personally, that the things they were adding were any more legitimately Druid than whatever things we had added. I think Isaac would argue that they were, because *they* were really Neo-Pagan and the Druids were pagan. But they were various kinds of mythology and anthropology that he had collected from goodness knows where.

Deborah: Just as badly documented as the early stuff we used!

David: Right! So there was quite a controversy about that, which Dick probably could speak to a lot better than we can, because he was in the middle of much of it. Since this is not a videotape, we should mention that Dick Shelton is sitting in the back of the room listening to this.

Eric: We did an interview with Dick, this past spring I believe, and went into the Isaac wars to some extent.

David: I don't know that I need to add very much to that, except that we were very much in touch with Isaac and Larse during 1969/1970. In the summer of 1971 we went off to Germany, where I had a job with the US government, and basically lost touch with them during that period. Occasional correspondence, but not terribly aware of what was going on, except as the result of the correspondence that we got through Dick.

Deborah: It is worth mentioning, in terms of the Carleton connection, that although we finally met Dick just yesterday, that it was through the Carleton connection that we got to know him and Ellen, mostly through correspondence back when these issues arose, and that we have always been able to find each another through the College directories and so on. That was part of how we became involved, at least tangentially, in some of these issues; not only as people who were physically present in the San Francisco Bay area and trying to figure out what we were going to do in relation to Isaac, but also in terms of this larger question, which Dick was dealing with . . . by that time I think you were in Ann Arbor, if I'm not mistaken?

Dick: Yes.

Deborah: This question of could there be legitimate Groves in the Seventies that were not Neo-Pagan, and what was the stance of Carleton as the Mother Grove, and what kind of authority lay here, and so on. That was probably of continuing importance to us, even though we at that point were no longer practicing Druids. [We] identified as Druids, but there was no real community to practice in.



Eric: In a formalistic sense, of course, the Council of Dalon ap Landu is continuing. You have membership on that, and if any body has to decide these questions, at that time that's the duly constituted body.

Deborah: Right. That was one of the interesting questions. When you got people like Isaac, who had no tie to Carleton directly, except through Druidism, how do you find people who are Third Order and therefore members of the Council. As long as we were all Carls, there was a fair degree of trust that we would that we would always be able to track each other down. This sense that somehow, in the course of following the nature of Druidism, we'd gotten people in there who didn't buy into the same kinds of values and, just, who were different, raised certain kinds of uneasiness, that I think were independent of the personalities involved.

David: I think I had an early sense that, whatever happened with Druidism, it was going to tend to revolve around Carleton. The Council early resolved that the Arch-Druid of Carleton would be the ex-officio Chair of the Council, in the belief that that most likely to be the most workable approach; that if we had the focus go anywhere else, it would probably get lost.

Deborah: Yes.

David: And think that over time, events have borne that out.

Deborah: That the communication channels that run through or around the College serve us well.

David: The College itself provides nice services in that regard.

Deborah: As this interview attests!

David: And we always tell everyone if you lose track of us, simply call the Carleton Alumni Office. Even if we don't let anyone else know where we are, we will always let the College know. That's a promise.

Another Grove that was founded, and I believe flourished for a while, was started by Dick Smiley at Purdue. I know he did have a number of followers there. He conducted services regularly for several years. We have clippings from Purdue newspapers identifying some of the services that he conducted there, and he did admit people to the Third Order. That was without adding Neo-Paganism or much of anything else, I believe, other than what Dick wanted to make up.

Deborah: More importance laid on the solstice perhaps than some other practitioners, but that was *perfectly* consistent.

Michael Scharding: My father remembers Dick Smiley just from reading clippings saying somebody was always having a huge bonfire. It was always Dick.

Eric: You say that after a certain point you were no longer practicing Druids, but [in] 1982 you were going to make a visit back to campus, and you had an ad run saying that Druids were coming back to campus and you'd be happy to meet with interested people. That had the effect of starting up I believe what had become largely a defunct Grove again.

Deborah: I had had continuing relationships with the College. In fact, in 1978, shortly after we got back from Germany, I came here in the summer for a week-long course for alumni that was something the College was experimenting with at the time. Even though it was, I believe, July, there were enough students on campus, and I found some poster that there was going to be a Druid service on that Saturday. So I went to a service that was *fairly* recognizable to me, but that did exist, and which I enjoyed. That was when I discovered

that in the Seventies it had become pretty normal for the Arch-Druid to be a woman, which was, as we've said, very contrary to our previous practice.

But then somewhere between then and fall of '81, I joined the Alumni Board and attended three meetings that year; then was off the Board for a year, but involved with development work, so I came for at least one meeting during that; and then got back on the Board for two years. So I began a period of being on campus from one to four times a year, for about five years there. I did that again some years later for my 25th reunion committee, but it was particularly at that period in the early Eighties when we were doing that. And I was getting the *Carletonian* as a member of the Alumni Board; I received the *'Tonian* regularly. In one of those issues there was a letter to the editor bemoaning the demise of the Druids at Carleton, and did anybody know what happened to the Druids? So we wrote back.

David: As I recall, that letter was particularly concerned with the valuable functions that the Druids had performed in providing decent weather on the weekends for arbing.

Deborah: The spring Board meeting was very close to Beltane, because I remember we had our daughter's first birthday on that trip as well, so it was the spring of '82. We were going on to visit other family in the Midwest, so David and Joel came with me, as well as Judith (whom I had brought to all the Board meetings because she was a nursing infant). This was very good timing, in terms of this letter showing up in the *'Tonian* and our response to it, announcing that we would in fact be here and would be glad to re-establish the tradition.

David: I don't know if we took out an ad; I think we sent another letter back.

Deborah: I think we sent a letter back that was then run in the *'Tonian*, and we were approached on the strength of that. Or we may also have written to whoever had signed that first letter, because we had his name, and you could just write in care of the College. So we didn't start this, but we responded eagerly to this initial stimulus. We met with people here.

David: We had a discussion in Sayles-Hill. Several people attended that and expressed an interest, and we talked about Druidism and all.

Deborah: The discussion was advertised on campus in some way or other; flyers or something. I don't remember that anymore.

David: So I said, well, is anyone interested in having a service? Yes, there was interest in doing that, so we held a service on the Hill of the Three Oaks. And then also raised the question: you really want to get this thing started again; is anybody willing to do a vigil? And sure enough, we had three volunteers.

Deborah: I think these were all people who lived in Farmhouse?

David: No; Bob Nieman lived in Farmhouse, I believe.

Deborah: In any case, we were at least partly tapping into some of the then still relatively new (by our lights) ecological and nature interests.

David: Bob invited us to have dinner at Farmhouse, which was wonderful. Good cooks over there at that time! We had a very pleasant evening with him. Let's see; it was Bob and Tom Lane and Meg Ross.

Deborah: Yes.

David: They all did vigil, and I tromped over there in early morning at dawn and performed the ceremony. This was all very spur

of the moment, so I did not have ribbons to present them. They got their ribbons in the mail after I got home.

I believe that it didn't take very well. I didn't get much in the way of correspondence from them; didn't get too much in the way of responses to my letters. I did get a letter from Tom Lane a year or so later, saying, well, they hadn't really done too much.

Deborah: There was a small cache of Paraphernalia, which then ended up in the attic of Farmhouse to be rediscovered later.

David: I don't really have first-hand knowledge of what really happened there.

Deborah: One of the other things in terms of what it means to be a practicing Druid: aside from, I believe, the January '82 Alumni Board meeting, when with the wind-chill factor it was unbelievably cold here (the final Board meeting in Great Hall became exceedingly uncomfortable because we were sitting on metal folding chairs and it didn't matter how much we were wearing by the end of that hour and a half; the room was just unheatable) aside from that, I don't believe I have ever made a visit to campus without going out to the Hill of Three Oaks, whether there were any other Druids that I knew of or not. I suppose in some way that says for me that my Druidism is still anchored at Carleton.

Eric: What is it about Carleton that made it a hospitable environment for Druidism to go on? I know the historical reasons it started here, but is there something about the nature of Carleton itself that, in your view, makes Druidism particularly compatible here?

Deborah: Well, one thing that occurs to me when you ask that is my sense of the Carls I've known well having always a bit of tongue in cheek in thinking about ourselves. We can take ourselves very seriously, but we also have a sense of humor about ourselves. I think that is a quality that made this perhaps more hospitable to Druidism, in various times, than perhaps some other schools would have been. It may have been an accident that it started here, but then that made it more possible to perpetuate Druidism. The time was ripe in the sense that there was also the beginning of encouragement of intercultural studies, area studies. I think President Nason on the academic level was strongly encouraging; in other words, I think the intellectual climate was getting more hospitable towards the idea that we didn't all have to be white-bread middle-Americans. For those of us who were beginning to get very worried about the idea that when we left Carleton we might have to turn into white-bread middle-Americans, this was very satisfying.

Eric: What about the geography of the campus? Is a place like the Hill of Three Oaks a place of spiritual power because of its significance to the Carleton Druids, or is it a place that has something special about it regardless of Druidic associations?

Deborah: I think that's one of these chicken-and-egg questions. As far as we know, it had no name before the Druids called it the Hill of the Three Oaks. That was one of the things people used to give us grief about at first. When we'd announced that we had meetings on the Hill of the Three Oaks, they would insist that not only that we didn't exist, but that *it* didn't exist. We've been very gratified by the fact that *that* at least has become enshrined in the maps, that it's properly recorded.

David: I think the fact of the Arb is very important. It's just impossible for me to imagine something like this starting up, say, at a place like Macalester.

Deborah: Or if we had just the Bald Spot. That wouldn't have done it.

David: I don't think Druidism could flourish meeting in rooms with chairs. It needs to happen outdoors somewhere. I think in all the various other Groves that have been started, that that was a significant component, that they had to meet outdoors somewhere. There are wonderful places above the campus at Berkeley in the Oakland Hills, in the Berkeley Hills, to hold services like this, and I just don't think you can do it without that kind of setting. So the very existence of the Arb was, I think, crucial.

Deborah: Yes.

David: Because I think we all did believe, and do believe, that Nature and an awareness of the world around us, an awareness of Nature as an organic whole is important to us spiritually. You cannot get away from that and have a complete spiritual life. We weren't talking ecology yet at that time, but again, if you look at the history of what was going on in the world, this was at about the same time that awareness of ecology began to be running through the rest of society. Whether Carleton was the right place or not, the *time* was right.

Deborah: And the place was appropriate, in terms of the Arb and the spirit.

David: And I think also, as Deborah has said, that a very important element of Druidism for us, and I think part of what has kept the spark alive, or has allowed it to return over the years, is the sense of not taking ourselves *too* seriously. A meaningful spiritual life is one which has a significant component of humor, of having fun together, of enjoying each other's fun, and enjoying each other's company. That's something that I associate with being a Carl, what life at Carleton is like, at least for the people I associated with. We've often said that we never met a Carl we didn't like. There's perhaps one exception to that, but in general, when we have gotten together with other Carleton people where we've had no previous association, and the thing that we have in common is the Carleton Experience, though sometimes separated by decades, we still find that same spark of humor, of having a good time together, much of which is intellectually based: good banter, ability to kick ideas around and have fun with them.

Deborah: Sounds like Druidism to me.

David: Druidism is of a piece with Carleton in that sense. Not to say that there aren't other places that can have that same experience, but it is definitely something that has happened here, and is part of at least our sense of what Druidism is all about.

Michael: I'd like to ask a question. Would you consider the Carleton Druids to be a fraternity attempt at Carleton? With alcohol, big parties, secret rites . . .

David: No.

Deborah: No. David can speak in terms of the men who were involved in the early period, but one of the things that was characteristic of our Druid times here was that alcohol was used very sparingly in Druid rites. Alcohol, for all that we drank, was probably used less, and abused less, in that period in the early Sixties than it was maybe in the succeeding half-decade, when pot also arrived on campus in significant quantities in the late Sixties and early Seventies. Our partying, if you will, the big festivals for the Druids then, have to me a very innocent quality. The party was the fire,

the fellowship, the seriousness and silliness of things like the fortune-telling, and about a shot of alcohol shared with everyone who was present. And that was all we drank together, as Druids. Some of us were also friends, and maybe partied elsewhere.

David: We also didn't put much emphasis on secrecy. I don't recall any attempt to keep anything secret from anyone else. The services were always open. There is this pretense of passing on the lore, what some of the words mean, if you go through the Third Order ordination service, but if somebody else wanted to get up at dawn and come up there on the Hill and attend the service, that was fine with us.

Deborah: Right.

David: We were not keeping anything secret from anyone, or "passing on the mysteries." It didn't have that quality at all. Perhaps if there had been fraternities and sororities and things here, there wouldn't have been the time or energy to make up the silly rituals; I don't know. Maybe our focus would have been drained off in that direction, so in that sense there may be a connection. But I don't think we were trying to create a fraternity substitute.

Deborah: Even implicitly. I don't think so. There were some contexts the *'Tonian*, KARL, Players, where there were intimate sub-communities among Carleton students, because people worked together in intensive ways, and I think for some people who were not as deeply involved in any of those, that was certainly one of the attractions of Druidism. It was another place where you could get together with people and have some continuity without having to study together and stuff. But I don't think that was particularly conscious either. That also wasn't why you joined the *'Tonian* or Players.

David: I didn't mention, in terms of why I came to Carleton, one the attractions (I don't know that it was the deciding factor) was the absence of fraternities. I didn't feel that fraternities were an appropriate thing to be doing with my college time. I don't know that I'd thought all this out before actually arriving on campus, but by the time I'd been here a while, I believe my sense was that these naturally forming interest groups were a much more appropriate way to form community and to have a sense of bonding than fraternities would have been (which always struck me as highly artificial). I was sort of intrigued by the notion of fraternities, secret rites, and all that sort of thing, but when it came right down to it, it wasn't what I wanted to do.

Deborah: In any case, one of my criteria for considering colleges, I would not look at any place with sororities, and places which had fraternities, even though no sororities, were sort of downgraded on my list. That was very practical. In those days, as a Jew, there were too many sororities I would have been excluded from. I had no interest in buying into a society in which people would be excluding me. Druidism would not, even if it had developed that way, would not have had that problem, but I think probably most of us would not have felt very comfortable if it had begun to feel too much like a secret society. Those of us who were here in our time. Except maybe Norman. But he would have done it with great zest for the sheer fun of it.

David: I think most of us who were involved were having too much fun with the theater aspects of it to have gone in for any secrecy.

Deborah: Yes. I hadn't thought of it that way, but I think that's absolutely accurate.

Eric: Other than the people who refused to believe that you existed, and the Goodhue jocks who would destroy the altars (for whatever reason) . . .

Deborah: We believe. This is tradition, but we have no proof.

Eric: . . .and administrative hostility, did you experience any hostility toward the Druids as a group from other students, people who were offended by your existence. Particularly the question might relate to existing religious groups on campus, the traditional Carleton religious groups. Did they feel threatened by the Druids, or were there misunderstandings about what the Druids were about?

Deborah: If so, it was damned low-key. I certainly don't remember anything in Canterbury Club. Inter-Varsity wasn't very active.

David: I don't remember any specifics of outright hostility. I had maybe a couple of conversations with people who were essentially fundamentalist Christians who believed that dabbling in any of this kind of thing was dangerous and sinful and dealing with the devil. The sort of people who are uncomfortable with Hallowe'en costumes.

Deborah: Took the spirits far more seriously than we did do.

David: Right. But there are always such people around, and they have their point of view. I didn't think that was particularly meaningful.

Deborah: It wasn't very common as a stance at Carleton when we were here. Certainly not the people we hung out with.

David: I suspect that there were more fundamentalist or nearly fundamentalist Christians than we were aware of. It was certainly less popular at that time to express that point of view openly, but *somebody* continued to go to Chapel on Sunday morning, even after it wasn't required.

Eric: Well, I'd like perhaps as a way to bring this to closure, to probe for some reflections on your part about what Druidism has meant in your own lives, how it has informed your subsequent philosophies and outlooks and altered things for you.

David: I think one thing that's definitely been true: what started out in some ways as a practical matter of being as incorporating as possible, of not wanting to do anything that would turn somebody off, of trying to be as welcoming as possible (part of that was we were trying to get people to join!) turned into a philosophical stance that I now believe very strongly: that a proper outlook on spiritual journey is to be as inclusive and accepting as possible. It doesn't mean you don't make judgments about things; it doesn't mean you don't sort out for yourself what you choose to believe and what you don't choose to believe. But to be open to ideas and to be as accepting of other people and their belief systems as possible is just a way of enriching your own life, your own spiritual experience; and I think it's the only way to go about it. That is something that has grown on me. It started out as sort of an official stance for me within Druidism, but has really been very much internalized.

Deborah: I would say something similar, and I think my experience of the last nine years has been even more informed by it. I was essentially becoming a Christian at the same time I was becoming a Druid. I'm not sure how much of that stuff I wanted to believe, but [was] very drawn to the people. One of the things, given my background, was that Carleton was the

first place where I found people of faith whom I could respect intellectually, which broke with one of my parents' insinuations about the nature of the world.

There was a period after I left Carleton where I was spending more energy exploring the Christian faith that was newly mine, but during that period I also began to articulate my one religious and spiritual absolute, the one thing which is always a guiding factor for me, which I see as very Druid: never trust the theology of anyone who cannot laugh at themselves. This has been a wonderful touchstone for a wide variety of groups that I have run into, and was great for clearing away some of the underbrush about people who claim to have hold of the true faith when I was a young Christian. Because it did help me to tell who were the people who were on the wavelength that I was on.

In the last going on ten years, my Christian experience has been very informed by feminism, by lesbian and gay liberation movements, by the spiritual journeys of a number of women that I sort of travel with spiritually (which are not Christian; some of which are Neo-Pagan). There's been kind of a return to Druid roots in this time, and I'm not sure how much of the rather long process of coming to really abandon a patriarchal image of God was informed by Druidism, but I see a continuity there. There have been times when I found it very reassuring to remind myself that this was not the first time that I had called upon God as the Earth-Mother or as the Goddess; that lightning had not struck me then, and that I was probably on the right track now.

There's a real significant sense in which this is a piece of my spiritual journey that I am reclaiming. I lead women's spiritual circle gatherings in a couple of different contexts, and have been conditioned to adding recent feminist and lesbian theology. I've been thinking a lot as I've put together the most recent ones of how comfortable this is for me. I haven't actually gotten out any liturgies; it may be time to do that the next time I lead a circle. So it's both informed by apparently mainstream religious life, and been what I think of as a kind of underground spring for much of my spiritual journey since Carleton, since I became a Third Order Druid; a real source of energy and life.

David: I mentioned in my opening remarks having been raised in the Presbyterian Church. Subsequent to that I did seek Confirmation as an Episcopalian, although the service was performed by the old Catholic bishop of Germany, which I rather like, because things were just murky and open-ended and as eclectic as possible. One of the things that I continue to find congenial about the Episcopal Church is that, at least in its better moments, it does seem to allow for things to be pretty much open-ended. We believe that it's better to remain in dialogue, even when we disagree with each other; it's better to allow the possibility of different and multiple answers to fundamental questions than to try to nail down *the* truth or *the* single Truth. We've just experienced evidence of that this weekend; we're in Minnesota to attend the consecration of our former rector from San Francisco as Episcopal bishop of Minnesota. There was a protest on the floor of the hall during that ceremony over the fact that this man has announced that he will ordain practicing gay and lesbian people.

Deborah: Non-celibate.

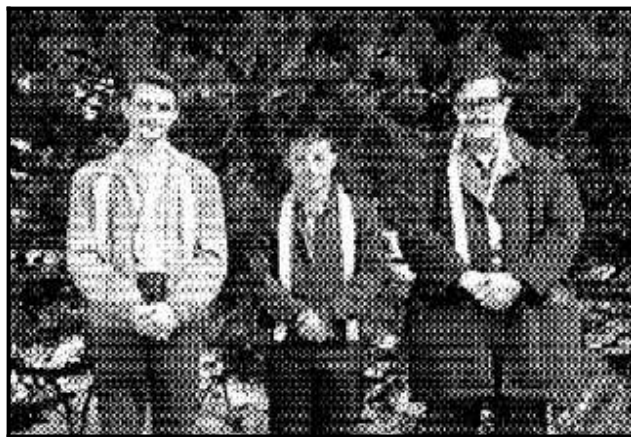
David: That he will allow within the diocese the blessing of same-sex relationships. (He still won't call them marriages because there are legal ramifications having to do with the use of that

word.) But these were very controversial positions. They seem in some people's opinions to be directly in conflict with resolutions in the House of Bishops. How can the House of Bishops say one thing and then turn around and allow a person who holds a differing view to be consecrated as a bishop? Well, I think that's delightful. Why not allow that to happen? Why not allow things to remain open-ended and murky; because I think that's the only way that we can continue to move toward anything that would be spiritually malleable for us.

Eric: All right. I thank you very much for the time you've spent with me, and for your memories and reflections and thoughtfulness. Unless you have anything else to say, I think I'll declare this interview closed.

Deborah: It's been a pleasure.

David: Thank you.



**Figure 2 Fisher, Frangquist & Larson, c. 1964 at Monument Hill.**

# Interview with Robert Larson '65

April 20th, 1994 c.e.



Mike: I am Michael Scharding, class of 1994, and I am interviewing Robert Larson, who was an important Druid because he knew the ways of the original Carleton Druids and also the ways of the Berkeley Druids. Robert founded the Berkeley Druids and thereby with Isaac, he set the stage for the birth of the Neo-Pagan Druid movement in America in 1969. As Archdruid of Berkeley 1969–1977, his views will help us to understand the Berkeley Grove during the troubling times.

Robert: Hi, everybody!

Mike: You're probably the only Third Order Druid from Carleton who I've not phoned, talked to or written to yet.

Robert: Well, congratulations.

Mike: Except Fisher.

Robert: Well, yeah.

Mike: You're also the only Druid to have known most of the competitors in the New and Reformed Druid movements. So you'll be helpful to my paper. Let's start off with what you remember of the early Founding Days and how you came to find the Druids at Carleton.

Robert: Ah, well, that was my Sophomore year. 62–63. I was at, I think, the second service. I made it to most of the services thereafter. Have you talked to Fisher? Fisher won't talk?

Mike: Fisher won't talk.

Robert: That figures. With the ideos of young intellectual people, you come up with strange ways of passing the time. The early 60s they still had the religious requirement in force. That went out about 65. That's when you had to go to a certain number of services every term and they made it pretty easy though. It was all nicely hypocritical. At any rate, David Fisher's method of rebellion was forming secret societies, which never really took off.

Mike: Oh, I didn't know there were other secret societies.

Robert: Well, he had a couple others that he tried to get off the ground beforehand. Nothing ridiculous or outrageous, but they were illegal by the laws of the college at that time.

Mike: One of things that Bonewits mentioned is whether Fisher was a member of the United Ancient Order of Druids.

Robert: I have no idea. I don't believe he was. I have no idea of what was in his background.

Mike: Ah. But what you said there made me suspicious.

Robert: Well, no. It was just his method of rebelling against college regulations. We all had our own ways. Mostly sneaking girls into the guys' dorms and getting drunks. But there were other ways, as Fisher never had much of a head for alcohol and he was planning on becoming a minister, it was just his way of rebelling, I guess. I really didn't know Dave that well, and we didn't get along that well. At any rate, he came up with this Druid thing to resist the Chapel requirement, the idea being that when we put in our religious slips we'd write down the Druid thing, and if they accepted it it would prove that the religious requirement was absolutely ridiculous, and if they denied it we could claim religious discrimination. Funny thing was when the men put it in, it was denied, but when the women put it in, the women's dean said "fine."

Mike: What happened there, according to Deborah Frangquist, is that the slips were checked by dorm mothers over at the women's places. And they didn't know anything and they said, "whatever. pass. whatever. pass."

Robert: Well, I know one guy, who was not a Druid, named Bob Miller who was getting by putting in things like the "Wesleyan Presbyterian and Fire Reform of Colorado" and they were getting accepted. But we had trouble with the Dean, but that was straightened out. Most of us covered our butts by going to the Sunday night lecture any way, which was a painless way of fulfilling the religious requirement. At any rate, there we were in 63 and we went away and came back the next year. For some reason, people found something in it, people on a religious search or philosophical search, kids trying to find their basis of being. "Roll your own religion" has always had an attraction to me, and I rolled my own. At first year, you had Fisher as ArchDruid & Howie Cherniack as Preceptor and we had various servers, but it eventually came down to Frangquist. He eventually became Preceptor and then Archdruid after Fisher had left, and I was his Preceptor for a while. Anything else you need to know of the early days?

Mike: What was your idea of what the RDNA meant to you at that time?

Robert: As I say, it's a nice excuse to get out in the woods on Saturday, but I've always looked at it as a way to search for philosophical/ethical/religious truth. Of course, the search is more important than the finding in those cases. The search led you in various directions. Nature is the focal point. My personal predilection even at that time, although in the introductory state, was in Celtic language, history and practices. I've always had a taste for the obscure.

Mike: I know what you mean.

Robert: Among Northern Europeans, the Celtic mythos was one of the more obscure and one of the more puzzling. I always had a tendency for the pagan religion, but most of my formative experiences were influenced by Nordic traditions. The Celt mythos & ethos & worldview is more conducive to my particular soul. There are many more good books now coming out, but at that time there was very little available and

you just had to get your information where you could and I had always been interested in that culture since the age of 12, although for no reason that I could figure out. It's just one of those things, I mean, where do your interests come from? It didn't really become focused until I was in my 20's and since then I've tried to pick up everything I could find on it, which is fairly good. I did more than a bit of work on Muenster Gaelic and now I can..... (long discourse on languages)

Mike: So you graduated in 65?

Robert: No, I didn't graduate...

Mike: Oh, you didn't graduate, what happened?

Robert: Loss of interest mainly. The final term I was laid up with one sprained ankle on another. I was majoring in English, which was interesting, but not overwhelmingly interesting. I just couldn't see working that hard. The general academic atmosphere just got to me.

Mike: I know that the Third Order was pretty much fixed at this point.

Robert: You mean in the ritual and how you became a Third Order?

Mike: Yes, I think so.

Robert: Yeah, it was pretty much fixed. As far as I know, it was fixed when Fisher ordained his first one, Nelson or Frangquist, I can't remember which was first. The ritual has not changed that much since, in order to keep some ilk of apostolic succession going.

Mike: And did you have the traditional curse of having it rain on your vigil?

Robert: No. But on my vigil, it was colder than an Eskimo's outhouse and I couldn't get my fire going. I found some deadfall in one of the thickets, and I had a nice staff that I was trying to whittle on to pass the time. It was a cold one. Eventually the dawn came, after I was walking around for awhile slapping my arms to my side for two hours, saying "When the f\*ck is Frangquist going to show up?" Just as dawn came, off to the west from the Hill of Three Oaks, where I stood my vigil, was a nice lightning bolt striking the ground in the shape of my staff.

Mike: Wow!

Robert: Wasn't that a lucky thing? Fortunately there was no thunder at the time of the ordination!

Mike: Yes, I know we had to do that with the ordination of one of my friends. There was a lightning storm going on and every time it thundered we had to start it all over again.

Robert: That's one way to do it.

Mike: By the end of it, I was speaking 6 times the ordinary rate.

Robert: The way we would have done it is, "Well we're going to have to do this again." Because, at that point, we were taking it halfway seriously. Still got snow on the ground out there?

Mike: I'd say no, but if I do then we'll get another foot in the morning.

Robert: Oh, I know. Minnesota weather sucks.

Mike: We've had six or seven springs so far.

Robert: Has the Cannon River flooded yet?

Mike: Oh, you should have seen it last July! You know it was my fault. I ordained two people that night in July. There was a backlog for ten years when no one was third order and so

when Shelton came down and ordained me, absolutely everyone wanted to catch up before they left.

Robert: Oh that's good. A new crop.

Mike: So, two people wanted to be ordained, and I think that was too much, and we got the Flood.

Robert: I ordained two on one night once. The problem out here is that we separated them, otherwise the vision quest doesn't go down, but making two or three visits each night, they were about a mile apart. It was one of those nights. We had a crazy Christian up in the hills back then. Never again will I try two in one night. It wasn't convenient to go home and lie on my own bed while they vigiled, because then I would have to make a mile or two mile hike to check up on them. So I had to stay up all night too...even though I'm a night person...

Mike: I've so far ordained 8 people and I've never been able to sleep on those nights.

Robert: No, you're concerned for them.

Mike: Yeah, you're concerned for them. So you trot out and check up on them, even if they don't see you.

Robert: Well, yeah, it's always the nice thing to do to give them a scare around 12:00.

Mike: A scare? Oh no!

Robert: Oh, yes, it's part of the vision quest. If you're in fairly dense woods, it's almost impossible not to give them a scare tracking through the goddamned underbrush. It's about 1 o'clock at night when things are getting a bit hairy. It's a matter of getting their adrenaline going, which at that time they can probably use to keep awake.

Mike: Sometimes, I don't know about you guys.

Robert: We're a little crazy. If you're half-way intelligent, you're already crazy. If you aren't crazy by the time you're 20, the world will drive you crazy by the time you're 30. I never really intentionally scared anybody, because I'm the type if you snuck up behind me and startled me, I'd jump up about three feet in the air. Most people are that way, especially in the woods at night.

Mike: You left in what year then?

Robert: Spring of 66, after winter term.

Mike: That was when Frangquist was winding down?

Robert: Yes.

Mike: And most of the rules had been passed?

Robert: Yeah. The originals had gone on.

Mike: During that brief flurry of voting, do you think they expected a vote to happen again?

Robert: I'm sure Fisher didn't.

Mike: I heard he always got pulled into consensus.

Robert: That's an interesting tale there. You're familiar with the stalled patriarchate of the upper orders? It stalled with Zempel at 8th? When they were starting up with the Druids, we thought, "Let's make some more Orders so that we can put more initials after our names." and so it was Fisher, Nelson, Frangquist, Zempel, and Zempel wanted the eighth but he got the seventh.

Mike: I wanted the Eighth!

Robert: Everyone wanted the Eighth or the tenth, because there is all sorts of initiation possibilities. But the idea at that time, that I got from Dave Frangquist, was they wanted to edge

Dave Fisher out because he was getting a bit too Christian and so they gave him the honor of being the first patriarch of the Fourth Order. He raised the others up to Fourth order, and they elected the fifth order, and then the sixth Order, and that's as far as they got until Zempel. Everyone would be appointed to the higher order, but the point would be that Fisher would be the lowest ranking Patriarch. Since he always wore black anyway, he was preparing himself to become an Episcopalian priest. He's always been embarrassed by the whole thing. We once had a science fiction novel with busty broads on the cover and we gave it to him to autograph, and he turned pale at the sight of it.

Mike: So you went off somewhere after Carleton?

Robert: I went home for a while and, let me assure you, living in Indiana is no treat for someone who wants to do something. Well, I went over to Berkeley and my main objective was keeping out of Vietnam, which I managed to do with one trick. Overweight.

Mike: But you didn't actually enroll at Berkeley?

Robert: No. I was a hanger-on. I was a typical 60s hippie, but I didn't do as much drugs as some other people. I did my share, but everyone did back then. But that was before you time, wasn't it.

Mike: Yeah. I wasn't around then. I was born in 1971.

Robert: You weren't even a sparkle then. Oh, young ones... (Conversation trails off into Scottish & Irish History)

Mike: So, there never really was a Berkeley College Grove?

Robert: No. Religious groups are not allowed in Berkeley at all. It's a state institution. So that can't have groups directly connected with the campus. At that time, Berkeley was a hotbed of radical politics and anti-Vietnam, which is where I was at the time.

Mike: Not even Catholic groups could meet?

Robert: Not for religious services. I'm not sure of the rules there. The first service that we held out there, we purposely flaunted this regulation and had it in the Eucalyptus Grove or somewhere along strawberry creek. After that we had all of our services in Strawberry Canyon out beyond the Stadium.

Mike: Did that inhibit your ability to recruit on campus?

Robert: I've never been into proselytization. I don't believe in proselytization for any religion or philosophy.

Mike: So how did members find you?

Robert: They found us. That's always been the way I've conducted things, you let people who look who find. If you're not looking, you won't find. But then we wouldn't want you if you were not looking for something. It really took off when Robert Anton Wilson was out here, he's the author of the Illuminati Trilogy, and we used to meet at his house before we went off to the hills, in order to arrange transportation. At that time I didn't drive and most people didn't have cars.

Mike: So did you notice a different type of people who came looking for Druidism?

Robert: oh. Well, it's hard to say, because Carleton is much more homogenous than anything in Berkeley, Carleton's a much smaller environment. The thing in Carleton was that lots of people were coming out for a good time. Just following their noses a little bit. Most of the people here were searching for something, but I've never been sure with any of them, though there was a definite pagan or anti-Christian bent... at that

time, the anti-Christian bent did not bother me, although it does now to a certain extent. I've mellowed over the years. But, the pagan bent never bothered me, although they tended to go too far into the occult, magical aspect of paganism, rather than the cultural aspects, for my taste. But I find, I believe you'll find, if you continue on... that what will happen is that the type of people that you get in a grove (that you set up outside the College) will have a fairly similar outlook to you. If they don't like your services, they ain't going to come and the result is, (although you'll have all sorts of factions and people you don't like, some people you like and some people you don't give a damn) you'll find that the general milieu is fairly homogenous within the group. And that's the interesting thing about Druidism, that because of the lack of dogma and the lack of standardization, disorganized religion as we always called it, in a sense it's very Mao-istic with "Let a thousand heresies bloom!" And they do! And I think that's good, because it makes people think. And thought is the main part of the search, that and experience and feeling, which is why the search goes on until you finally kick the bucket, then you may find out something,... or you may not.

I always kept the magic to a minimum although I was always very good at calling the winds, and I always got very good results. But theologically, or rather philosophically, I got more conservative than the group, and my bat has always been paleo-paganism rather than neo-paganism. I could make excellent arguments for human sacrifice.... if I wanted to.

(laugh)

In the original group, I probably would have been on the side of the animal sacrifice. Let's sacrifice a cricket, rather than a purely vegetarian passport, ... but whatever works. And it worked, though the building of the altars and the fire was really a nice touch, after they got rid of the portable record stand, which was definitely not a good altar. But the anti-Druids of the old days, Jocks in other words, were drunks (but so were we, so what the hell!) It's a matter of what side you want to be on.

Mike: You mentioned that in Berkeley people came searching for things. I always thought the Carleton group, back in the early 60s, broke down their beliefs into the very basic questions of fate.

Robert: Some of them, probably. For others, no. For some of them, well, Carleton at that time was a fairly Christian place, but not offensively so. Not like Bob Jones. But barriers were falling everywhere in the early 60s. You have to remember that this was the time of the Civil Rights, the time of Vietnam. Of course, the early 60s were before Vietnam, but the Civil Rights were very big. There was a big thing about getting blacks on campus. There was a big thing about getting more sexual freedom, about getting more open houses. At that time, the dorms were strictly segregated by sex, and college kids being what they are, that was a real big issue at that time. It was the start of the general breakdown of society, which has continued to this day. As soon as we wreck the old form of oppression, we'll erect a new form of oppression. That's what's happening now. My bent has always been towards anarchy rather than socialism, or rather towards conservatism. I always believed you should let people go to hell in their own hand basket rather than your own hand basket. And definitely most people will. That's their choice.

Mike: Let's talk about how you met Isaac Bonewits.

Robert: That was in Berkeley, of course. Interestingly, at that time, he was involved in infiltrating the Church of Satan.

Mike: I heard about that.

Robert: And the cult of Tony Lavey, as he called him. He used to come out on the Gate Entrance with a nice black wooden throne and would heckle the Christian bible thumpers. That was just off-campus, you see, where all the stuff was happening. Just off of what is called red square. And I was, at that time, in my hippiedom, to use an Irishism, and I was selling newspapers to skin a living at the Gate, which is one of the better places to sell, if you wanted a congenial atmosphere rather than money. I soon met up with Isaac. Isaac, at that time, was collecting ordinations, he'd join any group in order to be ordained, just to collect them. So, I said what the hell, let's do it real quick and we did it real quick. And at that time, I was in financial trouble, which is no stranger, and we took up rooming together. He had to get out of his place and I had to get out of my place, so we roomed together in an apartment. We got along fairly well for a while. There are a few things between us now, but I've mellowed out quite a bit since then. Monetary again. But that was how I met him. I always thought he went a little overboard on the magic/paganism bit. But that may be part of my essential laziness. I don't believe in enthusing myself over anything, whereas he gets enthused over anything, I control my enthusiasm better than his.

Mike: Okay. When did the actual grove get set up?

Robert: Actually to legally ordain someone, you have to have a grove. So we did that real quick, too. Was Zempel out here at that time?

Mike: Really?

Robert: Zempel was out here for a while.

Mike: Wow!

Robert: And he was studying in physics for graduate work. I don't know whether it was Zempel or another guy. I can't remember, it must have been one of our guys. It was ordain a server quick, ordain a second order quick, to get enough people for a grove, and then, "okay, It's time to ordain some one." But as for getting it going, as an ongoing thing, it was a few years thereafter. And I'm not sure what year it was, but Isaac and I were both members of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Isaac more than I. He set up things for them, and I started doing things for them, and it evolved from there. But my recollection of those days are grim. And it kept going for few years. How long...

Mike: I think you were Archdruid until 1977.

Robert: About then.

Mike: And then you went to join Clann na Brocheta?

Robert: Yeah, and that thing broke up fairly quickly. And since then I have only been to one service, and that was Stephan Abbot's (in 1993) 30th anniversary service at Beltane of last year. I always thought that I had run a loose service! And I didn't know what a loose service was. (Laughter.) Of course, Stephan has never been the most focused individual.

Mike: Yes, I've had many conversations with Stephan.

Robert: You poor boy. (Laugh) I've had met him face to face, trying to figure out between what he wants and what he needs, which are two separate things. But, he's a nice boy.

Mike: He's also a Celtic scholar.

Robert: He likes to think he is. He knows his tarot well. He knows a certain amount of Celtic things, but you can't get into Celtic things unless you learn the languages. And as far as I know

he's never taken the trouble to learn one. As far as I'm concerned a language is the heart and soul of a culture.

Mike: It is.

Robert: What language you speak orders how your brain will think, as any linguistics person will tell you.

Mike: I get the impression from other people that although you were the Archdruid from 68 all the way up until 77, officially, it seemed that Isaac was doing all the work.

Robert: Work? What work? I don't know what you mean by work?

Mike: Organizing people to do things.

Robert: Oh. I always allowed people to organize themselves. I've always felt that if you as Archdruid try to organize things too much, you will defeat Druidism, which is to let people to discover in themselves. Rather, that you discover, you have let them discover what they think. If you organize things too much, you direct things too much, what you're teaching people is what you think, and that's not my way. I never believe in that. I always believed that the preceptor should do more of the scuttling work. My main responsibility was providing the service, and in making sure everything was there for the service, and trying to collect the money for the waters, which is impossible I've found. Finally I decide, if you want cheap shit, don't contribute, if you want good stuff, contribute. And people contributed a little after that.

Mike: What was your favorite brand?

Robert: At that time I was into Tattie's, but now I'm into Powers. I don't drink that much, but Irish whiskey is always very nice. I've never liked Scotch that much, except for single malts, but that is prohibitively expensive for waters. Besides, you're supposed to water them down for services, except for Beltane and (humph!) Second Order Ordinations. Speaking of drinks, Stephan had some of the worst waters I've ever tasted at that May thing. He doesn't do alcohol and some of his alternative drinks are positively atrocious. The mead, which was home-made, and not necessarily bad, was pretty rank. At any rate, we got through it. It was kind of fun seeing some people again. Just like when I resigned from my Archdruidship, and it turned out to be Joan, I believe that when you step down you ought to go away and let them develop their ways, although I've been curious. But I don't want to see what they're doing unless they need help. If anyone asks me for help, or asks me for an opinion, I'm perfectly willing to give it. But, I'm not going to impose upon them. Again, it's not my way. I very much "live and let live," even though I have strong opinions.

Mike: How much of what was written during the Isaac Wars was his part and how much of it was representing the Berkeley Grove?

Robert: As I've said, Isaac has his enthusiasms, which tend to be pro-pagan, anti-Christian. To a certain extent I understood them. In fact, to a certain extent, I shared them, but not to the same radical extent as Isaac, who had unfortunately spent some time in Catholic seminary, which will do it to you any time. Most of the anti-Catholic and anti-Christian people I have known have gone to Catholic schools.

Mike: In the period when you were Archdruid, did you group ever refuse to allow people to join who were Christian?

Robert: No. Not as far as I know. Some people may have tried to discourage them. But they may not have felt welcome, considering the pagan bent of most of the members, which even I was feeling at that time, but as far as I am concerned,



everyone was welcome. If what we do doesn't suit you, you don't have to stay. If something we do offends you, go away. If you offend us with the way you act, we'll tell you. I don't recall any problems of that ilk. If so, it wasn't brought to my attention, as it should have been. If they didn't bring it to my attention, I'm rather pissed. I'm a libertarian in that.

Mike: Carleton College had a very, very heavy enthusiasm for Asian religions in the 60s.

Robert: Must have been after my time. Of course Zen Buddhism in the 50s... I got into Zen for awhile, to a lesser extent. There is the Japanese connection at that time, when students went over to Japan to spend some time.

Mike: Primarily in the 60s.

Robert: I wasn't aware of a heavy enthusiasm for eastern religions in my times. However, in the later 60s, everybody was interested in Asian religions. But Eastern religion and Buddhism are always interesting paths to look into and it's different way of approaching things. I know that Dave Frangquist was one who went over to Japan and that, for a while, he was heavily exploring Buddhist thought. Fisher I doubt.

Mike: Fisher was more into Hinduism, I've heard.

Robert: That makes sense. It's a bit more organized. Anyone who's searching religiously, is going to look into Buddhism and look into Hinduism, as being available to people. Definitely, the Druish meditative thing (although it was fairly short and people spent the time looking around at Nature like you're supposed to do) is sort of Buddhistic. I read some Zen when I was in high school, Alan Watts and such, and it interested me at that time. I'd already given up on my native religion, but what can you say about Christian Science? It was, what did Crowley say?, "an excellent grounding for magic, black magic, but magic nonetheless." On the other hand, Christian science, once you get out of the bullshit aspect, has an interesting viewpoint. But they try to control people's mind too much. It's another pseudo-Christian religion heavily by eastern thought. But Christianity is Judaism, itself influenced by eastern religion and pagan European thought. That's another kettle of fish altogether.

Mike: I always wondered if Druidism's Eastern influence kept the Druids from evolving into what Isaac thought was it's natural destiny. Becoming Celtic, like it's framework suggest.

Robert: Possibly. The main problem with getting Druids off the ground, as Isaac was always want to do, was it's predilection for disorganization rather than organization. When you get a lot of independent thinking people (or at least they think they are independent thinking) into a group and you start developing their own views that do not coincide. So, to get any type of organization going is very difficult and once you have a grove structure and a totally decentralized hierarchy, organization becomes counter to what Reformed Druidism is. It just doesn't work. If you get organized, if you start a putsch going, you're going to get dogma. You going to get ritualistic formalism. There is a certain amount of fixed ritualism between apostolic successions, but when you try to get a consistent viewpoint, you won't get that with Druidism as it was structured in the beginning. Now if people want to put forth a dogma and list beliefs in that dogma and then build a church based on that dogma that's fine, but that's not Reformed Druidism. They can call it what they want.

Mike: I can tell that Isaac was headed this direction early on.

Robert: Oh yeah.

Mike: With the SDNA.

Robert: I'd like to see the movement grow. I would like to see it grow to a magnitude of force that Isaac wanted, but not as an organization. I'd rather see it as a method of thought and as a method of looking into things rather than as a method of organization and control. That should never happen to Reformed Druidism. When Smiley tried to organize and put down rules and regulations and traditions....

Mike: You mean Shelton?

Robert: Right. Smiley was another guy. Yeah. He [Shelton] got some nasty reactions from me and most of the others because it wasn't against what he was saying, but for putting it down as a tight little thing. At that time, it was time of do your own thing, and to a large extent, it should continue to be the bat of the druids.

Mike: One of things I've noticed is that the hierarchy of the Druids gives a great deal of autonomy to the individual groves.

Robert: yeah.

Mike: Any damn thing they want as long as they leave the third order alone.

Robert: Right.

Mike: What made Isaac want to bring everyone into his own system, rather than his own grove?

Robert: I think you can call it psychological error. That's a matter between Isaac and his conscience. I hope that he's matured from that viewpoint. I don't know, and I haven't talked to him in many a year. I have a feeling that it was his Catholic seminary upbringing, which gives you a very tight structure and a desire towards a structure. He's a neat freak, I'm a messy freak. I guess you call it anal-retentive in Freudian terms. He always had a tendency to over organize. It's the problem every politician of trying to make people fit in molds. People are very very resistant to fitting in molds. In a mass, you can predict what people will do, but individually it's off the scale. If he ever got the thing going as a big mass, then he probably could get things organized like he wanted to. But then, getting that mass going together as an organization, given the traditional Druid resistance to being plugged into holes, is very difficult. It is probably beyond anyone, but an organizational genius. Who wants a fuehrer? Especially in the late 60's/early 70s? They were everything from Protestant to Unitarians, from every radical movement of that time, and they've become more so since that time. I've always felt that Druidism would be an excellent umbrella organization if you could get it to a reasonably size organization, if you get enough groves going, to incorporate as a non-profit church organization. God knows, it's always been non-profit. To give an umbrella of legitimacy to other odd-ball sects and I think there's a certain amount of need for that in the paleo-pagan, neo-pagan, occult, magickal community, and even for some of the stranger Muslim, Christian and Buddhist sects. There are a lot of very strange sects out there, some of them are dangerous, and some of them are just strange. They have their own little viewpoint. I don't care what someone believes as long as they don't try to put it on someone else and make them believe it. As long as he acts upon his own beliefs in his own group, that's fine. I think there is a need for that time of Umbrella organization and there have been attempts to set up those sorts of umbrella organizations. Most of them failed through the same problem as the Druids; that when you don't have a tight little dogma,

people go off on their own little spritzes and pretty soon everything is breaking apart.

Mike: I know there were a lot of things during the early 70s which may have made Isaac write in a slightly ruder style. I mean there are three years when nobody wrote to anybody and it looked pretty dead.

Robert: That was the time he was in Minneapolis and he was trying to get things going with the Gnostica newspaper. When you get involved in the old form of the occult community you run into organizational stasis and I suppose that was very frustrating for him, even though there were new people coming in. The Llewellyn press were very much 1920s operations...You have to remember that Isaac has always had a bent for ceremonial magic and that requires a tremendous amount of organizational control both mentally and physically. You can see where you would carry this bent over into the Druidism and attempt to over organize. As I say, if that's the way you want to set up your grove, fine!, But don't try to make me set up my grove that way.

Mike: Did you like being Archdruid in the early 70s?

Robert: Yeah. It was a nice thing to do occasionally. I missed conducting services since I resigned, and I've always wanted to get together with people near Beltane and Samhain and to hold a service. Actually getting together, since I'm out of contact with many people, is very difficult. Maybe one of these day, it'd be nice.

Mike: Did you always have weekly rituals outside of Quarter Days and Cross Quarter Days?

Robert: No. That's the way we started out. Then I worked out the phases of the moon nearest to Sunday and Noon. I didn't have them on Saturday because I like to watch Football myself, I was a 49ers fan, before they became good. That was the way we continued most of the time.

Mike: I heard that you used to have a lot of pizza conversations at the pizza parlor.

Robert: Some. After Cody & I got together, after each service we'd make a run down to Silano's and have an ice-cream splurge. There's always late night conversations. One winter I tried to organize classes in Gaelic, they lasted a little. I suppose people learned something. At that time I was only muddling in my Irish and I could only teach basics. Mainly there were a lot of bullshit session at Bob Wilson's house, before we got going up to the hills. It's at bullshit sessions that you meet people. But organized bullshit sessions, no.

Mike: There weren't any other Druid groups in the Bay Area then?

Robert: There was the Order of Druids. They were a beneficent organization. They still have a few buildings called "Druid's Hall" which are nice to see. But I don't know if they still meet. It's kind of like the Scottish Rite Hall in Oakland, which is mostly a venue for concerts and conventions. I don't think the masons are very active in that hall anymore. I was just printing some directories of cemeteries this week and there are a couple of Druid cemeteries in Sonoma county..... Just Masonic offshoots founded in 19th century.

Mike: But in the Neo-Pagan community?

Robert: No, I don't think so. None that I'm aware. Wait, there were some people basing themselves out of Welsh tradition. I never observed whether they had services.

Mike: So, pretty much the Reformed Druids were sitting out alone in the field?

Robert: Usually it's in a grove. Usually we were sitting around passing the pipe or passing the bottle. I believe in very informal, once you get past the winds. You had the sacrifice. You had the meditation and then the bullshit session for 15 minutes and then break it up. Don't want to have long sermons. I've never been into long sermons. I usually took my readings out of the Chronicles, or occasionally dip into poetry (Yeats, Manningly, Hopkins.) Everyone knew what was coming after I said the first word, but I thought they were important verses for people to think about.

Mike: What does the word "Neo-Pagan" mean to you?

Robert: To me, it's an attempt to reawaken the spiritual sides that we lost when the evangelical Christian movement took over Europe. Unfortunately, most of the Neo-Pagans have taken a lot of New Age philosophy, most of which is clap-trap, and attempted to plug it in, rather than attempting to study what the pagans really thought and felt. Read your Roman philosophers, read your Greek philosophers, read your Celtic & Norse myths and attempt to extrapolate off that and you're better off. I'm more for a paleo-pagan viewpoint. On the other hand, for many people, a good exploration of their roots and developing a belief system on the natural world rather than the revealed world. For me, the revealed world is never true. It is true to the person who reveals it only, it is not true necessarily to anyone else, but maybe true to some. This is especially true when it has gone through the garbling that happens with all the holy books of the world. The bible is a prime example, although the Koran does a fine job of garbling Mohammad's message too. The Buddhist texts are probably not the bad of an example because they were never that organized or even pretended to be organized nearly as much. The Vedas are also garbled mythologies, but good mythology when you get down to it. Man's religious views were originally developed out of his relationship with nature and in order to understand what man is, one must get in contact with that side. The churches, especially the revealed churches, obstruct that path. The Puritan church, in particular, defines Nature as the realm of the Devil. Well that may be true from the viewpoint of primitive man, because Nature is dangerous and not kind or evil or good, it merely is. You've got to understand where you stand in the phytonomy of life forms. One of the problems I have with the radical environmentalists is that they understand where the animals and plants fit in, but they don't understand where man fits into that relationships; just as the heavy timber industry doesn't understand where the animals and plants fit in. You have to consider both. The only way... not the only way, there's no such thing as the only way....one way for me is through the Nature question. Not necessarily an intellectual quest but a soul and vision quest than anything else. SO you can feel where you are and who you are. Find your spot and make it sacred.

Mike: That's seems to be the message that the RDNA is trying to use. The cautiousness of ever trying to instruct somebody.

Robert: Right. What is true for you. Even for something as simple as "2 + 2 =4" is not necessarily true if you are using a base three. (Laugh) If you agree with the Zuni, who don't count 1-2-3-4-5 on their fingers, but who count on the interstices of their fingers 1-2-3-4. You would end up with a base 8 as a result. The truth may be objective, but the perception is very individual. We all only glimpse one facet and if we move we might see more facets. The object of research is to move and see as many facets as possible.

Mike: I like that.

Robert: You never get to glimpse them all. It's just like science. In the 19th century they figured they reached the end of physics, they had all the answers. Then came atomic theory. Every time we think we are getting close to understanding the universe, it throws us a curve and I think the curves are going to keep coming as long as man continues or intelligent life survives, because the little universe we have in our brain case is changing it's perception all the time.... I think that each of us desires stasis, unchanging universe, and unchanging within an area of life. So we don't get surprised all the time. So we don't feel threatened all the time. Unfortunately the world doesn't work that way. IF you don't learn to flow a little bit, yourself, you're going to get run over by the river. Druidism is a way to flow. That's not a good analogy.

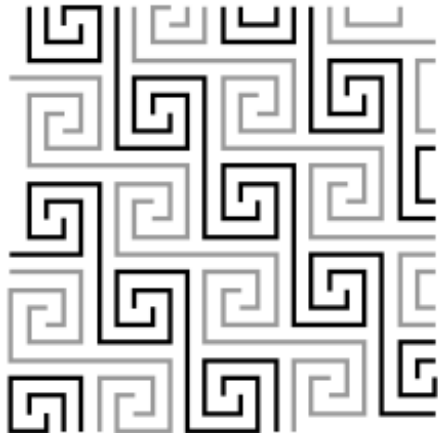
Mike: Religion is a difficult thing to pigeonhole.

Robert: They try. Every little sect of an organized religion thinks they have a copyright on the truth, and that's one thing that pissed off Isaac considerably and one thing that attracted him to Druidism. We didn't claim to have a copyright on truth, or to be the only way of approaching it. Unfortunately, once he found his truth he tried to pigeon hole it himself and that's where he and I part our philosophical company.

Mike: Well, that's all the room we have on this tape. Thank you for this interview.



**Figure 3 Carruth of Berkeley, Mike Scharding, Norman Nelson, Richard Shelton, David Frangquist & Merri-Beth Weber at the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at Monument Hill on Beltane 2003.**



# Interview with Richard Shelton, '71

May 8, 1993



Eric: This is Eric Hillemann. It is Saturday afternoon, May 8, 1993. I am recording an interview in the Carleton College library for the Carleton Oral History Program. I'm talking with Richard M. Shelton, a graduate of Carleton in the class of 1971. Mr. Shelton, who is currently Principal Mathematician for Unisys, was a Carleton math major who subsequently went on to earn a Ph. D. in mathematics from the University of Michigan.

Dick: That I have to correct: I was in the Ph. D. program, but I left before finishing my thesis.

Eric: I stand corrected. At Carleton, Dick was heavily involved in a number of things, including folk dancing and the Carleton Druids, more formally known as the Reformed Druids of North America, Carleton Grove. I'm told there was actually a large overlap in his time between those two groups, including both himself and Ellen Conway, who is now Ellen Conway Shelton. Mr. Shelton became Arch-Druid of the Carleton Grove during his time here, and has involved himself with interest in the subsequent ups and downs of the Carleton Druids ever since. That will form the principal subject of what we're going to talk about today. Dick, I wanted to start with some general things about your own background, and what brought you to Carleton, and things like that. Why don't you tell me about that.

Dick: I grew up in Illinois, down-state Illinois, nowhere near Chicago. Of course, Illinois is two states: Chicago and the rest of the state. My father's family is deeply rooted in Illinois, and I was born in Jacksonville, Illinois. My father went to school at Illinois College [in Jacksonville] and subsequently did graduate work in chemistry at the University of Iowa in Iowa City. He worked for a brief time at Dupont in Clinton, Iowa, but discovered that he didn't really like the industrial life, and, I'm reconstructing now, he jumped at the first academic job he found, which was at Western Illinois University in Macomb. That's where I grew

up. Macomb is a very odd town, because it's in the middle of Bible belt rural America, but it is a university town. As a result, I grew up very strange: a faculty brat in a culture that I was very much not a part of.

Almost the only person in Macomb that I still feel comfortable talking to is my high school librarian, who graduated from Grinnell College. She suggested that I look at Grinnell, or more generally at the Associated Colleges of the Midwest. When I discovered Carleton, I applied here for early admission, and was subsequently accepted. I came here because of my roots, I think. [I was] an ardent Republican, but events in Vietnam and on campus changed that fairly soon. I'm now considerably more liberal, and now find myself in America at large sort of isolated and in the milieu of a culture in which I no longer feel I belong. So in a very real sense, nothing has changed!

That's how I came to be here. When I applied for admission, I was interested very much in music and in astronomy. I was convinced I was going to be an astronomy major. But when I came here, I discovered I didn't get along very well with the orchestra conductor, and the astronomy department at that time was sort of a college disgrace. It very quickly became clear that I wasn't going to major in astronomy. So I ended up sort of by default in mathematics.

Eric: Were there particular professors at the time, who favorably impressed you, or pushed you in that direction, or moved you in that direction because they were good, or was it not something that had so much to do with the teachers you encountered?

Dick: Oh, that's difficult to say. I think like many people that age I didn't have a real strong notion of what I wanted to do with the rest of my life. I considered majoring in several departments. I had come with a fair amount of mathematics under my belt from high school. My high school was not a regular rural Illinois high school, but the Laboratory School of Western Illinois University. We had the opportunity to take college courses there, so I came here with a fair amount of mathematics. Toward the end of my sophomore year I finally decided that mathematics was clearly what I'd had most of, and seemed to be best at, so I might as well stick with it.

There were a few professors that impressed me very favorably. Roger Kirchner, in particular, I had several classes with. I think any math major has to put in a plug for John Dyer-Bennett, who, for math majors, was a very good instructor, and taught me a great deal about the way mathematics is done, rather than specific mathematical material.

Of all the professors I had here, though, I think the person who left the deepest mark on me was not a math professor at all, but David Porter in Classics, from whom I had beginning Greek and (I think more importantly) the course in mythology, which is where I learned that I have a soul. I don't think it's exaggerating too much to say that it changed my life. I had been interested in mythology before then, but as a very academic sort of thing. It wasn't until I had that course that I began to see the relationship between the dry and dusty mythology that you read about in Bullfinch and people's real emotions and religious needs. I believe it's that course, more than any other at Carleton, or indeed any other time in my life, that made me realize that there is another dimension to the human experience besides the academic one.

Eric: Is that a course that you encountered real early at Carleton?

Dick: Fall term of my sophomore year.

Eric: Since it's relevant, as we get into talking about the Druids, do you want to say something about your religious background? You said that was when you first learned you had a soul; did you *have* a religious background when you came to Carleton?

Dick: My emotional framework is very much a product of my father, who is a typical product of rural Illinois: dyed-in-the-wool Republican, very stiff upper lip. It's almost a cardinal sin to show emotion. I remember vividly one occasion: he had borrowed a tape recorder from the university for some reason, I forget what it was now, but we were having fun just trying it out. At one point he read some Shakespeare into the thing. I thought that was rather interesting; I mean, I had never thought of my father as being interested in literature at all. It turns out in fact that his main extra-curricular activity at Illinois College had been the literary society, but I didn't know that, which gives you some indication of how much he kept things bottled up inside. At one point he read out "In Flanders Fields," which commemorates the fallen in World War I, and about midway through he started choking up. After a while, he just gave up trying to finish the poem, and said, "What's the matter with me? I don't understand." There was a big block on the expression of emotion of any sort.

In addition to this, my father, rather atypically for rural Illinois, was a devout atheist. When I was growing up, I remember a couple of occasions, once in nursery school and once in kindergarten, I think once in first grade, some attempt was made to make me familiar with Christianity, but it was clear that it was not something my parents were part of, and it was not something that I was particularly interested in, really. It didn't really touch my life very much. Basically, it involved just being dropped off at Sunday school and picked up. One of the things, I believe, that Druidism is about is that American Sunday schools do very little in actually talking about religion or ethics or morals, or anything of that sort. They're essentially just daycare centers.

It wasn't until I was in, oh, junior high school, I'd say, that I had any significant brush with Christianity. A friend of mine was a Baptist, and he invited me to Sunday school. I went for a few times, and I went to Vacation Bible School class during the summer one year, and became fairly familiar with the Bible. I found it fascinating. I don't think I could ever say that I really believed anything that was in it, as far as the existence of God, much less Christ as the son of God. And to this day, I tend to think that that sort of "religion" is not important to me. It's not what I derive my ethical bearings from. The religious elements in there don't represent things that I regard as historical, although certainly there are a lot of historical things in the Bible. I think my primary interest in the Bible is the historical development of that culture and how the religious elements played off the historical elements.

But I think it's fair to say that by the time I graduated from high school, I had a much sounder grounding in Christian tradition than many people of comparable age in today's society. In fact, I find it very disturbing that many of the ideas and many of the references to religious things or Biblical things one has to explain today; you can't just take for granted that people will know and make the connection. I believe that impoverishes our culture.

But I cannot call myself religious, and it wasn't until Porter's mythology course that I began to understand what religion really is about, and why it is that religion exists as part of human culture. That was the beginning of a very

profound change for me. I'm not sure that most people would call me religious now. On the other hand, in a very real sense I am a *very* religious person, and I think the conjunction of the mythology course and my introduction to Druidism broadened my life dramatically. My spring term sophomore year academically was a disaster, but in a very real sense it was the beginning of my life.

Eric: Let's talk about your introduction to Druidism and your memories of your first encounters with this on campus, or how you got involved.

Dick: Early in sophomore year there was an article in the *Tonian* about Druids, and it mentioned that there were three on campus. There was a photo showing all three of them holding a service. I didn't really think very much of it at the time. It so happened, however, that one of the three, the Arch-Druid, was a good friend of mine by the name of Steven Savitzky, who was two years ahead of me. Steven was involved with a group of people on Third Burton, which was a hot-bed of campus radicalism at the time. The ring-leader, undoubtedly, was Joe Schuman. (Both Joe and Steve were class of '69.)

Joe Schuman looms large in my view of Carleton, and I think many people's. He was, I believe, in Israel my freshman year, so I didn't meet him until my sophomore year, when he came back as a senior. I was taking Econ 10 my first term, and he was in that class. That was an eye-opener; I was still nominally a Republican at that point, I think, although changing fast. '69 of course was the year that the Vietnam war took serious dramatic turns, especially since everybody expected that after the '68 election Nixon would wind the war down. It not only didn't happen that way, it went very dramatically in the opposite direction. It really galvanized the radical community at Carleton, of which I was not a part. But I became good friends with many people who *were* a part of that.

Steve was one of them, and I had known him in other contexts as well. He was a computer nerd; I didn't really consider myself a computer nerd, but I knew how to use the computer. I don't think I realized at that time how large computers would eventually loom in my life, and they didn't for a long while, not until after I left graduate school, in fact. Of course, at Unisys I live and breathe them. But I was very early attracted to them, and that was another context in which I was familiar with Steve.

One day, in April of '69, we were just sort of walking together, talking about something, at this point I can't remember what; it was probably related to computers, and at one point he just sort of turned and looked at me and said, "You'd make a good Arch-Druid." I was blown away! Over the next few weeks he gave me a few things to read about Druidism, and I glommed on to it. At this point in my spiritual development it was *exactly* the input I needed: a large window into several different religious traditions.

After the original purpose of Druidism was accomplished (the abolition of the religious attendance requirement) back in the early '60s, Druidism shifted to become the sort of thing that I found it to be: a spiritual anchor for people who, for some reason or another, needed something to hang on to. In Druidism there are largely two main groups. There are people like me, who are essentially religious *naifs*, if you will; and then there are the "spiritually battered": people who grew up in very strict hellfire-and-damnation traditions, who simply find that it is more damaging than it is helpful. Steve and I were of the former camp. There was always a large

contingent from KARL, the campus radio station at the time, who were also of that camp; technical nerds, with essentially no religious upbringing.

The *Druid Chronicles* I found very interesting. I think more important, however, was the tradition in Druidism of bringing readings and discussion of other religious traditions, particularly Taoism and Zen Buddhism, the two big threads in Druidism at that time. Both of them, I think, go back to David Frangquist, who was one of the founders. Taoism, to me, was the "universal truth," and I still believe it. The formal trappings of Taoism are something I never had much truck with, but the underlying philosophy speaks very deeply to my soul, and it's largely what I understand by the term "Druidic." It was very liberating for me, and it gave me a framework in which to explore my religious or spiritual feelings.

After Druid services were started again that spring at Beltane, there were something like *seventy-two* people at Beltane, which shows you what Steve had done with Druidism...

Eric: It shows you what an article in the *Carletonian* can do!

Dick: Well, I think, too, it was because Steve was involved in so many things, and a large number of those people were friends of Steve, and friends of Joe's. A large number of them were folk dancers, which both Steve and Joe were involved with, as was I. Toward the end of the year, [since] Steve was graduating, he appointed me Arch-Druid *pro tem*, and the next fall I was elected formally as Arch-Druid. I held the office for two years, until I graduated two years later.

Eric: You hadn't been Preceptor nor Server prior to that?

Dick: No.

Eric: Seventy-two people! That's a high point!

Dick: Druidism goes in cycles. It was quite popular when it was founded, probably for all the wrong reasons: it was an easy way to protest the religious requirement. After the religious requirement was abolished, it still stayed in strength for a while, I think largely on the strength of David Frangquist. I've never met him, but the trail I've seen in the Grove Archives and the College Archives and the correspondence I've had with him has been full of a very charismatic personality.

When Frangquist left — I believe he left campus in '66 — Druidism started to fade. Gary Zempel was his successor as Arch-Druid. Zempel himself is an interesting character, a radical who "caught Quakerism" and dropped out of society, all the time remaining a chief engineer for General Electric. He had a great deal of trouble reconciling General Electric with his spiritual beliefs.

His successor, Thomas Carlisle, left campus early I don't know the details. He was the last Druid priest left on campus, despite the fact that there were still a few people interested in Druidism, mostly at KARL. Marta Peck called Frangquist and was consecrated to the priesthood via long distance. She started the grove up again, and turned it over to Steve, and Steve took it and ran, we were on another cycle here. We caught the radicalism of the 60s, and that became the core of the next generation of Druidism.

After I left in '71, the Grove carried on for a couple of years, but starting dying down again in the early 70s, until the Isaac affair, at which [time] a good friend of ours on campus, Don Morrison, started the Grove up again. It went again for a

few years, and it dropped back. And then I didn't hear a lot about Druidism for a long time, until in the early 80s, I had a letter from somebody on campus. I can't remember who it was now. I sent a copy of the *Chronicles* and I believe a copy of *The Green Book*, a collection of readings that Frangquist put together from, oh, all kinds of places: Zen Buddhism, Taoism, a few things from the Old and New Testaments. We stuck in something, "Sayings of the Psychologists," a reading from [Robert] Ornstein's book about how people repeat formulas over and over again, until what becomes important is the formula, rather than the underlying spirit.

And then again we didn't hear anything until the mid-80s. I got a letter from Heiko Koester, and I came down and celebrated Beltane here with them on May 1. It must have been 1988, because it was the 25th anniversary: we set this thing up and were converting the date into the Reformed Druid Calendar, in which the year is dated from '63, the founding, and it came out 25! We sat there and looked at each other: my God, it's the 25th anniversary! It was impossible to believe!

By this time, the Grove had taken an interesting turn. I don't really know where this impetus came from, although I suspect Isaac had something to do with it. The people who were interested in Druidism were dealing not with the traditional religious cultures, like Zen Buddhism and even Christianity, but with alternative religions, things like paganism and Wicca (I think they pronounce it wik-ka, but the original pronunciation was wit-cha, a good old Anglo-Saxon word.) Heiko was interested in Native American religious tradition, and several of his friends were too. I think the chief focus of their activity was a sweat lodge that they'd set up, I don't know precisely where it was, somewhere around the Farm House.

That was fine with me; I didn't have any trouble with that. The first letter I had from Heiko was a *little* careful, because I think he was — *afraid* is not the right term — *concerned* that us older Druids might not see paganism or Native American spirituality as an acceptable form of Druidism. But, that's just nonsense. Druidism isn't about acceptable forms of religious spirituality; it's about religious needs. I myself find paganism, as it's practiced in modern America, a bit on the silly side in most cases, but Heiko and his friends had put something together that I found quite attractive, actually. The Beltane service that they held was the first overt Druidism that I had done for years, and it was in a very real sense a homecoming, quite apart from the fact that it was here on campus.

So I wish these people luck. I am certainly willing to help preserve traditions, but it is not my place to set these traditions in concrete, to try to force them on anything, because not forcing things on people, in a religious sense, is what Druidism originally began for. It's the underlying principle that, I think, connects all of this stuff.

Eric: I'd appreciate it if you could talk a little bit about the forms of Druidism as they existed at Carleton when you were getting involved with it; what a typical gathering would have been like, the kind of rituals that were done, or whatever went on. What happens when Druids get together?

Dick: A lot less than meets the imagination of the unwashed! The original services had a very strong Christian flavor to them. They were modeled, I think, unabashedly on Congregational and Episcopalian rituals. A large amount of Celtic mythology was intermixed, to try to make it as outlandish as possible,

because an important part of the original formulation of Druidism was to make it so outlandish that if, for some reason, religious credit were granted for these ridiculous services, then Druidism could be unmasked as just another way to get chapel credit, holding the whole religious attendance requirement up to ridicule.

But when they put the service together, they included a few remarkable things, including something that when I read it the very first time — actually, I didn't read it; I heard it at a service the very first time — it hit me right between the eyes:

*O Lord, thou art without form*

*yet we worship thee in these forms;*

*O Lord, thou art everywhere*

*yet we worship thee here;*

*O Lord, thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices*

*yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices.*

Over time — in fact, already that's not the original form; the original form talks about sins: "Overlook these three sins that are due to our human limitations" — already that had been changed to "errors," and since then I think the Lord has dropped out of it. (Druidism at Carleton today sort of sees itself as a Goddess religion, rather than a patriarchal religion; I have no real complaint with that.) I guess the point I'm trying to make here is that in putting this thing together, they actually touched, at least for me and I believe for many other people, or it wouldn't still be around, some very deep religious or spiritual currents.

After that invocation, the Arch-Druid and the Preceptor would draw a Druid symbol on the ground. (The Druid sign is a circle with two [parallel] lines through it.) The Arch-Druid would enter it and consecrate the Waters of Life, which were rumored to be one part scotch to seven parts water, but when I inherited the Paraphernalia, I sat down and actually measured the thing, and it turned out to be one part scotch to *two* parts water, so it was quite a bit stronger than people realized. And on Beltane, the ratio was reversed. You have to realize that at this time this was one of the few places one could get liquor on campus, or even legally drink it!

Eric: The seventy-two people becomes clearer.

Dick: And then the Waters of Life would be passed in a chalice around the circle. People would partake of them. The chalice was carried from person to person by the Server (whence the name.) After that there was usually a period of silent meditation, and then the Arch-Druid would "do something." Depending on the Arch-Druid, it might be a reading. Fisher (the original founder of Druidism) used the occasion to give a sermon, and since that time has become an Episcopalian priest. He was into this in a big way. A lot of the original trappings were stolen directly from the Episcopalian way of doing things. After the sermon, people would petition the Earth Mother for things, like good weather for the weekend, or something like that.

This was all done in a very light-hearted way. I think that's the other thing that I learned from Druidism, that spirituality is not just serious. If it is only serious, it is missing a large part of the human experience. Certainly the original Druidism was very light-hearted. On one occasion, this is, I think, documented in the Archives now, Howard Cherniack, who is now I believe a lawyer and not religious at all, from everything I've heard of him, was the Preceptor. In the formula of consecrating the Waters of Life, at one point

the Arch-Druid is supposed to ask the Preceptor, "Has the Earth Mother given forth of her bounties?" The proper response is, "She has!" One day, he just said, "Yup!" and they had hard a time keeping a straight face during the service for weeks thereafter!

This became known, by the way, as the "Cherniack Response." It's an official part — inasmuch as anything is official in Druidism — an official part of the liturgy. On occasion you will have a Cherniack Response. And it's very difficult to keep a straight face!

I wasn't very good at giving sermons, so I generally tended not to. I confined myself to readings, for the most part, originally chosen largely from *The Green Book* that Frangquist had put together — it's just a marvelous collection of things — and then from my own readings, particularly from Sufism, which I was interested in still am to some extent. Again, a large part of the trappings of Sufism I don't find particularly attractive, but the underlying philosophy and much of the poetry is just pure gold. One of the objections that I had to the original *Green Book* is that there was very little there from Islam. I never really understood that, because there are some marvelous things in Islam. But like many of the Judeo-Christian religions, a large part of it is hellfire and brimstone and doesn't really say much, personally, to me.

The weekly services were pretty much as I've just described. Each of the major feast days had its own ceremony. Again, although originally there were set ceremonies, by the time I joined Druidism, the liturgy had become fairly fluid, and a lot was left to the discretion of the presiding priest. The feasts were almost always celebrated in the evening, the evening *before* the official day. Samhain, for example, the beginning of the religious year, is an ancient festival from the Celtic tradition. The official day of Samhain is November 1st, but it actually begins at sundown the previous day. This period was considered a day between years. It was during that day that the forces of the underworld could come out, and that's the origin of Hallowe'en.

"Us Reformed Druids" were pretty tame: no burnt sacrifices, certainly not human sacrifices, although in the Celtic tradition there is very strong evidence for them. (Although, one always has to remember that virtually all of the historical information about the historical Druids came from their enemies; so a lot of the stuff you have to take with a grain of salt.) Our celebrations chiefly involved lighting a fire; the basic service was pretty much the same as the ordinary weekly service, but it had additional parts in it to commemorate the specific day.

Eric: Where did you hold your meetings? Was it on the Hill of Three Oaks?

Dick: We had three locations that were used with some regularity. I'd say the majority of services were held on the Hill of Three Oaks. I always preferred Monument Hill, although in passing I have to mention that at that time Monument Hill was kept quite mowed, and it was much more manicured than it is now. The grove near the monument, the circular grove, was a very wide and open place, and from it you could see a lot of the Upper Arb. To me, that's the heart of Druidism, and in fact, that's where Druidism started. That's where the first services were held.

Occasionally we would hold services on what we knew as Faculty Hill. If you take the drive that goes behind Goodhue, and go down across the creek and up on the other side where there's that Postage Stamp Prairie, there's a road

leading off towards the east that goes by an open area that we knew as Faculty Hill. That's where the Classics Department Picnic was usually held. The Arch-Druid, if he happened to be a Classics student, usually presided over that ceremony as well. That's where the first Samhain service was held, and traditionally, in our day, that's where we usually held Samhain services. But typically those were the only services that were held there.

Nowadays there are several other spots that they use, and I know that they don't use Faculty Hill, because when I walked by there with Michael Scharding, he was surprised to discover that any services had ever been held there. And it's not called Faculty Hill anymore; I'm not sure what they call it. It's not really a hill anyway. But those were the three main locations.

Eric: It was you, wasn't it, who actually added something in Greek to one of the books of liturgy?

Dick: Yes. I was asked to do the officiating there [at the Classics Department Picnic], and a friend of mine helped me write a "traditional" Greek sacrifice, traditional in quotes; who knows what actually happened in ancient Greece! We knew that one was supposed to pour libations in the name of various gods, so we did that. And then in addition, I translated the opening part of the Druid service, that I just recited a ways back on the tape, into Greek, and that's there as well.

Eric: You mentioned earlier having received the Paraphernalia. What exactly was all that?

Dick: The most important part of the Paraphernalia were the mimeograph masters for *The Druid Chronicles*, which I believe have since vanished. We did a printing in '71, and I believe that was the last time they were actually used. There was another printing after that, but I haven't seen a copy of that, and I don't know whether [it] came from the same masters or not.

In addition there was a red glass chalice, about four inches in diameter, I'd say. That, I'm pretty sure, was not original. The original chalice, I believe, was green; the tradition is very fuzzy on that. There was a reversible chasuble that was made, I forget by whom, back in Fisher's day for Fisher himself. Fisher had a flair for the dramatic. Everybody else wore sheets, but he wore black! So he stood out, with this chasuble in addition to that. It was primarily green on one side and primarily red on the other. The tradition very early grew up that during the summer half of the year, from May until November 1st, one wore the green side out, and for the [other] half of the year, when actually very little ever happened, except on February 1st, which was one of the feast days, you wore the red side out. (During the winter half of the year, also, the Waters of Life were the Waters of Sleep: they didn't have any scotch in them.) That chasuble was still around in my day, and still around in Don Morrison's day; but I think it's since vanished.

There was originally a staff for the Arch-Druid, but that was lost before my time. A friend of mine gave me a staff, but it turned out not to be particularly useful, because in getting services ready and hauling stuff to wherever the service was to be held, you needed all the hands free you could get. The staff just got in the way, so I tended not to use it. I don't think that's part of the tradition anymore anyway.

Then there were three books. These were all named because of the color of the covers they were in: *The Black*

*Book*, which contained all the liturgy; *The Green Book*, which was the book of readings that Frangquist had put together; and *The Blue Book*, which was all kinds of miscellaneous archives. To this day, when we say "the Carleton Archives," we have to be careful about whether we're referring to the Grove Archives, which was *The Blue Book*, or the Carleton College Archives, which, after a couple of these busts in the boom-or-bust cycle of Druidism, we began to appreciate as the Right Place to keep things!

The sort of things that were in *The Blue Book* were letters from various places, including a note from Lee Mauk, the chapel monitor who informed Fisher (I believe) that the Dean of Men did not look kindly on these chapel slips being submitted by Reformed Druids, and would not count toward the chapel requirement. There were copies of *Tonian* articles, and things of that sort, things of vague historical interest.

That was largely it.

Eric: These things were always passed on from one Arch-Druid to another?

Dick: Yes. In addition to the chalice, there was a clear glass cruet, which is what you used to mix the water and the scotch together. It had a line marked on it: so much water, so much scotch. That's what I was referring to earlier when I said that I sat down and measured what the actual proportions of things was. That, too, I think has vanished.

These things went astray several times. One of the Arch-Druids, three after me, by the name of Steve Corey, didn't appoint an Arch-Druid when he left campus. So he had all of the Paraphernalia in his apartment [in the cities], and when he left the cities, he turned them all over to a friend and said, "Here, take care of these while I'm gone." Well, he never came back, and at one point Don Morrison had enlisted my help trying to run these things down, because I had known Steve. We were looking all over the cities where we could think to find them. I say "we"; I was doing this by long distance, because I was in Ann Arbor at the time. One of my Carleton roommates was my leg man here in the cities, and he was quite amused that we had managed to lose the "Dead Sea Scrolls," as he called them.

But that's about all there was in the Paraphernalia. It wasn't an extensive collection. I think the interesting things were the historical documents. Although many of the originals have, I think, been lost, when I left I Xeroxed most of the stuff of interest there. My successor, Glenn McDavid, also made several copies, and I think left copies of a lot of this stuff in the College Archives, so most of that stuff has not vanished irretrievably. But the non-paper things that were in the [Paraphernalia] I think are all completely vanished now.

Eric: In your day was there a permanent, or semi-permanent altar? In the early Druid days they built an altar and the anti-Druids came and destroyed the altar, and they built it again. Was there one in use?

Dick: First of all, with two exceptions, we never really used an altar in my day, and there wasn't a "built" altar anywhere. One of the two exceptions was the big boulder that's still on the Hill of Three Oaks. Whenever we really needed an altar, that's what we impressed into service.

The other exception was the IBM 1620 in the computer lab, which is where we held the Oimelc service on February 1st. As near as we can tell, historically, Oimelc was a celebration of the birth of lambs, which occurs about this time in England. The



Christian church took it over and made it Candlemas. The Christian church has this wonderful way with holidays: if anybody insists on celebrating something, the general attitude is, "Well, if you can't beat 'em, join 'em; we'll just co-opt this thing and make it a holiday, "which is why, by the way, Samhain is not the festival of any particular saint, but the festival of All saints: one saint wasn't enough to make that properly Christian, I guess!

But Oimeic was always held in the computer lab, because it's damn cold on February 1st in Northfield!

Eric: The Druids always have a strong streak of the practical!

Dick: Yes, there's that to be said. The other reason it was held there was because one of the early Druids, the connection with computers goes back almost to the very beginning, was a man by the name of Richard Smiley, who later went on to graduate school in computer science. While he was at Carleton he wrote a program that set up various repetitive loops in the 1620 computer, and you could program this so that you could get the loops to resonate in various frequencies. Because there was a fair amount of electromagnetic radiation from the computer, you could pick this up on a radio. So you took a transistor radio down there, and you programmed in the notes that you wanted to have the thing play, and you could program it to play any song you liked.

So he wrote this program up for the IBM Systems Journal. It was published as a separate program available to IBM users everywhere in the world, and part of the documentation includes several songs that came pre-programmed in the deck of cards that you'd get with this program. One of the songs was the "Chant to the Earth Mother," and that's what we had the computer play as part of the Oimeic service. For that occasion the 1620 became our altar!

Imagine, if you will, slaving away at a computer program in the dead of night, and having, all of a sudden, the door open, the wind whistling in from the outside, and in march three or four, maybe five or six people dressed in outlandish robes who come around and circle the computer, chanting, "Hallow this altar; hallow this altar, "and then set up a radio on the thing and push off a program that plays some weird tune, and then pass a chalice full of milk (this was, you remember, commemorating the birth of the lambs) and hold this off-the-wall ceremony, and then vanish! We saw an awful lot of startled faces.

Eric: About the garb for people: did all the communicants, or whatever the proper term is, appear garbed outlandishly, or was that mostly the people officiating?

Dick: That was primarily the officers. If there were several priests around, this happens on occasion, but not often; there were during my senior year, and there were in the year after the founding, but typically there are only a couple of priests. But if there are a lot of priests around, it's sort of a badge of honor to wear *something* to set you apart. Not to set you apart as a priest, but to draw attention to the fact that we are Druids.

It was fairly common for priests to have some kind of special garment. I went so far as to have a tunic and a chasuble made up for me, but most people contented themselves with a cape or something of that sort.

Eric: Tell me about becoming a priest, your passage through the orders, as it were.

Dick: One becomes a First Order Druid by partaking of the Waters of Life at a service and letting the Arch-Druid know that you

want to be a Druid. That's about all it takes: a verbal commitment of interest. Well, that happened to me at the very first Druid service I ever attended. The next week, I was inducted into the Second Order, which involves polishing off any Waters of Life that are left after they're passed. Ordinarily, the remainder is consigned to the Earth Mother, poured out on the altar or onto the ground, to the formula:

*This portion of thy bounty we return to thee, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.*

But if you're inducting somebody to the Second Order, you give him the rest of the Waters of Life.

And then the following, no: it was at the new moon. Part of becoming a Third Order priest is performing an over-night vigil, staying awake all night, and I insisted on doing it at the [new] moon, because some obscure passage in *The Druid Chronicles* recommended the new moon as the time to begin New Projects.

I really paid for taking this literally, because it was the worst weather we have had in spring for a very long time! It rained cats and dogs; it was just a disaster. I couldn't keep my fire going. But I resolutely refused to take that as a sign! About half-way through the night, the rain started going away. By dawn the weather had become much more decent.

It was long before this, even before I had become a First Order Druid, that I had what I believe I can legitimately call a "religious experience." It was after Steve and I had been talking about Druidism and religion in general and Zen Buddhism. We had sort of been talked out, I guess, and we just sort of sat there on the Hill of Three Oaks. I sat there looking up, at the Oaks, at the clouds in the sky, and a very odd experience came over me. It's very hard for me to put into words what, really, it felt like. But I had never felt like that ever before in my life: a feeling of being at one-ness with the world, of being part of something that is very much bigger than my own personal life, a sense of connectedness, if you will.

Between bouts of being soaked on my vigil. . . I firmly believe that the whole point of the vigil, as with many other (not necessarily religious) induction ordeals that may involve sacred drugs, or physical hazing of some sort, I really believe that underlying all of these things is an attempt to disconnect the cerebral cortex from rationality: to get it to perceive the world in a different way than it's used to. And it's this dimension that somebody as deeply involved in academics as I was in my first year at Carleton, and somebody who was taught from birth, practically, that one should keep one's emotions bottled up inside — it was this whole dimension that I had really never uncorked before. And it just came spilling out during my sophomore year. This particular instance on the Hill of Three Oaks with Steve, and later at my vigil, just feeling a part of everything in a way that had no rational sense to it — it was a very moving experience, one that I've felt many times since then, usually not in a religious context. Druid services never really touched me very deeply, with a few exceptions. Most often, during a reading that meant a lot to me. Or as I mentioned earlier, the very first time I heard the original incantation, it just spoke voluminously to me, that, yes, this is Right.

But the services themselves — of course, I never really experienced services as an on-looker. I was involved in putting them on from very early on. So a large part of my experience during these things [was] thinking of the stage management. A large part of my religious growth at this time

was reading things to find appropriate things to bring to a service to read after the Meditation. I did an extraordinary amount of reading, particularly Zen Buddhism and Taoism, but in other traditions as well.

Eric: Have you had religious experiences beyond the feeling of connectedness? In my readings in *The Druid Chronicles* some people talk about visions that they've had in the Arb or on the Hill. Is that something that has any relevance to you, yourself?

Dick: Robert Graves speaks of a feeling of, or a perceiving of, the Numinous. I wouldn't go so far as to say that I have had visions, but there are definitely times that I've been overwhelmed by something. I believe that it's that kind of experience that underlies things like visions in people that are more visually suggestible than I am, perhaps. Is it God visiting us? I don't really know. The oriental religions have this wonderful phrase: "That is a question not tending to edification." I believe this is one of those questions; that worrying about what this thing actually *is* is not the right response to it. It's a *rational* response to it. The correct response to it is simply to let it happen, and to let the feeling one has when this happens inform and become a part of one's life in other situations as well.

I have never felt that the feeling I have in situations like this forms the rock upon which one can build an ethical system, much less a religious mythology, which is what I believe most of the Christian religion, and many other religions, to be, primarily. There is a core there of an appreciation of the Numinous that gets expressed in mythological terms, and then somewhere along the line, the truth of the mythology somehow becomes the important religious question. When that happens, you're no longer talking spirituality, you're talking something just entirely different, politics, in fact, is all it really boils down to; power politics.

The number of people that I've talked to that feel that they are religious, but feel that their particular church has *nothing* whatsoever to offer them spiritually, I find just astounding. I think it's just part of the natural course of religion, that the way people try to describe their religious feelings, the mythology they use to describe it, the ceremonies they use to try to evoke it, somehow take on their own life and become divorced from the actual underlying spiritual experience that started this whole process in the first place. At some point along the way, frequently one finds priesthoods being set up, priesthoods becoming entrenched political entities, and at this point you're so far away from meeting the spiritual needs of people that I think it's a mistake to call them a religion, if by religion one means something spiritual.

Eric: Is Druidism a religion? To you?

Dick: To me? No. I don't think I would call it a religion. Is *my* Druidism a religion? It is for me. I think that's a large part of what "Official" Druidism is about: helping people to find their own solution to the Spiritual Problem, or their own answers to their spiritual needs. I would not characterize what I feel, or what I believe, as Reformed Druidism; it's my own brand. I believe any true Druid has his or her own brand, which of necessity goes beyond the Basic Tenets as spelled out in *The Druid Chronicles*.

Is it reasonable to categorize it as religion? For example, does it make sense, as we tried to do on one occasion, to get a Druid priest classified as a priest for a IV-D deferment for

the draft (which was an important issue back once upon a time)? Well, I think I'll dodge that issue and say that this is one of those questions that does not lead to edification. The proof is not in the definition, but in the living of the life.

Eric: I'd like to ask about reactions from others at Carleton, and since Reformed Druidism is one of those things that people aren't used to, when they encounter it I'm sure you've had quite a range of reactions. I'm curious about, especially at Carleton, how your peers who were not Druids saw the Druids at that time, and what their reactions were. I mentioned before that in the Early Chronicles, there is talk about the anti-Druids. Did you have experience with anti-Druids during your Arch-Druidship? I'm interested in the reactions of others.

Dick: Carleton in my day was a very tolerant place. When I was there, here, I don't think I ever encountered what I would characterize as anti-Druidism. There was some of this in the early years, although many of the founders thought that it was primarily because these people didn't like them as people, rather than that there was anything religious involved in it. We have always had a great deal of flak from St. Olaf. I think more has been written about Druidism in the St. Olaf newspaper than in the *'Tonian*, and it is all very self-righteously negative.

After I left Carleton, one of the things that pained me greatly was the advent of a large group of fundamentalist Christians on campus. To this day, it is difficult for me to understand how fundamentalist Christians would choose Carleton as a place to come. But there were such people, and several Druids had rather heated discussions and on occasion even violent interchanges with fundamentalist Christians on campus. And that continues to this day, which is something, as I say, I have a great deal of difficulty understanding.

I do not believe that Druidism is fundamentally incompatible *even* with fundamentalist Christianity. Druidism, I believe, says more about the importance of somebody coming oneself to be convinced of the correctness of one's spiritual ideas, [and] the importance and value of examining other religious traditions. In that sense, I suppose, some fundamentalist Christians would object to it. I don't mean to lump all fundamentalism into the Christian camp. There are fundamentalists in other religions as well. But I think, as a historical fact, people who have come to Druidism came to Druidism because traditional Christianity does not meet their spiritual needs, and so as a simple historical fact, people who have been through Druidism by and large tend not to settle down into mainstream Christian traditions. I think a large number from my day have ended up in *some* kind of Christian church, although the boundaries here are a little wavy: a lot of people would not call Unitarianism Christian.

This is worth saying, too: Druidism as I know it is very much a Carleton phenomenon. Druidism transplanted away from Carleton, and there have been many attempts, has never done well. We tried to start a grove in Ann Arbor and failed miserably. This is very ironic, actually: I keep saying that an important part of Druidism for me was to help me get away from the rational straight-jacket that my life was being played out in, and yet Druidism for me is only possible among a community of very intelligent people. This is a paradox that I've never quite understood, and never plumbed to my satisfaction. But the fact remains that I do not enjoy Druidism in the company of people who are credulous, and

that's usually what we got when we tried to hold services in Ann Arbor, despite the fact that that is another very enlightened place with lots of intelligent people around. There's something about the liberal arts tradition that made Druidism click, and Druidism away from Carleton just does not work.

What I believe is the biggest threat to Druidism did not come from Christianity at all, but rather from paganism: *l'affaire Isaac*, the whole affair of Isaac. I've never met Isaac, and to this day I cannot be sure what his motives were. We were not particularly charitable in assigning him motives at the time. It seemed to us that what he wanted to do was to turn Druidism into his own private bailiwick, and set himself up somehow as a Druid pope, a Big Man In Paganism, if you will, latching on to an organization that was older than any of the other pagan organizations that were common at the time that paganism took off.

His original letter [in 1974] proposed that we stop shilly-shallying around about what Druidism really is, and say, "This is what Druidism is," and then put out a paragraph that was the most nonsensical thing that I have ever read in a very long time. It was just anathema to what many of us thought, ah, yes, here it is. This is the paragraph that Isaac proposed:

The Reformed Druids of North America is an Eclectic Reconstructionist Neo-Pagan Priestcraft, based primarily upon Gaulish & Celtic sources, but open to ideas, deities and rituals from many other Neo-Pagan belief systems. We worship the Earth-Mother as the feminine personification of Manifestation, Be'al as the masculine personification of Essence, and numerous Gods and Goddesses as personifications of various aspects of our experience.

Well, that doesn't say anything to *me*. I'm not sure I worship anything; I'm not even sure I know what worship is. But this, at any rate, was not what Druidism was about for me, or for any of the Druids, certainly before my time, and for most of them after my time, until Druidism at Carleton began to take on a paganist flavor. And even when it did take on a paganist flavor, it was a responsible paganism.

Chiefly what we objected to with Isaac's approach is the incredible amount of formalism that he wanted to graft onto Druidism. Rule books, and ceremonies that had to be performed just so, and all kinds of various orders of priesthood, just all the kinds of religious paraphernalia that we were trying to escape from in Reformed Druidism. It was just antithetical to the way we saw spiritual things.

For me this was a very agonized period. The letter came out in '74, and the affair really ended in '76 when he published his huge compendium of paganist writings. When he finally published it, we had made it clear to him that it was fine with us if he published it, but that it was not a Druid publication, it was his publication. We said, "We're not about to stand in your way, we're not even going to say that this is not a Good Thing, because for you it clearly is something that means something greatly to you. But it's a mistake to portray this as Reformed Druidism, because that's not what the Reform is all about." And several people suggested, rather pointedly, that he might want to go off and schis. So he had a schism, and called himself the Schismatic Druids of North America. After the publication of his volume, Schismatic Druidism faded rather quickly.

But during this period, from '74 to '76, there was a lot of correspondence with Isaac and with other more traditional Druids, trying to figure out how we should deal with Isaac.

During this period I first faced the question of what, really, do I believe. What *does* religion mean to me? And it was only after I saw myself getting *very* upset, almost homicidally upset, that I began to appreciate the difficulties that can accrue to a religious dispute. I had always wondered before this time what the fuss and uproar was in Northern Ireland: how can two religious, two *Christian* sects get so far from the teachings of Christ that they would kill one another over things? In my own small way I began to appreciate that, and it really drained me.

It also changed my willingness to hold services in Ann Arbor at the time. We were having trouble with the grove there anyway, because as I mentioned it was not religiously satisfying to hold services there. But after the Isaac affair, I was no longer even willing to *try* to explain to people, "No, that's not what I'm doing; *this* is what I'm doing, and this is why I'm doing this." My Druidism became a very much more private affair from that point on.

I'm still very happy that there is something like Druidism going on. I'm still willing to come out of retirement to help when things get sticky. And I don't object to leading a service in the company of right-minded people, doesn't that sound awful? But I am not an evangelist. For a while I would have characterized myself as an evangelist, I think. But I no longer am.

In fact, I've come to believe that in its own quiet way, Druidism is about non-evangelism; that it is one of the cardinal errors of mankind to propagate what one believes by any means other than by *example*. If one feels strongly enough about something, the right way to make people understand that is to live it, not to preach it. It wasn't until Isaac that I really understood that.

Eric: Did you meet him?

Dick: No. I came *this* close. He was in the cities for a while during '75-'76, I think, and actually came down and participated in some services here at Carleton. At the reunion in the summer of '76, several of us old-style Druids came, and I had written to Isaac, saying, "I would like very much to meet you; I think you should meet us." Arguments on paper have a way of living their own kind of life and cut more deeply than they are meant to. I felt that it was important for us to meet face to face. But he made excuses and left for the west coast before then. So I never did have a chance to. I understand now he's severely disabled, from some disease or another, which is not anything I would wish on my worst enemy, even Isaac. I haven't heard from him in, literally, decades.

Eric: I wanted to ask also something about the organizational phenomenon of the RDNA. As part of becoming Arch-Druid at Carleton you became *ex officio* Chair of the Council of Dalon ap Landu. I wonder if you wanted to say some things about that, and the phenomenon of people, after having graduated from Carleton, going out, still being part of the organizational structure; and maybe something about the strengths or weaknesses of the Council.

Dick: Originally Druidism was *simply* a Carleton phenomenon. Several of the early Druids, however, when they left Carleton didn't want to drop Druidism, and started groves in other places. Very shortly it became evident that there needed to be some broader organization than just the campus organization. The priests of the time, there must have been three or four maybe, decided (out of the air really) to say that the supreme authority, such as there is any in Druidism, is the Council of

Third Order Priests. The Third Order is the Order of Dalon ap Landu, so this is the Council of Dalon ap Landu.

There are several higher orders, but they function more or less like honorary degrees. There's no real activity in the higher orders. Originally, I think, they were simply part of the initial cult of outrageousness. They've not proved useful and have largely died out. It's the first three orders that are important.

The basic structure of a grove is to have a priest to lead the service, and a Second Order Druid to assist, and a First Order Druid to serve as the Server. These three people are our minyan. You have to have three to start a local organization. If you don't have at least three, there's no real point in having a formal organization.

Fairly soon after the original founding, Robert Larson, who was a Carleton student, left for Berkeley and founded a grove at Berkeley. I have no idea whether this is still going on, but for a very long time it was the only other grove that survived with any permanence at all. There were several early groves. One Fisher founded in New York City, that was doomed to extinction. Frangquist founded one at the summer camp that he worked at during the summer. Of course it died when he left. Norman Nelson founded one at his graduate school in Vermillion, South Dakota, and one at his home city of Rapid City in South Dakota. And they all died. There was one founded by Savitzky at Stanford that went along for a while, but again, I have no idea if this is still a going concern. And we founded one in Ann Arbor that lasted for a couple of years and died when we left. Died before we left, really; we stopped holding services long before we left.

But officially, anything that embraces the Reform as a whole, the organ for deciding things like that is the Council of Third Order Priests. In '76 there were something like 30 of us, maybe a bit more than 30. I have no idea how many there are now.

Fairly shortly after this mechanism was put into place, a series of resolutions were passed: formalizing the normal local grove structure; stating explicitly that there is no official liturgy, with the single exception of the induction into the Third Order. There were some other things as well. Practically from the beginning these were all passed by mail, because never once since the first couple years of Druidism have all the priests been together in one place, or even a quorum of them. All of this business was done by mail.

The last thing that passed was in '71: I insisted that we formalize the equality of men and women. There was a lot of male-chauvinist-pigism in the early years of the Reform, and it's not entirely due to the fact that women had less freedom at Carleton at that time (due to the women's hours.) It is directly traceable to the Christian tradition of Fisher and some of his friends. Chief players against that were Frangquist and his wife, and myself. We pushed hard to get this thing; even went to the extent of looking up Druids that we had hadn't heard from in a long time to try to get their votes on this thing.

And in the end it passed by consensus. There were no votes dissenting from the part that was officially adopted. We cultivated that as an ideal. Nowhere will you find it written what a quorum is in the Council of Dalon ap Landu. As an historical fact, everything that was adopted by the Council was adopted by consensus.

When Isaac came along and started consecrating all of his pagan friends to the Third Order, we rapidly saw that if he really wanted to take this and run with it, it would be possible for him to swamp the Council with pagans, and then he could do whatever he pleased. And so very, very strongly we pushed the notion that *anything* the Council adopts has got to be by consensus, because we knew that when it comes to Neo-Pagan sorts of things, things could not be adopted by consensus. There was no consensus on that sort of thing. But since '71, nothing has happened.

Eric: Do you consider that the Council still exists, in any sense?

Dick: Oh, sure. Sure it exists, just by the fact that there are people in the Third Order. It's never done business for a long number of years, and, I'm convinced, never will. I used to have this recurring notion that we had to be careful with this, because it is exactly this kind of organization that pulls a religion away from the spiritual into the formal and political. If one wants Druidism to survive as an organization, which on the face of it is nonsense; Druidism isn't about organizations, but if one wants Druidism to stick around, you have to have some formalism.

Perhaps the best way of perpetuating this formalism is as, in fact, has happened: by word of mouth, from one retired priest to a struggling undergraduate here at Carleton, trying to understand all this stuff, what the founders had in mind when they wrote this kind of thing. I feel strongly enough about Druidism that I'm willing to go out of my way to be part of that. But I think setting up a formal structure to try to keep this thing going is a mistake; it's the trap that religion falls into.

I didn't always believe that. In fact, when I first started as Arch-Druid, I set about codifying all the tradition I could find. It was in the summer after I was appointed Arch-Druid pro tem; I put together a "Codex of Form" (as I called it) that had all of the tradition that I could glean from *The Blue Book* and everything I could put together about what old-style Druidism was about. It was full of "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not" and so forth. It was such an anti-Druidic sort of thing; I have done penance for this many, many times over! But I was put right in no uncertain terms by several people. It was the beginning of a long correspondence with many people whom I've never met but value as friends. And this, too, is a part of my religious education, in understanding just exactly what true religion is all about.

And it was exactly this sort of thing that we objected to in Isaac: just form run rampant. Yet "Thou art without form."

Eric: If your goal is to continue as an organization, he had at least the point that the Council was not a very effective method of having an organization.

Dick: By design, I would say.

Eric: One of the points he would bring up would be the unreliability, from time to time, of the Carleton Grove Arch-Druid taking their responsibility seriously in reporting to Druids at large happenings and changes.

Dick: And I can understand that kind of frustration, even if he weren't into a power play trying to be Big Fish himself. There was a real divide in Druidism at this time, between Carleton Druids and non-Carleton Druids. The non-Carleton Druids, I'm sure justifiably, felt themselves on the outside, and I'm not saying we're entirely innocent of fostering that. But it remains true that the Druids I'm comfortable with, that I commune with, that I can understand, are the Carleton

Druids. I'm firmly convinced that the Reformed Druidism that I know is a Carleton phenomenon, and so it's not particularly important to me that there be an organization for the rest of Druidism.

At the same time, I don't want to give the idea that I don't think people outside Carleton aren't important, or that spiritual development outside Carleton isn't important. But I am convinced that the kind of organization that Druidism adopted survives well only at Carleton. Spiritual enlightenment for other people is important, but probably ought not to be done that way.

Eric: I was reading yesterday, preparing for this, through a lot of the correspondence that I have, a great deal of which comes out the '74-'76 Isaac wars. This correspondence pretty much stops as soon as Isaac's *Druid Chronicles (Evolved)* is published. At that time there had been talk about a Provisional Council of Arch-Druids to do some of the, well, people had different ideas as to just what it would do. There were indications that you would not necessarily be opposed to being part of it if it was going to exist. Did anything ever come of that, or did that just fitter away, or what? What's the end of that story?

Dick: I don't really know the end, to tell you the truth. The Provisional Council of Arch-Druids was suggested by Robert Larson of Berkeley as a way of trying to keep the official face of Druidism somewhat more consistent than the Arch-Druid of Carleton was capable of doing. You have to realize that most Arch-Druids of Carleton had very little in the way of resources, and little time, to spend on this kind of thing. The argument is just, that if Druidism was going to be a nation-wide phenomenon, there needed to be something beyond the Arch-Druid of Carleton to give it some kind of permanence.

At the time [though], most of us from Carleton deeply mistrusted Isaac's motives. We were not at all clear just what the Provisional Council was designed to accomplish. What made us even more suspicious was the fact that this thing was organized, as we saw it, behind our backs, because no Carleton Druids were involved except Robert himself. But again, that's not necessarily attributable to them; they didn't know of the Ann Arbor grove. Although we had announced it to the Arch-Druid of Carleton, she had left campus and not issued anything like a formal report, as she is required to do by the Council.

A large part of the animosity at that time is attributable certainly to deep differences in spiritual matters, but also to a bad lack of communication. It's exactly that sort of thing that the Provisional Council was to try to correct. But the Provisional Council really didn't meet the needs of anybody, so it died fairly soon. It didn't meet Isaac's needs, because Isaac wanted to be leader himself, and this was yet another obstacle in his way. It didn't meet our needs, because Arch-Druids and groves in general, beyond Carleton, have not been particularly important to Carleton Druids.

If Druidism was to be a national organization, the need for something like that was clear, but it's never been clear that Druidism *needs* to be a national organization. Some of us at the time thought, wouldn't it be just *terrible* if Druidism became a religion in this sense! One of my recurring nightmares would be to wake up and discover that Druidism had been declared the state religion! Something to rob Druidism of its essential nature; and that would do it very

rapidly. So the Council didn't really answer anybody's needs, and it didn't survive very long.

Eric: I wanted to back up just briefly to a minor point. You [spoke] about the higher orders as being the equivalent to honorary degrees: did you get such an honorary degree?

Dick: Yes . . .

Eric: What orders were you?

Dick: I am a Druid of the Fifth Order, which is the order headed by Norman Nelson, whom I regard as probably the quintessential Druid. He was one of the original founders. The Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Orders were all created in a single day, by who were then the three priests of the time: Fisher, Frangquist, and Nelson. They each became Patriarch of one the higher orders. I've had a lot of correspondence with Norman, and at one point he sent me a letter that said, "Find somebody to consecrate you to the Fifth Order!" So I did. It was in fact Steve [Savitzky], and I asked Norman's permission to have Steve consecrated to the Fifth Order, and he granted it, so I consecrated Steve to the Fifth Order.

Eric: As I understand it, you never were consecrated to the Fourth Order?

Dick: No, that's right. Beyond the Third Order it's just catch as catch can. I'm honored that Norman thought enough of me to grant me this honor. It's not an honor I wear on my sleeve. It's not the sort of thing that I will admit to unless I'm asked it point blank, because I do not believe that it is fundamentally an essential part of my religious experience, or fundamentally a part of Druidism.

Eric: Continuing with the trivial historical footnote, then: as far as I could tell from my readings, it wasn't clear that anybody had ever gone beyond the Seventh Order, which was the Order that Gary Zempel was made Patriarch of.

Dick: Right. Gary Zempel was the Arch-Druid after Frangquist. The first three Arch-Druids were Fisher, Nelson, and Frangquist, and they became Patriarchs of their high orders in that single day back in '64. As sort of a matter of course, the Sixth Order elected Zempel, the next Arch-Druid, to be the next Patriarch. But Zempel never selected any other priests to his order, and not too long after he left Carleton, he sort of dropped out. At one point, he felt that he should do something about the fact that the line of higher orders had stopped there, and mentioned to me that he wanted to be considered as retired, and somebody else should be appointed as Seventh Order [Patriarch]. So I wrote to Frangquist, the Patriarch of the next order down, which is responsible for electing the Seventh Order Patriarch, and said, "Well, Gary doesn't think that he's Patriarch anymore, or doesn't want to be considered Patriarch anymore. This is your bailiwick; if you want to do anything about it, fine." And nothing happened. I didn't expect anything to happen. As far as I'm concerned, he's still Seventh Order Patriarch, and there are no other Seventh Order priests, and it's ending there. It's not a big deal for me. It was for Isaac.

Eric: There have from time to time been other orders created, besides the numerical things, some of them not within the RDNA structure, but others "possibly" within. The Archives includes something from a person who was a Carleton Arch-Druid, at least during the summer of 1978. (It's not too clear what the chronology is in some of those years!) She's announcing the creation of a new order, and she considers herself RDNA. Do you have any comments on that kind of

thing, or are these higher orders or not? Where is that for you?

Dick: I've never understood this penchant for creating orders. It's largely a Neo-Pagan phenomenon, the orders created beyond the first [set of] higher orders. The first higher orders, I think, were created simply because Frangquist and Nelson wanted a bigger piece of the action. The higher orders have never been important to me as part of my religious experience. Do I recognize these as orders of Reformed Druidism? Well, I think probably Orders Four through Ten I will acknowledge as part of Reformed Druidism because they're in the *Chronicles*. Are they an important part of Reformed Druidism? Not at all. Are the other high orders important to Reformed Druidism? Well, they're not to my Reformed Druidism. To their members they may be important; far be it from me to gainsay that. I'm perfectly willing to live and let live. Am I going to refuse to have anything to do with somebody that comes to a service wearing the insignia of such an order? No, not at all. I don't feel the need to wear my insignia; it doesn't bother me one way or the other if they want to. It's just not part of my view of Druidism. I know they're there; certainly to me they're not important.

Eric: OK, I want to do a radical shift of where we've been, and return you to college and talk a little bit about some of the other things that were going on at Carleton while you were there, possibly as they relate to you as Arch-Druid, and possibly not. For instance, in May of 1970 the college has its Strike for several days following the invasion of Cambodia. As when I'm doing an interview with *anybody* who was here at that time, I'm interested in knowing your perspective on that and how it affected you, what part you may have played. This is turning into a long question, but I noticed, I guess it must have been in the Black Book, you had a poem or a chant "In Time of War," with the notation that it was written following the invasion of Cambodia. Obviously international politics was on your mind at the time.

Dick: The Exorcism.

Eric: An Exorcism, that's right. There; it's a long question; run with it!

Dick: In the mid sixties several things happened at Carleton. In the earlier sixties, about the time that Druidism was founded, various requirements were being abolished, like the religious attendance requirement. In my freshman year convocation requirement, the requirement that you attend the convocations, was abrogated. In the early sixties a lot of these *in loco parentis* things were falling, and there was a great deal of animosity between the student body and particularly the Dean of Men's Office, to some extent to President Nason as well, because, and, I feel, rightly, the students resented these things as not being an appropriate part of an adult educational experience.

I was not really part of that. A large part of this bitterness was over and done with by the time I got here in '67. In '67 the burning issue was race relations. The yearbook for that year ['67'68] was virtually taken over by essays about the relationship between races. Oddly enough, that seems to have been restricted pretty much to that one year, I think largely because while I was at Carleton we never did have much in the way of a minority student population. I think that's changed somewhat now, but we had a few token blacks, and that was it.

But increasingly as the years went on, certainly by the time I was a sophomore, when Joe came back from Israel, the

burning issue, bar none, was Vietnam. It consumed every aspect of our lives, from watching the body counts on TV to the Damoclean sword of the draft hanging over every male one of us. The death of somebody whose name I've forgotten, and whom I never knew, who was the only Carleton grad I know of that was killed in Vietnam, these were all impinging on us all the time.

The election of 1968 really galvanized the campus, and large numbers of students went on buses to Wisconsin to help in the primaries for Gene McCarthy. Many of my close friends, in fact, went on that. I did not, because, I think, at that time I was still a Republican. I had come to campus in '67 supporting the war. It did not take long to change my mind. (This was quite apart from worrying about the draft, although my mother certainly did! It hadn't yet really crossed my mind that *I* myself could possibly be drafted. This changed later on!)

When it became evident that Nixon was not going to wind down the war in Vietnam, there was a dramatic change of attitude on campus, I believe, and people became radicalized in a way that heretofore had not been.

My junior year was the year of the Strike. I was involved as a member of the CSA government: I was a CSA senator for a while, and then I was secretary of CSA, because I got so fed up with the incredibly poor performance of the previous secretary. One of my duties as secretary was to issue minutes for the meetings. This involved typing them up on mimeograph masters and then taking them upstairs to Fourth Willis. (Willis at that time was the Union.) Fourth Willis was where the government offices were and where the mimeograph machine was.

In the process of doing that, I came to know another person who was up there frequently. She had an office up there, but also she used the mimeograph machine. She had been a graduate student at the University of Michigan. Even before the Strike we had had conversations about what had happened at the University of Michigan. I don't know if you're aware of this history, but Michigan, outside of Berkeley and Columbia, was probably the most radicalized campus, and it was that campus that was overrun by the sheriff's office. Really brutal police tactics were used against students there. In fact, a couple of years later I myself went to Michigan as a graduate student, and I remember thinking once, walking past a building on campus, realizing, something suddenly clicked, *that's* the building where all this happened! It was like a thunderbolt from a distant time.

But this woman I talked to quite a bit, and she was a large part of my radicalization. During the Strike we were up on Fourth Willis every day, churning this mimeograph machine, trying to gather and put out all the rumors from all across the country that we knew about. After Kent State and the calling out of the National Guard, there was a very real sense that the powers that be in this country were starting to turn, maybe "Nazistic" is a little too strong a term, but repressive and Fascist. The March on Washington happened, I forget precisely when it was, but I'm sure it was that spring, and Joe was part of that. (I didn't go on that, having essentially no resources and no way of getting there, and refusing to hitch-hike.)

But basically the whole educational structure of the campus came to a halt. There may have been some classes, but virtually everybody stopped going to most of the classes. I can still remember standing by the teletype (KARL had a

teletype; that was on Third Willis, I think) and watching as these things came through, and literally ripping them off the teletype and taking them upstairs and typing them onto mimeograph masters. There was a very strong feeling that you couldn't trust the national press. You couldn't trust anybody over 30; that was the phrase, right?

It was a very paranoid time. The threat of the draft really burned that into us: if we got out of line, *we would be drafted*. Our draft boards would be told, and our deferments would be canceled, and we would be called up. I don't really believe that happened a lot. I know it did happen on a couple of occasions. But that was one of the threats that was held over us.

I can still remember the first draft lottery. I think it was when I was a sophomore; it must have been the spring of '69. The numbers came off the teletype, and they were ripping them off the teletype and posting them on the glass window in the KARL studio. I remember coming into the room — it was packed — and starting at the beginning, looking for February 28. I was aware by the time I had gotten to the second of these sheets (there must have been maybe ten of them all together) that my heart was beating so hard I was sure everybody could hear it. As I got farther and farther along down the sheets and I still hadn't found February 28, I started to relax, until I got all the way to the end of the sheets and I *still* hadn't found February 28, and I realized I'd missed it and it might very well be the second date for all I knew!

It turned out it was number 299, which, even I knew at that time, meant effectively that I wouldn't be called for the draft. And there was a real moral crossroads for me: once the threat of the draft had been removed, was I really as radical as I said I was? This was something I had to think long and hard about. I knew that I was against the war in Vietnam. Would I actually march in demonstrations against it? Well, I didn't, until the invasion of Cambodia, and at that point I was finally pushed over the line; I realized this was something you had to stand up and be counted about, and it was then that I wrote the Exorcism. We held that Exorcism complete with blazing torches that we smothered to put the flames of war out.

Earth Day also happened about the same time. I forget just what year that started.

Eric: Same year.

Dick: Druids were part of the first Earth Day. We gave an invocation. The summer that Ellen and I graduated, we were married that August. The wedding present that I remember best, and that we still have, was *The Last Whole Earth Catalog* that was sent us by Steve.

Eric: How appropriate!

Dick: But it was all part of the times. The radicalism of those couple of years is just impossible to forget, and it really shaped an entire generation. It's been said so many times that it sounds almost trite now. But those were the formative experiences of my generation.

Eric: Do you want to say anything to wrap up, you've touched on this many times, of course, summing up the meaning of the Carleton Druids in your life. That sounds much too vast! Anything that would be an appropriate way to close, stepping back and putting it in its place for you.

Dick: Well, for me personally Druidism was another one of those formative events, experiences, not really an event. Druidism determined the way that I look at life, the way that I deal with

not just my spirituality but with almost every aspect of my life, the way I approach writing a computer program, even. A very strong belief that (thinking of it in terms of a computer program now) the user must be respected. As the designer of a program, you can't foist your way of looking at things on the user; you have to adapt your program to what the user wants to do, what is valuable for him. And that's just another bit of Druidism, really. The whole idea of making life user-friendly, if you will.

In a very real sense I live and think and breathe Druidism every day, every hour of my life. As a formal religion I scarcely ever think about it any more, except when I get calls of distress from Carleton! I am occasionally asked to speak about it by other enlightened groups, like the Unitarians. It is not important, no, that's not true: I was going to say it's not important to me that Druidism continue as a "religion." I am very pleased that it has, and not because it validates in any sense something that I was a part of or something that I helped to continue, but because I believe very strongly in its principles and its approach to life.

As religious fundamentalism rises in this country, and in the world, I feel very strongly that it's important that we stand up for an alternative view; that we make clear that no matter how firmly someone may feel that fundamentalist Christianity is the only way to salvation, it is important in a pluralistic society (I would say important anywhere in the world, but certainly in America) not to let that destroy the fabric of society, no matter how sinful you may view that society. In the long run, that is the road to, I won't say damnation, but certainly to destruction. It's important to me that this contrarian view be promoted.

It's not important to me that that view take on a particularly Celtic view or form, or a Reformed Druidistic form, although I would say that this entire contrarian view is a druidic, small outlook. So the particular forms that it takes are not really important to me, but the principle itself I think is one that is one of the most basic in our society.

It's not an anti-Christian view; it's an anti-totalitarian view. I have nothing against the beliefs of Christianity; there are many beliefs of Christianity that I believe in. The moral teachings of Christianity I feel quite in tune with. But the modus operandi of fundamentalist Christian sects is to me just another version of totalitarianism, and it needs to be called that, and it needs to be countered.

Then again, one can apply the same principles in other situations that are not spiritual at all. The traditional top-down management that I encounter every day of my life at Unisys is totalitarianism, and it is counter-productive, and it's why the Japanese are beating us. And this is another way in which I am Druidic, trying to sabotage this top-down management.

Western civilization has from the very earliest times been pushed by and propagated by control freaks. At root, that is what I think Druidism is: a statement against control; that the best things in life come by letting them happen, not by controlling them to make them not happen. All valuable change, well, this is awfully dogmatic, but all valuable change (yes! I firmly believe this!) has come about in situations where the status quo simply can no longer hold, and the people who are trying to keep it from changing are willing to stoop to totalitarian tactics. It is at junctures like these where the Druidic approach is *necessary*.

Eric: Thank you.

Notes added by Dick during the editing of the transcript:

1. *Although at the time of the interview I had not met either the Frangquists or Isaac, I have since met both: the Frangquists in October 1993 and Isaac in April 1994.*

2. My numbering of the floors of Willis may leave some puzzled. The government offices were on what is generally known as Third Willis, the fourth floor if you count the Ground Willis as the first floor. My account is probably influenced by the memory of the three long flights of stairs from the ground floor where I got my supplies to the top floor where I ran off the minutes.



**Figure 4** Shelton at 30th Anniversary, April 1993 on Monument Hill.

## First Interview with Isaac Bonewits

by Michael Scharding

on April 1, 1994

Carleton College Archives

Oral History Project

Transcription by Benjamin Wood

Lightly edited for clarity, unknown/questionable words are put inside brackets

IB= Isaac Bonewits

MS= Michael Scharding



**Note:** See many other interviews with Isaac Bonewits in Green Book 10 of Part Six of ARDA 2.

MS: OK, this is Michael Scharding interviewing Isaac Bonewits, oh, you mind if this is recorded?

IB: No, that's no problem.

MS: OK, on the first of April, April Fool's Day.

IB: Ah hah

MS: 1994

IB: An auspicious to announce the founding of the Order of Thoth.

MS: That's right. Well, this one is mostly going to be back on the RDNA days again. As we were just talking about the writing of the family tree of Druidism, one of the rules in the bi-laws is only an Arch-Druid can elect a third order priest. Was this a common practice, or did any third order person do this?

IB: As I recall, <pause> As I recall you had to be a third order priest to be an Arch-Druid, and you could then ordain other third orders, but I also recall though that the point may have gotten stretched a few times that any third order can ordain another third order. I believe that all of the times that I did ordinations, I was the Arch-Druid of a given grove. Although, oddly enough, I might have been a traveling Arch-Druid, I believe I did several of those ordinations for what



eventually became the Arch-grove of the Hasidic Druids of North America down in St. Louis. I was traveling down in St. Louis, at the time I was the Arch-Druid of the Twin Cities grove, in Minneapolis, and I may have at that point done some of the ordinations down in the St. Louis area. That would have been Lou Schreiber and Vicki and Carolyn Clark.

MS: One of the things that some people have brought up, and there's so much dirt that gets thrown on you...

IB: <laughing>

MS: There is, a seemingly great desire on your part to become Arch-Druid of something, and I've noticed that you've been Arch-Druid of a grove often when there's another grove in the same city, mainly because of your SDNA branch. I was just wondering if this might have been because you wanted to increase the size of the third order, that you felt that you needed to be an active Arch-Druid.

IB: <pause> I don't think so. I'm trying to remember what time period you'd be talking about here.

MS: I know you were Arch-Druid of Stockton Grove from '72 to '74, Twin Cities roughly from '74 to '76 it seemed, and then you came back to Berkeley and then you were either Arch-Druid of Berkeley or the Mother Grove in Berkeley.

IB: <pause> I can't remember a lot of those details. I was staying with Bob Pinell <pause> and Roy Keister I think it was in Stockton. I may have made them second or third order, I don't remember. And we did have a grove there that, while I was living in Stockton. Generally, I tended for a long time to simply have a grove where I was living, because if people didn't already about Reform Druidism, I would tell them pretty soon, and then people would say "Oh great, let's start a grove." So we would. But I think it was more on the fact of people wanting there to be a grove than for me being particularly enamored of the role. Most of the time when I was starting a grove, I was the only one who was experienced with the liturgy and such. About the only time there was ever an election that was really contested with multiple candidates, was when I was in the Bay Area where there were a lot of third order Druids floating around. But Stockton was quite a distance from the Bay Area.

MS: And I also noticed that it almost looked like the grove was an extension of the SCA.

IB: Well we had an overlap for a while, a definite overlap. Bob Larson's Clann na Brocheta Grove was, in one sense, an extension of the Renaissance Pleasure Fair, because Clann na Brocheta was a group of Gaelic players and musicians who worked at the Renaissance Fair. And he did there ceremonies for them in [Munster] Irish, um but it, there has been an extensive overlap between the SCA and pagandom and science fiction fandom and computer fandom for many, many years. Because all of these are subcultures that encourage people who are intelligent and creative, so they are going to have overlapping populations.

MS: OK, yeah because I've noticed that a lot of Arch-Druids, a lot of groves have been [SCA] members and come to Carleton.

IB: Oh yeah, and a lot of them have been computer techies.

MS: Yes, <pause> one of the things that is very curious is <pause> more so than a few others, I think we can admit that you are a little more, it almost looks like you're proselytizing.

IB: <gasp>

MS: Yes

IB: You're saying dirty words

MS: Big dirty word, oh, most of the other groves that I've noticed that were setup by founders, except for the one in Berkeley which, of course, led to you, very very few people get ordained by the Carleton graduate. In fact, most of them never ever escape the college environment.

IB: Right.

MS: Berkeley somehow, probably because of the, the rather convenient Bay Area Neo-Pagan scene, managed to dump the college environment and go for something permanent. And, I'm kind of curious...

IB: Well there wasn't much of a Neo-Pagan scene in the Bay Area in 1969, there were twenty or thirty people in the area who were Wiccan, although most of them were being very definitely undercover in that process, because even then it wasn't safe to come out in public. But there were a number of people in the SCA who were Pagan. And I discovered the SCA at roughly the same time I discovered Reform Druidism, so they seemed to make a good match. And we started doing Druid ceremonies at some of the weekend tournaments. To deal specifically with the topic of proselytizing, I never thought there was anything wrong with telling people you had something good. Shoving it down their throats, or threatening them with hell-fire is totally different, but sharing something that you have that you think is a wonderful thing is, if not an obligation, at least an understand urge on the part of people that who've discovered something good.

MS: Yeah, one of the requirements in the third order is to minister to the people's needs, but I think that the Carleton group had the understanding that they're supposed to find you, or maybe that's just laziness on their part.

IB: There's a couple, several different orientations from that. I really believe that Dave Fisher was coming out of one of the United Ancient Order of Druid groups, that from the style of his liturgy and his description of what he thought Druidism was, it seems very clear that he was coming out of that group. And that group is a fraternal order patterned after the Masons, and like the Masons, pretty much insisted that people knock on the door and ask for admission. They did not actively go out and recruit, so I think that David Fisher had a reluctance to recruit in the first place, and I also think that for most of the old time, the first generation Reform Druids, the RDNA was a wonderful memory from their college years, and they wanted to keep it a quaint little alumni club, they didn't want to let in just anybody. So I suspect that a large part of the, you know, misunderstanding and hostility was generated by the fact, here was somebody that came out of the blue, who never even went to Carleton, who was treating their alumni club as if it were a real religion.

MS: Yeah, and that's what I've been able to pick up.

IB: Yeah.

MS: In fact, you're one of the very few non-Carleton students to actually ordain anybody.

IB: <laughing>

MS: The only other I can think of is Stephan and Tezra at the present, and maybe Larry Press. I don't know if any of the other groves, like the Twin Cities grove or the Arch grove...

IB: Uh, no, Larry Press and Emmon Bodfish in the Orinda grove, they ordained a few people.

IB: And who was I talking to? Yeah, and Stephan and Tezra have done ordinations. So, really, as far as I can tell, the real hotbed of Reform Druid activity was on the west coast, primarily in the Bay region with my grove and the groves that branched off from it. And also up in Seattle, with Cindy Schuller...

IB: Yeah, she has a pretty large group there.

MS: Now, <pause> what happened to all these little groves, like the Arch grove and the acorn grove and these...

IB: Well, the same thing that happens in nature, a bunch of seeds get planted and some of them sprout, and some of them don't, and of the one's that do sprout some of them get cropped off by the deer real fast.

MS: <laughing>

IB: And the ones that manage to survive to become saplings, either prosper or not depending on the rain and the fertility of the soil, and a hundred other things. So if you plant twenty or thirty groves, you're lucky if two or three of them are still running five years later. I didn't realize that at first. The Arch grove lasted for two or three years in St. Louis and then collapsed because the couple who were running it divorced, a situation that is very common the craft but hasn't been so common in the RDNA because we haven't had that many situations where couples were starting a grove. The Twin Cities grove, I believe it kept going for a short period of time after I moved out of the Twin Cities, I believe Avery Grant was running it. And, what ever, its not in existence now, I have no idea at one point it collapsed, my brother might be able to tell us that because I think he stayed in contact with Avery for a while.

MS: It seems to me almost, I don't know, there seems to been in the early '70s, something around 1972 or so, there seems to been large number of groups that seems to like have almost chucked a lot of the old occult astrology and a whole bunch of other kinds of things that, what Bradley calls were from a Christian matrix attitude and just started fresh, and started digging their hands into the stuff themselves and looking into other cultures. And this is what I've been able to figure out what Neo-Paganism is, kind of a hands-on, fresh start.

IB: Yeah, I'd say that that's true in many ways. There was an explosion of interest in the occult and simultaneously in witchcraft, Paganism, and folk magic, all intertwined together during the late '60s and early '70s and really the spread of Neo-Paganism is directly traceable to that particular time period, which is when almost all the people who are now big-nosed Pagans first got involved with it.

MS: Now you've always defined Neo-Paganism as a reconstructive religion based on primarily pre-Christian sources, what were the other kinds of groups that were doing reconstruction in a Neo-Pagan format? I know there's the Source of Eternal Life for the Egyptians.

IB: Church for the Eternal Source, that's what you mean, the Egyptian folks. They were one of the big groups. Fere-Faeria was another one, Fred Adams was trying to reconstruct his vision of Greek religion. The most influential of course was the Church of All Worlds.

MS: But that's not really a pre-Christian religion.

IB: Well, no, they were perfectly willing to admit that they were starting a brand new religion, but they believed that they were inspired by the models of the pre-Christian religions, and expanding them in a modern sense. Tim Zell (now Otter Zell)

was important, one of the first people to come up with what became known as the Gaia hypothesis. He actually published material on it before Lovelock did and Zell is the one that actually made the term Neo-Paganism widespread, it was in the American occult community. The Wiccan movement started out being what I consider Meso-Pagan, and only became Neo-Pagan under the influence of the counter-culture in the United States, when they realized they could drop a lot of the window dressing that had been added to keep the Christians happy.

MS: <laughing> And so the Druids were essentially the Celtic element, but the Wicca was of course using a lot of the Celtic...

IB: But the folks in Wicca claimed that they were Celtic but in point of fact what they were doing was far more Greco-Roman then it was Celtic, and for people in.... Oh, and there was also groups like the Asatru Free Assembly and other folks that were interested in Norse Paganism, they were starting up at about this same time. Unfortunately, they got infiltrated and subverted by Neo-Nazis rather quickly so that most of the, even today, you'll still find that the vast majority of Norse groups are Meso-Pagans, hung up on Aryan, pure-race, bullshit. But yeah, to a certain extent the Druids was the movement in Neo-Paganism for people who were interested in the Celts.

MS: And the RDNA was the only contender in the field at that time.

IB: That's right.

MS: See, that's what I'm very curious about. When I read your early letters, there seems to be a very rushed attitude. I know you were extremely busy in a lot of movements and

IB: <laughing>

MS: ...might have been a little bit upset about what you saw as a set of emergency breaks in the RDNA, on something you couldn't really deal to much time with, but um what was the sense of urgency coming from?

IB: That was a time period that I was fairly firmly convinced that the ecology was in a mess and that this insane macho posturing between the United States and the Soviet Union was libel to blow it all up, and I felt that there was really a strong need to spread the ideas of Neo-Paganism and to spread the techniques of magic to people with Neo-Pagan ethics, as widely as possible as quickly as possible, just for the sheer sake of survival of the planet. And I still feel that today but I don't have quite the sense of urgency I used to, because it is beginning to look like maybe enough magic was done to put the breaks on at least the nuclear threat. And because the ecology movement has begun to be successful, and is beginning to change peoples attitudes. I still feel a sense of urgency but I'm not in my twenties anymore.

MS: Yeah, it's actually quite remarkable what you were doing in your twenties...

IB: <laughing>

MS: I must say.

IB: Yeah, I wish I had that much energy today.

MS: Oh, don't you know it. And so let's, I'm just trying to figure out...

IB: Well, you know I've been doing a lot of research over the last twenty-five years in the history of Wicca. And the more I read about Gerald Gardner and about the atmosphere in the

occult community in England during the '40s and '50s and '60s, the more sympathy I'm developing for him. And, Gardner ordained zillions of people, he ordained anybody who'd walk into his living room practically, and the reason he seems to have done so was because he figured that if he ordained several hundred people, at least a couple dozen of them would be good and would keep his religion going. And I think to a great extent that I was working on much the same principle, the idea that if I ordained a lot of third order priests, that a significant proportion of them would keep it up and go out and start new groves, where they would ordain new people who would go and start new groves. And I thought that this would be a good thing for the planet and for the people involved.

MS: Yes, Bradley was talking about that, he's a very interesting person if you get to talk with him. And he said that there's a certain size for a parish to remain stable, he thinks it's around two hundred people, cause by that point you have at least five or six people who can cover slack in case something goes wrong, versus just one. And one of the things that I think a lot of people were a little bit eerie about, but then I'll talk about the other side, seems to be your role as a nexus point. Stephan also had this complaint raised against him. For instance, most of the Carleton RDNA were unable, for some reason, to contact many of the other, non-Carleton RNDAs. And they almost kind of felt like they had to go through you to get there, while it's nice that you actually were there to see actually make it to other people, I don't know, it almost seems like they're...they're kicking the system.

IB: I sent the name, and mailing address and phone number of every person I ordained to the attention of Arch Druid of Carleton.

MS: Right, and there is documents for that.

IB: And, if the people at Carleton didn't bother to contact any of those folks, and never bothered to keep up-to-date mailing lists, you know that wasn't anything I could really take responsibility for. I seem to recall that once every two or three years, I would send as much of an update as I had of current addresses, but there was nothing to stop people at Carleton from contacting any of these people directly, they just never bothered. The groves at Carleton were primarily concerned with Carleton.

MS: Yes, I picked that up...

IB: Which you can understand, running, even if it's a very small grove, you're still running a student organization, and the average college student really doesn't think on a grand scale in terms of "Oh, I'm at the head of a nationwide network and I have to keep the communication lines clear."

MS: <laughing>

IB: No, the average Arch Druid at Carleton, didn't think about that.

MS: Yeah, and you know, I don't know, maybe they're just jealous or they just, I don't know, there is definitely really small minded thinking going on and actually you know that it is one of the good things that you did publish so much stuff, because, as Bradley says "Isaac Bonewits he might have his faults here and there but at least he publishes, gets stuff out on the table."

IB: <laughing>

MS: "You know, you can like him or hate him, but you still at least have something to work with."

IB: Michael Bradley, who is Michael Bradley, why does that name ring a bell?

MS: Arch-Druid of Chicago.

IB: What?

MS: Chicago

IB: Oh right.

MS: He was inducted by McDavid.

IB: He hardly ever answered his mail as I recall.

MS: Yeah, but he was a pretty mellow dude and he and McDavid had a very nice connection with each other and they had a nice little grove for a number of years. And he's in Seattle now.

IB: Is it still functioning?

MS: Oh no, it stopped in '78 and Bradley's now in Seattle and he's going to join Cindy's group sometime in the future. He actually was going to start the humanistic DNA

IB: The HDNA?

MS: Uh huh, and that might have worked really well.

IB: Well at that point there wasn't any Hassidic Druids left so the initial was ok

MS: That would lead to confusion.

IB: Yes, it sure would. But we had a lot of confusion in those days.

MS: <pause> Lineage, how many groups in the '70s were stuck up on lineage?

IB: What, in the Reform Druid community?

MS: And also elsewhere.

IB: Well a sizable number in the Wiccan community really felt that lineage was important, because that was how they maintained their quality control. Because they were doing everything in secrecy, that being half the fun of being a witch, they didn't have any published standards of qualification for the clergy. And they had no central, because they were decentralized, there was no one address you could write to, to verify if whether or not a person was capable of doing what they said they were. So, the way they maintained any kind of quality of control was to say "well I was ordained by lady so-and so, how was ordained by lady so-and-so, who was ordained by lady such-and-such." And if you knew any of the people along that line of succession, then you could make a reasonable guess as to whether or not this person had been properly trained and initiated. But of course, that only worked within particular denominations, and there were so many people within the Wiccan community who were making up brand new denominations out of thin air, and telling outrageous lies about their ancestry and their families and their childhood training and a lot of other B.S., when they were obviously using stuff they'd ripped off from Gerald Gardner, that it made it impossible to ever verify anything. Now, but the folks that think of themselves as the British Traditionalist, the Conservatives, still to this day think that lineage is still very important, this is their own apostolic succession. On the other hand there were a lot of people who were saying "well no, we're going to make this all up ourselves, and we're going to use published material, and we're going to use material we research ourselves, and we'll put it all together, and we don't care if it's old or new, we like it cause it works." And those folks didn't care about lineage at all. Certainly the folks at Fer-faeria and Church of

Eternal Source and The Church of All Worlds weren't worried about lineage, because they knew that they were making brand new religion.

MS: That's why I'm kind of curious about, there has been rumors about Isaac, that one reason you stayed in the RDNA was because it preceded all the other guys. And I think that this is rather a shallow comment.

IB: <laughing> Preceded all the other guys?

MS: Yeah, because the others incorporated '67 and stuff and...

IB: Oh, well incorporations and stuff didn't matter very much. Nobody much was impressed by being incorporated except when it was a chance to gain legal protection for Paganism, then people got impressed by incorporation.

MS: Well, not so much incorporation as foundation.

IB: Yeah, most, Gerald Gardner started his trip, I personally don't think that there was anything preceding him that he was continuing, but even if there was, what he did was a brand new thing, and he essentially started that in the last '40s and early '50s. And the Druid orders, if you want to look at it, if we say that David Fisher came out of the Ancient Order of Druids or one of those offshoots, well that at least goes back to the mid 1700s. But, I never really thought that the apostolic succession was that critical. I have a whole long discussion on varieties of initiation and transmission of the Gnosis or apostolic succession is only one of the three major types of initiation, and it isn't always the most important, the other two being recognition of status already gained and ordeal of transformation. But the point is, no, I didn't stick with the RDNA because I thought the RDNA was older than any of the other Neo-Pagan groups. It was because the archetype, the Druid, really resonated with me, the same way that the archetype of the witch resonates with a lot of other people. It's what I was pulled too, and even when I tried to drop out and stay away from it, I kept getting dragged by the scruff of the neck back into it, kicking and screaming.

MS: It almost seems to me that the SDNA was kind of like the testing groups for ADF in some ways.

IB: Oh, to a great extent. When I sit down and I look through this old material I can see a lot of the ideas that ADF has manifested there in sort of an embryonic stage. And, when I really began to realize that the founders of the RDNA really didn't want it to be a religion, and yet I thought that it seemed obvious to me that it was a religion, I first started experimenting, and I think that the SDNA was my first experiment with that.

MS: Yeah, because I mean there had been lots of RDNA Druids before you who had declared it their own personal religion, it just seems like there was this subtle shift that you're not supposed to, even if you do consider it your own religion, not to advertise the group as a religion. And you want to, well see the thing is, any group after 1967 or so, that grove that founded, whether it was one of yours or one of the Carleton graduates doing it, the majority of the members that they got were of course from SCA, sci-fi, and most of them were Neo-Pagans. I mean, irregardless of the wish, you know, to have lots of smart people get together and just discuss how religions work, the majority of those people are going to be coming from Neo-Pagan tradition. So it's understandable that you'd want to advertise this, so Neo-Pagans wouldn't be confused by the double-talk saying "well we're not a religion, but we're a way to look at religion." And stuff like this, and anyone who's interested in Celticness would say wow, here

you go, and they're in. So it's quite understandable from that point of view, and most of the Carleton graduates I've been able to find haven't actually been able to find that kind of attitude of Carleton students to, almost just break down religion and just sit there and look at the basics. That doesn't seem to happen very often with many places, and the only people who really want to use the structure are the people who would actually worship.

IB: Well yeah, if you're going to emphasize the philosophical side of Druidism, then you're going to spend most of your time having intellectual debates, which is lots of fun. We used to do that in the HDNA for a while, we had a hair-pull session, we would get together for the grove meeting, we'd do the ritual and then afterwards we'd come back to my house for a potluck dinner and then after dinner we would read a couple lines from the Mish-Mash and the commentaries on it, and then we would have theological argument for an hour. It was a lot of fun, but we were still doing in within the context of we're Neo-Pagans and we're discussion Neo-Pagan theology. We weren't doing it in the let's keep all this messy religion stuff at an arms length distance, which is what most of the, apparently most of the founders of the RDNA prefer to do.

MS: There also seems like there are a lot of, as you mentioned, Marxists and atheists in the early group, and one of the things that they particularly valued was that... I've always seen it as if you have a bunch of people from all types of religions and un-religions, and you describe the story of a bird making a nest, all religions, because they're faced with the material world all around them, have drawn upon nature for a source for relating to the divine. And philosophies have done so for the same reason, and so one of the things that I've seen at Carleton is that even if you're atheistic or if you're very religious, you can be Christian or anything, they can all get together and draw something out of the simple bird's story that doesn't claim to be part of, or allied to just one group, and so it seems almost, sometimes they describe it as they didn't want Druidism to fall into being a religion, that might just be a little snotty point on their part, that they were above religion, but there seems to have been a fear that it would become narrow, somehow, although you, Robert Larson and yourself were interested primarily in Celtic Indo-European stuff, where as the Carleton grove had a very strong Asian element in it, because the Asian religions were very strongly taught at Carleton. And they pretty much had dropped the Celticness early on, because it had done its purpose. And, I don't know...

IB: Or because that wasn't the interest of the new generations of students coming in.

MS: Right, because of the Asian interest and Vietnam of course made Asian studies much more interesting.

IB: Oh yeah.

MS: And that's why I was always interested...

IB: Well this is one of the reasons why I found the term Meso-Pagan to be so useful, I did not invent that term by the way, a friend of mine in Berkeley who is a Wiccan invented that term, and the Masonic, Rosicrucian, fraternal style groups of Druids in England were Meso-Pagan, what they had was a mixture of Paganism and Christianity and ideas that are rooted philosophically in Christianity, all mish-mashed together and presented as authentic Druidism. In the same way at Carleton you had, the references to nature and the references to the gods and goddesses, but you also had lots of material that was Christian philosophy, liberal Christian

philosophy, or Marxist or atheist. Marxism and atheism are also outgrowths of Christianity, Marxism specifically is an outgrowth of the Christian gospel movement of the 1800s, even though Karl Marx would hate to have that said that about it, and atheism is the flip-flop of the dualistic black and white thinking of Christianity, either the Christian god and everything in the bible is true, or there is no god. And you know, as long as somebody calls himself an atheist, they're still playing the game by the Christians rules. In any event, the point is Reform Druidism, as first invented, was definitely a Meso-Pagan system, whether they called it a religion or philosophy or whatever, it was still Meso-Pagan. And, I thought the world needed Neo-Paganism, and saw this as a good starting point. But as you pointed out, within the first ten years I had tried to start alternative groups, using some of the ideas but also working in some of the ideas from the rest of the Neo-Pagan community. And, screening out the material from Monotheism and monothesisism.

MS: It's a very messy little thing.

IB: Well its amusing that the same people who were telling me that Druidism is a philosophy compatible, with every religion on the earth, were telling me "oh no, it doesn't include Neo-Paganism."

MS: Ah, see, I haven't picked that up.

IB: <laughing>

MS: I've looked for it closely, a lot of the letters between them are saying, you know, I remember Shelton once said that "Neo-Paganism was compatible with Reform Druidism, but doesn't encompass it." It's almost like...

IB: Well we didn't have the term Meso-Pagan in those days.

MS: Well yeah.

IB: Might have made a difference if we had, because then what you see is you see, you can have overlapping sets, make Venn-diagrams of it all. But, I had some of these folks verbally tell me it was totally inappropriate for Neo-Paganism and Reform Druidism to overlap and be the same thing.

MS: Well...

IB: Because they thought <coughing> Hang on... I think that they thought as soon as you brought any kind of "ism" into it at all, it was no longer Reform Druidism. I've often wondered why they didn't use the word Druidry but it may be that the fraternal groups in England hadn't started using that word at that point, I'm not sure about the precise dating of that term.

MS: Well see, the thing is, a lot of them in those years were often young too...

IB: Uh huh, we were all young way back then.

MS: Shelton who was one of the primary ring leaders then, has been very active again in keeping tabs about the Carleton grove since '86, when it was primarily Wiccan and Native American back then. And he has not really had too much trouble with us on that issue, and in-fact he's done a couple sweat-lodges and that kind of stuff.

IB: Cool

MS: And, there were a couple points where he was a little bit concerned, well first of all, you were coming from a different cultural background then he was, and most of the other Carleton Druids. I mean, you are first of all, an intellectual, and they hadn't had very much contact [inaudible], they kind of saw traps in definitions. And, they were in the process of destroying set ideas, they didn't want certainties, and...

IB: Right, well they were still in that early adolescent rebellion stage of being more interested in tearing down then they were in building up. And I can understand that, that's a necessary phase for an adolescent to go through. You have to deconstruct the culture around you before you can reconstruct it, to reflect something that makes sense to you.

MS: Right, and since most Carleton students are between the age of 19 and 20 around, I don't think, I think they were a little bit worried, well see it would be very hard of course to impose the NRDNA system on Carleton because it's so far away, but I don't think they felt that Carleton students, who didn't have a Neo-Pagan background to being with, were quite ready to reconstruct. And, I don't know, maybe they were just a little protective of the grove, they were...

IB: Well that's perfectly understandable, it was their turf. I mean just on a gut level, animal biological basis, this was their home territory, and if they perceived a threat to it, then they would be defensive.

MS: I think they also were a little bit afraid of their own people getting out of hand too.

IB: How so?

MS: Well, do you remember when Larson, I mean Shelton, tried to pass the Codex Reform?

IB: Very vaguely, yeah

MS: Well he got quite a few letters immediately, letters saying you know, red tape, red tape, you know, and Shelton backed down. Shelton by the way was the first Arch-Druid not to have known the founder. And so they were very careful to make sure that future groups wouldn't lose the original style, and that's probably one reason why they hung around so much. If you hadn't been around, they probably would have been content that no outside influences would've come into Carleton, but...

IB: Right, the fact that I wrote [New Apocrypha](#), sent copies of it to all the members of the order of Dalon Ap Landu, that I could get a hold of, sort of rocked the boat, all of a sudden there was an outside influence.

MS: And an outside authority.

IB: Yeah.

MS: From a completely new tradition.

IB: Yeah.

MS: And so, I think that's one of the main reasons that, in-fact, you have led to a closer bond between the alumni and the present students, which we're quite grateful for.

IB: Well that's a good thing.

MS: In fact, no Carleton group has ever had this much interaction between alumni and students, and we're the oldest, unofficial, student organization at Carleton.

IB: Is the RDNA still unofficial?

MS: Still unofficial.

IB: Oh, that's funny.

MS: We have a...

IB: Wait a minute, they were official at one time, they had a faculty advisor, Messenger

MS: Uh, yes, but we never got our constitutions approved.

IB: You're kidding?

MS: Nope, they uh, they kind of like put them into the “later” file, and then, sigh

IB: Just because Carleton is still legally a church school?

MS: No, that was stopped in '22, it was just the fact that we had a bunch of pig-headed, conservative administrators, especially in the Dean of Men, and they just said “Too wild” and put it aside. But, we also had a Dean of, an advisor with Bardwell Smith, who was an Asian history and religion professor, which of course made it more Asian then ever. But yeah, John Messenger was only around for one year.

IB: Yeah right, and then he went elsewhere.

MS: Perhaps if he would have stayed longer we would have seen different.

IB: That’s true, could very well have been different.

MS: Now, I want to talk about the Druid Chronicles (Evolved), you know the more I read that book, the more fascinating it gets, and that’s a compliment.

<break in the conversation for call waiting, tape flips>

IB: RDNA, so that tells me in the year 17 y.r., that’s what I was doing. We have the constitutions here, records of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, Arch-Druids of Carleton through Don Morrison, spring '76 to question mark, that’s as far as my list goes.

MS: Oh, yeah, did I send you an updated list of the Arch-Druids?

IB: I don’t know if you did or not.

MS: Well, he stopped at '78 and that was followed by Sue Olin for a year or so, and then somebody named Heidi Schultz and I don’t know, and then Katya Luomala who was incorrectly ordained, because of a drunkard Arch-Druid.

IB: Oops.

MS: Oops, she like showed up like the day and she like, Katya had vigiled and she thought Sue knew about this and...and Sue didn’t show up in the morning. And, so Katya found her like halfway through the day and was like, “where were you?” “Oh, I already thought you were a third order.....well here you go, here’s the order. And it’s like...

IB: Oh...great.

MS: Yeah, I was like, oh boy. Well you can imagine what that did to her ego. <laughing>

IB: <laughing> Let’s see, I have my copy here of the names of the Druids, which you probably have a copy of as well, that says who was ordained in which grove, anyway. It says Hal Moe was ordained in the Berkeley grove in 1973, which... could it mean it was either me or Bob, depending on who was running the grove in that year, I don’t remember right now. Then we have Cindy and Tom Schuler both ordained by the mother grove in '78, which probably, lets see down here it says...mg equals mother grove SDNA. Ok

MS: One of the things we do generally is we uh, I’ve seen at Carleton, is that we would do like, for instance for you it’d be BK69:Larson, so we can keep track of these things easier.

IB: Well that would probably make a lot of sense, and it would be nice to try and reconstruct all of this.

MS: yeah, and...

IB: So we actually do have a family tree, but of course, we don’t...I have been constantly told over the years about RDNA groves that existed and then disappeared. Like, uh, there was a grove in Palo Alto, California for a while, and there was a grove at uh... oh god, it’s an eastern college, starts with a p....

MS: Purdue.

IB: Purdue, there was a grove at Purdue.

MS: Yeah, that was Dick Smiley.

IB: Dick Smiley... see so you know a lot of groves that I don’t know.

MS: Well usually I make the family tree by apostolic succession versus worry about groves, because those just move all over the place. In fact, trying to work out the Berkeley thing, which is so darn confusing I gave up, but I uh...

IB: Well you know Joan Carruth could give you a lot that history. I mean obviously filtered through her eyes, but that’s going to be true of anybody you ask.

MS: That’s true.

IB: Do you have her current address?

MS: uh huh, yep.

IB: ok.

MS: I did an interview with her.

IB: Bob Larson... has vanished.

MS: Yes, he is vanished... showed up in spring, but disappeared again.

IB: Very strange

MS: Very strange, I heard he’s over with Asatru now.

IB: Oh, that could make a certain amount of sense, he liked the Norse stuff too.

MS: Yeah.

IB: In which case, I might be able to track him down through the, through...make connections in the Norse community, maybe through...depending upon which group he’s in.

MS: But yes, he’s disappeared.

IB: ok, let’s see here, now I have in addition to all that, I have the...Druid Missal-Any, which was...the one that Emmon Bodfish organized for a while

MS: Which we don’t have.

IB: Oh, ok, well I can make copies of those. What did we have here, oh and...a letter from Chris Sherbak that appeared in the Druid Missal-Any. “Dear third order Druid, the Council of Dalon Ap Landu has not had a vote in many years, one of the main problems has been the lack of contact between the head of the Council and the members, many reasons have been given, but the fact remains. I’m sending this letter to all known members of the Council in hopes of resolving this and getting on with business. There can only be two states of participation in my opinion, active and inactive. Our rules do not allow inactive participation yet, I propose we do now. I ask that you please respond to the questionnaire/proxy below. If you wish to remain in active status, please indicate as such, you’ll be kept in the Council’s mailing list. If you wish to become inactive, please mark and sign the proxy. This is very important, whether or not you are now interested in a Reform, you are still considered to have a vote. This was his effort to get around the impossibility of ever having a quorum...but that didn’t work either.

MS: Well a lot of them just felt there wasn’t anything more to vote on.

IB: There was nothing more to vote on?

MS: uh huh.

IB: I see <laughing> ok

MS: <laughing> They thought once they got everyone equal status, that was fine.

IB: 1983, so let's see, so these issues are from 1982 and '83. And...then we had the Druid Chronieler, which...

MS: We've got a lot of 'em

IB: You've got a lot of them, ok

MS: But not quite all of them, I'll have to send you...

IB: 1981 seems to be here, December '81...

MS: That's the last one we have.

IB: Yeah, that one was nicely typeset. This was, this is funny, this is really funny, I think this is the one and only issue that was ever done this way, typeset with nice borders around the edges. And this was <pause> this is the last time before I did ADF, when I tried to make major changes inside, Reform Druidism. Oh jeez, it's been years, literally years since I read this. "Isaac Bonewits left the mother grove in '79 because he was moving to Santa Cruz, when he went he appointed Joan Carruth and Stephen Abbot to be co Arch-Druids. Shortly after he left on his sabbatical, Joan and Stephen changed the name to the Berkeley grove." Okay, so it was the Berkeley grove for a long time, then it became the mother grove, then it became the Berkeley grove again. Let's see, "the next year saw Stephen drop out..." See I haven't read this in five or ten years here. "The next year saw Stephen drop out of the Berkeley grove, that was the end of co Arch-Druidship as an experiment in that incarnation. Joan ran for reelection uncontested and spent the last of 18 y.r. and all of 19 y.r. as Arch-Druid of the grove. In the two years since Isaac, the ritual and structure of the grove went relatively unmolested. But then Isaac showed back up and all the rules changed. He ran for the office of Arch-Druid, warning everybody in advance that he planned to make some broad changes in the grove. Even if it can't be said that the gods spoke, there was an omen of sorts, Isaac won. In doing so though, he alienated a large portion of the existing Berkeley grove... they thought the changes were taking Druidism far away from what its founders at Carleton College had intended it to be. That idea made them uncomfortable, so after much thought and discussion they decided to form a new grove. They asked Joan to be their Arch-Druid and she accepted. Thus there are now two groves in Berkeley: the live oak grove which still uses the traditional forms, and the mother grove, which is developing a new philosophy of Druidism for the 1980s." Right, now you have to understand, that part of all of this complexity that was going on is that Joan and I were on-again off-again lovers for many years. So, some of what was happening here was personal politics between the two of us, although fortunately at this point I can't remember any of the details.

MS: <laughing> yeah

IB: Just that Joan is basically a very wonderful person.

MS: Uh huh, oh I should tell you that...

IB: So you have this issue.

MS: Uh huh.

IB: Ok, that's good, because that is really, in terms of... history of the shift from Reform Druidism to ADF, this is really critical.

MS: Yes

IB: In any event...right Sally <pause> Sally was the Arch-Druidess at the same time as I was the Arch-Druid. Let's see, she was a server in 18yr <pause>

MS: Could we reconstruct these things a little bit later...

IB: Oh, I'm sorry, go ahead, continue with your, your list of questions you had for the interview.

MS: Ok, one of the interesting things that the Druid Chronicles is, I don't think you know this side of the story, is about the same time I believe in '74, '75 when you started Druid Chronicles going, we lost ours. We lost all the Archives, and they were a little bit afraid to tell you this... and apparently Steve Corey taking 'em all up to the Twin Cities without appointing another person at Carleton to take his place. And so all of the records were seemingly lost for two or three years. And everyone had to rely on their own personal copies of everything, and they were really afraid that your version of the Druid Chronicles would eventually become the only source of information... And they again found them about two years later, and then I almost can tell the animosity suddenly dropped in the letters.

IB: Well, I find that fascinating, because, you know, I didn't change anything in the Chronicles of the Foundation. I was meticulous in making sure that it was the same word-for-word, the only difference being that...I stuck in footnotes.

MS: Uh huh, no big deal.

IB: Yeah... then I added a bunch of other stuff, but you know, I always thought it's really critical in the history of any religion that you have accurate history. So I always thought it was important that we document what we were doing, while we were doing it.

MS: Yeah, and there's a lot of really good little turkeys, as you call them, in there.

IB: <laughing>

MS: And, I think in there, well even though you do say in the Apocrypha that you intended people to stick in their own stuff later on, some of them are a little bit bitter that... it almost looks like a one-sided argument. Because...

IB: Hey! I didn't stop them from sending Apocrypha around.

MS: I know, they're just a little bitter. <laughing> But otherwise it...

IB: "The editor has been informed that there are other Apocrypha currently being printed for distribution. Assuming that each has a date of writing attached, it should be easy to insert them into their proper order vis-à-vis those included in this edition." One of the things that the people who were hostile about this production never seemed to mention or think about was the fact that we deliberately designed it so that it could be punched and put in a three-hole notebook.

MS: right

IB: Thus implying that there would be alternate version. Oh well...

MS: Uh huh, they, I don't know, they were a little bit anarchistic, you know, any kind of... putting it all together in one book, just kind of, I don't know, grated on their nerves a little bit. But actually, it proved to be an extremely durable and reliable source for a lot of the groves which still use it. In fact, Carleton, in 1986, used it as their sole blueprint to rebuild, because we had lost the Archives again, and couldn't find them, so we used the Druid Chronicles (Evolved), as a

blueprint, which of course gave our group a very Neo-Pagan flavor.

IB: Yeah, I would think so <laughing> it would have that effect.

MS: And in that sense, I think maybe the guys at Carleton were a little bit... correct in their view that, you know, once... this book gets out...

IB: No, it's not a matter of once the book being out, it's a matter of distribution. I specifically made it a point to send copies to the library at Carleton.

MS: We actually had a copy for a while.

IB: Yeah, I also specifically designed this so it could be xeroxed, that was the primary reason we typeset it, actually I typeset the whole bloody thing with my own little fingers. And if I had realized then how badly things that were printed on dark colored paper would Xeroxed, we would have never used the dark colored paper for...

MS: Yeah, that's proved troublesome.

IB: Yes

MS: We had to type it up again, and print them up separately.

IB: I'm not surprised.

MS: But yes... and luckily you never made any kind of attempt on here to call it The Druid Bible.

IB: Nah

MS: You remember what caused that trouble with The Witches Bible?

IB: Yes, right, right

MS: And the whole big thing was that they used the simple word "the" versus "a"

<pause>

IB: Right, and point in fact, that wasn't their decision, that was the publishers decision... but that's another tale..

MS: It's amazing how nitpicky some Druids can get.

IB: Special order of worship Santa Cruz gathering, wow I have a whole bunch of stuff in here, I'll have to bring this with me. <laughing>

MS: Oh yeah, please do.

IB: What I'm planning on doing at this point, if we get this trip together for April...

MS: And it looks like it is very possible, I'm already getting the funding process going.

IB: Ok, I'm going to try very hard the week before I come out there, to gather as much of this historical material as I possible can, and I will bring it with me. In fact, I will carry the more important items on the plane with me as carry-on baggage, so that I will have my hands on them the entire time. And then once I have arrived...anything that I haven't Xeroxed, we can Xerox for you. Anything that you don't have yet.

MS: Yeah, and the school's going to pay for all that Xeroxing, isn't that wonderful?

IB: I think that's terrific.

MS: <laughing> So why don't we, let's see here, I have one more question here, do I? <pause> Okay, what would you say, let's just get this last question, what would say the special, what is special about the RDNA among Neo-Pagan groups? <pause>

What would make it worth studying, if you were a Neo-Pagan scholar? Besides the fact that you were in it.

IB: <pause> Probably I would simply say it was worth studying because it was the ancestral group that a bunch of other Druid groups grew out of. A lot of that being my fault, but some of it possibly not being my fault. The fact that it was the... you know, it was a different strand of development of what was to become the Neo-Pagan community.... I think that it is a good example of the fact that certain ideas were in the air in that particular time in history. Of course, you can also get, you know the great arguments they have between the great man theory, the inevitable historical movement theories. Unfortunately you can argue both ways from this situation.

MS: How so?

IB: That from the, from the point of view that this was a time of great, you know, of certain ideas being in the air, you can say that the RDNA showed that people were looking for a religious expression that, had a reverence for nature and yet also had a reverence for human individuality and freedom, which puts it in a similar boat with all the other Neo-Pagan movements. And from the, history is made by individual's point of view, you can point to either David Fisher or myself, or even Bob Larson for that matter, as having been critical in making, changing this from being a tiny little club at a small Midwestern college, to actually being a tiny, but noisy, and influential movement inside of the Neo-Pagan community as a whole. So you could argue it both ways. I don't think of myself as a great man you understand, but I was the person, in that place, at that time, and... I discovered the RDNA at about the same time that I was discovering the Neo-Pagan community, and to me they both seemed to be an obvious match.

MS: Well, ok... I think were going to stop the official interview there and just do some details here now.

**<end of first interview>**



# Second Interview with Isaac Bonewits

by Michael Scharding  
on February 23, 1994  
Carleton College Archives  
Oral History Project  
Transcription by Sancho Cochran-Bond  
Lightly edited for clarity

IB= Isaac Bonewits  
MS= Michael Scharding



**Figure 5 Isaac & Sam Adams at Hill 3 Oaks, 1994.**

**NOTE:** See Green Book 10 from Part 6 of ARDA 2 for more interviews with Isaac Bonewits.

MS: Ok, it's February 23rd, 1994, and this is Michael Scharding interviewing Isaac Bonewits, a prominent Druid member and best RDNA mover. Hello.

IB: < laughs >

MS: Ok, the goal of my paper is to try to... well it's going to be pretty big... essentially, fill a gap in the present academic study of Druidism, as a part of Neo-Paganism.

IB: I didn't know that there was any academic study of Druidism.

MS: That's what I figured. I mean, outside of your Druid Chronicles (Evolved), I do not believe there has ever been a really good synopsis of American Druidism. And you had to look, really hunt through encyclopedias to get anything more out of ... than that. In the major, you know, non-Druid publications. As far as I could tell...

IB: Well, it's, you know, it's a very tiny movement. I mean

MS: Dear to my heart.

IB: Maybe, dear to our hearts, but if you include all the people who have ever considered themselves members of an RDNA Group or offshoot thereof, maybe, if you're being real generous, you'd have a couple thousand people.

MS: Yeah, So I guessed.

IB: Now that's not much in a nation of two hundred and fifty million.

MS: No it isn't... But yes, that is true. It's really tiny. And some of them...

IB: But special

MS: Yes. Ok, I have read a few little biographies about you, but for the benefit of the listeners, could you like, maybe briefly, go over your life in four minutes? <laughs>

IB: Ooooo. That's extremely difficult to do, actually.

MS: Oh, I'm sorry, Ok.

IB: Let's see, I was born in Royal Oaks, Michigan. An appropriate birth place for a future Arch-Druid I suppose. When I was eleven, my family moved to southern California, and I went with them, not having anything better to do at the time. At sixteen, I went to the University of California in Berkeley as a sophomore, I graduated in spring of nineteen seventy, with a bachelor of arts degree in "Magic and Thaumaturgy." And then I wrote my first book, Real Magic, which was published in 1971, and it has been in and out of print ever since.

MS: Which I would like a copy of. I've read it, but I don't have a copy.

IB: Go to your nearest B.Daltons, or Walden Books, it's in all the big chain stores.

MS: Oh, it is being re-published again?

IB: Oh yeah, it's been in print for several years now. Weiser Publications has it out.

MS: Is that your actual Bachelor's Thesis?

IB: No, at that point they didn't have a requirement for a senior thesis, although in point of fact I did turn a couple of term papers, that I had written for different classes in my program, into the skeleton that I grew a couple of chapters around. Which you can sort of tell, if you read looking for that. Let's see, in 1973, I went to Minneapolis for the first of what was to become the Pagan festival movement. The first Pagan festival that I am aware of, anyway. Which was the Gnosticon Festival, that Carl Wesky of Lewellyn Publications started. This was like an indoor convention. It was not an outdoor camping festival, like we're used to know. But, at that time, he had invited me to move to Minneapolis, and take over editing his in-house magazine

MS: Gnostica

IB: Gnostica. Well it was then called Gnostica News, I turned it into Gnostica, edited it for about a year and a half, and then quit over various issues involving... different visions of what the magazine was supposed to be, let's just put it that way. He brought me in to raise the quality of the magazine. I did, and he started losing readers, He should not have been surprised. In any event... Let's jump back just a little bit, it was in the late sixties that I met Robert Larson, who was a Graduate of Carleton, and who had been an early, but not a founding member of the grove there. He initiated me into the RDNA in, I think, 1968. I made third order, around the full moon of October of '69. So, let's see, I just celebrated my 25th anniversary as an RDNA priest, I think.

MS: Congratulations!

IB: I survived to tell the tale. In any event, at that time, I felt pretty much that RDNA was Pagan, whether it was that obvious to the members then or not. I moved to Minneapolis, I lived in Minneapolis for two years, I started up a grove there, and

then, helped a couple of other people start other groves in other places.

MS: That would be...

IB: Traveled around, initiated a whole bunch of people.

MS: And we're still trying to piece together it.

IB: I know, I'm going to try to go through my... I actually have pretty good records... they just are all buried in files that I can't reach because of the other piles of paper in front of them. I will try to get them to you in time to be of some value for your thesis. In any event, let's see, I think I started out with something called the Schismatic Druids of North America, the SDNA,

MS: Which was the group underneath the Provisional Council of Arch-Druids.

IB: Right. I discovered this since, the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, wrote it's by law so that changes could only be made by a quorum of the entire Council, not a quorum of those that could be found. That it had essentially paralyzed itself, and made it impossible to accomplish anything. So that was when I then attempted to start up a Provisional Council.

MS: Yes, did that ever accomplish anything?

IB: I'm not sure it did actually. Other than, a bunch of us exchanging letters back and forth.

MS: Well, that's what normally ends up happening.

IB: In any event, I cannot recall the precise sequence between starting up the SDNA, and the HDNA, the Hasidic Druids of North America in St. Louis. That was roughly the same time, in '74,'75, and early '76. Then, when I went back to California, I believe I started referring to, I was reelected the Arch-Druid of the Berkeley grove there, around 1976. I'm not really certain on a lot of these dates, I'm afraid. In any event, I went back to California... I know I went back to California in '76... Cause, I was there in time for the bicentennial fireworks. I became Arch-Druid of the Berkeley group, we started referring to it as the NRDNA, since people found that a little less silly sounding than, SDNA or HDNA. And then some of the other people who I had ordained started up groups, and they were referring to there groups as NRDNA, too. Although it was never really... None of these groups was ever particularly structured. Obviously it was in 1976 that I produced the "Druid Chronicles (Evolved)." At least I believe that's the date it has on the front cover. Now, what I'm confused about, is exactly how the printing got done. I can't remember whether I did the typesetting in Minneapolis, or in Berkeley. But Bob Larson and I printed the one and only printing of it that was ever done. And we did that at his print shop, that he was working in, in Berkeley, in Lughnasadh of 1976. So, I can't really, at this point remember the sequence, I'll have to go back through files and see if I can find some letters that talk about more precise dating for that. In any event, in the middle 1970s I was back in Berkeley. We had a grove there for a while. As I recall, there was.. I was trying to make the group disciplined, and there wasn't a whole lot of interest in that. And, I was trying to get people to start taking it as a serious religion, and there wasn't a whole lot of enthusiasm for that either.

MS: Did they consider themselves a religion at that point?

IB: Most of them did, yes. The things that specifically characterized all the offshoots I was responsible for was that we said in our own definition that we were a religion. That it wasn't just a philosophy, that it was in fact a religion.

Probably, the thing that specifically characterized them was that they were Pagan religions, identifying themselves as part of the Neo-Pagan community. Whereas the old RDNA never did that. <pause> Now, somewhere along in here, I think in the early seventies, Bob Larson got involved with a group of Celtophiles, who ran something called Clan na Brocheta, which was primarily a Renaissance Fair group, who performed music and theater at the Renn. Faires. And, he became their resident Arch-Druid, and he started referring to it as the Orthodox Druids of North America, because they were doing things in Irish. There was only the one group of them, as far as I know, that ever existed, but.. and it was only a tongue and cheek reference, I don't think he ever filed any papers with..., but I think they did occasionally refer to themselves in print as the Clan Na Brocheta Grove of the ODNA. <pause> So, let's see, I suffered burn out, spun out and crashed at some point in the late seventies, I believe. There was a major explosion in the Druid group in Berkeley, and I just got sick of the politics, and quit. Now, I believe, off and during these times, I was publishing various things called the Druid Chronicler, and the Pentalpha Journal and Druid Chronicler. We can get some more dates out of those. So it must have been 1980 or '81 that I burned out on Druidism for a while. In fact I burned out on the whole Magical community for a while. I sold a large part of my occult library, and invested the money in computer books.

MS: Your, excuse me, your what? Your what all?

IB: Occult Library, the books I had on Magic and Religion.

MS: Oh, OK.

IB: I got rid of quite a few of them at that point, and used the money to buy books on computers. And taught myself some marketable job skills, and started earning a living for the first time in my life. Or at least for the first time in several years. Then I moved back and forth across the country a few times. Doing computerized typesetting and layout work, small business consulting, technical writing, a little of this, a little of that. And eventually, in 1984, I mentioned to Shenain Bell, who I had met in an Irish class in New York City, some of the things that Jim Duran had told me about Druid survivals in the Baltic Territories. Druid in the loose generic sense of Indo-European Clergy. And Jim had said that, if you took the material that was available in the Soviet archives on Pagan survivals in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, and combined it with the [Carmina Gadelica], dating materials, and the surviving Celtic sagas, you could pretty much reconstruct eighty or ninety percent of what old time Druidism had really been about. And, I mentioned that to Shenain, and he got very excited and he started discussing it with other friends, and the next thing I know, people were saying, lets start up another Druid group, and I said, oh no, not again. It's very hard to explain this rationally, but over and over again in my life, I've felt someone picking me up by the scruff of my neck and dragging me back into Druidism. So, whether it was the Earth Mother, or Be'al, or someone else, with a capital "S." I was given to know that this was something that had to be done. So that's when I started up ADF, and I deliberately choose the name of Ar nDraiocht Fein to make it very clear that no, I was not hijacking Reform Druidism as I had been accused of in the past, that we were starting something brand new, that we would proudly date ourselves to that year.

MS: That was 1984?

IB: I believe that was 1984. Might have been '83, but I think it was '84.

<to someone else> Yeah when where we meeting?

<someone else>: our meeting in the village was '83 so the ... no it was '82. Shenain says founded in '83, but I think it '84. you dated wrong I think it was earlier than that.

IB: I dated from Samhain of '84.

<Someone else>: ...Association in April of '86

IB: Ok, April of '86, my wife says, is when we.. '87.. was when we signed the articles of association, and made ADF a legal entity, on a water bed yes. The first board of trustees meeting was held on a water bed, we thought that suitably Pagan. It was also the only quite room in the house. We were at a party with some friends. And then in <off> 1989 we incorporated?

<Someone else>: Here, in this house.

IB: I'm consulting my off-line memory here.

<Someone else>: No, I was already off the board, and I didn't leave the board until...

IB: So it was '91. I'll have to look it up for you. It was '90 or '91 that we incorporated,

<Someone else>: I think it was '91

IB: and we got tax status last year, I believe, so we're now a 501c3. OK, That's a very brief and disjointed look at my history with Reform Druidism in terms of organizational, such as it is, structure.

MS: Ok, one of the things I have to do in my paper is... First of all, I have to prove that, I call it American Druidism, which is not the best term I could use, but it's the one I used, as including the RDNA, NRDNA, and everything else there, ADF and Keltria. Now, you just mentioned that you chose the name Ar nDraiocht Fein, as being, to avoid seeming that you were hijacking Reform Druidism, now does that mean that there was no connection with Reform Druidism?

IB: No, it means that, I really got worn down, with year after year after year after year of the older members of the RDNA feeling that I had done something terrible to their creation. And so, I decided that if we called it something else, it would not be something that people would automatically associate with all the other Reform Druids. Now, I borrowed some bits and pieces of the RDNA liturgy, because I'd been using it for twenty years.

MS: I believe mostly the blessing of the waters,

IB: The blessing of the waters, we used the catechism of the waters, and we used the consecration, we used the sacrifice prayer, but, the thing that's interesting is, it's been a matter of evolution that we started out with that material, and as I did more research into Celtic studies and Indo-European studies, we started modifying it. So, although the standard liturgical design is recognizable, that's mostly because the standard liturgical design in Indo-European cultures is pretty much the same, whether you're talking Pagan or Christian.

MS: And what is that basic structure?

IB: Ooooo.

MS: Without getting too complicated.

IB: That's a whole long lecture. Five basic phases, two liturgies. Now I might want to go so far as to say it's a global, but I'm not going to stick my neck out on that. I will say that I'm very familiar with it in terms of Indo-European religious ceremony.

MS: I think I've read these somewhere before, but could you...

IB: You probably have. There in one of... There's a whole long discussion of it in DP 2 I believe, or 4. The five basic phases to liturgy, that is to say worship ritual, the first phase is establishing sacred space and time. The second phase is reconstructing the cosmos and opening the gates between the worlds. The third main phase is generating energy, offering praise to that which is worshiped. The fourth main phase is a return flow of energy from the entity, or entities worshiped. And, the fifth main phase is unwinding the energy patterns that were created prior to that. Now that's very loose.

MS: That's very loose.

IB: And if you're going to quote me, I'd rather you quoted from the written material. <laughs>

MS: Yes, I understand. All right, and you say this is more the reason why the liturgies are similar between ADF and NRDNA?

IB: Well, the RDNA liturgy is in many ways, is clearly based on a Christian pattern. And the liturgy as ADF does it is based in part on that, but more in part of what I could reconstruct from dating ritual. And the few references that we have to Druidic ceremony. The ones that appear authentic. <Pause> Now in terms of the terminology that I use today, I consider the RDNA to have been a Meso-Pagan Organization. Now, Paleo-Pagan, and Meso-Pagan, and Neo-Pagan, are not clear-cut divisions. There's no sharp dividing line between those categories. They're points on a spectrum that blends imperceptibly. I believe, and this is what I want to find out from you, if you've managed to discover it: I believe that David Fisher came from a family of people involved in the United Ancient Order of Druids, or one of the other related fraternal offshoots.

MS: David Fisher, as far as I know, refuses to answer anything. So I can't... or maybe it's just bad addresses, but it just doesn't seem to work. I've talked with Norman Nelson who was a Mason, and he says there ain't nothing that looks Masonic, but as I am not a Mason I cannot possibly figure it out.

IB: Ah, OK.

MS: And Gordon Melton has not replied.

IB: In the past, I was in the habit of referring to the various Meso-Pagan Druid groups in England as being Masonic/Fraternal Druids. That was probably much too loose of language on my part. The cross over is easy to make in England, where for centuries it's been common for somebody whose interested in metaphysics and the occult to belong to more than one group simultaneously. There are obvious similarities to Masonic ritual in the surviving United Ancient Order of Druids ceremonies that I have seen scripts of. That is to say, the style of language is very similar, the style of ceremony is very similar, the images are different. So a modern day Mason, looking at those would not see the similarities. But, certainly I don't think the United Ancient Order of Druids has considered itself a Masonic organization in 200 years.

MS: Yes, mostly charitable, I think.

IB: What?

MS: Charitable organization.

IB: yeah, well a charitable, a fraternal organization. So, I believe that I can see from the earliest Ur text rituals, that David Fisher was probably working from one of the liturgy books of the AOD. And, that combined with his insistence that Druidism was a philosophy applicable to any religion, which is almost a direct quote from the AOD, makes it fairly clear

that he was starting out with that, what I call Meso-Pagan approach. The mixing of Celtic Paganism with extremely liberal Christianity. Actually Unitarianism, it turns out.

MS: I always thought of it as Deism.

IB: A lot of Deism, too. I don't know, did you get the magazine that the British Council of Druid Orders put out?

MS: Druid's Voice.

IB: They published an article, in one of the issues that they sent me, on the Iolo Morganwg activity with the Unitarians. It turns out that he was one of the early Unitarian agitators.

MS: Ok, that makes sense.

IB: And he thought of Unitarianism, and Druidism as being essentially the same thing. So, that kind of an approach of mixing whatever they might have had, or fantasized they had that was Pagan, with liberal Christianity, is really characteristic of what I call a Meso-Pagan approach.

MS: Yeah, I agree with you.

IB: It's roughly the equivalent to what was done with Voudoun, and Macumba and Santeria where you mixed Paganism and Christianity, in their case for survival. I think it was partly done for survival, in terms of public relations, in England, but it was also done because the guy who invented most of it was an agitator in the ultra-liberal wing of Christianity. And he saw the Druids as being exemplars he could point to, that English men would be proud of, and willing to follow the example of. So, in any event, RDNA started out Meso-Pagan. And it was, I will have to admit, it was probably due to my agitating, that it began to move in the direction of being Neo-Pagan. Because I was the one who first, to my knowledge anyway, wrote to any of the older members and said, hey this looks like a Pagan religion here, why don't we admit that it's a religion, and learn what we can learn from the other people in the Neo-Pagan community.

MS: Well, the Neo-Pagan community was not extremely well known at that time, or was it?

IB: Well, that's true. No, it was not particularly well known at that time, and I did not understand, as most people don't when they're young and involved in some kind of a cultural movement, just how tiny the pond was that I was swimming around in.

MS: Well, most of them seem to have pretty much grown out of this thing, I still remember being warned in 1989, stay away from Isaac. But, I think most of the people have pretty much forgotten the incident by this point.

IB: Wait a minute? What incident?

MS: Oh, the letter incident. The 1974 letter. There are just like dozens of letters in the Archives here about that. The initial reactions were pretty strong.

IB: Oh, when I published my letters and Reform Druidism was a Pagan religion and should admit it.

MS: Yeah.

IB: Yeah. I had no idea that that was going to provoke that kind of a reaction. I didn't even get most of the reaction, most of it seems to have gone completely past me, people talking to each other, and not bothering to send me a copy.

MS: I wasn't sure about that.

IB: I saw, maybe a dozen letters, all told, during that whole controversy. You probably have a much better picture of it than I did at the time.

MS: What is your impression of what happened to the NRDNA during the beginning of the eighties? It seems to have disappeared, or gone into what they call the boring years.

IB: The Boring Years, yeah. The San Francisco Bay regions in many ways is similar to England, a terrible thing for a Celtophile to say, but true, in that there were a certain number of people who were interested in the occult and unusual religions, and many of them belonged to each other's groups, and a lot of the activity that took place, took place at the instigation of actually a rather small circle of people. I think, what basically happened was: after the Berkeley grove blew up, that the Orinda Grove continued to survive off and on, but that was like five or six people, I think. Larry Press is the one to ask questions about the Orinda Grove. And, I believe they existed, off and on, to this day. Stephan always had a grove operating out of his back yard. Where ever Stephan Abbot was, he would say there was a grove. But, in point of fact, the grove actually existed only on those occasions when Stephan was in the mood to throw a ritual. And, it was essentially, you know, a charismatic following of whoever was hanging out with Stephan at the time.

MS: When was this starting? When did this Steven come in?

IB: Stephan Abbot? Oh god, he goes way, way, way, way, way back. Way back. He may go back to the very beginnings of the Berkeley Grove, I mean late sixties/early seventies at least. I lived next door to him for a while. We were roommates in a house for a while. We had a lot of interaction together. There was a time period when the Hazelnut Grove, and the Berkeley Grove were functioning simultaneously. And then, when the Berkeley Grove blew up, Stephan insisted that he would keep ceremonies going, and I think he did for a while. Then, Stephan, who has never had a very good grasp of real world economics, and therefore has been homeless on many occasions, or has had to move rapidly from one home to another home, as he moved around, his supposed grove moved with him. But, I was shocked to discover that he actually got around to buying a post office box in San Jose for his current grove, but his phone was recently disconnected, so I have no idea where he is. This is something that happens fairly commonly.

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MS: We're back again.

IB: Stephan and Tezra, both know my feelings about them, but I don't necessarily want that shared with whoever might happen to hear the tape.

MS: So, I hate to bring this up, but what is the explosion of the Berkeley Grove?

IB: I can't remember.

MS: I think it has something to do with two people wanting to be Arch-Druid, or something, at the same time? But that's the only [person] I had.

IB: It was a... I'm going to have to look it up for you, there was a bitterly contested election for Arch-Druid, I had been out of town for a long time, I came back, a lot of the people in the grove wanted me to take over as Arch-Druid again, others wanted the person who had been Arch-Druid for the preceding couple of years to be reelected [Joan]. They held an election, and I think I won by one vote. That's the sort of

thing that blows up small groups. And there were also some major personality conflicts going on between some of the organizers, I was trying to accomplish, on a smaller scale, many of the things that I have since done with ADF, and although there were three or four people folks in the group who were enthusiastic about that, the rest of them just didn't see it as being what they wanted to do with Druidism. So, all that got tied into the elections. Then there was a ritual that was going to be done on the beach, that wound up evolving a very long walk, and I think it's now called the Death March. That was Stephan's usual poetic exaggeration. To get to the spot where... I think it was Joan, I don't think it was Nina... It was Joan's decision that there was a specific spot on the beach that was absolutely perfect, and we saw no reason why a bunch of healthy people couldn't walk a mile. Well, one of them wasn't so healthy, but she wasn't the one who complained. That was a young lady who had Polio, and was used to walking along after other people and keeping up. In any event, that was just one more excuse for people who thought I was turning into a rigid religious fanatic, and they wanted nothing to do with it. <pause> What? Make a sacrifice for your religion? How un-American?

MS: Let me just get Henge of the Keltria out of the way here. I heard something about the twelve messages tacked onto your van or something, at PSG. What was your reaction to the Keltria? It was not quite a defection, but...

IB: It was a schism. Actually, though I was slightly annoyed at the time, I fairly rapidly came to see it as a very healthy thing. I figure any religion that has new religions spinning off from it is obviously doing something right. I mean that's a healthy sign for any organization, that it produces offspring. You know, mutations. The people who started Keltria seemed to be more interested in focusing on Celtic rather than Pan-Indo-European approaches to the material. At the time, I think they were quite a bit looser in their attitudes about what kinds of scholarship to accept. And they wanted to do rituals that were more reminiscent of Wicca than what I thought reconstructed Druidism should be. They also had some major disagreements with us over the organizational function and structure of ADF. Now, in the years since they split off, they have come to be more and more similar to ADF, in that... they discovered that some of the organizational rules that I had instituted, I had instituted for very good reasons. That it's the nature of social organizations, whether religious or non-religious to behave in certain ways, and if you plan for it ahead of time you can prevent quite a few headaches. And, I believe, possibly stung by one or two rude comments of mine on the topic, they've taken more and more of the Wiccan/Kabbalistic, non-ancient stuff out of their ceremonies, and tried to put more authentic material into their ritual. I can't say that for sure because I haven't been to a Keltrian ritual, but from the discussions I've had on the phone with Tony, I've gathered that Keltrian ritual, now, does not resemble Wiccan ceremony near as much as it used to.

MS: It doesn't, no. It doesn't seem to be very closely related at all.

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IB: No, the first schism from ADF was Shadow Path Grove in Connecticut, which spun off independently because they didn't really want to run an open grove, which is how ADF Groves are structured. They wanted a closed coven style group, and they didn't want to go public and invite total strangers to show up and participate.

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IB: Schisms from ADF. So the first schism was Shadow Path Grove, that was, I can't remember the year. Then was Keltria. Then the next one was Druidactios.

MS: That's a split off?

IB: Yes.

MS: Oooh! Interesting.

IB: Much to the... It's difficult to get the guy who started it, Tom Cross to admit it, but he was in point of fact a member of ADF [and the NRDNA.]

MS: Oh, does that mean I have to include him in the Definition of American Druidism?

IB: Yes and No. His group doesn't exist anymore.

MS: I heard actually that it does.

IB: Oh yeah? Well, the last I had heard from him, he had announced that he was converting back to Catholicism, and that all real Celts would be Irish Catholics, if they were real Celts. And his second in command, whom he had begged to take over the group had left it in disgust, and started his own Roman Paganism group. That's Ernie Didwell, who now lives in Arizona. An old time Neo-Pagan founding father of the community, in fact. In any event, Tom Cross... You should have the copy of DP that had, what did I call it, a forest full of groves, a discussion of other Druid organizations.

MS: I don't actually have all the issues, I don't believe.

IB: Oh, well tell me which ones you don't have and I'll try to get them to you. I though I sent you a full set.

MS: I'll have to get back to you on that one.

IB: In any event, Tom Cross, like many another person, has erroneously assumed that I am Jewish. Because he's anti-Semitic, he thought it was horrifying that somebody who was Jewish could be running a Druid organization. In point of fact, I'm not Jewish, but it has stirred up that same controversy on many occasions in my life.

MS: How is Druidactios a split off? Besides the fact that he was an ADF member?

IB: He was an ADF member. He started out using a lot of our materials, and then gradually replaced it with his own materials. He decided he wanted to do Gaulish Druidism. And since there's almost nothing known about it, it gives him plenty of room for him to improvise. What he essentially did was, he started up a Celtic version of the Norse Meso-Pagan groups.

MS: That's what I figured.

IB: It was the same, the racism and the emphasis on blood and family and the sexism. You've read his book? The Sacred Cauldron?

MS: I have read The Truth About Druids, and I have glanced through The Sacred Cauldron at a friend's house.

IB: One of the things that's really funny is that one of his major objections to ADF was that we used comparative Indo-European Studies as one of our sources of inspiration, and he thinks that that's a terrible thing to do, that we should only use Celtic materials, and then proceeds to put rituals in his book that are essentially thinly Celticized versions of Nordic fire rituals. In any event, I committed a major crime with him in that I was not... a) he thought I was Jewish, b) I wasn't

anywhere as impressed by him as he thought I should be. In any event, so he started up Druidactios. I saw their mailing list at one point, they never had more than about forty people on the mailing list, and two dozen of those where exchange subscriptions with other Pagan publications. He only put out like two or three issues of his journal.

MS: Do you have copies of those?

IB: I believe I might.

MS: Because I would like copies of those.

IB: I have at least a copy of one. He seemed to spend an enormous amount of time writing poison pen letters, about me and other people in the Pagan community, who didn't immediately acknowledge his superiority.

MS: That's what I kind of picked up.

IB: I mean, it was just thoroughly unprecedented, unpleasant yerker. I think is the technical, scientific, theological term. In any event,

MS: Are there any other schisms?

IB: I think that's it. Currently. For all I know there may soon be others. I mean, certainly we get, I get letters from people who say that, you know, they're starting a new group and they're borrowing stuff from us. And that's perfectly fine with me, that was one of the things that I expected to have happen with ADF.

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IB: ...out as having been a member of ADF, I had no indication that he had any background in Druidism prior to the membership in ADF, I could be wrong. I would have to go look up his membership records.

MS: It's a bit too late for me to stick him in my paper, except in the end notes.

IB: But he was upset that we had a non-racist, non-sexist policy, he thought our politics were too liberal. His politics were slightly to the right of Attila the Hun. And I'm liberal.

MS: OK, let's get some statistics on the ADF.

IB: OK.

MS: What are the number of paid members in the ADF, roughly?

IB: That has vacillated wildly. At the moment, I believe the current number of paid members is around 250. With a roughly equal number of paid subscribers to the Druids Progress, and about a seventy to eighty percent overlap. Not all the members subscribe to DP, and not all subscribers of DP are members. What I have discovered however is that this is not actually, necessarily, the most important statistic. I found this out by discussing the topic with Unitarians, and a few other people in other groups at the World Parliament of Religions, in terms of the impact that ADF has, it's sometimes more interesting to look, not at the total number of people who have purchased memberships in the organization, but the people who consider themselves part of the tradition. That is to say, we have about a dozen chartered groves right now, that is to say February of '94. Eight of those groves, at least, are having regular meetings at which anywhere from twenty to sixty or seventy people show up. And those people consider themselves members of the local grove, even though there might be only five or six of them in a given grove, who officially join ADF. So, in terms of the people who have been in ADF and consider themselves ADF Druids, they just haven't gotten around to renewing, and/or the ones that are

too cheapskate to buy memberships, but they still want to have the access to the traditions, written and other material. We're probably closer to around a thousand to twelve hundred. Normally, in most religions you would say followers, but we don't have much in the way of followers in the Pagan community. Most Pagan's don't approve of following.

MS: Don't want to go into other Druid groups right now, but... Might as well get them out of the way. OK, what other Druid groups are there presently in the United States, and do you consider them to be in the same category as the RDNA, ADF, and Keltria?

IB: It all depends on how we define our terms. The largest by far is the United Ancient Order of Druids, which still has several thousand members in the US, clustered mainly in Ohio and California. They're a fraternal organization like the Kiwanis Club, or the Lions, or the Elks. They don't have anything to do with us, even though I've written to them occasionally and exchanged nice letters, they're not connected to the Pagan community at all, to the best of my knowledge. The Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids, which was very definitely Meso-Pagan when it started out is becoming increasingly Neo-Pagan, under the influence of it's current chosen chief, Philip Carr-Gomm, who is a heck of a nice guy. I'm currently reading his book, that he just published, his new one, called The Druid Way.

MS: Very good book.

IB: Excellent, I'm really enjoying it. Even though I get annoyed when he occasionally throws these things in: "Ancient Druids believed..." and it's one of these things that was invented in the 1700s. But, other than that I'm really enjoying the book a lot. I'd say the OBOD is well on the way from the transition from Meso-Pagan to Neo-Pagan. They have several hundred members, I think.

MS: In the United States, or in Britain?

IB: Mostly in England, but they seem to have at least a few dozen in the United States, they have several local groves in the area, that we're going to be starting to list in DP and News from the Mother Grove. We just voted a policy, that I invented, called "a Forest Full of Groves" policy, whereby we will start publishing the central addresses, and local group addresses of the various and sundry other Druid groups that we get along with, which is most of them, by and large. Oh, that's right, I forgot yet another Druid group that was a schism from ADF, because I repressed the memory. Well, it wasn't a schism so much as it was a rip-off, something called the Divine Circle of Sacred Grove: A Druid Fellowship.

MS: They're an offshoot of Barney, aren't they?

IB: Originally they're from Barney. Their leader joined ADF, claiming to have absolutely no background in Druidism what-so-ever, and then preceded to plagiarize our materials, to mix it in with the stuff she had plagiarized from several other people. We were responsible for exposing them as being fraudulent, and essentially drove them out of town, in the Seattle area, and they've now moved to the Arizona area, and we're keeping in touch with law enforcement people there. They are not nice. In any event, other Druid groups around. Well, there's the RDNA, and it's offshoots. some of them Meso-Pagan, some of them Neo-Pagan, many of them in transition. There's ADF. There's Keltria. Druidactios, if it still exists and functions, is Meso- not Neo- and not interested in being Neo-. Tom Cross is furious that ADF is so "Wicked"



to a national organization at the start, we decided that we were going to function that way, as a national network for people who wanted to reconstruct Druidism in a way that we thought was focused on excellence rather than romanticism. So we have had lots of people communicating with each other at great distances, mostly through the mail, and a lot of people who heard about us primarily through Margot's book, and then joined the organization, and either stayed or didn't stay. This is different from the average organization, which starts out with a small local group of enthusiasts, and gradually gets larger and produces off shoots. So, it's had both strengths and weaknesses to the approach that we used.

MS: What are the main attractions of members now? How do most members come to find ADF?

IB: A multiple number of sources. The 1-800-Druidry line, that has been mentioned in various articles, has generated a lot of phone calls, and a lot of those people have become members as a result. The computer bulletin boards are attracting a lot of people since we have an ADF discussion group in the PODS net echo system. Are you familiar with that?

MS: Not yet.

IB: Pods is Pagan Occult Discussion System, or something like that. It's one of the FIDO net echo systems around the country, small local bulletin boards that use a tree structure to pass messages back and forth. Very informal. It's not a structure, it's a.... bulletin board organizing system paradigm that programmers use in common. In any event, so there's one of the many FIDO nets is the Pagan collection of FIDO nets. Bulletin boards passing Pagan messages around, and ADF is one of the discussion areas. There is also an ADF discussion area in Genie, there's one on the internet. And we also have people discussing ADF on all of the other main computer systems, like America online, and CompuServe, prodigy and so forth. So our name is certainly bandied about a great deal. And we've uploaded basic ADF literature with our address and with our phone number, so we get a lot of new members that way. And a lot of the new members are people who simply start going to a local grove, and attending. One of the biggest challenges we have right now is figuring out ways to persuade people that they should not just enjoy the fellowship of the local group, but actually join the organization and support the work that we're trying to do that requires money.

MS: You might want to take a look at the SCA, they're going through that problem right now.

IB: I'm not surprised.

MS: Yeah. OK.. and you also do presentations at conventions and such.

IB: Well, I.. yeah I go to festivals and things, not as many as I used to, because my health hasn't been good, but a lot... in the early days, a lot of the early growth of ADF came specifically as a result of presentations that I would do. I would go to a festival in some part of the country, talk about Druidism, talk about ADF, talk about what I'd like to do with it, a dozen people would join ADF, and the next thing we know we'd have two or three local groves. And, therefore, the majority of our groves wound up being in areas that I traveled to, which was mostly the east coast and the upper Midwest. That still has a strong effect on founding local groups. But, since I'm not traveling as much as I used to, it's not as effective a method. There's also the fact that having had a kid, I've had to focus a lot more attention on staying home and earning a living, which I have never been able to do from being Arch-

Druid, and that means that I'm spending a lot less time on promoting the organization and increasing its growth than I would like to be spending.

MS: You mentioned a Parliament of World Religions, is ADF part of any other interfaith councils?

IB: Not currently. It hasn't been relevant yet, simply because <pause> there aren't that many national ecumenical organizations. Local groves, are allowed to join local interfaith councils, but most local interfaith councils don't want Pagan groups, so that will vary considerably depending on what the local politics happen to be. I went... One of our members in ADF donated the money for me to go to the World Parliament of Religions, and so I went last September, and you probably read the results in the DP. the Druids Progress, or News from the Mother Grove, have you gotten that.

MS: I don't get News from the Mother Grove yet.

IB: Ah, I will try to send you some of those. It was a lot of fun, I learned quite a bit, and Paganism made quite a coming out party there.

MS: I heard about that.

IB Yeah.

MS: There was also Circle and wasn't Church of All Worlds there also.

IB: Yeah, and the Earth Spirit Community from Boston, which started out local became regional, and now is becoming a national organization.

MS: Do you see this to increase in the future?

IB: What? Ecumenical activity? Yeah, I think it's going to. Because the liberal members of the other mainstream religions are very very interested in Goddess worship, and in nature religion. And, they're perfectly willing to talk to us. So, even though the fundamentalists and the Greek orthodox and the Roman Catholics aren't to thrilled about us being around, the mainline Protestant and Unitarian and liberal Christian groups are very happy to sit down and have a cup of tea and find out what it is we really believe before they start arguing. I expect that there will be a lot of increasing interfaith activity between Neo-Pagans and non-Pagans in the future.

MS; I want to get a little more, I got like two more questions, here. Now as far as I've been able to pick up, the ADF is extremely well known for its pushing forward paid clergy, and obtaining church status. What were the other movements that were occurring at the same time you were doing this? For that paid clergy status and stuff? Were you alone, or were you among many people?

IB: Well, I told you about the ten year gap, didn't I?

MS: Yes I've heard of it.

IB: OK. About five or six years ago, I started talking about the need for professionally trained clergy in the Pagan community. That as Paganism became more mainstream, and as Pagan congregations became larger and larger, we were going to need a pool of clergy who were at least as well trained as the clergy of other religions are. And that meant that we needed to start having standards of qualification for clergy, based on demonstrable knowledge and skill. That in turn was eventually going to lead to people having to go to college or in some other way get an education related to how to be a



clergy person. This tied into ADF study program, which I believe I sent you a copy of.

MS: I've read it.

IB: I believe that we are eventually going to have a full time paid Pagan clergy. We have full time Pagan clergy now. It's just that hardly any of them get paid. Some of them do, some of them are actually starting to be paid by their religious organizations for these fifty and sixty hour work weeks they put in. I believe Otter and Morning Glory now get a stipend for the work that they do. And, Anders and Deirdre Corbin from Earth Spirit. Officially they earn their living organizing Pagan festivals, unofficially they're basically being paid Pagan clergy. The topic was extremely controversial when I first brought it up, for a variety of reasons, both legitimate and illegitimate. And, I think that we are going to see paid Pagan clergy increasing, and twenty or thirty years from now, there'll be so many Pagan clergy who are paid that every one will wonder what all the controversy was about. Not that this is going to solve all our problems, since there are plenty of clergy who get paid who still have problems. But, it will relieve one set of stresses from the heads of those of us who put in incredibly long hours trying to organize and facilitate large scale Pagan groups, and then have to turn around and earn a mundane living. The main argument on that will be in the last two issues of Fireheart Magazine, if you can get them.

MS: OK, I don't know if I'll get a chance on that. What is the official church position, according to law, right now, of the ADF.

IB: The official legal status of ADF? We're an incorporated nonprofit religious corporation in the state of Delaware, and we have 501c3 status from the IRS, they think we're a church, or they think we're a religious organization, they don't necessarily call it a church. And, so we're completely legal. And, we are working on obtaining what is called a Group-Exemption letter for our local groves. But, the IRS requires us to pay a fee of five hundred dollars for that, and we haven't accumulated sufficient money to pay for it yet, but eventually, each and every single chartered grove of ADF will also have a tax exempt status.

MS: Are your priests considered to be legal ministers?

IB: By whom?

MS: I don't know, by the courts? For instance if someone confided something to one of your priests, would he be forced to divulge that information in a legal court? Or has this not come up yet?

IB: It simply has not come up yet. Our people have performed weddings and funerals. Several of our people are functioning as Chaplains, not in the Military, but we have a prison ministry operating out of the grove in Texas. And, we haven't had any trouble at all with legal recognition of our status. Over the course of the last twenty years, due primarily to the mischievous going-ons of the Universal Life Church, most state and local governments have backed away from trying to define who's a real clergy person, and what is a real religion. Mostly these days, they examine things on a case by case basis. And, if you have an unusual non-mainstream religious group then a local county court house, or state government may want to see materials about your organization, before they'll say, "OK, we'll let you marry and bury here." But, so far that really hasn't been a problem here.

MS: The last two questions are activism, and differences between Druidism and Wicca.

IB: Ok.

MS: Which one do you want to go for?

IB: You've got my discussion of the differences in the... between Druidism and Wicca... in the little brochures. The standard ADF brochures, I mean, they're not that major, in one sense. I mean, Druidism and Wicca are Neo-Pagan religions, as we practice them anyway. <pause> Neo-Pagan Druidism and Neo-Pagan Wicca are similar in that they are both part of the Neo-Pagan community. They're sibling religions, with overlapping memberships. I would say that at least a third and maybe a half of the members of ADF also practice one form or another of Wiccan. There's no real conflict between the two, but there is a different emphasis in theology, a different liturgical style. And, primarily the difference is between groups that are small, private and exclusive versus groups that are large, public and inclusive. but, there's no reason you can't do both simultaneously. That is to say, you can have a large Pagan congregation that has smaller groups within it. That's what we're seeing develop in the ADF Groves, just as I expected.

MS: The major theological difference is Polytheism versus Pantheism?

IB: No, Polytheism vs. Duotheism. Wicca's basic theology is Duotheistic, or in the case of some feminist traditions, Monotheistic. ADF's emphasis is Polytheistic. We think it's more important to honor and celebrate the differences in diversity of deity, rather than the similarities they might have with each other. So, the advantage is that we don't have to cram all the deities into a small set of symbolic pigeon holes. Not every goddess in the world fits into the Mother, Maiden or Crone trilogy. Not every god in the world fits into the Hunting God, Vegetation God, Sun God pattern. So, we have a lot more theological elbow room in that way. My wife is a Witch and a Druid, I'm a Witch and a Druid. I just spent most of my time, and my emphasis in public on the Druidic side, because that's the side that needs work in developing right now. The Wiccan community is doing very nicely, and growing geometrically in a very quiet fashion.

MS: Last question here is activism. Does your group, as a group ...

IB: We encourage our members, and our local groves to be active in areas that are relevant where they happen to live. In ecology, social justice, and so forth. We don't have one or two particular axes that we grind. A couple... several groves are doing tree planting activities for example. We've had litter clean ups, and recycling days, and one group volunteered at a soup kitchen for a weekend, blood drives, basically we want... I think that Pagan congregations, at least the public church ones, should be an integral part of their local, social as well as biological, environment. And, that means participating in the life of the community, giving something back for what you get. I also believe that Druids are the natural chaplains for an environmental movement. And, that people who think of themselves as being Druidic in nature, so to speak, should be involved in some sort of environmental activism, even if its just a matter of joining Green Peace and subscribing to Nature Magazine, they should be putting some of their time, money, and energy into helping the environment.

MS: Alright, well I think I'm going to close off this interview officially, lets see here.

# Alice Cascorbi Interview

August 29<sup>th</sup>, 1993

Alice restarted the Carleton Druids in 1985 and was quiet influential in giving it a new face for the times, new customs with her friends, and breathing new life into the system.



Eric Hillemann (EH): This is Eric Hillemann, the Archivist at Carleton, the date is August 29<sup>th</sup>, 1993. What follows will be an interview with Alice Cascorbi, Carleton class of 1988. Also Sitting with us is Michael Scharding, the current Arch-Druid of the Carleton Druids and the Druids are expected to form what we are going to talk about today and what the Druids were like when you were here, but lets start out with some information about your own background and what brought you to Carleton. Get us to the campus...

Alice Cascorbi (AC): ok, I was raised in Cleveland Ohio and I went to a preppy private school for my high school and when it came time to look for a college, which all of were expected to do. I didn't know, what I wanted to be and I found out that liberal arts college would be a place for a person like me. We had a good guidance councilor who first pointed in this direction, but it was really a friend of mine, Frankie Bressman who was one class ahead of me, at that school, Laurel school in Ohio, who came here herself. She was class of 86 I guess, who, when I asked her where you going to school, oh she said, "oh Carleton in Northfield." I said, "Well, I guess I heard of that. It was a good school without the pretensions of some of the eastern schools, my hold cohort was being shoved toward. I had had too much and too much of the preppiness and pretension and so when I visited here, the thing that really decided me, I had looked at Oberlin which was quite close to home and Haverford, and Swarthmore, at U of Chicago and Vassar and of the two, I almost when to U of Chicago, but Carleton with its small town atmosphere. I never had been in a safe environment where people could really walk around at night. Even though it is not perfectly safe here, its a lot safer that what I grew up

with. The unpretentiousness and yet intellectual, I don't know what the high intellectual level without pretentiousness and the way people seemed to interact when they walked around campus. I liked the atmosphere here it was relaxed and because it had a good reputation academically, that is all I knew about colleges. I came here. I choose Carleton, well for myself, I really blossomed here and I had a good time, a good experience. It was a life changing experience for me. The Druids are only a very small part of that. I didn't really know what I was doing, as a high school kid. This was a very good place to go and if I could choose again, I would choose a college like this.

EH: That is good to hear.

AC: Anyway, my religious background, which would be some interest to this is pretty typical intellectual semi-agnostic atheist parents. My mother raised Catholic. My father raised Lutheran. My father came from Germany. My mother came from Pennsylvania from a long line of people who been in this country a long time. So I have that in my background, for what it is worth, but neither of them was terribly religious. When their children were going up and we moved to Ohio, there was an Anglican church, Episcopal church just down the road. They considered it a great compromise between Catholicism and Lutheranism and so close to home too and we would go there. It was a friendly place, but we didn't have a community there and they were not into it religiously. I think if my parents had been more religious it would have been harder for me to accept what I did and what I have about my spiritual side. I was brought up with this sort of "religion is for kids." It is something we tell the children. It is, looking back, it is the Easter bunny. The parents didn't really believe it. The didn't really believe the teachings of their church. If my parents have spiritual, they do actually, their spiritual beliefs are a lot closer to mine, than to any Christian churches right now and so they are sort of Unitarian Agnostic people who have nothing against odd practice. They don't believe in the devil, they don't believe in, you know, a strong theology of that kind. I'm only getting to this because I'm not a very rebellious person by nature and if they had been, I probably would never have come out of the closet as a Druid. That is just my personality and unlike some of the other folks who hopefully are being interviewed too, I personally have always had a conflict between my desire to do Druid things and my desire to be a good girl and stay in the mainstream. I only put that out, because there are those of us too who are just drawn to it from an internal thing and have trouble with the flamboyant side. Some people really enjoy bucking the system and really had people like that when I was a Druid who were into it because it was cool and weird. There is certainly a place for that, but it is not where I'm coming from.

To make a longer story short, I had read a lot as a child. I read Greek mythology voraciously. I loved Greek mythology and by the time I was 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> grade age, I had realized that my parents didn't really believe the stuff in church, but they were acting as those they did only in front of the kids, you know. Don't swear sort of things. Sort of superficial lip service to Christianity. It made me really angry and when one of my little classmates said she was an atheist and that meant she didn't believe in god. I said, "Well that is what I am." Oddly enough, or at the same time, I had what I called my mystical streak. I just gave up try to analysis it because even at that time, there was times when I needed to pray or wanted to pray. Wanted to reach out and give thanks or give for help

with something. I was 11 or 12 at this time. When I did that I reached out to Diana. The Goddess image that I knew from mythology and to Athena, but especially to Diana because I was a maiden, I was a young girl with tom boy tendencies and was quite unhappy where I was with my school. The maiden huntress image, was very attractive and comforting. Diana was my goddess, even though I was an Atheist. That is sort of where things stood. I came to College, I was 17. I had been skipped ahead a grade and that was a bad experience that I wouldn't do to a kid like myself at that point, but be that as it may. So intellectually up there, emotionally young, very young. Coming to college was the best thing that happened to me in terms of here I finally had, there were people all around me who were like me who had been smart, who had been weird and had often been ostracized because they were smart and or weird. I loved it, it was wonderful. To open parts of myself, be friends, having good friends. Living with other people all around me, having a roommate. It was tremendously hard especially the first term here, freshman year, but it was tremendously rewarding. For a couple of years, I was just being a student here. I went to Quaker meeting a couple of times. I was interested in their philosophy, but didn't find any real juice in it. I had heard of the Druids in the Carleton Catalogue that this was something that had started back in the '60s. It seemed awfully attractive. No, there weren't any on campus any more, it was something in the past, but what a cool idea, how funny. The amusing, the prankish nature of it to buck the chapel requirement in that way was funny and then somebody took me up to the Hill of 3 Oaks and said this is where they use to meet. That really appealed to my romantic side. God this is great, this hill, these beautiful twisty Oaks, this old stone. This is great. It was just a little part of the background of the school. It was just one of the little legends you here. I didn't. I always very, up until then, had been very private with my spiritual beliefs or spiritual side and very comfortable that way, only comfortable really by myself. Somebody, when I was a freshman, I lived on 4th Musser (Mec snickers)... shut up Mike. I know, I know, that considered one of the worse dormitories on campus and still is. Yeah, coming from Cleveland I was used to that.

EH: Cleveland prepares you for 4th Musser?

AC: That's right, yeah. So anyway, anyway my roommate was Rachel Leader. Done the hall was a woman named Judith Norman who was another freshman. We had a good forum, Judith and Rachel became two of my best friends. Two other people on the floor were Meg Ross who was a junior art major at that point. She had a single, which is probably the reason she was there, in Musser. Another freshman named Maggie Daggit and Maggie was a very frail women with a lot of problems. I think she was drug dependent. Anyway, many different people and I liked all of them. At some point in the fall of '83, Meg came up to us, me and Judith and said, "had we heard of the Druids?" I said, "Yeah" and she said she was a Druid and she one of the last ones left on campus and a guy, whose name many always forget and still forget who is probably David Frankel, right? Somebody who had graduated a few years earlier was the last Carleton Druid and he had inducted Meg into as a Druid, he was back on campus visiting that night and wanted to induct some more Druids if anyone was interested. Meg, asked Judith and me, would you like to become Druids? We said, "yeah, sure, that sounds like fun, what do we have to do?" she said grab your coat, come out to the Hill of Three Oaks (TM). Maggie was there was too and we told Maggie what we doing and asked if she

wanted to come and so we all paraded out to the Hill of Three Oaks (TM). Meg had this big green chalice. One of these really ugly glass things that I guess.

MS: Maybe the deep glass chalice.

AC: No, there was 3 or 4 of them kicking around at different times at the Farm House arena, but this one was one big ugly green glass chalice that was probably from Ben Franklin store. Meg had that and somebody had a bottle of spirits of some kind mixed very thoroughly with water. This guy, who ever he was, was staying in Goodhue and we met him at Goodhue and he wore his bathrobe. He had clothes on, but had his bathrobe over as his ritual robe or something. Judith brought her stuffed tiger who is like a mascot. She stills has it and Maggie and I. We tripped up to the hill and the guy, these people know his name...

MS: No, I don't.

AC: Yes you do, never mind. He and Meg, I think we let a fire. We did, they did the blessing of the waters. I guess it was the winter season, so we did the waters of sleep blessing and then they told us the tradition was to become a first level Druid, you just had to say you wanted to, to participate in the waters thing and agree that you wish to be a Druid. He told us that there two things, two tenets of Druidism that we were swearing ourselves two. I found it pretty easy to swear to and they were reverence for nature and respect for all religious paths, respect for other religions. No problem, for me. So we, to use the Druid prevalence, we were sealed to service of the Earth Mother and I related this to my Greek spirituality thing and to my ancestral feelings. You know, that my ancestors are from Europe and this once was their religion. That whatever little bit was left, was left a harking back to that, to something out of my own people, way back and I was delighted. It was mostly for fun and the guy who ever he was, not to take it too seriously that some people in the past had taken this Druid thing really seriously and he didn't think that was a good idea. All the same, to consider ourselves Carleton Druids now. The made the circle. They made the water blessing and then he and Meg both dipped their fingers in the water and they made the circle with the two lines on our foreheads, all of our forehead, it was myself, Judith Norman and Maggie Daggit and Judith's Tiger also received the symbol his forehead. (general laughter) He has never attended another ceremony as far as I know. That was the beginning and the end of my Druid activity for 2 more years.

The next thing in line was, well I had taken a year off. I went through my freshman and sophomore years and decided I wanted to take some time off and so the school year 85-86 I was not enrolled at Carleton and I subsequently take back. I was in Northfield for a portion of that time beginning January 1986 and I was working downtown and living in town. So I still had contact with friends who were at Carleton and I would go visit them sometimes and stuff. Let me make sure I get everything right here, chronologically. There were some other students who were older than I was, who were interested modern Earth spirituality or modern Paganism. One of them I know was Tino Thompson and I think what had happened, the summer before, that is the summer of '85, some students had gone to the Pagan spirit gathering. No, I could be wrong about this. No, never mind, scratch that. Tino was interested in Pagan stuff and some other people were too. They, I wasn't part of that, invited a woman named Selena Fox to come here and speak. It must of happened sometime in early '86, because that is when I was back in town. I went

to that lecture, I got an invite from someone I knew. She was a wonderful speaker. She gave a lecture on modern Paganism, modern Wicca. She's a Wiccan, you might say she is a witch and a shamanic practitioner. She talked about the Druids and their part in that small spiritual movement.

MS: She talked about the Carleton Druids?

AC: She did not as far as I remember directly. She talked about the spectrum of beliefs represented in modern Paganism and showed some slides the Pagan spirit gathering, that her group Circle Sanctuary puts on every year. Among them, well there are lots of many kinds of Pagans and there are the Druids. She described them as the Catholics among the Pagans. This was Isaac Bonewits' group. She had slides of Isaac and his group, some of followers at PSG under their Druid flag. I'm sure during the question and answer period somebody said something about Carleton Druids, but the main memory I have of that lecture, a wonderful introduction to people who are out there. There are people seriously worshipping Diana and saying they were, and not keeping it quiet and treating it and insisting they be treated as legitimate religious practitioner which was a new thing for me. As I said, she was an engaging lecture, she is a good teacher and she invited questions.

She talked about Satanism and that was not part of the Earth spirituality thing. It was a Christianity heresy thing. She likened the Satanist use of the pentacle to their use of the cross. In both cases they turn it upside down. I associated the pentacle with icky things and heavy metal music at best. I remember asking her well, who are these Satanists who go out and turn your pentacle upside down. She answered, in her experience, they were people who really lacked power, who were needing power in a big way. She is a psychologist. It was almost a psychological assessment who they might be. This was still freaky and you know the word witch was and to still is not a nice word in a lot of people's ears and certainly in mine. Oh, maiden mother and crow, Diana's maiden. Hmmm, interesting, I might be a witch, but no no, I worship Diana. When it was over, there was a dinner for them, potluck held out at Farm house where Tino might have been living at the time. Anyway he was associated with people there, if he didn't live there. Selena and her husband Dennis were hanging out after dinner there and I went over there. I think I didn't eat dinner there, but I got there later with my boyfriend at the time, Hideo Yamada who kind of hid behind the paper and read the sports page. He came with me, but he thought it all too freaky, but that is a funny story in itself, but, he just converted to Catholicism and now he was gung ho about religion himself. We're not still going out, but we're friends. Religion was not something he wanted to touch, especially goofy religion. Selena was there. Dennis was there. I and several other folks.

Someone then brought up the Carleton Druids, we have this home ground Pagan movement here at Carleton and the ancestors of Isaac's group started here and Selena hadn't known that or she said, "That is amazing. Are there any still around?" and someone said "No, they died out." and she said, "that's too bad." I was there, and I said, "No, you know, I am a Druid, I was inducted several years ago, into the first level." And they were like "really, wow!" I guess people had said, "Its too bad we'd like to start it up again and we don't have any Druids of the old line." and they did, it was me and I didn't know it. Maybe a week later, we had a big induction ceremony, a lot of people had been sparked by

this and had wanted to associate themselves with the Druids. I think Andrea Dawson, I don't know. Andrea Dawson was part of this with Jan Schlamp, both of them have changed their names now. Heiko Koester, Branden Shield, definitely him, Tino, although he wasn't a close friend of mine and I didn't do much religious practice with him. It was early spring in 86. I guess we looked up the Druid Chronicles. Someone had dug up a copy that might have been out at Farm house and looked up some of the ceremony's and things and getting more and more into it. We put together a big first level induction and had 30 people attend. Among them were Clay Christianson, who works for security here. He had been a friend, as much as a staff member can be a friend to little freshies and everything. He was a cool guy. He was the only staff member who I know of who has become a Druid. About 30 people, about mixed equally men and women, many of them I never saw again at a ceremony, but they seemed consider themselves Druids. I remember, I hope Clay doesn't mind this, but one of things you ask the people when you symbol on their foreheads is "are you ready for this, are you ready to be sealed to the service of the Earth Mother? Do you understand what you're doing?" When I asked Clay the question he said, "I've been ready all my life, you know..." Certainly, like in my case, there were people who had been feelings these things or feeling their invested somewhere other than the Christian milieu in which most of us grew up, but not having a name for it or a place to put it and the Druids became that for me for awhile. After the first big induction, there was no big danger that the lion, so to speak, would die out again. I don't know how much time we have left on this side... I can go into what we did as Druids as I went into my junior year and my senior year.

EH: There is time left, go ahead.

AC: So this thing in the spring happened and the following summer of 86, I left town, I actually went to Japan for a short while. Jan Schlamp and Heiko Koester and I think somebody else like Paul Grover, maybe, but definitely Jan and Heiko went to the Pagan Spirit Gathering that Circle puts on. It is a big week long get together/camp out thing in a camp ground in Wisconsin out in the country. They went and when they came back they were even more fired up. Both of them are go-getters, do it people and had a lot of energy which I never had and they we both also a year ahead of me. The were both at least the class ahead of me. That following fall, the fall of 86, we got the Chaplain at the school who was Jewelnel Davis and she began something new called the council for religious understanding. This was to be a lunch time, once a week get together. My impression was she had envisioned the Catholics talking to the Protestants and everybody talking to Jews kind of thing. Pretty typical ecumenical table, but there would be a topic each week and people would speak about their religious paths, responses to that topic whether it be war or the question of evil or smaller things, the place of women, things like this. The idea was to get religions talking to each other as represented by their student members here at Carleton. Jan and Heiko petitioned that the Druids be allowed to come and sit on this council. Things are a little fuzzy, I don't remember how many rituals or what was going on, at that time we began, sort of, the ritual practice that continued till I left here and after. Jan and Heiko had been exposed to the sweat lodge practice at PSG. They brought sweat lodging to Carleton. I'm sure they ran the first couple and Jan especially was really into it. Heiko went out at some point

and cut down some Willow saplings and they built a sweat lodge out of saplings in the lawn at Farm house and dug up blankets wherever people could dig them up and put them over the sweat lodge. I don't remember when I did my first sweat, but it was there...

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...Was Andrea was the one who started the nudity thing? I said, "no, not that remember." We always did sweats naked, but associated with some of the Pagan people was being a Nudist or going Naked in Farm House.

MS: Clothing optional house.

AC: Clothing optional house it became for awhile, but actually that was a little bit later and I really think Brandon Shield was the most into that. I should say, by this time, yeah the fall of 86, Brandon and I had started a relationship which was sort stormy and since has really got awful and I don't talk to him any more. I hope people don't judge me too awfully for that, but its like one of those college things. He was awfully attractive to me and I spent a lot time trying to get him to be to my boyfriend and a lot of that time happened while the Druid stuff has happening and inevitably some of that plays out. I only mention that for the sake of completeness, yes it is true. Heiko was going out with Jan at some point during this too. So we had couples forming among the Druids. Other folks since have told me like Nat Case who when I lived at Farm house my senior year, the year 87-88. He lived there too. After we both graduated, he let me know, that he considered himself a Pagan also, but never have felt good about coming to Pagan rituals, because he didn't really like Branden. Our leadership, I've seen this in other contexts, people who might have been interested in what we doing, might not have been socially interested in us or whatever and so because this is such a little college and people know each other very well often, the personal and the political get very intertwined. They certainly did for me, but let me try to pick up the thread of the narrative a little bit better.

Back in the fall of '86, I was a junior and I was living with Judith and Rachel, my good friends from freshman times in Nourse, second Nourse, Nourse 200. We were doing Druid rituals and I was trying to get through Organic Chemistry. Jan and Heiko were sitting on the council for religious understanding. There was a debate, the beginning of a series of debates around the Druids and around the legitimacy of the Druids, because here is a goofy out of the ground mushroom religion that the kids are doing. They decided we weren't a cult, which is good. A cult, not occult. No Guru not leading us down the wrong path, it was self-delusion if that, and that was ok. Many of the people on the council for religious understanding was quite wary of the idea of a non-Christian spiritual group claiming to be Druid and having meetings under the moon and probably naked sometimes and they were right. All this stuff. I recall reading, I think in the 'Tonian, something about this debate, Druids trying to get into the council for religious understanding and that the council had brought up the question, "well the Druids want in, what if some Satanist came and wanted in? Would we have to let them in?" "And that essentially they decided, that they would, if they wanted to be there. It was Heiko and Jan who did it. They went to those meetings. That was very typical, certainly of Heiko, he's kind of that activist personality. I applauded what they were doing. At the same

time it really scared me. I didn't want anything to do with it at that point. It wasn't my stick or so I thought. Meanwhile in our company, among our own company, we had some sweat Lodges, mostly on the Farm house Lawn. I recall Paul Grover becoming involved, another guy Paul and Michelle.

MS: Gretchen

AC: Well, Paul Gretch is Paul Grover. Paul Grover was called Gretch because he and another Paul lived at Farm house at the same time, and in one of those precious little traditions, that was really kind of funny, they... Years before they had 2 women living there who had the same name of Laura, I think . They decided the younger of the two, should have a different name to avoid confusion. And her middle name was Gretchen. And so, they got Laura and Gretchen. And then the next time two people with the same name showed up, they decreed that the second of the two should be called Gretchen. And I think the third time two people with the same name showed up, it was Paul Grover and Paul...long tall Paul with long hair, who worked in computers, I don't remember his name...he went out with Michelle Stollow, and they almost got married. But he was older, and so Paul Grover was called Gretchen, or Gretch. And that name stuck with him.

Anyway, he was in big with the Druid things. Digby Willard came to one of our sweats, kind of late. We had a floating batch of people, and...I found the sweat lodge a very good practice, you know, I guess we're not even close to what the Native American people do in their sweats, but we would...it would be a big event, you know, an event that took time, anyway, and finding time away from studies was always part of the milieu of the Druids. And building the sweat lodge, which had to be rebuilt now and then, because they are fragile – just saplings tied together with sticks – finding enough old blankets to put over it, which wasn't as much of a problem at Farm House, because they had a huge collection up in the attic. Building a fire, getting some granite, or hard stone, heating up the stone. When everything...when the stone was good and hot, bringing it into the sweat lodge, and laying it down. Then the people would crowd in, and I think they told us you always enter going clockwise, which is in...certainly in the Wiccan tradition, circling clockwise is building up energy. And circling counter-clockwise is letting go energy, or drawing down energy. And some traditions are very strict about which way you do what, and we were told, yeah, go in the sweat lodge clockwise.

Piling in there...we would all be naked, you know, people had the option to wear bathing suits or stuff if they wanted to, but the five or seven of us who were sort of core members at this point were into being naked for sweat lodge. I related to it, again, partly because it was...I don't how to respond to it exactly, but I felt like I was in National Geographic, you know. It's like wow, you know, we have all these bodies of really different shapes, and it's okay to be naked for a little while, you know, all together, and not look at it, you know, as sexual, necessarily. Although some people did, I think (laughs). Never mind that. But, no, some people got more of a thrill out of just seeing their friends naked. And some people got more of a thrill out of being naked (laughs). Except when it was very cold, I kind of enjoyed it, you know, alternative stuff.

EH: You had a copy of the Druid Chronicles and things. Was there any feeling that you had used any of the rituals that were

done by the early group, or did mostly concentrate on the sweat lodge?

AC: No, we did...I was just getting long-winded on the sweat lodge. We did certainly look through the chronicles, read through them, and look at the rituals that they had done, and re-enact according to their, you know, their formulas, or whatever. We tried having...I think we tried having new moon or full moon meetings each month on the Hill of Three Oaks for a while. And it worked for a while. All of these things would always fall apart when, you know, finals time came around and stuff. And the cold weather, during a lot of the Carleton school year, kind of puts a damper on these things. So, often times, somebody would say...it would be informal, but Branden or Andrea or somebody might say, "oh, let's have a ritual tonight," or "Let's have a ritual next Saturday. And... okay, well, so-and-so is gonna tend the fire, and so-and-so said she'd get firewood." I'll go into that in a little bit more detail. Often these things would sort of fall apart, and the day of the ritual, the people would call up, and just say, "Oh, I'm working on a paper, and I can't do the fire like I said I could." Or, "Well, I can be there at nine, but not past ten." So, it was very...it was loose, and it was not...well, there was nobody to say, you know, you can't do that, because at Carleton studies come before everything else, and it was just one of those things. But oftentimes, you know, we'd hear with joy, oh, you know, seven or eight people have said they'd be here up on the hill at ten. And two people would show up. And so, that's the way the Druids' roulette worked when I was a Druid (laughs).

EH: Did you have leaders, officers? Was there an Archdruid? Was that title used?

AC: No. When I was there, that title was not.

EH: Were any titles used?

AC: No. We...Depending on our interests...Heiko, and I think Branden got very much into reading the Druid Chronicles, and Jan too. And some of the stuff...they would sort of bring me stuff, and I read some of it, but looking at the formulation of the Druid hierarchy, I think Branden and Heiko got into that, just looking at it. And they decided, and I agreed, that a lot of the sort of playing with, you know, fourth, fifth, sixth level, who was who and what was what, and having a bard, and an I don't know what all, you know, an officer in charge of this and that, just was not appealing to us. It was too hierarchical. None of wanted to be Archdruid. Certainly in the following year, some of us who had been in it longer were looked on as leaders, but it wasn't...it was neither a self-given nor a formally others-given title. It was more a hierarchy of age, like a lot of things are at college...What am I trying to say...? Branden and Heiko made the decision to do vigils. You know, we had a lot of first-level Druids. And I think one of them...I didn't do this myself, but one of them said something to me, like, "Well, you ought to be second-level," you know, "You must be second-level by now," because of what I had done, you know. And I'm like, "Oh, great." They decided they wanted to be third-level, and they...we accepted the idea that for third-level, which meant a more serious commitment to these things, you were to vigil on the Hill of Three Oaks, theoretically, or someplace, anyway...Stay up all night in the Arb and meditate, think about being a Druid. I know that one...I think the night Branden was going to vigil, it was a horribly cold, rainy night, and...I mean, it was about this time, it was...at the beginning he said August – this was October, we're actually in October today, and

\*\*Hmm?\*\*\*

AC: Yeah, you did. But anyway – cold, almost snowing, rain, you know, right around Samhain, or Halloween time. And he decided that – or we all decided that vigiling at Farm House was quite acceptable instead (laughs), and so we had a ritual out on the Hill, and then came back in. And we would do the Waters of Life ceremony. That was a big part of any ritual we did. Other things that our rituals included were guided meditations...we did a little bit of the seasonal celebration, but somehow Samhain, or Halloween, always took big precedence over the other holidays. I think partly because of Halloween, and partly because it occurred early enough in the year that people had energy still to put into it. And a couple of the really big Pagan holidays, or cycle holidays of the ancient Europeans, occur at really awful times for Carleton grads, (correcting) or for Carleton students in class to be doing things with. You know, the winter solstice is when we're all on vacation, and so is the summer solstice. Fall equinox...well, I don't know. We never did much with that. Beltane, May Day, which we should have been able to do a lot with, we never did, somehow. It was never as big a deal as Samhain. Maybe because of Mai Fete, and other things that the college already does around those...I don't know. But it came to me, I guess, the second year that...well, we have this big, you know, Samhain, and people went and dug up just a little bit of Celtic mythology, and I understand I'm not actually pronouncing it correctly, but we said "Sowan," even though we spelled it Samhain, and I didn't really understand why. Okay, that's the end of the year, that's the final...that's the finish of one yearly cycle. It was the day of the dead, where the ancestors could walk again, you know, and people would honor their ancestors, and their connections with those who had died. And we'd have a big shindig at that point, a big ritual on the Hill of Three Oaks, and then always there were Halloween parties to go to afterwards. And the Druids would, in my two years of being associated, they'd, you know, go right to the Farm House Halloween party and have a blast. But we didn't do the same thing on the happy holiday that balances that somber one, which is Beltane, with flowers, and fun, and everything.

Let's see...so yeah, we did...we looked into the old Druid things, but we were anarchistic. Jan and Heiko had learned these...the sweat lodge-type things, and I guess elements of Wicca that weren't really present in the early Druid things. I think the calling of the four directions, and the association of certain qualities with the four directions was not originally done by the old Druids at Carleton. But we would...because they taught us this invocation, we would invoke spirits of North, of South, of East, of West, usually going in a circle, usually North, East, South, West, North being Earth, East being Air, South being Fire, and West being Water. So we would cast a circle, we would ask them, these spirits, to be present. I remember a discussion with Heiko once, 'cause... (laughs), yeah, here we go. One of the Council of for Religious Understanding things was reported once, again, probably in the Carletonian, and they said, well, "a discussion of spirits was posed, and Heiko Koester said the Druids do not conjure up evil spirits, even though they certainly could." And I kind of...I didn't agree with that at all. Because essentially, I don't think they're there to be conjured. So we had some theological differences, you might say. And I talked to Heiko about that, and said, you know, "what do you mean by this?" And he said, "Well, when we invoke, you know, the spirits of North, the spirits of East, I feel they're really there." And Joseph Walzer, who was younger than us,

was there with us, and he said something like, “But I think of those as spirits of mind.” And I agree with that. So some of us, like Heiko, were truly into the reality of these things. And others of us were seeing them more as symbols. And I certainly fall more into the latter category. But we would invoke the directions, and cast a circle, you know, ask these spirits to be there with us, to protect us and bless us with whatever we were going to do.

We would then have the Waters of Life ceremony, the blessings of the water, which was usually in one of these big, ugly, green chalices from the chalice collection. And Heiko had dug up several of them from somewhere, I think probably in the attic at Farm House they were stored – there’s a lot of old dishware kicking around over there. Or there was, anyway. Waters of Life, which were usually totally non-alcoholic. I think the original recipe calls for some whiskey to be added during the summer half of the year, when they’re the Waters of Life. And when they’re the Waters of Sleep, that is, from Samhain to Beltane, you don’t add any alcohol. But we hardly went out from Samhain to Beltane, anyway, and so it wasn’t all that much of a big deal.

We would often dance. We did spiral dancing when we had enough people, and that’s really fun. That’s...you probably heard about that from other people. There was also...there was a lot of creativity, and we would switch off leadership, who was going to lead the ritual, or once in a while, somebody would come over and say...like Heiko and I might go to Andrea and say, we want to have a ritual to celebrate X and such, you know, the...I don’t know what – the winter equinox, whatever – do you want to lead it? And then the person would agree or not, and so whoever was leading the ritual decided what we were going to do. It was always celebratory. Sometimes it also included a prayer, or what you might call a magic working, in that we would raise energy for some specific purpose. The energy was raised by dancing, by chanting...there were several chance which were...which came from PSG, and they’re basic modern American Pagan chants that a lot of people know – “the Earth is our mother” is one of them, “Air I am, Fire I am, Water, Earth and Spirit I am,” ...what else?

MS: Circles?

AC: “Circle around, we circle around.” Those were some biggies that we also did in the sweat lodge. But what I’m trying to lead into is the freedom and the creativity that people brought to these little rituals. And they were little. We didn’t have the time and we didn’t have the energy to be truly making this a focus, at least most of us...If somebody feels that they were, it’s news to me. You know, everybody had their schoolwork, and everybody had their friends, and their relationships, and their sports, and who knows what, you know, also going on, a lot going on. So we didn’t have a lot of time to put into this. But...one of the early rituals that I remember, that was totally off-the-wall, was...Curtis Love and Andre Baskin were two guys who...they lived at Farm House that year. Andre was sort of a computer whiz, and kind of an anarchist. He did a few interesting pranks with the computers. Like he set up a VAX terminal in one of the closets at Farm House, an illegal VAX terminal, which was wonderful, because at that time, when personal computers were just beginning to come in, lot’s of students wanted VAX space to do papers, and the VAX lab was incredibly crowded. And to live out there, and walk into campus, especially on a winter night, was a lot of trouble. And so, I don’t know where he kyped the equipment from, but he stole some computer equipment...didn’t really

take it off campus, ‘cause he just put it in a campus house, and got a modem hooked up, so that Farm House had a VAX hook-up in its closet. Anyway, that was Andre. And Curtis was a really interesting person – goofy guy, friend of mine. We had bio classes together. And Curtis had a very active, child-like side to him. And he really loved his stuffed toys. And he had this toy lion, called Leo, I guess, just this...

MS: There was the dinosaur too.

AC: Yeah. I don’t what all...I do remember Leo the lion clearly. In one of those little in-house things that I wasn’t really privy to, because I wasn’t living out there at that time, Leo got kidnapped, and it was a big deal. And I think it turned out Andre had done it. And Curtis was putting notices in the NNB for the return of Leo, and, you know, talking about him as though he were truly alive. And somehow peace was made, and whatever factions had done this came together again, and there was to be a ritual sometime, I think, in the fall of ‘86, late fall, the return of...the reappearance of Leo the lion. And Curtis and Andre set the whole thing up. We did some folk dancing at that ritual. Andre was into folk dancing, so instead of the spiral dancing, we did some Irish jig-type stuff that he taught us, which was sort of fun. And he had a boom-box for music. That was always...the innovations of what to do up on the Hill for entertainment for the theatrics of rituals – music, lights, whatever you want. He had a boom-box, and I remember thinking, “well, that’s not very primitive” (laughs). Sort of techno-Druid here. And Leo the lion appeared in a flash of black powder at some point. It was like...there weren’t that many people there, there were maybe six or seven of us, and then Andre and Curtis, and Curtis stood up and said something like, “And now, the moment you’ve all been waiting for, we’re going to ask the Earth mother if Leo could come back (laughs), and we really hope she’ll grant our prayer.” And they did something, and I think Andre threw some, you know, firecracker-type thing into the fire, and there was a big poof, and Leo reappeared, I think on the alter stone. And I remember Curtis picking him up and going, “Oooh, Leo, you’re back” (laughs).

And I tell this to emphasize that a sense of fun, and a sense of humor about all this was very much a part of the Druid time that I remember. We could be seriously thinking about our relation to the Earth, and the spiritual nature of that, and at the same time having these sort of silly rituals. One of the things that I like about the Druid path, as laid down by the Carleton people in 1960’s, whatever, was the beginning prayer, the apology that we actually didn’t use much, but the spirit of it appealed to me, where they said, essentially, to the Christian God, you know, forgive us for doing these things, forgive for asking...you know, forgive us for offering these prayers and sacrifices. We know you don’t need prayers and sacrifices. Forgive us these sins that are due to our human limitations, and the sins being offering to a specific God entity...to personifying God in a certain way, and to offering prayer, and to offering sacrifices, which I’ll explain in a second. The implication being we know God is bigger than all this. And that’s what I believe, that whatever we call God is much bigger, and much more inclusive than any human religion has ever captured. And part of the reason I think this is, if there is such a thing...I’m a scientist, I come from a science background. I believe evolution happened. I believe what they dig up archeologically is true, you know. So it seems that humans have been on the Earth at least several hundred thousand years in their modern form, and several million years, if you count hominid thingies, that probably

had language capacity, and made tools too. So in all that time, there have been so many different ways of reaching out to the divine. And I thought then, and I still think, you know, organized religions are an attempt to get a handle on our place in the cosmos, but whatever's out there, if there is anything out there...it's been worshipped in a lot of different ways. And if it's as great as they say it is, you know, as it must be, the only thing that I can think that would differentiate good from bad is intention. So actually, I consider myself more of Unitarian now than anything else. I'm sort of a Pagan Agnostic Unitarian. I have sort of a radical vision of God in that way...that what we were doing was in no way evil or offensive. Which was not shared...this opinion was not shared by all of the campus Christian groups, but I'll get to that in a second. We offered, as per the old Carleton Druid way, vegetable sacrifices. And everybody talked as though that was hilarious. The question of animal sacrifice runs through most people's minds when they think of Druid, or Pagan. And when we'd say, "No, no, we're the Reformed Druids, we offer only vegetable sacrifices," it would diffuse that tension in a big way. And we did. I mean, we thought about...our connection to the world that feeds us, essentially. Sometimes the sacrifices was Pine branches, I remember getting some from the Pines down near the hill. I was into harvest-type things, like food, you know, not just leaves that we wouldn't really eat, but corn, and squash, and things like that. So, on the occasion where we did, we would usually make

\*\*\*End of First Tape\*\*\*

EH: This is tape two of the interview with Alice Cascorbi on October 29, 1993.

AC: Okay, just to finish up about the vegetable sacrifices...yeah, we would normally leave them up on the Hill to be accepted by wild creatures. And sometimes someone would go back, like I'd go back a day later or something, to see if what we had left on the stone was still there. And if it was, I would throw it in the bushes somewhere. We always used the prayer in returning things, any such like dumping out things that we had to get rid off. "To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our mother, even as we must return to thee." This is a Druid prayer that I think is very beautiful, and you always use it when you're dumping the surplus Waters of Life onto the ground, returning to the Earth. And so, I guess, when I did that, with the vegetable sacrifices, I would certainly say that prayer as I threw the apple in the bushes, or whatever. It had always struck me as humorous that, in my reading of the old Greek practices, the Gods were said to be nourished by the stuff that the people didn't really want. Like they would sacrifice bullocks, as I understand it, and whatever else, but of food animals, the horns, or the...I'm sorry, the hide and the fat would be burned, and the scent of this wafting to Olympus was said to please and nourish the Gods. That's what the Gods got out of a sacrifice, and the humans got the meat. And I led one ritual, probably one of the better ones that I led, in the next year, in '87, and we had a fairly yummy selection of fruit, like some bananas, and stuff, and a large group of people – it may have been the first big ritual of the year, because we had a lot of freshmen interested in the Druids there at the time. And they included Heather Franek, and Heather Gruenberg, and several other younger people. God, what was that guy's name...?

MS: John Nolan(?)...Joe Banks?

AC: Yeah, John Nolan(?) was there. Joe Banks...he was...he wasn't a freshman then...But anyway, lots of new folks...yeah, people who subsequently got to be, I guess, leaders after my time was over, and after I was Carleton. But anyway, we had a large fruit selection, and I explained to the people that what we were going to do in this ritual that I was leading was offer the fruit, and, in the grand tradition of sacrifice, as I said, we were going to then eat it (laughs). So, you know, we would offer to the Earth Mother, but then it would for us to consume. And so, people liked that, they thought it was cute, whatever. And the skins and the cores went into the bushes. But I'm getting a little ahead of myself. Okay, the year '86-'87, it was academically my hardest year. I lot of core classes for my major at that point, which was biology. And had to really drag myself through organic chem, that was just hellish. But as Spring came, somebody asked me, I think it was Heiko, whether I would be willing to sit on the Council of the...the Council for Religious Understanding the following year. And I know at first I said no way. I just said I wasn't interested, I didn't feel a need to discuss my beliefs. But somehow it turned out nobody else was going to do it, or they needed two people, and I think Jan was graduating...would that have been correct? Yeah, I think so. So Jan was leaving, and they needed somebody. And Andrea Dawson also graduated at that point. And Tino was out picture...Tino left, I don't know if he graduated or not, I just don't know. But he was gone. And so, for the following year, '87-'88, which was my senior year, I was one of the elder Druids on campus. And the other elder Druids included Heiko and Branden. Now, wait a minute...I'm wrong about Jan – well, I don't know. Don't take me too literally on all these dates, I'm not quite sure about those things.

EH: We can look up when Jan graduated.

AC: Yeah, okay. But anyway, for one reason or another, I ended up serving on the Council for Religious Understanding in my senior year, which was an interesting experience. That was also Dave Diehl first came in, I think he was a freshman that year.

MS: No beard.

AC: No beard (laughs). He's a character, he always has been. And I found later, somewhat later, that he and I are like third cousins. Yeah, it's kind of cool. Anyway, Dave...these two young women named Heather were very different – we called them Heather Light and Heather Dark, because Heather Franek had long, dark hair, and Heather Gruenberg was very blond, and...I don't know. Heather Gruenberg was a very interesting person, and it was the first...I liked Heather Franek a lot, she became a friend of mine. But Heather Gruenberg was one of the folks who was totally enthralled with the weirdness of it all. This is almost more personal than Druid stuff, but Tino Thompson came back to Carleton that Fall for a short time. He stayed maybe a week or two. And he was kind of living in his van, and kind of traveling around. He came back here...I don't really remember why, but he stayed at Farm House, which was nothing unusual, you know, folks who had been associated with that house, or with people who were in the house always had a welcome, you know, to come and stay over a while. And he and Heather took up with each other (laughs), and it led to a couple of...it led to one very serious situation, which I'll get into, but she was totally enthralled. She was from Michigan, and from a...I guess a kind of conservative small town, and dove right in. And the Druidism was just like the Doctor Who club, and the watching Star Trek, you know, which are also things I love



doing, but the sort of just complete immersion in it I don't do. I had some problem with the whole attitude. I said some things I wasn't terribly proud of later. I had, for the first time in my life, the annoying sensation of people expecting me to help them find their spiritual self. And I had always been really solitary. Like I say, I'm not proud of this, and I certainly hope I get better at it as I get older, but...One time I was up on the Hill of Three Oaks, and it was daytime, it was a beautiful Fall day. And I don't remember why I was going up there, but Heather Gruenberg was there, and she was lying on top of the alter stone, kind of belly-down, I guess. And when I got up to the top of the Hill, she looked up at me with this sort of puppy dog expression. She said, "(affects a little girl voice) I've been lying here for the past hour trying to communicate with this rock, and I haven't been getting anything." And it really annoyed me, and I looked at her, and I said, "It's just a rock" (laughs). Oh, Alice, you're so mean, you're so awful. I really am not good with...this is not true confessions tape, but this is what would go on. Tino was really flamboyant, and they started going out, dating or whatever, and she would go around telling everybody that would listen that her new boyfriend was a bisexual witch. And she was really loud about it, you know, like...I think she lived in Goodhue...just giddy, totally giddy with this new freedom. She told everybody at home, at her place back in Michigan. And, sometime in Fall term that year, the whether was still very summer-like, I got this...Farm House got this phone call, and it was from Dean Jean Phillips...and let me make sure I get everything right here...Okay, Dean Jean had been contacted by a man who turned out to be Heather's old hometown boyfriend, who was younger than she was and was still in high school. And he, having heard about the Druid thing, and about Tino, and being obviously slightly unstable, and extremely jealous - he wanted Heather to marry him, is what I heard from Heather. He really was dead set on holding onto her. And called Dean Phillips, and told her that animal sacrifice was going on, and horrible things were happening in the Carleton Druids, and out at Farm House, and that she really ought to be concerned. And I knew Dean Philips from an academic thing the year before, where I had petitioned to take a bio credit by examination, and she had really helped me out, and she knew me from that, and knew me as, you know, a relatively sane person or something. And she said to me, "I was so relieved when I saw your name on the Farm House residence roster. What's going on?" And I could put it together, because I was, you know...Heather had in confidence...you know, she was looking for people to give her sympathy, and she had told this whole story about her awful boyfriend. Her boyfriend had even threatened her with court action for...I mean, the guy was just nuts. And he had said he could get her for statutory rape, as he was younger. And he would do it if she didn't get back to him. And so with this whole business of her informing him in no uncertain terms that Carleton different, and she was now going with a bisexual witch....Dean Philips said, "Well, when I saw that it was Farm House, which had the purpose of being natural history house," she said, "are you doing any taxidermy, are stuffing any animals out there, is there a legitimate purpose for..." He said things about entrails and stuff. And I said, "No, no, no. Not even that was going on. There's nothing whatsoever to this." And it was so frightening. And it was just...I mean, I told her about the vegetable sacrifices and everything. Yeah, that was a major episode. And she believed me, and I told her...I had also just been approached, Heiko and I both, by someone who was doing an article for the

Carleton Voice about the re-emergence of the Druids, and both Heiko and I would be interviewed. And Dean Philips hadn't known about that, and she said, "Oh, that's wonderful, that's great." And I said what was going to happen, and this woman was gonna come out and take photos of us both...Steve Philips was saying, "Do you have anything about the Druids that I could send to Heather's parents?" You know, to let her know that this is not some horrible cult, you know, dismembering animals or something. And I said, "Well, there's this thing coming out." And Dean Philips said oh, that would be perfect, that would be great. And so I heard nothing more about this matter, but it was one of the incidents that brought home, you know, this is not all sunny fun and games...it's very serious shit to some people. It can be made into very serious shit because most people think it's damned weird, and that's, you know...and if they say, "Oh, they're doing whatever...their rights..."

MS: Seriously, I'm thinking of some follow-up things to that, because I remember, like maybe '90...Beltane of '91 or something, there was the hush where Heather was up on the Hill, and boom! It was very hush-hush, and I couldn't figure out what it was about, but suddenly Beltane...boom! fell flat. And apparently someone had pushed her at the alter stone, and maybe thrown blood onto the stone...some crazy guy. So I'm just thinking maybe...

AC: Maybe this was that guy. I should talk about this, because it's probably the most...one of the more interesting things. As the Druids became more public, one of the first things I heard was that the Carleton Christian Fellowship was praying for us. And I knew some people in CCF. One of the people I met through Council for Religious Understanding was John Johnson (laughs), who did come from Wisconsin. He was this tall, really blond guy. Nice guy. He originally came as a Quaker, to the Council for Religious Understanding, but he underwent a conversion. I think it with CCF that he started hanging around...but with one of the more conservative and more dogmatically Christian groups. And I think it's from him I heard they were praying for us. And I said I was offended, and I said something like, "Oh, thank you, we'll pray for them too at our next ritual." I'm just giving my own emotional responses so you understand...I mean, at the time I was this, you know, nineteen-year-old, or whatever I was...Anyway, it became a force on campus, or it became that hadn't existed before, the Druids. Something that could be one the one hand played with by other people who weren't part of us, on the first hand, or whatever. Certainly some of the Christian groups found us...found a focus for...you know, I don't know, (laughs) saving lost souls or...whatever. That right here on campus were people openly calling themselves Pagan, and openly...kindly, but firmly, saying, you know, "No, we don't believe what you believe." I never got any hassle from Christian, and as part of the Council for Religious Understanding, I thought it was important to be as open as possible about what we did, and to allow people to come to our rituals, anybody, if they wanted. Heiko was not as much into that. He was other one who usually sat on the Council. He felt a lot of people want privacy, and want only a group of people they know they can trust when they're doing ecstatic dancing, or you know, whatever they're doing...Magic working, which is in my definition just prayer. It's where you raise and raise energy, and then...send the energy to some specific purpose. Ones that we did that I remember include a couple of sweat lodges for endangered species...one for a friend of ours who was going into the

military, to send him some energy. Those were purposes I remember.

MS: Was that [name indecipherable]?

AC: I don't remember who...just...this raising of energy and sending, it was not a huge part of what we did. But anyway, on the Religious Understanding Council, Heiko thought, "No, our rituals are private, they're for insiders only." And I thought we had nothing to hide, let's be as open as we can. And we made a compromise, and we had one big open ritual for Druids. And I have a poster still from that, Nat Case, made the poster, and it said "Druids, One Night Only! Come Celebrate the Season of Fall and the Rising Moon," or something, "Hill of Three Oaks, Nine p.m." And we invited some folks to come. And we had a tradition that I think they picked up at Pagan spirit gathering, of...there was a circle of participants, people who wanted to actually do the chants, and accept the Waters, and stuff like this. And then there was what they called the Circle of Fair Witness, that's people who didn't want to participate, but were friendly, or at least not hostile, and would stand around and watch. And so we had at least that one big open ritual that was very public. We got some people – it wasn't huge, the weather was cold...But I think John Johnson came to that one, and some other folks that I didn't recognize at all, from other groups, Christian groups, or whatever was on campus.

Some time in the Spring of that year, of '88 now, graffiti began to appear that said "DENMAD," D-E-N-M-A-D, and that's "damned" spelled backwards. And I still have no idea who was doing that. It wasn't one of us, or one of the people I knew. And "Denmad" symbol, this "Denmad" was written several places, including by the computer center, and in front of the library, and in some sort of chemical that killed the grass, out on the Hill of Three Oaks. And, again, it hit the 'Tonian, you know, there was some suspicion, whatever, or not suspicion, but people were saying, "Well, are these the Druids doing this? Is this, you know, Druidism, are you responsible for this?" Of course not, and I recall something good that Heiko said, was basically, "We worship the Earth, we're working to save the Earth, and why would we put chemical on the grass that kills the grass?" Especially up on the Hill, it's like graffiti on a church. And he kind of made a big deal about it, and that he was offended by it, it was religiously offensive. I think he went out and did something for the grass, like he reseeded it, or he did something publicly to try to erase the graffiti.

I ran into...okay, another story. A man, a staff member, whose name I don't recall right now, who was in the post office, probably still is...God, I wish I could remember his name. Middle-aged man, full-time staff member. We got a note from him, the Druids got a note, that said he had intercepted a mailing that was supposed to be an all-campus mailing by us, by the Druids, that had seemed so odd, that he wanted confirmation from us. And indeed, it was spurious. It was somebody trying to send something really weird to everybody on campus. And there were boxes of it, just like all, you know, all clubs, all Carleton clubs could, at least at that time, do a mass mailing, just by dropping off a box of enough flyers. And this was some really...narrative thing about...it was just a narrative, it was a story, several paragraphs about a cosmic creation, and something about...I think weird shit, some gryphons...it had vaguely sort of Kabbalistic, Satanistic weird shit all mixed together. I can't remember it exactly, but something about the unicorn mated with the snake, or something. It was nothing to do with Druid

stuff, and it was...ostensibly put out by us, and I think it might even have had our phone number, which was certainly public, I mean, Heiko's number as the Druid contact person, or whatever. Well he snitched...I mean, this guy snitched it and didn't let it go out, he said, you know, "Stop that," and "let's not put it out until we get confirmation." And I went later to thank him for that, you know, and I said...was his name Eisner? Eis-something...Eishorn, Eishner, something like that. And I said, you know, thank you, and I had known him in other contexts, and said, "I'm a Druid too, and I really appreciate your catching this." And he kind of gulped, and he said, "Yeah, that's my job. I've heard a little bit about Druid worship, like those kids over wherever they were who set that bum on fire..." And I came really close again to that really scary zone, because this was a good man who I knew in other contexts, and who, you know, certainly is a staff member to student...we were in good relationship, and he was doing his job, but his church, or whatever, was equating anything non-Christian, whatever, with some very sick happenings.

There had been some episode where some teenage boys around town – not here, exactly, but maybe in Faribault? Somewhere close by, set this old vagrant on fire. And this guy, the mail clerk...the staff member, he was thinking that that was our kind of thing. And even with that in his head, he still pulled the mail, and contacted us. And in some ways that's really beautiful, and it's really touching that he would do that, and on the other hand it's really sad and scary to me, personally, how much misinformation there is. So, anyway, as we became more public, we also got targeted, to some extent, by some pranksters. I don't know who they were...Nat Case...if you ever get a hold of him, ask him about...Nat is a good friend of mine. We lived in Farm House together. And he said he thought some weird groups at Carleton, very secretive...that he had seen some people out in the Arb once, all dressed in robes, and it wasn't the Druids. We didn't have robes of our own to wear, certainly not that all looked alike. And he said he saw a bunch of men in robes that all looked alike, who were like student age, all down...they walked past him, he was down by the river.

MS: I saw that once...

AC: You did?

MS: I was sitting at the sign fire over in the Oak grove, and there was like...I came in there, and I had wood up to my nose, and I couldn't see what I was doing. I just dropped the wood, and there was this circle of about seven or eight people...they were all blond, and they were all wearing light clothing.

AC: Maybe they're Oles.

MS: And I thought I recognized a Carleton student. But I came back with [rest indecipherable]...They put up a cross, in the place of the maypole.

AC: They put up a cross in place of the maypole. Very interesting...That's right, the Denmad thing would have crosses associated with it. There were little...it would say "Denmad," and then a little cross. Very interesting.

EH: When you would describe Druidism to someone, would you use the word religion?

AC: I guess I would. But it was clear to me, and certainly from the way I got into it, that it was a religion or a philosophy. Other people have said a spiritual philosophy, that you can take on along with other ones. You need not give up your spirituality or your religion to be a Druid. For me it was something to call what I believed, and I got involved, as I think I've

described, in the public aspects of it, for what you might call idealistic reasons. I did not, and still do not, really feel my own spiritual connections with the world except when I'm alone. I did a lot of outreach work, because I thought it was important. I thought it was high time that this kind of thing be recognized and legitimized, and I wanted to spread it around to other young people, like myself, who in essence were already...you know, were already somehow converts, or were already feeling these ways, that there were other ways of approaching the sacred, and that to look back at the old ways was a good way. That's why I was so public. I know the first Carleton Druids were adamant that this was a philosophy. They didn't know about the Pagan movement, as such, and they weren't connected with it for a long time. Many of them are still Christian, and I think one of them is a Christian minister now. Heiko was pretty firmly Christian for while, and for a while he was saying he considered himself both Druid and Christian. As I said, for myself it was not that. The Druidism we had was pretty loosely woven, as I'm sure you know. We would invoke the Earth Mother, and the male principle, sometimes, sort of secondarily, in the form of the Celtic God, I guess, Dalon Ap Landu, the lord of the grove. But we were very much a Unitarian-type group, you know, free-flowing...people would essentially invoke whatever God image they chose. Some of us were into Hindu mythology by then, and would invoke Shiva and Devi...Brandon was very much into Pan, the God Pan...now I'm coughing all the time. This we saw as perfectly fine. We saw whatever you wanted to call the divine as acceptable. There are a couple of chants that I recall – we had a guy from a Jewish background once come to one of our rituals, and there's a chant for the Goddesses, that's Isis, Astarte, Diana, Hecate, Demeter, Kali, Innana, and then there's a corresponding one with God names, old God names...Pan, Dionysus, Odin, something, something, and it includes Baal, the Baal of the bible, whose name is related to word Belenos, apparently, and it comes back to the beautiful...anyway, an old, old word, and an old, old name for the male consort of the Goddess. And this guy freaked out, he's like, "I can't say Baal! I'll go to hell if I worship Baal!" And we said, oh, okay, don't say it, you know. And, you know, he was kind of joking around, he was kind of kidding, or he wouldn't have been there. It wasn't really freaking him. But as far as I was concerned, that was fine. And we had a couple of folks from St. Olaf come over and join us...

\*\*\*\*End of Side One\*\*\*\*

AC: Anyway, so we had the occasional Olaf student, even, coming over to be part of our rituals. Heiko took a lot of charge of that. He was, I think, cross-registered for some class over there, and he'd put notices that Druid rituals were happening up over there. And this guy, Sam Adams, who was a music major, or musically inclined, he wrote a chant. And it's... (sings) All good things from you, mother, all good things from you. /All good things from you, mother, all good things from you. /Yours the dawn so new, mother, your's the sun-drawn dew, mother. / All good things from you, mother, all good things from you. (laughs) So now you can have it again, if you want.

MS: Spring it on 'em.

AC: Spring it on Sam, yeah. But there was a young woman named Christie...very powerful, interesting, and very innocent

woman. Really tall, like six feet tall, you know, Norwegian stock. And she came over, and she was so interested in the idea of worshipping Goddesses, and so careful, and so frightened in some ways that she was doing wrong by her God, and by the way she'd been raised. And she and I got to be friends, and I remember she wanted to do a meditation once, and we took some Mannheim Steamroller to music, in a boom box, up to the hill, and lit a fire. And she really wanted to do this, and the moon was full, I think, and to be there, and to salute the rising moon, but she asked me, "Is it alright if ask...you know, if I bring God into this?" And I said of course, you know, that's...yeah, sure. And she asked God, the Christian God, to bless what we were doing, and to understand that we were meaning no wrong, or something like this. And then she spoke to the moon Goddess. And I really liked her. I don't know what's happened to her since. So for me, at least, and I think for most of us, it was very heterodox.

EH: You mentioned, way back, about...I believe it was Curtis, or someone, who was a folk dancer. And that reminded me that I'd heard in the late '60's, early '70's, there was a big overlap between the folk dancers and the Druids. Were there overlaps that were obvious in your time with other groups?

AC: Yes, oh yes.

EH: Which ones?

AC: Definitely with residents of Farm House, who were thus drawn from people with demonstrated interest in natural history and Earth preservation. Definite overlap with the computer crowd, very...many of these people were all the same. Folk dancing, yes. I was not a big folk dancer, but many of my best friends were, like Judy(?) and Rachel. And, well...like Andre too. And Andrea Dawson was big into it. Jan did that also, Heiko some. I was maybe the only one of the group that wasn't a big folk dancer. Folk dance, Farm House, computers, and what you might call the science fiction crowd. Some of these people never had anything to do with the Druids, but many people who were occasional Druid participants were big into, like the Dr. Who club, and the Star Trek fan club, which in my time were more...groups of people who got together to watch the show in question, you know, rather than doing anything else outside that together. So yeah, our social groups overlapped quite a bit. And there were romances in between all of these things. Most straight, a few gay (laughs). But, yeah, these four groups I can name as being definitely interrelated.

EH: I'd like to know something about how you feel that your Druid experiences has stayed with you, and informed your post-Carleton outlook. Do you still consider yourself a Druid? If so, how so?

AC: I do for the sake of history. I very much like the idea of being tied into a tradition like this, you know, little as it is, and homegrown as it is. Carleton was my village for the four years that I was here, and it was the first time I ever had that feeling. I'm delighted to be part of that, and to be...you know, asked to interview like this. I've gone back to solitary practice when I want to pray, or to celebrate. I haven't done it with a group, really, since I left Carleton. While I was here, I called everything I was into in my belief system Druid. Now that I'm not with other Druids, the closest group I've found is Unitarians. And they have a Pagan element now, formally, within their structure, called the Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans, CUUPS. And I sort of stumbled into a group like that in Ohio last time I was home. It's been an

experience. It was my first big experience in outreach in a religious way. This past summer...well, I first made contact with the Circle Sanctuary people, you know, Selena Fox, and her husband Dennis, through that lecture that Selena gave back in '86. And I subsequently subscribe to their newspaper – they have a quarterly that comes out – and went to a couple of their gatherings, went to PSG myself the following year, the summer of '87, and again in 1991, and to a couple different events at their land, down in East 'Consin. So I've stayed in touch with them. And they're very eclectic – they have people from many different Pagan paths there, meeting there and doing retreats there, basically. I did an internship with them this past summer. I wanted a place to work and find out more about them as working psychologists, who also have this religion, or this spiritual bent. And I found myself using a lot of the same skills and doing a lot of the same things that I had as a Druid on the Council for Religious Understanding. And, you know, tabling in Sayles-Hill, we also did that, I didn't mention, but we had, you know, the annual freshman round-up, or whatever it was called, where you have a table, and say what you believe. And that's where one of the Carleton Unitarians – I was not part of that part while I was here, but this wonderful woman came up to me, and said, "I'm so glad you're here! You're the only other liberal religious group on campus, and we're so sick of being next to the fundamentalists every year!" It's like, okay. So we got a welcome from them. It's a part of my life, but it's not...I haven't gone and founded a grove. Yeah, I don't know what to say.

EH: Are there ways of thinking that you find yourself possibly being able to Druidic, that you find stay with you?

AC: Yeah. You know, the things that have stayed most with me are...this little prayer, the returning to the Earth Mother prayer, which I've used quite often, both when I throw out my compost, and a couple of times when I've pulled a dead dog off the road. It's a prayer that you can also use when you learn about a death. And the copy of the letter that's within the Chronicles, called Joan's Epistle to the Myopians, you know, I find really wonderful. And yeah, you sort of pseudo-King James' language of it all is sort of funny. But the sentiments expressed in that are very profound to me, and...I won't say this is the first place...no, I shouldn't say that. To know that there were other people who thought that way, and cared enough to put it down on paper, and include it as part of the Druid Chronicles has been powerful. The sense that...it was the first place I got the sense that I was part of a community in my spiritual way. And though I choose to be [a] fairly solitary member of the community, I still now know where I am, and that I'm not alone. What else...I definitely gained a better knowledge of my own history. As I said, part of thrill of it, for me, was also the thought that we were trying to go back to something that our ancestors had done – some of our ancestors, some of mine, anyway – had done before the advent of Christianity in Europe. You know, they were people, they had a religion. And one of their old religions, the Celtic side, anyway, was this Druid thing. And what we did was not Celtic reconstruction, by any stretch of the imagination. But just the thought, and the name, and the association with the Oak tree, which is a very ancient sacred symbol, wove that into the mixture for me, back to my own roots, in a small way. And I learned about the cycle of the holidays, which I certainly had not known before. We celebrated...this is history again, but we celebrated the holiday of Oimelec a couple of times, which is pretty obscure, but it's the beginning, the very beginning of Spring. It's

Candlemas in the Christian calendar, end of February, and I recall...Oh yeah, one of the lovely things about the chapel business was [that] Jewelnel Davis allowed us to use the chapel space for Druid rituals during the winter, when it was really cold out on the Hill. And we would, you know...very grateful for that, and we would look at the limestone walls, and I recall leading rituals in there, and talking about the limestone, and the little shell-creatures that had made it, and that it too was part of the Earth, and though we were inside, we were never away from the Earth. And we had a ritual in there once where we passed a chalice full of milk on Oimelec, instead of water. And I find that the conception of these holidays, as my life goes on, and as I experience more, I tie in more with the different holidays. And I had no exposure to that before I came here. I was in Germany this past February, and they had always said that Oimelec was the beginning of the lambing season, when the sheep and the cows first lactate. And I thought, God, that's way too early. But in Germany, it's true, the first lambs were born right about then. And so, I'm like yeah, this isn't just bullshit (laughs). So, I don't know if I'm answering the question, but, you know...

EH: I think that might very well be a good place to draw this to a close. If you have anything else you'd like to add, go ahead, but otherwise....

AC: Let me think for a second...Just to thank you both – I'm glad this is being set down. I don't know who will hear this, but, you know, good luck to you. And I hope the arboretum continues. I hope the Hill of Three Oaks remains a site where people can gather in a more or less natural setting. There's gonna be a lot of change at Carleton in the next couple years, and I really hope they don't draw lines on that and make it into a football field. 'Cause the Arb has many beautiful places, but the Hill itself is someplace special.

EH: Thank you very much.

AC: Thank you.



**Figure 6 Carleton Druids 1988 at Hill of 3 Oaks.**  
**Back Row: Dimitry Goufman, Carron Perry, Liz Mindel, Sarah Van Orman & Gina Cambell.**  
**Two on left: Branden Schield & Unknown.**  
**Three on right: Heather Grunberg (hiding), Fitz Bushnell (obscured) and Curtis Lum.**  
**Front Row: Alice Cascorbi, Joe Walser (picking nose) and Heiko Koester (with horns).**

# Interview with Michael Scharding

Carleton College Oral History Program  
27 August, 1996

This transcript has been lightly edited for clarity. The original audiotaped recordings are available in the Carleton College Archives.

Michael Scharding: MS  
Eric Hillemann: EH



**Figure 7 Alice & Mike, Hill of 3 Oaks 1993.**

[Tape 1, Side A]

EH: This is a tape for the Carleton oral history program. The interviewer is Eric Hillemann, College Archivist, and the narrator today is Michael Scharding, class of '94. The date is the August 27, 1996, and we're talking in the Gould Library. Michael, why don't you tell us a bit to begin with about your own personal background and how you came to Carleton College.

MS: Well, my father was in the military, doing food research and stuff, and also inspecting meat plants. And so we moved around quite a bit around my first 16 years and I lived in 12 or 14 states. But I had always considered Minnesota to be my home, primarily because we have a family cabin up near Hibbing, which I had gone to every year of my life, for summer vacation. And so when I started deciding in high school where to go for college, I naturally wanted to go to Minnesota, because I had grown to love the state very much. My qualifications for Carleton, for any kind of college, was that it had to be in Minnesota, or someplace with a lot of trees. It had to have an indoor and outdoor track and field program, and had to be small, because I didn't like the idea of a large college, and mostly private colleges too. Though I went to public school most of my life, thought they were quite good public schools.

That really narrowed it down to St. Olaf, Macalester, and Carleton, though I did look at Dickinson. I knew when I was looking through publications back at my High School and I

saw the Carleton folder, I instantly decided at that point that it was for me. There was something about the pictures – I don't know. They had a package perfectly for me. And I opted for early decision, and they accepted me, along with Olaf and Macalester, but I decided to go to Carleton, though I did do tours and stuff of the various colleges before I came. The track and field thing fell through because I busted my knee right before I came to Carleton, which interfered with my track career. But the trees – actually I think it was Lyman lakes, more than anything else, that convinced me to come to Carleton. Because I really liked water, and I thought it was great that they had a lake on campus. I lived in Goodhue for three years straight, four, if you count living in Myers. I always thought it was great, having your own little house next to a lake, something that most people only dream about doing.

EH: Okay, good. I think I wanted to ask this point too, something about your religious background, because that's going to be relevant to what we're going to talk about later.

MS: Okay, I was raised a Roman Catholic. My parents are Roman Catholic, but two of my grandparents – my maternal grandfather and my paternal Grandmother were both Protestant, and back then, a Catholic marrying a Protestant was kind of like a mixed marriage, or even interracial, because they married Irish and German together, on both sides. But it was never a very powerful Catholic, because it wasn't that old on both sides.

But I've been an acolyte and gone to CCD on Sundays, though CCD doesn't really teach you very much anymore, but it keeps you out of trouble, at least on Sundays. I guess I came to Carleton pretty much in mind being Catholic, but it's kind of interesting – people talk about like Dungeons and Dragons breeding paganism, and they might be right in some aspects of that, because I did play Dungeons and Dragons a lot, and I was familiar with mythology since I was about seven or eight years old. My first D&D game would probably have been around age nine or ten, and I played a druid, my first character, which is kind of interesting. And I've always liked playing the druids and the rangers, ever since then. Both my parents were mountain climbers, and they're veterinarian doctors, and very interested in old history, so we often went to old historical villages and they showed me about nature when I was growing up. Not an incredible amount, compared to some people, but more than I think was the average. And I'd always been more interested in the ancient mythologies, because they were more exciting than Sunday school. And when I was a kid I read everything I could about vampires, Norse mythology, and monsters, everything kind of supernatural. And I still have some interest in that today, though my interests have moved more in an eastern direction, to China and Japan recently. But I'm very prone to mythology, and that shows up, the fact that I named about 150 sites all over campus after various mythologies and stuff. Much to the annoyance of the other Druids, who don't know what I'm talking about.

EH: You hadn't heard anything about the existence of Druids at Carleton before getting here, had you?

MS: Nope. I hadn't heard a thing about them. In fact, when I got here, it took me about six months before I found them, finally found enough information that I could finally attend one of the ceremonies. It was very difficult to track them down, because they were in a slump, back in '88 through '90.

Enough people had graduated from the early renaissance, maybe '86 to '89, that they were kind of getting their feet back on the ground with Andrea Davis. And she's not the most organized leader that we've had, but better than most.

EH: Why don't you tell me about some of the activities that you got involved with at Carleton and then use that as a springboard to talk about how you got involved with the Druids?

MS: It looked like I was going to be majoring in extra-curricular activities, because I essentially signed up for far more activities that it was possible to pursue. I was in the juggling club, I was in the Science Fiction club, the folk music society, folk dancing, social dancing, I did a little bit of intramural Frisbee, but not much; a couple other small little groups that I can't remember now, but since I was spending far too much time doing extra-curricular activities, I started to develop – I came to Carleton with a fascination for the Grateful Dead, after essentially seventeen years of not listening to any radio, and so my first real music interest was with the Grateful Dead, and eventually I managed to get into folk music here at Carleton.

Mark Heiman was at that time a Junior or Sophomore, and he played, he had little miniature concerts where he would sing Irish and Scottish folk tales, and he would sing for six or seven hours, after science fiction club. And I would just sit there and listen, because I thought it was great. I love listening to performers. And at that time, my interest in Celtic things really started to peak. And I started studying languages at that point, and getting as much information as possible on the Celts. And someone told me that well, you're interested in Celtic stuff, why not check out the Carleton Druids? and I said, okay. This was the spring of 1990. By that point I kind of knew about them, but I didn't really know anyone who was in it. And I decided to check these people out, and little did I know that they had practically nothing to do with Celtic stuff. The thing that Sam and I first had grudges about in the beginning (but have since mellowed out about quite a bit) was that I kept pestering Matt Cohen to tell me when the next thing happened, 'cause they were having all kinds of stuff happening over at Farmhouse and the lower Arboretum at the time, over in the Oak Opening, which is now prairie and we can't use anymore.

So that spring, on April first, I got a note saying to show up on the bald spot, dressed in funny clothing. And it was signed 'Pookums.' And after asking enough people, I found out this was Mark Danburg, and this was his way of inviting people to Druid things. So I showed up wearing nothing particularly silly, and I met Joe Banks wearing a boot on his head, and Mark Danburg dressed in polka dots. And it was raining, so we went to the chapel. And I met Andrea there, for the first time, and I can't remember the other two women there. But I think Bill Shearer might have been there also. It wasn't actually a druid ritual that they were having, but it was a Erisian ritual. An Erisian is a person who believes in the goddess of chaos. And April fool's day was a particularly good day for them. And so there was some kind of washing machine anthem, like 'rinse, recycle, spin, wash' or something, and they handed out Oreo cookies, and spun around until they fell down. And I remember going home extremely disappointed because, first of all that was not Celtic, and second of all it was plain silly.

This was during my more serious phase of Druidism. I helped out with some campfires along then, but the first time was Beltane, after that, which was much more serious. It was

over in the little grove, also known as the druid den, within a hundred meters of the hill of three oaks. It has a little wooden gate there, and a depression in the ground surrounded by conic hills around it, making it a nice wind trap, where none of the wind can get into it. I don't remember much about the ceremony, but I do remember camping out there with Sam Adams, from Olaf, that night, and we both griped about how unCeltic it was, and that was the start of one of our close friendships. But I didn't do very much Druidism in the 1989-1990 year, but things did pick up the next year. Fall term, I remember, I started doing a great amount of research in Celtic history and doing research for credit, independently, on Celtic deities and stuff, and I was ignoring my Biology major at that point, to the point of hazard. And I had pretty much given up on my Biology major fall of '90 and thinking about history, but I wasn't sure if I really wanted to. So I decided to go to Scotland, to do some on-site language study and Celtic history study. Before I left, I was still not extremely active, I showed up like one out of every two rituals, and they still weren't inviting me to all of them. I didn't hear about some of them until it was too late. This is still under Andrea Davis' Archdruidcy. And I remember I became second order right before I left, which for me was a very definitive moment of independent religious thought at the time. I was kind of spiritually mature for making a quest at that point, right before I went to Scotland.

EH: What was involved in the second order thing?

MS: Well, during the mid-'80s the Druids had revived Druidism in some form or another, which was talked about by Alice Cascorbi in one of the other interviews. And basically, the older Druids were more into, well, they had their own tradition and were also more into eastern thought and just a wide eclectic choice, but they were definitely not neo-pagan. The people who revived it in '85, '86 were more Native American, neo-pagan, and Wiccan oriented. They occasionally did the old rituals, from the Carleton Druids, but most of the time they made them up, and they had stopped the third order. The third order had come to a halt around 1984, and it wasn't passed on, but the first and second order continued on afterwards. Normally a first or second order Druid has to be ordained by an Archdruid of a grove – an Archdruid is always a third-order Druid, at least in the older days. Now, after '85, there really wasn't an Archdruid, and there weren't any third-orders, officially, though people did vigil, to stay out all night, and just assume that they were third order at that point, because they couldn't find anyone to ordain them. And second order was passed on by Alice Cascorbi who was ordained to the second order by a previous third-order Archdruid, probably Bob Nieman? or Tom ....one of the people ordained by Frangquist, and so she was second order, and so she passed it on to the various people living at Farmhouse, the second and first order, which was a new thing, because normally the Archdruid has to ordain the first, second, and third orders of that grove. So they started off a tradition whereby second orders or first orders could ordain people to whatever order they were holding at the time, so that's how it continued after '85. There's no first order ceremony, but they didn't use the second-order ceremony, though they still consecrated the waters of life at various rituals.

By the early 90's, they had stopped using alcohol, mostly because Andrea Davis did not like alcohol at ceremonies. They substituted a very strong mugwort and verbena tea, which was quite effective. And there's a special ingredient,

which she never told me about, but she was substituting that for the waters of life. So when I was being ordained to the second order over in the lower arboretum, I believe it was at the Oak Grove – it was one of the last rituals at the Oak Grove that I remember. Basically, she ordained Bill Scherer, Bill Scherer ordained Matt Cohen, and Matt Cohen turned to me and said... Well, Andrea was saying that “Do you believe that the earth mother is good?” and then the person was supposed to be replying “Yes, I do.” And she seals you to the second order with a druid sigil painted on your forehead, which is a circle and two lines vertically passing through the circle. And then that person ordained the next person, that person ordained the next person. But Matt Cohen turned to me and said, “Do you dig that the earth mother is groovy?” and I replied, “I dig.” That was considered satisfactory, and I was ordained by Matt Cohen. Then I ordained the woman next to me, and then on and on and on. But I remember asking at that point, because I was kind of in turmoil at this point, I wasn’t sure whether I wanted to leave the Catholic Church, or not, so I wanted to make sure that this oath would not violate my conformation, because when it comes to vows I’m pretty faithful to them as far as I can, and so I wanted to make sure that my oath to study Druidism wouldn’t violate that oath, and I was very careful in asking this. And Andrea said that it was always a tradition that being a druid of Carleton would not violate any person’s religion, though that person could change over time, if they wanted to, later, but it wasn’t because of Druidism. So when she said that, I agreed to be ordained to the second order.

EH: Do you want to say a few things just generally about your attitude towards Carleton as you started?

MS: Well, the first term I studied my butt off, and I realized I didn’t have to. I quickly came to the understanding that ...well, I think it was summed up best by Topher, who was a prominent protestor at Carleton, and also a member of the Juggling group, he said once that “Carleton would be a lot of fun if it wasn’t for all this work.” And I took that to heart pretty strongly, and I pretty much determined by the winter of my freshman year that I was not going to be the wonder that I thought I was. First of all, everyone here is incredibly smart, far smarter than at my high school, and I thought I was reasonably smart, but these people were working their butts off far more than I wanted to, because I was having so much fun, just finding people who were like me, and having fun in groups, which I hadn’t done much before, that I didn’t think it was worth it to waste my time doing homework here. I figured I would pass and get a degree and I’d be fine. I wasn’t going to become a library rat and waste away all the time here because I’d heard that college is the best years of your life, and you should live your youth while you have it, and all these other adages, and so I had pretty much determined that I was going to get as much social growth out of these years at Carleton as I could, versus working my butt off, subjects that I’d forget about in four years, doesn’t make much sense to me to work hard like that and forget it all, though it does show up nicely on your transcript, to have a nice 3.7 or something. I escaped here with a 2.7 GPA and I thought I was lucky. I basically was a lightweight when it came to classes – I’d take two serious classes and then I’d take lots of music lessons to pad my GPA. I think I ended up something like 410 out of 465 here at Carleton...somebody was working harder at being a slob than I was, and I couldn’t figure out who it was. I devoted far more of my time at Carleton to extracurricular activities than just about anyone else I know, possibly excepting some senators.

EH: Tell me about your trip to Scotland.

MS: This was during the height of my Celtic nationalism, with got me in lots of trouble in airports. I went to Scotland, to the University of Glasgow on a two-week notice – I applied two weeks before the end of December, two weeks after the deadline, and the only place that accepted me was in Scotland. I would have preferred to go to Ireland, but Scotland was the only one who would take me. So without asking Carleton for permission, I just up and left, and Carleton responded by saying, ‘Oh. Don’t come back, if you’re not going to tell us.’ Because I didn’t tell them until mid-January that I wasn’t coming back on January fourth. Oops. So I pretty much studied Scottish Gaelic and Scottish history and Database Programming for Historians, and just jumped right in the middle of the school year, right in the middle of a year-long class, and I came out at the top of the Gaelic class and pretty much at the bottom of the history class, because I couldn’t write the papers like they did. They have this weird thing in Scotland – they don’t use computers, so I had to hand-write all the papers. And I am such a lazy lout that when it comes to writing papers, I write them once. And I had to write by hand, and so I didn’t revise them, so I got lousy grades. What can you say?

I was not impressed by Scotland’s educational system, which consisted of lectures, lots of notes, and then exams. No discussion at all in the classroom. Not even the tutorial sessions. I was always trying to get conversations going with the little tutorial groups; not a single one would say anything in the class. Even when asked by the Professor! They just hid in their chairs, cowering before his wit and sarcasm. And I was constantly goading him, and being goaded back, and I decided that even though I did like the subject I was studying, that Scotland was not the system of education that I wanted. I preferred Carleton, with fierce in-class discussions and debates, and people talking about issues after class, something that wasn’t happening over in Scotland. People did not talk about their homework after class. They weren’t interested. It was just something they were doing to punch their ticket.

So basically I studied a lot of Celtic folklore, dance, and everything, and kind of found my roots, Celtically speaking, during that year. I got terribly homesick for Carleton around that time period, and decided to come back for the fall of ‘91. The college graciously allowed me to come back, but refused to give me any credit for the time I was gone, so that forced me to move my graduation year from 1993 to 1994, meaning an extra year. And I think that year was very important, because it gave me a chance to step away from Carleton and come back with a renewed vigor for what was truly important about Carleton, which was not classes, but the people I was meeting.

EH: Well, let’s get back to your connections with the Druids again. You’ve said some of this already, but I’d be interested in having you sort of characterize what the Druids were like, the kinds of things that they were doing, what ritual was like, et cetera, when you first became involved with them, and how that then changed.

MS: By the time I came around in the fall of ‘89, to end of ‘92, it had switched from being Native American-based with some Wiccan things and occasional Druid things becoming almost exclusively Wiccan. All the major leaders of the group – John Burrridge, Andrea Davis, Salem Clark, Celia Lange? – everyone who was really in charge of the group, were

Wiccans. They weren't Unitarians or eclectic Episcopalians like in the old days, but they were Wiccans and they had a good idea of what neo-paganism was about. It was not the most open group to Christians or Jews or any monotheistic faith. It wasn't like they would run you out or anything, but they just never really talked positively about monotheism or anything like that. While I was really interested in Wiccanism during my freshman and sophomore years, I was more interested in Celtic customs and stuff like that. Wicca, I knew, was not Celtic stuff; it was based on Anglo-Saxon history and is also based on 19th century ceremonial magic, cabalism, and other kinds of gobbledygook kind of new age – well, it wasn't new age back then, but it's now called new age stuff, and most of that stuff doesn't interest me, I don't believe in complicated magical rituals and stuff like that. So I kind of sat through them and nodded my head, and I think I rebelled more in just in the fact that these were people who were seeking religious truth than actually appreciating the products of their research, because most of their research into Wiccan and Neo-pagan thought was just not interesting to me at all. And so I just kind of hung out with them because they were the closest thing to what I was looking for. It wasn't incredibly satisfying, but it was nice being around the people. That's how I kind of characterize the '89 to '92 period.

EH: So there was something there that was attractive enough to just keep you in there.

MS: Yeah. It kept me from dropping the group. Those were the years, '89 – '92, when a lot of groups were interconnected. Essentially from '86 to '91, the Folk Music Society with Pickin' & Grinnin', the Folk Dancers, the Science Fiction Group, the Druids, and Pro Musica, everybody in those groups knew everybody else in the other groups and often were members of the same groups. It was hard being a member of one group without being a member of the other. Around '91-'92 that kind of stopped; more compartmentalization had happened, where students found they only had time for one group, in addition to their studies. I think Carleton was getting more study-oriented at that point. People were members of one group and not the others. So around '91-'92, all the groups started to separate, and people who were Druids were not necessarily into science fiction anymore, not necessarily folk dancers. That might have been one of the reasons why Druidism had elapsed there, because people didn't naturally carry over from the other ranks to fill in the groups when people graduated. Kind of a strange period. I'm sure if you interviewed Mark Heiman, he could give you a very detailed description of this process.

EH: This is sort of an aside at this point, but I wanted to ask who the cloak people are and how does that relate to Druidism?

MS: Ah yes, and the cloak people were the other group. I think it was Vanessa or Linnea Johnson? back in '87 or '88 she brought a cloak to school, and other people thought it was really neat, and they started wearing cloaks too. Not because of any Druid thing, but just because that was really neat. And cloaks are really nice in the winter – cloaks are very warm, especially to wear over the outer garments that you're wearing in the wintertime already. And they're also mysterious and romantic in their own type of way. Carleton has a Society of Creative Anachronism chapter, which recreates medieval activity, and they like to wear cloaks for their activities. And so the SCA-ers started to wear cloaks. And then the Druids around that time said you know, cloaks are really nice when you're sitting out all night in the woods with nothing much else, so why don't we all start wearing

cloaks too? So they started wearing cloaks. And since all the groups were connected at the time, they all started saying 'why don't we wear cloaks too, because everyone else is wearing cloaks.' So essentially, the 'cloak people' was just a coverall term for this enormous five- or six-group clique around campus. And at one point we had something like 25 or 30 people wearing cloaks during the school year. That number has dropped down to maybe six or seven who wear them normally, but for a while there was just a whole parade of cloaks around campus, and the only people who wear cloaks anymore are Druids and the occasional person from the SCA; I guess partly because everyone kept saying 'you're wearing a cloak – you must be a druid' and they go 'no, not really.' But after enough of these kind of inquiries, people just stopped wearing cloaks because they got tired of being asked the question. Of course, if you ask a Druid that question, they just kind of look at you, and smile. That was the preferred response.

EH: To what extent up to this '92 period of Druidism that we're talking about did that group have a sense of connectedness to the historical tradition of Druidism at Carleton? How aware were they of the origins of the group and what it was like in the decade of the sixties/early seventies?

MS: Well, the blue book of the archives, which had contained all the documents of Druidism from the beginning, was kind of lost around 1985. It was found again by one of the Druids, but he didn't hand it around to everybody else, and it got lost again at his apartment, and found again about '88, and got re-found in 1994. But the blue book had never been widely distributed, only like one or two people read it at any one time. The archives had some minimal material on the Druids, but basically, when they restarted in '85, they only really had Isaac Bonewits' Druid Chronicles Evolved, which has an extremely heavy neo-paganism basis to it, and so anyone reading that, not knowing... See, I originally thought at '85 they had a break in their tradition, and they started again from scratch, using only Isaac's book, not talking to the original Druids. So unlike the previous renaissance of Druids, they didn't have a direct line back to the original founders – they were originally working from Isaac's point of view when they started the group, which was perfectly fine, because that was the way they were going anyway, because there were already people at Carleton before the Carleton Druids got revived who were interested in paganism and native American beliefs. So finding Isaac's book made it very easy for them to restart the Druids, because they were already interested in the stuff that Isaac was talking about. However, I'm starting to revise this, based on more interviews, and learning of the contacts Shelton had with them.

Most people, I've found, in the '89 to '92 period, knew the basic run-up story, that the Druids had been started as a rebellion against the Chapel requirement, and had always had a playful sense of humor. Maybe one out of every three people had actually read the five little books of the Druid Chronicle. So. And that was about it. Not much more than that was actually known, and almost everything else, again, was made up, as it still continues to do. Far more tradition of the group exists outside of the printed matter, things like how to collect your firewood and what kind of people you ask to join the rituals, how do you do it, where you go, all those little details are far more important to the vast majority of Druids at Carleton than what happened in verse 2, chapter 5 of the book of Meditations, which was never very important anyway. They read the book throughout the history of



Druidism, they just read the book once or twice and never saw it again, and got on with their own personal searches. Which is okay, of course. And in that way, I guess, the Druids were pretty much sticking to tradition, except that most people did not know the original liturgy of the Druids and did not see them practiced very often, if they did see it once. They were starting over from scratch ritually, using a lot of Wiccan-based liturgies and stuff. But they did talk a lot to each other about Druidism and alternate religious ideas after rituals and with each other, and in that way they were exploring religious thoughts, which was still in tradition of the older Druids. But it was more oriented towards the neopaganism and Wiccan ideas then talking about religion as a whole.

EH: What kind of activities were characteristic of the Druids? What was done at typical rituals or what sort of things were popular? When Druids got together in that era what did they do?

MS: Well, one of the things that separates us from the older Druids is that we have sweat lodges all the time. This was one of the major things from the Native American interests was that we started having sweat lodges, originally over at Farmhouse and then later wherever we could find firewood. Setting up the sweat lodge was basically a ritual in itself because you had to pick up dead, fallen wood, carry it to the site, build a frame, cover it with blankets that you had carried on your back from Goodhue or wherever they were. All these little details that you had to fill to get it ready, and digging a hole, finding the sage. It's a lot of work, five or six hour's work by oneself, easily, setting up a sweat lodge. Then there was all the mailbox stuffing of invitations to invite people. It was by far the biggest type ritual we had at Carleton was the sweat lodge, because there's so much preparation work required.

Basically, you show up, sit around the campfire for about an hour while the rocks are heating up, talk about various things, and basically Andrea was the only one who led sweat lodges while I was here. You get in a circle, you call the four directions, ask for their blessing, drink some more mugwort tea special. You strip down, get in the sweat lodge, close it up; the rocks are already in there, and you pour water on the rocks – you have four people, each one calls one of the four directions, then they call the sky and the earth, then they say hi to all their plant and animal brothers, and usually there's some form of anonymity involved, where anything that's said in the sweat lodge cannot be told to other people afterwards. Then they usually sang one of two chants, they get the energy going, and then they do some random singing, noises, meditation perhaps, where you imagine that you are a tree, and go to the roots, then you go to the roots around the roots, then you start traveling around the landscape, kind of diffusing your consciousness as far as you can, which is quite easy with her mugwort tea! Then you ask for blessings, and pray for different people who are in trouble and stuff, and ask for wisdom; then you come back from meditation around the hills, the dirt around the roots, then you go to the roots, then you come back into yourself, and eventually you're human again. Then you thank the four directions in reverse order, and then you open up the flap and you go outside, and everyone's steaming, and it's kind of neat; then you roll in the dewy grass, then you dry off by the fire. If you want to, you do it again, make it pretty quick. But it's the most intense form of ritual that we've ever done at Carleton. Far more than anything Carleton has ever seen before us.

The Wiccan rituals were mostly new-moon rituals. They had the Beltane one in the spring with the maypole dance when they could, and designed one – usually it's just a big bonfire somewhere – basically it's similar to the Native American that you call the four directions, they call them watchtowers, usually there's a circle drawn on the ground before the thing starts to cut off that space magically from the rest of the universe, which is kind of different from Druidic ritual, even Reformed Druidic Ritual, which generally just takes place in nature, versus being separated from nature – that's a hand-me-down from ceremonial magic, where you build a protective circle to protect you against the demons or what-not. There's a lot more, like you have magic knives, and you have cups – the knife is for the male element, the cup is for the female element; there's some sexual symbology with the two things when you unite them. There's some cakes you pass around, in Wiccan ritual. You really have to interview Andrea or Michelle Curtis, since they're much more into Wiccan theology than I am. Basically, Wiccan ritual has a female goddess who's pretty much head honcho. She might or might not have a male consort who runs around the woods with the animals, but the more feminist you get the less likely he is to show up in the ritual, because male gods are 'icky.' They don't like them. So.

EH: Do you know anything about the Wiccan history of people like Andrea or Michelle? Did their Wiccanism predate their involvement with the Druids?

MS: I'm going to be interviewing them before I leave, hopefully, or I'll have them come in. Most of the Wiccans come to Carleton now with Wiccanism before they arrive. Because witchcraft is mainstream enough that most people have heard about it before they get to Carleton, if they're already in that area. I didn't know about it before I came here, so it was kind of.. I don't know. The whole thing about witchcraft is that they for some reason have chosen a really stupid name for themselves, because they've got to reclaim this word, and make it good again, just like homosexuals have to reclaim the word 'queer,' and lesbians have to reclaim the word 'dyke,' and so on. I'm sure there's a pretty good reason why they're going through all this trouble, but I always liked the word 'druid' because, except for the human sacrifices, we have a pretty popular image: you know, tree huggers. I kind of like that. A lot less trouble from the naysayers.

EH: Well, tell me some thing about changes over time then, in your own connections with Druidism, and how the group changed focus.

MS: The group had pretty much dropped the Native American part of it when most of those people had graduated in 1988/89, and it switched to a more Wiccan/pagan orientation from '88 to '92. They had pagan studies from '86 to '89 or so, where they'd have intellectual discussions on books on paganism. They'd bring in speakers to talk about 'what is Satanism and how is it different from Neo-Paganism' and such, and they'd invite people from around the campus to come and listen to them, but generally most of the Christian societies just kind of avoided the pagan studies altogether. One thing that was noteworthy was that they were more activist than the older Druids were. Most people who come who are Neo-Pagans or Wiccans are afraid that they're going to get burned at the cross at some time during they're lives. So they have this paranoia to some degree, probably rightly so, that the Christians are out to get them. For this purpose, the group since '86 had had a much closer connection with the college than ever before, because they wanted to make sure first of

all that the college was never on the side of whatever group decided to pick on them, but also because they wanted to use the college's resources to help fund activist activities, like bringing the speakers, letter-writing campaigns, and such, so that Carleton College had actually funded Pagan Studies as a student organization, from '86 to '89, when it collapsed. After that, I think from '90 to '92, there was 'Catalyst' run by Salem Clark and Celia Lange, both of whom were solitary witches who didn't do much druid rituals, but they kind of had Sunday morning breakfasts at their apartment, and we discussed various issues of paganism. But, that was not officially funded by the College, but it was still a form of separate organization from the Druids to kind of bring people together and talk about these issues of where Neo-Paganism fits into society. During my Archdruidcy of '93-'94, I founded 'The Friends of the Earth-Mother at Carleton College' which was a front for getting money for the Carleton Druids without making the Carleton Druids an official organization. Because if you're an official organization, then you have to have your membership open to perusal by the administration, and we didn't want all of our members' names to be released, because of this same paranoia. So we had a front organization to filter money to our group. And I think we got about \$500 dollars that year, and we brought in Isaac Bonewits and bought candle wax and purchased some magazine subscriptions and such with that money. And in spring of 1995, I think, or 1996, Becky Hrobak and Anne Graham and Michelle Curtis finally got the Carleton Druids sponsored as an official student organization. And so Carleton's longest-running unofficial organization ended 33 years of being an outside organization and became an official organization. So far no major problems, but they're directly budgeted now, and I can see the '86 to '96 period as being a quest for legitimization of alternate spirituality at Carleton, far more than the older Druids ever did. They kind of played around with the idea and had fun with it, but they weren't dead serious on becoming an official organization, like the Druids at Carleton were since '86.

There was a lot more seriousness involved with the rituals. Most of the rituals were held for specific purposes, like healing, trying to – well, they never did black magic that I knew of, but it was to influence powerful people not to do something stupid, like putting nuclear waste on Prairie Island, and things like that. Environmental issues. We held rituals to clear up bad feeling in the air around Carleton at crisis points, for good luck on grades, stuff like that. The rituals were held for specific purposes, rather than being an excuse to meditate, like in the older days. And in that way I think they were different. And at that point I think I was more interested in just doing rituals for meditation than doing magic for practical purposes. Because even though I do believe that magic can exist, I don't feel like messing around with it because when you start disturbing the cosmic order with your own personal desires, I think you might cause all sorts of chaos to happen. So I don't generally try to influence things through magic, if I can help it. Though from a Catholic background, I do believe that prayer is effective. But to have huge rituals, with all sorts of magic being raised up, sounds a little bit like using a machine gun to catch a butterfly. It's overdoing it a little bit, in my opinion, with dangerous consequences for the bystanders.

EH: At what point did you or other people get interested in researching the history of the group and reviving some of the old forms and traditions and offices and things like that?

MS: Well, in February of either '92 or '93 – I can't remember – I essentially became very interested in becoming third order, because during that time period I was getting to the point where I wanted to start leading rituals. And the group had faltered, back in '91-'92, because of John BurrIDGE departing. There weren't Archdruids between '86 and '92. There were strong minds who made sure that rituals happened, and that was all there was. There wasn't any kind of totalitarian 'I'm in charge, we're going to make sure this thing happens' and such, it was more like someone showed up and said 'I'm going to lead a ritual on this day. Any of you guys want to come up?' and we'd all show up. And then someone else would say, 'I'm going to lead a ritual' and then people would show up. That's generally how things worked. Whenever someone felt like doing a ritual, something happened. Andrea Davis, from the period of '89 – '92, ended up being pretty much the only person who ever decided to do anything. And as a result, it started to develop into an Archdruidcy, because no one else organized anything, so she ended up de facto becoming Archdruid. There's an old proverb among us that the person who runs away from authority the slowest becomes Archdruid. So Andrea became Archdruid by default. But after three or four years, she was tired of that. And by the spring of '92 she pretty much had washed her hands of the whole group. I think she graduated in '93, a year late.

However, I was seriously helping her do all the detail gruntwork of carrying everything and collecting firewood and stuff, but I didn't want to lead a ritual at that point, until the spring of '93, when I felt I had sufficiently gotten a feel for the group. Now I would have graduated in the spring of '93 if it hadn't been for that Scottish thing, and the group might have well faltered at that point if Andrea and I had graduated in '93, but I stayed on for the extra year. The spring of '92 was when Sam and I decided we wanted to become Archdruids. '92, '93 – I can't figure out which one it was because they were almost identical years in my mind, because in the spring of both years I'd decided to become Archdruid in different ways. In spring of '92 I decided to become Archdruid just by staying up all night and saying I was Archdruid, which was the way things ran.

EH: Do you mean Archdruid, or do you mean Third Order?

MS: I didn't really think there was much difference, because no one had done vigils in a long time. In the spring of '92, Sam and I went into the little grove, where we had met in the spring of '90, and we decided to just vigil on our own, independently, and declare ourselves third order. And we did this. And it was about that time, the spring of '92, that I began doing my research into the Druids, which came to fruition in the spring of '93, one year later, when I sent out a questionnaire in February of '93, asking for information from other Druids on the past history. I wanted to try to reconstruct Druidism at that point. Because I saw that Druidism under purely Wiccan interests had fallen flat in the spring of '92. And by the spring of '93, Andrea was about ready to graduate, and the whole thing had gone flat. So I decided to try to essentially bring back old Druidism, see if that might help things. So during '92 to '93, considering myself a third-order, I started getting more involved in Druid activities.

The first ritual that I officially ever held was spring of '92, when I led a Beltane ritual on Mai Fete Island, with Sam Adams, Andrea Davis, Sam Adams, Heather Gruenberg, and Alex Stewart being present. I used part of the liturgy of the old druids at that time, because there was just enough stuff in Issac's Druid Chronicles, and then the Carleton clippings of

old newspaper articles for me to get a feel of the old Druids. But it was half-Wiccan, half old Druid at that time. Basically, we went around the lake in quarters. The first quarter was earth, the second quarter was fire, the third was water, and the fourth quarter we swam across to the island and was air. I wasn't being pretty true to the Wiccan four-towers thing, but I was doing it my own way. What really was interesting was not the ritual but what happened there in the night, when I had the great dream. It's written up in the book of the Dead Lake Scrolls, which I wrote. Basically, I had this weird dream where I was back in Scotland on the island of Erin, and there was a big bus group of people moving up this mountain, and it was very slippery and hard to walk on. And everything was in grays, except the rain, which was yellow. The bus stopped, and it was all my friends from Social Mecca [note: the dorm room of Curtis Mitchell & Kareem Kazkaz, a noted social center] and the cloak people, and I got on board there, and went to a place, and got off, and wasn't looking, and a bus hit me, and I slid under the car and banged my head on the universal joint of the car, and when I got up it was still heavily raining and very muddy, and there was this house with a yellow window, glowing against the darkness.

And I went inside, and all the people were there again, had gotten off the bus and were waiting for me, and a man came out who was completely covered in red boar fur, with bristles all over, and he had the same face as one of the druids I met over on the Isle of Arann. He had blue eyes, and he told me "Now you are one of us." And it was about that time that I woke up in the morning. It was a very strange kind of dream. And I kind of considered that my initiation into the Third Order to the full extent, that May of '92. And during my research of '92 - '93, I got enough materials to understand the old Druids, but I still didn't really understand what was different about them from what we were in the renaissance period of Druidism. And the questionnaire was my attempt to find out who were the Druids of the old time. And what I found out in that period radically changed Druidism at Carleton: it gave them a greater sense of history, and changed my complete idea of everything I held religiously. And we'll have to hold on to that until I'm interviewed tomorrow, when we'll do the second part of this interview.

EH: Sounds good. Thanks.

[Tape 2, side A]

EH: Okay, the date is now August 30th, 1996, and Michael Scharding and Eric Hillemann are continuing with an interview begun three days ago. We were talking about the history of the Carleton Druids during Michael Scharding's tenure at Carleton, and Michael, you had begun talking about how you had begun doing research into the history of Carleton Druidism, and I wanted to ask you about the fruits of that research, why you did it, and what kind of things you learned from it.

MS: Well, my major at Carleton was a History major, and I've always been kind of a person who would join lost causes and try to revive them. And what better group to try to revive than a group that's been dead for twelve or fourteen years? Officially, because by '93...well, maybe not twelve years, but '84 was the real drop in the older ways had happened. The renaissance of Druidism had begun in '86 with a different angle. So I wanted to revive as much as I could the pre-1984

Druidism, and to do that I needed to do research. Basically, I began with the Archives, which had not much more than a copy of Isaac Bonewits' Druid Chronicles Evolved, the original Druid Chronicles, part of the black book, and maybe about a couple dozen letters from the '60s and '70s. And from that I was able to get a bunch of names, and eventually I ran into Richard Shelton and David Frangquist and a couple other people, who were distressed to find out that the blue book of the Archives, which was the book of documents handed down from Archdruid to Archdruid, had disappeared. So they helped me to reconstruct the blue book, essentially, and do my other research.

The reason I did the research for the Druid Archives was to provide primary material for my Comps project, a comprehensive exercise project for the history major. I was going to do a history of the Carleton Druids, a project that caused me no end of trouble. Six or seven major revisions, and I think they just let me go because they were tired of me revising it. But one of the things I found out about the older Druids is that they had a much more lackadaisical attitude toward ritual, which I already did, because I had never really enjoyed the rituals that much, I just enjoyed being with the people. They had a philosophical bent about what the whole purpose of religion was and whether or not ritual was helpful towards religion, a topic that didn't come up too often in the post-'84 Druidism at Carleton, and it was a subject that fascinated me, so... I would say that one of the fascinating elements of researching the Druids would be the aspect of religion as being a method of rebellion. One of the problems that I had with post-'84 Druidism was that they were choosing a religion that was being persecuted, probably on purpose in some ways, but also because they thought it was closest to their heart. But they had already accepted the idea of religion, in some ways, because neo-paganism and Wicca and Native American beliefs are religions, in and of themselves. It had become somber, joyless and too serious. And they had given up the whole debate of "What was religion?" And the whole idea of what separates philosophy and religion for me has always been a very thin line, and I've always kind of straddled it back and forth. And these are the issues that the older Druids were constantly writing about, especially during the Isaac Affairs of the '74-'76 period, when Isaac was becoming extremely serious in his Druidism and trying to turn it into a religion, versus a mode of outlook upon religion.

Basically, when I finished my studies I introduced a greater amount of silliness, play, and meditation to my services, which I began to hold in the earlier style, on a more frequent basis. They weren't well received by most Druids, but then most Druids don't generally show up too often anyway. Usually two or three would show up for the weekly rituals, which I reintroduced for a while. The vagueness of the rituals was what I liked the best. If you weren't paying close attention, you might not quite understand what happened - it's like you blinked, and suddenly the ritual's over with. And I thought that was kind of a fun thing to do, because if you hold it in a particularly beautiful location, the people who are attending the ritual might be distracted enough by the trees that by the time they came back the ritual was over. I don't know, I kind of liked that. It's there and gone, and you don't have to worry about it. You can get on with looking at the trees and stuff, which I think is more important than the actual speaking of the words. At my rituals I decided to collect more meditations, and I started to write more personal histories of the recent years, like in the Dead

Lake Scrolls, and collected books of poetry, and stuff for materials, most of which never were used, but I was just trying to produce more thoughtful material for possible future Archdruids.

I also made the International Druid Archives larger than the Carleton scope, originally because I thought there was a greater connection between the different groups and Carleton's Reformed Druids, until I realized that the Carleton Druids are pretty much unique in the world, and that the Celtic connections are pretty superficial, and that the only thing that connects these groups, besides the name "Druid," is possibly the use of a couple of visual images of Celticness, a tendency towards anarchy and collapse, and possibly also the...any time you have a Druid group, you pretty much have people who are looking for answers, and I figure since we're all looking towards the earth mother, we'll probably get most of the same answers, even if they are taking the ancient Celtic part a little bit too seriously. But several Celtically-oriented pagan groups have spun off from the Reformed Druids, notably Ar nDraiocht Fein and the Henge of Keltria. And since I didn't think they would get any kind of stable archive of their own, and I kind of think of them as grandchildren of the Reform, I decided to include the material into the Druid Archives. Which may prove to be helpful to the Reformed Druids in some way, as an additional reservoir of nature-oriented poetry, meditations and liturgies to work off of in the future. Plus, with the Keltria group, they're up in the Twin Cities, and they can come down and join us, or we can go join them, so I thought it would be useful for them to have access to their records. Just kind of networking groups together.

But it's kind of hard to describe how my Druidism at Carleton changed, because it was a very gradual thing. Some of it is covered in my diary, my seven-year diary that I've had since I lived here, but basically Carleton is a very special time when you can work out a lot of your questions in a relatively supportive environment that you might not have another opportunity of. You have several people who are in a similar stage of their lives, and who are willing to ask the same questions and give you honest answers in a way that, well, perhaps people become more experienced as they get aged, and I don't know that experience can be translated in words...It has to be experienced, I believe. But I know that the 18 -21 age is, religiously speaking, probably the most crucial in deciding one's future religious lifestyle. Either you abandon it, you get more conservative, or you learn more about it then you ever believed possible. There's one proverb I remember, and I was thinking about the difference between religion and philosophy, that a religion destroys evil, but a morality merely covers it. I'll let you think about that one. But I think there's a certain something about religion that's one step above a philosophy, whereas a philosophy might have a logical basis to it, or it's more argument-based. There's an element of faith which does not completely exist within philosophy, and that's why I think Druidism kind of bounces back and forth. Philosophy doesn't have the same amount of ritual that religion does, but it's easier to understand philosophy for the hard-minded mind. But occasionally the mind needs to take a vacation – I think that's where religion comes in. But basically, my '93 – '94 school year was spent having a large number of rituals: the weekly rituals I've already mentioned, the nearly monthly sweat lodges, as much as I could. I got the Druid's Notes Conference up and running again, where people could post notes and talk to each other, outside of the ritual time period.

I tried to introduce weekly meetings of meditative readings, and stuff like that. I tried to network with people, give them addresses of different groups, and societies outside of Carleton which they might wish to contact. I essentially tried to do everything to make it easier for people to become Druids, sometimes neglecting my own Druidism by being too busy. My own form of Druidism was essentially talking to people, I think much more than doing rituals. Talking to people, and walking by myself in the Arboretum at night were, I think, the two backbones of my Druidism.

The way I have tried to be remembered for my Carleton Druidism is mostly through literature, which is amusing because I consider myself a little bit anti-dogmatic – I make fun of scriptures as much as I can, and to leave behind a 500-page tome of scriptures seems a little bit hypocritical, in a way. But I've collected this collection called A Reformed Druid Anthology, which I'll be publishing tomorrow. Partly as a scholarly tool, for other researchers. I'm producing 30 copies – about ten will be distributed to libraries across the country, about ten will be distributed to friends, and then I'll hold on to the other copies. This will be downloadable off the Internet, on our website. And I kind of hope that people will decide to write histories on their neo-pagan organizations, to provide useful material for religion majors and other people doing research on the newer religions. Especially in an age where Fundamentalism and other Christian religions seem to be surging ahead, I think it's necessary for more people to be doing research on the fringes of the religious movements, which are often the people who are rebelling against the mainstream religions, in a way. And I kind of hope that my book will encourage other people to research this area of theology. And this collection I've made, it has a study guide, it has the original Druid Chronicles, it has the Apocrypha, which has selected letters over the last 34 years from various Druids, on what Druidism is to them. It has a lot of rituals from the older days, a variety. It has various trivia and customs, it has some books on the Hasidic Druids of St. Louis, who are now extinct, and an increased and enlarged collections of meditations, miscellany, my history comps, and various publications that I've put out over the years. Since I won't be here over the next few years, I've decided to leave this behind as a kind of a very long epistle to future Archdruids and various Druids here at Carleton. My hope is that they will realize that most of it is self-deprecating, and that the underlying message is that 'these are the kind of materials you can collect over the years if you continue your Druidism' and not to use this book as a strict guideline or strict handbook of Druidism, but more of an example of what Druidism has done for me over the years, and that the sheer creativity that it can produce from one Druid might be an example for them on how it can affect their lives. It will also give them a sense of continuity over the years, with the past Druids, which I think is important.

There are lots of alumni who have gone through the same problems that you have, and that Carleton has deeply changed their lifestyles. And you can have a connection with these older Druids – just write letters to them, and ask how, over the last 30 years, your Druidism has changed. And for me, seeing how the Druids have changed after graduation has been perhaps the greatest benefit. Because I've seen how the ritual has fallen away, and how the lifestyle changes that they undertook have been the most lasting contribution of Druidism to them. And Druidism for me has pretty much been synonymous with Carleton's educational basis: the constant asking of questions, the unwillingness to accept

simple answers, the continual search for academic and religious truth, seem pretty close in my mind. The need to involve other people in this quest is important, also. The 'no man is an island' concept is important for the Druids, because without the other Druids, I would have never gotten to this stage, and that has to be remembered and respected. It is possible to be quite a good Druid by yourself, but I'm sure other people have gone through the same steps you have and can leave a trail for you to follow, or at least, what kind of tools will be useful in your quest. And I've noticed that many of the Druids over the years have returned to their original religion, but they still have that element of Druidism in their minds, which is comforting to me to know that one can reconcile one's beliefs with Druidism on a stable basis throughout one's life – there's always an opportunity for return.

EH: I was wondering if you wanted to say anything at all about the things that you did to mark the 30th anniversary of the Druids.

MS: Richard Shelton came down for that. Basically, for the 30th anniversary, we held a ritual on the Hill of Three Oaks and the Little Grove. Richard Shelton came down to hold a service. That period – that was May of '93, and April of '93 we had a run-in with some anti-Druids who broke up one of our rituals, but I don't think they understood that we were actually having a service. But thinking back on that period, I don't think I acted as well as I could have for that situation. Instead of being calm and collected, I got nervous and paranoid, which probably affected me more than them. Getting worked up about such things – and it was a trivial thing – was very un-Druidic of me, I would think. But it did kick off a huge surge of interest in my research, sort of a search for validity, which Druidism will never supply. Druidism is not in the habit of giving official credentials, and such. It's too much of a rebellious organization to ever... Well, every time someone searches for validity in their beliefs, they might find a couple people who agree with them. But basically, you have to just be yourself and change what you know to be wrong, and stand by what you believe in. No one else can give that to you. I'm sure you've heard that a hundred times before, but it's true. The 30th Anniversary was my attempt to connect with the past of Druidism, to tell all the other Druids that yes, we've been here a very long time, and other people have done the same things that you have done in your search for religious truth, and you're part of a longer struggle that not only have people in the past helped you, but you also have an obligation to provide the resources and support to future Druids at Carleton. Something that I really think is the basis of the third order.

The third order originated with Frangquist asking David Fisher in 1964 to take over the Druid organization, and Fisher had decided by the spring of '64 that he was going on to the Episcopal seminary. And the group was nearing its objective of getting the chapel requirement removed. Fisher did not really like the idea of it continuing onward, but Frangquist thought that the search for religious truth was too important to the various Druids at Carleton to just let it die and leave people to their own devices. Not that he felt that he was the only one who could help these people, but he was a way, a possibility, an opportunity, and that it was his duty to help other people as much as he could who came to him for help. The Druids have never been a proselytizing organization. Sure we show up at activities fair at the beginning of Fall term and put out a membership list, but when people fall

away from the organization, if that's the right term, we accept that, and just go on with the people who decided to continue on with us. I really doubt that anyone can graduate from Carleton without becoming a little bit of a Druid. But Frangquist started of the third order...essentially, it's your duty to provide counseling when asked questions, to provide opportunities of religious introspection for people who don't know how to hold services; to offer tips of meditation to those who need to learn about it – you're essentially becoming a resource for other people to work with, a resource that is without affiliation to any particular religion, a neutral party.

There aren't very many neutral religious organizations. I mean the Unitarians come kinda close, but they're still in the Christian camp. And the people who are just completely wandering around, there needs to be a person they can ask questions to. Of course, one of the problems that the Archdruids have is that they don't really have answers. They just have more questions to give to the person who's asking questions, which can be very disheartening to people seeking a simple, strict organization, a belief to believe in. But if they understand that the religious search is merely an endless stream of questions, then we can provide that service to them. That's pretty much the third order.

EH: Why don't we go now to the period after you graduated and you continued to maintain ongoing contacts with the Druids at Carleton. What's the state of Druidism at Carleton now, and what have your connections with it been?

MS: Well, I ordained Becky Hrobak as my successor, and then she took up Anne Graham and Michelle Curtis as her co-Archdruids in the spring of '94. The '94 – '96 period, they held frequent rituals, mostly of the Wiccan variety, which Becky didn't like that much because she's not into ritual – she's kind of like me in that respect. She's more into the meditative aspect, and her favorite activity was having tea parties where people read poetry and drank tea. Or taking Arb walks. That was one of the things I liked doing a lot. But Anne and Michelle are more into the organized ritual aspects of religious life, and they did a pretty good job of organizing things like that. They're also good about providing access to resources of the neo-pagan genre. I think they did a pretty good job, because you don't have a lot of time at Carleton to devote to activity: there's only so many hours you can do and still get a decent GPA. I usually spent a good eight or ten hours a week, at least, of serious Druidic activity or research, possibly much more than that. My grades suffered as a result. You have to be extremely dedicated to do something like that, day in and day out. And after about two years, they were tired of this.

[Tape 2, Side B]

MS: They didn't have the sheer resources of time that I allowed myself. Considering that, I think they kept the group pretty active. It didn't grow too much, but at least it was maintaining itself. They were sophomores when they came into their Archdruidcy, so they were relatively young. It is my opinion that seniors should not be Archdruids, if it can at all be helped. Because Comps tend to take up too much of their time to be an effective Archdruid. But they did find their successors, which is the important thing for the Archdruid to do. They found Irony Sade and Michelle Hajder, who we ordained in spring of '96 to be next year's Archdruids. I've

written about them in the book of Vigils, so you're welcome to read that. They're in the Dead Lake Scrolls. But I think that they are the first Archdruids to be in charge of an official Druid organization. The first 33 years of the Reformed Druid history, we were an unofficial student organization. In the spring of '95 or '96, I don't remember, Becky, Anne, and Michelle got the Druids to become an official student organization, with funding and everything.

Now this is very helpful for financial purposes, but for secrecy purposes it kind of puts a wet blanket upon the Druids, because all our records and membership lists are now available for perusal. And there are some hoops you have to jump through as an official organization, which take up more of the Archdruid's time, which should really be spent with the other Druids as much as possible. Here you've got money, which allows you to do more activities, but here you also have more paperwork, and you have to be more careful that you don't do anything that will offend the college, or you can get your funding revoked. So it hampers the kind of activities you can have, it takes up the Archdruid's time, and it makes you an official part of the college, which affects the whole basis of your organization. If you're constantly on the outside of the group, the group being the college, you can get away with all sorts of stuff and fight against rigidity of beliefs and the status quo and stuff like that, but when you're actually part of it, you have a tendency to support that organization. And while I am very supportive off the college in many ways, I kind of think that the Druids need to be there on the fringes, rather than in the limelight. To correct the organization in ways that only an outsider can really do. I really hope that Michelle and Irony don't get too absorbed in the specifics and legalities and continue to have a thriving organization, meeting in the Arboretum and talking to each other and stuff like that, and don't get wrapped up in college politics too much. But it's kind of nice to see that the group has continued on, after me. Michelle and Irony are my great-grandchildren, in the Reformed sense. Or great grand-children and -sisters. I don't know if that works. But it's just nice to see what one has done has lived after one, and I suspect it will continue on for another three or four years before the next major crisis will happen.

EH: Okay, is there anything else you want to say to the Druids?

MS: Good luck!

EH: You've been doing some other interesting things apart from Druidic things. Since your graduation you've been involved in a number of projects – I wondered if you wanted to say something about those.

MS: Well, the Carleton Druids were a religious rebellion of mine, but there were other kinds of things that I was trying to do. Now you mustn't get the idea that I was some kind of wild-eyed revolutionary person running around, picketing places. I prefer to do my kind of Reforming more casually, kind of picking away at the rock versus swinging sledgehammers. One of the other groups that I started at Carleton was the Mystery Science Theater 3000 organization. The Science Fiction Club at Carleton had become more and more quality-oriented and film-watching. The original Science Fiction Club, which started I think in '87, was essentially watching Dr. Who and old Star Trek episodes. And that only took up two hours of your Saturday afternoon, which left you three or four more hours to socialize. That started forming a nucleus which eventually became the Dr. Who club, which became the Science Fiction Alliance. That was a lot of fun. Got lots

of people together, talking and discussing various science fiction topics, listening to folk music, like Mark Heiman's singing, which got me into Druidism, and was generally just a good thing. People didn't watch much TV at all back then. For us, watching two hours a week was kind of scandalous, at least in the eyes of the college. And over the last three or four years, there's been an explosion of various science-fiction series on TV, and there's just a glut of viewing activities now being performed by the Science Fiction Alliance at Carleton, to the point where there's so much new stuff on that you have to be quiet so people can hear it for the first time correctly. In the old days, of course, everyone had seen it already two or three times, so it was no big deal if you started talking to your neighbor and making fun of the series or chatting or socializing. Now you have to sit there quietly in a room with sixty other people and then as soon as it's over you have two minutes to talk, and then -boom- there's another series on the TV. It's just not very good for building a community. It's more of a communal... I don't know, it's like being alone in this group of 60 people watching the same program. It's not like the older days. It reminds me a lot of my younger Catholic services, where you sit put and just listen passively.

So three years ago, in the spring of '93, Mark and I founded the Mystery Science Theater 3000 club at Carleton. MST is a business from Minnesota that would take old movies and stick three comedians in the lower right corner of the screen. And they would constantly make fun of these movies that were so abysmally bad that you could hardly bear sitting through them. And somehow by adding humor to it, or just completely destroying them, I think one becomes aware of how many science fiction movies and stuff like that are actually quite good. So we came up with the idea that if we showed really terrible MST movies to the Science Fiction Community here at Carleton, they would stop bitching and moaning about how awful the last Next Generation episode was, and they might actually start appreciating how much better it actually was than 'Manos, the Hands of Fate' or 'Earth vs. the Spider' or these really crappy movies, or that people would take a more positive attitude in their critiques, versus saying 'oh, that wasn't the best thing possible.' Which is, I think, becoming more and more a way that the American public is seeing it as. They have such a fascination with perfection that when something fails to meet it they tear it apart, whereas they don't realize all the good qualities of it. I think by subjecting yourself to what is a *really* terrible movie, you will appreciate the better qualities of the recent materials that are now available. And appreciating what you have, that's what it's all about. Mark and I also formed the Bagpipe Association at Carleton, where we sneak around in the Arboretum at one o'clock in the morning to serenade the students who are still up working. Bagpiping is very similar to the MST3K concept, in that bagpipe is pretty horrible music to listen to, and it makes you appreciate the quiet tinkly music of classical concerts, and stuff like that. The MST3K society is kind of moribund, it kind of collapsed after two or three successors; there really wasn't anyone who was interested in watching those movies any more than they already had. They'd seen them all, and they didn't want to see them again. And so it's kind of collapsed. It might power up again in a couple of years, but...

Back in the spring of '94, Mark and I started the Half-Dozen Eggs film production company. Similar to the MST concept, we wanted to make a really bad movie, because here we had been criticizing all these really terrible movies in Mystery Science Theater, and yet, we ourselves were guilty

of not appreciating how good those movies were, because we said, 'oh, I could make a better movie than that.' That kind of comment comes up. Well, we decided to put our money where our mouth was, and we failed! We made a terrible movie. The first one was called "A Prisoner" which was supposedly a predecessor to the Prisoner series, the British science fiction series where a retiring spy is taken to a prison and they try to drain some information out of him, and he resists, and he tries to escape, every episode, and fails. Kind of a depressing series in that way. It was the first action series where the hero loses every episode. Which we find kind of amusing. So we made a prequel to that film, and it didn't turn out very well; it was not very well made.

But in the Spring of '95, we decided to move from the science fiction genre to the Barbarian fantasy genre, mainly because it's cheaper to make a really good barbarian film than to make a really lousy science fiction film. Because all you need is a bunch of fur and a sword, and you can make a good barbarian movie. And this was called 'Gator,' based on the movie 'Ator the Fighting Eagle,' so ours was 'Gator the Fighting Rabbit.' It was a pastiche of 30 or so barbarian movies that I had seen over that spring. Most of the actors and crew were Druidic sorts of people from Carleton, with that quirky sense of humor. The trick of writing a really good comedy is not to write a comedy, but to try really hard to make it serious, and then to fail. It's kind of like Douglas Adams saying that the way to learn how to fly is to throw yourself really hard at the ground and miss. It's a very similar concept.

I had an underlying idea for these two movies, in that Carleton to me has a kind of mystical, mythological landscape, and I always had one foot on the other side, mythologically speaking, while I was here. Every building had all kinds of stories and legends to me, from the friends I've heard talk about what they did there, and everything like that. But I thought it would be really interesting to try to impose a completely alien idea of the college, Carleton College actually being a science fiction scene or set where people were having their brains wiped, or something like that. Or turn it into a barbarian landscape full of monuments and beautiful maidens and bad action sequences. So I extensively used the features of my beloved Carleton in my movies; kind of making a monument of my love to her.

And the last one we've made is Drake's 7, which is another science fiction series but much higher budgeted, based on the old Flash Gordon serials of ten-minute episodes. And to a degree I think these film projects also filled a gap or a void in the Science Fiction Alliance here at Carleton, because over the years there's been less and less interaction between the members of the Science Fiction Alliance. And so what we did with our movies over the last few years, was since a lot of the Science Fiction people hang around over the summer, we put them into movies. And so when you're on the set for five or six straight hours and you only have to say one line, you tend to try to find something else to do. And this is usually where you start making friendships with people, and building a common experience to work upon. And these film projects are a way of getting the Science Fiction Society involved in the more creative aspect of producing science fiction, and not just watching it. And also hopefully to encourage them to comment and write materials on other forms of science fiction beyond the visual formats.

And like the Druids, I've funded various books and projects for the science fiction library as well, stuff like that.

And I feel as an alumnus that rather than giving the college a check to work with as they feel, I'd rather target certain groups that I think are important to the college's welfare and make sure that they have all the money that they need. Well, not all the money that they want, but the money that I think they need for certain projects, and so I've directed my contributions to these groups – the druids, the science fiction society, the MST3K group, and the Bagpipe society. Mark Heiman and I together have pretty much been the backbone of these organizations, behind the scenes. The other organization that I think is really important for me is Pickin' & Grinnin', because this is a group that meets Wednesday nights to do folksinging. And one of the unfortunate side effects of mass-production of music is that instead of ...like in the old days, when you wanted to have a dance, you had to find a band to play for you. Now you can just stick a CD or a tape into there and have a perfect performance for your enjoyment pleasure. This leads to more jaded behavior, 'oh, why should I get this crappy band when I can get this beautiful performance by these world-renowned people who everybody knows?' This is a lack of creativity on their part, because there are certain things that a live band can do that a canned band cannot do. You can't make requests, you can't ask them to do something special. This is part of an aspect of society that is happy with prepackaged religion, prepackaged music, and all these other things. And Pickin' & Grinnin' is where you make your own music, you make your own harmonies, you pick your own songs, you modify the songs, and you play instruments with them. And this kind of self-sufficient attitude toward entertainment I think is very healthy for a student to go through while at Carleton. To realize that there's very little that they can sell you that you can't do for yourself, if you really wanted to.

And this applies towards religion, and entertainment, education to a great degree, and almost everything. The last two or three years I've been getting into a more Spartan existence, as much as I can, mainly because I realize that if you don't want your possessions, they will eventually take control of your life. And after you're dead, of course, your possessions live on after you, but of course that's not who I am, I'm not my possessions, it's the friendships that I've built and the ideas that I've done. And that's more important than who's the richest person in the cemetery or who has the most stuff to give away when they're dead? Well, I think you should be working on that throughout your life, giving away possessions and stuff like that. I guess that's just the main thing about the Druids and everybody is trying to teach self-sufficiency and self-confidence, self-reliance and innovative ideas and how to do things in ways that other people have not done before and are better suited to the situation. To be adaptive in all aspects of life. To challenge myself even further than this, I am going to Japan in five or six days. I am going to abandon most of my official responsibilities as a Reformed Druid for a couple years.

Well, I take that back. I'll probably get questions about religion, and though they won't know I'm a Druid, I'll probably try to give them good advice. I call this "guerrilla Druidism." So I guess I'm not officially abandoning my responsibilities, but I'm not going to be going around, starting a grove or anything, for a couple years. But basically I'm going to try to live as cheaply as possible in Japan, which is not easy to do. I'm going to be learning a new language, a new career, and I'm going to have to learn how to do my own entertainment because I won't understand theirs. I'm essentially trying to learn a new lifestyle, and how to adapt to

it. Because most of what I know about the American lifestyle has become second nature. I don't know how I learned it in the first place. And I think to become a better adaptive and creative person, to go through it again as an adult, consciously, as you go through it, I think will be a great way of building up tools and resources for future endeavors of mine. New ways of thinking, new ways of organizing people, new ways of learning, new ways of religion. It's just a massive attempt of mine to learn new tools, I guess new Druidic tools, towards life. They say you grow a new soul when you learn a new language. There's also a little bit of – oh, what do you call it – reliving the past here, because I know that Frangquist went to Japan right before he came back with a really heavy-duty Druidism. I suspect he went through many of the same things that I'm going there for. He probably had to learn all sorts of new adaptive and creative ways of thinking and doing things, and then he brought these back to Druidism. I hope that Japan will do this for me also.

EH: Good luck with that, and is there anything else you wanted to say, or are we wrapped up?

MS: I would recommend to people that every morning when they wake up, realize what a great opportunity they have here at Carleton. I've been here since 1989, off and on, and though there were probably days when I didn't think about it, hardly a day has gone by when I did not appreciate the opportunity I had here to talk with people. Do not pay too much attention to the classes – most people never look at your grades in any individual class. Take classes that you'd never take, maybe just pick one randomly. Everything you've learned here will be useful somewhere along the way. Try not to take classes just purely for credit purposes, to get a good grade because you already know the stuff. There's opportunity for dawdling in life, don't do it now. Spend as much time as you can talking with people, I don't think the term networking is appropriate, but just understanding different people who are working in different fields who come from different backgrounds as possible, join as many organizations as you can, perhaps in succession, one after the other, until you can understand how they work. Because you'll never have this quality of openness and access to different types of groups and organizations that you have now. Everything after this gets much more difficult to break into the cliques in the organizations.

Here you have an opportunity to explore all the different types of groups that later appear in society, in a raw state, where there are fewer things hidden from you than there will be in the other forms that exist outside of Carleton College. And try to use whatever opportunities are available for you. I mean it's nice to do the minimum amount of work here. But do independent studies, if you can, do independent research. Ask for advice from the professors: don't underestimate this resource. These are people who've made it their life's quest to teach people and to offer them tools of learning. And most of them are delighted to have people ask them for advice. And after you graduate make sure that you contribute, as past alumni have contributed, to others academic search. Provide access for people who are looking for jobs, give them tips, provide money for certain projects that you hear about that you like. Provide services if they ask for them, or offer your services for certain projects of theirs, and help recruit people that you think are useful for Carleton's future. And never finish your studies. Don't think that you've learned it all, because you haven't. And I wish you all the best of luck.

EH: Thank you.



**Figure 8 Frangquist bestowing 6th Ordination on Mike at Samhain 1993 on the Hill of 3 Oaks.**



# Interview with Irony Sade

Subject: Irony Sade [IS]

Interviewer: Eric Hillemann [EH]

Date: April 21, 2001

Transcriber: Dan Brooks, Leona Kwon (12.10.02)

Tapes: 2



Begin Tape I, Side A

EH: This tape is being recorded for the Carleton Oral History Program. The date is May 11th, 1999. The interviewee in this interview is Irony Sade, a Carleton senior currently. And doing the interviewing is Eric Hillemann. Irony, let's talk a bit about first your own background and anything you want to say about yourself prior to coming to Carleton, and then how you got interested in Carleton and came here.

IS: Alright, I was born in up-state New York, 22 years ago, I suppose. My parents, both professors, one of anthropology, the other biology, and lived between a small town in New York and suburban Chicago back and forth till high school and moved to New York permanently. Came to Carleton, umm, not entirely sure why. It sounded like it was more forgiving of uniqueness than many places, and it was a long way from home, both of which I wanted.

EH: Um, did you visit it before?

IS: I did visit it, once. I'm trying to remember if I was already accepted at that point. I applied early admission, and then didn't actually complete applications for anywhere else. I got into a panic towards the beginning of February and started applying to Cornell just in case, but once Carleton accepted me they apparently told Cornell before they even told me. And I got a letter from them saying, "I'm sorry, you've been accepted somewhere else. We can't handle your application." (chuckle)

EH: Okay, you say forgiving of uniqueness, and that was important to you. Why was it important to you?

IS: Because my high school was not forgiving of uniqueness. And while, I was not willing to conform it meant that I had, perhaps, four friends, over the four years I was there. And that was ok because I kept to myself most of the time, but coming to a new place, I also wanted to be able to be more of who I was without that restriction and without that image in the collective mind of who I already was.

EH: Since this tape is going to talk largely about your relationship to the Carleton Druids, I think I want to ask you about your religious background, if any.

IS: Yeah, (chuckle). (pause) My parents wanted us, my brother and I, to make up our own minds about religion. And as such tried to expose us to everything, but not ever...but wouldn't ever say this is the way that things are. 'Till I was about sixteen I really didn't think about it much, I remember in fourth grade once deciding that since nobody else currently believed in the old Norse gods I would, just because they ought to be believed in, or they might die. (chuckle) But that was never anything serious. I went to a Presbyterian church, my grandmother's church for holidays and on occasion when I felt like it. I was in the choir for a while there, but had no real religious thoughts until I was about sixteen, then I suffered an accident that made me think, and from that point on, started really looking into what Religion was, what God might be, what Truth was, who I was. Just asking all the really big religious questions, and then I started seeking out people who seemed to know and talking to them. Found a prayer group in my high school and joined that, clashed greatly with many of the Christians there, but found a lady who's faith was strong enough, that she would really talk, and she would really answer the hard kinda blunt questions I'd ask. And I learned an awful lot from her, so, I didn't have any...I didn't have any religious training or (pause) I don't know. Experience is the wrong word for it, but I didn't have any background, but I did have thoughts and investigations, I don't know. My family's been religious from way back. My grandfather was a Mullah [spelling?] in Kurdistan and he was the first person on that side of the family to become Christian and passed that onto his son perhaps too strongly. My grandfather used to go to church, sit ramrod straight in the front rows, sing through all the choir pieces, and then turn off his hearing aids when the sermon started. My father, himself, never speaks about religion. Mom was raised pseudo-Catholic, I think, but not really. Very little influence from my family that way, except encouragement to make up my own mind.

EH: Ok, um, have you been satisfied with having chosen Carleton?

IS: Yeah, very much. I agree with Michael ['Mec'] Scharding that it should be required that people take a year off between their sophomore and junior years. But I would definitely come back. I'm sorry to be leaving, but it is getting toward time to go.

EH: Well tell me some things, really anything you want about your Carleton experience, but I'm particularly interested in how you got involved with the Druids. Did you know about the Druids before you came to Carleton?

IS: The person who gave the tour that I came on, over the summer of '95 I guess it was that I came here, mentioned something in passing about the cloak people. And so when I had my sort of interview on campus, I think it was with Dean Govoni, and I asked him, "so who are these cloak people?" And he started laughing and got this "Oh dear, how do I explain this" expression and mentioned that there was a druid group and I looked through the Algol at that point and saw who they were. They looked like neat people, and I think, promptly forgot about it during the intervening summer.

I don't really remember how I actually met the group when I got here. I remember that it was very small, and I remember going to one Druid tea, that Michelle Curtis and Annie had. And I remember being a little bit leery of it, and just kinda,

“What’s this about?” asking them kinda questions. “What do you mean by these orders? You say that they confer different things. Do they confer what, powers, responsibilities?” You know “what is this about?” And not getting very far with the answers, but I also met Michelle Hajder at some point in there and she’d gotten involved with the Druids. But the first memorable experience with them was a sweat lodge in the lower Arb that was mostly alumni. I don’t believe Mec was there but Andrea Davis was. Joe (pause) Banks? I think was and Annie and Michelle both were, Michelle Curtis and Hajder for that matter. Umm, I don’t remember how I got involved with it, but that was the one that security busted twice (chuckle).

And oh Rodelt [unclear] rode that story out long ago but that was my first intriguing experience and after that knew I was staying, I guess. By that time also Michelle and I had gotten to be friends and had independently come to the conclusion that the Druids were a neat thing. It was really amazing that a religion had actually started here, if they were going to call it a religion. And that as there were only two people left, both of whom were leaving the next year, and neither of us really wanted to see the group die out, so I can’t really speak much for her, but I didn’t know much about its history or anything about what I was getting into but decided I didn’t want to see it die. So volunteered or ran away slowest I guess and said I would try to organize things next year, and it just sort of accumulated from there.

EH: What about the group appealed to you and made you want to not see it die?

IS: Mmm, innate sympathy for the underdog... I liked the things they talk about, I liked the anything-goes attitude towards questioning but I also saw in it potential for some very serious inquiry into nature and knowledge and what life meant. (pause) I was impressed by the people in it, particularly Andrea, and Mec was around at some point during that first year because he was gone by my second, so I did know him then. (Sigh) I don’t really know why beyond that. I’d looked into some of the prayer groups here and had found them interesting but sort of exclusive and the Druids were willing to talk about anything and look into anything and that’s what I needed at that point.

EH: Exclusive in terms of just a group of friends who wanted to be in an exclusive group of friends or exclusive in terms of religious orientation?

IS: No, not socially exclusive, for the most part. There was a little bit of that, but I think that is just the nature of groups at Carleton because everything’s so intense. But there was a Bible-study group I remember where it was literally that, a Bible-study group. And any other opinions, any other texts, any other readings that you brought in were duly and carefully considered, but (pause) made things acutely uncomfortable I suppose. And I remember at one point asking a lady who shall remain nameless some questions about it and she gave this very piercing look and said, “Have you studied philosophy here?” And I said, “No.” Cause I hadn’t then, and she said, “Oh, good. You’re still pure.” and went on with whatever she was talking about. But that made me hesitate towards exploring much that way.

EH: So (pause) Well, I want to get into what Druids did, both early on when you were just getting exposed to them and stuff. One, in what ways they’re different than that in the sorts of things that they’re talking about as well as just sort of the activities describing what goes on when the Druids get

together. Tell me, to start with, about the security-busted sweat lodge.

IS: Okay. That was the only major activity that I saw during that first year here, besides the third order vigil that Michelle and I did. Um, the sweat lodge incident... I don’t know the name of the island, or peninsula rather, but the sandbar in the lower Arb, this side of the river but sort of north of the stone pilings, there’s a sandy spot in a little dell. Joe Banks and I built the sweat lodge there, I volunteered to help for some reason, and we built fire and somebody brought in saplings and we put up the sweat there and he and I just ended up sitting and talking for, must have been two hours, about a lot of Native American religion that he’d been involved with, about magic of different sorts, about what went on at Carleton, just about life mainly. And we talked about plants and different things and he said what he really wanted were some herbs to throw on the rocks and I said, “Well, what about catnip?” He said “Catnip would be great, do you know where some is?” So I ran off around Lyman and found what I had been told was catnip, turned out later it was lemon balm, which does something entirely different, but is still safe. So brought back a handkerchief full of that. Other people kept showing up and got dark and we were just about ready to strip down and head into the sweat when flashlights and security jumped out of the bushes and said, “What is this?! Who are you? Why are you have fires here? Are you camping? Do you have alcohol?” All three of which are illegal in the lower Arb. And we said yes we had a fire and no we’re not camping, we’re all ex-Carleton students at least and there’s no alcohol at a sweat, that would be a very bad thing. And they took down names and asked that we put out the fire. One of them grabbed a bucket full of river water and was about to dash it onto the fire, [I] was trying to explain to him that throwing the bucket of water on red-hot stones was probably not the wisest course of action, and he wasn’t listening, and Joe Banks said, “Sir, this is a religious ceremony. Would you let us put out the fire our way please?” And he was instantly, “Oh. Okay. Yeah that’s fine.” And I really, I don’t know, really respected that somehow, a way of problem-solving I hadn’t thought of. So Joe raked the rocks out of the fire, and then poured the water all over the coals and the wood and the ashes, and intoned some circle breaking charm and security told us not to do that again and left. Now we all took off our clothes, put the rocks in the lodge and had the sweat. (chuckle) Since we hadn’t gotten the rocks wet. I had no idea how long the sweat lasted, but it was really dark and really cold when we came out. And I guess Mec must have been at that one, because he then lead a whole group of people down into the river to cool off for some reason. I was freezing as soon as I got out, so half the folks ran down to the river, and they other half grabbed whatever they could to wear, and I went and poked up the fire again because I was freezing. So the rest of us sort of clustered around the fire and then everybody else came up out of the river and we passed around soft mead and things and just general decompressing after the sweat and then decided it was time to go home. Took apart the lodge, and I started trying to put out the fire, and since there was a river there, I would grab one log, and heave it into the river. And it would spin through the air in flame and go down in hiss and security came running out of the bushes, stormed into the middle of the place, said, “Who has the fireworks?!” And everybody just sort of stared at them, tried to figure out what they meant and they were mad at us again for having the fire a second time and sort of ordered us all to leave, which was okay cause we were done

by then. Made sure to put out the rest of the fire less dramatically, but that was definitely memorable. I continually wonder what would have happened if they'd come back either five minutes earlier or later, either of those times found a dozen naked people sitting in a tent. (chuckle) I don't know. (pause) I did learn from that though for any future Druids reading this to make friends with security. Ask them, or at least keep them informed of some of your activities so that they are less likely to break them up.

EH: You mentioned your third order vigil, that was in your first year?

IS: That was my first year. That was um...Belting [?] night. The night of May 1st and of the spring concert and Michelle Hajder and I both vigiled then because... well Mec said that he didn't like third order vigils in the first year. I meant, no, Annie and Michelle Curtis, 'Michelle the Dark' he calls her, were both leaving and he wanted there to be some third orders left. So Michelle and I both vigiled that night, and it rained. Michelle had a fire vigil, and I did, uh, a walking vigil, the first one after Mec's I guess. And it rained all night.

EH: What's a walking vigil?

IS: A walking vigil is just like the fire vigil but you don't stay in one place, you walk out into the Arb after dark and stay awake and stay walking and just listen to world and listen to the woods and see what you learn. See the sorts of things that crawl out of your head, and see the sorts of entities that come out of the woods. And there's something about vigil nights that's just different. I don't know if things come out then that don't normally or it's just that people don't generally sit down and think for ten hours straight, or walk and think for ten hours straight. But, you learn a lot. I haven't, I don't know, I don't know what the fire vigil was like, I didn't do that then. I've done some since, but I think any vigil I do now is colored by the experience of that one.

EH: So it did what it was supposed to do to you, basically marked a watershed.

IS: It does. It marks a beginning, and it tests your commitment and it teaches you a lot. We've since picked up on that aspect and... well, because so much made sense during and immediately after my vigil and Michelle's, that we couldn't remember later and can't express now, because so much was lost in transition with nobody to tell it to, what we've started doing now is after people vigil they come back to the circle and talk, tell people what they've learned, or ask questions so that whatever they've learned is shared and spread and doesn't dissipate so quickly.

EH: So organizationally at that point, the Carleton Druids were down to very few people who were about to leave except for...

IS: except for Michelle and I...

EH: you and Michelle.

IS: Yeah, Michelle Curtis and Graham were the only two active druids still enrolled. Mec and Andrea were still active, but Andrea was in the cities, and I have no idea where Mec was at that point, except that he occasionally showed up. Michelle had become a second order druid sometime earlier in the year. I actually was never a first or second order druid, and they discovered this as they were trying to ordain me third. They went, "Wait!" And did some serious ad-libbing there and figured it would be okay. But organizationally the sweat happened because the alumni organized it, the vigils happened... I don't entirely know why because we wanted it

they just happened. Other than that, weekly teas did happen then and (pause) granted I was not as involved with the group then, but I don't remember that anything else happened.

EH: The Tea's held outside somewhere in the natural Druid setting, or were they in a building?

IS: Depending. Um, then, the first one was in Ann's [?] room on third Goodhue. I remember another one being in Goodhue lounge. I remember one being held in the dining hall, but I don't actually remember any being held outdoors then. During my second year we started holding them in the Japanese garden when it was warm enough, and that went over really well, except that people had to keep running back and forth for water.

EH: So what do you do at them besides drink tea?...

IS: Drink tea...

EH: Is there discussion?

IS: There is discussion. Um, the better organized ones actually have discussion topics announced beforehand so people can bring in writings or ideas or whatever. We've done craft workshops where people built dreamcatchers or carved pumpkins or different things, just generally druidic in some sense. The ones I think are best are ones where we've just started with a question and given people a couple of days to think about it and then had them show up and talk about it. And gotten into some of the best conversations I've had at those. Generally the format is there's not a discussion leader, just sort of an organizer, there's a table full of hot water and the tea collection, however much of it happens to be there. And sometimes somebody will bring cookies or bread or whatever and people just sit down and drink tea and talk and some of the discussions are kind of guided and can go on for two, three hours, some of them. People drift in and out, but that's the general format.

EH: Is it the sort of thing that's sponsored by the druid organization but open to anybody who wants to come and therefore you also even, you get a lot of people who don't, aren't identifying themselves as part of the Carleton Druids or is it mostly people who you consider part of the Carleton Druids who come. Or is that...

IS: Mmm, most of the above (chuckle) I lost the logic train in there somewhere, but, um, we've advertised for some of the teas in the NNB and we usually do that more heavily toward the beginning of the year, but after a while it settles down to a core group that come back. And generally after a while, all of those do identify themselves as Druids, even if that's not always the case. Um, for instance, just this past weekend, one lady that's come to just about every tea this year, finally decided that she really was a Druid. The ones to which people outside the Druid group come have the been the best and the worse because you get a sudden influx of new personalities and new perspectives, but you also get people who come in and sit there uncomfortably and make the whole group uncomfortable. We had one of those last week. What happens after a while is we generally stop advertising because we forget or get lazy, and every now and then we advertise a new one if there's an especially interesting topic going up. And then some people come, generally if folks don't come in the first two weeks of a term, they're not going to it seems, but people do invite their friends and bring in people from out of town and just interesting characters they've met that they think would be interested. And that continues to happen throughout the term and provides some

of the growth in membership. I was going to say something... (pause) Yeah, one of the other things that happens at Tea a lot is just organizational stuff. There's a lot of sitting down, "So, what do you guys want to do this term? We've got two full moons, we've got... Samhain, we've got this... Two people want a sweat lodge, etc." And ideas are generated and dates are marked down and on good days responsibility is delegated and then things happen from there.

EH: Would you typically at a gathering like a Tea have ritual at all?

IS: Not typically, but sometimes yes. Uh, more so in the past I would say. The Druids this year are more social than spiritual on group level. Individually, I would say they were more spiritual than most people I've known in the past, but they are so in such different directions that one led ritual at Tea would generally make somebody uncomfortable. We did a Tea somewhat toward the end of last term, this would be winter, where we talked about some basic magical skills, like raising a circle, grounding, putting a quick personal shield if stuff goes wrong, and passed energy around, and taught people how to do these things, just so that they would know. From that has come the energy experiments, which are apparently a recurring phenomena that crop up every eight years or so according to the some of the people that have been around longer, but are either on a hiatus or on their way out right now, not sure, which where we design experiments regarding what is this energy stuff we keep talking about, if I charged ten marbles out of twenty can you tell me which ones they are? Things like that. And results that we have gotten so far have been statistically ambiguous and, but personally meaningful. Like even if someone looks at the chart of results, and says, "Well, the numbers don't tell me anything." They can still go, "But I really felt something when I picked up this rock, but I didn't when I touched any of the others. So I personally think there's something there, even if the numbers don't show it." Tend to get a lot of that on the individual level, but nothing that you could present to a review board and say, see, there really is something here.

EH: You're saying teaching people some of the basic rudiments of magic, etc. How did anyone in the group learn them?

IS: Different places, and surprisingly different places. We started talking about Grounding at one point – my vocabulary for this tends to come a pseudo-Wiccan background, just because that was the first system I encountered that had a vocabulary for magic. But when we started talking about Grounding and Centering some of the people who had done Aikido before said, "Hey! I've done this, I don't know the words you're using, but this is exactly what we do, what we mean, when talk about Chi flow, when we talk about you know extending toward, extending your energy toward the attacker." Or a person who'd done something in a Quaker circle, understood exactly what was going on, and had a different vocabulary for it. I call it magic, because I haven't really anything else to call it, just like I call, whatever it is, God, because I haven't anything else to call it, but I don't attach to either of those words any of the systems that have been attached to them. I use them because they work and they are there. And making up a new vocabulary for them would only breed confusion, not that this doesn't.

EH: So what was your exposure to Wicca, since that was the vocabulary that you...

IS: Mmm, a couple of books in high school, a couple of people early on here... It's not something I've pursued, but it's something that gave me a very valuable point of reference for

the experiences that started happening once I was in Druidism. Once I started doing things with the group and really paying attention to what was going on, I get...

End Tape I, Side A

Begin Tape I, Side B

EH: Ok it's recording

IS: I guess I starting looking into Wicca about the same time I started going to the Christian prayer group because after the accident when I was sixteen I just expanded, I wanted to, I wanted to know. I'd run across a set of questions that I had never of asking before, and every time that I've done that, it's just opened up a domain and a world I didn't know existed, and I looked into it every way I could. I didn't pursue Wicca very far because I didn't find it (pause) I don't find ritual as personally meaningful as I do, unstructured experience and what one might call philosophy. But the vocabulary that surrounds the ritual, becomes very useful for making sense of experience later on. So the vocabulary of Circle-Raising helps me make sense of what it is that I do when I'm uncomfortable or about to do something magical that might attract attention is I raise a circle and that could be the walls of the room I'm in, it could be if I'm in the stone circle it could be that, it just, it's something to provide a sacred space, to provide some element of shelter and protection. The vocabulary of the eternal rebirth of the god in Wicca, as opposed to the eternal existence of the goddess makes wonderful sense of the Celtic holidays, and the cycle of the year, even though Samhain isn't technically in any Celtic sense when the god dies, but if you overlay those two systems it makes both of them much clearer.

EH: Okay... Let's do some basic Carleton organization history here. Umm, at the end of your first year, you and Michelle had been ordained as... consecrated into the third order, whatever the word is...

IS: Yes, consecrated....

EH: Alright, and you were the only ones, essentially that are, there to start it up again next year. What did you do to have a group?

IS: Came back fall term sophomore year and found a package from Mec in my mailbox, that included maps of the Arb, included some of the old rituals. I don't believe yet included the anthology... yes, yes it might have had the anthology at that point. Now it had a note saying, "Go to Mark Heiman's and pick up you a copy of the anthology, which was immensely valuable to me. It also had a note saying, "check out the Hill of Three Oaks, go look behind it." And I went up and looked behind the hill, and oh my! there was a stone circle that hadn't been there before. There was a couple making out in it, so I didn't go and investigate just then, but that became a very special place to us, and to a lot of people. Organizationally, a lot of what happened during that first year was trying to get our feet under us. Michelle and I felt like we'd been dropped into things. We hadn't had the group dropped on us because we had asked for it, but suddenly we were supposed to be in charge of something we didn't understand and felt like we had very little guidance. Mec was gone, Michelle Curtis and Ann were gone, Andrea was around that year and proved invaluable. She would come down from the cities on several occasions, both to Teas and to rituals and that helped a lot. Michelle and I were both

living in Faculty Club at the time, so Teas were either in the lounge there or in the Japanese garden. And there was a lot of, "So...what do we do?" There was a lot of philosophy that year. A lot of talking about different things, and a lot of trying different things. And we found somebody who was a Reiki practitioner and asked him to come down and teach us and he did that. We came across Carlos Gonzales, maybe?, used to be on the alumni board, he's a Native American, he's a western doctor, but he's also a Native American, and he works with both systems, so we invited him down and he came and talked with us for a while. That was I think our first main event then was Samhain. [?] We've always celebrated Samhain and Beltane. They've always been the most powerful and the most well attended holidays that we've had. Close to thirty people came to that one, that first year, and we made a talking stick and passed it around. A lot of stories came out. Talking stick...

EH: Tell us.

IS: A talking stick is something Andrea told us about and maybe is a stick of some significance and some inherent power, I guess. We find a stick that volunteers, I found this one in Utah. It was a well traveled talking stick. You decorate it with different things that can provoke stories and memory and then you give it to people. And it's really fun to give it to people without telling them what it is, because what happens is you hold the stick, you stick it in the ground, and it washes stories out of you. I don't ... You can describe it any of a different ways. I've heard it describe that it sucks energy from the Earth, and washes up through you and pulls out of you stories that are already there, pulls out of the Earth stories that are there and makes you speak them, I don't know. But if you give it to somebody and have them stick it in the ground, they'll just start talking. And sometimes it's just silly stories, and sometimes it's profound. It's people coming out for the first time. It's people saying good-bye to family members who've been dead for most of a decade. Just stories associated with that. There was a lot of that at the first Samhain - I'm going to pronounce it seventeen different ways, because I've never gotten it clear. But after that we had a sweat. We had several sweats my sophomore year which was good because at the end of that, the people who know how to lead them were all gone and... Actually at the end of the sophomore year I was gone too, but we'll get to that in a while.

Sophomore year was really... was really good. It was really powerful, and felt like things were on the upswing in terms of where the group was going. During that year, we got a lot of little things figured out, like, where does the mail addressed to the Druids actually end up, and who do you have talk to make sure it ends up in the right place. Where are the different spots in the Arb that it's safe to have fires. How do you do a mailing list. How do you contact folks in the cities. Where are all these bookshelves that people keep talking about. What does it actually mean to hold a ritual. A lot of nuts and bolts things like that, a lot of experiential learning. A lot of, "Shoot. I don't know what I'm doing, what do you want me to... How do you... How am I supposed to lead?" A lot of just getting up and doing it. And discovered much later a fair amount of learning what the elements of ritual were, not in any academic sense, not in any, you know, Redown [?] the Wiccan ritual that has thirteen different elements, all of which have to be there. Not that, but just doing rituals from different places, designing rituals based on other things, seeing what worked and what didn't, and then

suddenly realizing that secular weddings have the same format as, you know, pick your random pagan event. And that once people started designing rituals without knowing how rituals worked, if you leave out certain elements, it suddenly doesn't work. That they have to have a beginning and an end. Those don't necessarily have to follow one after the other, but there has to be closure, there has to be purpose. If you do a ritual without a reason behind it, not a rational reason, just "I'm doing this for... or I'm doing this because..." If you're lacking that it falls apart. If you're lacking some emotional investment it falls apart. It's little things like that that I suppose could be studied, but at least in my case, had to be picked up, gradually.

I guess through my second and third year here, I felt mostly like what I was doing with the Druids, was just gathering in, was just stabilizing, was trying to find my own feet and find out how things work, so that then, this year, I could pass on to the next generation of Druids something that they would be able to build on, that they wouldn't have to start from scratch again. I think, had Mec's anthology ... had the anthology not come about then, we would have been very lost. Had Andrea not been around, we would have been very lost. And I don't know what would have happened without those two. Which is very interesting, because they never got along from what I could tell. They had very different approaches and very different perspectives. Grated with each other on more than one occasion.

EH: Has the terminology of having an Archdruid maintained itself at Carleton in recent years or...

IS: Yes, Michelle and I considered the two of us together, the Archdruid, singular. And that worked for a year. I think it's good to have more than one person, whether you call them Archdruids or whether collectively the people who get things done are the Archdruid, I don't know if that makes much of a difference. But it's been a functional thing. The people who organize and made things happen and got things done were the Archdruids or Druid. I guess technically they are supposed to be Third-Order. I don't know, if you buy the functional definition and that's not necessary, but I think that, I personally think that some commitment of the person involved is required for a good Archdruid. That if it's just social and just organization I don't think that it works entirely well. That argues in favor of having them be Third-Order. On the other hand, there's David Coil, who I consider an honorary Archdruid. He's been there through the whole past four years, he's been more reliable than any other single person in the grove. And yet for the longest time, he didn't consider himself a Druid, he just showed up to help, and to say actually what if you do things this way, this might work better. Or to volunteer to get firewood, things like that. And, yeah, so yes the terminology has maintained itself. Going into next year, it looks like there are five different people, none of whom could or would lead by themselves, but all of which together might make up, the Archdruid?

EH: Ok, is it time to interject your own personal history about your year off?

IS: My year off? Well, I can skim much of that, if you want. I didn't come back fall of my junior year. I went to Germany, somewhere in the middle of the summer and learned a great deal there, had a lot of very profound Druidic experiences, mostly took the time to sit back and digest and figure out what I had learned at Carleton. Because I knew if I kept piling more on top, I'd start forgetting it all. And I needed to

sit still and watch things settle out and figure out what of it was important and what of it was distracting. And one of the things I realized in there was that I needed to get to know my own family, my father and my brothers specifically. But another thing I realized was that the Druids were profoundly important to me, as an existing group, as a historical group, as a personal way of living. That none of those things, were ones that I was willing to give up. I went to England after I left Germany, and tried to find some of the old Druids, which was quite the experience by itself. If you break things down into the Paleo-Druids, the Meso-Druids, and the Neo-Druids, I would say I didn't find any Paleo-Druids, and I wasn't looking for Meso-Druids, but I did find Druids as it were. People who exemplified that which Druidism teaches. who did have some profound spiritual connection that I had only grazed, and I learned an immense amount from them.

EH: These people who call themselves Druids? or people that you just recognize as...

IS: People I recognized as Druidic. I could have easily have found people who call themselves Druids, but that wasn't what I was after. I spent some time in Glastonbury, and something that came very clear there was that there was a difference (pause) that I still have trouble articulating. Glastonbury is a town on several different levels: There are the people who live there. There's the history of the site itself, which is impressive. And then there's this sort-of overlay of New-Age-ness, and I hate the term, New-Age, but it describes it better than anything else. And there's a whole set of people who are there because it's a New-Age center. And yet it's also a place that really does have some significance. And coming down off the Tor, I spent the night there. Coming down off the tour, seeing in the eyes of the people who lived there, the same expression regarding me, as that they regarded the people who were there because it was New-Age center. Realized that there was a difference between the way I was searching what I was searching for, then just, "Ohh, crystals. This is neat." And realized too that that difference wasn't showing, and that if I was going to maintain there really was a difference, I'd better figure out what it was, and how to make sure it came through. So after that I was not looking for people who called themselves Druids, but I was looking for people who had an integrity and a commitment and a depth that names don't. And I did find some.

EH: How do you look?

IS: That's a hard question. [Pause]

EH: How did you find who you found?

IS: By asking questions. By finding...people nets, I guess. I have an aunt in England who's lived there for, lived in the same house twenty-three years and seems to know everybody and asked her. You know, told her what I was up to and what I was looking for and asked for where would be a good place to look and she said, "Well, go to this commune and go talk to this lady in Glastonbury and see what they say." Discovered later that, she had said that the commune was a place that one could find real Druids. I misinterpreted that at the time, I thought that meant there were real Druids there and I would find them. What it really meant was that it was a sort of testing ground, and that people would go there and be watched by the people who owned the commune, owned it and ran it, the family that lived there. And then if they decided that these people really were looking, and really were honest about what they were up to and people they wanted to be in the know, then they would talk to you and move you

along farther to tell you where real Druids were. I didn't get that 'til afterwards. I didn't, I left a little confused because I'd expected one thing and hadn't found it and then realized later what had been going on...was quite impressed at how well it worked. The lady in Glastonbury, turned out just was one, that she had known. It was funny. She was very hesitant sending me to her because my aunt herself thought that this person was a witch and not in a good sense, that she had done horrible things to her daughters, not on purpose, just by having a very chaotic persona and energy base. My aunt's vocabulary is very yogic, which isn't one I'm familiar with so I'm translating things a little bit here. But going and talking with her I found, and maybe this is part of how you search, I found her one of the most genuinely insightful people I'd ever met. That after talking to her for five minutes, having never met her before, she was able to see things about me that my own parents couldn't. That people I'd known for years had no clue of. She could just look inside and go, "Oh, well, you're doing this." And it wasn't psychologizing and it wasn't mind reading. It was just genuine insight. And it was that, and an honesty about her that I really respected, and it was just a great wealth of experience and personal depth that set her apart from other people I had met who had the talk I guess but their lives didn't bear out the things they spoke of that one fellow I met who did right Chi, who could talk your ear off about healing energy and you know, "Oh, you've got...you've got these great streamers out of your hills and different things" and definitely sounded like he knew what he was talking about and his own life wasn't one in which healing seemed to have happened. And that incongruity made me very uncomfortable working with him. I cannot...I don't know, I'm in no position to judge and I can't say he didn't have anything, he wasn't real, I can't say that. But there was something unsettling....there was something discordant about it that didn't quite fit. [Pause] Anyway, that was part of my travels. Unless you have questions there.

EH: So, when you returned to Carleton, um, this time had helped you bring new things to....back to the Carleton Druids?

IS: It did. Um, after I left England I went home for two or three months and then I went on Sea semester and had a completely different kind of learning there and both of those brought more back to Carleton in my person than I had left with. But I think that they were growing experiences for me rather than the Druid group. When I got back most of the group was gone and Michelle had been in charge during that time and we kept corresponding and at one point she wanted to disband the Druids entirely and I didn't think that was right. I didn't think any one person had the right to disband a group that had been in existence longer than they had because they personally weren't working out with it. Or because people weren't taking it seriously or because it seemed nothing but a joke.

EH: Those were the reasons that...

IS: Those, if I recall, were her reasons for wanting to disband. She talks about fall and winter as the year of amnesia. They had Samhain. It went over pretty well. They did a lot of Tarot reading and stuff. Most of...I don't know, the old Druids, the old guard I guess, disappeared during that time. There were a lot of people who were around my sophomore year who were no longer there when I came back spring of my junior year and they are still at Carleton but they're no longer with the Druids. I don't know why. I don't know what happened at the end and Michelle might be the only person who does. [Pause] I forgot where I was going with that.

EH: Well, you were talking about you and Michelle having communicated and seeing that issue differently.

IS: I don't know how she managed things. Um, Andrea had worried when she heard I was leaving because she said there were three elements that were needed to lead the Druids and those were some very good organizational capabilities, some very good ideas, generations, creativities, and some personal charisma, and that those didn't all need to be embodied in one person, but if you were missing any of them in the people in charge the group would fall apart. And she worried that among the people left, there was not the element of charisma she thought I had. Um, I don't know if that was the case. I don't like to think that [pause] charisma, if I have any, is a motivating factor in the growth of the Druid group. But during the times I've been here it's grown significantly and when I was gone it didn't. That bothers me. [chuckle] I don't, I don't want to have followers that...anyway, came back [sigh] this will be the last spring already. Picked up a lot there um, I started leading sweat lodges at that point for the first time, and that was peculiar. No, that wasn't the first time. I led the spring previous, I forgot about that. But then um...oh, we skipped a whole bunch. We skipped the circle.

EH: Tell me about the circle.

IS: Wanna do that? Ok...

EH: Tell me everything, or whatever you want to.

IS: Yeah, ok. [pause] Whoo. Can I get a glass of water?

EH: Sure. Take a break for a minute.

IS: Yeah, ok. When I got back my sophomore year there was a note in my mailbox telling me to look behind the Hill of Three Oaks. That was when I found the first stone circle and [pause] loved the place. Everyone did. There was a maze in the ground next to it at that point that faded over the rest of the year but...even that next spring, if you looked right at sunset you could still see depressions in the ground where people had walked. We used to have music gatherings out there, there were a couple of harpers, there was a lot of whistle players and singers and we had a drummer or two and we would just show up out there and play. People would do their homework out there, we had dancing, I stayed out there one night to watch a lunar eclipse. Turned cloudy all night but, stayed out there anyway. Was this really really wonderful place. Somewhat toward the end of winter term, was wandering out there one night and came across the circle and found that somebody had thrown the stones down, all the other stones, and was furious, and tried to pick them up but they were frozen to the ground. Running out?

EH: Yeah, we're running out.

IS: Ok.

EH: If you wanna hold your thought right there I will change tapes.

IS: Ok.

[End of Tape 1, Side Two. Start Tape 2, Side One]

IS: We found the, the outer twelve stones down and, which was is furious. Came storming back down to Goodhue to see if anybody knew anything or if anyone would help me put them back and they were having a...I forget who I ran into but they were having a dinner then wouldn't come help and [sigh] so they'd come up in the morning. For some reason I thought it was important to get them back up before the sun rose, so I

went to talk to another friend of mine who was visiting and he said he would help in the morning. I don't remember the rest of that night that I got out there, maybe five in the morning and waited and waited and waited and nobody came so finally put the rest of the stones back up myself and paid for it for the next week or two [laugh] but managed. I was just really upset because I hadn't been able to get them up quite right and it wasn't the same after that. Then, somewhat later, maybe it was end of spring term already, Michelle and I were out wandering in the Arb together and came across the circle and found everything down, including the center stone, which hadn't been moved the first time and were furious again and went and talked to some people who were partying on the Hill of Three Oaks and asked them if they knew anything about it and they didn't. So, the two of us together were able to move anything except the center, and neither of us could move that. Both of us together couldn't move that, so we went and found Dave Coil and his roommate and Dave, Jared, and I, together, managed to roll the center stone back into place. I don't think I thought of doing anything about it then. Somebody wrote nasty editorials to the Carletonian about it and uh, everybody was upset but nothing much happened. Then later on, getting toward Beltane we were trying to find a place to hold Beltane because the Spring Concert was happening at the same time and the Hill of Three Oaks and the circle where, we'd wanna get, weren't going to work. So I'd suggested Three Bird Grove, which seemed like a nice place. Some of the older Druids weren't comfortable with that because they'd had bad experiences with that part of the upper Arb. There was...either there was or at least there was a story of something called BOB, which stood for Big Obsidian Ball that I've never encountered and have sought, have looked for but have never run into so I don't know what credit to give this story, but if you want I'll tell it.

EH: Sure.

IS: Ok. The stories I remember. Pagan group in town was anonymously given a black obsidian ball about the size of a small fishbowl which must have cost a fortune, was just given to them anonymously. Well I thought this was really neat, until I started noticing that whoever's house it resided in, that [pause] whoever it was living with would start having random accidents. They would just drop dishes all of a sudden for no particular reason, they would cut themselves on knives, they would twist their ankles on their own stairs, just, I mean, nothing...nothing manifest, just general unpleasantness and bad luck and sort of like they had an anti-browning [?] going around. So they would give it to someone else and they would have the same thing and they would give to someone else and they would have the same thing and finally they decided they'd just better get rid of it. I don't know if they tried magic or exorcisms or anything on it first but eventually, to get rid of it, they went up one night and buried in the Arb. Uh, [laugh] I don't know if that was to ground it or to just make it go away or what but immediately after that several other people, I don't know, sensitive people at Carleton started running into this thing in the Arb that...that just, they would be walking perfectly fine through the path and all of a sudden just get totally terrified and feel and presence and leave. And this happened over and over again, different people, um, Andrea was one, Eric Stewart if I remember, mentioned something about it...that he might, my memory might be wrong there, so, someone would have to ask him. But anyways, Three Bird Grove, where I suggested having Beltane was one of the places where this had been encountered and Andrea at least thought it would be very bad

idea to have Beltane there if BOB was around so I said I'd look and went up and spent the night there. Left a candle out and issued an open invitation for whatever was around to come talk to me and waited and waited and waited. I wasn't, somebody got the idea I was going out to duel with BOB and I got very worried. [laugh] I just, I just wanted to talk to find out if there was anything there and if so, what it was up to. Just an offer to be friendly with it. Nothing came, so around, I don't know, one or two, I left and started wandering about and [pause] all the times I've gotten into some other state I haven't realized it until afterwards. But I realized later that I had...that there was something akin to vigiling there where it wasn't just myself walking around for awhile. But I showed up, I came in from behind the hill toward the circle. And everything was fine, except the center stone, and that was down. Found out later everything had been down and Wade Davis had come out and fixed everything he could but he couldn't move the center stone either so, this is the second time it had been down and the third time the circle had been vandalized, not counting broken glass and things, which, was annoying but hey. Wasn't mad anymore, was just profoundly saddened somehow and, without really thinking about it bent down, picked up the center stone, and put it back. And then stood there in shock, wait a minute, I can't lift that. [laugh]

Next morning I skipped class and wrote a letter to Mr. Lewis, the president and, might have the letter somewhere still but, said I don't know if you're aware of it but there's a circle out in the Arb that's a very meaningful place to a lot of folks. It's um, about the closest to a holy site on campus since the chapel's used for classroom sometimes and stuff, and it's just, people have really gotten a lot out of it, and found it important, and it's been vandalized three times in the past ten weeks. And, with your permission, I'd to create something more permanent. Said I'd find the rocks, I'd organize the labor, I'd orchestrate the whole process, all I wanted was his permission, if I could pull it off to build something more lasting along those lines. Well, this got bounced to Dean Govoni, and then it got bounced to...uh...Dennis Easley, and then it got bounced to the chapel, and then it got bounced back to Dean. And the upshot was, this was a very peculiar request, they didn't know what to do with it, but it wasn't against any rules. And if I could find a place with the Arb directors, that they would agree have become a permanent site in the Arb, and if I could find somebody to pay for it and all the other stuff I've mentioned, then yeah, that was ok. I didn't wanna just build it, because I guess I wanted official sanction. This has been a quiet trend through these four years that apparently Max started of getting the Druids more and more official recognition. But I wanted something officially sanctioned so that if it were vandalized, it would be an attack on the College, not just an attack on a random ring of stones. And, the intern chaplain Lisa Ebert, was leaving in four weeks and had a standing budget she could do whatever she wanted with so she said sure, and Dennis found a guy to help move the stones and Mark and Miles said Three Bird Grove was ok and, which is, about two weeks from letter to full circle. It was there, all of a sudden. And, I don't know, I was wandering around, just totally amazed and Michelle and Amanda were both teasing me saying I was acting like a new father or something 'cause I couldn't believe it had happened. I don't know if anybody ever thought it would. I know Michelle didn't. I don't know if I was even asking that question at the time, it was just like, I want this, and, it's just there. We went out and, you know, with sticks and twine and marked out where it could be and picked out what stones we

wanted where and set them all into the ground so that they couldn't just be toppled over. It's just all of a sudden there. Transplanted trees to make way for it and cover up some of the tracks. One of the stipulations was that we buried the fire pit so that there wouldn't be any fires there, 'cause they were getting nervous about that. And we did that. There've been two fires that I know of since, but, those have not been officially sanctioned and one of them was interrupted, which is another story. But uh, yeah. That was really peculiar because it, it went up maybe eighth week of my sophomore spring term and then I was gone until the next spring and didn't see it for a year. [laugh]

EH: It's used? It's stayed...it's staying successful? Is it a place of power?

IS: It has accumulated more and more power over the years apparently. We did a charging ritual, we danced a pinnacle dance in the first full moon that it was standing after giving it time to establish itself. When, uh, we first set it up there was a lot of...sort of disconcerted opposition to it, a lot of "How dare the Druids create such a thing without asking us first" from random people. "You know, the old circle is a public spot. You're making a Druidic spot, you can't do that." That was not the intention. It was supposed to be a place of peace and power for anyone who'd respect it and open to everyone. I've tried to make sure it stayed that way. There was some opposition because Three Bird Grove was somebody's favorite sunbathing area, and they thought with, uh, a site there that they wouldn't have that privacy, which I suppose is true, but, I didn't know about that. [laugh]



**Figure 9 Old Circle c.1996 & New Circle c.1999  
Very soon after both of their appearances.**

EH: Is the old circle still there at all?

IS: No, the old circle...at the site of the old circle was where I wanted to build the new one and at this point even though they hadn't really started publicizing it, plans for the Recreation Center were already underway, and they knew they were going to level that field and said anything that was built there would be very temporary and I wanted something more lasting. I also wanted something farther away from partying sites I guess because, while we never tried to find out who vandalized it, the assumption was that it was random groups of drunken folks who wanted to see if they could push the stones around. The current stones weigh in around two and a quarter tons for the most immediately pushable and are farther away from where people are likely to be so I'm less



worried about it here. But, four of the stones from the original circle are incorporated into this one. The current south stone was the old center stone. The three stones supporting the center stone were the three largest of the old ring. I didn't want a new circle, I didn't want to create something new, I just wanted to create something lasting, and wanted as much continuity as possible between the two so that...we brought them. It's interesting seeing the people that it's become important to. I never wanted it to be just Druids and it hasn't been that. I ran into a faculty spouse this past Beltane that solved one minor mystery. For most of this year I've heard from different people that while they've been studying in the circle, this old guy, this old bearded guy, would just show up all of a sudden, walk into the circle, go around slowly touching every stone and leave without saying anything. And someone thought it was Mec, and I said no, he's in Japan, and somebody thought it was Mark Heiman, and I said no, I don't think so. Ran into him, over Beltane and uh, I forget who his wife is, I think she teaches in the art department, but he himself is Greek and for him, there are twelve gods, and there are twelve stones in the circle. And he just found it the neatest thing, that there was this, this shrine he could use, already there, that was non, non-denominational isn't the word, but...open, I guess. And I know there are people from town that come up there, I mean even kids from high school that come up when they're having a bad day, they just come up to sit. To have it be something peaceful. [pause] I'm jumping topics I'm afraid. [laugh] You asked if we charged it, did you, or something? I don't know.

EH: About the circle?

IS: Yeah.

EH: I had just asked if it had become a place of power.

IS: Yeah, definitely. It's full of personality too, which is a little disconcerting. [laugh]

EH: In what ways?

IS: Why? Because if it's developed a personality, I don't know, this is going into either metaphysical or magical speculation, depending. There's a personality now attached to the circle. It could be something that was already at that spot that is now being noticed because there are people there more often or has grown because there's power there now, don't know. It could be something that grew there because the circle is there and people focus energies on it. It could be some other entity that just showed up and....

EH: Wow.

IS: If it's BOB he's not like the BOB I remember hearing about. I don't think it is. Um, were I Christian I would say it's an angel, but I'm not. I've run into it on a number of occasions when I was doing someone's Second Order vigil. I realized at one point that while I was speaking it wasn't me anymore. I wasn't in control of the words, that there was something standing through me, guiding the action and, to the people across from me they say I grew ten feet. It wasn't me at all that they were talking to and it remained something else, someone else until I left the circle and turned human again. Other people have talked to it, have met it, have felt it. There's one girl now who was in the little grove and was just listening. I think Mec and I were talking and suddenly went, "Oh, something from the circle just showed up." That she recognizes it on that level, that it's a distinct personality, it's not just a feeling. But I, I'm curious about it because it'll be here longer than any student at Carleton, than any individual

person in the Druid group, and it does interact with people and I just wonder...I feel kind of responsible for it. I don't know if that's kind of silly but I built the circle so [laugh] it made them alive[?] too. I wonder what I've introduced. I wonder what effect it's going to have since it can communicate with people and does. So far it's acted as a sort of comforter and spiritual teacher I guess. It's selected different people out to do different things and it said, you know, have this vigil, clear this path, do this thing. It could guard people, I mean it does, but it could do that on a larger level. It could be a continuous presence. I don't know. The way one person put it, it can manipulate people if it chooses, and it will be here longer than any of you. I've seen no indication that it does or that it will do that, but it's, it's at least in some sense an unknown. [pause] I think it's safe. I've seen only good there so far.

EH: Is there anything else you want to say about um, after you got back from being gone, revived somewhat I take it and things that have happened in that period.

IS: Um, the main growth revival happened this fall, but some significant things did happen last spring. One was that while I was gone the circle was kind of vandalized. It was a much classier vandalism so it wasn't something that produced such a strong reaction. While I was in Germany at one point somebody very carefully stenciled with spray paint a face on the south, on the north stone that is...was either John Lennon, Albert Einstein, or me, depending on who you ask. It was a sharp-nosed, long haired guy with glasses and different people thought it was different folks. Somebody thought I did it, but I told them I was sort of off the continent at the time. Anyway, it was really well done and it stayed there even though people probably could have gotten it off because for some, it was a representation of the god, that it was in the right place, it was just there when they came to the circle. Yeah, it was incongruous but it was okay. A little bit of iconography. So when I came back in the spring I studied and thought about it for awhile and I left it and left it and didn't have an immediate reaction one way or another, is this okay, isn't it, 'til I don't know what finally changed but talking to several other people we decided it might be better off gone, that if we left it we could encourage other graffiti and in itself didn't quite feel right. So, got the college's help again, which is one of the reasons I was...tried to have it be an official place. Got Glen from the paint shop to put together some gunk and spent some quality time with a wire brush getting it off. Couldn't quite manage it by myself but he got, he came back later and finished up with some other stuff.

But then that spring too, were the two times that people have built fires in the circle. They built them on the center stone and left...had a drinking party and left a horrible mess. And the first time I just found it afterwards and cleaned up as best I could. Second time was another one of those peculiar otherworldly things, I guess. Ginger Wild and I were out walking and thought we'd swing by the circle one night to see what was going on and saw that folks had built a fire there. So we walked in and, you have to get Ginger's side of the story too 'cause it's much more elaborate [chuckle]. Went in and asked them what they were up to and explained that fires were not allowed in this part of the Arb, that there were too many fields, it was too close to residential area, danger of it spreading was too great and you'll damage the rock if you put it there [chuckle]. They had it built right on top of the table. Told them if they wanted I would show them where it was okay to have a fire but that we had to put this one out,

and asked if there was anybody with shoes around that would help me stomp the thing out, and nobody moved. Nobody had moved since I came in, so I was like, okay, started picking up the logs off the altar, center stone, table, alter, all the same thing, I just don't know what to call it. Picking up the logs off the alter, got all the pieces I could get without burning myself and there still a lot there so I started brushing it off and then started scooping it off and picking up handfuls of coals and saying no, you can't have fires here, dumping it out, nobody moved. Just all sort of squinching back into the stones around the circle so I stomped it out and finally somebody got up to help me. I asked if they wanted me to show them either Little Grove or the Hill where they could build a fire safely and they said no, is it okay if so long as we clean up after ourselves that we stay here and I said yeah, that would be okay and left. And as soon as we were out of earshot Ginger just started laughing and laughing and I was like, what? We had been having this conversation earlier about proper, you know, how magic only seemed to work for the right reasons and how showing off was not one of the right reasons. And, she just looked at me and said, showing off, it doesn't work if your showing off, right, right? What do you explain that with? And I looked down and at my hands and realized they were black and sooty, but I had just picked up a full fire's worth of coal and hadn't gotten burnt. And my feet were fine too. And it was just, aghhhh [laugh] what happened to....? I don't know. It's just...another thing. So....yeah. Other thing that happened that spring was the statue of the lady that used to be in the Arb disappeared. Um, I don't know how much of that's here or in the histories, but...



**Figure 10 The Lady Statue of the Arb, c. 1995.**

EH: I know about it but I don't remember what's been recorded. Go ahead and talk about it.

IS: Ok. You might have trace its early history, 'cause I don't know that, but the earliest I can tell of it is that there used to be a New age group that would come to Carleton on occasion and have events here over the summer. Mec says that they built it originally. It was a statue of a lady about six feet high, carved out of a pine log with a chain saw. And she used to stand up by monument hill, years and years ago. Then, according to Mec, Carleton Christian Fellowship took it down and put a

cross up, and then somebody else took the cross down and they put another cross up. But the lady meanwhile sort of drifted down the hill and into the weeds. Well, I found her there my first fall at Carleton, stood here up in the woods. I thought it was a log with a nail in it and I picked it up and I was, oh, it's a statue, that's kinda cool. Stood it up in the woods down above the dam on Spring Creek and stayed there through spring of sophomore year. And then Michelle found it down again and set it up back up, she and Amanda, still over by the creek. They said they moved it though so I went to see where it was this time and found it down again with tire marks over it and decided that was enough and picked it up and carried it to what was then Three Bird Grove and grabbed a shovel, skipped class, and set her up sort of off around the corner so you couldn't see her from the path but you could find her if you knew she was there. And she had more visitors than the circle did, early on. Um, she was there when we had Beltane there the first time and people would leave flowers and necklaces and just different things there and I would come by and see people kneeling, talking to her, which is a very, a very beautiful statue, very generic, just a lady with her hands together, head bowed with something like a halo on. I thought she was the virgin Mary, I don't know what she might have been but people just called her the lady. Um, sometime around that second fire at the circle um, she disappeared, she vanished again. She wasn't knocked over, she was buried about two feet into the ground, but somebody could have broken her off fairly easily. Instead they actually dug her up out of the ground and carried her off. There were no drag marks, there was no, no burned logs, searched around a good bit but never found her. The hole is still there and you can still see the path to it but she's gone. I was kind of sad about that. I don't know what the New age group was or if there's any intervening stuff between when she was on the Hill and when I found her four years ago. Somebody else might know.

EH: Group that used to meet her old time [?] was called Spiritual Frontiers, but I don't know anything about the lady, before it was in Three Bird Grove, actually, is where I first saw it.

IS: Mark Heiman says that carved into the base there were two initials and a date. I don't recall that but if she shows up, that could be useful for figuring out where she's from. [pause] One year left?

EH: Sure.

IS: [laugh] [sigh] During last spring Michelle started having less and less to do with the Druids. Michelle had her...um, she herself turned toward Discordianism [?] and was still there last I knew but started having less actively to do with organizing things and running teas. [pause] This fall I started really worrying about next year because I didn't, I knew I was gone and we had one Third Order besides Michelle and I and she wasn't terribly active, and I didn't know what was going to happen, and I didn't want all the work we'd done to have to be repeated. I wanted to be able to pass something on, I wanted there to be people to pass it on to. So I tried picking the next Archdruid. That doesn't work. [chuckle] This was pointed out to me from any number of directions. Um, the circle apparently considered the person I'd picked, didn't like her, and gave her a mosquito curse so that whenever she walked into the circle mosquitoes would descend on her and wherever she sat down ants would swarm out of the ground and eat her and she won't go back now. [Eric chuckles] She still won't go there by herself. Um, Andrea kindly wrote from Seattle saying, no, you can't do that. You can't pick the

person – they'll show up when it's time. So there was some grand confusion before I figured that out. But, I brought, I didn't bring them back. Two people that I knew outside of Carleton applied and came to Carleton this year, Chrissy Phelps and Mary Beth Weber and both of them were interested in the Druid group. Chrissy was a person I had actually picked to lead it and that was a mistake. For one thing she felt pressured into it and when she later found her own interest diverging didn't know how to back out. Um, we figured that out too, eventually. Mary was not interested in doing anything with the Druids. I mean, she would do stuff with them because I was there but she explicitly didn't want to have anything to do with leadership. She was very Christian herself. When she showed up the circle started talking to her and scared her badly but told her this was something she had to do and so she did, for as long as she was here. But, because I came back with them, I was here during New Student Week and during that time, during that week and a half where people haven't gotten sucked into classes and sort of fossilized into which activities they're going to do, met most of the current proper Druids. There are perhaps three people left over from past years, but just about everybody else is a freshman that we met during New Student Week. Highly recommended, anybody in the future. [pause] Where am I going with it, I don't know. I guess since then I've been just trying to show how things work and what we've been doing, trying to pass on what I've learned without teaching. Trying to share but not say, this is how to do things, because that'll, that'll kill the group faster than anything. We had Samhain again and it was kinda disastrous because we tried to...people that were in charge of some of the things at Samhain also wanted to go to the ball that was happening at the same time, the Halloween dance and...it didn't work. Doing one or the other would have been fine. We had several sweats, um, we had a procession across campus for Samhain carrying lit candles down through the library. Yeah...[Eric laughs] I hoped we weren't going to get arrested for that but managed to get out ok. Walked up through Sayles, through the libe, down past Olin and up through Goodhue singing, it was a lot of fun. And, mostly I've been trying to show people what's going on and introduce them to all the resources, show 'em all the new, the groundwork and get other people to start leading. Something that's happened every four years more or less for the past sixteen so far as I can tell is that when there was a turnover, there was in the next generation a strong reaction against what the people before them had done. That, uh, they would react violently against it and go one way and then the next group would find that too extreme and go the other and I...I feel like because Michelle and I didn't have anything to react against we might have escaped that trend, but...to be extra careful I guess I've been trying to get the people currently involved to do more and more of the organization and more and more of the planning and ideas and things so that there's not a sudden power vacuum. [pause] One of the things they wanna do for instance is to create a, a sort of tri-monthly or quarterly newsletter that comes out. And we've got people now with the background to do that, both with the writing, writing skills we've got four or five people, all of whom write, we got one person who did a magazine in high school and knows all about the editing and the layout and stuff so I think now it can finally happen if they choose to do that. We rediscovered the web page and set up a caucus conference this year. Did a lot of um, a lot of more official stuff, a lot things during New Student Week with prospective students, just tabling and stuff. Working

with the chaplain on different things. We started getting letters from prison inmates addressed to the chaplain's office saying I understand you have, from the prison chaplain to the Carleton chaplain, to us saying that I understand you have a Druid group there. I've got someone here who's looking for that kind of spiritual guidance. Could you do something about it? And, never quite know what to do with those but, we're working on it.

EH: I get those too, I'd love to pass them on to you frankly. [laugh]

IS: Ok. That'll work.

EH: Yeah.

IS: One thing I've wanted to do is make up, for all the letters that say, send us all your information, I just wanted to make up a form letter saying we don't have any, look at this website. But, haven't done that for some reason. But I started to, actually, because it's more fun to answer them in person, is, once or twice a term getting all the letters that have come in like that and just passing them out at Tea. Saying hey, take one. It's too much for any one person to do but if everybody writes one letter every five weeks we can do it. The more serious letters, like the ones from prisoners, I try to answer. And I feel really weird doing that because I don't feel like I'm a spiritual anything. I'm just a guy. Just...ran away too slow, responsibility jumped in. [pause] So this year's been smoother and less eventful than any of the previous, I guess. Lots has happened but nothing, nothing as monumental building the circle or as...suddenly trying to run the group. I think it's been the most, paradoxically I think it's been the most productive year on an individual basis. Not for me, but for people in the group. People have started coming to it not just because it sounded neat. People have always come to it for that, but now people have come to it for...great variety of reasons. To have somewhere to express their irreverent silliness that either gets them in trouble or just looked at strangely anywhere else. One guy loves to make up games and stories and masks and put on impromptu plays. He's doing that now, here, but couldn't find an outlet for that before. We've got die hard scientists who at the same time feel there's something more there and wanna look into it, but aren't religious. We've got a couple of them. We've got people who are profoundly religious, but who have suddenly asked themselves, wait a minute, I think Christ is a great guy but I'm not sure I'm Christian anymore. What am I supposed to do with this? And...feel lost in their churches and start just exploring this way, going well, maybe, maybe there are other ways of looking at time, maybe there are other ways of looking at life, you know, what does this mean. I don't, I wish people had written more in the past about personal experience as well as personal history because there's been a lot of magic this year and these past four years. People have had visions in sweat lodges and have talked about them and have gotten very scared sometimes because they don't know what sort of precedent they have, or what they might mean and since, at least, these years the Druids haven't had a teaching, a cosmology, we've never been in a position to say, oh, you saw this in the sweat, well, that means x. It's just, well, I don't know what it means. You have to figure that out. I can show you these books, I can tell you what I've seen, but I don't, I don't know. There's been a lot of visions. There's been a lot of...lot of tory [?] hallucinations, I don't know. People talking to and getting responses from things in the Arb, in the circle, God, whatever you want to call it and, part of it is that those are very intensely personal experiences and I don't know if they'll ever want them written down. But I

feel like if they're, if it's not acknowledged that they happened, that element of the group will be lost. I know that way back in the beginning, someone at the first Samhain ritual started speaking in tongues and scared everybody else to death. But I know it's happened, I know that the Druids as a group have always had some peculiar influence on the weather. Andrea talks about the Winter Carnival people approaching the group when she was in charge. Week before Winter Carnival with no snow on the ground and asking if they could do something and they did a modified rain dance on Farmhouse lawn and day before the festival, just Rice County got hit with a snowstorm. [Eric chuckles] We've done things were we needed it sunny for Beltane and it got cloudier and cloudier and cloudier and cloudier and we finally said wait, come on, could you just be sunny, please? And it would get cloudy right up to that night and then go clear, against all weather maps and stuff. It was just...none of it's impossible but it's too reliable to...comfortably call coincidence. Even had one night where we asked, Amanda and I asked that, we're having a sweat, ok. Told everybody, make sure we have nice weather for the sweat. We didn't specify beyond that. One person thought nice meant sunny. One person thought it meant windy. One person thought it meant cold so there would be no mosquitoes. It hailed. It did everything at once. [Both laugh] It just got utterly chaotic, so we cancelled the sweat. We moved inside to the sauna in the ladies locker room and uh, said ok, we'll have the sweat next Saturday. Everybody think warm, dry, and clear, ok? [laugh] None of this ambiguous stuff. And it was. It's just, it's unnervingly reliable. But I know that whether stuff has been attached to the Druid group all the way back to Dave Fisher but...if it doesn't get talked about I wonder if that'll get lost.

EH: Well, this tape will be record of some of that for later people maybe. I ran into the story from that first year uh, as well as one of the women having a vision that, of uh, I've forgotten the details of, room with a, something draped with a flag or something and uh, just before Kennedy's assassination so that was the interpretation of that later.

IS: Yeah, she saw three black rocks that she thought were three graves and the flag I think. [pause] Martin Luther King, John F. Kennedy, and somebody else were assassinated in quick order.

EH: Well, there's five years between Kennedy and King and Robert Kennedy.

IS: Yeah.

EH: But, well, anyway. That's beyond our...[both laugh] Is there still, is there still overlap um, with cloak-wearing?

IS: Oh, yeah. We tried to dispel the Druid stereotypes. We did not have orgies, we did not have drinking parties in the Arb, and we do not all wear cloaks. These are the three main myths...you know.

EH: I've had it explained to me before that the cloak people and the Druids were not the same group although there was a lot of overlap. This was a previous generation of...

IS: Yeah. There are two main groups that...tend to accrue cloaks. So the Druids and the Society of Creative Anachronisms. Those two have a lot of overlap. There are also a few people unassociated with either who wear cloaks just because they like cloaks. So...David's been one of our best apologists for this has always said, you know, not all those who wear cloaks are Druids and not all Druids wear cloaks. The problem is, currently most of the Druids do wear cloaks, at least

sometimes. And, all the people who wear cloaks visibly on campus tend to be Druids so we've, we've tried to dispel it but it creeps in. The orgies, there's never been an officially sanctioned Druid orgy. Members of the Druids have been involved in things that could be called orgies, and until Nick's last visit there were no alcohol drinking parties with the Druids, but that was a tradition from his time I wasn't comfortable giving to the group as a whole, passing on that way but, on an individual basis, thought it was ok to humor him with. Yeah. No drinking parties with Mec. [both laugh] Dangerous thing.

EH: Well, let me ask what you foresee for yourself in terms of future Druidism. Will you be involved in another group? Will your Druidism become almost entirely an individual thing? Will you have continuing contacts with the Carleton group? What's your best guess?

IS: A lot of questions there. My Druidism can't be a purely individual thing anymore. The way we understand orders now has something to do with that. First Order, the way we've been describing it, is you consider yourself a Druid, plain and simple. Second, you consider yourself a Druid and find something, you agree with the basic tenets, that's also First Order. You agree with basic tenets, you find something valuable in the search itself and on a personal level you'll continue that search for the rest of your life. Maybe not with the Druid group, maybe not with any religion at all but just that kind of thinking, that kind of prayerful and rational consideration that makes one a Druid whether they use the name or not. That you're personally committed to that for the rest of your life. Third Order is all that plus a conviction to share. Not necessarily to teach, but to share what you've learned, and to share that way of thinking with the people around you. And I've come to that understanding after I came to Third Order, but it's something that imposes itself. I've watched other people go through the orders now and it's always been something that becomes exactly as serious as you take it. And, if you take it as either a lifelong commitment or as a commitment to share and teach in some sense, then it becomes that. So whatever I do, Druidism will come with me and I'll share the fruits of it and whatever I can of it with those around me. I do think I will always have connections with the Carleton grove, as long as there is one. Um, I don't know how sporadic that will be. I know folks at Carleton now and I will for the next four years. I myself will be in the Pacific for the next four years so I probably won't show up on campus during that time.

EH: That'd be hard. [both laugh]

IS: Yeah. There has been a grove started now in my hometown by one of the ladies that came to Carleton from there and then went back and I'm sure I'll be connected with that. I don't know if I'll be in a position of leadership again. I hope that I won't anytime soon because I've been doing it for too long and I don't think I'm qualified. And I want to do more learning without, without the pressure of being in charge and without the distance of being in charge that when I lead a ritual or a sweat or a celebration, it's very difficult to get into it and get the full effect of it because I'm orchestrating it. I'm being a stage director in some sense, and I'm making sure in the sweat that people are doing okay, that it's not too cold, that we have enough water, that things happen in the right order, and I can't just sink into it and disappear and appreciate the experience while I'm doing that. And I've been doing that for too long so...Wherever I am next I hope it's not as a leader. [pause] I had a dream while I was at sea

that has made me think a lot about my future relationship with this grove. And that was that I was walking down Second Street toward the Arb years and years from now, and there was a war going on. Not anything official or national, just lots of people killing each other and doing it in the name of Druidism, and in my name. And...somebody who'd just killed somebody under a bush was talking to me, telling me about this prophet Irony from years back who'd told them all these things and they were doing this for him and all this stuff and ran off and didn't recognize me at all. And I, I walked out to the circle and found that they had very carefully destroyed the entire outer ring but left the center, but done that through some perversion of something I'd once said and heard a voice inside me just saying let it go, let it go. [pause] I was quite serious when I said I don't want followers. I know I've affected the group here and I know I've changed the way it's going to be in some sense, but I've tried very hard never to have the things I've done become Scripture. To have people do things because I did them and on a certain level, I would be very fearful if that were ever to happen. I don't think it will. I think the people here now are sensible enough that it won't, but I...I...I don't know. I never want it to.

EH: I'm thinking that might be a good place to stop. Thank you, Irony.

IS: Thank you.

## Interview with Merribeth Weber

Carleton AD from about 1998 to 2003, an extraordinarily long period of time overlapping with the departing of Irony Sade and Ehren Vaughn.



MS: ...Michael Scharding, class of '94 interviewing Merri, class of 03.

MW: Yep.

MS: And today is May 2nd, Friday, 2003, Common Era. We're going to do an interview with Merri about her last four of five

or six years here at Carleton and what she's done with the Carleton Druids and other groups that she's been with while she's been here. Why don't we start off by having Merri tell us a little bit about where she grew up and some of the influences in her early childhood that are of interest to this interview.

MW: I grew up in Mexico New York, which is in the middle of nowhere in upstate New York, near Lake Ontario. I lived on a back road in the country and spent the majority of my time running around in the woods and the hay fields and scaring the deer. So I think that that's probably the main influence on my Druidism, or having ended being a druid. That and I grew up Seventh Day Adventist, which is kind of a weird bunch of Christian people, sweet people. I eventually decided that it wasn't quite for me; hence going the Druid route instead of still being Seventh Day Adventist. They're big on being natural, sort of natural foods and that sort of thing. We always used to go for long walks on Sabbath. Nature walks were a big thing, going for hikes, spending time camping. I think that was a big influence...we'd do this thing where'd go for a nature walk on a Saturday after having been to church in the morning and there'd be a big group of people, lots of kids and whatever, and we'd walk along and all the kids were told to look for a Sabbath surprise. It was a special thing for it being the holy day, that there would be some special thing out in nature that we would find.

MS: Like...?

MW: Like Robin's eggs in a bush or special flowers hidden somewhere that we just happened to notice. It was this whole kind of thing of nature is part of God and I got a lot of that at an early age so...that probably has an influence.

MS: What about your parents, do they have any interests that they were keen to teach you besides Seventh Day Adventism?

MW: As far as spirituality?

MS: Yeah.

MW: I don't know. They taught me to have common sense and be level headed about religion. They raised me with an idea of religion and this is how you do things. The whole idea of don't be mean to other people because of religion and don't just assume people are wrong because they're not the same as you. A lot of things like that that I think is very good and that other people that grew up in the same religion may not have had...because my parents were very much... they're very open.

MS: Were there any individuals, people that in your childhood who were spiritual teachers of any type, individually. Pastor or...?

MW: Yeah, probably Pastor Sadie. Pastor Sadie was the Pastor when I was 8 to 12 or something around there. He was a little unorthodox...he had a tendency to where a leather jacket and ride a Harley. And I thought he was the best Pastor in the world, he was just super cool...and he was just a really great guy all around and was known for giving sermons that were half an hour longer than they were supposed to be...not the greatest thing, but he was into it. He was big on spreading the word of God in his thing that he was doing. But at the same time he was very down to earth and just a normal human being which I think spoke really well to me as a little kid because...you know, I could relate to somebody that read a motorcycle because my brothers rode motorcycles. But at the same time he was a holy man, he was a Pastor, and he was very spiritual. And he was perfectly willing to talk to me even though I was a small child; lots of people just ignore

children, so to me, I was like wow...he must be the greatest guy in the world.

MS: I think that's probably because people are afraid of the kinds of questions kids might ask. [laugh]

MW: That's entirely possible.

MS: They haven't learned to keep the deep important questions to themselves yet. When you were looking for colleges, what were you looking for?

MW: I didn't really know...was part of the problem. I knew I was going to go to college because I was smart and smart people went to college...was basically my reasoning. I figured my family would be disappointed in me if I didn't go to college and what in the world would I do if I didn't...I'd probably live on the streets somewhere and be a loser and I don't want that so I'd better go to college. I don't think I worked it all out particularly well...I just figured that was the next step so I was looking for a place that had an atmosphere that I would like because I didn't really like my high school much.

MS: What was wrong with your high school?

MW: One...I was bored out of my mind. Two...the people just didn't make any sense to me, they were just, they cared about being popular and wearing the right color lipstick and which boys they should date or shouldn't and...I wasn't so much into that. I liked to sit in the corner and read books and ride horses and run track. And occasionally do theater...I guess that that sums up my time in high school.

MS: That sounds like the solitary route, actually.

MW: Yeah. I didn't like...they seemed so petty. There's nothing, no creature in the world more vicious than teenage girls. Now they were never vicious to me because I just didn't attract attention, but I watched them...I was like, 'This is not a nice place, I don't like it and nobody ever does anything interesting. There aren't people that I can talk to unless I want to talk about make up so, well gee, I want to find a place that's more interesting and has more interesting people in, and has things I can learn.' So I picked Carleton...

MS: Over...?

MW: Over any Adventist schools, I was still Adventist at that point and they have a big education system. So I thought, hey, I could go to some Adventist school in Australia, wouldn't that be great...cause, you know, Australia. There was the local college...I wasn't going to go there, definitely. There were some other places on the East coast, I don't even remember now. But, basically, I got all these brochures in the mail and I read all these brochures and there was the boring pile and then there was the king of interesting pile. There were three in the kind of interesting pile...weren't many at all. Basically I'd heard a lot about Carleton because I knew Irony who was Archdruid before me and he...

MS: Where did you meet Irony?

MW: He went to the same high school as I did.

MS: Oh really?

MW: Yeah. We dated all through my time in high school. We started dating when I was at the end of ninth grade and he was at the end of his senior year...which was this bizarre thing.

MS: Was Irony different back then?

MW: Yeah.

MS: What was different about him?

MW: He was younger. [laughs]

MS: [laughs]

MW: So I knew about Carleton through him. He'd told me lots of stories because of...dating for a long time. So it sounds like just a fascinating place and I knew about the Druids through talking to him because he became Archdruid and I thought, oh my goodness, that's scary, they're Pagans, aren't they. So my initial reaction to the Druids was 'Wow, that sounds scary. Do they do Satanic rituals in the woods, or something?' He explained that no, that was not what they did, they actually liked trees a lot and that was the main driving force. [laughs] Between all of the fun stories that I heard from him and the fact that I knew it was a good school and the fact that their brochure was one of the few interesting ones and that it was far enough away from home that I would go away from home...because I thought that was a big thing, to move out of my parents and be somewhere else. I applied to Carleton, early decision cause I thought, hey, they're good and if they reject then...I'll apply somewhere else. It was very much...I had senioritis, I didn't want to do anything so they accepted me so I went to Carleton. And then I decided Carleton was really really hard and scary and I didn't know if I wanted to do this whole college thing so then I took a year off.

MS: Was that your sophomore year?

MW: That was actually halfway through my freshman year. Right away I was just like no, no, this is crazy.

MS: You know, back in the early eighties and nineties we used to have a ten day freshman week before you went to classes for orientation and they found out that too many kids were dropping out in the first week...they shortened it down to two days.

MW: Yeah.

MS: It is frightening, a lot of people get home sick when the first workload comes through with two hundred pages for the weekend.

MW: Yeah. That was kind of it. When I first came here I thought I was going to major in linguistics. I didn't really know what linguistics was, I knew it was the study of languages, I loved learning languages, I spent a year in Germany when I was in high school. So I thought, hey, that's the thing to do. And then, my first term I took an upper level German class, Greek, and a freshman seminar on linguistics and I hated it, all of it. It was horrible.

MS: You know what I thought linguistics is like. Everybody likes a good joke, but there are certain people who try to organize and classify jokes, like, this is this kind of humor, this is this kind of humor. [laughs]

MW: [laughs]

MS: That's what linguistics is. People who love the languages but hate to go into the nit-picky details of why this is this and why this is that. I could never take linguistics.

MW: I don't know, it didn't click with me. I got so frustrated with it. So, then when I didn't want to do the major that I thought I wanted to do and hated all my classes my first term and I didn't do very well then I was just like, man college, what was I thinking. So I came back winter term and I talked to a bunch of people and I was like, you know, I really am not enjoying this, can I leave now? They said, well, yeah, I guess you can because you're not doing very well in your classes and you do seem to be quite unhappy here so, sure you just go on and take some time off...come back later.

MS: Where'd you go?

MW: I went home for a while. Then I came back here for a while, just working, random odd jobs. I worked down at More 4, I worked at the dry cleaners. That was interesting. Then I went and took a three month trip to England and Ireland, the whole British Isles thing...hitchhiked around there for a while, it was kind of fun, kind of crazy. Then I came back to home and decided it's time to go back to school now. Came back to Carleton, they wouldn't let me in for winter term, what would've been my sophomore year if I'd gone along with everybody else. So I kind of lived in somebody's room where I wasn't allowed and slept under their bed, quite literally...eventually got back into classes for spring term and then I had a room of my own, it was amazing. Then I was like, 'Hey, Carleton, this is pretty great, 'except you shouldn't have two freshman years...I was a freshman for two years and it was just awful.

MS: I had two sophomore years, it worked out great.

MW: See, sophomore year is pretty good. You can have two sophomore years but you know, having to say you're a freshman for two years, I didn't like that. But the rest of it was great...I really enjoyed it once I came back, and I was ready then. It's like, yeah, ok. College, I still have no idea what I'm going to major in but that's okay because it's liberal arts...I can take whatever I want for a while.

MS: What did you think about the Carleton students in general.

MW: They're all kind of crazy. I really like Carleton. The Carleton students...there's been a change, see, it's different now. When I came here as a freshman, basically it was just sort of this school for really smart odd balls...which was great, that was what I was looking for. I wanted a school for smart people who were weird because that would suit me because I'm smart and I'm kind of weird. So I came here and there's just all these crazy people everywhere and they do all sorts of crazy things and they're stressed all the time. And, you know, I just made a lot of friends and I thought wow is just the greatest, best, place I could possibly have come. I think that's true. And then I hit my junior year and suddenly started taking organic chemistry...oh my goodness, I'm gonna die, this is just way too stressful. You know, but I was enjoying it at the same time that it was slowly eating my soul. But the thing is that the last couple of classes of freshman that have come in have been different than that. They're all...I mean they're all very smart, as expected, and they're a little odd, but they're a lot more mainstream than any of the people that...you know, the balance has shifted. It used to be that the majority of people were a little off kilter from the mainstream popular culture folks that you run into a lot in high school. It's shifted now, and there was a small contingent of people that were still in that mainstream sect, but now it's shifted so that it seems like the majority of the underclassmen are now kind of mainstream and you know there's a few odd balls out of those freshman and sophomore classes and there's all of us upperclassmen who are sitting here going, 'Why is everyone wearing Abercrombie and Fitch and they've all got cell phones, what's going on'...I have a cell phone, I'm sad to admit this but...I can't bash the cell phones too much.

MS: Friends of mine back in '89 were deploring to me, back in '85 when they put telephones into every dorm room it completely changed everything [dramatic]. No more hall phones and people yelling down trying to find people. And then when I was '94 I was telling other people the same thing you told me

and so I'm wondering if this is golden age mentality or is it really changing.

MW: Well, it does change. I mean you really...I think I see it even more because of being here five years instead of just the four. It's not big changes, it's not bad...I mean I'm friends with a lot of sophomores and freshman that are great people. It's just slightly different from the way it was when I first got here. It's funny to see that. And it's funny to look around and look at all of the things that have changed on campus too. Just...where I used to eat my meals, everyday for my first two years here. There's a wall there, I can't go to that place anymore. It's gone, it's a storage room. [laughs] They walled up the pit in Burton. It's gone. White walls you can't walk in there, no pit.

MS: No one eats at Burton anymore?

MW: There's Burton, but there are sections of the dining hall that they've walled off and you can't go in there anymore. I think it's something to do with the basement having problems and they had to store things other places so they walled off sections and made it storage rooms.

MS: Yeah, I don't like it when they tamper with my campus. Come back every year or two and something...there's a new building or there's a new field or...something's always changing. Guess they have a purpose to it. So, Irony introduced you to the Carleton Druids?

MW: Yeah.

MS: But, were there any other clubs that you were interested in when you first came to Carleton?

MW: What did I get involved in? Long time ago. There's folk dancing. I did start off going to that a little bit. I haven't gone to folk dancing I think in two or three years now but when I first came that was one of them. Think I went to 'Pickin' 'n' Grinnin'' for a while. These are sort of a lot of overlapping things. Anime society. I'd never seen Anime before, I was kind of confused by that. I know I went to that for a little while. Got into Film society. I don't remember at what point...but...for a while I went to film society every Wednesday. There was one term that we termed the Malko-term. It was John Malkovich movies the entire term. Film society was so so strange. That was a long time ago.

MS: You staying...currently in any other groups now, besides Druids.

MW: Yep. Interestingly enough, I'm head of two groups on campus and I can't put either of them on my resume because one of them is the Druids which people don't take kindly to...it's a little weird...and the other is the Assassin Guild.

MS: Woman after my own heart.

MW: Yeah, [laughs]

MS: And my head. [laughs]

MW: Yeah, I ended up with the Assassin Guild by accident. Ehren Vaughn ran it last year and at the end of the year he couldn't find anybody to take it and I said 'Well, if you can't find anybody, I'll do it, but you know I've already got other stuff to do so look around for other people first...' he couldn't find anybody. So I ended up with that too.

MS: Not good for getting rid of that stress of your senior year, isn't it.

MW: Well, it's fun, it's really fun, I like running the Assassins. Because, you know, I deploy people to kill other people with little plastic guns...it's really, it's cathartic. And sometimes I

go around with my big foam axe. That's pretty great. But I'm also involved in Aikido. Been doing that for a couple of years now. I've done dance off and on. I've danced Ebony...I didn't this term. They've gotten very sleazy. I mean...Ebony's always been sleazy. It's getting sleazier...I'm amazed. Still just as much fun as ever. Yeah, I think that's about it as far as extracurricular activities.

MS: So, what is your actual major here at Carleton?

MW: I'm a neuroscience Major.

MS: Neuroscience?

MW: Yes. It's a special major

MS: What's that?

MW: Um, brains.

MS: Brains?

MW: Yeah.

MS: How they work?

MW: Yeah. Basically. It's a combination of the biology department, the psychology department and the chemistry department, basically. More biology than anything else and not so much on the chemistry but I did have to take organic chemistry.

MS: Is this a field that you intend to work?

MW: Oh, beats me. I considered grad school or medical school, decided I really don't want to go to medical school, maybe grad school but not right away. Truthfully the plan at the moment is to move to Ann Arbor and live with a couple of friends and have a job for next year.

MS: I hear there's an ADF grove over in Ann Arbor.

MW: IS there?

MS: Yes. One of the biggest ones. Might have to spy on them a little bit.

MW: I better look them up. You should give me contact information.

MS: We used to have a RDNA grove with Shelton back then, back in the '70s too. Quite the happening Druid's spot.

MW: That's great. It's also the big Aikido Mecca.

MS: There's got to be a connection.

MW: I think there is. There are lots of Druids that have done Aikido and lots of Aikido that do...One of the senior students right now in Aikido is one of my co-Archdruids, that's Steve-o, Steve Crimmins. Yeah, lots of people migrate there, it's sort of, it's a Carleton place to go. Used to be Seattle and now, these days it seems to be Ann Arbor, at least for the circle of people I know.

MS: When I was in St. Cloud we had an Aikido club mixed in with the druids. At MSUA we had an Aikido club mixed in with the Druids. So I'm starting to see a pattern running through here.

MW: Yeah, there seems to be, Aikido seems to be an overlap, folk dancing, and folk music.

MS: Sometimes theater.

MW: Sometimes theater, yeah. We haven't had too many overlaps with theater recently although I've done some theater at Carleton but I'm not really a theater person.

MS: See I'm a complete, I'm probably the worst actor in history.

MW: [laughs]

MS: My movies well show that. Andrea Davis back in the '90s brought in a lot of theater majors. That's why we had so much back in the '90s. Moving on to the next phase. You were a little apprehensive about the Druids before you came to Carleton. What was your impression of them, or how did you first...well Irony probably took you to the first service.

MW: Well, actually what happened is he'd gotten that circle built out in the Arb and the very first day that we got here, Chrissie Phelps, who also was Arch Druid for a little while then she went off her own little way, she's actually living in Fish house now which is sort of funny, it's the Christian house. She didn't start off as Christian here, she went the opposite way. I came in as Christian, went Druid, she came in as Druid and went Christian.

MS: Kind of a crossing place, cross roads.

MW: We got here the first day, all three of us because we're all three from the same home town and had gone to high school together and been friends and Irony took us out to the circle and I walked into the circle and the place was just buzzing. I was like wow, this is really cool, I've never experienced anything quite like this before. I think basically that's, I decided ok, this is a good thing. I didn't know what I would think of the Druids until I walked into the circle and as soon as I walked in it was just like, 'Ok, this is something good and I think this is something I'll be involved in.' That was it. Already before the first service, which I think we had a full moon celebration still during new student week. Already by then I was recruiting other people rather than being a freshman being recruited myself. That's where a lot of the main people, that's where a lot of that group came from was that night during New Student Week, Irony was like, 'Hey, there's a full moon, we'll have a full moon service right away when it's just still all freshman, we'll get people to come. Why don't you ask some of your friends that you've been meeting.' I was like, 'Oh, yeah, sure, sounds like fun.' So, I ran off and Ehren was in my New Student Week group, Chris Middleton lived a floor above me, Chrissie of course came, a bunch of other random people, John Parejko, fiddler John, the guy with the fiddle at every Beltane playing Mairi's Wedding and all that and grabbed all them. The only way that we got John to come was, somebody...he'd set his fiddle down next him, they picked up the fiddle and ran with it and he raced after them just screaming 'give me back my fiddle.' Then we managed to get him to descend to come for a couple of minutes, then I think he had to go play fiddle somewhere. A lot of the crowd that came in with my class came from that new student week thing where we were all friends, we were milling around. I was like, 'You don't want to go to this particular whatever they were taking us to, you know,' how to find the swimming pool at Carleton, you know, those meetings they have. 'You don't want to do that, we should all go do this,' and then they told their friends and they told their friends and we got a bunch of people right away. It was really neat. And then everybody stuck, kept coming to tea...

MS: Were there many old timers back then?

MW: There were a few, there was Dave Coil, and there was Simon with the three or four last names [laughs], a guy that always played the drums, he played several different instruments. There was Michelle Hadjer, was still around, she was sort of peripheral but she came to some things. Amanda Bradley. She was also a Neuroscience major. I don't know, maybe there's an over lap there to because Dan Brewer is graduating with me this year and he's also a neuroscience major, he



- comes to a lot of Druid thing...he was raised semi-pagan. I don't know who all there was in those days.
- MS: Was the group doing pretty well before you came along?
- MW: Yeah, it was doing pretty well. I know Irony had done a lot of work legitimizing the Druids...
- MS: Legitimizing?
- MW: Yeah, he did a lot of, you know, he made friends with the chaplain, and he started, he made friends with all the Arb people and he started making all of the druid events non-alcoholic on general principle because well, it made funding easier. And then it turned out that a lot of people that came in were a lot of people that didn't drink period so it just sort of stayed that way.
- MS: I haven't noticed many heavy boozers in all the druids over the years except for maybe myself.
- MW: Well, I just know that before Irony came along there was, you still used whiskey for waters of life and things like that and he made some minor changes of that, of just like... 'Well, in general we'll be non alcoholic because the college likes us better that way and none of us really drinks any how. Then we'll have water instead of whiskey.' A few little things. I think it made a bit of a difference with the administration. He made friends with security and the Arb guys like Myles Bakke and all them. Which I think helped because when they ran into us naked in the Arb they'd be like, 'Oh right,' you guys instead of beating us with their flashlights or whatever. I know that was a lot of stuff that I heard about. A lot of it was before I came. Then when I showed up...Irony had actually planned on training Chrissie in as a new Archdruid. What ended up happening was that Chrissie was, you know, she came to stuff and she did stuff but she wasn't quite as into it as I ended up being so I started jumping into Archdruid stuff immediately, as soon as I got here...foolish freshman that I was and then look what I got stuck with.
- MS: There is an old saying that the person that runs away from responsibility the slowest becomes the Archdruid.
- MW: And that's really true. That's what's happened.
- MS: You might be necessarily gifted or not, you just ran the slowest.
- MW: That's about how it goes. Just whoever is foolish enough to take on responsibility...they end up with it.
- MS: All of it.
- MW: Yep.
- MS: Have you found over the years that most of the work is done by a small number or is it shared pretty equally?
- MW: Well, back in the day it was shared pretty evenly...oh my roommate too...Chloe Flynn was in on things for a long time there. Because there was a big group of us that were all friends and all involved in the Druids. We split up stuff amongst ourselves really well but as the years went on various members of that group sort of schismed off and didn't come to Druid things quite so much and went on to whatever else they did and at the point it became more difficult and it became fewer and fewer of us doing more and more of the work because as people came in they'd do bits and pieces but they'd sort of come and go. It's sort of an anomaly to have had that big group all in one class and all a huge group of friends go through together like that. I think, I haven't seen it happen since. We'll get a few new people every year but they'll be from all different groups and they'll be kind of friendly but, I don't know.
- MS: I'm kind of wondering if leaders appear in a vacuum. When there's already strong leadership I think that people tend to follow but when people come in and they notice that there's no one in charge they tend to take on responsibilities they wouldn't normally do. If you already have a very strong, well organized Archdruid, you probably won't get anyone in one in the next class who'll do anything. That's what I'm wondering.
- MW: Possibly. I don't know, I know when we all showed up Irony was in charge of everything and he was actually quite organized, planned a lot of stuff. I think what happened is that I jumped in and started doing Archdruidy stuff with him right and then there were...who was, I think it was Ehren, Chris Middleton, and Chloe at the end of that year...see I was not in classes so I was not...I'm like I'm leaving, I don't know when I'm coming back, maybe I never will, I'm heading for Africa or something. I didn't know what I was doing. So Irony decided we should have new people come in, who wants to do it. So the three of them said we'll do it. So they took over as Archdruids. Then I was gone for fall term and then I came back winter term and jumped right back in doing stuff so it was four of us that were in charge of things and that worked out quite well, for a while
- MS: Four is quite nice.
- MW: It was a quite nice number. Eventually it got harder because we all changed a little as we went along and eventually there was a little bit of friction between some of us. That made it a little more difficult for delegating responsibility and sharing things but by that time we started to have some people coming along behind us and so we could shunt off work there and it still worked out quite well. Then it got down to where it's only me and Steve-o and Corwin. We're the only ones left, it's a very small group at this point.
- MS: In the past most Archdruids have only gone for one year as Archdruid, usually their senior year. Usually a junior is usually following behind. But you had almost three or four years as Archdruid. You think that's a better plan... because I know a lot of Archdruids, like Irony and Michelle and Ann were, they all started off in their freshman year doing work. Does it make a difference.
- MW: That's what I did as well. I'm very tired at this point. I think it's better to come in as at least a sophomore or junior and start doing it because, at this point I've been doing it for nearly five years and I've gotten very tired and very frustrated with it because it's, it's a big time commitment. You have to keep the events happening, you have to try and get people in. It's very hard to delegate work to people. People are very resistant.
- MS: Especially very busy people.
- MW: Yeah, I mean, at Carleton it's just so hard. Now somewhere else where people weren't stressed and writing papers all the time, they might be more willing to volunteer for stuff. But it's tough and you don't want to scare away newbies by saying, 'Hey, you gotta do work now.' Because they're like, 'Hey, if this is work I'm not going to do.' So it's the people who'd been around a while that are doing the work. Well, I've been around the longest so I'm still doing the work. And I've enjoyed it. But I think it would be better, for my leadership of the group, if I hadn't been doing it so long because I know I'm frustrated at this point. Especially because it's my senior year

and I just want to play and I have six weeks before I graduate...

MS: Last chance for freedom.

MW: I just need to play. I'll do what I need to do but 'Steve-o, Corwin, you guys do it.' The two of them are like, 'Oh, but we've got so much work. I can't do that. Oh no, no, you please.' 'I'm working on comps, do it, do it.' So all three of us are just sitting around going 'Well I've got a paper,' 'Well, I've got comps,' 'Well, I've got do this thing,' you know? 'You do it,' and passing it around like playing hot potato all the time about who's going to do what. But it's worked out pretty well because we're always trying to shove it off on somebody else but when it comes down to things needing to get done, you know, we do it.

MS: What kinds of activities did you guys do, perhaps in your first years, and has that changed over the four years, have new things been added. Or removed.

MW: Well, lets see, We started off with full moon celebrations as often as we can manage to remember to do them. We had the fall equinox celebration.

MS: Usually the biggee...

MW: Yeah. And sweat lodges, and Imbolc, Spring Equinox if people are around for it, it usually ends up falling in midterm break, or the spring break, rather. Tea every week, that's been consistent. At tea we do discussions or arts and crafts or Arb walks. There's all sorts of activities that take place in that. And then there's the big Beltane bash every springs, that's our biggest thing, and sort of some more sweat lodges in the spring. It started off like one in the fall and one in the spring and it's gotten up to two in the fall, two in the spring a lot of the time. We were going to try and do three this term...

MS: Sweat lodges?

MW: Yeah, but we got rained out a week or two ago and where we were going to do. What else do we do. I think a lot of that has stayed pretty consistent. There are some random traditions that got started up some where along the line that kept right on going, like the donut tree. For a while there was marshmallowing which was sort of like therapy, get a bunch of marshmallows, you choose some one, it was...instead of a stoning there'd be a marshmallowing and you be like, this marshmallow is for this particular sin and you'd say what the sin is and throw it at them. Now you can make stuff up, it doesn't have to be stuff they ever actually did and at any point in time you can stop and say 'Stop the marshmallowing, explain this sin to me' to the poor person getting marshmallowed and whatever it was, it didn't matter if they did it or not, they've got to explain. It's really a lot of fun, it's kind of a story telling thing...we haven't done that in quite a while but we had several of those during the first couple of years. Traying, Druid traying was always a big thing...stealing trays, going out to Evan's hill, that resulted in several injuries... [laughs]

MS: We did [unintelligible] at the Nude Olympics in '92.

MW: Ah, the Nude Olympics, bah.

MS: I won the luge. But some of the other people, it rained the two previous nights and frozen into a solid sheet of ice but there was a warm rain which pock marked the surface of the ice and then it froze again and so it was like a giant cheese grater. [laughs]

MW: [laughs]

MS: It was a very bad choice of location but we did stick out through the end. Pretty nasty.

MW: I can imagine.

MS: That was Wade Davis, he was also an Aikido person, he organized it.

MW: Yeah, I know Wade. He's actually...Liz McDowell is one of the Druids that came through and she's now with Wade in Ann Arbor. She was my roommate for a year. Yeah, I know Wade pretty well. He's crazy.

MS: He got in so much trouble during Carleton.

MW: Yeah.

MS: He stole the bug. You know he did that?

MW: No.

MS: There used to be a giant centipede in the library lounge about twenty-five meters long, about two thousand pounds. He dismantled it one night, when no one was looking, took it out and reassembled it in the chapel.

MW: That's great.

MS: He got in trouble for that. He almost got kicked out.

MW: Wow.

MS: Oh yeah. He was behind most of the pranks back then. Now that we've talked a little bit about some of the activities, what do you think the reasoning behind all these activities is. Why do people want to go to Druid activities.

MW: We had a big discussion about this at one point. We were trying to classify the types of Druids. What we came up with...there are the spiritual Druids...the religious Druids. How about this way, we've got the religious Druids and that's the select few for whom Druidism is a religion that's there sole religion. Really don't have anything else. There aren't many of those. I'm one of the few. Irony was one. I think Ehren was one. And I don't know, in my time if there have been any others. And then there are the spiritual druids, which are slightly different. They may have other religions. Unitarians or Christians or Buddhists or whatever they might be. And they come in because of their interest in spirituality and wanting to take part in it but not wanting it to be there driving religion. So that would be the next layer of druids. Then we've got the social druids. They come for the social group because they like the people, they like the activities, because it's fun. So that's what they come for. And then there are the Druids that come for free food. [laughs]

MS: [laughs]

MW: And they tend to show up at larger events, and they're sort of the sight seeing, food eating Druids. And they're all great and it's fun to watch because everybody's got their own level of involvement. There are the some of them that are there because that's what they believe, they've got this reason behind it and then there are the people that are there because they're very fascinated by it all because of the spiritual interactions that are going on and the activities relating to spirituality and other people are just like fun fun fun and then there are people with the free food. So it's, it's really great. And people will fluctuate between those, two. Sometimes the social ones will become the free food ones and go back to being social and then some times even step up to being spiritual. And it's very fluid.

MS: How would you describe Druidism to someone who doesn't know much about it?

MW: Oh, I've done it on so many occasions.

MS: What's your spiel?

MW: My spiel, all right...the Druids are a nature loving spiritual group, basically. And the only two things that I've been able to determine that they, as a whole, hold to be true, and even then they argue over them, are the two tenets; that being that the search for spiritual truth is an important and a life long search and the second one being that through a familiarity and closeness with natures, that's one way to further your search. If you believe those two things then you can call yourself a Druid, you're a Druid of the first order. Basically that's it. At Carleton at least, that's what it's been. And everyone comes in with their own take on things and it's not a religion unless you decide to make it so. But it's not not a religion. We had this, oh, there was an argument a while back between me and Chloe because my statement was 'Druidism is not a religion.' She said no that's not true. 'Well you can't just call it a religion because it's not a religion for everybody'. She's like 'But it's a religion.' So we can't really decide if we are a religion or a philosophy...I think that we're a spiritual group that likes nature. [laughs] And some times it's a religion.

MS: But if you think about it, most mainstream sects, I think you can probably find those kind of divisions in it too.

MW: Yeah.

MS: There are the people who really truly believe the doctrines of that church and there are some people who are just there because they have pot lunch afterwards.

MW: Yeah. It's true.

MS: Or because they think it's good for their job. There's a lot of reasons...

MW: Yeah.

MS: Motivations I think, people do attend the services. Is there anything beyond that for you?

MW: For me, yes. Druidism has become my religion. People ask me what my religion is, I say, well, I'm a Druid. Because I was Christian for a very long time but it just didn't mesh for me. Finally came to the conclusion that well, this is a whole thing with Christianity that they're right and that everybody else is wrong and should be converted and apparently...I've discovered that there are many Christian groups these days that don't hold that to be necessarily true and they don't feel like they have to convert everybody and that everybody else is wrong and going to hell if they're not Christian. But it's such a pervasive thing and there are so many things that you have to, you're expected to hold as definite beliefs that I hold more as, okay, that's fine, that could be true. I decided to leave the Christianity and I respected, I think, a lot of it, I know that the Christian ideals influence a lot of my beliefs and my ways of interacting with people but I decided it just wasn't going to work. So I said, alright, well, what am I going to be? Can't really be Jewish. You know, Islam isn't going to work for me. Buddhism just doesn't quite work either. Taoist, is, well, confusing, and... I went through, I was like I don't think I can just convert to another religion but I've got this Druid thing and the whole idea with the Druidism is...I'm searching for some sort of spiritual truth. I sat down one day and said well, that's what I'm doing. Must be, that's my religion. Because I've always spent time looking around and wanting to figure out how things work, why does this happen? What is behind this? Why do things interact in this way. Why, why, why, why, why... And ended up coming to

the conclusion that I don't know and I'm never going to know but it doesn't matter that I don't know. At that point I wanted to just decide what works for because what works for everyone else is up to them. But what works for me is up to me. That was my goal. And when people found a religion that helped them to better themselves and put a certain amount of structure into their lives, that was a very important thing, very meaningful and I didn't think it mattered which particular way they chose to do it. Or even if they chose it...I mean if you don't choose a religion that doesn't mean that you're a bad person and it doesn't mean you're not going to be able to organize your life. You just might have a different system of working, or you might just be really confused [cracking up], and disorganized and have no idea what you're doing. I mean, it can go either way. There are plenty of people that have chosen a religion that are confused and disorganized and have no idea what they are doing and they're mean and they knock at people and they try to drive them off the road, and the road rage...I mean it's so much a personal thing is what I decided. I picked Druid because it allowed me that freedom to make it personal. I have my path and other people have theirs...and we can interact. But it doesn't mean that everybody else has to follow my path, nor do I have to follow any one else's.

MS: You've spoken a lot about the spirituality of it. Is there something more material in your Druidism?

MW: Well, I am a recycling Nazi. There are a lot of things along those lines that have become very...it's sort of the material manifestation of my Druidness is this idea of having respect for the earth. This idea of needing to find a balance amongst each individual when everything else is going around them. What that comes down to is...I recycle my cans and bottles and paper. I drive a car that has decent gas mileage. I walk when I can. I try to take care of the planet...pick up the litter when I'm walking around. It's just strange little things like that. That and yelling at my friends when they throw away plastic bottles. I blame that on my religion. There are definitely material things to it. When I am troubled I go to the circle or I go find a tree. Where some people would go to church, they would go talk to their pastor, I go talk to the trees. It works for me, it works for me better. People are confusing...trees make sense. And the trees tend to give me better answers than people do. So...that works for me. There are also small ritualistic things, saying hello to the moon when I see it. Paying attention to the changes in the seasons. I get very frustrated at Carleton because I get so busy and so sleep deprived that I don't see things...I miss full moons completely. I sit there going, 'Oh we should have a full moon celebration this term,' except that the full moon was a week ago. I missed it, and there's not going to be another one until break

MS: [laughs] Yeah, I think that's one of the ideas behind awareness that sometime pops up in Druid literature. Just opening up and realizing what is there and your place and your relation with it and often we get tracked onto these plans and stuff that absorbs everything, all our attention and concentration and we miss a lot of things along the way that really should've been appreciated. What happens to Druids after Carleton? Are you at all worried about this?

MW: What happens to Druids when they leave Carleton?

MS: I see Carleton as being a very nurturing place for Druidism, don't you?

MW: Yes and no. Yes because it's open to that kind of thing and you can say 'I'm a Druid, I'm going to do my Druid thing,'

and people are like, 'Really? You spend lots of time in the Arb, aren't you afraid you're going to get lost.' But it's a pretty open place to be something weird like a Druid. But at the same it's so intense and everyone's so busy all the time that you have this whole awareness problem and it's hard to go to tea every week when you have to finish your homework for the next day... In that way I'm really looking forward to leaving Carleton and having time to just sit and watch the flowers grow and think about what are my exact beliefs on this particular subject. Or read about other religions...I want to reread the Tao Te Ching, I haven't read it in ages. There's are things like that...I feel like, for me at least, my religion, my spiritual journey has come to sort of this stagnation because I've been so busy for so long, just spinning my wheels that I haven't had that time to grow myself personally and have my faith, or whatever you want to call it, grow. Because that requires work and contemplation and quiet time.

MS: New vistas, new people to interact with, new environments to brave...?

MW: That could also help but, for me...even just a month of not having to do much other than read books and walk in the woods, I think, would do amazing things for me. [laugh]

MS: I think you're talking about sabbatical, aren't you.

MW: Yeah, but, not a sabbatical of 'I'm going to go live in a cabin on top of a mountain for a while,' but, just stopping the frenzy that you get into at Carleton because you're a student, you're here to learn and once you get past your freshman and sophomore years you get into your major and your major requirements and your upper level classes and a lot of hard things. And you start having to look at what you're doing after Carleton and applying to grad schools and applying for jobs and looking for an apartment to live in. It's a whole big thing. You don't really have time for all that in between all the trying to turn in your assignments and trying to get enough sleep so you don't die and attempting to get your exercise and usually you've got at least three extracurricular activities that you're involved in. That's just hard. If I were a religion major maybe I'd have more time for thinking about these things because it would be along with my school work to some extent. I do have some things that apply in my field. Science is a religion in itself. A fascinating one. I run into all sorts of things that I want to sit and ponder with the classes that I take but it's harder because the things that I want to sit and ponder aren't things that I can really apply to the actual school work. I can apply them to my life in all sorts of interesting ways but I can't put them into the paper, I can't put them into my lab report. 'Gee, this has an interesting corollary to this fascinating spiritual book that I read once,' you know, as a foot note and it's just not really going to work so well. So I think that Carleton is a good place for the Druids. I think that the group is small right now but I think it waxes and wanes. I think it'll get big again.

MS: One of the problems I've noticed, I've talked to many Druids after they've graduated over the years...they've always told me that the greatest problem with continuing the Druidic formula/system of operations is that no place is like Carleton, people are different. It's like starting over from scratch. You spend more time explaining what Druidism isn't than explaining what it is. Once you leave the communal atmosphere of Carleton which is basically like a monastery and you go to Grad school and you see somebody once a week for two hours and you're not living with them, you're not eating with them, you're not going to Folk dance with

them, you can't get the level of intimacy you can find at Carleton. You'll see this not just with Carleton alumni but across the board, the college years are a very special period of time when you can build that [side ends]

MS:...this interview with a few more things. So, you're not at all worried about a period of loneliness at all, or perhaps never being able to have this kind of experience again.

MW: See, the thing is that the people that I was close to and developed those relationship with graduated last spring for the most part. So for me, this has been my transition, this year has been my lonely period. This was my year to sit there and go, 'Oh my goodness, my friends have all left. Who do I talk to, what do I do now.' I still have the Druids but they're all younger than me now. They're people that I know and I'm friendly with but they're not my...I'm not close to them in the way that I was close to the people that have gone away. So for me graduating is actually going to be... a liberation from that seclusion that I've been in for this year because I'll be going to a place where a lot of my friends live and I'll be having that community again...not the same way, but more so actually than I've been having it here. I am going to be sad to leave behind this place because it is a very special place and there's a lot that is going to change. There's not going to be so many nights of sitting up late, eating pizza, discussing philosophy. Because that just doesn't happen so much when people have jobs. But I've had five years of that. I've enjoyed it, I've savored it and I think it's ok that that period in my life is coming to an end. I think having this year has given me time to think about that. Like, 'Well, okay, this is the way life progresses.' We're having a lot of people who maybe didn't have this strange intermediate year that I've had... I know my friends that all graduated last year...they were upset, they were sad, everyone was leaving but for me, I'm sort of late and I'm following everybody. I'm way behind yelling 'Hey, wait for me, I'm coming.' So...no, I'm not too worried about it. I'm really looking forward to it because I think it's time for me to not be at Carleton anymore because a lot of the people here, I don't relate to them in the same way anymore, I'm not at that level of...you know, it's almost like I'm one foot out of the community already cause there is this whole community of monks or whatever it is here... I've started taking off my monk's robes already. It's actually harder for me to sit and have these experiences with the people that are still in that mind set than it is for me to have experiences with people that have already moved out of it. So when I go off I think that the fact that the Druid thing has already become very personal for me...I think that'll be alright that I'm not going to have the little Druid community.

MS: You have a little portable version in you now?

MW: I think I've got a portable version at this point. I've been working on it for a long time and I've got...it's contained, it's good. So I think that I may find some church of some sort, I don't know...pick a religion and find a friendly group of people that are interested in things that I'm interested in and maybe I'll hang with them for a while and see what I can learn from them. As well as getting reacquainted with some of the friends that I haven't spent time with in a long time. And then just the quiet time with just me.

MS: Quiet time, yes, quiet time.

MW: It's good.

MS: Talk about outside. What kinds of...were there any outside influences on the Druids during your last four or five years.

Any people who popped in or people or outside events that really changed or effected the Druid community at all.

MW: We've had a few townies, as far as outsiders, there was Rob for a while, and there's Doug, these days. And Julianne has been in and out. They're just kind of visitors. They're fun. They kind of pop in and are like, hey, what are you guys up to now. Spend our time together. Outside events...hmm...

MS: Thinks that [unintelligible] riled them up or...

MW: There was the loss of our north stone. That kind of riled us up. It just disappeared one day...somebody stole. We got it back so quickly that it was kind of confusing. We just...it took a while to adjust to the fact that that was actually a different stone.

MS: Have you had much difficulty with some of the Christian groups on campus or anything like that.

MW We really haven't.

MS: Because I know you went through the millennium period...

MW [laughs] Yeah, year two thousand, Y2K. No, I don't remember any difficulties there. We're on pretty good terms with all the other religious groups on campus. Not so much this year but last year we would occasionally try to get things happening with the Unitarians and the Druids simultaneously.

MS: I always called the Unitarians the indoor Druids.

MW: Yeah, they call us the outdoor Unitarians. [laughs]

MS: [laughs]

MW: That always amuses me. Actually there's been a little bit of difficulty with CRU, the Council for Religious Understanding because we've had Druids on that for, I don't even know how long.

MS: [unintelligible] '84, I think. Off and on.

MW: And there's actually no Druid on the Council at the moment. It was...well, Irony was on it back when I first got here. When he and I went for a little while then. When he graduated and I had to leave it was Ehren that took over. Chloe and Ehren both...they were in it for quite a while. Then Chloe left and I started going. So we had two Druids for quite some time. What ended up happening was that it got very frustrating for us and I think it got frustrating for a lot of the non-theistic, or non specifically theistic...basically for anyone that wasn't Judeo-Christian. It got very frustrating in a lot of ways to continue going to CRU. It started off being a really fascinating and great thing to me but then we hit a certain barrier where we'd...the topics of conversation could only go so far and then we'd run into things of...they'd just start bringing in these topics of conversation that, I was slowly realizing...these have no application to the Druids, and then I'd start talking to the Unitarians...oh...there's no application for the Unitarians either. Or the Quakers. And the Hindu's are just kind of confused. A lot of little things where...it's really a wonderful thing to have, CRU, but it's difficult because it is started from this sort of Judeo-Christian perspective and, although they mean very well it gets hard because what they see as important and want to discuss, we can't quite relate to, but at the same time we have a very difficult time explaining to them that, 'Well, this just doesn't apply, this just isn't something that's useful for us. We're fine to talk about it as it applies to you but we can't talk about how it applies to us because it doesn't. That just got sort of difficult. I keep meaning to go in and talk to Carolyn about this, the Chaplain, because she's a wonderful lady and I think she likes the

Druids, she sounds quite fascinated by us. I know that she's really...she very much wants to foster understanding amongst all of the groups on the campus. I think that she probably just hasn't realized that...where these difficulties come in. We had a progression of people. One of our people was Will. He's a philosophy major. He was actually there for the Buddhists rather than for us because he was in the Zen Meditation group. He ended up getting asked to leave because he was not communicating in a helpful way or something...the thing is that I was there and what we were hitting was this barrier of him saying that, well that doesn't mean anything to me, that doesn't apply to my life or my spirituality and trying to explain it and I think he came off as confrontational. He was not trying to be...I was present for some of what was happening and it was a matter of one person trying to explain, 'This means nothing to me' and the other person saying 'How, does it not mean anything to you?' 'There's nothing here to be discussed,' and then the frustration on both sides of 'We're not communicating here' and I felt bad because I could see, very much I could see where he was coming from and I could see where none of this was malicious on the other side. So we lost...Will was no longer able to be on CRU, I was very sick of being on CRU because we kept repeating topics and I'd been on it a long time. So I had left but we wanted to have somebody so we sent Corwin. Corwin went very dutifully and after a term emailed me and said 'You know, I really don't like this, it doesn't apply to us, I don't understand how we're supposed to communicate.'

We hit that a lot...trying to explain to people what we are and what we do and, no, that doesn't apply to us. They don't always understand. And we're almost as marginalized as the Christians on this campus sometimes because this campus is much cooler to be Jewish or Atheist or something that's not Christian. If you're Christian they're like, 'Oh, you're Christian,' [dismissive voice] But the Druids they kind of go to the other side. You're too far to the other end. You're strange and what you do isn't legitimate. I got very upset, actually, this fall because they were going to have a Tarot workshop in the Rec Center and it was supposed to be this fun thing, they were having somebody come in and they were going to tell how to do Tarot readings and do some readings and they canceled it at the last minute, the administration did, I'm not sure who was in charge. I never could figure out why. They said that it was because of the advertising, and it was something along the lines of that the advertising made it seem like it could give you more concrete answers than it really could and that that wasn't something that Carleton should support. But I just found myself very insulted. I was like, 'Now, if you had been having...' they have so many discussions on various Christian ideals and various...oh, they had the evolution guy come in at one point and talk about how, he was the creationist guy and he was saying how Evolution was bull-honkey. They had him come in and nobody complained about that even though, how is a guy coming into say how God created the world and all of it's inhabitants anymore scientific and concrete than somebody coming in and explaining how to do Tarot readings and the history of it and the ideas of what it can accomplish. I don't see any difference there. To me, Tarot has played a part in my spirituality. It's something that means something to me. For me it's a ritual to do and it helps me order my thoughts. It's like prayer would be for some people or saying a rosary would be for a Catholic. Basically they said 'Oh, this is something that's just not legitimate and we can't have that' and got rid of it with no notice what so ever. I was just like,

wow...if I were an actual organized religion I could make such a stink about this. But I can't really...and I'm not sure what to do. A lot of us talked about it amongst ourselves, we never did decide who we should talk to or who we could say anything to about how we were really sort of insulted and wished that they kept that, or something.

MS: When you say organized...you're a funded group on campus, right?

MW: Yes

MS: You've got a charter, a constitution in, hold regular meetings, officers, elections. Was there any kind of communal arrangements made to stay in the same dorms together.

MW: No.

MS: No...

MW: No. We did have second Myers once...had almost all of the Druids on it, but that was just by virtue of all of us being friends and a lot of...I ended up, I lived in Goodhue that year. But, there were two of the three Archdruids lived on second Myers that year and a lot of the people. But as far as like a Druid house or anything of that sort...no, we've never done anything of that sort. No we've never done that.

MS: Too organized?

MW: People always have different goals of where they want to live, what kind of living arrangements they want and...besides, I think if we spent all of our time together we'd hate each other.

MS: Quite possibly.

MW: That's my take, I don't know.

MS: There's pretty amazing things that happened over at Farmhouse back in the eighties, clothing optional house was, I think, the official name. There was a lot roommate changes over a period of a couple years.

MW: There was Religious Diversity house, that one year, and that kind of went up in smoke.

MS: Yep...

MW: Religious animosity house, is what we tend to recall... refer to it these days.

MS: Time to wrap up with a couple questions like...now that you're departing and have only six weeks left, what would the key pieces of advice you would leave behind to bequeath your wisdom onto the next generation.

MW: Recruit, recruit, recruit at the beginning of the year. You got to get freshman interested before everybody else gets them interested. I think the main reason we're so small this year is because we fell down in the recruiting this fall. I was recruiting for Assassins and left the two new guys to recruit. They didn't recruit hard enough because they'd never done it before. That would be number one because otherwise you lose the numbers and then it's really hard to do things. Number two would be...stay friendly with all the administration. The best and easiest way to get things done. If they see you as a responsible organized group of people they will respond to you so much better than if they think you're a bunch of crazy freaks that are just going to leave messes everywhere. I think...be friendly and open is the main thing...if you're in charge of things. Pay attention to who comes to things, try to remember names...be aware of what's going on because the best way to insure that the Druids are going to do well and have people that keep coming is if they

see you as a friendly and welcoming group. That kind of falls to the leaders to go up and say, 'Why hi Bob, I'm glad you came again, how are you doing.' Whenever they show up. If you fall down on that and you're all just talking amongst yourselves when new people come in and they sit there and they're like 'Oh, I don't know anybody and I'm bored,' they leave and then they don't come back again. But if they come and your nice and you talk to them and you ask them, hey, so what's your major... [laughs] then they feel like, 'Ok, that was fun, I liked that, I'll bring my other friend next time. Then you get more people and the more people it is the more fun it is. The more the merrier, that's the way it goes. I love when we have a huge group of people somewhere. It spreads out the workload, it gives you tons of new people to talk to and it's just fun, and you can plan more things.

MS: Anything to avoid?

MW: Don't do Morris dances that involve sticks in the dark. We made that mistake once. I don't think anybody got hurt. That'd be the main one.

MS: So you're final [unintelligible] next couple of years for the Druids, stay on course, steady as usual...

MW: Yeah, I think they're doing ok. Steve-o and Corwin know what they're doing. They just need to be assertive about grabbing people and bringing them in. They're on top of things. They've been there and helping with all of the events since their freshman years. Corwin's a sophomore and Steve-o's a junior. They know, they've been there. Corwin is setting up a sweat lodge for the first time himself, tonight, or being in charge of setting it up.

MS: Who's going to lead it?

MW: That's a good question. Steve-o probably, I've been teaching him how to go about leading things, I think he led one this fall and did fine. I would lead one but I'm sick and I don't think I'm going to be sweating tonight. If Ehren sweats he may lead one. I don't know if he will though because we're going out for dinner tonight. Sweating on a full stomach is going to be interesting.

MS: Alright, that seems to be about all the questions I can think of right now so I think we're going to close the interview officially now and thank you very much for listening, we appreciate it.

# Interview with David Fisher '65 Founder of Reformed Druidism

August 27, 2004.

Speaker Phone.

DF = David Fisher

MS = Mike Scharding



Michael Scharding: Question number one. Introduce yourself, tell us who you are and where you're from and what it was like when you were growing up

David Fisher: I'm David Fisher. I was born in San Bernardino, California, but raised in a suburb of St. Louis, Missouri, called Webster Groves. Webster Groves was a typical middle class American, Midwestern suburb. I attended grade school there and then attended high school at the St. Louis country day school before going to Carleton College.

MS: What would you say your parents backgrounds are?

DF: You mean background in terms of what, education?

MS: Education, religion, or cultural interests?

DF: My father was raised on a farm in a small town called Foley Missouri and went to Westminster College in Fulton where he graduated in sociology. He spent his career as, mostly, manufactures representative although he had also auto management as a purchasing agent and the director of a small company. My mother was born in Cape Toronto, Missouri. She went to Sweet Burner College but did not complete college. She majored in Latin and in English. Both of them were interested in current events; my mother more than my father. My father enjoyed classical music a great deal. They were both active in the Presbyterian church, of which they were active members. Both were deacons in that church. My father became an elder later in his life.

MS: So you'd say that your parents were, perhaps, future role models for you?

DF: I think so. They both stressed the value of higher education. My grandfather was also a role model. My grandfather Dearthmont. He was an attorney and became chief council in Missouri Pacific Railroad and eventually president of that railroad. He was very interested in discussing current events

and issues and when we went to his house for dinner on Sundays we would typically have such discussions.

MS: So you were always being introduced to new ideas and kept fresh with the changing of the times?

DF: Yes that's true.

MS: As a child did you have any tendency towards pranks or have a sense of humor in your family?

DF: Oh, no more than usual I suppose. My brother and I both enjoyed a good laugh and so forth. I can't remember anything specific.

MS: Ok. What kinds of clubs and activities were you involved in when you were in high school?

DF: I was involved in the debate club, eventually became vice-president of that, also involved in singing, glee club I believe. I was a manager of the cross country team in high school. For a while I was active in the Order of DeMolay but that was only for about two years.

MS: Is that like Freemasonry?

DF: Yes, Freemasonry. My father was an active freemason and encouraged me to do that, so I did.

MS: I'm not very familiar with Freemasonry, how would you describe that.

DF: I think it's a combination of social service and boys gathering to bond with each other, engage in some rather harmless rituals. To be honest with you it's been so long I can't really remember much. It tells you the impression it made that it only lasted a year. I decided not to go on for the higher whatever. It was too silly.

MS: So, how did you come around to picking Carleton? What were you looking for in a college?

DF: I was looking for a good education. My parents strongly encouraged me to look at Carleton. I had applied and been accepted at Kenyon College. Both my parents said, 'look, you've been to an all boys' high school, we think you should go to a co-ed college.' I think that was a good decision.

MS: So did you visit Carleton before you applied?

DF: Yes I did.

MS: You did. Was there anything that cinched it for you?

DF: I really can't remember. I'd been accepted at Kenyon, as I said, and at Westminster, my fathers alma mater. I was on the waiting list at Harvard. I eventually did get in but decided I didn't want to go to a big school, that I would rather be at a small school and that's why I went to Carleton.

MS: What were your early memories of Carleton, like the transition from home, your clubs, I believe you were a member of the radio station and such?

DF: Yes, I was very active in K-A-R-L; I think it would be fair to say that was my primary activity, secondary activity was players, the theater group. Both of those were very important to me at Carleton. The first year, like many freshman, I tried to find my way. I remember feeling a bit lost at the beginning. But I also remember finding an activity I could relate to in the radio station and in theater. Both which were, as I say, important to me.

MS: Would you say the radio activity was an outgrowth of your interest in current events?

DF: Yes...yes. I was always interested in current events and public speaking, debate. I'd been to the debate club in high school so this was a chance to continue those interests.

MS: Any of the other future Druid members also in the KARL club.

DF: Neither of the two co-founders, Norman Nelson and Robert Larson, neither of them were, I think, active in KARL. I think Norman, from my vague memory, and Bob may have both been on the fringe of players but it's been a long time.

MS: How would you describe the early '60s?

DF: Time of transition. I think it would be fair to say that most of us at Carleton had no doubt at all that we would eventually find a place, a job as good or better than our parents. We had confidence, which is not the case now. What we were concerned about was finding meaningful work, something that we would find not only enjoyable but worthwhile. And when the war began to preoccupy us all, and the civil rights struggle, for many us this became a focus of our energy and attention.

MS: Ok. You mentioned the civil rights act and the cold war, how much apart of that was daily life at Carleton?

DF: At the beginning, not much. There was a chapter of STF and there was a chapter of the civil rights group. Both of those constantly encouraged the rest of us to be more active. I suppose, partly because I was involved in radio and was doing a lot of news broadcasting I decided not to get involved, but to be an observer, although I was sympathetic to both causes. There was also a fair play for Cuba committee. People like Ben Starr. And others were certainly active leaders in those movements. But you ask was it part of our daily fare? No, no it wasn't. We were taking classes and involved in activities and Carleton was a fairly all consuming activity.

MS: What would you say your favorite classes at Carleton were?

DF: Oh, that's hard. I think I really valued my history classes with Catherine Boyd. Medieval history, Russian history, Byzantine History. I enjoyed the classes with Carlton Qualey (sp?) although I didn't find American history then as fascinating as European history. Ironically, although I now teach philosophy, I didn't find the philosophy courses all that stimulating. Martin Eschelmann (sp?) was about the most boring teacher I've ever had. A good man, but a rigid analytic thinker and Kantian. Philosophy at Carleton at the time was analytic, not continental and therefore from my point of view, boring. So I took the classes, minored in Philosophy but, at the time didn't make much impression on me.

MS: What was your major?

DF: History.

MS: Do you remember your comps project?

DF: Yes I do, it was a philosophy of history project. I compared Crochet (Sp?) and Collingwood on philosophy of history, and I actually still have the thing somewhere floating around. Although I have not taught philosophy of history professionally more than once or twice it remains an interest.

MS: I guess one topic that was current at Carleton at the time was the en loco parentis rules. How were those changing and what events led up to the Druids taking on one of those rules?

DF: Very interesting time. I think Carleton suffered from the blessings of being liberal. John Nason, bless his heart, was a sincere philosophically inclined Quaker. A decent guy, a little

uptight. Not inclined to suffer fools gladly and he hated the idea of being repressive. Of course, you can't be totally without any kind of rules and students, especially some of the more radically students pushed the envelope wherever they could in things like personal dress or even personal hygiene. There were protests about many things, but among them protests about the religious requirement. Sure enough, eventually, of course, as you know, it was dealt with by a responsible group of students who met and endlessly discussed it until it eventually became a non issue. We, at the time, had a choice of a Sunday evening program, which was basically culture, or going to college chapel service; that was actually pretty good, David Maitland is a fine preacher and the choir was excellent.

MS: I've done an interview with Maitland before.

DF: Yea, very bright. Very powerful preacher. Or you could go to town, one of the churches in town, but you had to do one of those things and many people thought that was too much. So the way the Druids got started, I've tried to tell this to other people who've called me and listened to me over the years; it's really very simple, one night Norman Nelson, Howard Cherniack, and myself were having one drink too many and were trying to figure out what we could do to deal with this requirement which we all thought was fairly silly and we decided, because I'd been reading something in one of my history classes about the ancient druids, why don't we start a group called the Reformed Druids of North America. What we tried to set up was essentially a Hobson's choice. If the college gave us credit for attending these ridiculous services we would expose them for the farce they certainly were. If they didn't give us credit we would protest about religious oppression and lack of decency. That is how it began. It was a bunch of guys sitting around, having a drink, having a joke. It was not due to any kind of mystical experience, any kind of transcendental moment. All the things that people keep saying must have been the case just were not the case.

MS: Do you think this is how some other religions have started?

DF: Oh, I wouldn't presume to know. I have no idea. But certainly, I think, it would be fair to say that the Druids, at least in terms of the founders, Howard, Norman, and myself were not meant as a serious alternative to religion. We just didn't think of it that way. We thought of having a good time, we sort of dreamed a piece up here and a piece up there, improvising as we went along the way people I suppose sometimes do. That's how it started.

MS: Ok, lets talk about a couple of those pieces here. I've interviewed about fifteen previous Arch Druids at Carleton and they all have the same questions.

DF: Yes?

MS: One of the things, where did you find/come up with the idea of the druid sigil.

DF: I believe I had read texts such as Jessie Weston, and also Frazer. I'd taken Intro Religion and Intro World Religions and had more than a passing interest in English history and knew something about the Arthurian material. It's very hard to reconstruct all this time later what precise texts I may have read at the time. But that was the general kind of the material. I think, if I were going to be very accurate I would say that there were essentially two foundings of the druids at Carleton. There was the one that was started by Norman, Howard, and myself je n'ai spree (sp?), which, you know, became more than a je n'ai spree because, if you do



something week after week its hard to maintain a farce. We began to be a little more reflective and meditative; brought in some poetry, some song. Peter Basquin composed a very nice chant. That continued through my time at Carleton. Then when I was on the way to a graduation, David Frangquist came and expressed a strong interest in moving from mere casual participation to leadership. And, my memory is that David went on a vigil and had some kind of either visionary experience or at least deeply meaningful personal experience. Something transpired that moved him, whether his heart was strangely warmed or his mind was strangely expanded, I don't know. What I do know is that when we went through a ceremony of ordination David became the next Arch Druid. I think it would be fair to say that he re-founded the Druids.

MS: I would agree with that.

DF: He essentially took what had been a protest against religion requirement and an occasional exercise in panentheistic speculation and turned it into, if not a religion, something like a religion. And, when I've gotten letters and emails from successor Arch Druids I've always said the same thing: if you have a question about the meaning of this ask David.

MS: David's very charismatic.

DF: Because, yeah, I think it served a need for him in a way that it may not have some of the rest of us. That's the best of my recollection but I've tried to get these...it's been very embarrassing actually over the years to get these strange messages from these people who take it quite seriously and who ask me for guidance when I have absolutely no interest in continuing to guide anything. I mean I'm happy that they're happy and I don't want them be depressed or anything but neither do I feel called upon to lead the Reformed Druids or guide the Reformed Druids.

MS: I understand that. Usually when each succeeding Arch Druid, there's about forty of them now...

DF: Oh my lord.

MS: Yeah, it's a long series, I was number thirty. When one Arch Druid leaves it's pretty much an unspoken rule that you disappear for a few years and let the next Arch Druid do their own thing, start over from scratch, so to speak.

DF: Yeah, I've heard reports over the years that it's, they've told me that it's changed from year to year.

MS: Yeah.

DF: It's been different things for different peoples.

MS: Yeah, some people go on a Native American angle, so people go Zen. A couple of the groups over in California, spin-offs from Larson's, have pretty much found it sufficient for its own purposes and just stayed with it and so they've gone on a Celtic angle and stayed with it for many years. So it's pretty much systematized and become permanent. But, Carleton has always been such a rotational kind of grove that nothing stays for more than two or three years. Just the spirit gets passed on, not much of the customs.

DF: Hm. I also remember John Messenger being fascinated as an anthropologist in this local phenomenon on his own campus and trying to study it, interviewing some of us, and I remember, oh goodness, it must have been twenty years ago, running into Carlton Qualey (Sp?) at some meeting and him asking me, David, didn't study about Joseph Smith? The implication being, I suppose, that one should've thought ahead. And at the time neither three of us really thought ahead. I think Howard, if I remember correctly, ended up being a lawyer, practicing in Canada, probably took it the least serious.

MS: Right. He seemed more interested in the protest.

DF: Yes, that was Howard. Norman, I think, was ambivalent. Like myself, Anglican, Episcopal. I don't that Norman went on and entered the ministry or not.

MS: He's now a deacon.

DF: He's a deacon. Which does not surprise me. A permanent deacon?

MS: Yes.

DF: Yeah, and I'm a priest. I suppose those ritual impulses took that course. And that's where it is. It's been, on the one hand, interesting to watch something that one started take on a life of its own utterly beyond any extent that any of us could have ever imagined. None of us imagined this thing would last more than four or five years. And as I say I think its largely through David's charisma and David's dedication in refounding it.

MS: Yeah, cause it's collapsed a couple times along the way.

DF: Yeah, I've heard that. I've heard that David has had some role or other in assisting it.

MS: Well, yeah. Usually there's three or four old Arch Druids who look after the group.

DF: Yeah.

MS: And they check in every couple years and if its not there they show up and find a couple interested students and then they leave again.

DF: Huh.

MS: And the group just... It's kind of liking shocking a battery in a car.

DF: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

MS: You've just got to shock it once in a while.

DF: Well, I suppose, given people's need for alternative spiritualities, the Druids are like a template on a word processor that can be filled in with a number of contents and I suppose that's a good thing. At least I'm not sad for it, I just want good news some times and I get letters addressed 'Dear Reverend Brother in the Mother.' But that's life.

MS: Going back to one of the earlier origin points. So you're not quite sure where the symbol came from?

DF: No, I'm really not. I'm not sure whether that was Howard or Norman or myself. It just seemed the closing of the circle with two lines through it meant something.

MS: Kind of resembles a greek letter.

DF: Yes, yes it did.

MS: I think it's phi.

DF: Yes, it does indeed. I was learning a little bit of Greek then. It could have been the idea of Sola Sofia mother wisdom.

MS: Oh, that makes sense.

DF: It could have been that. It also had, for some people, affinities to the peace sign. The idea of closing the circle is certainly a major notion of world mythology so it could be that. To be honest with you I just don't know. I don't think Norman or Howard would know. We all used it, it made perfect sense to us at the time and danged if I could figure out how it happened, it just happened, like everything else.

MS: We've gone through a couple books of symbols and no one else has ever used it before; something so simple.

DF: Maybe it's just the creativity of, I guess I must've dreamed it up but I don't know where it came from.

MS: One of the other mysteries is the origins of Dalon Ap Landu.

DF: That, I think, was a phrase discovered by Norman, or by someone else, a member of the Druids, in their research, as a phrase meaning lord of the groves. And we adapted it. I can't honestly remember who it was that dug that up.

MS: That's another one that kind of went like a snark quest. A couple people have gone through books of dictionaries and books of mythology and of course they're never able to find it.

DF: Nope. Someone dug it up but, you know, I can't remember which Druid it was that may have done that or not. I just remember someone came up with it and we all thought it was a good idea so we add it.

MS: Actually its kind of fun because, since there is no origin for it, it's also very flexible for usage.

DF: Yep. Like everything else.

MS: You mention before that you were studying Norse and Celtic mythology. Before expounding it and I believe Frangquist also did some research.

DF: Yes. I believe David probably did more because, as I say, he got very serious about it and, having decided he wanted to be part of this he'd better find out more about the implications and off he went. But I don't know what David read because we haven't been in contact for years.

MS: I'm pretty sure of what he read because when I was doing my own research I found his name in all the books I was reading.

DF: Well, I wouldn't doubt it. That would make sense.

MS: Also, one of the things that happened when they were making the Green Book, of Meditations...

DF: Yep.

MS: We have noticed that most of the selections that you contributed were actually from the Hindu texts.

DF: Yes. I did have a copy of hymns and Rig Veda, arguably one of the oldest texts of Religious tradition in the world. And so yes, I used that.

MS: I think the other David was more interested in Zen.

DF: Yes, that's true.

MS: Which was actually quite popular at the time.

DF: Yeah, yeah. Very much so. The Carleton in Japan program, Bardwell Smith teaching in comparative religion was an influence, I think, on many people.

MS: The concept of vigiling...was that taken from medieval literature?

DF: I think that was either, I can't remember whether it was I or Norman, the idea that one had a vigil before one would enter into some serious calling, like knighthood. One of us came up with that idea. All I remember is, no one really being very excited about it except David. He really wanted to try it out and indeed that's what he did.

MS: We were also thinking, is it the Catholic priesthood they vigil before their ordination?

DF: Yeah, that's true.

MS: That's where we figured that came from.

DF: Yeah, I think probably either Norman or I, both of us interested in medieval literature and medieval history would have remembered that. But again, I didn't take notes at the time because, obviously, I didn't think I was founding something for thirty, forty years.

MS: One of the things that happened in the first year is that you, they set up ten orders, or they tried to.

DF: Tried to.

MS: Tried to. I think they got as far as seven before they got tired.

DF: Yep.

MS: I believe that's the same number of orders that's in Scottish masonry.

DF: You know, ten just seemed like a good number.

MS: Ten's always a good...but

DF: *Laughing.* I'm sorry to be disillusioning but it just...it seemed like a good number. I suppose we were fascinated with the ideas of levels, of hierarchies. In the literature of science fantasy, things like Tolkien and others there's the idea of levels of adeptness and wisdom. I must admit we were all readers of science fiction or science fantasy so that must have had some impact on us. But again, I don't know because we didn't go about annotating what we were doing.

MS: David during his first year put together the Chronicles...

DF: Yes.

MS: What did you think of that.

DF: I thought it was pretty fun.

MS: Yeah, I thought so too.

DF: I mean, it'd be the mock old English and the laying it out in columns like biblical texts was funny. The level of imaginative reconstruction, shall we say, was high. So I thought it was a pretty good piece of work, it was funny. It was funny for me at least to read. I don't know how Norman reacted to it, but I thought it was pretty funny.

MS: Let's see here, early missionary activities. Norman, I think, set up the first out of Carleton Grove.

DF: I remember hearing that, yeah.

MS: David also did one.

DF: Yep.

MS: And I think you set up something in New York for a while.

DF: Oh, I thought about it. It really never got off the ground. I think the Basquins, Peter and Katie, tried to do that. But they were busy establishing themselves professionally. I was busy and so it never really took off.

MS: From that activity the idea of forming a council developed.

DF: Yes. I suppose at that time I felt somewhat responsible having started the ball rolling down the hill to offer what helpful observations I could. So I didn't disagree with the council and, early on at least, continued to try to exercise some benign influence on it.

MS: One of the fun things about the council is that nothing has really been done with it since '71 after the priestess issue was finished.

DF: Yep, I heard that.

MS: Mainly because no ones been able to find everybody, or able to get a unanimity on the issues.

DF: Not surprising.

MS: People were afraid that...like during the '70s that if it could become a majority one then it might actually become functional. And the more it said the less it would be Druidical. As you said before, sometimes less is more in the way of organization.

DF: Where two Druids are gathered together there are at least three opinions.

MS: I think that's now pretty much a legend actually. Everyone has said that at least once so far in their interviews. So, it was set up and groves started to spring up around the country, and disappeared almost as frequently.

DF: Yep.

MS: How would you describe the other founders in character? Like, for example Larson, or Nelson.

DF: Oh gosh, that's a hard question. I really wouldn't want to presume. I think of all of us, Howard certainly, from the very beginning, I think, saw this as a vehicle for social protest and as it became obvious that people were taking it seriously...I don't think he was so much irritated as just bemused. Sort of as in, 'what on earth is happening? Don't these people understand how this started? Are they all insane?' And we explained to Howard, 'no, people are not insane; they're just taking it a different direction.' Norman, I think, found it more significant, very early on. I'm not quite sure how. And I certainly found myself moved by the way in which something that had started as a good natured way of trying to challenge authority had become a source for some people, at least, of meaning and significance. And I felt responsible for that. If people were finding something of meaning it, even if I personally didn't, it seemed to me inappropriate to do anything that would undermine those individual's quest for value and meaning.

MS: I can understand that.

DF: Although it was often to pummel me, something as amorphous and as non-defined would do that. I mean Zen, after all, which you mentioned, and Hinduism are both traditions that have long histories and considerable literature and a very strong discipline of practice. Certainly in Zen that's true. And it's true in Hinduism in terms of ritual. The Druids never made those kinds of demands on people. So it always is puzzling to me that something which made so little demand on anyone would fill the needs of someone, but apparently it did. So, there we are. I don't have much more than that to add about my cofounders except that I'm sorry to hear about Bob.

MS: How would you say that your observations of early spread of Druidism ties in with your understanding of Christianity started.

DF: Well, the only similarity I can think of is that Christianity emerged in the Hellenistic period and a syncretistic environment in which there was a mixing of many different religious ideas. And certainly our culture, in the '60s and '70s was highly syncretistic. Not multi-cultural in the contemporary sense but syncretistic in the sense there was an interest in overlooking traditional boundaries and finding something meaningful that would not necessarily be as constraining. There were a lot of things going on, so to the extent that the cultures were similar, I think that's the link. I don't think it's the link in terms of the rather highly

evangelical character of the first Christian missionaries. And the first urban Christians simply were not, from what I can read about them, that much like the first Reformed Druids.

MS: For me I think the Druids have pretty much been there and people came to them.

DF: Yep.

MS: And people left just as quickly.

DF: Yep.

MS: So, in that sense I think that they're different, they don't have a driving mission to make more Druids.

DF: No.

MS: Though like you said, if they show up you feel obligated.

DF: It is true. I think the druids have met a need for a lot of people.

Side 2

MS: We've got about ten questions left.

DF: I think the Druids essentially fill the need for people looking for meaning who are not ready at that particular point in their life to make the kind of commitment that most institutional religion demands. That's what they do. They offer a placeholder that may be filled later by something that's more sustaining, more involving, more definitive. I think that's good. That's the Druids at their best.

MS: Yeah, I've always described it as being a way station along the road.

DF: Yep, that's what it is.

MS: Also, I've seen it more as Norman describes. He describes it more as a supplement rather than a supplanting.

DF: That's something he, I remember early on, said that. I think the only danger with something like the Druids is that, for some people, it becomes an excuse for staying in spiritual kindergarten the rest of their life. It was never meant, by any of the founders, certainly—I don't even think David—it was never meant to be a genuine alternative world religion. We didn't set it up that way. It has no doctrine to speak of except a vague kind of pantheistic matron theology. It has very little ethical importance, except sort of benign concern for nature and ecology. Perhaps some pacifism. It has no notion of divinity other than a pantheistic one, or panentheistic one. So it wasn't meant to be a replacement for religion. I think meant at its best to help people on their way find something, but then they should move on. If someone stayed a Druid all his or her life that would be unfortunate from my point of view.

MS: I've only known a couple people, mostly in California, who pretty much stayed only in Druidry. Most people go on to find another religion and usually with a renewed appreciation for nature.

DF: Which is great. If the Druids do that then they've done their job.

MS: That's what I think.

DF: And frankly if that's what the Druids are then I don't feel so bad about what happened. You know, I've said to many Arch Druids before, it's a weird thing that something that you start take on such a life of its own. But I guess in some ways, really, what I said to you earlier really remains true. It was

restarted by David and so whatever it is now, it's as much his work as it is mine.

MS: I have a couple question for you now.

DF: Ok.

MS: At the end of Carleton, you were starting to feel a greater certainty of vocation.

DF: Yep.

MS: How would you describe how that developed and how you made the transition to seminary?

DF: I was given the Rockefeller fellowship, called trial year ministry. It was meant for people like me, at the time, who thought they might be interested in the ordained ministry but weren't sure. I discovered in union was that, at the time at least, I was not ready to commit myself to full time ordained ministry. I was ready to commit to teaching. And then I got the call to England, frontier in terms of missionary duty. It became even clearer that I was called to teach, although I didn't ask for work in England as a lay person. I mean the question was what, a whole year of philosophy at St. Louis U. was not the life I'd hoped as it would be and I went to Vanderbilt. It was only while doing a PhD at Vanderbilt in the department of religion, systematic philosophical theology, that I really decided that I also wanted to seek ordination. I was working then in the student chapel, with the Reverend John Hatcher, who was a philosophical complex, very good, person. At one point he said, 'David, if you're gonna play the shaman's role you might as well wear the shaman's rank. You might as well do the process (hard to hear next piece).'" But it didn't happen over night. After many conversations with John I found, yeah, that was something with a meaning to me and it has been for the rest of my professional career.

MS: What do you define as a vocation?

DF: Vocation is a direction towards which one feels pulled or sometimes I supposed is pushed. It centers one's life and gives purpose.

MS: Here's a broad question for you; what is the role of religion in life.

DF: You know, I think it's as fundamental, as Tillich said, as the depth dimension of culture. Religion in a culture is what expresses what is spirit in that culture. And at the same time is institution. I think religion helps people direct themselves toward that energy and transform it. What I mean by that is that while there may well be mysterious spiritual depth working in any culture, it takes an active institution with a tradition, a text, a discipline to turn that amorphous spirituality into practical action, into moral imperatives, into concerns for peace and justice, for tolerance and understanding. That's the kind of thing, I think, that at is best, religion does. It transforms what is vague and amorphous and unspecific into something that is quite specific with very clear implications for how people live their life.

MS: And when does religion go wrong?

DF: I think religion goes wrong when it thinks, or its leaders think, I admit, or adherents think that they have the final absolute answer to all questions and ought to impose those answers on other people. Certainty is a fine thing. Thinking that gives you license to impose your certainty on someone else is a bad idea because if it doesn't grow from within it's not your own. Everything I know about religion says that you can offer, you can entice, you can lead, you can suggest, and almost (????)

in words, but you can't make someone else have whatever you find significant. They have to find it themselves.

MS: What is the role of nature in religion as you understand it?

DF: Well it's something that, at least in Christianity, is seen as an expression of creative love and requiring creative care. That's the simplest way I can describe it. What has been created and given in love ought to be cared for with love, fostered, nurtured, not harmed. And that's about as clear as I can make it. I know there's a lot of talk about creationist spirituality from Eraneus (sp?) to the present and I think that's a good dimension of our spiritual heritage. But in general I think that's what it is. Nature is after all the vehicle through which the spirit moves and expresses itself.

MS: Do you think that people in bygone ages had a better understanding or appreciation than they do now?

DF: No. I just think that probably people have less mediated lives. The culture we live in is a highly mediate one. We interact through electronic means, through a very abstract symbolic language, and through very complex institutions. And people like me spend most of their lives interacting in that world of secondary or tertiary or even quaternary symbolism. No, I don't think we are any better or worse than our ancestors. We are certainly less driven, but every now and then we get reminded, from hurricanes or from plagues that nature remains a force that is not totally mastered for our disposal. But no, the difference is we're mediated in more ways than I think our ancestors were. At least the mediation has more layers, that's a better way of saying it.

MS: And I think that's one thing that Druidry tries to do is bring you to a primary experience.

DF: Yep. Best regarded religion. Every religion I know insists that there is the difference between the thinking about the experience and the institution organization for the experience and the texts recording the experience, and the experience. And whether it's in worship or meditation or reading or prayer...yeah, the plan of the whole apparatus is to nurture and sustain that experience.

MS: Ok. Well after you were ordained, where did you go onto?

DF: Oh, the rest of my story is fairly boring. I was ordained and for the last thirty years I have always combined serving as an interim pastor, assistant, a long term supply priest while I've been teach. So, I've had two parallel careers. One as a teacher and one as a...mostly interim pastor. I'm now out of that business as they say. I am now working as an assistant in a parish, very happy to do that. At this point in life I do not fill drawn to solving the kind of problems that come with interim ministry. I've more than enough to do with my teaching and my other vocational interests.

MS: What's interim ministry?

DF: Interim ministry mean's you're the person in charge of the parish between a full time pastor. It mean's you're the one who provides services, does some ministration, some counseling. And while I could do that with, I think, some grace when I was twenty or thirty or forty, even fifty, I'm now sixty, and I simply don't have the energy or the drive to do that on a full time other job. It's a lot of work and it's a lot of not just showing up and going through the motions. People ask you lots of questions. They need to express this stuff. Sometimes they'd been hurt, sometimes they'd been confused, sometimes they feel abandoned. What you have to do as the interim is find all that anxiety. It's a very interesting

and creative challenge but I've done thirteen of them in my life and that's enough.

MS: How have your other Carleton clubs or experiences continued over the years also.

DF: Really not at all. I went to one alumni reunion with my wife who's also Carleton. It was ok. We talked about going this year, decided not to. I think next year's my fortieth and I'm thinking about going next year. But I have very little contact at all with anyone from Carleton. Just have drifted out of contact. And while I find the campus beautiful and attractive I know enough, having been in higher education all my life, to know that, whatever they say, you can't go home again. If I went back I would be with a bunch of strangers who I wouldn't recognize whose lives may have been interesting but certainly with whom I've not been in touch. And I don't know if I'll go back or not; I'm thinking about that. If I do and if there's still a Druid there maybe we could talk. We'll see. At this point I've been teaching overseas in the summer the last two years, I may do a third year, so...

MS: How does religion change as you grow older?

DF: Yes it does. You find less need to cross certain bows, the minor things and to qualify and footnote. It becomes more a matter of direction, focus. It really is true that less is more. That's not just a Zen notion; it's true I think in all religions. You reach a certain point in your life when you no longer feel as obsessed with, as you did, what turn out to be very minor differences in theory or practice, you are more interested in the bigger picture and that is where I am.

MS: As the years go on and we start to lose more and more Druids, how would you like to be remembered?

DF: Oh, I hope I've some degree of affection. If nothing else, appreciation for having started something that others have made their own. I've not maintained an active tie with Druidism because sometimes the leadership has seemed very strange to me. I'm not a Neopagan and I find that very strange. And I find sometimes the intensity has been a little overwhelming, sometimes its been confusing. You want to say, well, what's going on here. It's sort of a feeling I suppose Howard would have felt all those years ago. I'm grateful that it's been meaningful to people and as long as that's remembered that's perhaps enough. I certainly don't think of myself as worthy of a plaque or an obelisk or anything of the kind. If anyone deserves that it's David.

MS: Over at the Monument Hill there's an obelisk there. Three sides talk about the first baptism, first church service and the first marriage in Minnesota and the fourth side is completely blank. I believe you remember Richard Shelton...

DF: Yeah.

MS: He's always told me that the fourth side describes Druidism.

DF: That's a good monument. I would say and often said *si monumentum quies perspicere*: if you seek my monument look around you. Look at the oak tree. We chose that because there were oaks there. We knew, even with the little research as we had done, we knew there was always a link between the Druids and the oaks and we built that first altar which was torn down by a bunch or rather angry, inebriated, I think intervarsity types, and I understand that it's been rebuilt and rebuilt and so forth a number of times since. But yeah, the oaks really were the grove, it wasn't the physical stones, that was nice, but the stones weren't as important as the trees. Makes some sense.

MS: Ah, trees are a symbol of movement, of growth, of change, not of permanence.

DF: Yeah, that's true.

MS: A couple of final questions.

DF: Ok. This is good because I have to get going to pack, leaving for England on Wednesday.

MS: Ok. During the 1960s and early '70s the Druids had to decide on the priestess issue and this was also during the period of the sexual revolution...

DF: Yes.

MS: And I think the Episcopal church was also starting to think about ordination of women.

DF: That's true.

MS: What are you're thoughts on the whole issue.

DF: Oh, makes perfect sense. It never seemed to me at the time that there was anything wrong with women being able to function on her own; human nature is not confined to one gender. I mean, it's a matter of tradition, preference, that's all it is. If the majority of people are finding it helpful to include both genders than I thought it's a good idea.

MS: Alright. A last question for you then. What are your long term hopes for Carleton and the Reformed Druids?

DF: Well for Carleton I hope it continues to be the kind of place that stimulates creative, aspiring minds in a consumerist and profession driven culture. That is being what a good liberal arts college ought to be as to what unfortunately many colleges becomes. And for the Druids, well, as long as people find whatever the Druids are meaningful and valuable as a placeholder in their journey toward whatever place they find, I hope the Druids prosper and flourish too.

MS: Ok. Well I think those are the major questions I had to ask.



Figure 11 Nelson, Fisher & Frangquist, Hill of Three Oaks c.1964.

# Magazine Volume Notes

(Parts 11-14 printed as a separate 750 page Volume)

## Part Eleven NRDNA Druid Magazines

### 2003 Preface Only

The newsletter tradition is a great legacy of the NRDNA to Reformed Druidism. Carleton Druids were networked by their alumni ties and bi-polar correspondence tradition, but the other Druids worked in a nodal format and needed something to build community, a way to share information and reach out as a recruiting tool. It details the shifting Berkeley historic politics.

Bonewits' 2 year stint editing Gnostica magazine, writing of Real Magic and Druid Chronicles (Evolved), plus his wide-ranging Neo-Pagan contacts, gave Isaac the skills to be publish the Druid Chronicler magazine. After a few years, he launched the Pentalpha organization to build a more organized Druid organization along with the Pentalpha Journal. Divorce & unemployment forced him to suspend the elaborate PJ, and the Druid Chronicler briefly returned. After Isaac left, the Live Oak Grove under Emmon Bodfish published their local "A Druid Missal-Any", which networked the scattered grove until it also faded away. Not long after Emmon's death in 1999, Stacey resumed the Missal-Any and it became the on-line voice of Reformed Druidism.

I suspect that this will be least popular section of ARDA2. because few people like to read old newspapers. Although most of the interesting articles have been lifted from those 27 years of magazines, you might still wish to watch how Druidism changes over time in a slow chronological manner, to put the articles in the context of their times. Reformatted for publication, they are a treasure to cherish and pretty much speak for themselves.

So please brush off the dust of ages past, so that your browsing might reveal insight into your future. Enjoy.

## Part Twelve Conclusion

### 2003 Conclusion

I hope you have remembered in the beginning when I told you that nothing printed in this volume was actually very important for being a Druid. I repeat this sentiment again and again through out the book, and I'm not just doing lip service to the ideal. If you want to be a Druid you'll eventually have to stop finding excuses for not going out in the woods, fields, or even just looking out the window when you have a free moment. You'll be surprised what you discover.

I am not certain, but fate willing, I will put out another collection in 2013 for the Golden Anniversary of the RDNA. Well in advance of that time, if you feel inspired to add something to this collection, be sure to send it to me at mikerdna@hotmail.com. If it is half-decent, it'll probably make it in, but in the meantime, enjoy it all. Please remember that yesterday is history, today is treasure, tomorrow is mystery; so let us treat them as such.

To be continued in ARDA /I: Return of the Druid

### 1996 Conclusion

To be continued in ARDA II,  
Son of A Reformed Druid Anthology: The Druid Strikes Back

## Part Thirteen: DVD of "Gatorr: The Fighting Rabbit"

### 2004 Introduction

The 2 hour barbarian movie, Gatorr, DVD was added to ARDA 2's Magazine Volume as an afterthought because it so captures the spirit of Carleton Druidism in 1995, although it was not strictly intended as a Druidic movie. Mark Heiman '02 and I had ample contacts with members of heavily overlapping Carleton groups like; Carleton Druids, the Folk Music Society, The Folk Dance society, Science Fiction Alliance, Society for Creative Anachronism and the Mystery Science Theatre 3000 club. Armed with only a shoestring budget of \$2000, three long summer months, piles of fake fur & beards, and 6 months of hotly debated scripts, we set out to make Carleton College's first full-length student film, and to briefly turn the amazing foliage and structures of Carleton & Olaf into the mythical wonderland that it is in my heart.

Intentionally awful as it is, Gatorr has a graceful lilt and it is emblematic of the way how Druids fully throw themselves into their projects, with every ounce of their skill, determination and free time. As the script developed, the introduction of several pseudo-religious lines and plot elements began to mature. As all films, it is a self-portrait of the inner workings of the creator. The cynical post-modernist hero is evident, perhaps giving the underlying message that society remolds the less-than-stellar reality of heroic figures to match its needs. From a sheltered, comfortable world, he undertakes new mystical challenges and is sent on a quest to right wrongs, understand himself. Gatorr's a good natured, bumbling fool pushed by circumstances much beyond his control into a leading position some pretensions towards heroism, hindered by his ineptitude. Barbarian is a relative term used by civilized people for others who are mutually not understandable and at a state of lower technological or apparent complexity.

Much of the movie is about walking, as life of even adventurers is mostly spent in travel and commonplace activities, punctuated by decisive moments. And the film shows that in excruciating details to reveal the subtler nature of heroes. Many elements of the movie (e.g. the Slainte & shoes) are purposely obscure in reason and origins, as is much of life's driving forces. There are several wizards and sages in the movie, some benevolent, others driven by deep seated grudges and fears. The element of reconciliation exists, but sadly wasn't developed fully in the movie.

By the time the final book of ARDA 2 comes out, Part Thirteen will have a copy of Gatorr's script, a map of where all the scenes took place, and details about the various actors, most of whom are Druids. If anyone would like a copy of the DVD, send \$10 to cover shipping costs to me, ask for the address at mikerdna@hotmail.com. Enjoy!

## Part Fourteen: ARDA Files CD

To ensure the survival of records of the Reformed Druids in case the main archives collapses, I pass on, and other inevitable developments, I am enclosing a copy of all the ARDA 1 and ARDA 2 files, collections of Druid communications, and other files to all people receiving a copy of the Magazine Volume.

Please save a copy on your computer, and share a copy to be saved on the computers of other responsible Druids. Distribute copies of the files to researchers and new Druids who have trouble locating or downloading on-line files, for whatever reason.

So Endeth  
Vol Ten and the  
Main Volume of  
ARDA 2

Peace, Peace, Peace.