



Volume 30, Issue 2
Spring Equinox
March 24, 2013

Day 52 of Earrach, Year L of the Reform

Editor's Note: Spring comes and young minds turn to Druidry, and meeting other Druids. Even as we ramp up for the **May 3-5** and **June 21-23** reunions at Carleton for the **50th Anniversary**, a mini California reunion happened at PantheaCon in February, and the Quebeckers of Raven Grove went to the British Isles on a tour. And Druids debated a lot. So much material this season, I had to save more for Beltane issue.

Your Editor is living in Washington DC, anticipating another horde of tourists to descend upon his city, and hoping that a few Druids will visit him. There are two large events happening in the Virginia mountains in April May, ADF's Trifolium in April and a pan-Druid in May. Happy travelling.



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News of the Groves



Black Thorn Protogrove: News from Kentucky

Yes, we are still active, but our numbers are now down to four. We are still in Louisville, KY. This email, blackthorngrove@earthlink.net, is still our sole method of contact. We continue to meet once monthly, sometimes twice, and still prefer to remain a protogrove using our own ritual and liturgical model. We do still consider ourselves part of the RDNA movement, despite our relative solitude. Thanks for staying in touch!
-Chris

Rose Rock Grove: News from Oklahoma

We're still here, though nowhere near as active. Stacy and Lyla are back on the road again, so they're rarely in town, and Jeff is in trucking school planning on doing the same. My computer is still broken, so I don't check my e-mail very often to say the least. Our membership number is five, and I think this is still the best e-mail to privately contact me. I think the best public contact is probably going to be Lyla's e-mail at ms.dariana@gmail.com. Noises have been made about making a facebook page, we'll send that info if it actually happens.
-Lydia

Awen Grove: News from Alberta

We are still active. We have 6 members and are based in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. The email address is awengrove@yahoo.ca and our website is <http://awencanada.com>.
Athelia /\

Susset Protogrove: News from California

But grove is defunct and looking for a new location 20 miles East in Vacaville, Ca
Oriana

Triple Horses Grove: News from California

Our grove is still active. Our website is <http://triplehorses.weebly.com>
We have three grove officers. Our attendance for any event, ritual or otherwise, varies from 3 to 30 but it is usually closer to the 3.
Our publishable location is Medford, Oregon
Our contact via facebook is: <http://www.facebook.com/Aigeann>
Our contact via email is: triplehorses@gmail.com

Oakdale Protogrove – News from Minnesota

<http://youtu.be/aT5toj4EG8o>

Time lapse/how-to video of traditional bookbinding techniques. Book in the video is the 50th Anniversary Edition of the Oakdale Protogrove's condensed and adapted ARDA



To the left is my own mini-reliquary for safely & legally transporting the sacramental Waters, but to the right is another reliquary - a bit of a gift investment for the Carleton Grove, unbeknownst to them. This is something that might have to stay in the Carleton College Archive (if non-literature can BE archived) between academic years, but there is more inside and it's quite well padded. With all the effort I put into the druidic "care package," I kinda want to keep it. But this is something meant to be shared. (Is this tax deductible? Hehe)

Bushmills Black Bush wasn't my first choice, as I've never had it before. My general preferences for the Waters are something at least moderately good quality, in which case I based that judgment on price, origin, and interpretation of propaganda on the labels.

I was hoping to find a brand called "The Knot" which is my current favorite (very smooth, "buttery" texture, 100 proof) but it seems to be a relatively rare import in my corner of Minnesota.

I made sure to select a whiskey with a screw-cap, because I was worried a corked whiskey would leak when stored on its side in the lockbox. Can those kind be stored on their side, or will it indeed leak around the cork? Every bottle was at least half an inch too tall to be stored in the box upright.

The Bootstrap Ordination Proposal Theory

You could try my favorite alternative, which I call the "bootstrap method," which is basically picking yourself up by the bootstraps at the grove level... democratically.

1: Start with a minimum of 3 druids, making sure everyone attests belief in the Two Basic Tenets. Here is an excerpt of ARDA-02 under First Order Ordinations: "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"

2: With a minimum of 3 Reformed Druids, hold elections to appoint at least 3 druids to the 2nd Order (one election each) - of course anyone can cast a vote for themselves.

3: To appoint someone to the 3rd Order/Priesthood, an election by at least 3 votes from 2nd Order Druids. The Priest elect must then vigil, then one of the 2nd Order Druids must preside

over ordination the following morning, for in the absence of an existing Arch-Druid, any 2nd Order druid can preside over rituals.

4: Once ordination is complete for the new Arch-Druid, they can now consecrate the Waters-of-Life to the fullest extent, at which point, everyone involved partakes of their belated ordination rituals for both the 1st & 2nd orders to retroactively affirm their positions.

Note: some dogmatic/ultra-orthodox Reformed Druids might not recognize the bootstrap method until the new Arch-Druid partakes of the Waters under a druid with an apostolic succession they can trace back to David Fisher.

Also, it might be just as easy for tech-savvy druids to hold ritual with a 3rd Order Druid over Skype. To my knowledge, telephone ordinations have happened in the past, even for vigils.

White Rabbit Grove: News from Wisconsin

My Grove Revealed, 2013

Nature just dumped another foot of welcome snow upon us, at the top of our Wisconsin hill. I managed to clear the paths to the Grove without falling upon my caboose more than once. Most passers-by don't even know my Grove is there. That's just fine.



Still, my ministry could use a bit of visibility, as it has evolved into a form largely virtual. Belief in one's own existence is worth reaffirming, and so I will render here in words what physical form we have. I still don't want you to visit. When Season of Sleep ends, in less than two weeks, the Grove will be mud, all betwixt and between. Strangers would trample us.

When first White Rabbit Grove came online, we were in a very different physical setting, a riverbank near a protected wetlands area. But then we lost our lease, and the move was traumatic on all levels. As I reflect, in this time of preparation for another cycle of green, we have been at our present elevation for five years! It's about time I got over my mistrust of its possible impermanence. All things have a season. So I celebrate the roots we have established here upon the hilltop.

By the way, despite the Grove's name, there are no white rabbits here, just the regular brown kind. When Mike the Fool named us, I believe he was remarking upon the front teeth of the Archdruid, and I admit I'm not brown in any season. We also are a Grove with only one human member, the others being plants and animals. As the Archdruid fares, so does her Grove, which is as it should be.

Technically we are in an urban area. However our animal members are largely wild-- raccoon, possum, squirrel, hawk, crow, skunk, jay, dove, woodchuck, and so on. There are anthills and mole hills. There are bird nests and a squirrel majordomo. As well as the herbs and flowers I have introduced, there are the outstanding trees, the pillars of our status as Grove.

Most numerous species is the speckled Alder. Alder is a nitrogen-fixing tree, as is black Locust, without the inhibiting effect upon growth at its base that Locust has. Alder's much more generous, as well as a pioneer.

Innumerable tiny insects drill its small leaves for sap year round, so that they constantly fall and regrow. My herbs and flowers cozy up to their very bases, even twine up their trunks.

In addition they serve as Grove 'furniture'-- tool racks, fence posts, tent pegs, and so on. They tend to remain slender and easy to train and prune to shape, never a huge tree. I would change the name of the Grove to Alder, if it weren't so cliché to name Groves after species. This Archdruid cannot get over the presentiment that I may need to relocate again someday and leave my hill of Alders behind.

It's not surprising to find pioneer tree species so numerous here, as the house that used to be here burned down. Another pioneer species, Box Elder, is our second most numerous. Prairie tribes revered this tree, though farther east it's largely a colonizer of so-called waste ground, with wood that is weak and easy to fracture. That is why many people dislike having Box Elders nearby, as they are prone to drop limbs upon one's house in a storm. But if you want a maple in a hurry, they are eager to please, and their plentiful seedlings are sweet in a salad. For those who tap for sap, Box Elder is nearly as fine as Sugar Maple for syrup.

I spend quite a bit of time pruning and weeding the Box Elder volunteers so that they don't crowd out the sunshine, as well as the other species. However I consider them solid Grove citizens, my 'prairie balsawood'.

There are distinguished arboreal holdovers from before the house fire. The most eminent in my estimation are the Chokecherries. When the Archdruid arrived here the parent tree was in its dotage, barely putting out leaf any longer, but around its broken down remains have sprung up colonies of suckers and animal-spread saplings, with wonderful cherry aroma and shiny foliage. In 2012 I was able to taste the first crop of maybe a dozen delicious, stony fruit, suitable for pemmican. Aside from encouraging them to leave the paths clear, I am delighted to let the Chokecherries return.

From the previous house's garden I was gifted with perennial flowers, and also the shrubs Lilac and Honeysuckle. The latter is considered invasive by the state Department of Agriculture, and I must agree, as its bright red berries are never eaten by anything, and it grows so fast that one must constantly cut it back to nearly nothing just to let in the sun. However its golden-white blossoms have their charm, and as a young Druid on vigil I was very grateful for its gift of dry tinder in a drizzle, so I am not about to forbid it in my Grove.

As for Lilac, this fragrant ornamental dots the sites of so many abandoned homesteads that it's practically a resident species of the European invasion, like wild apple and day lily. Though it isn't edible like those examples, organic gardeners have successfully used lilac leaf spray to make garden crops taste bad to pests.

The Grove also boasts distinguished individual representatives of their species. Foremost among them is our huge Blue Spruce, whose dense umbrella of boughs serves as the vestibule of the Grove. Every year it is claimed by a squirrel, as it is highly desirable real estate for them, as well as nest site for several types of birds. Hawk has left signs of its kills here, sometimes squirrel. Blue Spruce and Fir boughs are the best source of bedding if you are going to camp out; I leave it to the critters, as the Archdruid's Residence is in close proximity.

If I were ever to vigil again, by preference it would be upon Spruce's spicy and insulating floor of needles and boughs. When I had no home of my own once upon a time, the conifers provided. I am glad to have at least one conifer represented in the Grove. The previous Grove site ran instead to Cedars both red and white, which are primarily incense trees.

Nowadays my Cedar, as well as my delicious Mulberry, have to come from elsewhere. I don't miss them greatly because they are accessible in my neighborhood, and the humans haven't objected to my gathering thereabouts.

Elm and Silver Maple have crept back as individual exemplars here. Both are fine solid trees with tasty seeds for the Grove members who relish such things. And in 2012 I fund a new baby! For the first time in Grove history, we will have an Oak. Its two small leaves upon a sturdy stem went brilliant red at frost. My heart is glad. I cannot wait for the muddy spring to reveal it again.

I hope you enjoyed this introduction to our Grove. It's not just a bunch of pixels on the web. It's actual beings in an actual place on the planet. Because Nature is Good.

Helgaleena,
Arch druid, White Rabbit Grove
somewhere in Wisconsin

PantheaCon 2013



Jen, John, Sean and Stacey meet up.



News from Order of White Oak

At long last my new website is up at <http://www.elleneverthopman.com/> It is still being tweaked. Please stop by for a visit and send me your suggestions! Just throwing this out as a query - how many folks would be interested in spending a weekend at a gorgeous retreat center in Western MA (they will pick you up at the airport if necessary) to learn Gaelic chants, prayers and Celtic tree lore? Cost would be somewhere around \$250 or so (includes lodging and vegetarian food) plus instruction. www.earthlands.org If you are seriously interested please message me privately. The date would be some time in late summer or fall 2013.

Earthlands | EARTHLANDS

www.instituteforenvironmentalawareness.org

Earthlands is a program center and a working community of Earth Stewards that support and promote "Living & Learning in harmony with the Earth and All Life". All programs and services of Earthlands are within this mission where the focus is on personal growth, ecologically sustainable living.

News from ADF

NEWS from DOMI--I mourn the loss of George Hersh, PhD, early Vice-Archdruid of ADF. NROOGD priest, administrative law judge, biologist, psychologist, dancer, jewelry designer, elder and friend and much more. May the Nature Spirits guide him home, may the Honoured Dead welcome him among them, may the High Ones grant him rest, and rebirth in due time. As it was, as it is, as it will be; there will be a returning for him.



Trillium Spring Gathering

What: Trillium Spring Gathering

When: April 18 - 21, 2013

Where: The Log Cabin Campground, 2058 Morgan Frederick Grade, Cross Junction, VA ([map](#))

Organizers: Grove of the Seven Hills, ADF, CedarLight Grove, ADF

Contact: crystal@cedarlightgrove.org

Website: <http://trilliumgatheringadf.org>

Come out and enjoy Spring together in the beautiful Virginia Highlands with us!

Over the past 15 years Trillium has offered outstanding workshops, becoming a favorite way to shake off the Winter blahs and welcome the renewing Earth at peaceful TLC Campground in Western Virginia. We bring together some of ADF's most dynamic folks for 4 days of games, workshops, ritual, dancing and the celebration of our abiding fellowship. This year we'll focus on magic in workshop and ritual, test our mettle in the ever-popular Circle Challenge and compete in the festival-wide Cattle Raid of the Outsiders! All paths are welcome at Trillium!



May 3-5 and June 21-23
50th Anniversary Reunions
Reformed Druids of North
America (& Friends) at
Northfield
Minnesota  2013
www.rdna.info/reunion.html

50th Anniversary Reunions of Reformed Druidism in 2013

There will be two separate celebrations in 2013 of the 50th Anniversary of the Reformed Druids of North America that was founded May 1, 1963.

The **primary** celebration will be the weekend of May 3-5, 2013. The **secondary** celebration (and smaller) will be June 21-23, 2013. <http://www.rdna.info/reunion.html> for more info.

Spread the news!

Feel free to float this picture and blurb out on social media:

Where Druidism in America began! On Saturday, at Noon, on May 4th, the Carleton Grove of the Reformed Druids of North America will celebrate it's 50th anniversary with a service on the Hill of Three Oaks on the campus of Carleton College in Northfield Minnesota. All Reformed Druids, other Druid organizations, their friends, the curious, and well-wishers are welcome to join us for a lovely slate of activities, maypole dancing, picnics, discussion, and campfires all that weekend, May 3rd to 5th. A smaller but similar gathering will occur on Alumni weekend on Saturday June 22nd. Please see <http://www.rdna.info/reunion.html> for more details, contact info and maps. Updates will be posted regularly. Please RSVP by email to mikerdna@hotmail.com or Facebook message your interest to [mike.thefool](#) with your name, people travelling with you, contact information, email addresses, which dates you plan to attend, what Druid group you belong to, and list what special interests, requests or needs you have.

Rough Schedules

The final schedule is here, with things getting shuffled about no doubt at last minute without warning by an hour. Ad hoc tours, discussions, and alternative rain-event locations will be designated.

The *tentative* May Reunion event schedule, as of **January 22**, is:



- May 3 - 8pm Campfire at Druid's Den (in the trees near the Hill of Three Oaks)
- May 4 - Noon 50th Anniversary service for Reformed Druids of North America at the Hill of Three Oaks
- May 4 - 1 pm Picnic at the Stone Circle of the Upper Arboretum
- May 4 - 8 pm Campfire at Druid's Den (in the trees near the Hill of Three Oaks)
- May 5 - 5:30 am Sunrise service at Hill of Three Oaks

and the Summer Reunion tentative schedule, as of **January 22** is:

- June 21 - 8pm Campfire at Druid's Den (in the trees near the Hill of Three Oaks)
- June 22 - Noon 50th Anniversary service for Reformed Druids of North America at the Hill of Three Oaks
- June 22 - 1 pm Picnic at the Stone Circle of the Upper Arboretum
- June 22 - 8 pm Campfire at Druid's Den (in the trees near the Hill of Three Oaks)
- June 23 - 5:30 am Sunrise service at Hill of Three Oaks for vigilers.

Resources

Maps of the campus, arboretum, travel info, hotel listings, and advice are in a travel document called [Reunion Travel, Maps and Lodging](#)

Joining the [RDNA Facebook group page](#) is a good way to keep up with developments.

Regular e-mails of any updates will also be mailed out every few weeks by Mike@rdna.org (or message me on Facebook to [mike.thefool](#)) to those who have voluntarily RSVP'd with him. **I will not be at the events (due to problems) by John Michael Martens and Richard Shelton will be there at those times (more or less).**

Feel free to bring a gift to the Carleton Grove, but bear in mind TSA at the airport. I can provide a mailing address in Northfield if you need to mail it.

Reunion Rules - Version 2.0

1. No campfires except in designated firepits.
2. No camping in the forest
3. BYOB, BYOF, BYOStuff.
4. Do not damage the arboretum.
5. The students are hosting us, respect their wishes for the schedule.
6. Do not get wildly drunk, cause trouble, or be impolite.
7. This is primarily an event for Reformed Druid activities, but liturgical demonstrations, blessings, readings and gifts from other groups can be worked into services and the schedule, with enough planning.
8. There is little to no crash space or financial assistance available.
9. There are no merchant table opportunities, but feel free to talk about your products or services.
10. You may wear ritual or casual clothing.
11. The reunions are *not* planned as a clothing-optional event.
12. Use of illegal substances is not welcome.
13. Carleton College is private property and possession of firearms is not permitted. Displays of edged weapons may be inappropriate to some guests.
14. Fire conditions will determine whether campfires, candles or other burning objects are safe and permissible in designated spots.
15. Please coordinate any ordinations, vigils, marriages, or other liturgical activities with the organizers.
16. If foul weather occurs, alternate indoor activities will be available.
17. There are no fees to attend, nor any membership requirements to be in any branch of the Reformed Druidic movements. Please be respectful of others' differences.
18. Do not take photographs or record proceedings without advance coordination, and permission of those present.
19. What you do in the woods on Beltane morning with your sweetie is none of our business.
20. **Have fun!**

Road Trip to the British Isles



Penny's Thoughts from the British Isles

So it was, on a chilly October evening that I felt a need, a need to visit my former home, my birthplace, and my parents who still lived in Wales, where I was born. To travel so far, and yet the place is always near, for I carry my birthplace forever in my heart. The Land of my Fathers remains ever close. Hiraeth was upon me, and had crept up on me, shortly after Samhain, which upon reflection makes perfect sense to me. This yearning filled me with melancholy. I had, not a week past, met our grove members and been part of a very emotional Samhuin ritual, and then while in deep meditation felt myself being called to a mountain top associated with my childhood, in the middle

of a raging storm and chanting Awens on the wind. I later wrote a poem of my experience of the longing and yearning of Hiraeth. My connection to the land of my birth and ancestors was calling me home, and so it was on that chilly October night in Canada that I answered, the call, and found myself up in the Black Mountains of Wales, chanting.

In the days that followed, I invited my grove members to accompany me on my journey across the Atlantic. Karen accepted my invitation, and so we spent some exciting hours booking flights, which was followed by weeks of planning for our journey. My parents were incredibly excited at the prospect of seeing me, as they hadn't laid eyes on their daughter for two years past.

It was all very euphoric. How does one pick sacred sites to visit when there are so many in that part of the world? I tried to bear in mind, while pondering these wonderful sacred sites, what would my dear grove sister Karen like to see. So we proceeded to devise lists of places and I equated the time it would take to visit the sites. By process of elimination we narrowed it down to the most important places we would like to visit. Not forgetting our gracious hosts, mum and dad, who wanted desperately to spend time with me.

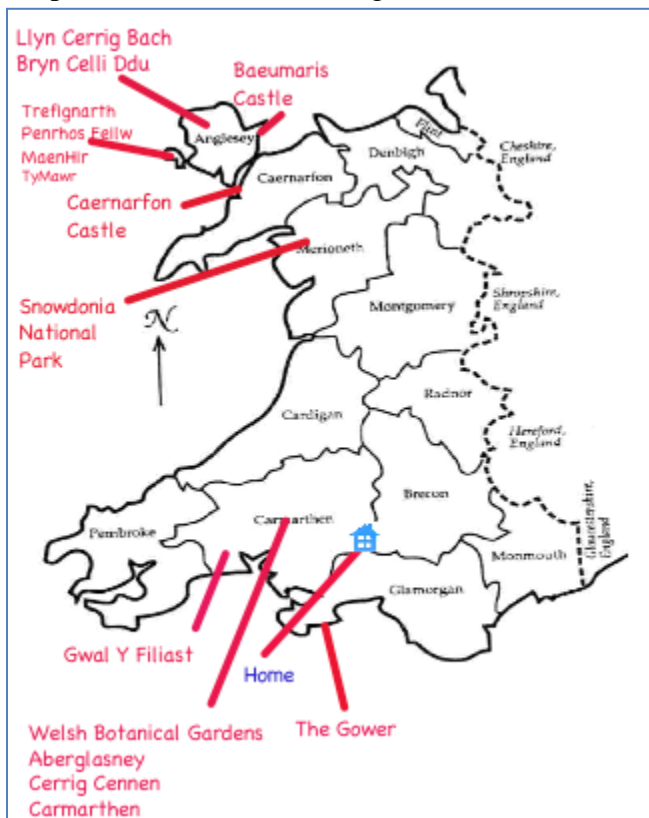
We booked flights for late January with a return in early February. This gave us the opportunity to spend Imbolg with another Grove, and escape the the coldest time of winter in Canada. This however, wasn't without its complications. Luggage allowance leaves little room for regular clothing when carrying ritual clothing. That being said; it was a must that we were to be ritually attired for Imbolg. The only exclusion from my luggage was my staff, I was terrified of placing it in the cargo-hold of the plane. So I decided that I would cut a new oak staff, from one of the numerous oak trees surrounding my mum's garden. This I did, and placed upon the newly cut staff my dragon pendant, the one Sebastian had so graciously carved and gifted to me that past Yule. The venue was set, flights booked, invites and meetings arranged and luggage prepared way ahead of time. The only thing remaining was for Karen and I to prepare ourselves psychologically for a very special pilgrimage. Our plans were to examine, where possible, trees, cromlechs, stone circles, and megalithic structures on the route to Glastonbury.

We set out from Ottawa, on a cold January afternoon. For the first time in years I found myself not sleeping on the plane. Most of the six hours of flight time were spent happily chatting about our expectations although

there were brief periods when my stomach roiled and boiled, as they say. For me, this was a pilgrimage back to my birthplace, where the hills and valleys, the sea and mountains formed my early life. The mountains, echoes of ages past when bards would tell their tales, the myths and legends of the Mabinogi were plucking at my heart and I soared ever high. This is my birthplace. This is the soil that has felt and heard my footfalls. This is the Land of my Fathers. It recalls a quote from none other than Master Tolkien himself “ Welsh is of this soil, of this this island, and is the senior language of the men of Britain; and Welsh is beautiful“. I was longing to plant my feet in Welsh soil and feel that connection grow in me again.

As the plane descended into Heathrow, I looked out the window. The sun was shining, unusual for this time of the year, no fog. Tears trickled down my face. The plane landed. I caught my breath, and marveled how good it was to feel alive, to be here at this very moment. Mum and Dad, smiling faces, and watery eyes filled with emotion, I caught my breathe again.

Just another four and half hours by car, until we reach the mountains that signal the nearness of home. The glorious greenery, the dampish air that makes breathing so easy. I reveled in it all as we sped down the motorway. Karen and I taking photos from the car. Then it happened, “Croeso i Gymru” (Welcome to Wales). We sped over the Severn Bridge into Wales. More tears. More smiles.



My parents live in the village of Garnant on the hillside across from the north black mountain range that forms part of the Pembrokeshire & Brecon Beacons range of the National Parks of Wales. These are on the borders of two counties: West Glamorgan and Dyfed. The area is of outstanding natural beauty and ranges down the valleys and rolling hills to the sea coasting the areas of Swansea, Gower and Pembrokeshire.

We eventually arrived home. I had two things in mind. First, a massive mug of tea. Second, to run upstairs and stick my head out of the skylight to look at the delights of Mynydd Ddu, the hilly range that dominates the landscape on the west side of the house. It’s a wondrous sight of rugged, unspoiled beauty, tall dark mountains of rock, shrouding the eastern area of the valley. I felt great, but something greater than I was out there! It is the greatness of echoes and whispers from the mountains that tell of invaders. It is the music of the people who farm on the mountainsides, and of the miners who toil inside. The mountains are the heartbeat of Wales.

Next morning, I once again stuck my head through the skylight, to watch the dawn come over Mynydd Ddu. I felt like a child taking it’s very first step on an adventure; full of wonder, full of awe, and full of inspiration. From a druid’s perspective (for this was my first visit to my birthplace since I was initiated) I was filled and nourished by Awen. Although my words don’t do it justice for Awen’s expanse is infinite and ever nourishing as the three rays suggest. I felt inspired, ready for an adventure. Nature itself was speaking to me loud and clear.

We visited many places in our travels, both in Wales and England. My only regret is that we didn’t make it to Ireland. Certainly, another visit will be planned, and I will once again have the pleasure of casting my eyes on

such beauty as Tara and New Grange, but for now, I am totally enchanted with love for my homeland of Wales. The mountains, the valleys, the trees, the very soil, echo my name.

In Wales we visited The Gower, Cerrig Cennen Castle, The Welsh National Botanical Gardens, Carmarthen, Aberglasney, St Fagan's Welsh National Folk Museum, Gwal-y-Filiast AKA Bwrrdd Arthur, Llanglydwen, Snowdonia, Yns Mon, Bryn Celli Ddu, Caernarfon Castle, Beaumaris Castle, Llyn Cerrig Bach, Ty Mawr, and Penrhos.

All these sites are magnificent.

The Gower coastline boasts numerous awards for its spectacular coastline, and its nature sanctuaries. Most recently Rhossili beach was rated as the best in the U.K., third in Europe, and tenth in the world by "TripAdvisor".

Gower is also noted for the discovery of The Red Lady of Paviland, an Upper-Paleolithic -era human male skeleton. The skeleton, first thought to be female has now been classified as a male. Discovered in 1823 it is the first human fossil to have been found anywhere in the world, and at 33,000 years old is still the oldest ceremonial burial of a modern human discovered in Western Europe. The bones were discovered 1823 by Rev. William Buckland, during an archaeological dig at Goat's Hole Cave; one of the caves between Port Enynon and Rhossili, on the Gower Peninsula, South Wales.



Cerrig Cennen Castle is situated to the North of Swansea, close to lovely village of Trapp. The fortress sits high up on the hillside facing the Black Mountains. The first structure it would seem was 12th century, since then it has been replaced to what we see today. The stronghold has a very eventful past surrounding it, from Welsh royalty to King Arthur warrior stories. Besides the obvious spectacular scenery of the surrounding countryside and the mountains, one of the castle's most exciting features for me, is the cave, that leads out and down from the inner ward into the bowels of the castle itself. There lies a very steep passage that leads into a limestone

cave. There has been much speculation as to what this space was used for. From my prospective, I had, what I would term, as a rather odd experience down there. I had the sensation that people had been trapped in there, and still were trapped, and that I was being watched. I had to venture back up to the inner ward to ground myself twice. The first time I had this sensation, I was overwhelmed with heat, which remained with me for some time. The second time I was more prepared. I did post a picture with an orb on it, in the location I sensed all this, the picture is on FaceBook. I wasn't scared, just somewhat overwhelmed. I also attuned again, up in the inner ward, and sensed more activity. I have yet to speculate on my experience.

The Welsh National Botanical Gardens and Aberglasney House are especially interesting for those who like the restoration of historical buildings, landscaping, plants and trees. I highly recommend these attractions.

The Welsh National Botanical Gardens is a centre for botanical research and conservation spread out around a beautiful 600-acre Regency park, with 200-year-old historical features, modern architecture, landscapes, and a collection of approximately 100,000 different plants. There are a variety of restored buildings, an apothecary, Middleton Hall, as well as numerous gardens to suit all tastes, complete with the largest greenhouse I have ever seen. Conservation is at the heart of the gardens, hence "The Welsh Rare Plants Project", which you can be read about on their website.

Aberglasney House has a little special place in my heart with its the magnificent restoration of the house, and its the various gardens, The Cloister Gardens and the Yew Tunnel are particularly lovely and enchanting. The atrium in the house, would make a wonderful meditation room, with light cascading in from the sky lights and windows.



Carmarthen is a delightful market town, filled with the mysteries of Merlin, as is the whole county. You will find a marvelous statue of Merlin in the town, which was carved with a chainsaw. There are numerous legends associated with this county, as well as many megalithic stones and cromlechs. You can check out numerous online sites for this ancient welsh town.

The Welsh National Folk Museum in St Fagans, is a must for all who wish to get a full experience of Welsh culture and history. They have an outdoor museum as well an an indoor museum. Sadly the indoor museum was closed at the time of our visit, and so was

the wood henge site. Many buildings have been moved from the original site to the museum, where they have been restored, complete with authentic furniture. You will see beehives, farms, a wood henge, tanneries, kilns, miners cottages, a Celtic village, just to name a few. Inside you will be able to enjoy exhibits of love spoons, welsh knots, weaving, bardic chairs etc. A fantastic day out, you will need the whole day to properly appreciate this site.

Gwal y Filiast , (Bwrdd Arthur). This was my favorite site, of all the wonderful places and sites I visited with Karen. Situated near Llaglydwen in the Preseli Hills, Gwal y Filiast, nestles a hidden gem of a small cromlech, surrounded by a grove of enormous beech trees. The cap stone points in a westerly direction towards Afon Taf (River Taf), which can be heard clearly from the site. This site really was like going on an adventure. It took quite some time to find it. I got the impression that I was most definitely being tested, but I was determined not to give up. After receiving directions from villagers, and having problems with the ordnance survey map. We arrived at the lay-by located north of the site. We proceeded to get on our wellies and boots and warm clothing, cause it's quite a walk down to the site. We had arrived bang on cue, it was twilight. My favorite time to do workings of the mystical kind. The access to the site from the north, takes you down a public footpath, which runs right past a farm.

There were no sign posts except at the head of the lane which read " Penbontbren". This is the name of the farm, which seems to translate to "above the wooden bridge". Down the farm lane, past the farm house, down through a series of gates and tracks, I would say approximately a mile from the road where we parked. It seemed to take along time to get down, and the footing was muddy and wet. In the twilight the darkness descended and was quite ominous when surrounded by trees and the sound of swift moving water from the river Taf.

It was also odd in the sense that once through the last gateway, the atmosphere changed, from one of being tested and not welcoming, to a deep sense of peace and sanctuary. Walking the last couple of hundred yards into the grove of woodland was like passing through some kind of boundary. As I attuned to my surroundings I looked up because I could feel the unmistakable presence of the trees. They where protecting the cromlech. They stood like sentries around the whole site, great big beech trees. The sun was nearly setting amongst the

trees, and I wondered what other people had made of this view. Karen entered the grove behind me. I felt this to be a special place protected by other custodians as well as the big beech trees.

The whole site created for me a shift of consciousness. I was very happy to be here. I walked over to the cromlech, and stood, just looking. I went in and sat, and smiled as the sun dipped out of sight. The feelings I had in the cromlech were of acceptance, and I would have been happy to stay all night, in a dreamlike state. I came out and thought to take some photos but realized I had forgotten to bring my camera. Karen obliged, and we got some photos. I will definitely visit the 'greyhounds lair' again, and maybe spend quite a few hours there. It was a surreal experience that I will forever hold dear.

Snowdonia is breathtaking, you will be swept off your feet, and find yourself on the doorstep of Dinas Affaraon in a blink of an eyelid. For those of you who are lovers of the Mabinogi and the myths and legends of old, just a few hours in this national park, will leave spouting words of poetry and endearment. It will penetrate your psyche and perhaps even leave you with a sense that, there is something greater than oneself. For me this was over whelming, in fact I sniveled away in the car, with Karen comforting me because I had denied myself for many years to feel such beauty, but now I had awoken to it. It was calling to me, "here I am, look at me". My connection to this land and in particular the mountains, had awoken my dragons heart and it now nourished me. The steep winding road up the valleys, surrounded by the walls and peaks, of rugged wild beauty, left me feeling humbled. I was in awe of the living breathing landscape that encompassed me. From the coal mining valleys of South Wales to the slate mining valleys of North Wales through which we now travelled, industrialization changed the face of my country. Still this soil calls to me, and echoes in my being, just as much as I breathe new life into it, with each word that forms in my mind and I put down on paper, it breaths new life into me, and this is how I would describe this connection. I have seen many mountains, in many distant lands, but none speak to me, like The Land of My Fathers. This wondrous, bleak, wet landscape is my home, and I have been gifted with what I seek.

Awen.

Beaumaris Castle and Caernarfon Castle are great examples of castles in Wales. Our landscape is littered with castles, ranging from modern reproductions like Coed Coch, to castles built during the campaign of Edward the First in North Wales and from these stemmed many more.

The remains of these fortified residences still dominate a lot of the Welsh landscape. Each built in different periods, each with its own style, from moats, to caves and dungeons. Castles can be explored until the heart is contented, and you get a taste of what life could be during those times. Of interest to some, Caernarfon in modern times was the place of the Investiture of HRH Prince of Wales. The plastic balcony the Royals stood on mars the facade of the castle to this day.

Ynys Mon, the Druids Isle, The Honey Isle, has a very colorful and disturbing history. There are many sites here, that one such as myself would wish to spend lots of time. We where incredibly fortunate to meet with our gracious host for the day, and fellow country man, Kristopher Hughes. A very charismatic, like-minded, druid author, who is a native of this soil. We met in the tea rooms of Plas Newydd and Kristopher guided us around many of the sacred sites as time would permit.

We visited Bryn Celli Ddu "the mound of the dark grove" where, Kris and the Anglesey Druid Order (ADO) meet for gatherings to celebrate, the solstices. The chamber itself dates to around 2,000 B.C., but the history of the site dates back a further thousand years. The mound which envelopes the structure is marked by a circle of small kerb stones, set at about 30 metres in diameter. Excavations have uncovered evidence of hearths outside the entrance, together with an ox burial inside a three-sided shelter, and a scattering of quartz pebbles. The procession up to the chamber, draws you in. Offerings were given to Briant, in the lovely rivulet, and Kris lovingly said a few words. The chamber itself was incredibly atmospheric, as Kris smudged with herbs, described the effect of the sunlight hitting the quartz in the rock walls. There is a stone pillar inside, one which

I would assume would have been used for ritual purposes, as well as a replica of a pattern stone outside. The original can be found in the National Museum Of Wales.



Another site is Llyn Cerrig Bach, a lake next to an RAF military base, where over 150 Iron Age offerings were discovered. Recently the finds have been dated from between 300BC to 100AD. Given such a broad range, it is now thought that this wasn't one offering but many offerings. There was a very odd atmosphere here, perhaps a feeling, a sense that I was walking in the footsteps of people before me. The ancient side-by-side with the modern - parallel with the military RAF base. AT Penrhos, in the centre of a farmer's field stands maen hir, two standing stones or portal stones. It is a mystery left to be discovered, as to what these stones represent, what they did. They have been dated 2000 to 1500 BC, facing outward to Snowdonia and

and Holyhead. It is clear that this area has been a site for much activity and many more discoveries are yet to be made, since it is very near to Plas Meilw (TY Mawr).

Ty Mawr is a site of around 10 or more stone remains, of circular huts, dating back to early Neolithic and Bronze Age. The complex is fairly well preserved. Grinding stones are easily visible giving one a sense of home life of this period. Some of the remains are identified as store houses and other, more elaborate, are assumed to be houses of important personages. This site certainly gives you a feel of how our ancestors lived.

Trefignath burial chamber boasts magnificent tall portal stones, and implements of stone and flint have been found at the site. The dating suggests that this has had been used over a long period of time, and the site does emphasize to the significance of these monuments in Neolithic times.

Our excursion in Anglesey was during a damp misty day. However, Kris us treated us to tea and cake at his home, where he and his partner Ian, gave us great insight into their wonderful experiences along their spiritual journey. So nice of them to share with us. Karen and I left with nice memories of nice people living in a very interesting area of discovery.



Well our edifying ramblings through Wales now stretched across the border into England. Lots of educative sites to browse. the Long Man Of Wilmington, Glastonbury, Stonehenge, West Kennet Long Barrow, Avebury and more, but time was everything, and we were pushed to the limit to take them all in.

Our first visit was to the Anederida Grove open gathering to celebrate Imbolg. This was a new

experience for both of us. Here was our opportunity to gather at the foot of "The Long Man" in a larger grove of people all under the wing of Damh the Bard, and Cerri Lee.



Karen and I are of RDNA and OBOD lineage, and we wanted to experience Imbolg in the U.K., which offered a slightly different ritual. Our grove (Clairière du Corbeau - Raven's Grove) is very eclectic in it's nature, so I wasn't disappointed when I experienced a larger grove with different traditions, but along with the different traditions were some very familiar ones. I particularly enjoyed the uplifting chanting, the holding of hands, and the eisteddfod. The location was enchanting, and the friendly welcome very heartfelt. Karen and I made new friends and we enjoyed a really instructive and uplifting experience.

Our next place of call was Glastonbury and here we stayed for two nights at Bere House, a pleasant comfortable B&B. If the future is kind and I am sure it will be, I shall return to Glastonbury and hopefully Bere House will again make me very welcome.

Glastonbury has been described as a New Age Community and in many ways attracts people with New Age and Neopagan beliefs. It is also notable for myths and legends related to Glastonbury Tor, Joseph of Arimathea, the Holy Grail, and King Arthur. In some Arthurian literature Glastonbury is identified with the legendary island of Avalon. Joseph is said to have arrived in Glastonbury and stuck his staff into the ground, and it flowered miraculously into the Glastonbury Thorn. The presence of a landscape zodiac around Glastonbury has been suggested but no evidence has been discovered. The Glastonbury Festival, held in the nearby village of Pilton, takes its name from the town.

A lovely sunny English morning; not hot, but blue skies and just enough warmth to be comfortable. Breakfast was nice and we and headed out. The first sight of the Tor was from the street outside of Bere House. The Tor towered over the town. I imagined the view must be spectacular from such a lofty height.

We strode up the street, cloaks on and staves at hand. How refreshing it was to be so attired but draw no curious attention. We walked past the Chalice Well Gardens to the path leading straight up the Tor, rather than taking the winding terraces which would have impinged upon our tight schedule. One day I shall take the winding terraces and count every step of the way, and tread the labyrinth up to the Tor.

At the top stands St Michael's Tower. Excavations have revealed the outlines of two churches of St Michael, of which only the 15th-century roofless tower remains. Glastonbury Tor also has a grisly past. Abbot Richard Whiting was executed here in 1549 on the orders of Thomas Cromwell, the first Earl of Essex for his adherence to the Roman Catholic faith.

St Dunstan, who became abbot of Glastonbury in about 940, introduced the Benedictine order. Around about 1190, seven years after a fire had destroyed the abbey completely, monks proclaimed they had 'found' the tomb of King Arthur and Guinevere - quite possibly as a way of attracting pilgrims and supplementing their coffers. The Tor is further known as being one of the most spiritual sites in the country. Its pagan beliefs are still a cause for much celebration. It can also be very windy and cold (it was).

From the top the view is wonderful. The summit of the Tor, is indeed breathtaking, you can see for miles. There are many myths and historical attributes to Glastonbury Tor, far to numerous to mention. But once on

the summit, you do get a sense of its spirituality. So much history, so many tales associated with this site. It is a very special place, and one can easily sense and visualize what it must have looked like as “The Isle of Avalon”. I happily sat looking out over the expanse. When we had taken in enough, of the lofty heights I was drawn to quickly descend where I grounded myself, and gradually attuned to the lower terra firma.

For me it was somewhat overwhelming. The St Michael and the St Mary, dragon lines (ley lines) which connect many of Albion’s important archaeological and pagan sites, seemed a little to much, and the energy left me feeling dizzy. Down below I felt much better.



From the Tor we and headed to the Chalice Well Gardens. The feel of this place, was quite different to the headiness of the Tor. The gardens are serene and peaceful with ample opportunities to find a suitable place for reflection, contemplation, and meditation. Exquisitely designed and cared for, a sanctuary for all, not just for someone of my persuasion. Water features throughout, spiral walkways, devotional spaces, phenomenal yew trees. You really feel it in your being, that Spring had been born here. The Chalice Well itself was adorned with fresh cut flowers and candles for the Goddess. Perched above the well, a bird, happily ate away at seed left no doubt by a bird lover.

This is a place to be nurtured and nourished, a place of tranquility and contemplation, a place where you feel the goddess in her many forms. A place that I feel, I will visit many times.

At lunchtime we stopped off at Bere House, changed, and headed into town for lunch and shopping. The town itself, is unlike any place I have ever been. Every faith, spirituality, religion is in this town. For druids, like Karen and myself, it is a most agreeable and uplifting place to be. Such wonderful esoteric stores, organic stores, pubs and restaurants. We had a wonderful lunch in the Rainbow Cafe, all manner of vegetarian delights served here, washed down with a bottle of dandelion and burdock pop! I think we hit every esoteric store that we could find, along with all the clothing shops. At this point I began wondering about luggage allowances, but just couldn’t resist being just a little of a spendthrift. We shopped until the stores closed, returned to Bere House, showered, changed, and returned to town for dinner. This we had in a wonderful pub named The George and Pilgrim. Over 500 hundred years old. Stained glass windows adorned the lounge, suits of armor and tapestries adorned the walls. What a lovely place to be. Glastonbury is a must for people on a spiritual path. The acceptance in this small town is what makes it so very special to people like myself.

Another glorious day, and we are driving to Stonehenge, West Kennet Long Barrow, and Avebury.

At Stonehenge it is rather peculiar to stand at the edge of such a magnificent monument, and not be able to touch the stones, to feel the stones, to connect directly to the stones, except in one’s psyche. Yes, this is a world heritage site. There was a time, when you could walk to these stones and greet them. It saddens me that this is no longer the case because of deterioration at the site. The English Heritage Trust has fenced and roped the entire monument as an act of protection. Druids are allowed to officiate pagan gatherings for the solstices, and archeological digs are permitted.

Stonehenge is now a mirage of the old and the new. Tour buses, gift stores, cafes, people and traffic everywhere. The tour guides are well versed in their knowledge both from an archeological point and a pagan

perspective. I think they have done rather well with that particular point; however, everything else is somewhat marred. To find the sacred you need to put all the tourist clutter out of your mind and I found that very hard to do. I have been fortunate to visit the stones a few times, but now their profundity is markedly less. People travel from all over the world to come and see Stonehenge. And today's travelers are not so different from travelers of long ago.



So many theories, still elusive as ever. Their meaning for people back then and now, is vague and ambiguous but we still feel reverence while visiting these giants of this sacred circle and wonder at their mysteries. The stones dominate the landscape, beacon-like they demand our attention.

West Kennet Long Barrow is one of the many prehistoric monuments that are part of the Avebury complex of Neolithic sites situated along a 200-meter contour line overlooking Silbury Hill, one-and-a-half miles south of Avebury. There is a small lay-by on the main road and then a ten minute walk to the barrow. On our walk to the barrow we spied a clotie

tree. Further along the walk I felt myself being drawn toward the tomb area.

The sun was beginning to set, and my feelings were similar those I experienced at the cromlech in Preseli Hills - a presence of peace. I gave offerings and scattered them around. In the barrow was a distinct smell of old damp air that permeated throughout.



When Karen gifted our grove with stones collected from this site, the smell was again noticeable, it is a smell I recognize from other ancient sites.

This particular barrow, is in good shape, and has endured well against the elements and excavations. It is the second longest in Britain and measures 100 meters, with two chambers to the left, two chambers to the right, and one at the end. It has been excavated by John Aubrey,

William Stukeley, and most recently Piggott and Atkinson in 1955-56.

These tombs, contained pottery of various kinds, beads made of bone, stone and shells, flint tools, and animal bones. Its funerary importance is obvious, along with the fact that it's aligned east-west, in accordance with the daily path of the sun. Very few intact skeletons have been excavated and it leads to assumptions that bones were often removed for rituals

Avebury, just one-and-a-half miles from West Kennet contains the largest stone circle in Europe. One large circle encloses two smaller circles. Unlike Stonehenge you can walk through the stone circles and touch the stones. A large henge ditch surrounds the outer circle and encloses the complex. It has been built and altered many times. It is part of the wider complex of Neolithic and bronze age monuments in the same area: Stonehenge, Silbury Hill, West Kennet. We arrived just after sunset, which is a shame, because I much preferred this site to Stonehenge. It is more accessible. The stones seem plonked down randomly and tourism at the site seems quite light compared to Stonehenge. There is a very welcoming feel to this site, you can go

and explore, for as long as you wish. I would have loved to have seen it in the daylight and have put it on my list for a future visit.



So, my trip to “The Land Of My Fathers” closes. Someone in UK sings of a “New World in the Morning” and that now seems to be my course and my home. It is goodbye to the old world, but I shall return. Wales has magnetism and close associations with Celtic lore that are close to my heart.

Karen and I had a fantastic time. It was incredibly busy, but inside of us we had a need to see what we planned to see, and apart from our called-off Irish trip, we were quite successful in our itinerary.

For me and my personal beliefs, this trip was a reaffirmation. My sense of belonging

and connection to Wales is incredibly strong even though I have chosen husband and hearth in a beautiful country far far from Wales. I have tested my bonds and I have love for all.

My practise of druidry has made my bonds with the land, the seasons, and nature stronger. However, there exists a disconnection felt by a lot of us that our bonds are not strong because we have not nurtured a sense of belonging.

Our connection to land, nature, culture, and people bonds us like links on a chain, and gives us a sense of belonging and welcoming. When we feel we belong and feel welcome, we have a sense of participating in life. When we participate in life, we feel we are contributing to its enrichment. Neighbor not talking to neighbor is how we start to weaken the bonds that give us participation, contribution is lost, and so is the sense of belonging.

My sense of belonging and welcome enables me to participate in life and contribute to life’s enrichment. These are the core values that form the foundations of my druidic practice.

Enjoy!

Penny Leyson-Young

Druid Poetry

The Time We Share Are The Gifts You Bare

Father the time we share, are the gifts you bare. The lessons of speech and academic teach, a life of giving, and infinite willing, you paved the way, so family might stay, in the comfort of the hearth, you chose your path.

Father the time we share are the gifts you bare. A daddy's girl i have always been, innocence to a teenage scene from the tender age of a child, to the adult world i now find. We discovered the rock's and sea's salty air, we walked the shops without a care. You guided my hand and inspired me, to love and live life in all that i see.

Father the time we share, are the gifts you bare. Know that your efforts have never been in vain, you have given me the world, even when not to your gain. You gave me strength when doubt towered over me, you made me smile when i couldn't see.

A daddy's girl i have always been, you made it possible for me to dream, you gave me the world and let me fly. I will always be the apple of your eye.
Father the time you share are the gifts you bare.

Mum we have giggled and laughed keenly, we have been on adventures all meaningly. We have tramped over hills, and waded marshy ground, looking for ponies, dogs, will they ever be found.

Mum the time we share are the gifts you bare. Lessons of love can be genteel as a dove, a life of self worth, that you did give birth. Always different, always free, great confidence, you gave to me.

Mum the time we share are the gifts you bare. A mam's girl is clear to be seen, non stop talking on the social scene. From the tender age of a child, obnoxious teenager, and the adult i find. We discovered raging hormones and passions flare, the twisty path, i'm the moody mare. You guided my hand, and bolstered me, you rocked me in your arms and then set me free.

Penny

A Bardic Blessing

A clear blue sky on a warm Sunny morning.
May be the Flower blooming on this Sunny Day.
And none dare pluck you as they walk your way.
The bees come visit and your seeds live and bloom on another Sunny day.

TDK (George King)

The Quest

As above, and so below,
I walk the middle plane,
As those before and those ahead,
I search for knowledge gained.

My fingers touch the earth upon,
my eyes gaze to the skies,
my feelings are whispered words,
as I ask a thousand why's?

The search is but a life long query,
my quest is nary straight,
much like a dusty book in an old library,
the answers are worth the wait.

j~anglehart 2013

I see often request for helping small animals that of course need room to live and protection from the grinding killing
Civic wheels of Man.

And yes I do help every day.
In my humble and simple way.
A bit of food both from plate and Pay.
Goes to the Goddess's children each and every Day.
For surely in these hard times for Nature, this is the Druid Way.

But what of Wars and wrongs, of GMOs deadly Farms?
We have only weak and chicken peep to say of these great Harms.

Once we were the right had of Kings and of our wisdom they did obey
Now those new elected Kings do in our good names awful crimes every hour of the Day.

Today's Druids, few do dare or perhaps do care enough put their names much less their life on the Ley.

Lets put on our robes bring our Bells and our Votes demand new wiser Kings and a better Way.

Or Fracking and GMO clones with flying Drones.
Creating a dead land with fearful serfs in camera Zones.
Will be all that's left and no one will have a rightful tongue.
Or legal right to give a Druid's say.

It is all been Written in the Past.
We have let the deadly die be cast.
But now we must take a stand.
Extend our hand and take their bones away.
For it is up to us the Druids to weaver the better way.
TDK (George King)

Druid Child written in the milk of Oimelc's ink

Let bars of Iron not bind its mind to be another Man Cow.
Or touch the burning brand of Adam to its Shining Brow
So few are born like it with the Third Eye.
Goddesses Ceridwen's special gift, the Awen of Why.
Be it born a She or He the Druid Soul carieth not a Jot.
For it is not the sex that has cast this special child's sacred Lot.
But in its Blood there is an invisible third stand of cosmic DNA.
The Ancient Oak's hidden Gift to the Druid's Soul Way.
And with it, a Child is born in the knowledge of the Ley.
This rare blood carries special kinship to all that's wild or pagus still alive Today.
To it Awen flows down from the ancient and sacred Oak that Groves.
Only in the far off lost lands of the Fae.
Where they guard its ancient life each Night to Day.
Through all five seasons of the mystic Dark and Light.
From those on Earth born to the ancient evil Way.
Yet still rule over man, even to this very modern Day.
Their goal to cut down this Ancient and sacred Oak.
And of its wood, finish Humanities final Yoke.
To gain ultimate power for them there is no other Way.
Still as long a Druid child is born and remembers ancient Ley.
A blind and lost Humanity will remain somewhat free for another Day.

If this tale rings deep in the well of mind for You.
Doubt not its flash of strange but sweet Awen.
As Goddess Ceridwen has blessed your tongue with just a drop or Two
And she need not to give reference to old Men with Silk and Bordered Robes
That used the wood from our sacred Groves to feed the fires of their Roman Globes.

The Druid King

Copyrite George King February 22, 2013

When you die, only **three things will remain of you**, since you will abandon all material things on the threshold of the Otherworld;

1. what you have taught to others,
2. what you have created with your hands,
3. and how much love you have spread.

So learn more and more in order to teach wise, long-lasting values. Work more and more to leave the world things of great beauty. And love, love, love people around you for the light of love heals everything.

~ French Druid Triad - Francois Bourillon

Spring Did Come.

Spring did come,
On butterfly's wings.
On a flitting bird,
And the song it sings.

Spring did come,
When the flowers bloomed,
When it filled the air
With a sweet perfume.

Spring did come,
On the morning's breeze.
Spring did come,
On budding leaves.

Spring did come,
On blades of dew.
Spring did come,
In skies of blue.

Spring did come,
With a joyous ring.

Spring did come...

Welcome, Spring!

By Macy Dvirnak

STORY: The Druid's Parable

Video Story Based on Robert Larson's Tale



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ztxxdz-nAiY>

This lovely by **Celestial Elf** (at Mike's suggestion) is taken from the 2nd Epistle of Robert in the Book of Apocrypha. <http://orgs.carleton.edu/Druids/ARDA2/doc/2part2-1.doc> on page 67 of 90 in the file (labeled 82 on the document)

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. Beannachtaí na Mathar libh. Siochain

Robert, ArchDruid, Berkeley Grove

28 Mean Samhraidh, 14 y.r.

(July 2nd, 1976 c.e.)

NEW PODCAST

CHARLTON HALL

I have a podcast called 'Druid Nation.' Each Sunday at 2 p.m. EST we record a Round Table discussion for the podcast. This week's topic will be 'alternative energy,' if anyone would like to participate. We record via Skype. Please contact me if you're interested! The podcast is here: www.druidnation.com

MORE Druid Videos



Eostre/Equinox (with Lisa Thiel) ~

www.youtube.com

Eostre Equinox: The March Equinox (March 20th) marks the beginning of Spring in the northern hemisphere, in the southern hemisphere this is at

Eostre Greetings by Celestial Elf

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4lZ-YKlEXww>



Native American Ritual (Rogue Media)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tvvaqTFUmj0> -Sebastien



Native American Ritual Stone Structures

www.youtube.com

To learn more about YHWH or to contact Quiet Buck, a Minister of YHWH. Please visit <http://www.QuietBuck.com> or

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OjpbajvuDU> -Sebastien



Irish History - Brehon Law - Part 1 of 11

www.youtube.com

Irish history with Pat Flannery. This was filmed 6/4/07. A very interesting talk on the system of law that was native to Ireland and existed all the way

) -Sebastien <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cN52LnC020g>

Really good conference on Brehon Law. For me the Brehons was the perfect example of what happen the last Celtic Laws and society. Really important part of Irish history! :-



A Proper Opossum Send Off

www.youtube.com

Helping an animal to make the transition. <http://mepearl.com>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=endscreen&v=3QLJPtRXKrA&NR=1>
Here's a fine ritual approach from southern California

channeled by a bodhisattva squirrel. – Helgaleena



Hey everyone, it's your favorite sometimes Bard back again hehe. I really should keep up with this page more but I've been super busy at work for the most part. I was watching this

video and was amazed with how intricate his bodhran skills are, and I had to share it. Enjoy :)

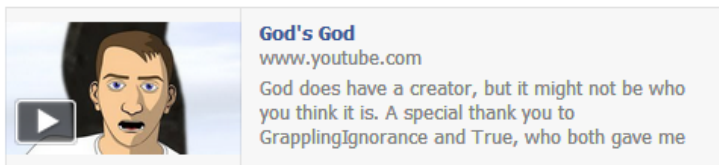
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-gfPVwBoaiY>

For St. Patrick's Day Mike recommends the following videos:

- 1959 "Darby O'Gill and the Little People" is still the best leprechaun movie. You might find the accent a little thick in spots, but you'll like the special effects, and Sean Connery's break-through pre-Bond role. Little romance, humor, and a touch of culture. Based on the popular books by an Irish writer who wrote of her memories on the turn of the century.
- <http://youtu.be/3KsXcNZ5Tj4> Part 1 of 10 videos. Enjoy.
- Leprechaun's Christmas Gold <http://youtu.be/x8sRpCeocVk>
- Leprechaun's Gold Cartoon <http://youtu.be/ALVNQkXYKk0>
- The Wee men <http://youtu.be/Uqr5yrBJdms>
-

Oriana Recommends

Quiet Man, Evelyn, Angela's Ashes, Leap Year, Circle of Friends, Ballykissangel (been there! :D) Tara Road, Finians Rainbow, the magdalene sisters, Secrets of the Roan Irish, Scarlett



Making it up as we go along. Hope you enjoy this video, and it blows your mind.

<http://youtu.be/ODetOE6cbbc>

If you like that one see the following three youtube channels

<http://www.youtube.com/user/DarkMatter2525> Dark Matter 2525

<http://www.youtube.com/user/TheThinkingAtheist>

<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL0886D8914D5FA08F> Messed-up Bible Stories

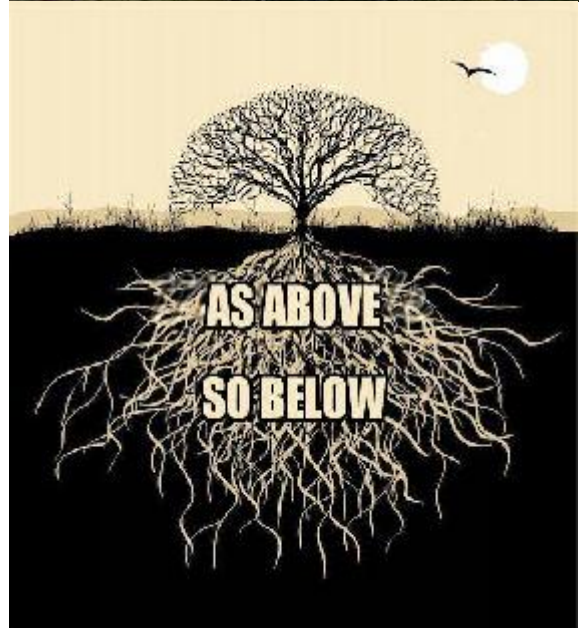
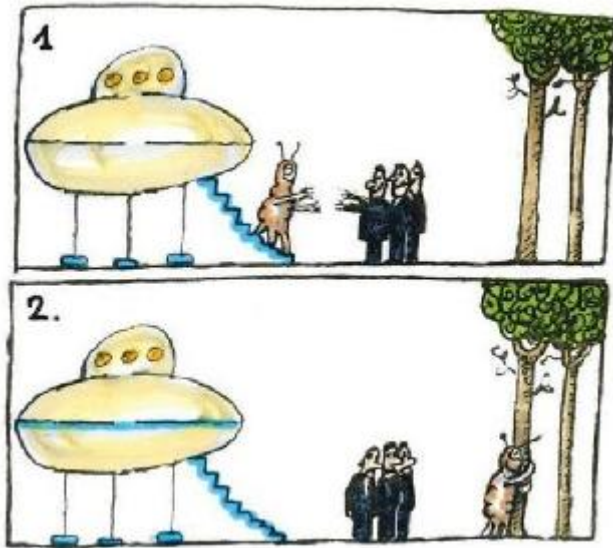
Druid Pictures



Ostara Blessings from snowy Quebec :) –Julie



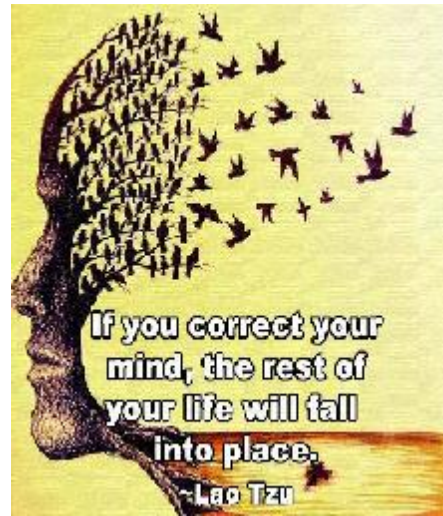
March 22, World Water Day
May you never thirst!



Thomas' altar



St. Patrick driving the snakes out of Ireland.



KIDS: Songs of Spring

If Candlemas day (2 February) be dry and fair
The half o' winters to come and mair
If Candlemas day be wet and foul
The half o' winter's gane at Yule.

The rose is red, the violet's blue
The honey's sweet, and so are you.
Thou are my love and I am thine;
I drew thee to my Valentine.
The lot was cast and then I drew;
And Fortune said it shou'd be you.
-as printed in *Gammer Gurton's
Garland* (London, 1784).

Lots of historical references to birds in older poems, such as:

Hail! Bishop Valentine whose day this is
All the air is thy Diocese
And all the chirping Queristers
And other birds ar thy parishioners
Thou marryest every year
The Lyrick Lark, and the grey whispering Dove,
The Sparrow that neglects his life for love,
The household bird with the red stomacher
Thou makest the Blackbird speed as soon,
As doth the Goldfinch, or the Halcyon
The Husband Cock looks out and soon is sped
And meets his wife, which brings her feather-
bed.
This day more cheerfully than ever shine
This day which might inflame thy self - old
Valentine.
--[John Donne](#), *Epithalamion Vpon Frederick
Count Palatine and the Lady Elizabeth married
on St. Valentines day*.

The year's at the spring,
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hill-side's dew-pearl'd;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn;
God's in His heaven--
All's right with the world!
--[Robert Browning](#), Pippa's Song in *Pippa
Passes*.

Now Nature hangs her mantle green
On every blooming tree,
And spreads her sheets o' daisies white
Out o'er the grassy lea.
--[Robert Burns](#), *Lament of Mary Queen of Scots*.

Starred forget-me-nots smile sweetly,
Ring, blue-bells, ring!
Winning eye and heart completely,
Sing, robin, sing!
All among the reeds and rushes,
Where the brook its music hushes,
Bright the caloposon blushes.—
Laugh, O murmuring Spring!
--[Sarah F. Davis](#), *Summer Song*.

Like an army defeated
The snow hath retreated,
And now doth fare ill
On the top of the bare hill;
The Ploughboy is whooping—anon—anon!
There's joy in the mountains:
There's life in the fountains;
Small clouds are sailing,
Blue sky prevailing;
The rain is over and gone.
--[William Wordsworth](#), *Written in March*.

I come, I come! ye have called me long,
I come o'er the mountain with light and song:
Ye may trace my step o'er the wakening earth,
By the winds which tell of the violet's birth,
By the primrose-stars in the shadowy grass,
By the green leaves, opening as I pass.
--[Felicia Hemans](#), *Voice of Spring*.

And softly came the fair young queen
O'er mountain, dale, and dell;
And where her golden light was seen
An emerald shadow fell.
The good-wife oped the window wide,
The good-man spanned his plough;
'Tis time to run, 'tis time to ride,
For Spring is with us now.
--[Charles Godfrey Leland](#), *Spring*.

If April showers
Should come your way,
They bring the flowers
That bloom in May.
--[Buddy de Sylva](#), Song: *April Showers*.

Make me over, Mother April,
When the sap begins to stir!
When thy flowery hand delivers
All the mountain-prisoned rivers,
And thy great heart beats and quivers,
To revive the days that were.
--[Richard Hovey](#), *April*.

Crimson clover I discover
By the garden gate,
And the bees about her hover,
But the robins wait.
Sing, robins, sing,
Sing a roundelay,—
'Tis the latest flower of Spring
Coming with the May!
--[Dora Read Goodale](#), *Red Clover*.

Now the bright morning star, day's harbinger,
Comes dancing from the east, and leads with
her
The flowery May, who from her green lap
throws
The yellow cowslip, and the pale primrose.
Hail, bounteous May, that doth inspire
Mirth, and youth, and warm desire;
Woods and groves are of thy dressing,
Hill and dale doth boast thy blessing,
Thus we salute thee with our early song,
And welcome thee, and wish thee long.
--[John Milton](#), *Song, On May Morning*.

What is so sweet and dear
As a prosperous morn in May,
The confident prime of the day,
And the dauntless youth of the year,
When nothing that asks for bliss,
Asking aright, is denied,
And half of the world a bridegroom is
And half of the world a bride?
--[William Watson](#), *Ode in May*.

A swarm of bees in May
Is worth a load of hay;
A swarm of bees in June
Is worth a silver spoon;
A swarm of bees in July
Is not worth a fly.

*if bees stay at home
rain will soon come
if they fly away
fine will be the day*

The Padstow Song

Lovely Rousing Song, As by Steel Eye Span

<http://youtu.be/19KvspjpKN8>

Night Song

Unite and unite and let us all unite,
For [summer is acome](#) unto day,
And whither we are going we will all unite,
In the merry morning of May.

I warn you young men everyone,
For summer is acome unto day,
To go to the green-wood and fetch your
May home,
In the merry morning of May.

Arise up Mr. and joy you betide,
For summer is acome unto day,
And bright is your bride that lies by your
side,
In the merry morning of May.

Arise up Mrs. and gold be your ring,
For summer is acome unto day,
And give to us a cup of ale the merrier we
shall sing,
In the merry morning of May.

Arise up Miss all in your gown of green,
For summer is acome unto day,
You are as fine a lady as wait upon the
Queen,
In the merry morning of May.

Now fare you well, and we bid you all good
cheer,
For summer is acome unto day,
We call once more unto your house before
another year,
In the merry morning of May.

[[edit](#)]Day Song

Unite and unite and let us all unite,
For summer is acome unto day,
And whither we are going we will all unite,
In the merry morning of May.

Arise up Mr. I know you well afine,
For summer is acome unto day,
You have a shilling in your purse and I wish
it were in mine,
In the merry morning of May.

All out of your beds,
For summer is acome unto day,
Your chamber shall be strewed with the
white rose and the red
In the merry morning of May.

Where are the young men that here now
should dance,
For summer is acome unto day,
Some they are in England some they are in
France,
In the merry morning of May.

Where are the maidens that here now should
sing,
For summer is acome unto day,
They are in the meadows the flowers
gathering,
In the merry morning of May.

Arise up Mr. with your sword by your
side,
For summer is acome unto day,
Your steed is in the stable awaiting for to
ride,
In the merry morning of May.

Arise up Miss and strew all your flowers,
For summer is acome unto day,
It is but a while ago since we have strewn
ours,
In the merry morning of May.

O! where is St. George,
O!, where is he O,
He is out in his long boat on the salt sea O.
Up flies the kite and down tails the lark O.
Aunt Ursula Birdhood she had an old ewe
And she died in her own Park O.

With the merry ring, adieu the merry spring,
For summer is acome unto day,
How happy is the little bird that merrily
doth sing,
In the merry morning of May.

The young men of Padstow they might if
they would,
For summer is a come unto day,
They might have built a ship and gilded her
with gold,
In the merry morning of May.

The young women of Padstow might if they
would,
For summer is a come unto day,
They might have made a garland with the
white rose and the red,
In the merry morning of May.

Arise up Mr. and reach me your hand,
For summer is a come unto day,
And you shall have a lively lass with a
thousand pounds in hand.
In the merry morning of May.

Arise up Miss all in your cloak of silk,
For summer is a come unto day,
And all your body under as white as any
milk,
In the merry morning of May.

O! where is St. George,
O!, where is he O,
He is out in his long boat on the salt sea O.
Up flies the kite and down tails the lark O.
Aunt Ursula Birdhood she had an old ewe
And she died in her own Park O.

Now fare you well and bid you all good
cheer,
For summer is a come unto day,
We call no more unto your house before
another year,
In the merry morning of May.

Jenny Wren and Cock Robin



The Wren

There is only one European wren, but the family is much more diverse in North America, but still often quite small. It primarily eats insects, and spends a large part of its time foraging in grass and underbrush, rarely flying much, behaving more like a mouse. Considered the smallest of birds in Europe, it has distinctive black bands on its wing, reminiscent of ogham? It possesses a powerful song with diverse lyrics, possibly attracting the attention of bards. The song of a wren, pound for pound, can be 10 times louder than that of a rooster. And its song is quite varied. It can be sweet trilling music or churrs and sputters. It has a range of at least 100 separate notes, which is quite impressive! A single bird may have a repertoire of up to 30 different songs. This is where some say that the saying *'a little bird once told me...'* comes from.

The wren is quite interesting when it comes to mating. The male will build several nests and present them to the female. She will examine all of them and pick the one she likes the best and line it, making it a home. Their nests are quite intricate, often compared to a magpies' nest in complexity. They prefer nest sites in coniferous forest low in the scrub, but will nest in mixed conifer and deciduous trees. There is a rich mythology in regards to the wren, most of it coming from Europe. In the British Isles it is considered the Druid bird, and is often associated with druids and gaining knowledge. In Irish drui and Welsh dryw could also signify the wren. Besides these, we find Breton drew 'merry, cheerful' (derived from 'wren') and Middle Irish drean "wren". In Ireland

the wren was called a Drui-en, or Druid bird; in Welsh the word Dryw signifies both a druid and a wren.

In fact, the wren was considered a bird that was always seeking knowledge and never refusing a source of knowledge. There is a story that the magpie offered to teach any bird to build as fine a nest as it builds. All birds refused thinking the magpie arrogant. The wren, never to turn away from knowledge, agreed to its teachings and that is why the wren makes such fine nests. Another tale discusses how the magpie once had no tail, and the wren had a long tail. The magpie was going to a party and wanted to look pretty, so she borrowed the wrens tail. She was so pleased with herself and thought herself so pretty, that the wren let her keep it.

The wren has been known widely since ancient days as "the king of birds" due to an under-dog-like legend. In old High German it was called, "*kuningilin*" or *kinglet*, and in modern German as "Zaunkönig" or king of the fence or hedge. In Dutch the name is "winterkoninkje" (little winter king). In fact it has a little golden crown on its head plumage, the possible origin of its name. The Celts considered it the king of all birds as there is a myth (also known to the Greeks) that there was a contest to see who should be the king of the birds. The wren suggested that whoever could fly the highest should be made king. The eagle thought this was great and immediately went to show how high he could fly. Little did he know that the Wren was hidden in his feathers and when the eagle was at the top of his flight, the wren popped out and flew up 2 more feet and said 'Behold your king!' Although technically cheating, perhaps the kingship should go to such a cunning bird.

There are several myths that say that the wren was the animal that brought fire to mankind, much like Prometheus. The druids used the wrens song for divination, and saw the wren as having the power of healing. There are several myths of shape shifting as well. On the Isle of Man, there is a story of a mermaid, which would lure youths into the sea.

Once a boy threw a spear at her and she turned into a wren to avoid capture. Once a year, she must return to her own shape (on new year) when she could be killed. A wren feather is seen (on the Isle of Man) as a charm against drowning and no sailor would go to sea without one.

Wrens were associated with the continental Celtic God Taranis, and it was said that if you disturbed a wren's nest or stole its eggs, that your own home would be struck by lightning and your hands would shrivel up. As such, the wren was associated with the underworld and with the god of the dark half of the year (Chaos). It could only be hunted once a year, at the winter solstice. In Christian times, this was transferred to the myth of St. Stephen, who was betrayed on Dec 26 by a wren calling out, and thus the wren can be killed on St. Stephen's day.

There were taboos on killing the wren at any other time:

The Robin and the wren
Are God Almighty's cock and hen.

He who hunts the robin and the wren
Will never prosper, sea nor land.

"He who shall hurt the little wren
Shall never be belov'd by men." - William
Blake Auguries of Innocence

Hunting the Wren

Birds hold a special place in the Celtic imagination and in Celtic mythology the tiny wren holds powerful sway. Some believe the word "dreoilín" (Gaelic for "wren") has its roots in the term "Druid's bird" and that it acted as a messenger between this world and the next.

The tradition of Hunting the Wren is celebrated on Dec 26th. Historically, a wren was captured and thought to bring good luck for the new year. In modern times, the tradition of "hunting the wren" involves musicians roaming from house to house playing music on "St. Stephen's Day" (December 26th), and "passing the hat."

As with so many dates from the ancient Irish calendar, a Christian holiday replaced the original. St. Stephen's Day celebrates the first Christian martyr. However, the celebrations of the day seem to have little relation to St. Stephen himself, although there is one tale that recounts the 'chattering' wren betraying St. Stephen to his enemies as he tries to hide from them in a bush. Thereafter, the wren, much like poor St. Stephen, was to be hunted down and stoned to death!

In Irish folklore, the wren was viewed as the cleverest of birds, and hunting the wren is thought to have a stronger relationship to sacrificing a sacred symbol!

The tradition of "hunting the wren" has continued virtually unbroken, at least in some parts of the country, for centuries. Men primarily, carrying tin whistles, accordions and the like, went from house to house playing simple tunes (due to the cold weather when stiff fingers can prevent the playing of more difficult pieces) and dressed in disguise. They often wore costumes of straw, but should not be confused with strawboys who often performed at wakes in times past.



Mummers or mumming, is another tradition, more dramatic in nature that is somewhat different but is also associated with mid-winter and often carried out on Dec. 26th, but usually involves a Mummer's play. Mumming is more 'theatrical' in nature. Click here to read more about mummers and mumming. The core theme of mummers plays is that of death and resurrection, the death of the old year and the

rebirth of the new, the age old expression of a vital system.

They wren boys often begin their festivities with this old song:

The Wren, The Wren

The Wren, the Wren the king of all birds,
St. Stephens day, he was caught in the furze.
Although he is little, his honor is great,
Rise up, kind sir, and give us a trate.

We followed this Wren ten miles or more
Through hedges and ditches and heaps of snow,
We up with our wattles and gave him a fall
And brought him here to show you all.

For we are the boys that came your way
To bury the Wren on Saint Stephens Day,
So up with the kettle and down with the pan!
Give us some help for to bury the Wren!

Here's a YouTube Irish version from the Clancy family with an introduction, little girls dancing, and extra verses for thanking the folks who donated.

<http://youtu.be/zeTsyueyGuo>

The wren boys were often led by a 'hobby horse,' with a wooden head, with snapping jaws, placed on the shoulders of the 'leader.' Believed to have associations with the ancient god Lugh, the horse was thought to be of great importance in old Ireland, but like many of these old traditions, its original meaning are often lost to us. That said, the antics of the hobby horse often made for great entertainment. They are most common in West Kerry where wrenboys and the tradition of Mummers plays and Mumming stayed very strong long after it had died out in many other parts of the country.

At the very least, 'hunting the wren,' reflects the universal practice of dressing in costume or disguise and having an 'out of body' or 'out of everyday life' experience, in order to relieve the tensions and constraints of every day life.

~

Another Version of the Wren Song:

The Wran, the Wran the king of all birds,
St. Stephen's Day was caught in the furze,
Although he is little, his honour is great,
Put your hand in your pocket and give us a trate.

Dreoilin, dreoilin where is your nest?
Its in the bush that I love best,
Behind the holly and ivy tree,
Where all the birds shall follow me.

As I was goin' down to Youghal,
I saw a wran upon a wall,
I up with my stick and I knocked him down,
Then brought him back to Mitchelstown.

Mister_____ is a very fine man,
It was to him we brought the Wran,
You'll have luck throughout the year
If ya give us the price of a gallon o' beer.

Raise up your glasses, your bottles and cans
We toast your subscription to bury the Wran,
Up with the kettle and down with the pot,
Give us your money and let us be off!

The wren figures as a king of the dark half of the year in Celtic myth, in opposition to the Robin in the light half. In fact, in many myths it is in opposition to the Robin, just as in many myths it is in cahoots with the magpie. On top of the association with Taranis, there is also an association with Wisdom goddesses. In Scotland, they called the wren 'Lady of souls hen', and combined with the wrens penchant for caves and its wisdom, one can certainly see this association.



The Robin

No less storied than the wren, the little pugnacious Robin and its American cousin are the harbringers of Spring. They particularly like to nest near homes of people.

The name “Robin” is gender-neutral, and in older days might be given to children conceived on

Beltane or on forest trysts.

Over half of male Robins will not survive their first year, due to the fights they get into for dominance. Perhaps the inspiration for the well known superhero “Robin” who teams up with Batman? Perhaps also the source for Robin Hood?

Their blue eggs are famous for their color.

From Wikipedia: The robin features prominently in British folklore, and that of northwestern France, but much less so in other parts of Europe.[30] It was held to be a storm-cloud bird and sacred to Thor, the god of thunder, in Norse mythology.[31] Robins also feature in the traditional children's tale, Babes in the Wood; the birds cover the dead bodies of the children.[32]

More recently, the robin has become strongly associated with Christmas, taking a starring role on many Christmas cards since the mid 19th century.[32] The Robin has also appeared on many Christmas postage stamps. An old British folk tale seeks to explain the Robin's distinctive breast. Legend has it that when Jesus was dying on the cross, the Robin, then simply brown in colour, flew to his side and sang into his ear in order to comfort him in his pain. The blood from his wounds stained the Robin's breast, and thereafter all Robins got the mark of Christ's blood upon them.[31] An alternative legend has it that its breast was scorched fetching water for souls in Purgatory.[32]

The association with Christmas, however, more probably arises from the fact that postmen in Victorian Britain wore red uniforms and were nicknamed "Robin"; the Robin featured on the Christmas card is an emblem of the postman delivering the card.[33]

In the 1960s, in a vote publicised by The Times newspaper, the Robin was adopted as the unofficial national bird of the UK.[34] The Robin was then used as a symbol of a Bird Protection Society.[35]

Robin - From George Knowles

The Robin throughout history has been variously associated with charity, compassion, good luck, bad luck, fire and death; as such he has become a legend in the folklore of many countries. Many stories about the Robin attempt to explain the origin of his red breast, the most common being associated with the birth and death of Christ. One such story relates that when Jesus was crucified on the cross, a Robin flew down and removed a thorn from the crown on his head to relieve some of his suffering. In doing so, the blood of Jesus stained his throat and chest, and ever since his breast has remained red.

In a similar story concerning the birth of Christ, a Robin flew into the stables where the baby Jesus was born. Seeing Mary and the boy child sleeping, the Robin noticed a nearby fire had almost gone out, and while fanning the embers back into flame, he burnt and singed his breast feathers. Mary blessed him for his courage, and when his feathers grew back again they remained red in recognition of his efforts.

Because of his red breast and this association with fire, like the Raven in mythology, the Robin is said to have brought fire from heaven. As such, in folklore, Robins are considered holy birds, and are beloved by gardeners for they remind him of paradise and the legendary Garden of Eden. A similar myth has it that the Robin was a storm-cloud bird sacred by Thor, the god of Thunder in Norse mythology.

In the old folklore traditions of Great Britain, if a Robin pecks at your window or enters your house, it is likely a death will soon occur there. Likewise, if a Robin flies into a house through an open window, it was taken as a sign of death being present. This idea is thought to have come from an old 16th century folktale called “Babes in the Wood”, which implies that if a Robin finds a human corpse, it would cover the corpse with moss, leaves and flowers, effectively burying it.

First published as a ballad by Thomas Millington in Norwich 1595, the “Babes in the Wood” tale has been reworked into many forms:

Thus wandered these poor innocents,
Till death did end their grief;
In one another's arms they died,
As wanting due relief;
No burial this pretty pair
Of any man receives,
Till Robin Redbreast piously
Did cover them with leaves.
This from a 1765 poem by Thomas Percy (1729-1811).

It was said to be extremely unlucky to kill a Robin, and the hand that does so will continue to shake thereafter. If a farmer causes the death, he should expect his barn to catch fire or his cow's milk to flow the colour of blood. It was a common belief in both Britain and Ireland that whatever tragedy befalls the Robin, the person who caused it would suffer the same consequence. If a person destroyed the nest of a Robin, he should expect a death in his family within a year, or a fire to destroy his house, or lightning to strike it and damage it.

Breaking the eggs of a Robin will result in something valuable of your own being broken. To see a Robin sheltering in the branches of a tree indicates that rain is on the way, and to see one chirping on an open branch indicates that fine weather is coming. You should make a wish when you see your first Robin of the season, and make sure to do it quick, for if the bird flies away beforehand, you'll receive no good luck for the next twelve months.

Another association of the Robin with death is in a pagan belief. In Celtic traditions, Yule is the time when the Oak King triumphs over the Holly King. The Holly King represents the death and darkness that has ruled since the onset of Samhain (Halloween). At the time of the Winter Solstice, the Oak King is reborn and begins a new cycle of life and lightness.

A similar version of the Oak King versus the Holly King theme is the killing of the Wren. The Wren is the little King of the Waning Year, and is killed by the Robin Redbreast, the new King of the Waxing Year.



Robin and the Wren Nursery Rhymes

As mentioned before, the two birds are paired possibly as a Summer Solstice/Winter Solstice opposite pair of symbols. The two often appear in nursery rhymes together as lovers.

JENNY WREN

As little Jenny Wren
Was sitting by her shed.
She wagged with her tail,
And nodded with her head.
She wagged with her tail,
And nodded with her head,
As little Jenny Wren
Was sitting by the shed.

(Music <http://youtu.be/QnV0JQprfCQ>)

The Robin and Wren

The Robin and the Wren
Fought about the porridge-pan;
And ere the Robin got a spoon
The Wren had ate the porridge down.

Cock Robin

Cock ROBIN got up early,
At the break of day,
And went to Jenny's window
To sing a roundelay.

He sang Cock ROBIN's love
To little Jenny Wren,
And when he unto the end
Then he began again.

When Jenny Wren Was Young

'Twas once upon a time, when Jenny Wren was
young,
So daintily she danced and so prettily she sung,
Robin Redbreast lost his heart, for he was a gallant
bird.
So he doffed his hat to Jenny Wren, requesting to
be heard.

"Oh, dearest Jenny Wren, if you will but be mine,
You shall feed on cherry pie and drink new currant
wine,
I'll dress you like a goldfinch or any peacock gay,
So, dearest Jen, if you'll be mine, let us appoint the
day."

Jenny blushed behind her fan and thus declared her
mind:
"Since dearest Bob I love you well, I'll take your
offer kind.
Cherry pie is very nice and so is currant wine,
But I must wear my plain brown gown and never
go too fine.

The Robin Came To The Wrens Door

The robin cam' to the wren's door,
And keekit in, and keekit in:
O, blessings on your bonnie pow,
Wad ye be in, wad ye be in?

I wadna let you lie thereout,
And I within, and I within,
As lang's I hae a warm clout,
To row ye in, to row ye in.

Little Jenny Wren fell sick,
Upon a time;
In came Robin Redbreast
And brought her cake and wine.

"Eat well of my cake, Jenny,
Drink well of my wine."
"Thank you, Robin, kindly,
You shall be mine."

Jenny she got well,
And stood upon her feet,
And told Robin plainly
She loved him not a bit.

Robin being angry,
Hopped upon a twig,
Saying, "Out upon you! Fie upon you!
Bold-faced jig!"

Robin Red Breast

LITTLE Robin Redbreast
sat upon a hurdle,
With a pair of speckled legs
and a green girdle.

Robin a Bobin

ROBIN-A-BOBIN
Bent his bow,
shot at a pigeon
And killed a crow.

The Robins

A robin and a robin's son
Once went to town to buy a bun.
They couldn't decide on plum or plain,
And so they went back home again.

Little Robin Redbreast

Little Robin Redbreast sat upon a tree.
Up went Pussycat and down went he.
Down came Pussycat and away Robin ran.
Says Little Robin Redbreast,
"Catch me if you can!"

Little Robin Redbreast jumped upon a wall.
Pussycat jumped after him and almost got a fall.
Little Robin chirped and sang,
And what did pussy say?
Pussycat said, 'Meeow!' and Robin jumped away.

Poor Robin

THE north wind doth blow,
And we shall have snow,
And what will poor Robin do then?

He'll sit in a barn,
To keep him self warm,
And hide his head under his wing,
poor thing.



Druid Debates



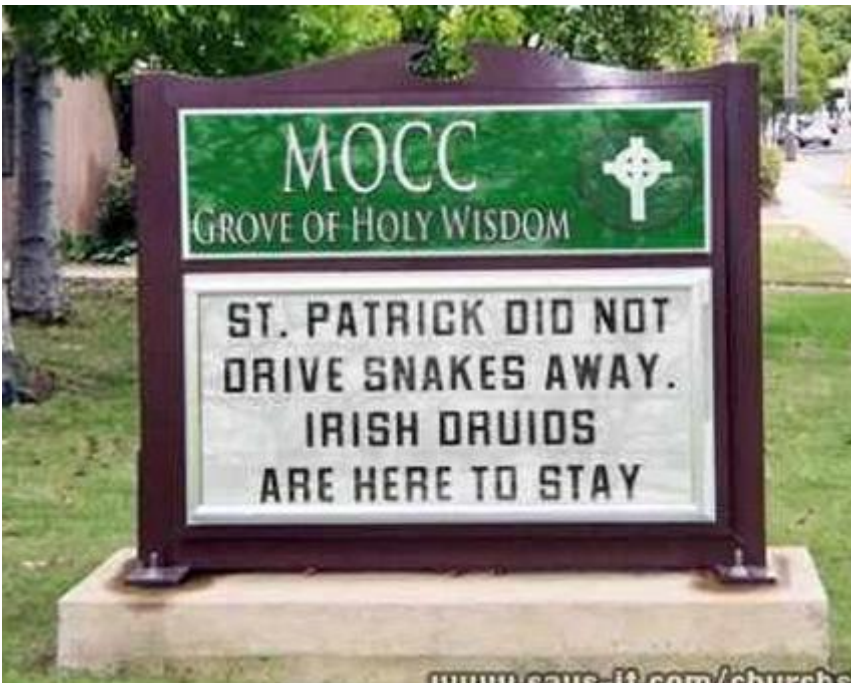
DEBATE #1 FLUID DRUID

Mike TheFool if a drunk druid trips in a forest where no one can hear him, what hits the ground first, the druid or the bottle?

Stephen Just my own thoughts..... if the drunk druid is still able to walk as implied by tripping in the forest..... then the druid would hit the ground first, so as to alleviate the anguish that would result from breaking the bottle and/ or spilling its contents.

If the druid is unable to walk but still manages to trip and fall.....all bets are off. The whiskey is safely contained in the drunken druid.....we hope.....the bottle is probably lost back along the trail.....and gravity wins again.

George If the Druid stays long enough in the Woods the Trees will get the Spirits anyway.



Debate 2: Patrick and Snakes

Sébastien Actually Celtic paganism and early Christianity coexisted for a few more centuries together in Ireland. In fact, Druids and the Celts took up the new religion, creating with time a distinctive early Celtic Christianity. Mixing both Druidic and Christian customs. The Celts tried to integrate Christianity in their own culture and society but ended up being assimilated later by the more Roman powerful and persuasive authority. Replacing Celtic Bishops and Celtic community monasteries by roman structured diocese.

Thomas The true story of Patrick is very different from the legend.

Sébastien Indeed, he was the perfect candidate by Rome to bring change and reform to Ireland. It was the start of bringing Ireland to a more Romanized Christianity. For Rome, the bishop before him seemed to be more pagan than Christian. It took about 4 centuries (after St-Patrick) for Rome to Romanized Ireland and Scotland.

Thomas Of course, Ireland had Christian communities for two centuries before that, at least, thanks to the tin trade making Southern Ireland a commercial hub in the ancient world. Patrick was very much a late presence.

Sébastien Too bad that many of today druids and pagans do not admit that Celtic culture evolved with time and in fact in Ireland and Scotland this peaceful coexistence between Druids and Christian Clergy existed. Actually some druids became Christian monks and created monastic communities and Abbeys. But this is sadly denied by both sides.

Sébastien The Brehons Laws was druidic in origin and it stayed in place in Ireland until the British invasion. Then it was outlawed and replaced by British laws and lordships. We forget to mention this also

Thomas The; most confusion is that it happened as such in different parts of Ireland and Scotland at different times, not consistently. This is because that there were what were called petty kingdoms rather than solid nations, tribal units, not one large territory under one rule and one monolithic, homogenized culture. The result is that both sides can find evidence for their stand in the history and archaeology, but the truth is not present in either camp to the exclusion of the truth of the other position.

Sébastien Saint Patrick's Day reminds me of the beginning of the transition between the free spirited Celtic society, the decline of Celtic monasteries and the advancing Romanized authority.

Thomas Ah, the period surrounding the Synod of Whitby.

Sébastien Do not get me started on Whitby... lol

Thomas Lol. In the SCA my persona is one of the Celtic Rite monks that attended Whitby.

Thomas The more I dig into that period, it was about money and land, pure and simple. The liturgical differences exacerbated it, but it was primarily window dressing for greed of filthy lucre.

Sébastien The destruction of Whitby was ordered by Henry VIII in 1540. The end of what was left of Celtic Christianity was exterminated by Reformation. The only thing that the Reformation kept from Celtic Christianity is a few basic notions and nostalgia.

Thomas On EWTN, I still hear rhetoric that devolved from the Roman Party's dismissal of the Council of Constantinople and declaring their regional councils to be Ecumenical, though they are not open to the representatives of other Communion not under the control of the Vatican.

Thomas I find that the character assassination of Pelagius by Augustine in their century was very much at play when the Pope of the time sent Augustine of Canterbury to take up his see in Britain. It was very much a push of Rome to exterminate Coptic and Orthodox elements in the British Isles.

Sébastien I believe that modern day druids should learn about these important evolution and time periods. It is what made and shaped modern Druidry today, well that is my opinion

Thomas That, and the drafting of the Twelve Hides of Glaston.

Sébastien Long live Pelagius! The last of the Christian Druids

Sébastien or the beginning... lol

Thomas Vivat Pelagius!

Sébastien Well, Pelagius views and doctrine influenced some parts of the reformation

Thomas Too bad they did not influence Calvin. Free Will and Predestination are not a good mix.

Sébastien See, some druids do study Christian theology, in fact we should at some point to be able to have a better perception of it all....lol

Sébastien The study of early Christianity, theology and Celtic history has permitted me to broaden my druidic practices and views. It turned my religious and spiritual tolerance into acceptance. Must also be the reason behind RDNA's Green Book. Somewhat RDNA's attempt to open up RDNA druids to world different theologies, religions and spiritual concepts.

Thomas The Missionary Order of the Celtic Cross is about half Pagan, half Christian. You'd be surprised some of what us old timers discuss

Jamie Sebastien and Thomas - I have enjoyed reading your conversation. Do you have any favorite books about this period of Celtic history that you would recommend?

Thomas Unfortunately a lot of it is simply in academic articles concerning the period. Not a lot of books on Whitby I've seen. You might check out How the Irish Saved Civilization, which doesn't wholly address the issue, but looks at the influence of the Irish on the Church of the High Medieval Period. Ellen Evert Hopman might consider writing a novel of the period, though she's mostly concerned with Celtic Reconstruction from a much earlier period.

Thomas It would be an interesting to see the perspective of a Druid from that period witnessing the Synod.

Sébastien I have a few books... will give you my list later... need to make phone calls to my students tonight for tomorrow night French conversation classes.

Thomas Might send me the list, as well. Never can have enough of a To Read list.

Sébastien The Celts and The Druids by Peter Berresford Hellis

Sébastien The Celts by Nora Chadwick

Sébastien The Course of Irish History Edited by T.W. Moody & F.X Martin

Sébastien Hope of Scots edited by Dauvit Broun and Thomas Owen Clancy

Sébastien Celtic Christianity by Timothy Joyce <----- my favorite book.

Sébastien I shouldn't have shared this... I'm in the process of a book myself... I hope that Ellen Evert Hopman does not take my idea... just kidding Ellen writes books like crazy, would love to have her penmanship.

Sébastien Also the author Caitlin Matthews has good books about mixing both Celtic and early Celtic Christian material.

Thomas Considering the dearth of information on the Synod, I doubt that having more than one or two books written on the matter will change the situation much. What I wouldn't give to just have had a bug on the

wall of the hall where the Synod was held. We know horridly little about what went on, other than some bare bones reported afterward.

Sébastien The contention between native Celtic Church leaders and Roman-trained clergy. I believe that language could have been a problem.

Thomas Those who were classically trained in Latin no doubt carried strong anti-Celtic bias.

Thomas Not from the Papacy, but from the time of Imperial Rome.

Därth My very sincere thanks to Sebastien and Thomas for their conversation

Jamie Thanks for all the recommendations - I have some reading to do!

Thomas I have a distinct feeling that if Sebastien and I were to be sitting at a bar, the discussion would be rather deep.

Sébastien Indeed Thomas!

Mike TheFool Actually he being such an arse of the place, the snakes had the good sense to leave, took the Irish another 1200 years to follow their advice.

Sébastien I do not hate the man at all, he was following orders from Rome. The snake thing is not only against druids and pagans but also anyone who was against the institutionalization of religion in Ireland by Rome, this including insubordinate Celtic Abbeys, clergy and Celtic Christians. I believe that we must learn to forgive him plus we cannot change history. But we can evolve, move on and change the future without forgetting what shaped our societies throughout historical eras. Still to this day, Rome denies the fact that there was such a uniqueness known as a Celtic Christianity even if some Catholic clergy and theologian argues otherwise.

Sébastien In becoming a Druid, I decided to also keep my Christian heritage in the beginning, and not deny it like so many do or will do. When I became a Druid, I did not embark on my journey as an act of rebellion or as an act of disgust towards Christianity or any other religion. It was thanks to many circumstances that I became a Druid. I really get troubled when I hear pagans and Druids blast or say hateful things against Christians. But one can debate and disagree about Christian theology and concepts because it is one truth amongst many!

Thomas There are times when I am critical of the institutional church, and when I am critical of Fundamentallism (regardless of which religion it is attached to). I am also critical of hypocrisy, regardless of it's point of origin. Relevant here, however, is that the RDNA never sought to displace Christianity, it sought to displace a bad institutional policy and then sought to enrich spiritual experience by interaction within a more ecumenical, philosophical and Natural framework. I know many Christian and Christic Druids. I would hate to see any of us ostracized due to Spiritual matters.

Thomas I recall a Druid triad recounted by Patrick: "Truth in heart, strength in arm, honesty in speech". It doesn't say which pantheon anywhere in there.

Sébastien Nothing is wrong in being critical... actually it is keeping you own spirituality and faith strong and healthy. I believe that we also should evaluate and question our own beliefs and knowledge. In my opinion, fundamentalism of any kind is for me extremely hazardous to the freedom of expression, to wealth of diversity and democracy. Being critical is essential !

Sébastien Isn't being critical part of being a Druid?

Mike TheFool It certainly is, but also acknowledging good and successes too.

Ian The sign is nice - I want the building

Monica My personal belief is that there are many paths that in the end meet. Just because one path is not your own does not make it wrong, just not yours. I embrace this belief to the point my best friend is a born again Christian. While she does not fully understand Druidry she knows I am what I am and I know she is what she is, there is no animosity between us over it. Occasionally she does worry about the whole fire and brimstone thing though.



Debate #3 Animals in four parts.

Part 1 the picture

John This is amazing, I love it! How does it sound?

Julie real special it sounds awesome!

Sébastien Just like a normal brass bugle or any other horn!

Sébastien thank you John!

Ellen When the ancient Druids sacrificed an animal they gave it to the Earth. The other parts were eaten.

Ellen You can read about animal sacrifice in the Rig Veda.

Helgaleena I had a real conundrum a few years back when a man from my riverside neighborhood gifted me with a crane's head and feet. He said it attacked him and he had to break its neck. Probably he was too near its nest. I ended up doing several ceremonies before holding funeral when Awen gave me no clues as to how to utilize them, Sebastian has found a way.

Sébastien Thank you!

Mike TheFool Great

Aonarach Helgaleena, I might agree with you had the coyote been the victim of an unfortunate accident or met its end in the same manner as the crane, however the additional pelts in the background lead me to think otherwise, and that saddens me.

Helgaleena What saddens me is when animal fellow travelers are slaughtered with deliberate cruelty. I don't know how this coyote met its end, but certainly it is being honored by its post mortem. None of us deserve to

be used cavalierly, but even pelts can be gathered with respect, much as organs are harvested by the modern medical industry from those of us willing to be so used.

Helgaleena Another story: My family keeps pet ferrets. One of ours, a large male seemingly in the best of health, keeled over unexpectedly while walking across the living room. Though we were devastated, we brought him to a taxidermist for careful skinning and his pelt (called a fitch) is now made into a bandolier bag for ceremonial display at powwows.

George Feet make Good Claw Wands. I use Chicken and Bamboo for mine.

Aonarach Well, for what its worth; when I meet my end, please don't honor me by shoving a pipe in the back of my skull and putting me on display for the world to see.

George Oh Mummey

George If you were Vodunsaint perhaps you could set on a nice Altar all day!

Stacey Vodunsaint?

Sébastien I consider my pottery shop as my personal sanctuary. It is my own personal sacred and protected space that I share also with others that come through my door. Everyone that come to my pottery shop come for or with a spiritual purpose. I like to refer it as my little monastery. Everything created in pottery shop is to be used in a spiritual sense and the place is somewhat an altar, if you would like People walking in my pottery shop are always surprised by its calm, its warmth, its spiritual charm and beautiful atmosphere.

Sébastien I dedicated my pottery shop to Brigid

Sébastien An elder once told me that my pottery would become medicine to people and that my pottery shop will become a refuge. It did on many occasions. If the walls of my pottery could talk, it would have an incredible story to tell. I'm truly blessed and grateful to have it.

George Pictures, Kiln, stories about your clay please!

Sébastien It will be a pleasure. But it will take time

George Like all good works do. I do not work with it (Clay) yet, except for small magick objects but have a fascination and it is part of many of my 3rd and 1st world product ideas. Including using a woodgas generator to feed a Kiln.

Animal Debate Part 2

Ellen When a Saw Whet owl died because it crashed into the front of my car, I kept it on my altar for three days. I then wrapped it in a cloth and buried it with song in the forest, adding tobacco and sage as I sang. I allowed myself 3 feathers for my Crane Bag but did not deface the body otherwise. I felt truly sad at the death of the creature and tried to treat it with utmost respect.

Aonarach Thanks for sharing Ellen, I have done similar.

Thomas Gallows humor, but I just got through re-imagining this from the owl's perspective.

Aonarach Care to share the owl's perspective?

Thomas Okay, here we go. There I was, flying along looking for dinner for my poor little hatchlings. Then here comes this loud metal boulder screeching down the stone river along which poison is spewed into the air. I couldn't escape. The metal boulder slammed into me and I perished. Then the unnatural ape woman, wearing those unnatural leaves and false fibers, covering the true skin and fur given by the Mother, grabs me up so that my family will never see my broken body. She steals my corpse, puts rotting plants around me, wraps me in the false skins carried by their demented species so that my body will not know the open wind even in death. She dismembers me so that in the next life I may not fly and then buried me so that not even my body may nourish the living. Where are my hatchlings today?

Sébastien What saddens me more is the fact that millions of family and children are dying from war; it saddens me that millions of people across the world are dying over hunger and have no access to any proper healthcare because they can't afford it. It saddens me to know at this moment Human rights are violated every second on this planet. It saddens to see meagre firearms laws and school shootings in the US. It saddens me to know that my government has permitted to extract oil from the oil sands. It saddens me to see such things like stuff animals made out of plastic and artificial products harmful for our environment being sold because they are adorable gifts to give. I'm against mass production, I'm sadden by our over consumerism and billions of tons of waste finding its way to landfills everyday. There are many things that saddens me in life also.

I am against poaching, over hunting and over fishing. I am against taking more than we need from nature (including plants, carbon fuel, and minerals). I am a concerned human when it comes to the environment.

But I can assure you my intention was not to provoke. And please do not mistake me for a person who does not love and respect animals. If you do not agree, then we are going to have to agree to disagree on the matter. To avoid seeing the pictures over and over, you may want to hide them from your timeline by hovering over the top right of the post and clicking the dropdown arrow, then on "hide story". What I do does not make less of a druid. What I have learned in druidry and even within RDNA, is the importance of sincerity. I make use of what is given to me and treat such things as being very sacred. I'm aware of the value they hold. It comes down to personal ideals and beliefs and druidry does not enforce any views or doctrines.

George Yet We and others Spend Billions making and using Killing Machines to do it. Truly the New Rome! And The Hedgehog Druids most often offer not a peep.

Thomas I'm not against hunting. Quite the opposite. However sometimes it does us good to contemplate another viewpoint.

Thomas Not the viewpoint of co-humans. The viewpoint of plants and animals.

Sébastien Indeed Thomas, it makes us more aware and sensitive to importance of conservation and the proper management of our natural resources of our planet.

George I have had perhaps a odd habit for years of saying a quick release prayer every time I see Road Kill. Which is almost every time we drive more than a few blocks. The Prayer is to guide the spirit back to the light and release its fear, if it is still near by.

George Just another Soul Buzzard Druid Duty.

Penny I struggle with such things and perhaps i always will, but one thing i am sure of is that this animal was treated with the utmost respect, and it's is being honored by being used in this way, and it will continue to be honored with it's use. This makes me smile, that such respect and intent has gone into this beautiful creation, and that some one deeply cares

Sébastien Thank you Penny!

Thomas I've done the same many times, but one can't help but wonder if the owl, to whom a vehicle must resemble a weapon that kills without even meat being harvested for food, views it similarly. I recall a Cherokee story in which the animals held council against humans for hunting and the plants joined humans as our medicine.

George Yes unlike the Concrete Deer In Deer Field Beach will they ran all the Deer away 60-75 years ago.

Thomas Yeah. We do hunt with decoys, don't we?

Thomas Lol

Thomas So how do we carry forward the sacredness of the hunt n modern society?

George Limit it to one knife and one short spear and hunt only animals that can and will if need to kill you.

Thomas No atl-atl?

George Also if Killed Nature gets your carcass and no retribution to what killed you !

George I give human a little better tool as it has poor senses .

George I do think that when Hunting a hunter should be required to take whole kill and use or make available hide and bones cleaned for others to use. This would add a big effort burden cost on them.

Thomas But that's a somewhat less than sporting chance. Consider all the weapons the Earth Mother has given Bear against defenseless fish.

Sébastien I believe that we need to look into aboriginal views from across the world on this matter. My father has shown me that we do not take more than we need from Mother Earth. Druidry has also showed me that we are all interconnected and nothing is without a cost and we need to be aware of it. Hence the sacredness in druidry.

Thomas And at Nature. Despite anthrocentrism, animals and plants have culture of sorts. In discernment of their behavior in the wild, we might stand a chance of being able to respect them properly. Our prefabricated nests sometimes leave us stunted.

Thomas Nature might be good, but it seldom plays by our rules.

Aonarach Thanks for that interesting perspective Tomas, never quite thought of it that way. And Sebastien - the many other things in this world that sadden you and me both do not make this issue any less disturbing to me - in fact, using that tactic has revealed a great deal to me. Best I remove myself from this particular discussion. - and thanks for the tip on hiding.

Sébastien The fact is that I did nothing immoral in the true sense of the law and that I truly honour the animal. Would it have been better to have been thrown in the rubbish? It is not like I'm mass producing and I'm not putting it for sale; it was given to me to find it a proper use. I could have made it into be a hand bag but that would have not in my opinion gave it the true value it holds. It is shocking for some to see a head, but the hide was taken to make something else and the leather and fur worker hates spoiling because it is unethical for him in his line of work. I understand your point of view but it seems that you do not want to meet me half way and understand my point of view.

Penny Aonarach -- I am having a hard time understanding why u would find this offensive. I mentioned earlier that i struggle with meat consumption, and i'm wondering if this is part of the reason, that this doesn't sit right with you. I eat meat because i have to, not because i want too. The last 15 years i have tried using all other forms of protein, but i still got sick. I eventually went to my doctor, and was informed that the amino acids found in meat and fish cannot be found in other foods, but you can however replace them with other proteins. After doing many many weeks of food meditations, i have drawn to the conclusion, that my body was meant to have meat. So i eat meat every 4th or 5th day and i don't get sick anymore except for the smell sometimes. There are other reasons too, but i just wanted to share my experience with you and explain what eventually gave me the peace and the understanding of such matters that i had been searching for. I really like the idea that the pelt is used and not wasted, and not to forget, there was a reason that this pelt was gifted to Sébastien Beaudoin, in the first place. So if this might be the reason, your having such a hard time i hope this helps, we all rely and need each other as nature intended I don't mean to offend you in any way or disrespect you, i just don't understand where u are coming from.

Julie I know this is not going to sit right with alot of folks, but..if it weren't for meat eaters, there would be no hides, no hides there would be no leather, suede, rawhide ect....if there weren't any of these, there would be no saddles, boots, belts, dog chewies, jacket, leather furniture, car seats ect.... without these there would be no income/ outcome of varying economical classes, there would also be no hunting, no husbandry of anykind (bird, mamal, fish, reptile) I know I know we can all eat toffu, vedgies ect.....but honestly....I believe humans were meant to be omnivorous, now yes there are exceptions to every rule, I also know we are not living in a world as a 1000 yrs ago, what I think those of you are upset with(ignore me if I'm wrong) is that in today's society pets are just as important and in many cases more important than our human families, so we give them human feelings and human reactions. do you not think that an antelope does not know it is food for the lion? I think it does. Do I agree with animal abuse? no I don't but If you let mother nature to her own devices she will balance things out and its a "eat or be eaten world" , and I for one have respect for everybody's differing opinions and if that is how you chose to live your life, then you MUST respect and let others honor their path and their ancestry. Do I buy meat that is hormone injected and crowded in small pens living a short and stressful life, I do not. but I do buy and eat meat that has been humanly raised and respected for its role in the circle of life. And when the rabbit, deer or fish that I consume come from the wild I will honor it and waste not one bit of it for trophy or disgust I turn what I can into a usable object or food. Do I eat vedgies and such, yes I even grow my own, and I know that a full summers worth of gardening will never fill my cupboard for a winters survival. I ask do you really know where your food comes fom and do you respect the fact that all beings have a purpose and honor it as such??? Do you object to birds scavenging for their hatchling or nest building? do you feel offended when the weasle enters the chicken coop for meer purpose of killing? Do you feel it is wrong when an animal dies and another use it for food? I don't I accept the way mother nature has governed herself and we are merely another animal in her great game....this is my view and Sebastiens coyote head is what many generations of his and my ancestors have done, honor it by giving it a purpose and respect to its spirit.

George Soon GMOs both Animal and Plant may solve the problem at the price of killing us all. LOL

Julie yes George it will grow a brain and out think us...it may very well happen...

Thomas Just an observation, but whether created or evolved, humankind has a number of highly specialized teeth. Among them are the canines developed for the eating of meat.

Animals Part Three

Sébastien I do understand that everyone has their rights to their own opinions; I respect everyone's opinion here in this group as long it does not attain to one's reputation. My opinions and likes are as much valid as anyone else in this group. My art form is my own expression if I choose to show it in this group is that I trust everyone in this group to be mature enough to make that distinction. I have let people express their opinions on my matters, such as politics, being vegan or on other topics as long it is done in a diplomatic way. I'm not a vegan myself, but it should not be obligated to hide my heritage and culture on that matter. I'm for hunting and trapping as long it is done in humane way. I was unkindly judge and have been victim of bigotry. I will not be bullied in my own group because I'm not a vegan. Let's agree to disagree. My goal is not convince anyone otherwise. Personally my artwork has a deep spiritual meaning for me. For me I honour every aspect of life (dead or alive). Hunting has been part of my upbringing and heritage. To delete my images is not at all respectful. For me, it is not a cultural or social taboo. I want to make this clear. In fact the coyote in my work was hunted by an Algonquin trapper. Its spirit was honoured and a tobacco offering was given to him. I suggest that people respect each others culture and heritage. Druidy should never force people in denying their own personal identity.

Carole Sebastian please read my post. We are guests on the FB pages - we cannot force them to see something they do not wish to see. IF the rules are no dead animals in circles, surely that should be held on the group page as well. That said, it appears to be very good work you have done and a credit to the animal.

Rusty Actually, this IS Sebastien's page, and he is not forcing anyone to be here, or to keep their eyes open while they type, or to keep their minds open to the fact that humanity has omnivores.

Carole Well, then, perhaps whoever is deleting the pictures need to talk to him before they do it?

Lisa Facebook has deleted the pictures because a close-minded person who shall remain unnamed who seems to have removed herself from this and other groups and who jumped the gun instead of first asking what the whole story was decided to report the pictures. For those who are open minded and would like to hear the actual story (which has absolutely nothing to do with animal sacrifice btw), Sébastien will be more than happy to explain. Ok, done my little rant now

Sébastien Ok... I do not do any animal sacrifice, RDNA, OBOD, ADF and many other druidic groups know that I'm soooooo against it. What I do is so far from being inhumane. This coyote hide has been given to me to be used in an honourable way. I believe that I did a great job of doing so. The person giving me the hide knew that I would. I'm a very well respected druid, this person had no idea. It is very sad. Anyway... I will just let the dust fall for now.

Karen It saddens me to know there are still people who jump to such horrific conclusions. Anyone, taking a few minutes to check out these pages or even to go as far as looking on your profile Sébastien would see with just a few minutes of research, you honour all animals that cross your path. I am so sure the spirit of this coyote is very proud to have his/her life honoured as you have done for him/her. Long life to coyote spirit.

Carole It's obvious what they are Lisa I'm surprised they did not have the decency to discuss it with him before deleting

Sébastien Thank you Karen for such lovely words, very appreciated.

Carole reporting

Sean I make no bones about the fact that part of my druidry is cooking sacred meat over a flame. It connects me spiritually. If someone is offended, then they don't have to read my posts. The same holds true here. There are many people here with many opinions, everyone here needs to be tolerant of each other's points of view. Healthy debate is good, but stifling opinion because it is offensive to one person is another.

George No Long Pig I hope LOL

George I have heard in EU you can get almost anything in your mystery Burger!

Penny Yes the mystery burger, inevitable i would say, are peeps really that shocked ?

George Yes it is odd they are so upset. At least it is real meat not like the Sawdust US burger helpers.

Penny I actually was coming at it from another direction George King Being so close to continental Europe, and part of the EC i thought it was rather obvious that this would occur at some point, prob is, most the hysteria, in my opinion is due to the fact that, that psychologically lots of peeps can't handle this (including myself) the only law that has been broken is that the packaging doest state this, hence it being fraudulent. There really isnt anything wrong with horse meat, it is no different to consuming beef or any other meat for that matter, with exception of what i just stated.

Karen Yet another good reason for hunting or growing your own source of protein, this way you know what you are eating. Making it more easy to honour the life of the animal as well.

Aonarach I've got no issues with hunting and trapping - unless its just for sport. I'm curious though - why does one coyote's?

George True Penny and in the 1950s US made it legal to sell as Beef. Canned Beef stew used to be Horse meat from South America. Today who knows what anything is. Meat glue is a common practice to make steaks in US now of little peaces of ???

Penny Makes me chuckle George King, mystery burgers LOL



George Kind of like Druidism in a lot of Ways

Karen I personally don't know anyone who eats coyote, but I do know they exist. A lot of small farms in remote regions do hunt coyotes as a way of protecting their new born calves & lambs. These small family operated farms who raise animals ethically are also sadly being eradicated by the big unhealthy, factory farms that have no respect for the humane practices of raising animals or the environment.

Thomas I could say who does eat them, but it's kind of oathbound. I will say the meat is eaten sacramentally.

Aonarach Interesting Thomas, I shall have to investigate

Animals Part 4

Carole If I may say something to Sébastien Beaudoin

Whilst I agree with your 'rights' and would fight with you for them, including the photos of a dead animal...

- you also have to understand the rights of those who might be offended by your 'rights'

By posting pictures that are yours by right, you take away the rights of others who may be, vegetarian, animal lover etc.

The moderators here (I am not one) have to maintain a balance and its better NOT to show something, than to do so and offend many.

Carole Also, and the point here is this..From what I understand the Reformed Druids - they do NOT allow sacrifice of living beings in their order... again, I am not a reformed druid and they can explain further - but you are going against their beliefs. Would you really want to offend them in such a way? It is their page after all.

Mike TheFool seen a lot of fur and leather in photos and art over the last two years. I think what was perhaps more shocking, to some, was a face on the fur. Americans, while carnivorous to an extreme, are rather shocked by seeing faces on a dead animal, even a fish. Reformed Druids do not sacrifice animals at their Reformed Druid services, yes , but it doesn't mean that they don't hunt, practice husbandry, or slaughter animals for food, or perhaps kill animals in other religious traditions with which they participate (e.g. if they were Lakota and participating in a Buffalo kill). Sebastien, what is the back story on your artistic creation and the tradition that inspired it? You need not defend it, I'm just curious what it is.

Carole I appreciate that Mike - im just putting the 'rights' issue forward. Sebastian understands what im saying...

Stacey How is posting photos taking away your rights? You have the right to look at them or not look at them. If you don't like seeing the photos hide them. And as far as I know Sebastien did not sacrifice these animals as part of RDNA ritual. He treated them with respect and honor.

Sébastien Thank you Mike and Stacey. Also, Thank you Carole for sharing your impute it was very appreciated. But sadly it was too late as she has reported me

Carole No way

George Well Meet Druid Stacey . (even as I am not a RDNA myself, yours is an in tune with Pagus World View). TDK

Sébastien Not the same Carole... hehehehe

Carole All you have to do is put it that pics like this has nothing to do with ritual and you are covered
Sébastien

Sean I do not know what picture he/she is referring to, but his/her opinion does not rule supreme here. If they are offended, then don't look at it.

Carole Who is she Sean

Sébastien Sean is part RDNA and ADF

Carole Lol no he said. "She is referring to" I wanted to know who she was

Sébastien lol

Sébastien sorry

Sébastien Oh... she seemed to have left the group at the moment she reported me

Sean Who knows. That's what happens when i walk into a conversation when it's about over. lol

Carole Lol

Carole She realised messed up

George Trolls were biting today if you had Head Bait.

Sean heads or tails, they were about.

Sébastien hehehehe

Sébastien That is another topic George Thank you all for you support, truly appreciated.

Julie I believed it was truly tactless of her(person who reported) reason being is that she shared the picture on her wall then proceeded to be offended after Sebastien defended himself. Also I was the one that put the bee in Seb's ear about the share...I think we all could learn from this that now matter how "civilized" we think we are their are always going to be people who have a very narrow view of the world. I hunt I skin i tan and I've raised rabbit, chicken turkey horse cattle sheep pigs, and I have a very good sense of where my food comes from, I don't agree with abuse situations of any kind for any animal, but realisticly some of our domesticated animals could never run wild(there is no land for them)and many wild creatures are disapearing so why can we not honor their spirits and sacrifices for our survival????

Julie Also I DO NOT AGREEE EVER WITH ANIMAL SACRIFICE IN THE NAME OF MY DRUIDRY EITHER>

Sébastien Good news!!!! I can post pictures again!

George Yet in America thousands of Dog and Cats are killed every day in the name of clean streets and millions of Factory animals die in the name of cheap meat for all and shorten life spans. So what odd animals the Humans are.

Julie Was wondering, if there is a rule about no dead animals on face book, why are there tons of pics of dead animal on face book? Even whole pages dedicated to the torture and hatred towards dogs, I'm confused.... I'm always hiding post that I'm not comfy with, I don't go around reporting them, to each his/her own I guess...

Peggy I am an extreme animal lover and I find this to be beautiful!!!!

Penny Young Oh Peggy Fletcher it is very beautiful

Ellen I addressed the issue of Druid animal sacrifice in my book Priestess of the Fire Temple - A Druid's Tale. Animal sacrifice is a well attested aspect of IE religion.

Thomas The interspecies symbiotic relationships on this planet seem to escape some, it seems. I never knew that growing fur was the only litmus test for sentient life.

George And still done in Main Stream Religions by some, but that is a storm not worth raising as it never rains good will.

George I should hope it is not as I believe all life is sentient except a large percent of humanity.

Clover



Wood Sorrel, Shamrock

Clipped with permission from SCOTTISH HERBS AND FAIRY LORE p. 185

Part used: the fresh herb (gathered in the spring)

Gaelic: seamrag, greim saighdeir (a soldier's mouthful)

Latin: Oxalis acetosella

Gathered in spring, the herb can be eaten in small amounts. It is added to soups and salads and taken as tea for fevers including typhus. Caution: do not eat large amounts of this plant as it contains oxalic acid that can harm the kidneys and cause internal bleeding and diarrhea. Persons with weak or diseased kidneys should avoid this plant. The cold tea helps indigestion and liver complaints. It is used externally as a wash for skin conditions. Tea: steep 1 cup of the herb per quart of freshly boiled water for 3 minutes. Take ¼ cup, 4 times a day, for a few days.

Lore: where shamrocks are plentiful there is sure to be Fairy activity in the area. Sheep Sorrel (Rumex acetosella) is known as Fairy Money.

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THE SECRET MEDICINES OF YOUR KITCHEN (mPowr Ltd, London, 2012) is available now! Learn to use the foods and spices already in your kitchen, for natural home remedies. Visit my book store and blog <http://www.elleneverthopman.com>

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