



Samhain Issue
Year of the Reform “LIII”
October 30, 2015 c.e.
Volume 32, Issue 7

Editor’s Notes:

.Went to visit the Valley of the Kings and spent a lot of time in tombs and mortuary temples, which is of course perfect for the end of October. Still miss seeing the leaves change colors, but a taste of death none the less. Winter is actually the most enjoyable time in Egypt to get around and see everything, and people are more lively as the weather is not oppressive. My neighborhood here held Halloween parties and I had trick-or-treaters. All very nice.

Best wishes to you all and a happy new Celtic year.

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NEWS OF THE GROVES



Carleton Grove: News from Minnesota

Cool play at Carleton in the Arb! "So many cool aspects to Nature, an original production by [TigerLion Arts](http://www.tigerlionarts.com) coming to Carleton for three shows on Saturday and Sunday. One: It's outdoors in the Carleton College Cowling Arboretum. Two: It's a "walking play," which means the audience moves with various scenes. Three: It's about Emerson and Thoreau. Four: It also features music, dance, and period garb. Still need convincing? Read on!" https://apps.carleton.edu/arts/blog/?story_id=1328533



<https://youtu.be/QNISGr48cDQ>

A short clip from Irony's 1999 interview about a mystery in the Carleton Arb.

Poison Oak Grove: News from California

I've often wondered what the old druids did when they were not advising kings, doing ceremony, or hobnobbing with other druids. My teacher Emmon Bodfish used to say that a druid should live as closely to nature as possible. He was also great at scrounging and wrote an article about it the first edition of *A Druid Missal-Any*. I took both of those to heart. We spend all year scrounging for wood as our upstairs is only heated by a wood stove and so far (knock on wood!) we haven't had to buy any in the 11 years we've lived here.

Yesterday was chainsaw day. The two large pieces in the back are from the Coast Live Oak that fell on the house two Februaries ago. On the far left is the little wood stove Emmon left me in his will. We used it until the inner plate cracked (it was too old to for replacement parts.). The new stove still has a connection to Emmon. In his will he left me his Lopi but it was really a Jotul. So when I went looking for a new stove I had to buy a Lopi!



Koad Grove: News from Michigan

Wonderful expansion!!! The twenty-one new Druids of the 1st Order are now the Reformed Druids of Australia!!!

Oakdale Grove: News from Minnesota

Rather hastily crafted Druid Sigil pendant, with precautions taken to prevent malachite poisoning. Or if I do get malachite poisoning at the very least I could wear this for healing, lol



John M asks:

For those who have conducted another Reformed Druid's 3rd Order Vigil, is there a common single title for the Vigiler's "babysitter" that you tend to use? I know there's no set nomenclature, but when it comes to writing things down frequently, it makes me feel that for such a time-honored tradition (as un-Reformed as this sounds), it might be beneficial to have standardized terminology.

At least for Oakdale Grove as an autonomous congregation, I'd like to incorporate some semi-formal terms to suit specific roles, and I could use some crowdsourcing to help my mind-mapping, especially now that I've started writing a handful of other rituals. Now specifically in regard to the Vigil-Watcher (Watcher sounds a bit creepstastic), I was mulling terms like Vigil-Warden, Conductor, Overseer, Custodian (plus Vigil = "Vistodian!"), "The Vigilator," Proctor, Vigil Voyeur (omg, no! LOL) ...ideas, thoughts, synonyms?

Four years of my life were spent at the College of Saint Scholastica in Duluth, Minnesota. I lived there from 2002 through the summer of 2006. A very large percent of that time I spent exploring, mapping, and gallivanting across the woods, climbing up and down the cliffs of the Valley of Silence. Carleton College may have the Arboretum, but this was my realm. This was my sacred forest, dotted with my nemetons and temple glades. I crawled through thickets, sloshed through muddy wetlands, never finding a single tick in my adventures. I tolerated the burrs, left inscriptions in stones

Saint Scholastica's class of 1922 named the woods on campus "The Valley of Silence," for how quiet and peaceful it was in the woods. I would escape to its serenity regularly, all times of the year. Yesterday I returned to go gallivanting across the forest again, just like old times. There is never enough time. A part of my spirit will always be tied to this place. It rends the heart knowing I can't run to it on an afternoon whim any more; I am 150 miles removed from there. Whenever I leave the Valley of Silence, I feel as if I am being ripped away. There was inevitably somewhere else I had to go.

Though there were many times I spent the entire night in the woods. The full moon guided my way without need for flashlights. On overcast nights, especially in winter, the sodium lights from the city of Duluth gave enough light pollution to read by. There was only one place that always seemed dark, even during the day. That was the section I called the Darkwoods. Dense cedar and pine grew along a shallow rocky stream that meandered from a natural spring down into the valley. The Valley of Silence is so full of mystery and geological wonders. There is so much I have yet to explore - I don't want to wait another 10 years to go back.

Some photos will have additional details in the description.

https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=843165339188&set=oa.10153260182201245&type=3&relevant_count=1

I attended an Equinox ritual put on by Dancing Waters Protogrove (ADF), and was welcomed by a wreath secured on two stakes, which was partially intended to represent the druid sigil, but admittedly the two stakes were for stability.

I counted twelve in attendance. My carnyx summoned the druids to the procession once the flame-keeper had lit the fire. Then after the ritual, the equinox festival potluck began. I had brought two bottles of Mead, and I spotted a bag of Druid Circles! There was so much food, we were sent home with divvied leftovers at the end of the night.



Raven's Grove: News From Quebec

See the first video in the Druid Video section.

My definition of a Spiritual Awakening

A Spiritual Awakening is the full awareness of your true self and that you have chosen a way life that reflects your true inner identity, values and belief. There is no higher teaching than your own heart, mind and spirit. It is the capacity for self-awareness and to make choices that are in the interest of oneself and others.

- Sébastien (October 13th - 2015)

RDG Fundraiser

Ellis trying to raise money for purchasing land for Dryad's Realm

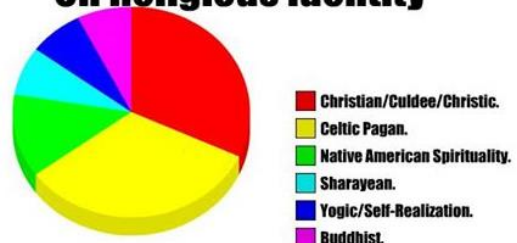
<http://www.theplaidzebra.com/research-shows-that-people-are-ditching-religion-and-turning-their-attention-to-nature-instead/>

MOCC News:

New Facebook: MOCC Free Voice

<https://www.facebook.com/moccfreevoice1>

MOCC Straw Poll On Religious Identity



October 2015. This poll is only a straw poll and does not reflect all MOCC members.



Druid Poems

"Long ago before the first human ... before the first tree ... her life began. She breathes and grows ... blood rushes through her veins. She can feel pain. She can feed us when we are hungry. Heals us when we are sick. She has the power to give us energy ... the power to make us smile. She is not human. She is the Earth. There is a reason why we call her Gaia, Earth Mother" ~ Author Unknown

-Shared by Shimon

Do not go gentle into that good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.
Though wise men at their end know dark is right,
Because their words had forked no lightning they
Do not go gentle into that good night.
Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright
Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.
Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight,
And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way,
Do not go gentle into that good night.
Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight
Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.
And you, my father, there on the sad height,

Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears, I pray.

Do not go gentle into that good night.

Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

-Dylan Thomas

This is a poem I wrote to hopefully explain what druidism means to me

A Druid's Lament.

by wulfdreamwalker 10/11/15

History is clouded and lost records not kept
Of the ancient people known as druids
Demonized and targeted by the church
Taking to hiding in sorrow their worship of Earth
Masking their ways hiding their beliefs
Becoming whatever keeps them safe
Practicing in secret educating orally
Traditions of wisdom and compassion
Centuries pass and wisdom flourishes
Hidden away from the religious foes
New ages arrive and knowledge is gleaned
A new dawn of an ancient belief is reborn
Recreated as best they can by today's druids
Following as best as possible the old ways
we make a stand
The ancient teachings lost and remade anew
New Druids Practicing worship based in nature
Blending technology with oral traditions
Living for Mother Earth and sharing
Wisdom and lifestyle both young and old

Often mistaken for ungodly beliefs.
Spiritual in belief holy in essence
Nature is good, Nature is God
we are Nature so we are God(desses)

'To go in the dark with a light is to know light.
To know the dark, go dark. Go without sight,
and find that the dark, too, blooms and sings,
and is traveled by dark feet and dark wings.'
~ Wendell Berry

She Stands
Tall, in the tallest tree, she stands;
Dark against the night,
Dark that is the night,
She stands, balanced between the seasons.
Black, against a one-half moon, she stands;
Dark against the white,
Silhouette absorbing light,
She stands, balanced between the spheres.
As the old season slips away,
With its battles and losses,
With its lightness and love,
With its grey, indeterminate nature,
She devours it as it slips from time and memory.
By consuming all that is,
Regardless of value or purpose,
Satisfied,
She stands.
Black, against a starless sky, she stands;
The moon is consumed,
The stars are devoured,
She stands, blended into the darkness that is home.

Jon D

there I stood, on the edge of light
and did not know how quickly my eyes to shut
not for fear but for beauty
and indeed the positive chance of blindness
when I heard the light in my head
the sparkles spat out of my thinking
from the base, the vast emptiness
the darkness before any thing
I was never more unsure
never more trebling
never more alone
but, well, the joy is but indescribable

-Hennie

leave nothing untold
leave nothing unsaid
put the fire to your head
and drink the cup of change
sing every song
dream every dream
let every word redeem
and read the book of change
write letters of love
write letters of hate
go where you've been of late
and build the house of change
and change the change
to more than truth
and dance beyond the stars

-Hennie

see, the Earth is my grave
and my cradle
my food and my drink
the Earth is my war and my peace
my last hope
my first mother and lover
the Earth is my toy and playground
my dream of grandeur
my enemy and murderer
the Earth is my Goddess
no escaping there
what can I, if not worship her?
-Hennie

as I die
it will be as if I was born
clocks will be consulted
there will be a coming and going
family and friends will be informed
maybe there will be a gathering
there will be gossip
words of remembrance
expectations, evaluations
even angry words, perhaps
Life cannot be passed by unnoticed

-Hennie

go out and breath
and breath again
do you know air?
steal a kiss
and then one more
do you know fire?
drink the waters
drink deep
do you know water?
enjoy your food
really taste it
do you know earth?
read a poem
and again
do you know spirit?
and now : do you know life?
-Hennie

life lived without pain
I can't no more recall
all other feelings slain
the curtains slowly fall
well, this might be all
as far as I can say
I guess, Death will find his way
and even still might stall
perhaps there will be tears
and certainly relief
no need for these last fears
or wrestling with too much grief
-Hennie

Druid Blogs and Links

Welcome to the webpage of Well-Grounded Druid podcast



Sebastien made a video on Druidry, Algonquin and Anishinaabe

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qA9eq2yAgzs>

Druidpodcast 103 with Interview of John Beckett, the dreaming, beads and bridges.)

<http://druidcast.libsyn.com/druidcast-a-druid-podcast-episode-103>

John Becket blogs on sacred mysteries, tarot, Witches of America book, men's mysteries, afterlife, paganism and athiests, signs of Samhain coming, ancestors, dangers

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/johnbeckett/author/johnbeckett>

ADF podcast still not operating <https://www.adf.org/forums/podcast>

Nimue blogs on vocal story telling, needs, drama/intensity, sleep cycles, mythical place journeys, inner turmoil, loom & gloom, inner landscapes, better dolls, transgender, awkward meditation, Pagan Dreaming book, <https://druidlife.wordpress.com>

Ellen Hopman blogs about who upcoming secret medicines from your garden book, beekeeping video, and numerous archaeological links <http://elleneverthopman.com/?cat=4>

<http://aren.org/newsletter/> <http://aren.org/newsletter/2015-litha/index.html> no Samhain issue yet

Druid Magazine has their Fall 2015 issue at http://druidmagazine.com/pdf/201510_DM_Fall.pdf on transatlantic druidism, how Samhain changed to Halloween, Public ritual, Druidism during grad school, finding Spirituality online, permaculture and Druidry, Green Thumbs.

<http://www.druidicdawn.org/aontacht>

Features include: Time and Healing: Personal Rituals (Lisa Crandall), Crisis or Transformation (Lindsay Gay Walker), The Next Step (Sarah Fuhro), We are All Mayflies (Brendan Murphy), Spell Work, Ritual and Depression (Siobhan Johnson), Three (David Rankine).

Feature Interview with Nigel Dailey - Founder of Druidic Dawn, Poems by Rosaleen Murphy, Nimue Brown and Bear Rollins. Plus Earth Mysteries (The Druid 3X3), Recipes, The Fox's Tale, Sun, Moon & Stars, and much more from the global Druid and Earth-Based community.

Building Unity in the Community

No blogging updates from: <https://helgaleena.wordpress.com/> except a freaky skull graphic

Penny recommends this article on 13 Samhain traditions

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/thewitchesnextdoor/2015/10/13-samhain-traditions-wellat-least-at-our-house/>

Penny recommends a pagan feast website <http://recipesforapagansoul.weebly.com/samhain-oct-31.html>

Ronald Hutton on Halloween for the Guardian:

http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/oct/28/halloween-more-than-trick-or-treat-origins?error_code=4201&error_message=User+canceled+the+Dialog+flow# =

Shimon on European paganism resurgence <http://theweek.com/articles/584634/could-paganism-make-comeback-not-crazy-sounds>

Shimon on Celtic symbol meaning <http://ireland-calling.com/celtic-symbols>

Weaving your own coffin <http://www.stroudlife.co.uk/Pictures-Weave-coffin-Stroud/story-27893556-detail/story.html>

Cerridwen found an article of people leaving religion for nature

<http://www.theplaidzebra.com/research-shows-that-people-are-ditching-religion-and-turning-their-attention-to-nature-instead/>

Druid Videos



Margot Adler (author of *Drawing down the Moon*) talking about the last 15 years of paganism that has surprised her when she got back in touch with wider paganism.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-J82cBgWZQI>



What's the deal with daylight saving time?

<https://youtu.be/kw462Xbbzng>



[Samhain Eve](#) by Damh the Bard, rec. by Penny



Why comedy is important.

<https://youtu.be/mgsErxFEPSE>



Three part series of Iron Age Celts on BBC
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b06h7x5f/episodes/player>



Why hazing happens in fraternities and sub-groups

<https://youtu.be/DvknIZ00pj4>



What is life like in frats and sororities?

<https://youtu.be/N4Nr2IKjERg>



Autumn is disappearing, and here is why!

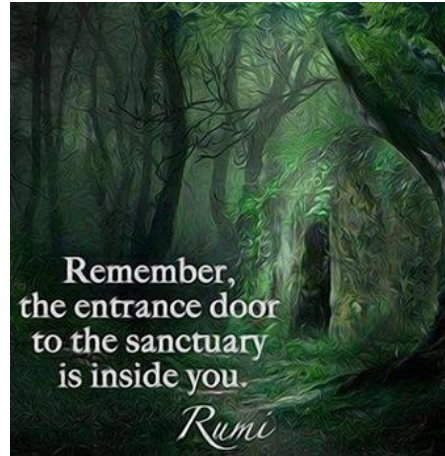
<https://youtu.be/wzyZg985pBY>



These silent monks take a simple set of words and makes them epic in this performance

<https://youtu.be/pRhjWdr-LAA>

Druid Art



Should I Make Art?

BY JOHN OSEBOLD



From Ceridwen



6 Signs It's Getting Close To Samhain

October 8, 2015 by John Beckett

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/thewitchesnextdoor/2015/10/13-samhain-traditions-wellat-least-at-our-house/>

Our ancestors didn't need a calendar to tell them Samhain was getting close – they could read the signs. People have been reading signs in the wider world for at least as long as we've been human. This requires no great psychic skills – anyone can do it, if you pay close attention over a long period of time. Many things that happen regularly happen in a particular order, and while correlation is not causation it's good enough for predictive purposes.

We've lost much of the wisdom and lore of our pre-Christian ancestors, and in any case we live in a very different world. But even in here in urban and suburban North America, there are signs that let us know it's getting close to Samhain.

For any readers who are new to Paganism (especially those who found this blog through Sunday's post on gun violence), Samhain is pronounced "SOW-en" – it's an Old Irish word meaning "summer's end." It's not pronounced "SAM-hane" and there never was a "Samhane Lord of the Dead" – that's a early modern literary error that was sensationalized by evangelical scaremongers. Jason Mankey wrote a very good piece on the history of Samhain last year. In contemporary Paganism, it's the final harvest festival, celebrated on October 31. It's a time to remember our ancestors and a time to contemplate death and what comes afterward.

Some of the signs that Samhain is getting close are silly and border on offensive, but they're still signs that Samhain is coming. Fortunately, there are deep, serious, spiritual signs we can look for as well.

First, here are **three silly signs** it's getting close to Samhain.

1. **Christmas decorations in Wal-Mart.** Like the ridiculous articles you see on Facebook and say "please tell me this is The Onion," I wish I was joking here. I'm not. I pulled into a local Wal-Mart last Saturday (where else are you going to go for large plastic tubs?) and saw 15 shipping containers sitting in the parking lot. My fears were confirmed when I got inside and saw artificial Christmas trees for sale – on October 3.

I'm old enough to remember when Christmas sales started on the Friday after Thanksgiving. Then it was after Halloween. Now we're barely past the Autumn Equinox and it's starting already.

Christian friends, please reclaim your holy day from the moneychangers.

2. An onslaught of bad horror movies. Yes, this has more to do with Halloween than Samhain, but it's still a sign we're getting close. I love gothic horror and have ever since I first heard Bela Lugosi say "I am... Dracula." But for every good movie, there seem to be twenty that look like they were written by someone who thinks plot is only found in cemeteries.

This year's big Hollywood offering is *The Last Witch Hunter*, a movie whose tag line says "The last witch hunter is all that stands between humanity and the combined forces of the most horrifying witches in history." Why no, that's not offensive to contemporary witches who struggle against religious discrimination, or to the memory of those who were tortured and killed because people thought they were witches.

I'll probably see it anyway <sigh>.

3. The mainstream media remembers Pagans. Paganism is practiced year-round like every other religion, but the mainstream media seems to think we only come out in October. We still see "meet the Pagans" pieces that present us as curiosities. Those might have been appropriate 20 years ago, but today they're just condescending. I want to see a newspaper covering a public Samhain circle the way they cover Easter Sunday at a Catholic church or a live nativity scene at a Baptist church.

If you get a call from a reporter, remember their goal isn't to tell your story honestly and fairly, it's to tell an interest-grabbing story, and many aren't above exploiting an unsuspecting Pagan for a sensational piece. Contrary to the old saying, bad publicity is often worse than no publicity. If you're not convinced this reporter will present you in a good light, just say no.

Those are three silly signs of Samhain.

Now here are **three serious signs Samhain** is getting close.

1). The Dark Half is growing. The days have been shorter than the nights since the Autumn Equinox two weeks ago. Now the change is evident: the sun is low enough to be in your eyes on your drive home, it's rising further and further south every day, and the temperatures are dropping. My evening prayers, which were said in bright sunlight just a few weeks ago, are now said in shadows. Before long they'll be done in artificial light. Summer's End is getting close, even here in Texas.

In an agricultural society this would be a signal that work is slowing down. Instead, we're gearing up for the "holiday season." But our reading of the signs reminds us there will eventually come a time when our work is no more. What is hidden away causes fear and anxiety – let's bring Death out into the open and explore the great transition we will all someday make.

2. The Veil Between the Worlds grows thin. Samhain is the season when the world of the living and the world of the Gods and ancestors draw near, and sometimes overlap. The Veil between them becomes thin and porous, and even those of us who aren't particularly skilled at such things can hear, see, and experience the Otherworld.

Are your dreams more vivid and more meaningful, even if they're as elusive as always come morning? Is your intuition sharper, your inexplicable feelings you should do this or must not do that stronger? Are your meditations clearer and your sense of the presence of the land spirits more certain? Samhain is getting close.

Perhaps you have trouble seeing these signs. That's not surprising – you probably have trouble recognizing subtle changes in weather, vegetation, and animal behavior too. We aren't taught these things any more, and those of us who are particularly adept at them are told we're imagining things or that it doesn't make any difference.

Pay attention to your dreams and intuitions. Take notes and review them from time to time. Things that happen regularly usually happen in a particular order and in particular patterns. You won't become skilled in a week or a month or maybe even a year, but with diligent practice, eventually you'll be able to read these signs as well as you can read the more obvious and silly ones.

3. Our ancestors draw near. Perhaps after death we live on in the Otherworld. Perhaps we're reincarnated into another body. Perhaps the essence of who we are merges into the Universe, just as our bodies return to the Earth from whence they came. I have my favorite theories, but in the end, we don't know.

But this we do know: that which is remembered lives.

At Samhain we remember our ancestors. We remember our grandmothers and grandfathers, our ancestors we knew in life or that we know from the stories told about them. We remember our ancestors of spirit, the teachers and friends who influenced our lives even though we do not share their blood. We remember, as best we can, those ancestors we never knew but whose deeds form a foundation on which we build our lives.

We remember and they draw near, and we experience their presence once again.

Samhain is coming. The calendar says so and so do the signs. May your observances and celebrations be powerful and blessed.

DRUID INQUIRER INFO

Publishing Information

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Editor: Michael the Fool

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Submissions Policy: Give it to me! If you have news about your grove, written a little essay, like to write up a book or move, have a poem, saw an interesting news article in the paper, or have a cartoon, send it in to mikerdna@hotmail.com I'll try to give credit to whoever the original author is, and they retain the copyright to their works, and we'll reprint it one day in a future binding also. Nasty works will not be published. Although my standards are not skyhigh, incomplete works will be nurtured towards a publish-able form, so send those earlier for assistance. Submissions are accepted from other publications and organizations, so you need not be a formal member of the RDNA to have your items published.

Deadline for Yule is December 10, 2015