

Part 11 of ARDA 2

SECTION THREE



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Samhain Essay: Summer's End

By Stacey Weinberger

The season of Samhain is upon us. Summer has finally come to an end in Northern California with the warm days of an Indian summer swept away by some of the windiest nights in 50 years. Cold, rainy weather has returned, heavy sweaters are pulled out of storage, the heat is turned on. Time for hot tea, mulled cider and wine!

Samhain, summer's end. Traditionally whatever is left over from the harvest is left in the field for the birds, and mice, and other wildlife, and the Sidhe--the spirit folk, to glean for preparation of the coming winter. Samhain signals the beginning of the Celtic New Year. It is the end of the Summer half of the year and the beginning of the Winter half. This is the time when the veil between the worlds is the thinnest and when the ancestors, departed family and friends are said to return to visit the land of the living once again. The dead are honored and feasted on this night. Food is set out for them and they are remembered in word, song, and deed. Astronomical Samhain occurs when the Sun is half way between the Fall Equinox and the Winter Solstice and is on November 6 this year. As the "night precedes the day," Baccharis Grove will be celebrating Samhain on Sunday, Nov. 5 at sundown, which will be at 5:06 p.m.

After a nine year hiatus, the Missal-Any has found a new home. Though it had been in the back of our minds to resume publication without any particular start date, this Samhain seemed to be fitting. Our Grove celebrates its one year anniversary and is going strong. Interest in the RDNA and what we do seem to be on the rise. It is our sincere wish that we are able to continue the tradition started by our noble founder, presenting information, resources, history, and not a little bit of humor. So it is to him, Emmon Bodfish, that we dedicate this first issue.

News of the Groves

Baccharis Grove

Baccharis Grove, East Bay celebrates its one year anniversary. It was named Baccharis due to the proliferation of said shrub in the East Bay Hills of Northern California and in honor and memory of the Missal-Any's founder, who had quite a fondness for it. Other names in the running were Bay Laurel Grove, Poison Oak Grove, and Fez Grove. Though following in the traditions set by Live Oak Grove, we have already started our own, such as the themed feasts for High Day celebrations. Ask us about the goat's milk ice cream we made for Oimelc. The recipe is available upon request.

On October 21 Grove member Stacey held her Third Order vigil up at the Grove site, on what turned out to be the windiest night in the area of the past 50 years. Sick with a bad cough and fever the AD stuck it out, and it became quite an ordeal for him as well as he ended up in the hospital. The new Third Order feels terribly guilty about it (though it wasn't her

fault inspite of thinking that at the time) and sends her best get well wishes.

Obelisk Grove

Mike Scharding, AD of the Carleton Grove from 1993 to 1994, has moved back to the U.S. from Japan to attend graduate school in Washington D.C., and has founded Obelisk Grove. They are putting together a Presidential Pantheon for holding services. There aren't any female presidents yet, so they will be adding some famous female political figures. They are currently taking suggestions on which presidents are in charge of which attributes.

Resources

The Druid Chronicles, now compiled into the ARDA (A Reformed Druid Anthology), are available on the Internet and are downloadable and printable in PDF format. The URL is:
<http://www.student.carleton.edu/orgs/druids/ARDA/>

There are two RDNA websites. One is the Carleton College website at: <http://www.student.carleton.edu/orgs/druids/>
The other is Mike Scharding's, which is updated almost daily and is quite extensive:

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

It lists, as well as information about the RDNA current Groves, Hazelnuts of Wisdom (short edifying postings), and Fallen Leaves, a memorial to those Druids who have gone on before us.

For Scottish Gaelic books, tapes, and videocassettes contact Siol Cultural Enterprises. Siol is a distributor/wholesaler of Gaelic language and Celtic interest books, music, and videos. They are the North American distributor for Acair Limited, the largest Gaelic language publisher in Scotland and wholesale books from a number of other companies most notably Y Lolfa in Northern Wales, Canan on the Isle of Skye, and Gairm Publishing, Glasgow. Call (902) 863-0416, via email at siol@ns.sympatico.ca, or through post mail at: P.O. Box 81, St. Andrew's, Nova Scotia, CANADA, B0H 1X0

An excellent book to get started learning about the ancient Druids is Miranda Green's *The World of the Druids*, published 1997 by Thames and Hudson. Order from your local independent bookstore today.

October Musings

Two weeks ago, before your editor's Third Order vigil and towards the end of a year of intensive study, one of the MIS people at work came into her office to do some work on her computer. He noticed her Maxfield Parrish calendar, which for the month of October featured the painting "Riverbank, Autumn, 1938," depicting an ancient Live Oak tree. He said, "That looks very Druid." Your editor tried very hard to suppress a laugh, thinking all the while, "Does it show now?"

Calendar

Astronomical Samhain, when the Sun is midway between Equinox and Solstice, will occur on November 6, 2000 at 4:00 p.m. PST. (By the alternative method of calculation, the Sun will reach 15° of Scorpius at 6:49 p.m. PST.) Samhain services will be held on Nov. 5 at Sundown, which is 5:06 p.m. Please call for carpool arrangements (510) 654-6896. For the social observance of Samhain we will be going immediately after the service to Le Bateau Ivre, 2629 Telegraph Avenue in Berkeley.

Regular services will be held at Solar Noon on Nov. 12 and 26. Please call the above number to confirm.

The Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are \$4.00 and online subscriptions are free, but might not include everything that is in the post mail edition. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's subscription free. Write Baccharis Grove, c/o 309 63rd St, Oakland, CA 94618.

A Druid Missal-Any Yule Y.R. XXXVIII Vol. 16 Number 2 December 21st, 2000 c.e.

Yule Essay: Yule and Mistletoe

By Stacey Weinberger

Yule, Winter Solstice, is one of the four minor Druid High Days. More so than any other of the High Days, Yule seems to be especially associated with plants and trees. In the dark days of Winter it is the evergreen that reminds us of the “continual flow and renewal of life.”

The Mistletoe is one of the few plants that naturally bears fruit this time of year. It is commonly found on such trees as the apple, ash, walnut, and hawthorn, and much less often on the oak. Though it manufactures its own food through photosynthesis, it depends on its host tree for water and nutrients.

The Mistletoe was held sacred by the Druids. In Wales it is still called *druiddh his*, “Druid’s Weed.” The Roman author Pliny the Elder gives an account of the mistletoe gathering ceremony in his Natural History:

“The Druids held nothing more sacred than the mistletoe and the tree that bears it, always supposing that tree to be the oak. But they chose groves formed of oaks for the sake of the tree alone, and they never perform any of their rites except in the presence of a branch of it, in fact they think that everything that grows on it has been sent from heaven and is a proof that the tree was chosen by the god himself. The mistletoe, however, is found but rarely upon the oak; and when found, is gathered with due religious ceremony, if possible on the sixth day of the moon. They chose this day because the moon, though not yet in the middle of her course, has already considerable influence. They call the mistletoe by a name meaning, in their own language, the all-healing. Having made preparation for sacrifice and a banquet beneath the trees, they bring thither two white bulls, whose horns are bound then for the first time. Clad in a white robe, the priest ascends the tree and cuts the mistletoe with a golden sickle, and it is received by others in a white cloak. Then they kill the victims (i.e. the cattle), praying that God will render this gift of his propitious to those to whom he has granted it. They believe that the mistletoe, taken in drink, imparts fecundity to barren animals, and that it is an antidote to all poisons.”

Pliny doesn’t explain why the Druids held the mistletoe so highly other than the reference to it being all-healing. It is extremely poisonous. I overheard this past week while waiting for the train home that some florists, when it is sold yearly at Christmastime, have removed the berries because there have been cases of children picking them off the branches, eating

them, and dying. (And where were the parents in this?) Mistletoe has been used (the leaves, not the berries) however, though greatly diluted, in modern times too much success in treating serious illnesses. A specially prepared homeopathic tincture is used in the treatment of cancer and herbalists use mistletoe to strengthen the heart and reduce blood pressure. So the Ancients did have it right after all, it just took us moderns a little while to uncover it, and as with any medicinal, probably used it with great wisdom, caution, and efficacy.

Poems of the Season

From Our Server, Susan Press

Solstice

Winter has come, The song has been sung, The days have been white and cold.

The dark has been deep, The earth was asleep, Dreaming a dream of old.

Now hear Her blood drum, For the time has come, For the days to grow long and warm.

For the dark becomes light, And the earth will take flight, Greeting the Sun’s return.

Nights of Winter

In deep of winter, In the middle of the night, Jack Frost paints your windows with nary a light.

Look thru his icy artwork, Know each to be unique, You’ll see a starlit world revealed, A world that some would seek.

A world that is within, without, A fragile world of wonder and glitter A world that from his paintbrush flows, In the deep, dark nights of winter.

Walk Amongst the Trees

Murmuring softly, Father Winter walks amongst the trees, gently easing them into sweet white slumber. He stops to rest with those who keep vigil during the long winter, the Holly, the Mistletoe, and the Evergreen.

They are old, old friends and pass the long white winter sharing tales and talking of things they have seen and heard throughout their long lives.

Go walk amongst the trees. Be quiet and still, listen for their voices and then for their wisdom. Share with them your dreams, your wonders and your woes, for they will become the substance of tales told in the future...the knowledge and wisdom of the trees.

News of the Groves

New Groves!

Staggs Trail Grove

The Druids of Staggs Trail Grove (ReDNA) in Alta, CA has been re-established. There are currently four members and they would like to meet more people of like mind. Contact Kelly and Tenby at pendragon@foothill.net.

Tampa #3 Grove, Tampa, FL

Paul Jantzen is establishing his own grove, should there be no others in the area. He has a neurotic parrot and a rather stately cymbidium orchid who would happily take up roles in such a group. There may be some wayward humans who have interest as well. Contact Paul at pjantzen@hsc.usf.edu.

Obelisk Grove, Washington D.C.

Mike Scharding reports that Obelisk Grove is doing poorly. Many students never came back after the first few meetings, but perhaps this will change next term. They had a few events, but as it is the first term for the group, they will regroup and start anew next term. Mike is doing well, adding on to the RDNA site (about 15-20 hits a day, after an advertising blitz) and recently added the Druid Archives access site at

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

The latter will be completed by his birthday on Jan. 15th. With all the bad vibes in DC right now, Mike hasn't really felt very good, but his first term in Grad school is over.

Florida Groves

Swamp Grove (Naples, Southwest Florida) and River Oaks Grove (Jacksonville, FL)

The Florida groves appear to be doing well, despite all the hullabaloo over the election. Without giving away any positions, the general consensus is "enough." Both have nice websites up and running.

Swamp Grove:

<http://people.goplay.com/mousepolice/home.html>

and River Oaks Grove:

<http://personal.jax.bellsouth.net/jax/e/z/ezandmz/index.html>.

Carleton

Carleton seems to be doing quite well so far this year. A new batch came over this fall and the Samhain was well attended and the weather held out for most of the rituals. So far none of the members have burned out after three years in leadership positions. Carleton College is on winter break from Thanksgiving to January 11th. Carleton also appears to have a new college chaplain who is very friendly to the Druids, which has generally been the case since 1985.

Akita Grove, Japan

Akita Grove is well, in difficulty. Kibo Nozomi has gone to Oregon in America, and the group remaining in Japan is struggling to reorganize. Ikari Sekigawa (mabon@mb.infoeddy.ne.jp) is still in Japan and is currently on sabbatical, reexamining his life and thinking about things. He says he will resume active Druidry next year, perhaps.

Baccharis Grove

Samhain was celebrated in the patio below the Grove site this year due to the AD still recovering from pneumonia. In RDNA tradition of the new Third Order leading the first service after ordination, our Preceptor led the service. Though a bit on the giddy side prior to the service, and losing the second sacrifice bounding down from the Grove site (it actually got lost in the folds of her robe), the service went very well. The Full Moon rising over the patio wall through the trees during the service was unspeakably beautiful.

The Live Oak acorns that have fallen over the course of this past Fall at the Grove site are already showing signs of sprouting. Our Server has collected some in the hopes of growing them at her new house. This has given me the inspiration and impetus to post the first in a series of see and do

articles. My teacher always told me that Druidism is a "see and do" religion versus Judaism or Christianity, which are talk-think religions. And so we bring to you;

Planting Your Own Grove

Do you have a reverence for trees, particularly oaks? You can grow these mighty trees yourself, from seed.

Start by gathering acorns. Let your favorite kids help or find acorns at the foot of an oak that has a special meaning for you. Make sure the tree is healthy. Use a fishing pole or other long pole to shake them from the tree. Your best chances of successful acorns are those picked directly from the oak.

Gently twist the acorn's hat. If it comes off easily, you've got a candidate for your project. Toss out any cracked, rotten, or hole-y acorns as well as those that seem very light by comparison. As a final test, place the acorns in a bucket of water and get rid of the floaters.

Don't keep acorns too long before you plant them! Once they dry out, they probably won't germinate.

Using plastic bags, mix a handful of acorns with a handful of perlite. (Vermiculite can be added to the mix, if you like.) Seal the bag, date it, and place it in your refrigerator. It may take as much as three cycles of the moon for the acorns to germinate or as little as one cycle, depending on the type of oak. At the full moon and the new moon, check your acorns to see if they are starting to sprout. When several have sprouted, it's time to plant all the acorns in the bag.

To plant the acorns, use large plastic pots (this is one time I actually like plastic anything!) I tend to use the large black ones left over from the previous spring's azalea purchase. Use one-gallon size at a minimum. The little oaks will develop loooooong taproots, so they'll need plenty of depth. Make sure the pots drain well, too, with holes in the bottom.

Fill the pots with potting soil almost to the top. Leave about one inch. Place a single acorn on its side and cover it with half an inch of potting soil. Then water, taking care not to wash the soil away from the acorn.

Place your pots in a protected area so the cold won't freeze them or dry them out. Water them whenever the soil dries on top.

Now sit back and wait! Hopefully in the spring, you'll see the first signs of growth. When the little oaks are growing nicely, you can move the pots to an Eastern sunny spot and fertilize them every Sabbath. At Mabon or Samhain when the little oaks are one to two years old, plant them in a permanent spot.

The thing I really like about having these small oaks in pots is that I can arrange the pots in a circle for special workings. In the side yard, on the back deck, or even in a pasture, I can let them grow (almost) naturally and feel the power of this magickal tree. As they grow, I can move them out, away from the center of the circle, to make room for their future growth. Once a lot of rituals have taken place in this circle of young trees, the place becomes sacred, and it's a good spot to plant the trees in a special ceremony.

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Statement of Policy

1. The RDNA does not own, publish, or control the Missal-Any, although it uses the Missal-Any as its official journal, i.e. we print all announcements the RDNA is legally required to make. All other items published in the Missal-Any are the opinions of their authors and not of the RDNA.

2. The Missal-Any will not violate copyright and give credit for all contributions; however, we will exercise our legal right to quote copyrighted material in reviews, criticism, and scholarly articles.

3. The Missal-Any will not quote anyone or publish their photos without their knowledge and permission.

4. The Missal-Any will publish material (including rebuttals and alternate opinions) by authors whose opinions differ from ours; however, we reserve the right to append disclaimers to such material.

5. The Missal-Any accepts paid ads from individuals and neo-pagan groups for products we think worthwhile; we do not accept "relationship" ads.

6. Post mail subscriptions cover the cost of postage and paper. We will exchange subscriptions with other neo-pagan publications that we think worthwhile. People without money can barter for subscriptions (e.g. by writing an article).

7. The Missal-Any is published eight times a year, two weeks before each Druid high day; the Missal-Any shall come out on time.

8. All articles will be typed, or the equivalent. A typical issue of the Missal-Any will contain:

- a. A lead article discussing some aspects of the current holiday.
- b. News of the Groves.
- c. Letters and questions from subscribers.
- d. Cartoons and quotes from the media (but note item 2 above).
- e. Contributions, including songs, poems, ceremonies, articles on philosophy, research, experiences, and opinion.
- f. Official announcements of the RDNA, including notices of elections, names of officers, etc.
- g. Resources available for further research and study.

Resources

The Abrams Planetarium at the Michigan State University publishes *Sky Calendar*. *Sky Calendar* promotes sky watching for people of all ages. As its name implies, the sheet for each month takes the form of a calendar. Diagrams in the boxes invite the reader to track the moon's rapid motion past the planets and bright stars of the zodiac, as well as to follow the more leisurely pace of the planets in their conjunctions with bright stars and other planets. The reverse side consists of a simplified star map of the month's evening sky. The sky maps are printed for mid-evenings, at Latitudes similar to Lansing (43 N).

The *Sky Calendar* has become the nation's most highly illustrated easy-to-follow guide to sky events. Not only is it enjoyed by its over 10,000 paid subscribers, but it is reproduced (with permission) by classroom teachers for their students, by planetariums and astronomy clubs for their members and the general public, and by park interpreters for audiences at sky talks. Frames from the calendar appear in the planets pages of *Sky and Telescope* magazine. Both the sky map (on the reverse side) and the calendar appear in each issue of *Science and Children*, a journal of the National Science Teachers Association.

A full year subscription is available for \$10.00 per year, starting any time. Write *Sky Calendar*, Abrams Planetarium, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824

S & T's Weekly News Bulletin and Sky at a Glance stargazing calendar are provided as a service to the astronomical community by the editors of SKY and TELESCOPE magazine. In cooperation with the American Association of Amateur Astronomers (<http://www.corvus.com/>), S & T's Weekly News Bulletin and Sky at a Glance are available via electronic mailing list. For a free subscription, send e-mail to join@astromax.com and put the word "join" on the first line of the body of the message. If you should have any problems either subscribing to or unsubscribing from the list, send a message to list administrator John Wagoner at stargate@gte.net for assistance.

Premiering in January 2001 is *Bay Nature*, the first natural history magazine for the San Francisco Bay Area. Every season *Bay Nature* will bring in-depth views of the Bay Area's open spaces, wetlands, animals, plants, weather, geology--as they are now, and as they were before--as well as the best of Bay area wildlife photography and landscape art, and news of the local conservation community and upcoming related activities.

A one year charter subscription costs \$16 for four issues. Send a check to *Bay Nature*, P.O. Box 1493, Martinez, CA 94553-9903, call (925) 372-6002, or email baynature@baynature.com to start your subscription today!

Calendar

Yule, Winter Solstice, when the Sun enters Capricorn, will occur on December 21, 2000 at 5:38 a.m. PST. Yule services will be held on Sunday, Dec. 17 at Solar Noon. Please call for carpool arrangements (510) 654-6896. For the social observance of Yule we will be going immediately after the service to AD's house. Regular Druid services will be held at Solar Noon on January 7 and 21. Please call the above number to confirm.

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SECTION THREE



Volume Seventeen

2001 c.e.

Drynemetum Press



A Druid Missal-Any
Oimeic Y.R. XXXVIII
Vol. 17 Number 1
Jan 21st, 2001 c.e.

Oimeic Essay:
The Goddess and the Saint

By Stacey Weinberger

Oimeic, the end of Winter. It is the turning point in the Season of Sleep. Now is when the ewes come into milk and the first lambs are born. It is the beginning of new life. This can be seen even at the Orinda Grove site with the budding of new plant life.

Oimeic is the festival of Bride, Brigid, Breedes, daughter of the Dagda, Sun-Maiden, Daughter of the Dawn, Celtic Goddess of fire and the hearth, and of birth. She is patroness of poets and bards, smiths and craftspeople. Bride has perhaps had the longest enduring cult of any Celtic goddess. This is evidenced by Her aspects being co-opted by the early Christianizers into the figure of St. Brigid of Kildare. Even as a saint, Her identity continued to be associated with fire. No doubt the "legend" of St. Brigid's monastery at Kildare (from cill dair meaning chapel of the oak--possibly a telling connection) of a group of pagan holy women originally tending the perpetual sacred fire of a pre-Christian sanctuary on the site suggests that it is based on historic precedence.

Her eternal flame continued to burn in Christian times at Her sanctuary at Kildare and was never allowed to go out--a tradition that sprung from its pagan Celtic roots. This sacred fire was tended for nineteen nights by nineteen nuns who each took a turn to feed the flame. On the twentieth night, St. Brigid Herself was said to take over. That night the nineteenth nun put the logs beside the fire and said: "Brigid, guard your fire. This is your night." In the morning, the wood was found burned and the fire miraculously stayed lit. The fire was not extinguished from the foundation of the monastery in the fifth century but once in the thirteenth century until the reign of Henry VIII.

Sister Mary Minehan, a Brigidine Sister (Sisters of St. Brigid)--a restoration of the Ancient Order founded in 1807 to revive again the spirit of St. Brigid--relit St. Brigid's flame on Oimeic in 1993 at Solas Bhríde, a Christian Community Center for Celtic Spirituality in Kildare. And so to this day Her sacred flame continues to burn.

"Unto Bride, Ruler of Fire,
Give us this little comfort now."



The History of the Sigil

Michael Scharding,
Former Arch Druid of the Carleton Grove
Current Arch Druid of Monument Grove

What is a Sigil?

The circle bisected by two vertical parallel lines is known as the Druid sigil in modern Druid groups. It is one of the many symbols now widely used by Reformed Druids of North America, its offshoot called Ar nDraoicht Fein (ADF) that started in 1983, which also had an offshoot The Henge of Keltria. Therefore, it is a prominent symbol of Druidism in America.

Any group can use the sigil, if they wish, we're not possessive about it, just send us a copy of your artwork for our gallery collection.

False Origin Myth No. 1

There is a well-publicized myth that it came from a photograph of a Celtic-Romano temple's foundation that had a square Roman foundation over laying an older Celtic circular structure. It looks remarkably like the Druid sigil with two of the rectangular while parallelly intersecting the circle. However, this shot published in Stuart Piggot's seminal work "The Druids" was first published in 1966, three years after the RDNA was already documented as heavily using the symbol. So that can't be it. None of the founders probably had the background knowledge in 1963 of obscure archeological digs, so they couldn't have come across it anywhere else in the first two weeks of the founding of the RDNA.

Closer to the Truth Story

David Fisher, the founder of the RDNA, was eating lunch at Goodhue Dorm Cafeteria on Carleton College Campus in Northfield, Minnesota, USA in early April 1963 (perhaps April 1st?) and talking to Norman Nelson and a few of his other friends. There were complaining about a mandatory requirement to attend weekly religious services by the college. They decided to start THEIR OWN religion to see if that was satisfactory, and they decided on the name "Reformed Druids of North America."

So they traipsed up to the Hill of Three Oaks soon thereafter (April 17th, 1963) and had the first ceremony. David Fisher claimed to have been initiated into a Fraternal Druid order in Missouri, but they didn't believe him, because he had also tried to set up three other semi-secret farcical organizations on the campus with a similar story. But the others recognized the power of continuing an older tradition. The sigil was apparently used during that ceremony.

So from whence did it come? Probably from David Fisher's fevered imagination (divine inspiration?, definitely inspired by spirits of whiskey). I've conducted over 11 hours of research through various books of symbols and magical runes, but I have found no trace of the circle with two vertical lines. The closest thing is a Greek letter of a circle with one vertical line (and David was possibly interested in starting a

Greek fraternity style group, which were banned at Carleton). The alchemical symbol for oil is similar to that Greek letter.

What does it mean?

Good question. There is no definitive answer on this subject. It both means what you think it means, and it means something you don't think it means.

Various designs have popped up, but there were no ornate designs until 1969. It had always been simple three strokes of a pen until that date. Recently, people have tended to draw it as a wreath pierced and supported by two wooden poles.

Since then, various designs, visualizations, and descriptive readings have been attempted of the Sigil. I'm in the process of collecting and listing them.

What Do You See In a Sigil?

Michael Scharding, November 11, 1997

Dear Amanda Bradley, Sister-in-the-Mother,

I wish you a happy Celtic Year and beginning of the Time of Sleep in Reformed Druidism (Samhain to Beltane). As a present I offer you this Druid Sigil that I usually give to new 3rd Orders. What does it mean? It is merely a lump of silver to some, worth \$20.

To others it is a symbol of weirdness, of people who refuse to accept societies predetermined paths of spirituality.

To others it is a symbol by which to recognize other Druids, but verily I believe that there are many people in many faiths or codes who follow the Druidic path but use a different name for it. Seek these people, too.

To others, it is a symbol of their desire to control the "magic" of Nature. I have done this too, but beware of egotism, because the control of Nature's magic can be abused just as we have abused Nature's other resources.

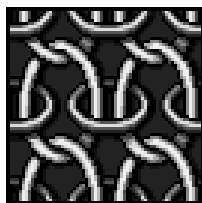
To others, it is an indefinite thing. This simple symbol has seemingly never been adopted or named before by any known group before 1963. It can be used as a tool without existing prejudice for teaching.

To you, it will mean whatever you wish. If you wear it, people will associate your deeds and words with this symbol.

I give it to you with this in mind.

Yours in the Mother,
Michael

Druid Missionary in Japan



My Vision of the Sigil

Robert Harrison, ODAL,
Carleton Grove (associated)

I've thought a bit about the sigil. The following is born out of my experiences with a Rosen Method practitioner, my experiences with the Mists of the Stone Forest Grove in Minneapolis, as well as the events of the night of my vigil. In

Neopagan Druidism, such as we are, there is a tendency to three-ness. There are a number of three aspected Godheads in Celtic mythology, for example. There is also the aspect of three in time, which has Gaelic names for past present and future that I cannot remember. Also, the three realities that the Cosmic Tree unites: Upper World, This world, Lower World. Another "three" that we at Mists worked with is that of Gods and Goddesses, Nature Spirits, and Ancestors. In our rituals we invoke these three. The sigil of OBOD is the three-rayed sign, commonly translated as the rays of spirit, mind, and body.

My view of the RDNA sigil is that the two vertical rays represent spirit and soul. Soul could alternately be called mind. I see the difference between spirit and soul as being the two parts of life that reach for the heavens (spirit), and that which embraces the Earth (soul). I won't say that this is a sharp definition. They could just as easily be two aspects of the same immaterial aspect of a human as two different things altogether. However, they have a body around them, and I believe that is very effectively symbolizes the unity of Life, especially within a Pagan worldview. The two rays extending in both directions beyond the "body" can than have significant meanings of the need to have the balance of an inner life coupled with the outer life of experience. I am a believer in the mind/body connection, and this sigil could well symbolize that too. That has been my experience of late with this Rosen Practitioner. It's a subtle form of touch that reads the soul as kept in the body. I was doing some experiments of my own in my last session, and the results were outstanding.

This practitioner I see is good. If I changed my mind in mid-stream, he felt it. I was changing my energies, by centering very deeply. When I hit core, I get body rushes, and when I did, he immediately noted it. I was being silent the whole time, and experimenting with the method because I see this as being a powerful tool for healing souls, which is a desire of mine. So the sigil to me is very profound. I wear it constantly, and it serves to remind me of my Third Order calling.



News of the Groves

Carleton

The Carleton Grove is currently sleeping Nov 26 to Jan 15 due to school break.

Akita Grove, Japan

They are currently working on a pagan journal. Things are difficult right now, socially.

Monument Grove

Mike Scharding has been busy working on the Druid Archives files on the internet with the assistance of Jason Hollywood. He wants to locate other Druid Groups, increase the diversity of the collection, and update mailing lists.

New Twin Cities Grove?

Ross the Solid wants to start a Grove here in the Twin Cities area and is looking for members. He can be reached at dracos49@yahoo.com. Ross was a member of the Big River Grove of St. Cloud MN 1994-96.

New Chico Grove

Rhiannon has recently started Draoi Croi Croga Garran (Druid Heart Spirited Grove). She has in the past gathered quite a number of participants to learn the Old Ways and participate in seasonal rites, meditations, and healing rituals, and would like to continue the same in Chico. The Grove currently has plans to build a Celtic sweat lodge, a round lodge for ceremony, and is working on a standing stone arrangement. They also have a metal worker who makes ritual items such as sickles, swords, etc. and Rhiannon makes bronze Awen necklaces. These items are for view on their website. You can contact Rhiannon at jbeltain@pacbell.net or write her at 1959 Vilas Rd. Cohasset, CA. 95973. Their website address is:

<http://www.connect.to/DruidHeart>.

Baccharis Grove

It truly is the Season of Sleep at the Grove site. The Beltaine Rose lies dormant as well as the Elder. Our Birch tree doesn't appear to be getting new buds and is possibly dead. If that is the case when the weather warms up we will be looking to purchase another. Birches grow better in threes so we will be looking for a source that can supply us with several. Last Fall our poor Pine that had fallen over and snaked around the Grove in a semi-circle was finally cut down. We will be replacing it with a Pine native to the area, such as the Gray or Foothill Pine, rather than a Monterey, which is more coastal and is known for falling over when it gets this large.

Yet even in this time of time of sleep there are signs of life. The Pacific Snakeroot is sprouting up all along the path up to the Grove site and in the Grove itself. Tiny ferns are just beginning to unravel their fronds in the moist earth of the steps. Bride's tree, our spontaneous apple tree, has fuzzy pale green bud just beginning to make themselves known. And of course the mushrooms abound after the recent rains, poking their multi-shaped caps through the fallen leaves of Winter. The most interesting one we've seen so far is the Fluted Black Elfin Saddle (*Helvella lacunosa*). The cap is grayish-black and wrinkled looking and the stalk is white to dark gray with prominent grooves and ridges. They look like tiny old men of the forest.

Last weekend our preceptor went wine tasting for her birthday at Rosenblum Cellars in Alameda. One of the wines she tried was the 1999 Zinfandel from their Oakley Vineyards in Contra Costa county (where the Grove site is located). Much to her pleasant surprise the wine tasted like the smell of the Live Oaks that populate the Grove area. So if you want to know what our Grove site area smells like and join us vicariously, buy a bottle of this.

Goat's Milk Ice Cream

Back by popular demand! This was a hit at last year's Oimelc social. Now you too can make Goat's Milk Ice Cream as a fun and tasty way to celebrate the festival of the lactation of the ewe!

- ½ cup sugar
- 2 cups very hot goat's or sheep's milk
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 4 egg yolks, slightly beaten
- 1 pint heavy cream

Mix the sugar, salt, and egg yolks together in a heavy-bottomed pan. Slowly stir in the hot goat's or sheep's milk. Cook, continuing to stir, until slightly thickened; remove and cool. Add the cream and the vanilla extract. Chill. Freeze in a hand-cranked or electric ice cream freezer.

PantheaCon 2001

Cathedral Hill Hotel in San Francisco CA
February 16-19, 2001

Join the largest indoor gathering of tribes and traditions in the country for a 4-day extravaganza of workshops, rituals, events, networking and fun.

Presentations, rituals and panels from a wide variety of guests including: Robert Anton Wilson, Diana Paxson, R.J. Stewart, Raven Grimassi, Lon Duquette, Timothy Roderick, Rachel Pollock, Victor Anderson, Mary Greer, Brian Wilson, Dossie Easton, Z. Budapest, Pat Califia, Gus di Zirega, Kachinas Kutenai, Luisah Teish, M. Christian, Mara Freeman

- Musical performances, ritual theater and a Masquerade Ball: Heather Alexander, Avalon Rising, Gaia's Voice, Pombagira, Reclaiming, Bast ritual, Magical Acts Theatre, and a Rock-n-Roll ritual with Leigh Ann Hussey.
- Workshops, scholarly papers, author readings and slideshows by special guests and local favorites
- Over 65 vendor booths featuring pagan, magical and earth oriented products.

Admission fee: \$70 (includes all events for the entire conference) \$30 for a full day, \$15 for evenings only.

For more information contact Ancient Ways, 4075 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, CA 94609, (510) 653-3244, or view their web site at www.ancientways.com.

Calendar

Astronomical Oimelc, when the Sun is half way between the Solstice and the Equinox will occur on Feb 3 at 10:30 a.m. PST when the Sun will reach 15 degrees of Aquarius (or by the alternative calculation when the Sun will reach 16 degrees 18 minutes declination on Feb 3 at 1:20 p.m. PST). Oimelc services will be held on Sunday, Feb. 4 at Solar Noon. Please call for carpool arrangements (510) 654-6896. For the social observance of Oimelc we will be going immediately after the service to AD's house.

Regular Druid services will be held at Solar Noon on Feb. 11, 25, and on March 11. Instead of the regularly scheduled service on Feb. 25, we might be attending the Early Bloomers wildflower walk at the Marin Headlands. Please call the above number to confirm.

The Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are \$4.00 and online subscriptions are free, but might not include everything that is in the post mail edition. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's subscription free. Write The Missal-Any, c/o Weinberger, 309 63rd St, Apt. C, Oakland, CA 94618.

A Druid Missal-Any
Spring Equinox Y.R. XXXVIII
Vol. 17 Number 2
March 10th, 2001 c.e.

Spring Equinox Essay:
What is the Equinox?

By Stacey Weinberger

Equinox, three months past the Winter Solstice, Yule, marks the astronomical arrival of Spring. This is when the Sun crosses the celestial equator following the ecliptic moving northward. The celestial equator is the projection of the Earth's equator on the sky. It divides the sky into two equal hemispheres and is everywhere 90 degrees from the celestial poles. If you watched the Sun for the course of a year it would appear to circle the sky. This apparent path of the Sun is the ecliptic. Another way to define it is to say the ecliptic is the projection of the earth's orbit onto the sky.

Days and nights are now of equal length, and at the North Pole the sun rises above the horizon after a six month absence. The Sun rises exactly due East and sets exactly due West. The noonday Sun is shining directly upon the equator.

It is a time of balance. As the days start to warm, the nights remain still cold. While there are new buds of green foliage on the Sweet Gum trees outside my window, the thorny balls from the previous year still hang from their branches, stripped of their seeds by the local wild birds. But it is a time not just of balance in Nature but in our own selves. It is a time to look within and to reevaluate our lives, looking at where we've been this past year, and looking towards our own new growth with the coming of the new season. Perhaps it is not a coincidence that the East, the direction of the dawning Sun, also represents new beginnings.

Mad Sweeney News

Mountain stream, clear and limpid,
wandering down towards the valley,
whispering songs among the rushes--oh,
that I were as the stream!

Mountain heather all in flower--longing
fills me, at the sight, to stay upon the hills
in the wind and the heather.

Small birds of the high mountain that soar
up in the healthy wind, flitting from one
peak to the other--oh, that I were as the
bird!

Son of the mountain am I, far from home,
making my song; but my heart is in the
mountain, with the heather and the small
birds.

Welsh; John Ceiriog Hughes; 1833-87

Equinox at the Sunwheel

Visit the University of Massachusetts Sunwheel!

Members of the University community and general public are invited to join Prof. Judith Young of the U.Mass. Department of Astronomy to watch the Sun rise and set over the tall standing stones in the U.Mass. Sunwheel for the upcoming Vernal Equinox. Visitors for the sunrise viewing should arrive at 5:45 a.m., and visitors for the sunset viewing should arrive at 5:15 p.m. The sunrise and sunset events will be held on both Tuesday and Wednesday March 20 and 21, 2001.

This is the first equinox to occur since the tall standing stones were added to the Sunwheel; on the equinoxes, the Sun will be seen to rise and set through the East and West stone portals. The sky will be particularly beautiful in the morning, since the waning crescent Moon will be visible in the East just before sunrise. For those interested in learning about the sky, there will be a presentation that will include the cause of the seasons, the Sun's path in the sky, the phases of the Moon, and the story of building the Sunwheel. Bring your questions, your curiosity, and DRESS VERY WARMLY; a \$3 donation is requested. Sunwheel T-shirts and sweatshirts will be available for purchase.

The U.Mass. Sunwheel is located south of Alumni Stadium, just off Rocky Hill Road. It can be easily reached from the center of Amherst, following Amity St. to the west, on the right hand side of the road about 1/4 mile after crossing University Drive. ALL VISITORS SHOULD WEAR WARM CLOTHING, SUITABLE FOR STANDING STILL ON FROZEN OR WET GROUND. In the event of rain, the events will be cancelled. For more information on the U.Mass. Sunwheel, check out the web site at:

<http://www.umass.edu/sunwheel/index2.html>

And see photos of the recent construction. To arrange a Sunwheel visit for your class or group, call 413-545-4311 or e-mail young@astro.umass.edu



Potential Cure for Oak Killer

From the San Francisco Chronicle, March 9, 2001
Peter Fimrite, Chronicle Staff Writer

Scientists battling the killer disease threatening California's oaks have discovered a potential cure, the first big break in their efforts to curb the fast-spreading plague.

While the discovery may not help wildland areas, it could be the savior for thousands of landmark oak trees in parks and on private property.

Experiments on 90 potted live oak trees in Sonoma County since last August determined that the compound phosphonate all but eliminated the deadly lesions that characterize sudden oak death.

"I am totally excited," Matteo Garbelotto, a forest pathologist at the University of California at Berkeley, told The Chronicle yesterday. "This is an incredibly lethal disease,

and we really don't have anything we can do to stop it once it gets into a tree. This gives us something we can use."

Garbelotto, who has been working day and night for months in the lab, mostly with discouraging results, will be addressing a conference in San Rafael today on the issue.

Sudden oak death has killed tens of thousands of coast live oak, black oak, and tan oak trees along a 190-mile range of coastline between Monterey and Sonoma counties. And it has been spreading at a feverish rate.

Plant biologists recently found the disease in Shreve's oak trees in Santa Cruz County, wild huckleberry bushes in Marin County and commercial rhododendron plants at nurseries in Germany, the Netherlands, and Santa Cruz County.

The phytophthora that causes the disease is the same type of organism responsible for the Irish potato famine in the mid-1800s and the current die-off of Port Orford cedars in the Pacific Northwest.

The pathogen is commonly referred to as a fungus, but, in terms of its evolutionary heritage, is more closely related to brown algae.

This particular strain has proved to be both mysterious and highly adaptable. It has been found in rainwater and in soil, on the leaves and on the stems of trees and plants.

During the experiment, potted trees were infected with the phytophthora in August and in November. Within 48 hours of the second application, all the trees--the newly infected and the ones with 3-month-old lesions--were treated with one of four compounds, copper sulfate, al-fosetyl, metalaxyl and phosphonate.

Garbelotto said some trees received stem injections and some soil drenches, and others were treated topically.

Injection was the most effective form of treatment, and phosphonate was clearly the best compound, reducing fungal growth in the new and old infections three-to-fourfold, according to Garbelotto. The size of the lesions was reduced to virtually nothing.

He said al-fosetyl and metalaxyl were both somewhat effective in killing the pathogen, but there is concern that phytophthora can develop resistance to those compounds based on previous experiments on potatoes. Copper sulfate didn't work on the disease but may prevent the pathogen from entering the tree when it is used as a coating.

Garbelotto emphasized that the data were still preliminary and that a lot of work remained to be done before a specific product could be recommended. There are currently many different product lines selling phosphonate, mostly as a fertilizer.

"We should think of this as kind of an exploratory phase," he said. "We need to refine the treatment and work out methods of administering the chemicals, whether it's through injections, sprays or through soil drenching. We also need to do more tests at different times of the year."

No matter how effective the chemicals are, they still won't be able to stop the pestilence from spreading.

"It's fantastic news, but it is not going to solve the problem because you're not going to do aerial spraying over seven counties of open space and national forest," said Marin County Supervisor Cynthia Murray, who has been lobbying hard for emergency funding. "There's just no way to do a massive application."

Even if a spray were developed, one need only look at the efforts to contain the glassy-winged sharpshooter to see how difficult a statewide campaign could become.

Proposals to spray pesticides on the voracious pest, which has spread the incurable Pierce's disease in 13 counties while feeding on grape vines, has created a furor in Sonoma County. Environmental activists, citing threats to public health, have vowed civil disobedience if anyone tries spraying the vines.

The most anyone can hope for with regard to sudden oak death is that beloved trees like the majestic, and sick, 400-year-old oak at Boyle Park in Mill Valley may now be saved from the wood chipper.

Meanwhile, hikers and bikers are being asked to clean their boots and tires of mud to prevent the disease from spreading. Bills asking for \$10 million to fight the disease are scheduled for hearings in the state Senate and Assembly. And a quarantine preventing the movement of oak wood and infected plants across state lines is under consideration by the state and by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Leave No Trace

By Stacey Weinberger

As Druids and lovers of Nature we tend to spend a lot of time outdoors, be it holding services, hiking, or overnight camping. With the coming of Spring and warmer weather and our thoughts turn towards those outings in the woods it is important that we keep in mind the philosophy of Leave no Trace.

Leave No Trace is a program of outdoor ethics managed by the non-profit organization LNT Inc. dedicated to building awareness, appreciation, and most of all, respect for our natural lands. Following these simple principles of Leave No Trace we are able to enjoy our activities outdoors while still preserving our environment:

Plan Ahead and Prepare

1. Know the regulations and special concerns for the area you'll visit.
2. Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies.
3. Schedule your trip to avoid times of high use.
4. Visit in small groups. Split larger parties into groups of 4-6.
5. Repackage food to minimize waste.
6. Use a map and compass to eliminate the use of marking paint, rock cairns or flagging.

Travel and Camp on Durable surfaces

1. Durable surfaces include established trails and campsites, rock, gravel, dry grasses or snow.
2. Protect riparian areas by camping at least 200 feet from lakes and streams.
3. Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary. In popular areas
4. Concentrate use on existing trails and campsites.
5. Walk single file in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy.
6. Keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent. In pristine areas
7. Disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and trails.
8. Avoid places where impacts are just beginning.

Dispose of Waste Properly

1. Pack it in, pack it out. Inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash or spilled foods. Pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter.

2. Deposit solid human waste in catholes dug 6 to 8 inches deep at least 200 feet from water, camp, and trails. Cover and disguise the cathole when finished.
3. Pack out toilet paper and hygiene products.
4. To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater.

Leave What You Find

1. Preserve the past: examine, but do not touch, cultural or historic structures and artifacts.
2. Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them.
3. Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species.
4. Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.

Minimize Campfire Impacts

1. Campfires can cause lasting impacts to the backcountry. Use a lightweight stove for cooking and enjoy a candle lantern for light.
2. Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans, or mound fires.
3. Keep fires small. Only use sticks from the ground that can be broken by hand.
4. Burn all wood and coals to ash, put out campfires completely, then scatter cool ashes.

Respect Wildlife

1. Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach them.
2. Never feed animals. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors, and exposes them to predators and other dangers.
3. Protect wildlife and your food by storing rations and trash securely.
4. Control pets at all times, or leave them at home.
5. Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, raising young, or winter.

Be Considerate of Other Visitors

1. Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience.
2. Be courteous. Yield to other users on the trail.
3. Step to the downhill side of the trail when encountering pack stock.
4. Take breaks and camp away from trails and other visitors.
5. Let nature's sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices and noises.



News of the Groves

Monument Grove, Washington D.C.

The D.C. Grove isn't doing well. But Spring is coming soon, along with the Japanese Cherry Blossom Festival which Mike Scharding, AD, is helping to organize with another member of the Grove.

Druid Heart Spirit Grove, Chico, CA

Everything has been going well. Sister Rhiannon has been writing new tunes, making new things, and sewing robes she's embroidering Celtic Knots on. There is a lot of snow up there, what can ya do? Sister Rhiannon is also writing a book on Druidic Ritual with Cymric and Irish deity guides, pronunciation guides, healing meditations, song lists, and more.

Reformed Druidic Wicca, Missionary Order of the Celtic Cross

Thomas Harris of Reformed Druidic Wicca hopes to be going to Washington D.C. this summer to meet with Mike Scharding of Monument Grove to re-establish the line of Archdruidic Succession from the RDNA to RDW. They have a new name that they operate under, the Missionary Order of the Celtic Cross (MOCC), but technically it is a fellowship in the "grouping" of RDW. They have groups spread out all over everywhere with Muskogee, OK, Seattle, WA and Argyle, NY being the three most active. Currently all Groves of the MOCC are independent and proudly autonomous, but there is talk of getting 501(c)(3) status. For more information contact: thomasleeharrisjr@mailcity.com.

Baccharis Grove

Baccharis Grove has been quite busy these last couple of weeks of winter. For Oimelc we revived the Scottish tradition of the Bride-og, a doll representing Bride made out of corn (grain) from the previous harvest. We took a cob of Indian corn and wheat sheaves left from the memorial we held for Emmon last November and fashioned a doll with a linen dress and kerchief, adding dried millet stalks for the arms and legs, and native grasses from the area surrounding the Grove site to form her basket. At the Praise portion of the service the Preceptor read from the Carmina Gadelica and the Grove bid "Let Bride come in!" It looks like our offering of the Bride-og was accepted. The millet has been eaten by the birds and the wheat is beginning to sprout.

After our Grove Pine, Ghiuthais, fell over last year and had to be cut down, we decided to replace it with a native Pine tree. Our research took us to the Digger or Gray Pine (*Pinus sabiniana*), which is native to the East Bay, particularly the Orinda Hills and Mount Diablo area. We were able to locate one at North Coast Nurseries in Petaluma that specializes in California natives and reforestation. Our Preceptor recounts her tale of trying to dig up the old Ghiuthais:

I went up to the Grove to try and remove the old Pine, try being the operative word. I tried to saw the trunk at the post root portion, but after I got past the bark and into the meat of the tree I couldn't saw anymore because the wood was damp. So I thought to myself, I'll dig all around the stump, loosening it from its earthly binds. I cut through several roots with the aforementioned saw, and continue to dig. Ok this is working. I then moved around to the base of the tree. Broke the damn shovel. So it was old and partially rotted, still, I am disgusted. I took up everything and went back down the hill to the cabin, put on some music, and laid down. Bought a new shovel on the way home. Where's that 20-mule team when you need them?

The Grove has organized a work party in two weeks to take up the shovel again. Volunteers are welcome.

Resources

Siol Cultural Enterprises, a distributor/wholesaler of Gaelic language and Celtic interest books, music, and videos has their new website up and running at <http://www.gaelicbooks.com>. Their email address is also changing to siol@gaelicbooks.com (or sales@gaelicbooks.com). They have also been given approval to start taking payment using VISA. Just in time for their sale items: All Gàirm books (Dwelly's, Thomson's, Modern English-Gaelic Dictionary, Am Mabinogi, A' Choisir Chiuil, etc.), as well as Bun-Chursa Ghàidhlig, are 15% off when ordered before Mar. 31, 2001! Please note that delivery probably will not occur until late April unless already in stock. E-mail them to reserve a title or for full a list of titles. Siol Cultural Enterprises 3841 Highway 316, P.O. Box 81, St. Andrew's, NS, CANADA B0H 1X0. Phone/Fax: (902) 863-0416.

Calendar

Spring Equinox, when the Sun crosses the Equator, will occur on March 20, 2001 at 5:31 a.m. PST. Spring Equinox services will be held on Sunday, March 18 at Solar Noon. Please call for carpool arrangements (510) 654-6896. For the social observance of Spring Equinox we will be going immediately after the service to AD's house. Regular Druid services will be held at Solar Noon on March 25, April 8, and April 22 (Earth Day). Please call the above number to confirm.

The Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are \$4.00 and online subscriptions are free, but might not include everything that is in the post mail edition. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's subscription free. Write The Missal-Any, c/o Weinberger, 309 63rd St, Apt. C, Oakland, CA 94618.

A Druid Missal-Any Beltane Y.R. XXXIX Vol. 17 Number 3 May 6th, 2001 c.e.

Beltane Essay: Sacred Maypole Tree

By Stacey Weinberger

Beltaine, May Day, the beginning of the Summer half of the year when Nature awakens once again. This is the most widely known of the pagan and Druidic High Days with the practices of paganism having evolved or been adopted into practices of folklore and custom. The marking of the return of life in the veneration of vegetation appear in the words of the old saying "April showers bring May flowers," May Day celebrations, and the dancing around the Maypole with colorful ribbon streamers. It is not surprising that Mircea Eliade's words "the cosmos is symbolized by a tree" and "fertility, wealth, luck, health" are all concentrated on herbs or trees.

Beltaine probably originated as a vegetation, agricultural, and fertility festival. Cattle were driven between two fires to insure their health and fertility before being sent out to green pastureland for summer, with Druids officiating at the ceremony. With the beginning of the summer half of the year the tree embodied the newly awakened spirit of vegetation. The belief was held that the tree-spirit would bless women with children, cause the herds to multiply, and make the crops grow. Houses and farm buildings were bedecked with green boughs and flowery garlands. May flowers were crushed and the juice from them was used to wash the cows' udders.

Nothing symbolized the tree spirit more than the Maypole. Originally a sacred tree, the Maypole became the focal point of Beltaine festivities. A sacred ash tree stood at Uisnech, County Westmeath, an important Druidic center and assembly place where Beltaine was annually celebrated. The Cerne Abbas Giant cut into the hillside above the village in Dorset, possibly dating back to Romano-British times, obviously epitomizes fertility and vitality. For centuries, a fir Maypole was erected on May Eve on the hillside above the giant's head in readiness for the May Day festivities, which were again dedicated to the continuance of fertility. In villages whole trees were felled and set up. Later the pole was permanently left up and then decorated each year for May Day. To this day a few villages in England and local parks and Renaissance faires in the United States still retain the Maypole, which is often painted with red and white spiral stripes. These colors are often used in spring festivities, red signifying the color of life and generative energy, and white, a fresh, new beginning. Again we see the constant theme of renewal and rebirth as the world awakens from its long season of sleep.

Taking a Sit on Recycling

As Druids we don't just worship trees and have a reverence for Nature in name alone. There are things we can do in our daily lives where we can incorporate our beliefs into our daily practice. One of these is using recycled paper products, especially toilet paper. Recycled toilet paper has come a long way from the days of the late 70s and the scratchy material with the consistency of cardboard. Now there are

choices equal to regular toilet paper in softness, strength, and absorbency, and they are available at your local supermarket:

Seventh Generation bathroom tissue is available in 2-ply, white, unscented, and without dyes. It is 100% recycled, involves no chlorine bleaching, and is hypoallergenic. It is safe for the environment and for septic tanks.

Second Nature Plus toilet tissue is also available in 2-ply, is 100% recycled, uses a 100% bleach free process, and is 100% post-consumer grade material. Second Nature might have been discontinued by its manufacturer Wisconsin Tissue. Please write in to let us know.

Green Forest is made from 100%-recycled paper, including at least 10% post-consumer paper, and is also safe for septic systems.

If every household in the United States replaced just one roll of 500 sheet virgin fiber toilet paper with 100% recycled we could save 297,000 trees; 1.2 million cubic feet of landfill space, equal to 1,400 full garbage trucks; 122 million gallons of water, a year's supply for 3,500 families of four. Do your job for the Earth Mother!



News of the Groves

Carleton

There will be possibly a few vigils at Carleton during Mike's visit with his internet friends and possibly a Carl or two. The weather is still quite unpleasant, boding well for interesting overnight experiences for all!

Birch Grove

Joan came across this in a discussion from another list the book, *Far Pavilions*. In this book the protagonist, who had been exposed to different religions, prays to the mountains of his Indian home:

"Lord, forgive three sins that are do to my human limitations.
Thou art everywhere, but I worship Thee here.
Thou art without form, but I worship Thee in these forms.
Thou needst no praise, but I offer Thee these prayers and salutations.
Lord, forgive three sins that are do to my human limitations."

She would like to know if anyone can make a connection between the author and Carleton College, the RDNA, or know how else he might have gotten hold of that prayer.

Birch Grove continues in a kind of limbo. It holds Services whenever Phyllis and I and any third person are in a place of natural beauty and wish to celebrate it. I may hold a few Services this summer in relation to my coven, which is getting inquiries from people who are unfamiliar with the Pagan worldview in general, and need some time before they are ready for Wicca or whatever Path is best for them. I explained how good RDNA is for people in that position, and my High Priestess was intrigued. We may work in her backyard, which has a hilly view, and is bordered by woods,

and there is also a new “Pagan Grove” site at UMass/Amherst which we may try.

It has been a loong cold snowy winter up north here. I was taught that if you have your peas in by Patriot's Day [mid-April], you'll have peas for 4th of July [the traditional 4th meal is salmon, new potatoes and fresh peas]. Well, Patriot's Day, a holiday only observed in Massachusetts, mostly by the running of the Boston Marathon, was this Monday, and so far I can only see parts of my garden. It will be some time still before the snow is gone and the ground workable. However, the crocuses are up, and a couple of daffodils are blooming, so there is hope. Two weeks ago there wasn't even that--it looked like Winter was never going to end. My windowsills are full of baby plants.

Monument Grove

Cherry Blossom festival went well, with 200,000 attendees faithfully worshipping the cherry trees that bestrew Washington DC in this annual ceremony. Thankfully, there were no fatalities this year and the beavers seem healthy. Sine Ceolbhinn is doing well, having recently come out of the closet and dusting off her Druidic finery. We had a nice practice together down by the Rock River Creek. Our Grove's attempt at hand-fishing was hilariously unproductive!!

Grove of One in Garden City, MI

Has disbanded.

Tonga Grove News

Irony is doing quite well, despite the heat, from a picture in the Carletonian newsletter. Tonga experienced a little bit of a shock when the Mir flashed across their sky recently on its earthfall. Several natives were seen previously praying to the gods that some pieces would hit their island so that they could claim profitable damages from the Russians' insurance policy. They were all sorely disappointed.

Druid Heart Spirit Grove

They are almost done completing the standing stone circle and need one more stone to have a circle of eight. They will be having two Beltain rituals with a May Pole this year. The first will be on April 29th, and the second will be on May 5th starting at twelve noon for the May Pole dance, then the ritual, followed by potluck and drumming circle. Rhiannon's band “Beltain” will be playing with their octave mandolin player Morgan McDow and their Irish flute/Hammered Dulcimer player Dave Cowan. Morgan, and Rhiannon will be doing the music for the May Pole dance.

Rhiannon is looking forward to seeing her newly planted Birch tree clones grow as they are now shooting out little greens which must mean that they are growing roots! She plans on planting them around the Grove site.

Druid Heart Spirit Grove is soon to start building a Celtic Sweat Lodge. They have gotten about ten volunteers, which will be plenty. They have also manifested a butt load of Willow for building the frame.

Creeks Called Groves

They celebrated "First Leaves" festival on April 12th when the first buds of the year have turned into tiny leaves.

Baccharis Grove

After taking three people to remove the tree stump of the old Pine, we finally got our new Pine planted and held a tree dedication for it on April 7. The Preceptor read *The Two Trees* by William Butler Yeats from his collection of poetry *The Rose*, 1893. This is a familiar poem to many as favorite Celtic music singer Loreena McKennitt set it to words in her album *The Mask and the Mirror*.

We have done quite a bit of sprucing up of the Grove site in these last couple of weeks before the Season of Life begins. The new Pine, Ghiuthais, as well as Birch, Cuileann the Holly, and Rose were fertilized, Birch was pruned and mulched, and Rose got a new of wire fence to protect her from the nibbling deer. Even our Ash, which looked as if it had gone into permanent hibernation last winter, appears to be coming up from beneath its blanket of oak leaf compost. And last but not least, and much to the relief of the AD, we are in the process of removing the new poison oak growth from the immediate area of the Grove site.

Tree Meditation

A Meditation from the Druid Heart Spirited Grove

Meditation is the key to trance when it is done correctly. Breathing techniques help induce these states of trance and also awaken the electric governing vessel and the magnetic conception vessel, which helps our outward journey to succeed. Meditation and trance are a pathways between the conscious and sub-conscious for inner therapy, reprogramming, recreating our pasts, healing our core self, etc. We use trance and meditation for all of these plus journeying. Journeying is similar to astral projection except that you are safe and still in your mind, body, and spirit. When you journey into the underworld (Anwyn), you journey into the sea, deep parts of your self where your Ancestral memories exist, genetic and spiritual, past lives also.

There are different levels of trance. We like to use medium trance because you are safe there. Deep trance should only be done by those with much experience or by a guide who leads you by voice.

The tree meditation does many things. It grounds your entire being. It runs Nyvwyres (Sacred Spirit) energy through the governing vessel which runs down through the crown of your head to a spot called the core-star, and the conception vessel which runs up (from the earth) from the bottom of your spine or feet to the core-star. The core-star looks just like it sounds like a small white sun located between your solar-plexus and your navel. Thus uniting the earth and the sky, and filling the channel with Nyvwyre. The tree meditation is also a medium trance state. So instead of ending your meditation when it is done you can slide right into a journey.

Start by finding a quiet place where you will be undisturbed. Unplug your phone. Put a sign on your door “DO NOT DISTURB.” Do your meditation outside if you can find a place and the weather is willing. Have a pillow ready because you are going to sit cross-legged. When you are comfortable you may begin. Take a few deep breaths slowly. First filling your stomach then your lungs. Fill completely. Do this a few times. Focus on letting go of any tension that may have built up during the day. Keep deep breathing as you take your mind and body off any distracting thoughts. THINK NOTHING!

At the bottom of your spine imagine pushing and growing a large taproot down into the earth and feel other roots pushing down. Feel your roots pushing down through rock breaking them apart. Feel your roots feeling water, minerals, and nutrients. Now just take some time to allow them to grow further down until you feel warmth. Feel them reach water.

After you have a strong root system well grounded, feel that earth energy moving up to your lower body (belly area) and developing a wide base trunk. Grow up quickly. Feel the trunk growing up your entire body, and when you get to just above your chest feel branches push their way out. Keep moving up and out. Take some time to do this. Make sure that branches grow out of the crown of your head. Reach those branches for the light of the sun. Feel the warming rays giving you energy. Grow new sprigs and lots of leaves and don't forget to take a deep breath and live. Be a tree for a moment. Notice if there are any animals living in your branches?

Pause...

Now I want you to focus on the earth energy coming up to your core-star, which is directly above your navel. Feel how strong Mother Earth's energy is flowing through you!

Take a moment...

Now feel Father Sky's energy coming down through your branches, down to your core-star at the same time you still feel the earth's energy coming up.

Take a moment...

Now send the Earth's energy up to the sky, out your branches, and send the skies energy down into the earth through your roots. As soon as both are united you see a bright light that is gold-white. It is coming from your core-star. Back in that light. Feel the love. Let that light burst throughout your entire being. You are meant to be here now.

To continue with journey...

Now stay within and visualize that gold-white light filling you up trying to burst out of your bark. All the way out to the ends of your branches, and all the way down to the tips of your roots, especially your taproot. Once you have done this, imagine that you as your human self are smaller than normal and inside this tree that is filled with light. You are floating around as if there is no gravity. Now turn yourself upside down and look at the opening of the taproot that looks far into the underworld. It looks like it goes forever, all you see are its sides and the light. You decide to investigate. But first you find that there is a small white pouch tied around your waist, and you realize that it must have a purpose so you open it, and inside there are three golden seeds. You put them back in the pouch and continue on your journey. You grab a hold of the bark and pull yourself into the tunnel, as you are small inside this great tree and you are light energy you find it very easy to move along.

As you keep looking ahead it seems as though it will take forever but as you continue to move you see the bottom of the root and it looks like it is open at the end. As you get closer you see a beautiful luminous light that is tranquil to see. Upon reaching the opening you see a reflection, you grow more aware of the object that the reflection is coming from, and you see that it is a cauldron. A very large cauldron that could hold one to two hundred gallons. It appears to be water. Looking into that water it's dark at first just reflecting that luminous light, then you notice that an image appears, some kind of writing. Some ancient symbol that may have belonged to your ancestors. Look very closely. Memorize it, you may know it, it may even be unfamiliar to you, but remember it well...

The experience has made you feel somehow, special, like you were given a gift. Then you realize that you must also leave an offering so you reach for your pouch and open it, allowing the golden seeds to fall freely to the sacred waters. You will receive a sign that the offering was received. After you have received this you may return back up the root to your core self...

Once you are back in the trunk of the tree, expand your body to fill the tree and return to the earthly plane, remember to keep your core self intact.

It may be helpful to record this reading it aloud into a tape deck allowing for the amount of space you will need in different places during the meditation and journey.

Resources

Part of a Druid's training is being able to identify native wildflowers, shrubs, and trees, and to learn their medicinal uses and as well as esoteric properties. To help in learning the plants in your area the Missal-Any presents a listing of recommended field guides for across North America.

The Audubon Society Field Guides are the first all-photographic field guides and have vinyl covers to protect them from the elements. The books are divided into three parts: color plates, family and species descriptions, and appendices with a glossary. The series includes Field Guide to North American Wildflowers, Western Region; North American Wildflowers, Eastern Region; North American Trees, Western Region; and North American Trees, Eastern Region.

The National Audubon Society also publishes handy Pocket Guides small enough to fit in your back pocket or jacket without the weight of a larger book. The photographs are close-ups with good detail. These titles are: Flowers (Eastern Region), Flowers (Western Region); Familiar Trees of North America West; and Trees (Eastern Region).

The Peterson Field Guide Series have excellent line drawings and beautiful colored illustrations, and shows what features to look for to tell one species from another. In the series are Pacific States Wildflowers, Rocky Mountain Wildflowers, Wildflowers (northeast and north-central North America), Southwestern and Texas Wildflowers, Edible Wild Plants (eastern and central North America), Ferns (northeast and north-central North America), Western Trees, California and Pacific Northwest Forests, and Rocky Mountain and Southwest Forests, and Medicinal Plants.

Nature Study Guild Publishers has a Finders series of 4" x 6" pocket-sized guides identifying native plants of the United States and Canada. A dichotomous key leads you through a series of questions about the plant you're trying to identify. Each question makes you choose between two possibilities (dichotomous means dividing in two), and each choice brings you closer to the name of the species.

The series is quite extensive with 22 titles: Pacific Coast Tree Finder, Pacific Coast Berry Finder, Redwood Region Flower Finder, Pacific Coast Fern Finder, Sierra Flower Finder, Tree Finder, Winter Tree Finder, Fern Finder: A Guide to Native Ferns of Northeastern and Central North America, Berry Finder: A Guide to Native Plants with Fleshy Fruits for Eastern North America, Flower Finder: A Guide to Identification of Spring Wild Flowers and Flower Families, Winter Weed Finder: A Guide to Dry Plants in Winter, Rocky Mountain Tree Finder, Rocky Mountain Flower Finder, and Desert Tree Finder.

Calendar

Astronomical Beltaine, when the Sun is half way between the Spring Equinox and the Summer Solstice, will occur as 15 degrees of Taurus on May 5 at 03:46 PDT or as 16 degrees 18 minutes decl. on May 5 at 00:53 PDT. Beltaine services will be held on Saturday, May 5, at Solar Noon which is now 1 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time. Please call for carpool arrangements (510) 654-6896. For the social observance of Beltaine we will be going immediately after the service to AD's house. Call for potluck "theme" ideas. Regular Druid services will be held at Solar Noon, 1 p.m. on May 20, and June 3. Please call the above number to confirm.

The Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are \$4.00 and online subscriptions are free, but might not include everything that is in the post mail edition. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's subscription free. Write The Missal-Any, c/o Weinberger, 309 63rd St, Apt. C, Oakland, CA 94618.

A Druid Missal-Any Summer Solstice Y.R.XXXIX Vol. 17 Number 4 June 21st, 2001 c.e.

Summer Solstice Essay: Belenos

By Stacey Weinberger

Midsummer, Summer Solstice, the longest day of the year. On this day the Sun rises and sets at its most northerly points along the horizon and reaches its most highest point in the sky of the entire year at Solar Noon (1 p.m. daylight time).

While there are several Celtic deities who are considered a Sun god or goddess, in the RDNA tradition it is Belenos who we honor and praise this Midsummer day.

Belenos, also known as Beli, Belin, or Belinus in Britain, is perhaps associated with the Phoenician word Ba'al, meaning master. The variant Belenos is found widely distributed in early inscriptions in Gaul and northern Italy. Beli Mawr (Great Beli) appears in The Mabinogion as a powerful king of Britain and ancestor-deity of the Welsh royal line, and may be identical in origin to Belenos Himself. The ancient name element "Bel-" (root), is also found in the Latin bellus, meaning bright or brilliant, beautiful, and all the words subsequently derived from it; in the Goidelic "bile," meaning sacred tree, and other words of distant origin.

Bel was the young-god counterpart of the old-god Bran, as Jupiter was the counterpart of Saturn in the Roman pantheon or as Zeus was the to Cronos in the Greek pantheon. In general the first half of the year may well have been associated with Bran and the second half with Bel or Belenos.

Caesar's Gaulish Apollo is generally to be taken to be Belenos in His native guise. Apollo is actually a latecomer to the Greek pantheon, and one of a variety of theories about His origins is that He was adopted from the Celts. Both are known as gods of light and of the sun. Both are gods of sacred springs. In the Shetlands as well as in the Orkneys, the sick visited the wells, which were circled sun-wise before drinking from them. This is another tribute to Belenos, who like Apollo, is also a healer-god. Water and solar symbolism are closely linked in healing cults.

Whereas dedications to the Celtic gods in the form of inscribed altars appear to chiefly recur within one area, a few individual dedications are distributed widely. Belenos was one deity to be honored in such a way. His dedications are relatively common and widespread in Celtic Europe, particularly in southern and central Gaul, North Italy, and Noricum in the eastern Alps. Ausonius, a Bordeaux poet writing in the later half of the fourth century A.D. mentions sanctuaries in Aquitaine and writes of Phoebicius, who had been a temple-priest there.

Belenos is commemorated in place names as well. In England examples include Billingshurst in Sussex and Billingsgate in London. In France a number of places bear His name. The high rocky islet off the coast of Normandy formerly called Tombelaine, which in the slightly altered form of Les Tombelaines is a reef off Jersey's north coast. Belenos also appears to be venerated in some parts as St. Bonnet.

It is thus not coincidence that in the liturgy for the Special Order of Worship for the Summer Solstice it is suggested that the altar fire be especially large. We welcome

Belenos on this day of days asking Him to fill us with life, and warmth, and light our way as we honor Him with His element, and enjoy this glorious season before He begins to wend His way southward again.

Hail Belenos, God of the Sun!
Hail Belenos, Giver of Life!
Hail Belenos, Lord of Light!



News of the Groves

Carleton

Skip Wolcott had his vigil for Third Order last Friday night, 8 June. We have a good crowd of people who are enthusiastic. Skip is also Patriarch of the new Order of Hephasteus (Vulcan) the fire god. Carleton is going on Summer break until September.

Monument Grove

Regular services have begun on Sunday morning near Georgetown, but no one has shown up to participate with me, as I restart the Grove (besides a few passing squirrels and robins). We've undergone a few liturgical changes on the Order of worship. As listed below:

Vestments:

Due to my wife's mischief, my red and white ribbons are now sewn into an inseparable loop with knots where they join. These symbolize Beltane and Samhain. Before starting the ritual, I rotate it once, and then guesstimate the date on the red-ribbon (i.e. June 2 is about 18% past the knot), give it a kiss and put that spot at the nape of my neck. You can tell the date by looking at me.

Invocation:

We dance in a circle while singing and then we've added two lines:

"You have no need of names, yet we call on these names."
"We know not all your ways, yet seek to live in harmony with them."

Akita Grove, Japan

Patrick Haneke has produced the ultimate quick and easy ritual for those tired of schlepping baskets of materials, scripts, and such to the site. This can be performed anywhere, even in the middle of Wall Street without drawing too much attention. Pat calls it the "Quick Order," (but other members of the Grove, call it "Lugh's Lookey Liturgy," "Mannanan's Mucus Mass," "Sirona's Spit Service," etc.) and it is best done solitarily (as you'll see):

The Quick Order Liturgy

1. Scratch a sigil at your feet.
2. Whistle or hum something.
3. Ask, "How was that?" Look around you for signs.
4. Say, "Not bad, huh?"
5. Ask, "What is precious to us?"
6. Answer, "Waters."
7. Ask, "Where is the waters?"
8. Answer, "Right here." Pour something (or spit) into your hand.
9. Raise your hand.
10. Say, "Bless these and all waters that give us life."
11. Drink the waters.
12. Say, "Here's the extra." Return the extra to the ground.
13. Think of something clever, or ordain people.
14. Say, "Good bye"
15. Rub away the sigil.

(Estimated time for completion: 2 minutes 12 seconds)

Druid Heart Spirited Grove

Druid Heart Spirited Grove is getting ready for an all night jumping over the fires of Alban Hefin on June 24th. The sixth night of the New Moon Mistletoe rite falls on the same night so we will be having two rituals. Then next we are preparing for an open Druid campout for Gwyl Ifan (Lughnasadh) on the weekend of Aug. 4th. Anyone who wishes to attend, send me an e-mail to jbeltain@pacbell.net or a snail mail to Druid Heart Spirit, 1959 Vilas Rd., Cohasset, CA. 95973.

Our stone circle was completed just before the last Beltain which we had thirty-five attend including my Catholic father who completely enjoyed himself dancing the May Pole, and made it through the whole ritual! I don't think that that will be his only Druid ritual he attends, I'm almost done with the book I've been working on for so long. All I have next to do is the Gaelic pronunciation guide and glossary, and the artwork. I need any other authors of similar books to read it for me and write any comments back. I think a good title would be Workbook for a Druid's Healing Ritual.

Duir de Danu Grove of California

The Grove had a ritual for BAPA's (Bay Area Pagan Assemblies) Gaia's Gateway. The ArchDruid MaDagda did an outstanding job of leading the ritual and doing his by now renowned Tree of Life Guided Meditation. All the rest of the evening after the ritual we got compliments on it.

After Stephen Abbott McCauley and his wife Debby moved up to Sacramento and took the Hazelnut Mother Grove with them, there was a definite vacuum in the Silicon Valley. Druidically speaking, I was going to put together a Grove I called Boudicca's Birch, but MaDagda beat me to the punch with Duir de Danu. If you know anything about the god Dagda, you know about the ever-full cauldron of delicious food. MaDagda is a splendid cook, which is welcome to Druids, we being a chronically famished bunch. Duir de Danu (Oaks of Danu) had its first ritual for Samhain at Sanborn Park in Los Gatos. It was a beautiful, but very expensive site. The Grove then sat dormant thru the Season of Sleep until MaDagda arranged to do the Gaia's Gateway ritual for the month of May.

MaDagda is also preparing to move from Newark in the East Bay to a house in Cupertino. Now there will be a place to have Celtic Nights during the Season of Sleep. MaDagda,

Darren (my significant other), and I went up to Sacramento at least twice to do demo Druid rituals for Sacramento Cross Traditional Circles, the Sacramento answer to Gaia's Gateway. On the last Sunday of each month, a different group does a ritual in its tradition. It is followed by a potluck feast. The people of Gaia's Gateway follow their rituals with a meeting at Marie Callendar's (a local restaurant famous for its pies).

Creeks Called Rivers Groves

In early June Creeks Called Rivers had our first ever yardfood potluck. The idea was to create dishes from the various edible weeds and common plants here in Midwest suburbia.

Happily, no one was hurt, and we ended up with some surprisingly palatable fare. We're going to work on making some repeatable recipes, and make them available on the CCR site. If anyone else out there is interested in yardfood (or is an accomplished yardfood chef), tell Feck (feck@theoldreligion.com).

All things considered, things are going well here in Columbus. I finally bought a house (on Royal Forest Blvd. no less), so Creeks Called Rivers now has a permanent (if not particularly private) outdoor space.

This evening I sat on my patio and began re-reading Drawing Down the Moon by fading sun and flickering candlelight. I heard the first cricket of the year. Life is good; and the Reform is, indeed, groovy.

Baccharis Grove

Sometime between Yule and the first service of the New Year in the electricity went out in the little cabin we rent below the Grove site on the property of our esteemed posthumous member Emmon. Getting permission from the estate several weeks ago to have electricity restored, the lawyer for the estate recommended an electrician, who unfortunately turned out to be a flake. After three weeks going back and forth, missed appointments, and no work or estimate done I fire him. Keeping in Emmon's spirit I wanted to look for an electrician who was a woman (deciding this even before I got a chance to fire the other fellow). Doing a search on San Francisco Bay area web sites for a directory of women in business proves futile, so I call the local feminist bookstore for any leads. The woman on the phone gives me the name of two woman contractors who would be able to recommend an electrician. I call number two. She says she is a contractor but is also an electrician. She is very matter of fact, understands the job, describes what needs to be done, provides an estimate. Fine, she is hired.

When I call her back to coordinate a time and date I could tell by her voice that she was of a generation of women in the trades who had to fight to where she got and is probably in her late 40s to mid 50s. Hmm. I get to thinking. I've got a copy of Emmon's address book that we used to locate friends to invite to his memorial Samhain of '99. I get it out and look under the appropriate place.

This woman's name was there...same number.

I gasp.

And the freaky experience continues. I call the electrician back and tell her I want to ask her something that might make it easier for her to find the house and cabin. I ask her if she knew Emmon and she says yes! In fact she had worked on that very cabin before!! The last time was in '97. She says that when she heard Emmon died she wanted to get

in contact with someone who knew her, but didn't know how. I guess she has now.

I find it amazing, when being open to otherworldly experiences, as Druids tend to be, how we are at times directed to do something. It validates our sense of path and connection, and is both awe inspiring and humbling when it happens.



What is Arbor Day?

Arbor Day is a nationally celebrated observance that encourages tree planting and tree care. National Arbor Day is celebrated each year on the last Friday in April.

The first Arbor Day was celebrated in the state of Nebraska in 1872, in response to a state proclamation urging settlers and homesteaders in that prairie state to plant trees that would provide shade, shelter, fruit, fuel, and beauty for residents of the largely treeless plains.

On that first Arbor Day, more than one million trees were planted in Nebraska's communities and on its farms. The Arbor Day idea was promoted by J. Sterling Morton, (possibly a relative of the RDNA's Shirine Morton?) editor of the Nebraska City News, who later helped the idea spread to neighboring states and eventually to all of the United States and many other nations.

Today, Arbor Day celebrations are held in communities all over America, with the date determined by the best tree-planting times in each area. Celebrations are held as early as January and February in some southern states, and as late as May in more northern locations. For information on the date your state will observe Arbor Day, contact the National Arbor Day Foundation.

National Tree

It could be that the United States is a country of closet Druids! The Oak was voted the national tree.

April 27, 2001. The people have selected the oak as their choice for America's National Tree in a nationwide vote hosted on the Arbor Day Foundation web site. Results of the Vote for America's National Tree were announced April 27th at a tree planting ceremony on the Capitol Grounds in Washington, D.C.

"The oak is a fine choice to represent all of America's trees, and to exemplify the importance of trees in our lives," John Rosenow, president of the Arbor Day Foundation, said. "People of all ages and backgrounds responded enthusiastically to the vote, which was the first time that the entire American public has been able to state their pick for a national emblem."

People were invited to vote for one of 21 candidate trees, based on broad tree categories (genera) that included the state trees of all 50 states and the District of Columbia, or to write in any other tree selection. The redwood, maple, pine, and dogwood rounded out the top five choices.

An oak was planted the same afternoon at Arbor Day Farm in Nebraska City, Nebraska, the birthplace of Arbor Day in 1872.

"We undertook this vote to remind Americans of just how vital trees are to us all, and to emphasize the history and

grandeur of our trees," Rosenow said. "By any standard, oak merits the distinction of being named the people's choice for America's National Tree."

Among the many strong attributes of oak, Rosenow cited its diversity, with more than 60 species growing in the United States.

"This magnificent tree is significant in sheer numbers alone," he said, "with oak trees being America's most widespread hardwoods. From the earliest settlement of our country, oaks have been prized for their shade, beauty, and lumber.

"Oak's amazing strength and longevity have also made this tree a central part of our history," he added, "with leaders as diverse as Abraham Lincoln, William Penn, and Andrew Jackson being associated with them. Another early 'hero' of American history, 'Old Ironsides,' or the USS Constitution, was famed for repelling British cannonballs thanks to its thick, live oak hull. The American people have chosen wisely in so honoring the oak."

The Arbor Day Foundation is a million-member, nonprofit education organization that helps people plant and care for trees.

To print out a poster of the Oak as the National Tree go to:

http://www.arborday.org/NationalTree/NToakPoster_lrg.PDF

This 8.5 x 11 inch image can be printed on a color or a black and white printer.

This information is courtesy of the National Arbor Day Foundation at <http://www.arborday.org> or call 402-474-5655 or write 100 Arbor Avenue, Nebraska City, NE 68410.



Celebrate the Celtic Wheel of Life with Mara Freeman

Mara Freeman, British writer, storyteller, Archdruidess of the Druid Clan of Dana, an Irish Druid order, faculty member at the University of Creation Spirituality in Oakland, California, and author of *Kindling the Celtic Spirit* offers *The Feast of Lughnasa: A One-Day Workshop on the Celtic Harvest Festival*. Sunday, July 29, 10am to 5.30pm, Lotus Heart Center, 530 Sunlit Lane, Santa Cruz.

In this one-day workshop you will:

Learn all about the gods and goddesses who preside at this sacred time.

Find out about Lughnasa customs and traditions of Ireland, Scotland and Wales from ancient to modern times.

Listen to Celtic myths and legends of the harvest.

We will then take the teachings of this hallowed time into our souls through ritual, song, meditation and circle dance. Special Guest Linda Carol Rizzo, teacher of sacred arts and illustrator of *Kindling the Celtic Spirit*, will teach a traditional Lughnasa craft.

The cost is \$89.00 per person and craft materials are included in the fee. Major credit cards are accepted. Call to register: 831 644 9393 or 800 694 1957 (toll-free) or email: events@celticspirit.org

Register early! Space is limited!

Resources

Contributed by Alex Stewart, Second Order.

“Living off the Land”

Contacts: Yes, we all want that mountain cabin, but we need a little help from our friends.

Helpful Internet Sites:

Backwoods Home Magazine:
www.backwoodshome.com

Country Home Magazine:
www.countryhomemag.com

Homesteading/Rural Living Site: www.yonderway.com

Rural Living Web Magazine: www.rural-living.com

Rural Living Canada:

www.torpw1.netcom.ca/~kenruss/rural.htm

Homesteaders Ring: www.mcsi.net/ssp/homesteaders

Back Home Magazine: www.backhomemagazine.com

Helpful Books and Magazines:

Readers Digest, Back to Basics: How to Learn and Enjoy Traditional American Skills, (1987)

Skip Thomsen and Cat Freshwater “The Modern Homestead Manual” (1994)

Countryside and Small Stock Magazine 800-551-5691, (715) 785-7979

Backwoods Home Magazine, PO Box 40, Montague, CA 96064

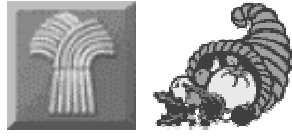
Back Home Magazine, 119 Third Ave. West, Hendersonville, NC 28792

Calendar

Summer Solstice, when the Sun enters Cancer, will occur on June 21, at 12:38 a.m. PDT. Solstice services will be held on Saturday, June. 24 at Solar Noon. Please call for carpool arrangements (510) 654-6896. For the social observance of the Solstice we will be going immediately after the service to AD’s house. Regular Druid services will be held at Solar Noon on July 8 and 22. Please call the above number to confirm.

The Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are \$4.00 and online subscriptions are free, but might not include everything that is in the post mail edition. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year’s subscription free. Write The Missal-Any, c/o Weinberger, 309 63rd St. C, Oakland, CA 94618.

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Lughnasadh Y.R. XXXIX
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Lughnasadh Essay: The Harvest

By Stacey Weinberger

Lughnasadh, funeral games of Lugh in honor of his foster mother, the beginning of the harvest, the Feast of the First Fruits. Technically still summer one can already feel the chill of the coming fall in the air here in Northern California. Though the sun is still setting late into the evening, the daylight hours begin to shorten and effort is begun in earnest to bring in the harvest while there is still light in the sky.

Lughnasadh was a festival that lasted a month long, beginning in mid-July and ending mid-August. It was a time of great feasting and games, as well as being a time of assemblies where political and legal matters were settled. Origins of the festival tell that it was established by Lugh to commemorate his foster-mother Tailtiu, the last queen of the Fir Bolg, who died at Teltown, (in County Meath) on August 1. After clearing the great forests of Ireland for cultivation she collapsed from exhaustion, and as she was dying asked Lugh to hold funeral games in her honor every August.

This year the wheat we left from the offering of the Bride-og beside the Grove altar at Oimelc sprouted. As part of our Lughnasadh service we will be re-enacting the Celtic ceremony of the *Iolach Buana*, the Reaping Salutation. As is tradition, we will be using a sickle, freshly polished and sharpened for the occasion.

The practice of the reaping salutation appears to be related to the "crying the neck" custom that was practiced on large farms in Devon. An old man, or someone else acquainted with the ceremonies, would go around to the sheaves as the laborers were reaping the last field of wheat, and pick out a little bundle of the best he could find. This bundle he would tie up very neatly and plat and arrange the straws very tastefully. This was called "the neck" of the wheat. After the field had been cut, the reapers, binders, and the women stood around in a circle. The person with "the neck" stood in the center of the circle, grasping it with both hands. He would first stoop and hold it near the ground, and all the men forming the ring would take off their hats, stooping and holding them to the ground in imitation of the person with "the neck." They then would all begin in a very prolonged and harmonious tone to cry "the neck!" at the same time slowly raising themselves upright, and elevating their arms and hats above their heads. The person with "the neck" did this also raising it on high. This was done three times.

The cries then changed to "Wee yen! Way yen!" which were sounded in the same harmonious manner three times. After this everyone burst out in joyous laughter with much capering about. One of the laborers would then grab "the neck" and run as fast as he could to the farmhouse, where the dairy maid or one of the other female domestics stood at the

door with a pail of water ready to douse him, reminiscent of a rain charm. "The neck" was then hung in a place of prominence and honor within the farmhouse where it remained until the spring when it was mixed with the seed corn before it was sown or fed to the horses or cattle at the start of ploughing.

Beannachadh Buana,

Reaping Blessing

From the *Carmina Gadelica*,
Collected by Alexander Carmichael

The day the people began to reap the corn was a day of commotion and ceremonial in the townland. The whole family repaired to the field dressed in their best attire to hail the God of the harvest.

Laying his bonnet on the ground, the father of the family took up his sickle, and facing the sun, he cut a handful of corn. Putting the handful of corn three times sunwise round his head, the man raised the "Iolach Buana," reaping salutation. The whole family took up the strain and praised the God of the harvest (Ed.: Michael, who Lugh became co-opted by in Christian times), who gave them corn and bread, food and flocks, wool and clothing, health and strength, and peace and plenty.

When the reaping was finished the people had a trial called "cur nan corran," casting the sickles, and "deuchain chorran," trial of hooks. This consisted, among other things, of throwing the sickles high in the air, and observing how they came down, how each struck the earth, and how it lay on the ground. From these observations the people augured who was to remain single and who was to be married, who was to be sick and who was to die, before the next reaping came around.

God Bless Thou Thyself my reaping,
Each ridge, and plain, and field,
Each sickle curved, shapely, hard,
Each ear and handful in the sheaf,
Each ear and handful in the sheaf.

Bless each maiden and youth,
Each woman and tender youngling,
Safeguard them beneath Thy shield of strength,
And guard them in the house of the saints,
Guard them in the house of the saints.

Encompass each goat, sheep and lamb,
Each cow and horse, and store,
Surround Thou the flocks and herds,
And tend them to a kindly fold,
Tend them to a kindly fold.

For the sake of Michael head of hosts,
Of Mary fair-skinned branch of grace,
Of Bride smooth-white of ringleted locks,
Of Columba of the graves and tombs,
Columba of the graves and tombs.



News of the Groves

Carleton Grove

Carleton College is on summer break until September. Ehren reports that he is in Ann Arbor, enjoying some high-level physics courses. He didn't know there was a RDNA Grove there 1973-76, but he cannot seem to find an adequate place to worship yet.

Akita Grove, Japan

It is rainy season in Northern Japan, which have dampened many of our outdoor frolics, forcing us to look toward indoor entertainments. With the heat and humidity, much of the grove is not willing to do much, although we are planning a trip up to the mountains to cool off. Nozomi and I will be camping for a week and a half in the World Heritage area "Shirakami (White God?) Mountains." We will meditate, perform austerities, practice waterfall meditation, and perhaps some frolicking with the foxes. This is inspired by the Yamabushi (mountain saints) who wear ridiculous decorations while testing their spirits, visiting mountain shrines, doing dangerous stunts, and learning wilderness skills. Since there are no roads in the area, we intend to go in about three days and make camp. Some members of our Grove will join us on July 28th to have our Lughnasadh service closer to the trailhead. Unfortunately we cannot have a campfire in that forest, but we will have races, tests of strengths, a feast and a handfasting. Nozomi and I will renew. We pray the rice harvest will be bountiful.

Volcano Grove, Tonga

One of the men I work with here, Saia, by name, has been asking me about Druidism. Religion plays a huge role in Tongan life, and I often ask him to describe parts of its impact. Invariably he returns the questions: "What are the religious duties of a Druid?" "What money does the church collect, and what is it used for?" "What are the requirements for being a priest?" "What obligations do they have?" "Do they serve for life?" "Can they marry?" "Are there Druidic schools?" "To what moral code are Druids bound?" As it is the delicious doom of every Druid to answer such things for his or her self,

I can only pass the questions on. May they stimulate much thinking.

A thing that fascinates me about his line of questioning is its purely practical focus. Not "What do you believe?" but "What do you do?" In a way it is not such a bad place to start. Actions are driven by values that may be derived from and supported by wildly divergent beliefs. Thus, if it be found that a group of Druids hold similar values, they can act in concert, even if those values are supported by different or even incompatible beliefs, which each individual has developed through his or her independent search for spiritual truth. The forum then becomes: I value X; therefore I will do Y. This shift in paradigms has immediate consequences. Not the least being that it moves one out of the highly contested and poorly articulated realm of theology. Values, furthermore, seem to have a longer half-life than beliefs, which may suddenly shift in the light of new experience. Changes in what people value come only--I suspect--with a distinct change in a person's character, which experience shows is rare indeed. The challenge is that one must engage in serious introspection to discover to which values one is really committed.

Somehow or other I have now been here over a year. Next Beltaine will mark my release from the Peace Corps. Still no clear plan on what is to follow. Japan is looking less likely. So is traveling right round the world, a trip many ex-volunteers arrange. I have gotten too deeply into this culture to enjoy a touristic whirlwind of several dozen others. I intend to see many other countries, but I wish to know them personally, and that will take time. I know I will return to the states, see my family, and maybe publish a few stories. If possible I would like to criss-cross the country a time or two, visiting all my scattered friends and correspondents. Perhaps I will build a new harp and simply be a bard for a while. 'Tis still too soon to tell.

Monument Grove

With the influx of pilgrims (and the fourth of July festival), D.C. is fully charged up. But, all is quiet here in despite the usual hullabaloo. All in all it is a pleasant summer. I've been busy with Japanese classes and keeping the website up to date with all the new Groves joining it. We are now at the ridiculous level of 27 or so Groves. The vast majority of which are probably what you would call "Protogroves" in the official sense but, that only means they don't have a constitution and a Third Order Druid yet. I have gotten a membership from ADF, yes me, so that I can keep tabs on our granddaughter group; which appears as busy as ever. Take care!

Draoi Croi Croga Grove

The Solstice was peaceful. We had just a few people here to celebrate with; everyone else was either out of town or too hard to contact. I've been working on trying to contact and organize for a campout for Lughnasa here on my property. I wanted to have a full on festival with workshops, morning rituals, Bardic fire circle etc. But, by the time I got my printer fixed to make the flyers, that computer burned out. We are still doing the campout on the weekend of Aug. 4-5, it might not be as large as I hoped. If anyone wants to attend, please e-mail me at: jbeltain@pacbell.net

through MSN Messenger at dragonryder65@hotmail.com.
Their homepage is
<http://www.geocities.com/dragonoak1/index.html>

MOCC Muskogee/Mother Grove

Br. Thomas Lee Harris, Jr. returned from the pilgrimage to Lawrenceville, GA on April 1st, making him the April Fool's Archdruid, apparently. There was an attempt to return on Good Friday so he could step off the bus saying "Muskogee, Muskogee, thou who killest the prophets," in recall of that fabulous pre-Reform Jewish Druid Br. Jesus' words in the gospel account concerning his entry into Jerusalem, but the glorious opportunity was foregone in order to be there for friends having medical problems. There was a drumming hour on July 14 near Arrowhead Mall in Muskogee, but, being Oklahoma in the Summertime, it was just too dang hot. Two former members of the Muskogee Grove will be returning by Lammas, and an attempt at making the Grove much more active will be made, provided a decent schedule can be arrived at.

Baccharis Grove

Baccharis Grove is on hiatus the month of July due to our Preceptor participating in the Live Oak Renaissance Festival in Santa Barbara. She reports:

Even though I am not able to attend services, which I sorely miss, I am finding that I am in other ways able to uphold my Druidic practices, even unwittingly. Now this faire takes place in a California Coastal Live Oak forest that is beautiful to behold. Deer graze in the ravine. Western bluebirds fill the air, and there is evidence of wild turkey by their square-tipped feathers left on the ground. We arrived quite late the night before workshops and set up were to begin. I parked the car, turned off the engine, and then realized the car would get pretty hot sitting in the middle of field, so I moved it to beneath one of the oaks.

On Sunday while loading the car for the trip home small light green leaves on the ground caught my eye. These were not the dark green of the live oak! Upon closer inspection I saw that they were mistletoe. I looked up and located the hanging boughs in the branches of the oak tree. I remembered Pliny the Elder's words in his account of the mistletoe ceremony, "The mistletoe, however, is found but rarely upon the oak; and when found, is gathered with due religious ceremony..." I felt extremely lucky and honored to have found this particular oak to park under. Was it coincidence, or instinct?

Last weekend I went by the corn dollies booth to purchase a birthday present for a friend. There also for sale were Bridghid's crosses made of wheat. Wanting to buy one from a Pagan-friendly source I bought it as well. Later that night our guild master was struggling, having a difficult time trying light a fire in our fire pit. Being practiced from setting our Grove's altar fire I offered my assistance and built a "Texas firebox." Lo and behold it lit immediately! I couldn't help but think of the corn dollie I had bought earlier, and of Bride, goddess of the hearth and fire. Was it coincidence, or instinct? In the morning there were a few embers smoldering but they were not lighting. I once again used my skill at building a fire. This time the fire lit before I had even finished. I thanked Bride once again for Her help.

New Grove Announcements!

Dragon Oak

A new Grove has been formed in Virginia Beach, VA. Contact: Penny Kotyk via email at HexxOmbres@aol.com or

Candle Grove, Whittier, CA

Contact Dusty White at ohmygodiam@aol.com.

Order of the Mithril Star

Greetings from Cylch Cerddwyr Rhwng Y Bydoedd, the Mother Grove of the Order of the Mithril Star of the Reformed Druids of North America (Southern Oregon Branch). Our Mother Grove's name is Welsh and it means "Circle of Walkers Between Worlds," an allusion both to the Druidic Shamanism we practice and in honor of our co-founder, Adam Walks Between Worlds, who passed to Tir Na Og in February 1997.

We have been in existence since Samhain 1995 and currently have three Groves total and over 57 members throughout the United States. Although we started out as a Thelemic oriented tradition of eclectic Witchcraft, with a heavy influence of Heinleinism, our practices have evolved over the last few years to a much more Celtophilic, Druidic focus and have very recently affiliated with the RDNA as an expression of our Druidry.

We are proud to be representatives of RDNA and hope to live up to her high standards of scholarship.

Our website is currently located at
<http://www.ormus.org/mithril>.

May you never thirst,
Stephen Gabriel
Vice-Arch Druid
Order of the Mithril Star of the Reformed Druids of North America

Amon Sul Grove

The summer solstice was celebrated by observing the sunrise and sunset at the Sacred Circle. The Waters of Life was consumed on a regular basis during and between the two ceremonies. The Grove has adopted the following tenets:

1. The Amon Sul Grove is devoted to the worship of Nature.
2. We believe that all Druids are equal and consequently we do not recognize any hierarchical structures or "Orders."
3. All members are authorized to conduct any and all rites and rituals related to Druidism.
4. All offices are strictly functional and do not carry any status beyond conducting necessary organizational tasks of the Grove. The Arch-Druid shall publicly represent the Grove. The Scribe shall be responsible for the Grove correspondence. The Purser shall be responsible for handling the Grove finances.
5. Anyone wishing to be a member of the Grove shall inform the Scribe of such intent.

We will soon have a web-page up and running. Keep an eye out for it! Contact the Grove by sending an email to Gandalf952@cs.com

The Chronicle and the Ballad of the Death of Dalon ap Landu

In 1999, the Hazelnut Grove, in a period of isolation and frustration with no reading material on Dalon Ap Landu (a God only known to the RDNA, apparently we discovered him in 1963) decided to replace him with the much better documented "Hu Gadarn," who has a history running back to 1703 when Iolo Morganwg discovered him.

The reason for the ballad about the battle is that the AD wanted to just ditch Dalon Ap Landu because he couldn't find any literature on him, and he was afraid that we would be laughed out of the room by those for whom we did demo rituals. He did, however, find literature on Hu Gadarn. Well, as always in the Reform, there were those of us who rebelled and felt that Dalon Ap Landu should not be just unceremoniously dumped like a bad date. And it hit me one Friday night during our Druid Think Tank meeting. If DAL must die, let him die, as any Celt would want to, in battle. So, I wrote the chronicle and the ballad.

We figure that he was a thought form created by the founding fathers of the Reform, because still being Christians, they felt uneasy about calling up any real Pagan deities. It is my personal belief that by now as a result of having been called upon for 30 plus years, he is at least an eggcore by now, and one day could attain true godhood. And in ritual, whenever Hu Gadarn's name is mentioned, we whisper Dalon Ap Landu's name that it may remain a mystery to the multitude.

The Death of Dalon ap Landu (Prose Chronicle Version)

And in those days a great cry went up from those of the cross traditional circles that a ritual shall be held to show the multitude what the Druids of the Reform did in their worship. In the writing of the ritual for the common worship, the scholars and Druids had pored through tome after tome in the Arch Druid's great Celtic library, but could find no reference for the name Dalon ap Landu, or even of his progenitor Landu, and much did the ArchDruid fear the ridicule of the scholars of the cross traditional circles. But a name did come up. One Hu Gadarn was the Lord of the Groves for the ancient Cymry, and so his name replaced that of Dalon Ap Landu.

But there were those in the Grove who mourned the passing of Dalon Ap Landu. To them, even a young god was a fit deity who should not be cast aside as a worn shoe. Long did they whisper whenever the name of Hu Gadarn was mentioned the doughty name of Dalon Ap Landu. To some it did seem as an in-joke, and to others a mystery.

But there was one who gathered her courage to speak onto the ArchDruid, "If he is to be dead, let him die a fit death for a Celtic deity. Let him die in battle."

And behold, the ArchDruid objected not.

Long had Hu Gadarn slumbered under the barrows of the honored Celtic dead. But as gods will often do, Hu Gadarn stirred when he heard his name being called. Lo, did they call upon his name to bless the sacrifice of life and the libation. And when he stirred, he knew that there was another god he must face in combat for the privilege of being called upon to bestow the blessings. And behold did he know this, because when his name was called, the other's name, Dalon Ap Landu, was whispered softly.

And when that name was called, be it ever so softly, Dalon Ap Landu did hearken onto his name, even as so youthful a god was he, did hearken onto his name. He knew he must face his nemesis in open combat, in a duel to the death. He armed himself with a spear made of the deadly yew, and armored himself with a targe of solid oak and armor of oaken bark; for after all was he not Lord of the Groves? His shining copper locks were held back by a strip of under-bark, and his blue eyes flashed in the sun.

When the two came together, thunder roared among the boughs of the trees and the ground under them shook. Dalon Ap Landu struck first a blow upon Hu Gadarn's mighty thigh. But that did not even slow Hu Gadarn down, and he, with his spear also of deadly yew, ran Dalon Ap Landu's noble chest through. All the youths who were looking on wept bitter tears for the death of the young and doughty Dalon Ap Landu. Manfully did he struggle with Death. But the Cailleach did scoop up her charge and sped away with Dalon Ap Landu.

But even now in the rites when the name of Hu Gadarn is called upon, the name of Dalon Ap Landu is ever whispered by some, and so shall it continue to be a mystery onto the multitude.

The Ballad of the Death of Dalon Ap Landu

Long were his locks of shining copper hue
Stormy also his eyes of Mananan's own blue
Tall was he and mighty were his thighs
Shoulders broad as the spreading drui
O youths and maids shed a tear for the death of Dalon Ap Landu

His spear was of the deadly yew
His targe oak that near it grew
He armored himself as all warriors do
But that could not stop the death of Dalon Ap Landu
O youths and maids shed a tear for the death of Dalon Ap Landu.

Long had the scholars toiled to find his name so true
But where he'd come from no tome knew
So finally in teeth gnashing and weeping anew
They signed a death warrant for young Dalon Ap Landu
O youths and maids shed a tear for the death of Dalon Ap Landu

His only crime was that he was new
For six and thirty years he throve and grew
But of the books and tomes none knew
Of the paltry existence of Dalon Ap Landu
O youths and maids shed a tear for the death of Dalon Ap Landu

Scholars did find as Lord of Groves one Hu
Gadarn his surname and stories about him grew
Druids called upon him to give his blessing to
Their offering of leaves and potent brew
O youths and maid shed a tear for the death of Dalon Ap Landu

Only thirty six years had he, as gods go, that's pretty new
There were those who thought to kill a god, one shouldn't do
E'en a youthful god had merit they would softly coo
As the Druid said the Lord of Groves whose name was Hu

O youths and maids shed a tear for the death of Dalon Ap Landu

They came together, a clash of arms, Dalon and Hu
In the trees thunder, in ground a tremor grew
Dalon brandished his spear made of deadly yew
And landed a blow on Hu Gadern's mighty thew
O youths and maids shed a tear for the death of Dalon Ap Landu

Then came the spear of the Lord of Groves named Hu
Long and straight his spear, also of deadly yew
The thrust was great and pierced young Dalon straight through
He struggled manfully in his dying, did the son of old Landu
O youths and maids shed a tear for the death of Dalon Ap Landu

And still we sing of the death so long and cruel
He died and went to the land of great Pwyll
A death occurring in great duel
[I hope you think my song adequately cool]
O youths and maids sing a song for the death of Dalon Ap Landu

Tegwedd Shadow Dancer
CoCoArchDruid Hazelnut Mother Grove, CoArchDruid Duir De Danu, and Chronieler of both Groves.

(Note from Mike Scharding, Monument Grove: We have it on very good authority (from a certain anonymous Floridian Druid) that Dalon Ap Landu choreographed his death in 1997, with the help of Braciaca, his drinking buddy, in order to take a well deserved vacation under the auspices of the Deity Protection Program. After blessing the Everglade's mangroves (which are overseen by the god, Darolia) he returned to full duty and bears no grudges. "I enjoy this dying-rebirth god activity, you know, it's invigorating," was his only comment. For further news updates, please contact your nearest tree.)

The Parenthetical Epistle of Mike

July 5, 2001

As always, I speak for myself, and certainly do not represent the opinions of the Reform or other members. Why, in fact, I don't often agree even with my self. Sometimes I have the most interesting conversations when I talk to myself...

Few people join the Reform, or any other Druid group for that matter, without some pretty strong preconceptions already established. Man has always wished to control Nature, rather than be controlled (or rather, just a part) of Nature, so myths are rife with gods, demi-gods or even mere mortals can twist or manipulate mighty Nature to their own whims and needs. "Man" is often defined 'as the animal which uses tools,' although we know that chimps use sticks and some birds sew their nests. I would redefine "Man is an animal that uses drugs," which may make you smile (I refer you to the 5th Order for further guidance), but in a real way we all wish that we were something that we are not. There are several avenues to accomplish this goal, mainly: drugs, insanity, and fantasy. Religion tends to wander in and betwixt these three options, acting as a possible accelerant to their flames. Fantasy is by far the most socially acceptable option in our present society.

This can take on many forms; day-night-wet dreams, the entertainment media which provides us a brief respite, living our dreams vicariously through other more famous people (i.e. soap operas), myths--gossip--stories, drama and games.

Tolkien is often credited with being the grand-daddy of the Fantasy movement, so we all should add *The Hobbit* to our Grove libraries. I seriously believe that without Tolkien, there would be no Reform. (Or if there had been no McCarthy or inquisition. As all of you Dr. Who fans know, changing the past in reality is a very dangerous activity, but changing our understanding of the past is big business.) So, let's talk about Dungeons and Dragons, an influential off-shoot of this Fantasy movement. We all know that Role-Playing Games (RPG) and the medieval Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA), both starting in 1971-ish, grew hand-in-hand with the Neo-Pagan/Wiccan/New-age emergence. Perhaps, those evangelists are correct in saying that RPGs are a breeding ground for Paganism; which they add is a "bad thing." Strangely enough, I kind of agree with them. I first played D & D in 4th grade in the school yard, exploring the "S2: White Plume Mountain" scenario, as, can you guess? Yes, a 6th Level Druid named "Magoor," if I remember rightly. My understanding of magic was heavily influenced by that game over the next 8 years, as well as by the definitions of the 9 alignments (Lawful Good, Neutral Evil, True Neutral, Chaotic Neutral, etc.), and the ordering of the Planes of Existence. (I dare not touch the topic that experience points and advancement are only gained by slaughtering others, which is actually capitalism.) D & D provided a structure for me in which multiple pantheons of deities, ruling separate realms, could co-influence their respective spheres of activity over our mortal plane of existence (a concept that is no doubt conducive to my own eclectic brand of Druidism). Yet it wasn't until College, that I began to depart Catholicism (the True Paganism!, according to some people.) I am sure that Brother Isaac Bonewits (refer to his academic *Real Magic* tome or his RPG "Authentic Thaumaturgy") would be the first to agree with me, that these popular visions of fireball-flinging wizards are perhaps detrimental and distracting to the more practical magic that we are usually inclined towards practicing (although it would be fun to unleash a ninth-level "creeping doom" (i.e. a cloud of bugs) upon certain opponents.)

So that brings us back to Nature and our relation to it. In numerous fantasy novels (in particular, the "Shannara" series), computer games ("The Druid," and the game "Mystery of the Druids," advertised in this issue, etc) and also in AD&D (where we are a special sub-class of Cleric); where we have been laden with the image of a rather crotchety old man, usually robed with a deep hood, who is rather neutral of human concerns (because nature does not concern itself with good or evil), hauling rocks around the landscape for no apparent reason (perhaps they were the inventors of the construction cartel?), in control of secret powers related to the control and protection of Nature, and loitering in dark leafy groves singing groovy tunes (that sounds like me, except the "old" part, I'm only 30). Unlike most clerics, the powers of fantasy figures come through the study of Nature not the imploration of the god(s), and "absorbing of energies," or the gruesome activities of which the Ancient Druids are often accused (perhaps rightly), we can also change shape! Adding to this stew, are the Celtophiles; who claim the Druids could do anything your ancestors could do, and could do it better (if they really wanted to try), including an imposing list of cultural, judicial, musical, medicinal, philosophical and astrological skills that would make a modern renaissance

liberal-arts student blush in shame. I suppose they didn't have specialists back then? Don't forget that famous verse of "Gimme that old time religion" goes "We will worship like those Druids, who drink fermented fluids, waltzing naked through the woo-ids, and that's good enough for me!" (This, at least, describes the Carleton Grove rather too perfectly.) As for the general public's opinion, don't forget lead guitarist Nigel's adept summary, in the movie "Spinal Tap," with his introduction to the song Stone Henge; "Long ago, in a mystical land, were a strange race of people, the Druids. No body knew who they were, or what they were doing...But their legacy lives on in...STONEHENGE!" Of course, the Wiccans bring over their ideas, thinking we that we must also like athames, pentacles and quiet moonlit walks on the beaches...(which are cool too.) Finally, there are our siblings in the UK and Europe, who are dotty over dolmens, heady over henges, and have a really poor fashion sense towards ridiculous headgear, unflattering robes, and gaudy jewelry. (I'm sorry, perhaps I'm really AM talking about us?) This has been going on for at least four centuries, (see "The Famous Druids" by Owen in 1979)!

Whew! For good or bad, this is the image and mental baggage, which nearly all our recruits bring with them to the RDNA. What's the problem with it, because it sounds really exciting and it's great for marketing our image (except that bit about sacrificing, which I might discuss further next time)? Well, nothing I guess really is really wrong, but I believe the founders of the Reform had different key elements; simplicity, revolutionary defiance and a love of whiskey (which I might add are key Scottish attributes...). The RDNA began over the issue of not being coerced into worshipping the way other people want us to do (and perhaps it still is?). Now, I'm a rather antagonistic person myself, being 41.32352% or so Celtic-ish ("The easiest way to make an Irishman to decline an action is to order them to do it"), always taking up an opposite view to balance things (there's my lasting imprinted notion of "neutrality" again), so I hate being defined by other's fantasies (mine are sufficiently strange, thank you!). But it is only by examining your presumptions and preconceptions that you can know where you're coming from and going to.

The previously described image (the word "describe" also has a meaning of corralling or limiting) is rather similar to the one that many in the ADF, OBOD, Keltria and some of us are (perhaps willingly) striving towards, I believe. What has made us stand apart from the pack of other Druid groups, is probably our well-developed sense of sarcastic humor (an ancient Druid trait) and our skillfully inept organizational skills (unfortunately, also an ancient Celtic trait). However, borrowing the Taoist image of "the un-carved block of wood," whose future shape is yet undetermined, and therefore infinitely versatile; I believe each and every grove, yea!, every Druid in the Reform should consider stripping away these accretions (there's that "Waltzing naked in the woods" cry for simplicity!), return to the seed of Druidism (which may be something about Nature, isn't it?), then allow their trees (and grove) to follow Nature's course (please be reserved on pruning the mistletoe that clings to your boughs, too).

Like it or not, as a group, we are diverse, anarchic and eclectic. In the past we had Norse, Zen, Celtic, Hasidic, Wiccan, Non-Aristolean, Humanistic, Orthodox and others paths which had no easy labels (take a look at www.geocities.com/mikerdna/wherogrove.html for a fuller list.) In all honesty, our group has not been conducive to a Reform-wide mythology, theology, voting rules, set ritual, long-term membership, powerful-lobbying body, fund-raising, recognition by IRS, or fashion (Och lord, how I've tried, but I am a color blind Scot, yowsers!) For most, that sounds like

failure. But a leopard shouldn't complain about its spots. I heard once that a sign of a good teacher (hopefully, one of ours is the Earth-Mother) is not the answers she gives, but the kinds of questions that she raises. I believe that, under her tutelage, we have produced a healthy crop of really good questions about some very basic concepts and issues, (bull-shit is very good fertilizer.) As long as that activity continues, whether we call it Druidism or not (an oak is an oak is an oak), then the RDNA lives on.

Now that I've said my piece, what do you think?

Resources

Summer Afternoon Herb Walk

Do something delightfully fun and different—sign up for the Learning Annex summer afternoon herb walk in Marin County's magnificent Tennessee Valley!

With herbalist Catherine Abbey Rich as your guide, you'll learn about the awesome healing powers of herbs, plus how to: identify herbs you can use for both cooking and medicinal purposes; use them in a variety of soothing remedies, comforting herbal teas, delicious soups, and full meals. Plus: folklore and herbal remedies from around the world. The walk is an easy three-hour hike. Please dress in layers, bring water and sunscreen, and wear comfortable shoes.

Course 180M, Section B, Sunday, Sept. 9, 3 to 6:30 p.m.
Course fee: \$39. Call (415) 788-5500 to register.

Call for Articles

The Greymalkin Gazette needs YOUR articles or poetry. The length for articles, good original articles on any topic in Paganism or Magick is between 300 and just under 1,000 words (one to four typed pages). Poetry does not have a length limit, but something like the Sagas or the Eddas would probably be too long. Good topics are those about the Goddess. It should be the body of the email, as I have a tough time opening attachments. Send to: tezra@earthlink.net or if on hard copy, snail mail to:

The Pythoness
The Greymalkin Gazette
P.O. Box 6775
San Jose, CA 95150-6775

Calendar

Lughnasadh, when the Sun is half-way between Summer Solstice and Fall Equinox, will occur on August 7, at 3:54 a.m. as 15 deg of Leo or as 16 deg 18 min decl at 6:25 a.m. Pacific Daylight Time. Lughnasadh services will be held on Saturday, Aug. 4 at Solar Noon. Please call for carpool arrangements (510) 654-6896. For the social observance of Lughnasadh we will be going immediately after the service to Pyramid Brewery in Berkeley. Regular Druid services will be held at Solar Noon on Aug. 19, Sept. 2 and 16. Please call the above number to confirm.

The Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are \$4.00 and online subscriptions are free, but might not include everything that is in the post mail edition. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's subscription free. Write The Missal-Any, c/o Weinberger, 309 63rd St, Apt. C, Oakland, CA 94618.

A Druid Missal-Any

Fall Equinox Y.R. XXXIX

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Fall Equinox Essay: Cernunnos

Reprinted from A Druid Missal-Any,
Fall Equinox 1984
By Emmon Bodfish

Equinox approaches the time sacred to Cernunnos, the Hunter God. "Now is come September, the Hunter's Moon begun." ¹as Holly sings it, and now is the time of Cernunnos, the god of the hunt, the immortal shaman invoking and controlling the quarry. In Gaul, an altar was dedicated to him below what is now Paris. He is one of the prototypes of that inexhaustible figure, The Horned Man.

As Master of the Animals, he embodies their spirits and can parley with them, bringing game to the hunter, or protecting and sustaining cattle and flocks. As the Woods-god, he directs primary energy, the life forces, creative, magical, and procreative of animals and wilderness. As the Shaman-god his function is to be a connecting link between the human and non-human worlds, and to balance the two with their opposing tensions. From these two roles flow his later attributes, God of Wealth, magician, juggler, and Lord of the Dance.

He is appealed to communicate to the spirit of the animals to let one of their number be taken for food, to make the cattle flourish, and to increase the herds. Most pagan cultures believe that it is not prudent or even possible to catch game or raise an animal for slaughter without its permission on the spiritual level. This is always a bargain, requiring the prey's cooperation. Ritual and honor must be paid to prey species, or to the Master of Cattle, in return.

Though Margaret Murray was ridiculed for suggesting it in the 30s, it has since become clear that we are dealing with a Paleolithic cult in the Horned God, yet one that has continued down to the present day. This shows a strong, basic archetypal appeal. Like all good archetypes, he has multiple and voluminous levels of meaning

In Celtic mythology, he forms a triad with Esus and Sylvanus. As with other Celtic triple divinities, these may be different facets of the same being. He is close on the left side to Esus, god of the underworld and riches, and on the right to Sylvanus, Wood spirit, god of vegetation, the Green Man. The links with wealth and death on one hand and magic and fecundity on the other go all the way back to Cernunnos' stone age roots. Around the pictures of horned men on cave walls are other pictures, most of them of animals. All were animals

which were important in the hunt, but which were dangerous to hunt. Species known to have been hunted, but which are not dangerous, are not represented. These animals, deer, bison, bulls, wolves, horses are ones that have to be reckoned with, and this was done magically. As the Finn-Ugric and Siberian hunters, heirs to Paleolithic Europe, explained it in the 19th century, there are three things the hunter wants to insure: that he kill the quarry and that it not kill him. That is that his spirit, mana or tapa, overcome the animal's spirit. And thirdly, he wants to insure that his hunting not cause the prey species to flee or to become depleted. He wishes to propitiate the spirits of the animals for the loss of some of their number, and to insure the fertility of the herd and secure its increase.

Among many Northern European peoples it was important to assure the animal killed of a way to be reborn, to come back and continue its life. Its bones were collected and treated with special funeral rites and magic to aid this return. Ideas presaging the concept of reincarnation are common to Eurasian hunter cultures and south to the Caucasus and the Indo-European homelands. Here, then are the Cernunnos' triad's attributes:

Success-Wealth Underworld-Death	Magic	Fertility Reincarnation
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with magic as the connecting link or directing force which humans and gods assert, influencing the course of events for their benefits.

Cernunnos is the Gaulish deity whom Caesar equated with Roman Mars. This was more than chance resemblance. There is some evidence of for their common I.E. roots. Mars was not always a god of war. Originally he was a god of vegetation. Cato and Varro concur on this, telling us that it was to Mars that the farmers prayed for good crops and prosperity, and for protection of their cattle. He had an old title, from pre-Republican days, of Mars Silvanus, Mars of the Woods. The elements of War and martial spirit were later connected with him when Rome began its expansions and conquest. There is a myth recorded in Plutarch's "Parallela," in which Mars takes on a mortal woman as his lover. Her name is Silvia; she bears him a son whose soul is contained in a spear.

Mars War Plunderer	Mamurius Veturius Fecundity Venus' Lover	Mars Silvanus God of the Wood Protector of Cattle
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At the other end of the Indo-European spectrum, in Vedic India, is the figure of Rudra, who may be cognate with Mars. He is the patron of the Keshin, long haired, woods-dwelling ascetics. And there is reason to think that Sylvania, Silvanus, and Shiva are the same. The latter two share similar myths of travels in the Underworld. If we accept the Irish Wildman-of-the-Woods, Mad Suibhni (Swee' nee) as a late Christian euhemerization of Sylvania/Cernunnos, then the Celtic Horned-god(s) made similar journeys to the Underworld, under or inside Magic Mountains. All these tales include a visit to a female figure who lives inside the Mountain and who is the source of wealth or knowledge. In Siberia she is the Reindeer Mother. Among the early Greeks she is the Bear Mother. On Shiva's journey, she is Devi,

Madam Bramha, conqueror of the Bull-Demon, bulls, cattle, and herds.



In the Caucus she is Mother of the Dead, who suckles the soul of the newly dead, as the Reindeer Mother suckles each would-be shaman who finds his way through the labyrinth to her cave. There is nothing like her in African, Chinese, or Australian myths, no source figure who is a Lady-inside-a-Mountain. She is an Eurasian figure, probably of Paleolithic origin. In her we may be seeing who “Venus of Willendorf” was.² Similar Magdalenian and Gravettian female figurines have been found far down in caves and caverns under mountains in France and Switzerland. These caves are often difficult and dangerous to climb down into, yet the walls are elaborately painted with figures of animals and outlined handprints of humans, or whole rooms painted red with ochre. Footprints in the hardened clay show that dances and ceremonies were held here around her figurines, or around clay models of gravid or copulating bison. Here someone painted on the wall the famous “dancing sorcerer” of the Arièges, the proto-type of the Horned Man.

Cernunnos, King of the Wood, Lord of the Animals, he can be appealed to for difficulties with pets or with wild animals. His color is brown, burn aromatic woods or pine pitch or incense. Brown is a very special color; it is not found in the spectrum. It is a mixture of red and green with yellow for warm brown, or blue for cool brown mixed in, in lesser quantities. But there is no brown light. The sensation, brown, is created within the human visual system. This is fitting for Cernunnos, the mind-traveler, and the shaman. Francis of Assisi, preaching to the birds, living in the forest, and specifying humble brown robes of local material for his Order, was in the old I.E. tradition of the Holy-Man-in-the-Woods. These old currents of thought change direction and name, but do not die out as quickly and as easily as textbook history would portray.

Cernunnos can best be experienced out-of-doors in the woods or wild places. After 2:00 a.m., and the last lights are out and radios off, even fairly tame bits of the out-of-doors, backyards, and gardens return essentially to Nature. Smells and sounds change. Try sitting like Cernunnos in his Gunderstrup pose in this setting. If you cannot find a horned serpent, use some other symbol of the Mountain Mother,² and a torc, sign of the warrior and of his bond to his patron deity.

¹Holly Tannen, “Invocation.” Kicking Mule Records, KM 236.

²James Duran, “The Horned God of Europe,” Spring Seminar, 1984.



News of the Groves

Carleton Grove, MN

At the final tea of the last term, the Carleton Druids discussed what they would like to do with the Druids at their weekly teas for the coming Fall term. Some of the ideas considered were:

Crafts: beading, mask making, dream catchers, folk dancing, Druid games (we at the Missal-Any are curious as to what those are), tea on the (climbing) wall. Group discussions.

General activities for the Fall Term 2001: Full Moons services and/or social gatherings, more processions and midnight dancing; two sweat lodges per term; watch Druid movies including (but not limited to: Princess Mononoke (it’s about nature), Braveheart, Medicine Man, Excalibur, 13th Warrior, The Lorax, and Sword in the Stone, roast marshmallows in the winter by a fire, climb more trees.

We hope that reading what the Carleton Druids have planned provides inspiration for other Groves. There are times when it is not possible to hold services out-of-doors. At these times, such as when the weather is too inclement, there is nothing like a good “hairpull” over a cup of hot tea. Even if you only have two Druids present you will still get three opinions on any given subject.

Akita Grove, Japan

Pat: We finished our two-week trip to Shirakami World Preservation Park, filled with austerities and rituals for the Lughnasadh holiday, concluding with a rather great feast. Nozomi overdid it a little in the waterfall meditations, we were afraid she might have gone a little hypothermic, but she recovered well after a night’s rest. Even in the summer, waterfalls are not warm. Be careful with asceticism in the wilderness.

Nozomi: In Japan, there is a very ancient custom of seeking purification by standing under waterfalls. When the first God and Goddess of Japan gave birth to the sun, the Goddess died and went to underworld. The God tried to recover her, but she was revolting and he fled and closed the door to the land of the dead; then he showered. During his shower, a hundred gods were born off his body. Asceticism used to be very popular among the upper classes and clergy in medieval Japan. Nowadays, we usually wear a white robe, but for a long time it was no clothes. Hands are held together and magic formulas are said as long as the body can stand it. Great power is gotten with shugyo. The human body is 95% salt water, so Japanese feel love to the ocean, naturally! There is

an Ocean-grandmother and an Earth-mother for me. Please try it, too!



Pat: We plan to have a special Equinox celebration. On Saturday September 22nd, we will start with a dawn service. The entire 12 hours of daylight will be spent outside in quiet activities, naps, and meditation, then at sunset another service, then for the 12 hours of the night we'll be as raucous as we can with much drinking and carousing and feasting. Then another dawn service and we'll go home and sleep through Sunday for at least a mandatory 12-14 hours. I wrote a Shower Shugyo liturgical piece on an inspiration from hanging upside-down off a cliff for 20 minutes; it can be performed by all orders. It'll appear in a section down below the News from the Groves.

Volcano Grove, Tonga

Things have been unpleasant in Tonga. Morale is low in the Peace Corps. My friend with the burst spleen was medicated this morning to Hawaii where they have an actual hospital. The one here in Tonga has unclean water due to the presence of two cats (probably relatives from my Grove) living on the roof, leaving their leavings to wash into the rain tanks. Most of the others Peace Corps members have resigned from service.

I am on Tongatapu (the main island, only one with reliable email) until August 11th. Then if all works out I will fly back to Niuafo'ou Island for the remainder of my stay. Paradise is overrated. Where do Druids go when they die?

Having no community of thinkers around is a strain. No pagans, no naturalists, precious few musicians. The other volunteers are primarily interested in food and sex, with a few movies in between. Not my kind of fun. If all goes as planned I will escape on Beltain 2002. I plan to head back to New York, see the folks, and build a new harp. Then for the life of a wandering bard. I have many people to visit.

Ice Floe Grove, Antarctica

What do you expect? It's cold, freezing, and arctic (or should I say Antarctic?). Anyway, it's dark a lot and depressing, but the stars are wonderful when the weather is clear. I don't need to do shugyo, because life down here IS shugyo, at least the cold part, bathing outside would be a foolish exercise, to say the least. Our ascetic routine would bore you, but I look forward to leaving next spring.

Monument Grove, D.C.

Well, you all know what's happening here. All in the Grove are safe and sound, but Angeline and John are leaving D.C., permanently, so the Grove is down to an irregular three. I'll be moving next month to the South East from the North West to the Capitol Hill area and starting a Druid garden (too

small for a "Grove," I suppose) and opening an international guest house, perhaps.

I've ordained a new member, Alyx Griffin (DC2001:Scharding) to the Third Order on September 1st, using "Taranis Touch" (i.e. a cell phone) to reach her in their forests of Colorado, after sending her pre-blessed materials and consulting with her before hand for several weeks in her preparation. It's the third time I've performed such a long-distance ordination (out of the 17 or so people I've done, so far), and usually I eventually meet them again to add an additional "hands-on" scalp blessing. The results have usually been positive, but nothing beats in-person transmission and all-night campouts in the wilderness for me.

Swamp Grove, FL, ex-RDNA

All are well down here, we are currently drying out the property from the rainy season, and it should be dry in late September. Our county just had a school board vote to keep the Christian coalition from putting up posters in the local schools. Many Pagans, Unitarians, Jews, and representatives from various other groups turned out to speak out against the attempt. Fortunately we all persuaded the school board to do the right thing and they voted to keep the signs out. Freedom of religion is alive and well in southwest Florida.

Druid Heart Spirit Grove, CA

Greetings from Druid Heart Spirit! We have two more dedicants in our Grove now, and have been having a great time! Our campout for Lughnasa was a success. We might, later on get more property, another twenty or so acres for larger campouts and a Druid retreat center.

Druid Heart Spirit is growing well. I think that having the property for doing the campouts and stone circle is a great benefit for the Grove. My partner and I moved five more big stones from the creek down the road and added them to the stone circle. One of them which is ready to be stood in the west must have weighed a thousand pounds. We chained it to the back of my truck and dragged it to our house about one sixteenth of a mile, it left a semi permanent pathway on the dirt road. Then we used a dolly to get it to the Grove location, that took three of us including my twelve year old son Jimmy. We are going to plant it and stand it up using a come-along to a great cedar tree nearby. I'm hoping to get all the stuff together for building a small water fountain in the Grove's area before Fall Equinox. We are also doing a campout for Samhain on Oct. 27th and 28th with workshops, potluck dinner, Bardic circle, and rituals.

Circle Grove, NY.

My family and I are getting a lot out of the Circle here. My baby nieces love climbing on the big stones and my ten-year-old nephew started building a line of small stones through the woods nearby just recently (I'm not entirely sure why.) My parents are devout Christians so I'm happy that they are open-minded enough to enjoy something as odd as a stone circle and to let the rest of the family enjoy it as well.

Walk in peace,
Merri Weber

Ancient Circle Grove, MOCC, NY

We have been very busy lately. We are currently seeking non-profit status and are working on finding grant money to purchase a beautiful parcel of land that is for sale and is in danger of being logged off.

Big River Grove, Minnesota (Defunct)

Ross Wilke is in poor health, but has lots of Celtic fighting spirit. He recommended a site about Ogham, for you rock-scratchers out there: <http://www.islandnet.com/~edonon>

Corn Grove, Iowa (unestablished)

I just read an incredible book called The Jesus Mysteries, which if you have not read you must. It confirms a lot of things we Siblings in the Mother have always known but never had proof of...their thesis is that Jesus Christ never actually existed but was simply one of many Pagan dying and resurrecting god-men who were worshipped freely in ancient times. They also theorize that the Gnostics had Inner Mysteries, based in the Pagan Mysteries that conferred Gnosis upon the Initiate, that were lost when the Literalists took control of the movement and got bolstered and protected by Constantine when the Romans decided they needed an authoritarian, fear-based religion to control the public.

Won't say more so as not to spoil the ending for you. Every good Pagan should read this. REALLY powerful stuff: <http://www.jewitch.com/>

Amon Sul Grove

Amon Sul Grove has attended two Pagan festivals since the last issue: Lammas at Oak Thorn Farm in Eastern Kentucky and Summerland in Yellow Springs, Ohio. Lammas was a fairly small gathering (30-40 as opposed to the nearly 300 at Beltane in May) but the lack of numbers was made up for by our enthusiasm. Summerland was sponsored by our brethren of the Sixth Night Grove, ADF and it, too, was a very nice outing. At both events there was drumming, dancing, partaking of the waters of life, and all of the other revelry of Pagan festivals. Gandalf also attended the first Lexington area Pagan Night Out that was held at Lynagh's Irish Pub. Seven people were in attendance and we hope to make it a monthly event.

Faerie Spell Proto-Grove, CA

Candle Proto-grove has changed its name to Faerie Spell Proto-grove, as that is more the basis of what they are doing there.

Baccharis Grove

I am finding that as I get more involved along this Druidic path elements of synchronicity seem to happen more and more. Either that or I am definitely being watched out for by the deities. This time it appeared to be Enbar, steed of the gods.

For the past five High Days I have been going up to the Grove site to watch the sun rise over the caber set in the position along the horizon of that particular High day by our esteemed posthumous member Emmon. Since the sun is rising later and later in the day I thought it would be easier if I just

spent the night at the cabin allowing me to not have to get up quite so early. And I was able to obtain the day off at short notice.

Driving around the bend to the Grove site on that early evening I noticed the temperature gauge going up in my car. As I parked the car it made a rumbling noise towards the center of the dashboard area. Antifreeze bubbled out along the right side. I figured I could either try to find a telephone and arrange to have the car towed or I could just leave it there until morning and limp it back home then, leaving me to enjoy the rest of the evening and watch the sun rise as planned. As there was no mechanic who was open at that time I opted for the latter. I would wait until after rush hour to return home to prevent my car from overheating in traffic.

After watching the sun rise over the Lughnasadh caber and hiking around the hillside and woods, listening to the waking birds and the barking of the adolescent gray fox who has made his home near the Grove site, watching the red tail hawk and turkey vultures hang in the sky seeming to accompany me in my walk I decided it was time to leave my adopted sylvan home and deal with more mundane matters. Just as I was getting on to the freeway my car started to steam and the rest of the anti-freeze poured out. Had to have the car towed. Turned out to be the heater core. Had I not decided at the last minute to take the day off and drive that morning to the Grove I would have been very late for work. Imagine trying to explain that one to my boss! Despite a certain amount of personal consternation, I felt as if I were being watched out for that day. And to that I say thank you.

News from Old Timers (Isaac Bonewits)

Isaac Bonewits (BK68:Larson), a Druid's Druid, has been plagued for his entire life by a surfeit of brilliant ideas and a scarcity of income. Loved or hated by all he meets, Isaac's dream has been elusive due to an absence of a rich patron or at least a stable, funded position as a pagan priest. Recently, he has had good cause to bemoan the financial status of Pagan priesthood in a recent article, far too long to be printed here. To read it in its entirety go to: <http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/isaacrant.html>.

Mini-Biography: As we all know, Isaac was the first to graduate with a Bachelor of Arts in Magic at the University of California at Berkeley, published his famous Real Magic thesis in the 1970s (recently republished in 1995), helped edit and publish A Reformed Druid's Anthology's 1977 predecessor The Druid Chronicles (Evolved), published Authentic Thaumaturgy for Jackson Games by applying "Real Magic" to role playing games. As a gleefully controversial Arch-Druid of the Berkeley Grove (NRDNA/SDNA) in the late 70s and early 80s, Isaac published "The Druid Chronicler Magazine" and "Pentalpha Journal," before finally schisming off the RDNA to form Ar nDraiocht Fein, the second largest Druid organization in America. The author of countless articles and acknowledged expert on Neo-Paganism, he is sadly now forced by medical troubles into a state of semi-retirement, doing speaking tours and such.

New Grove!

Piñata Grove (at least for now)

Sister Alyx Griffen (DC2001: Scharding) successfully completed her vigil on September 2nd and has entered the 3rd Order. She is starting a Grove in Colorado, as yet but tentatively named. This is her introduction:

To me, religion is like a piñata. On one hand, a faith or belief system that can't withstand some thumps or whacks is nothing but an empty shell; it may look pretty hanging from the ceiling, but in the end it's nothing more than a decoration. But more importantly, it's not the container that matters, but what's inside. Like the piñata, no matter what shape it is, how fancy it's made, or how elaborately it's decorated, religion is ultimately of no use to you unless you smash it open to get to the goodies inside. And whether the stick is need, hardship, or even humor, eventually you're swinging it blindly until, finally, you connect.

Druid News Outside the Reform

Keltria has a third Grove, Avalon Grove, in MO; and Keltria has reelected all of its three officers.

ADF's Study program, closed for along time, is open for business again; and is highly recommended by Mike Scharding, AD, Monument Grove, if you're feeling like testing your mettle and studying.

ADF is also moving its headquarters from Michigan to the Los Angeles area. What goes around comes around. All mail or parcels to ADF should be sent to:

ADF
c/o Raven's Cry Grove
859 N. Hollywood Way, Box 368
Burbank, CA 91505
The general ADF e-mail address remains:
adf-office@adf.org

The Celtic Learning Project

The Celtic Learning Project exists to bring the civilization of the ancient Celts to a broad audience. It seeks to do so through interactive instruction and accurate re-creation of events, communities, and architecture associated with the European Iron Age Celts. In order to achieve these goals the Celtic Learning Project will:

- Educate children and adults through Celtic storytelling.
- Create and distribute educational materials.
- Produce a newsletter containing information on related topics and the progress of the Celtic Learning Project toward long term goals.
- Provide educational programs to community organizations, schools and other interested parties.
- Re-create an Iron Age Celtic settlement staffed with interpretive guides.
- Establish an educational center at the settlement for research, classes, and special events.

For further information contact:
Cyril May, President
128 Nicoll Street
New Haven, CT 06511
(203) 624-2798
cyril.may@yale.edu

Fall Equinox Ritual 2001

D.C. Grove's Patriotic Version by Sine Ceolbhinn,
Qith inspiration from Mike Scharding

No insult is intended; we're just a little wild. We'll report how it works. The Sunday before the Monday service will be spent under the Washington Monument's shadow from dawn to dusk, followed by a party on Sunday night.

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these errors that our due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee here.

Thou art without set form, but we worship thee in these forms.

Thou art beyond name, but we call thee by these names.

Thine presence is ever with you, but we worship thee now.

Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, but we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices.

O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for mediations.

O Washington and Jefferson, overlook this use of public land for private worship.

Procession

Circle the Washington Monument beyond the Jersey Barriers, stopping at the cardinal points, at which each do a spin. Afterwards form a circle, with Archdruid, Preceptor, and Server inside. All members scuff a sigil below them with their feet.

Incantation

I am a Washington in revolution.

I am a Franklin in wit.

I am a Jefferson in wisdom.

I am a Monroe towards neighbors.

I am a Lincoln in debate.

I am a Bull Moose in the wilderness.

I am a Taft at dinner.

I am a Wilson in study.

I am a Roosevelt in hard times.

I am an Eisenhower in battle.

I am a Kennedy in charisma.

I am a Carter on the farm.

I am a Clinton in virility.

I am a Bush in having smart friends.

I am a Gore to the environment.

Who is it who leads the people?

Who comforts us in our crises?

Who takes the credit for success and failure?

If not I?

Chorus

Dalon's Daily Ditty*

(With appropriate side step rock-shuffle and clapping.)

The Sacrifice

Priest: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles, our clap have echoed off the trees and our dancing feet have pounded the earth. Hear now, we pray Thee, O our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. (All drop their sacrifice on the altar.) Accept it we pray Thee, and cleanse our minds and hearts, granting us Thy peace an life.

Preceptor: Hast Thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the East (i.e. Congress and the Supreme Court) to give answer. (Congregation notes omens), of the West (Lincoln and Teddy Roosevelt Memorial), of the North (White House), and of the South (Jefferson and FDR Memorials). Fellow Druids, who says the omens are favorable? (Hands raise, majority rules.)

The Reply

(If favorable)

Preceptor: All is well.

Priest: Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted. Go to Catechism.

The Reply

(If unfavorable)

Preceptor: All is not well.

Priest: All is not for naught. Approval is not to be expected. We continue to celebrate this joyous occasion, but without the fire in the water. It is now appropriate to pause and reflect on this season. (Skip to meditation.)

The Catechism of the Waters of Life

Priest (in evocatory enthusiasm): Of what does the Earth-mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?!

Preceptor (in plain-song, followed by crowd): The Waters-of-Life!

Priest: From Whence do these waters flow?!

Preceptor and All: From the Bosom of the Earth-Mother, the Ever-changing All-mother.

Priest: And HOW! Do we honor this gift that causes life in us?!

Preceptor and All: By partaking of the Waters of Life!

Priest: Has the Earth-Mother given FORTH of Her bounty?!

Preceptor and All: O She ha--as!

Priest: Then give me the waters!

(Preceptor with the whiskey and Server with the water, pour equal portions simultaneously into the chalice of the Priest.)

The Consecration

O Dalon Ap Landu, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold-powers and by the three ways of days and one of night. O Presidents, please also bless these waters by your 43 ways. Cleanse our minds and hearts and join us together as we take and drink of your secret essences.

The Communion and Optional Ordinations

Libation

To thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to Thee. O Presidents, including those who disapproved of alcohol, please accept this blessing of drink.

The Meditation

Here is the historical anecdote:

“When George was about six years old, he was made the wealthy owner of a hatchet of which, like most little boys, he was immoderately fond; and was constantly going about chopping every thing which came in his way. One day, in the garden, where he often amused himself by hacking his mother's pea-sticks, he unluckily tried the edge of his hatchet on the body of a beautiful young English cherry tree, which he de-barked so terribly, that I don't believe the tree ever got the better of it. The next morning, the old gentleman, finding out what had befallen his tree, which, by the by, was a great favorite, came into the house; and with much warmth asked for the mischievous author, declaring at the same time, that he would not have taken five guineas for his tree. Nobody would tell him anything about it. Presently George and his hatchet made their appearance. ‘George,’ said his father, ‘do you know who killed that beautiful little cherry tree yonder in the garden?’”

“This was a tough question; and George staggered under it for a moment; but quickly recovered himself; and looking at his father, with the sweet face of youth brightened with the inexpressible charm of all-conquering truth, he bravely cried out, ‘I can't tell a lie, Pa; you know I can't tell a lie. I did cut it with my hatchet.’--“Run to my arms, you dearest boy, cried his father in transports, run to my arms; glad am I, George, that you killed my tree, for you have paid me for it a thousand fold. Such an act of heroism in my son is worth more than a thousand trees, though blossomed with silver and their fruits of purest gold.”

Many years ago, at the signing of the Constitution, Benjamin Franklin noticed the engraved sun on the Chairman's chair. By looking at it, one could not be sure whether it was a rising or setting sun, but he believed it was a rising sun, by the patriotism and courage of those around us. We are in another time of balance both in the cycle of the sun and in the hearts of American. We Druids seek young Washington's courage to harmonize with these cycles; perhaps accentuating the good and reducing the baneful. I wish you luck this autumn.

The Benediction

Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that She has answered our prayers, and that we go forth with Her blessing and that of our presidents.

Parting Chorus

I'm a Yankee doodle Druid,
Here in Washington D.C.
A real strange Druid with a loud bagpipe
Playing tricks and full of whiskey.
I love my dear sweet earth-mother,
She's my Yankee doodle joy.

Yankee doodle went to Wiltshire
Just to view that Stonehenge!
I am a Yankee doodle boy.

I laugh at all those silly Druids,
Tied up in red-tape, they don't need.
Give me a one page constitution, PLEASE!
So I don't go blind, trying to read.
I love our simple, clever humor,
I'll follow it till the day I die.

Yankee doodle went to Wiltshire
Just to view that Stonehenge!
I am a Yankee doodle guy.

*Dalon's Daily Ditty

I've been intrigued by Gospel music lately, despite never hearing any. This is my new take on liturgical gospel. As you know, I'm obsessive about Carleton, and I know every bend of the trail and every forested corner of its 800 acres. Like for the Navajo and Tibetans, it is a deeply sacred landscape, filled with memories, legends, gods, and lessons. I hope you enjoy Dalon's Daily Ditty; it works best with a side-shuffle and rocking back and forth, I believe. Choral work could improve it. A map of Carleton is available at: <http://www.acad.carleton.edu/campus/arb/> Feel free to adjust the lyrics or make your own.

I am nothing special just a simple Druid,
Seeking my awareness though the Earth Mother,
And life's lessons.

But, I'm filled with doubts, and deep confusion
What can I do to release these chains?
Make a journey!

CHORUS:

Take me on up,, Lord (i.e. Dalon), take me on down.
Take me on over to the ho-oly gro-oves
Of Carleton!

The road is hard, black, long and winding
With Bright-eyed Dragons spitting fire and smoke.
Lord guide me.

I'm goin' down to the Cannon River,
Gonna wash away all my ignorance
And dogma's blight.

Through lonesome prairie and swamps of passion
In the uncertain floodplain I learn a lesson
The Lower Arb

Matriculate past the dean of admission,
To enter the ranks of those holy students
And faculty.

It's the Land of Youth on an ancient mission
Lifting the torch of inquiry both wide and far
Through long study.

The price of learning is a high tuition
One that must be paid back for many years;
To my pupils.

Drink at the twin lakes of knowledge and wisdom
Filled by the creek of experience
That's Lyman Lakes.

Proceed on to the tower of inspiration
Whose fair white walls call out to me
That's Goodhue Hall.

On seldom trod paths of contemplation
with barbed sarcasm and rocks of Irony
The Upper Arb

I'll climb up that steep, green, holy mountain
Where so many before have found Awareness
Hill of Three Oaks

There I'll pray and vigil in jubilation
Between my green mother Earth and starry Pa
And go on home.

The world will've changed with those revelations
The simple will be hard and the hard simple.
Can I teach this?

But questions will arise despite my education
So, what can I do to solve them all?
Make a new trip!



Sirona's Shower Shugyo Sacrament

By Patrick Haneke and Nozomi Kibou

WARNING: I recommend that you practice in your bath's shower (which works fine, just less scenic and powerful) for a few weeks before trying the real thing to gauge your body's strength and reaction to cold. Each time, go a step colder. Be careful of hazards at natural waterfalls. Large ones can really club you with their force, logs and junk may flow over the edge and strike you, some falls have large, DEEP pools directly beneath them, strong undercurrents, have slippery DANGEROUS rocks nearby and are often located far from medical care. You should probably start off with a group or shuggy-buddy as I call them. An appropriate choice is Sirona, a Celtic God of rivers, quite popular throughout Europe it seems and Patron of the 7th order, but if you know the particular God of that river or falls, it would be best to use that one of course.

Notable Activities & Events

Process:

1. Eat a simple diet for a week before the shugyo (low spices, little meat, no salt, no alcohol, no sex).
2. Either in light-weight, white cotton suit or sky-clad, go to a waterfall. Starting downstream on the approach is respectful, if starting up-stream toss in coins with a prayer, the river will carry your message to the falls of your approach. It can be done solo, or as a group (see above), chanting out loud in unison.
3. Start by purifying yourself and 5-10 minutes of mediation on your goal.
4. Bow, clap twice, now, ask to enter the waterfall.
5. If omens are good, step into the waterfall. Drench yourself thoroughly.
6. Turn your back to the waterfall and have the main force of the water hit you between seventh vertebra of the neck and the shoulders. If you douse your head, it's hard to open your mouth to chant and it strains your neck.
7. Clasp hands together, forming a mudra if you like.
8. Chant your invocation. (like the one below)

Sirona's Supplication

I can't release the one used by Nozomi (trade-secret of her father's, but here is one I made). One of the problems you'll realize is that breathing is difficult when cold, so it often comes out in staccato syllables. Keep a rhythm. The verses are A chorus B chorus C chorus B chorus A in a "Stepladder format" (i.e. ABCBABCBA is possible). Perhaps you'll come up with your own words and send me a copy?

Waters over.
Waters under.
Waters around.
Waters through me.

O si-ro-na!
o SI-ro-na!
o si RO na!
o si ro NA!

Waters cleanse me.
Waters love me.
Waters guide me.
Waters bless me.

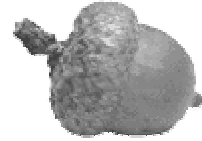
O si-ro-na!
o SI-ro-na!
o si RO na!
o si ro NA!

Change in motion.
Adaptation.
Down to ocean.
My salvation.

AND REVERSE IT BACK TO THE BEGINNING

"Nuts to Carleton" Project

As if there aren't too many already there, I (Mike) thought it would be an interesting idea to donate acorns from all the groves to Carleton to be surreptitiously planted in the Arboretum's large grassy field, this Autumn near the Rocks of Irony. I'm borrowing this idea from Isaac's old RDNA Chronicler in the 70s. Basic plan?



Well, just mail 2 or 3 clean blessed acorns to Carleton. Someone plants them. Then we wait a few years. Visit Carleton, and try to divine which one is your tree. :) Your cost is about 68 cents and an envelope.

Carleton Grove
Reformed Druids of North America
C/O Ehren Vaughn or Merri Weber,
Carleton College,
Northfield, Minnesota, 55057 USA.

vaughne@carleton.edu or weberm@carleton.edu

For more on tree planting:

<http://www.druidry.org/obod/intro/treeplanting.html>
<http://www.druidry.org/obod/touchstone/plantasacredgrove.html>

Celebrate the Celtic Wheel of Life with Mara Freeman

The Feast of Samhain, Saturday, November 3,
10am–5.30pm at "Expressions of Amity,"
Ben Lomond, North of Santa Cruz, CA

Samhain is the original Halloween, a time-between-times when the veil between the worlds thins to reveal the mysteries of the Otherworld. This workshop is an invitation to deepen into sacred time and space, to reflect and to seek wisdom for the year to come. Through storytelling, ritual and inner journeying, we will explore the realm of the Ancestors and the Gods and Goddesses of the Underworld. Also a celebration of the Celtic New Year, this is an extraordinary opportunity in our contemporary world to consciously release old negative patterns in preparation for a new cycle of creation in our lives. At the close of the day, we will return to the world with gifts for the soul and the power to call upon these ancient teachings to fire the glow of spirit and beauty in the winter ahead.

Cost: \$89.00 per person (some sliding-scale places available). Major credit cards are accepted. For further

information and to register, call 1-800-694 1957, or email: events@celticspirit.org. Space is limited—Please pre-register!

Green Egg on Hiatus!

The Ides of August, 2001

Recently, the Church of All Worlds Board of Directors suspended publication of Green Egg, its renowned international magazine, and dismissed its current Publisher and Editor because of chronic financial problems and an enormous debt. In spite of the heroic efforts of the Green Egg staff and many friends and supporters, frequent fund-raising efforts, and huge patience on the part of the CAW Board of Directors, these problems continued to worsen. Increasing difficulty paying creditors is among the serious problems the magazine's staff and the CAW BoD had to face. Oberon, as the magazine's founder, is being frequently asked about the crisis. Unfortunately, he has had little access to information about the current situation, nor any ability to influence it.

Although it is not common knowledge, Oberon's official involvement with Green Egg ended five years ago; the current difficulties arose long after he was removed as Publisher. Because all concerned felt that airing the details of his removal as Publisher would adversely affect the magazine, Oberon was asked not to discuss the matter publicly. Since then Oberon continued to support the magazine by allowing his name to remain on the masthead as "Publisher Emeritus," and by writing his columns and articles.

People all over the world associate Oberon Zell with Green Egg, one of the most highly-praised and universally-respected Pagan publications of all time. Dozens of books credit Green Egg as a primary catalyst in the early coalescence of the Neo-Pagan community, and name Oberon as its creator and primary influence. After founding Green Egg in 1968, Oberon published 116 issues over 28 years. For much of that time he volunteered his time and energy, building it from a single dittoed sheet to an award-winning 70+ page newsstand magazine with no outside funding. Green Egg eventually supported a part-time staff and a well-equipped office.

Oberon's guiding influence over Green Egg ended abruptly in September of 1996 when he was involuntarily removed from all decision-making power by the Church of All Worlds Board of Directors, most of whom were at that time also members of the Green Egg staff (the Minutes of that BoD meeting have never been released). Oberon's position of Publisher was assumed by the newly-elected President of the Board, and Oberon was handed the "honorary" title of "Publisher Emeritus," with no authority over any aspect of the magazine. The CAW President/GE Publisher and most of that staff later resigned from the magazine in favor of the current Publisher, recently dismissed. The Editor remained throughout the transitional period until she too was recently dismissed.

Our hope would be that out of the current ashes of the Green Egg, a new Green Egg may be born that rests on a kinder and more responsible foundation. We hope that such a new Green Egg will honor its Founder. If it cannot do so, perhaps it should find another name; for Oberon's name and Green Egg's are forever linked in the minds of Pagans throughout the world. Oberon is satisfied with much of the quality and content of the magazine since he was ousted from the role of Publisher. Yet it is acutely painful to him that the magazine he founded has now become a source of financial embarrassment and conflict in the Pagan community. He remains deeply wounded and grieved by the manner of his removal, and estranged from the people who effected it.

We sincerely hope that the Church that took over the magazine from its Founder will be financially responsible to its vendors, investors and subscribers. And finally, we hope that people can pull together in this time of painful reappraisal and learn from all the mistakes that have been made.

Signed,
Morning Glory Zell-Ravenheart
Liza Gabriel Ravenheart
Wynter Rose Stiles-Ravenheart
Wolf Stiles Ravenheart

Calendar

Fall Equinox will occur on September 22 at 4:05 p.m., PDT. Equinox services will be held Saturday at Solar Noon. Please call for carpool arrangements (510) 654-6896. Equinox social observance will be held on September 23 at the AD's house. Regular Druid services will be held at Solar Noon on September 30, October 14, and 28. Please call the above number to confirm.

The Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are \$4.00 and online subscriptions are free, but might not include everything that is in the post mail edition. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's subscription free. Write The Missal-Any, c/o Weinberger, 309 63rd St, Apt. C, Oakland, CA 94618.

A Druid Missal-Any Samhain Y.R. XXXIX Vol. 17 Number 7 Nov. 1st, 2001 c.e.



Samhain Essay: A Thin Time

By Stacey Weinberger

Samhain, Samhuinn in Scots Gaelic, Sauin in Manx, from *sam fuinn* "Summer's end," marks the Celtic New Year, the day when the veil between the Worlds is the thinnest. Fires were lit on sacred hills this night. It was customary to extinguish the household fires, symbolizing the end of Summer, and then relight them from the ceremonial fire marking the beginning of the new season, Winter, the Season of Sleep. For the first time Baccharis Grove will be enacting this tradition during the service when the Third Order Druids exchange their ceremonial red ribbon for white. After the New Year's revelry and merrymaking rejoicing in the bountiful harvest of the previous year, we prepare ourselves for this long period of darkness as our thoughts turn to contemplation, reflection, and renewal.

This Samhain issue marks the one year anniversary of this publication of A Druid Missal-Any. It is beyond your editor's wildest dreams that the Missal-Any would increase from a mere two pages that very first issue to this longest issue of eighteen. Groves reporting seasonal news grew from two to twelve. The number of subscribers has grown both in hard copy, email, and internet subscriptions. We have had to increase the yearly subscriptions to \$6.00 with issue due to the increase in length and postage. The Missal-Any has indeed become a vehicle for other RDNA Groves to keep in touch with one another and the Reform. I wish to thank Larry and Susan, the other officers in the Grove, for their support and encouragement in this endeavor, Mike Scharding for his patience with my idiosyncrasies (a polite term for pickiness and stubbornness) and for making the Missal-Any available on the internet, and Emmon, as always, without whom none of this would be possible.



News of the Groves

Carleton Grove: News from Minnesota

Festivities for the Equinox included food, music, merriment, and story-telling, and maybe even a fire. In October, there was a nature walk to enjoy the fall colors and observe plants and animals. On the full moon was a torch-lit procession to the Arb.

Monument Grove: News from DC

Things are quieting down, at the time of this writing (Oct 3rd) and people are going about their lives again. Mike moved Oct 20th to the S.E. corner of Washington, closer to the Capitol Building (personal safety has never been his forte.) He intends to give the house a goodly amount of blessings, before moving in.

Akita Grove: News from Northern Japan

My sister Megumi, has moved to Tokyo, dropping our Grove to five family members. Her new husband doesn't like religion. We are assisting my father to run the local Matsuri festival at his Shrine (jinja), and he was curious how the American pagans have their festivals, which is when we first down sat and talked. He was a bit disappointed with some of the customs, Pat explained, but liked Beltane and Samhain; and he already knows about Christmas, "It has good points, but we know more. They should study here."

Father has a good idea. RDNA members will learn much if they come. Brothers Mike, Pat, and Arik came and are happy with the effects the JET program. 2,000 Americans come each year, teach English, receive much money, and do town festivals for one year. It is famous and good. Applications need to be in on December, so don't wait. On HTML, type http://www.mofa.go.jp/j_info/visit/jet/index.html or ask Brother Mike (mikerdna@hotmail.com) who works at the Japan Embassy in D.C. (this is the JET home office, too.) You must be less than 35 and have a B.A. Other ways are difficult, too.

So come to Japan!

Halloween is famous in Japan, and some towns have celebrations for it. Japan has own in August (obon festival) for dead people. We will make pumpkins and have a fire for all night, yea!

Amon Sul Grove: (aka Gandalf Grove)

We've been semi-busy planning our Samhain Spooky Gorsedd and Festival of Party Food. The costume theme this year is "Redneck Tolkien," and we've been working on digging up Appalachian ghost stories for telling. Other than that, Feck's wedding in the land of sand, gambling, and Elvis is our only big news.

During August we attended two festivals: Summerland, near Dayton, Ohio and Lammas, at Oakthorn Farm in Menifee County, Kentucky. Both events involved much merrymaking and many opportunities to get to know other Pagans. Oakthorn Farm is owned by a central Kentucky Pagan and it is the site of several festivals each year. Lammas was a fairly small gathering of 20-30 persons and it had a family reunion atmosphere to it. The Sixth Night Grove, ADF, sponsors Summerland and this was their third annual gathering. Those who enjoy elaborate rituals would have found the Saturday rite particularly interesting (Amergin, Senior Druid to the Grove, is an old and dear friend and we have an ongoing discussion

about his “High Church” approach to ritual and my own preference for spontaneity.) Some of the subscribers to the kypaganforum (a Yahoo E-group) had been discussing starting a Pagan Night Out in the Lexington area and we had our first monthly get together in August. We meet at an Irish pub and practice the ancient art of conversation over a pint or two. The Grove’s web site at: <http://geocities.com/gandalf4.geo>, is working some of the time. Contact the grove by sending an email to Gandalf952@cs.com.

Grove of One: News from Ohio

The Dilemma of a Gemini Druid

Greetings, Brothers and Sisters, in the Mother and Be’al!

I have a problem. Now, granted many of you may not take astrology seriously, but based on my own observances, I’d have to say there might be something to it. You see I have the Moon, Sun and Jupiter (I think, it’s one of the big planets) in Gemini. Apparently Gemini in general have problems making decisions, but according to my friend Susan, I might as well go and hide from the world; I should join a monastery or something. I can’t make up my mind about anything! I’ve always fighting with myself over which religion I want to be a part of. I’ve been a Christian (wide variety), Buddhist, Taoist, Wiccan, Satanist and Asatruer. Hell, I even hung out with the Hare Krishnas for a day! It spills out into my mundane life as well windows or Linux? Linux or BSD? BSD or Windows?! AHHHHH!

I guess this is why I was overjoyed to have stumbled (drunkenly?) over Brother Mike’s website. Finally I was allowed to think whatever the hell I wanted to, even if it would change the next hour. Yea, I even found others just as screwed up as I. However I don’t get to talk much to other Druids (besides Mike every other month or so), being fairly lazy about communicating with people. So, I suppose this is an open letter to see if other Druids share this Dilemma. Maybe, from what I’ve read in the ARDA, we have more in common than just an appreciation of Nature; perhaps we all share the Dilemma of a Screwed up...err, umm I mean Gemini Druid.

PEACE!
Matt Ikonen

P.s. I’m working on called The ELDAR Tree (Electronic Library of Druidical Awareness and Research). It’s a CD-ROM of a whole bunch of sacred writings from all over the world, with a nifty interface. If you’d like a copy, probably around Yule, let me know. I don’t know if I’ll distribute it beyond friends, since the whole legality thing gets rather tricky as far as wide spread distribution, but if you want I suppose I could burn up about 25 copies and offer them through A Druid Missal-Any. After that it’d have to be a grove sharing thing.

Missionary Order of the Celtic Cross, MOCC: Muskogee, Mother Grove

Preparations for Samhain-Yule season are currently under progress, which should disturb EVERYONE. The Archdruid has found recipes for Bread of the Dead for Dia de los Muretos and will be making copious amounts. An odd combination has found it’s way into the Muskogee Grove that will no doubt dumbfound the entire Druid community, but we gotta go with what works. Belly dancing and St. Jude. Which

leaves us with the question of can a Druid group have a Patron Saint? Belly dancing you ask? Who are we to argue??? Anyhows, this fall and winter season should be quite lively here.

Myrddin A Maeglin, Archdruid of the Grove, continues adding our prayers to the intertribal council fire lit in Summit, OK on Sept. 11 for the victims of the attacks. Let all of us pray for wisdom. This declare above all: Healing and Light and Peace.

MOCC: Seattle Grove

Daniel Hansen (DC01:Scharding) has also entered the Third Order of DAL after a period of six years of study, and is considering the establishment of an RDNA grove.

MOCC: Ancient Circle Grove

Our Samhain gathering will be a memorable affair. We will commence with a procession and ritual. Two members will receive their rites of apprenticeship at this time. Feasting, games, dancing and drumming around the bonfire will bring the evening to a close. Each Grove member will depart from the gathering toting home a souvenir bottle of “Middle Ages Brewery” limited edition “Druid Fluid” barley wine.

November 3rd marks our first convocation. At this time new officers will be elected and the year in retrospect will be presented by the Archdruid, Purse warden and Scribe. We will discuss our plans, hopes and dreams for the upcoming year.

We currently have four new people who are interested in the Grove.

Ongoing projects include maintaining the upkeep at an old cemetery (in which we have utilized the free labour of high school kids in need of a community service project as a course requirement), and producing “Ancient Circles Gathering,” a newsletter distributed free to the public to foster a greater sense of community spirit among those who practice an earth-based spirituality. Our food pantry is small but growing and our bank account reflects the same modesty.

We will be working with the DSS to “adopt” a needy family at Yule and share our own abundant blessings with those who have less, to make the holiday a joyous affair for everyone.

A more formal schedule of meetings will be instituted in the coming year and classes on a variety of subjects will also be implemented. This is at the request of Grove members.

Filing for our non-profit status is an ever ongoing drama. (Editor’s note: be careful of this becoming a Grove drama as well as a bureaucratic one. We speak from experience!)

As always, the public is welcome at our rituals.

Swamp Grove: News from Florida

As predicted in the I-Ching, Tarot, and entrails of gummy worms; The Swamp Grove has risen from the swamp. Actually, we found some new members who asked about our Druidic past and the old members became nostalgic for the old ways. Since you informed me that most of the founding Druids were pretty much Taoists anyway, we figured that it was silly to stop being reformed Druids, even though it is pretty silly BEING a reformed Druid. We still have many ties to the Pagan community and participated in the local move to stop the Christian coalition from placing religious posters in public schools around the county. Our new website is: <http://swampgrove.spiritualitea.net>

We are preparing for a Walk With the Ancestors on the 27th with some of the other local Pagans. The Cypress Moon Circle have a wonderful area up in Bonita Springs, about 40 minutes or so north of us, and since our Grove has still not dried out from the heavy rains of late September, we are happy to have a dry place and some good company on Samhain. We have also been planning our next Grove gathering, possibly the Festival of Silly Hats, sometime soon.

Druid Heart Spirit Grove: California

Druid Heart Spirit is getting ready for our Samhain campout. We have had some difficulty in getting everyone's schedules squared away and in order, but I think we've got a plan now. Our Samhain campout has been rescheduled for the weekend following the actual Samhain date. Even though we did not hear back from to many, we are still going to do it, and jump the Samhain fires all night, and play music.

The Yahoo groups e-mail list has proved to be a sufficient means for attracting new membership inquiries, and is bringing new folks to the Grove. The Celtic Sweat lodge is taking longer than I wish. Digging three feet down into clay soil is hard work, so we decided to wait till we have a rototiller to help us along.

Our new member Celeste and I had a wonderful time going through our First Order ordinations at Baccharis Grove. Such great company were they to be around.

Baccharis Grove: California

It has been a long dry summer up at the Orinda Grove site and some of the Grove's sacred trees suffered. Water was continued to ensue with the tenant of the main house who didn't understand the importance of keeping the drip lines running in the hotter, drier months. Deciding to take things into our own hands we made a request to Taranis for a little rain for the trees at the Fall Equinox service. Two days later there was the biggest thunderstorm and lightening show the Bay Area had seen in 20 years. Never underestimate a request to the deities. And be careful what you wish for!

This past year the Grove Elderberry did not revive itself from its winter dormancy. Our Preceptor made the trek up to the North Coast Native Plant Nursery in Petaluma, where we had gotten our native Foothill Pine earlier in the year, to purchase a native Blue Elderberry in time to plant and dedicate for Samhain. There is a new manager at the nursery. When I noticed bags of seeds and asked if she could start actually trees from them, she replied half jokingly with the help of some spells. It was after that I saw a copy of Drawing Down the Moon on the office bookshelf. I took it down to show her where the RDNA is mentioned. She was quite pleased to be supplying trees for a sacred Grove. For transplanting the Elder we came across Foxfarm Organic Planting Mix with earthworm casings and bat guano.

Our Preceptor is taking beginning Scottish Gaelic classes found through The Gaelic Society of America, ACGA. Yes, such things are still available! You can find local classes by looking at their listing of classes on <http://www.acgamerica.org/language/classes.html> or on the Scottish Gaelic Learners Association of the Bay Area page: <http://members.tripod.com/~scotgaelic/index.html>

Druid News from Outside the Reform

Isaac Bonewits (BK68:Larson), former Arch Druid of ADF, has another good essay for us about the perils of

fundamentalism and the ways to cure it. The full article is at: <http://www.neopagan.net/Call-to-Arms.html> or

<http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/isaacrant2.html>

Skip Ellison, ADF's Archdruid, will be in Madison on November 1st. An informal gathering of Wisconsin and nearby ADF members is planned for that evening.

Liturgical Rigmarole Debate

This is a discussion of the various Groves that arose from your editor possibly opening up the proverbial can of worms by desiring to resurrect the Council of Dalon Ap Landu (being a member is one of the perks of being a Third Order Druid.) Not realizing that what she had known it as by time she joined the Reform in the 80s and what it had been intended as during the early years at Carleton were indeed two entirely two different entities.

From the Baccharis Grove Arch Druid:

"Originally, CoDAL was INTENDED to be a governing body that would make decisions for the Reform as a whole. Whether it ever actually WAS such I don't know, but if so it didn't last for long--in fact, the Druids being who and what we are, the Reform as a whole is ungovernable, so any such attempt is doomed from the start. At any rate, I'm sure that this organization (or something analogous to it) must be what Mike understands you to mean when you speak of "the Council of Dalon Ap Landu."

On the other hand, by the time you and I came on the scene CoDAL had ceased to exist as a governing body (if in fact it ever was such), but we all continued to use the term "Council of Dalon Ap Landu" to refer to what amounts to a mailing list: in effect, all the Third Orders whose addresses we knew. Whenever any of us had some announcement, suggestion, complaint etc. that we thought ought to concern the Reform as a whole (or just those Third Orders whose addresses we knew), we'd send it out to everybody on the list, and claim that we were thereby notifying the Council of Dalon Ap Landu. Here, "Council of Dalon Ap Landu" was arguably a misnomer, but we retained the term for historical reasons i.e. the mailing list was in fact more-or-less just the people who would have been on the real governing body, had there been one. Obviously when you speak of "the Council of Dalon Ap Landu," it's this second sense that you mean.

A discussion ensued amongst the various Groves over hierarchy and the validity of the Orders.

Amon Sul Grove response:

Greetings all,

One of the reasons that I "jumped the broom" and took up with the RDNA was that I was convinced that it truly believed in diversity. To me, this begins with embracing a full spectrum of opinions. The subject line of the email that I responded to was Liturgical Rigmarole. It was not my intent to in any way question the right of anyone to embrace hierarchical structures. I was just expressing a personal opinion that such structures are "silliness." As far as I am concerned, recognition of faithful service comes from the respect of one's peers, not from being elevated to the next level. I have known too many people who have risen to the highest degrees of whatever organization they were in and were still total losers. As far as I am concerned, respect is earned and not conveyed by titles. I return to my assertion that all Druids are equal and I continue to have concerns that "Orders" are elitist.

Faerie Spell Grove Response:

Hee hee! (let the old man speak for a moment...)

This is what keeps the minds fresh and alert--dissenting voices are allowed to be heard. Every note on this so far has had its merit. I agree that practice and study do assist in a better understanding of the world around us, but it is far better to be a loose band of tree huggers than to focus so tightly on regimen that we become like the Catholic Church. Personally after 25 years of serious practice and study, I have come to laugh at myself--for nature has taught me more in her simplistic complexity than any book or ritual ever has.

I am humbled by the layers of knowledge at our disposal if we just learn to observe nature do her thing (as we are even a part of that while we observe.) And on a great cosmic scale as with the cellular level--we are all equals. Ribbons and badges of honor are wonderful fineries, but nature would only laugh at our self-glorification anyway. Why do you think all the druids wore white robes? Should we start wearing colored robes and denote who gets to carry a walking stick?

Okay enough of my ranting. Of course I love you all and I know you are all correct!

Baccharis Grove Response:

It is unfortunate that you have had bad experiences with people being raised up the hierarchical ladder without merit. I too have experienced that in other groups non-pagan related, and it seems based on such things as popularity, one is "good" that day, or the proverbial kissing up. There are some Druid groups where if you read certain books, take certain classes you come out a Druid. To mind my being a Druid is much much more than that.

In the RDNA I haven't experienced the things both you and I have in other situations. In that the RDNA is like a breath of fresh air blowing up a mountainside. The Carleton Druids set down the tradition of the three orders (see A Druid Anthology). It wasn't something that was made up along the way to satisfy those who were power hungry. In my 17 years as an RDNA Druid those who were merely in it for the title didn't last long and eventually faded away.

In my experience those who achieved the higher orders did so out of recognition of faithful service and the respect of one's peers. When one is the ordaining ArchDruid of a Grove, s/he in my opinion should have the wisdom to weed out those who have questionable motives for climbing that hierarchical ladder.

But as is one of my favorite sayings of the RDNA, it is one way, yea, one way among many. If the orders don't work for you, that is ok too.

Faerie Spell Grove Response:

Okay! Here's some fun food for thought:

...having read both of your wonderful emails I am proud to be a druid (whatever the hell that is) and be associated with the RDNA. I have never been a joiner, but throwing in my lot with the RDNA just sounded like too much fun. I am deadly serious about my practice and as far as study, research and all the rest of that junk that goes along with one who gets to carry the "oak stave" (ooh! I just impressed myself!) to thump the youbnins with. But I tend to watch what I allow myself to be called, as my ego is bigger than any title one might pass on.

Thus I go by no title at all (well maybe "Grand Poobah"--from the Flintones, "faerie prince" or maybe something like "that hippie bum who should cut his hair and get a 'real' job" depending on the ritual and whether I am playing with my pet squirrels or being humbled by the majesty of a nearby family of hawks and their ability to fly outside of a metal can with wings.)

In your own worlds, your words carry a sanctity reserved for the highest of truths. What we seem to be discussing here is not so much the matter of who gets to wear what, but more an extremely personal view of what spirituality means. Again, I can find points that I like in both of your arguments, but I am leaning (personally) towards Gandalf's line of thinking (being a philosopher at heart--regimen is an extremely powerful tool that too easily becomes an inescapable trap.) So in short, I agree with you both and believe that what you state reflects truths far more powerful in your magics than simple Freudian leanings. This is how you bond with the world. And I think it is really cool that you two are so open as to share these thoughts!

So here's the punch line. In light of all of this I hope not to bore you with more of my cryptic ramblings, but rather to entice a smile to pass across your face with my next nutty idea.

Having seen covens again and again I have seen the inherent problems and wisdom contained in hierarchical structures. I have long pounded my own pulpit to all who would listen that "someday" I would start my own order and everyone would start out as an HP. Welcome to the coven/grove/elite group of metaphysicians (or whatever...) Now go out and buy yourself the biggest sword you can find and tell all your friends that you are a High Priest/ess. Use it to get laid--and abuse your power in any way you think fit. As one progressed in their learnings, they would be stripped of their ribbons and badges one by one until they attained the vaunted title of "peon" and had the distinct honor of being a "nobody."

Very Zen in a way, but not for the same purpose. Knowledge creates power, which creates responsibility. Responsibility is a heavy stone to bear and takes some strong shoulders to carry it with you throughout the day. I have been creating leaders for quite some time now and made far too many mistakes along the way--thus I have learned the power of titles well and I play with them occasionally to remove any emotional attachment I may have to them. The moral of this story is not that titles are worthless, but that when one truly becomes a master, one needs no title at all. It shows in every thing you do. It's the rest of us who need reminders of how far we have progressed. If that comes in the form of a title, woo hoo! But it is really meant for us, is an extremely personal thing, and means little to anyone else, because the wiser you are, the more you can learn from people who know less than you. If that reminder comes in the form of a badge (trophy) or a badger (totem/guide), take it to heart, but don't allow it to be an outwardly shining light--because it tends to blind some and just annoy others.

...Okay I will be climbing down off of my high horse as soon as I can find a ladder tall enough after that tirade. It is 3 a.m. and I am just annoying myself now. I am off to bed. Thanks for sharing your thoughts and as for mine--well I am glad I have the excuse that it is 3 a.m.--lest it might have been better worded.

Dravidia Grove Response:

I myself follow the same line of thinking. The group that I have study on their own for the most part. We get together to share the knowledge we accumulate, and to pass it on. We are separate, but one. We each have our own views, our own

reasons for being Druids, and our own gifts that we bring to the RDNA. We are Druids. Individuals with common goals and a love for nature that surpasses all other things. We are the spirit of the woods, and the voice of nature. We will always be Druids regardless of others' views. Even if tomorrow we no longer share the views of the RDNA, we will still be Druids. Forever we serve.

The reality of the order is always been clear to me; we are individuals serving the higher purpose of the Earth. Though badges are nice finery, they only show your dedication. Your respect comes from actions, and not from badges. I myself have been a Druid for 20 years by myself, and have done so of my own choice. I have recently become part of the RDNA, now hold a Grove of my own, and have no badges whatsoever. I have areas in all three, but does that mean I am not a Druid because I have no badges? No it doesn't. It simply means that being a Druid is more than simple finery and title. It is a way of life that earns respect by action. A Druid is (in essence) a physical part of nature's actions. We are a part of the whole plan that makes up life, and not just the part that makes up mankind. If any Druid out there holds the material things and badges more sacred, then to me s/he does not know what a Druid's purpose is yet. I hope that my ranting hasn't made anyone angry, and I apologize if it has. I am a Druid. We tend to do that.

Baccharis Grove Response

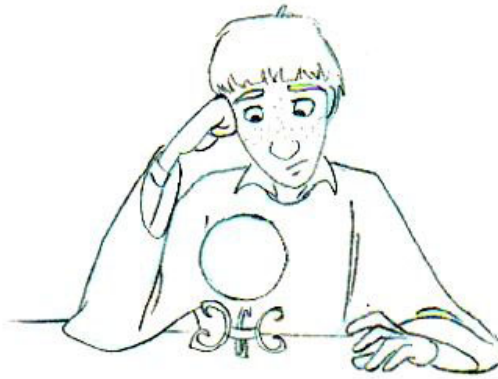
I totally agree with you! True, some people join a group for achieving that badge only. I have seen a lot of people, once they achieve it, feel like they no longer need to put any more work into what they are doing. It is a certain amount of frustration for me, because I see that level of achievement as carrying a certain amount of responsibility with it.

My badges as it were are mere symbols of what I have achieved (red ribbons, bronze sickle--though this is very dear to me as it belonged to my dear friend and mentor who has passed on) but I done them with honor and humility and can only hope that I can live up to what they symbolize to me.

For me becoming Third Order is a stepping-stone. I haven't slacked up on my studies at all (and I include academic as well as spiritual), and continue to be very active in my Grove, doing research on Celtic as well as I.E. practices we can incorporate into our services, and working on my own spiritual development. It is important to me to be able to consecrate the waters-of-life in the name of Dalon Ap Landu as prescribed by the Founders of the RDNA.

But this has been my path. It is what is right for me. I cannot tell anyone to do the exact same thing, because each one of us has our own path. If someone should come to me for advice, that is all I can do, advise. I can say what worked for me, make suggestions and recommendations, but I cannot say this is what you should do. You will know in your heart of hearts what is right. Someone asked me earlier in the year "how do I get to be Third Order?" without even asking what the RDNA is all about. For obvious reasons I did not follow up on it.

I hope you do not mind me making this assumption, but it seems to me that our philosophies are not that far off, but it is our methodologies that differ. Your posts have been very thought-provoking and have caused me to put into words what I have but felt up until now.



On Divination:

A Short Talk and Dialogue

By Larry Press, Arch Druid, Baccharis Grove

I had in mind to lead off with the perfect, most appropriate quote; that meant, of course, finding the book containing it. Having found the book, I see that the full quote runs about a page and a half, extravagantly violating all principles of fair use (and necessitating a great deal of typing). Rather than quote in full, I paraphrase; this is appropriate, since the full quote is itself a paraphrase. Here I paraphrase Xenophon paraphrasing Socrates:

"It is not given to man to know all things; that is the province of the Gods. But as the Gods have given us our limited rational faculty, so have they also given us the oracles. Some questions are suitable to our rationality, and those we must answer rationally; other questions must be put to the oracles. It is arrogant and impious to attempt rational answers for questions that are beyond our rational understanding; likewise it is impious to ask of the Gods answers that we can perfectly well find ourselves."

Thus far my paraphrase. An over-simplification perhaps, but otherwise (I trust) a reasonably accurate account of what the translator said Xenophon said Socrates said.

Now let me go back and restate the whole thing (putting words in everyone else's mouths):

1. There are several reasons why a question might not be rationally answerable
 - a. We may lack information.
 - b. There might be a rational answer, but we might be too limited intellectually to find it, or to understand it once found.
 - c. It may be in the nature of the question itself that there is no rationally attainable answer.

In any of these cases, there could still be an answer (or at any rate, an APPROXIMATE answer) that is attainable IRRATIONALLY (or at any rate, not WHOLLY RATIONALLY).

2. In some important ways, the different divination systems are more-or-less equivalent; which one(s) you choose may be a matter of taste and temperament, or just an accident (though some would say it's no "accident") of which you are exposed to first. The important thing as I see it is that
 - a. You have a way of answering questions rationally.
 - b. You have another way of answering questions that you can't answer rationally.
 - c. You know which is which.

3. In other ways, divination systems are all quite different. Each imposes its own view on the world, and tends to answer all questions in the context of that view. (To a hammer, the world is nothing but nails; to a saw, it's nothing but boards.) In fact, each system is best suited to certain sorts of questions; nonetheless, it does NOT do to second-guess the oracle--IT knows better than you do which sorts of question it can answer (personal experience speaking here).

Querant: How do I find the information needed to answer a question? And how do I know when I have found that information--does a little "ah ha!" go off in the brain?

Augur. Oops! I think you're assuming one does a divination to find missing information, and then uses that information to (rationally) answer the question. That's not how it usually works.

True, information alone can be the difference between being able or unable to answer a question rationally. And in fact, we CAN use divination to (try to) discover missing information, but I don't know that that works very well. Rather, we may use divination not so much to find the information needed to answer a question rationally, but precisely because we lack that information, and so cannot answer the question rationally.

As for how we know we've "got it right," I think we can only know we have the right information when it gives us the right answer. And how do we know we have the right answer? How do we EVER know? Same sort of tests we apply to any purported answer to any question.

Speaking from experience (not of divination per se but of trying to understand things in general, such as why something happened in a certain way, etc.): sometimes part of understanding is waiting to understand.

Querant: How do I answer questions that I can't answer rationally? Blind faith?

Augur: Blind faith? That may work for some (maybe--I'm unconvinced), but not for me. Of course, there's no guarantee you can answer those questions at all--but the oracles give you additional tools. ALSO, the oracles let you see additional facets of questions that you CAN answer rationally.

Querant: Tools? Let you see? Oh this is beyond me, at least right now! And how else would you know other than faith?

Augur: You're looking at a thing--might not be a physical thing; it might be a social situation, an ethical question, or whatever.

You can look at it from a variety of viewpoints (psychological stances, assumption sets, modes of investigation, etc.), and the thing is so complex that no single viewpoint gives a complete picture of it. Rational investigation gives you some of those views of the thing; divination might give you other views of it. The more different directions you view the thing from, the more you know about it. (Though perhaps, not the more sense you can make of it.) But blind faith? Perhaps you're faith-oriented, whereas I'm unfaith-oriented. As I said, I approach divination as a rational exercise, even though I'm working in a non-rational realm. Of course, your mileage may vary.

Querant: Then it seems to be one of those gut feeling things, like you know when you know, hence the "ah ha!" although

knowing and feeling come from two different places--they would seem to be related--oh, but they are both senses! The message comes from or through the senses? How can you test a sense?

Augur: It may be that a highly developed gut perception is the ideal. I'm not sure I'd call that "divination"; it may go beyond divination i.e. it may be a direct perception of that of which divination gives indirect hints. Alternatively, it may be just another mode of divination (depending on how you care to categorize things.)

When I think of divination I generally have in mind some system that lets you use your rational faculty (to whatever extent possible) to get information from non-rational sources.

At any rate, I'm head-oriented, rather than gut-oriented, and so I use head-oriented divination systems. I'm sure there are legitimate gut-oriented approaches, but that's terra incognita to me.

Querant: Does divination then come from the head, as it is trying use our RATIONAL faculty?

Augur: For me, it does; for you, maybe not.

Querant: In Tarot readings when there was no answer to be found YET, I've noticed that the cards would be ill-dignified and say something about being selfish or out for gain, etc.

Augur: The oracles do that. Not only do you get answers to the questions you ask, but you get answers to questions you didn't ask, and comments on the state of your act in general.

Querant: I've learned that that means I'm not meant to know yet--is this the "there is no answer?"

Augur: Not necessarily. It could also mean you're asking the wrong question, or asking the wrong oracle (i.e. using the wrong method of divination), or whatever.

It could even be that the oracle really is giving you an answer, but that you can't see it.

Querant: The kinds of questions I asked most recently when I got the ill-dignified cards were job related ones.

Sometimes it just wasn't the time for an answer (maybe I was being pestery or impatient or disparate) or I discovered I didn't phrase the question right.

Augur: Yeah. It can depend a LOT on your current psychological state. It also helps to practice a lot (says one who doesn't).

Querant: How do I find my divinatory method?

Augur: Trial and error. You need to cast about, to see which methods are most congenial to you.

Querant: How do I find out what the methods are?

Augur: Read a lot. Talk to other people. Note also that you don't have to use somebody ELSE'S method; you can modify an existing method to suit your taste (that's what's usually done), or create your own out of whole cloth (that's also done surprisingly often.)

I think that practice with any method will give insight you can use in learning, modifying, or creating another method.

Querant: How do I become familiar with a method's view so that I know how the answers are colored and adjust accordingly?

Augur: By working with that method A LOT. But don't pay too much mind to the differences between the method's views, at least at first.

Remember, it's not wise to second-guess an oracle.

Querant: Should I do a web search for methods? If so, should I search on the keyword "divination?"

Augur: I haven't tried. I'm sure you'd get some hits that way.

I've merely learned about numerous systems (generally only a token amount about them) over the years through reading and discussion. I've followed up on the ones that seemed interesting and congenial, and ignored the rest.

Querant: Why would I use divination? The augury for the sacrifice? Any other instances?

Augur: The augury for the sacrifice is one of the traditional instances; it's really just a special case of the augury for ANY important public function.

I think you should do divinations over ANY important question that doesn't have a really obvious rational answer (and many that do). However, I admit right up front that I don't follow my own advice here as much as I should.

Note though that I don't mean you should ever base an important decision solely on divination--or even primarily on divination--that's just silly.

Querant: Is an oracle a deity?

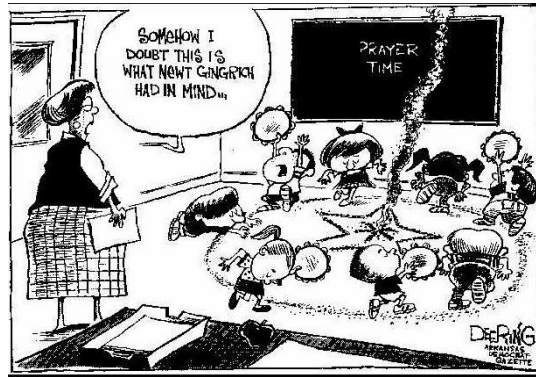
Augur: You can treat them as such, if that's your bent. I generally don't personify them, except sometimes when talking about them to others.

I use the term "oracle" as shorthand for "divination system," with the understanding that such a system is far more complex than it appears at first--so much so, that we might well treat it as sentient, with its own (inscrutable) will--though, as I've said, I generally don't.

Querant: Do or can the Celtic deities play a part in the divination in any case?

Augur: They may have for Emmon; they could for you, if you want them to. And it WAS the old Indo-European tradition that

1. The Gods spoke through oracles
2. We don't dare do anything important without first checking whether it's OK with the Gods



Somehow, I doubt this is what Newt Gingrich had in mind...

Prayer and the Workplace:

"It's Not Just for Ashcroft Anymore"™

By an Anonymous Druid in Antarctica, 2001

Sure! Why if Ashcroft can hold a bible-study and prayer meetings in his governmental office in the Department of Justice before starting work, why not me!

I was also inspired by my research on Islam where people pray at least five times a day, and a religious man blesses Allah 100 times a day. The Hassidic Druids of North America in the 70s advocated that their members be able to write a blessing for any occasion. I'm not to be outdone on anything, so I devised an ambitious schedule to fill the day with prayer. Before coming here, I also had to navigate the daily rat-race. Turning it into a sacred activity will require a new outlook. The possibilities of hexes, prayers, blessings, spell casting are endless, so charge up your non-descript wand (i.e. PowerPoint collapsible pointer rod or a pencil) at night, you'll need it.

Now, rather than make a really long article, I defer to the Reformed Druidic tradition of challenging you to come up with your own appropriate words. As they say, "Prayers need not be long, when the heart is sincere." Just a few words or a sentence will suffice, and you'll soon become really insightful and poetic with practice (i.e. your Bardic skills). Let each time, be as the first. Perhaps if you don't feel like praising at those times, you should just say, "Not now, sorry." You don't have to selfishly wish for personal gain in these situations, I find it's rather nice just to acknowledge the joy of participating in life's abundant activities.

The first week sucked. They may be whispered, shouted, signed or silently thought; "The Gods know our hearts, even when we don't know the words." We in the RDNA are after awareness right? Besides you've heard that people who are married, those who pray, and vegetarians tend to live longer; why? Because they must carefully think about what they're doing, take a concern in those around them, and abstain from most unhealthy activities.

Here are some recommended situations to try some praying, most are obvious, and you can think of more:

- Waking up
- Cooking and Partaking of Food (all meals)
- Partaking of Waters (all times)
- Dressing (wards of protection, attracting love and respect)
- On seeing the sun, moon or sky
- On leaving the house: (invoke protection)
- On first touching the ground

On first sight of a living creature
On meeting a friend
On exercise/sports
Commuting (all times)
Restraining Road Rage
On hearing a wise thing
On hearing good news
On avoiding disaster
On entering and leaving your workplace (very Japanese)

Other Special Situations:

Office relations
Administrative problems
Restructuring
Hostile merger
Office dating
Random curses

Work Situations:

Photocopier (apology for paper wastage)
Computer Wards (no crashes)
Impromptu blessing for good health (sneezing)
Word Processing (make me glib)
Handing in reports (be impressed)
Undertaking new projects
Modifying office moods
Completing assignments
Office betting pool
Gossip (protect me, get him)
Recycling (return, to come again)
Meetings (anti-boredom/pressure, speakership)
Mid-day yoga (energy-raiser)
Late afternoon fatigue (focus)
Returning home
Dealing with children and spouse
Going to sleep

Office Magic Equipment:

Computer for divining weather and unknown knowledge.
Paper-weight for storing energy.
Staple for binding power "So staple it be."
PowerPoint pointer rod.

A Few Thoughts About Prayer, Death, and Sacrifice

By Mortus, the Morose Druid

(Please refer to the NRDNA's 1979 article:
<http://www.geocities.com/druidarchives/pent3-2part2.html>
titled "Now, About Those Human Sacrifices..." about Celtic Gaul.)

We all know that there are only three certain things in life; Death, taxes and idiots. As much as we dislike them, often all three arrive together. But with this essay, please tolerate the first and third.

Well, it is Samhain, so it's time to bring up that perennial subject; death. (Fun activities at the end.) Yes, death, a subject rarely brought up willingly in our modern cult of youth and life. It is a huge far-reaching subject, on which I'd like to endlessly ramble for a six pages. It is a huge topic that we all are deeply concerned about. Life is, of course, not separate from death, it only looks that way because, "Death stares old men in the face, and lurks behind the back of

youth." Perhaps one of the reasons we are so shocked in our society by sudden violent death, is that we persist in that infantile belief of immortality, bolstered by medical and social advances that virtually promise us a death by old age. Death always comes out of season to us, it seems. Yet, throughout history, death was a daily possibility and old age a rare achievement; therefore worthy of respect. (Possibly, a reason why current seniors are not respected is that there are too many of them?) Talk to an insurance salesman if you really want the morbid statistics of modern dangers. Our fear of death, combined with our materialistic fear of economic loss has made the whole concept of "sacrifice" particularly unpleasant to many today.

The very word "sacrifice" tends to ring warning alarms to pagans, who must constantly prepare arguments and defenses against ill-informed persecution; "Oh, we only use vegetables or Sacagawea Dollars," or such. But while this word is bandied about in this preparation of America for a "new" war, let's pause to reflect on its meanings. Here's a popular view of sacrifice from the O.E.D. (abridged edition);

"sacrifice: n. 1.a. The act of offering something to a deity in propitiation or homage, especially the ritual slaughter of an animal or a person. b. A victim offered in this way. 2.a. Forfeiture of something highly valued for the sake of one considered to have a greater value or claim. b. Something so forfeited. 3.a. Relinquishment of something at less than its presumed value. b. Something so relinquished. c. A loss so sustained. 4. Baseball A sacrifice hit or bunt. [Middle English, from Old French, from Latin sacrificium: sacer, sacred; see SACRED + facere, to make.]

To "sacrifice" is to "make sacred," which means:

"sacred adj. 1. Dedicated to or set apart for the worship of a deity. 2. Worthy of religious veneration. 3. Made or declared holy: sacred bread and wine. 4. Dedicated or devoted exclusively to a single use, purpose, or person: sacred to the memory of her sister; a private office sacred to the President. 5. Worthy of respect; venerable. 6. Of or relating to religious objects, rites, or practices.

Many cultures make daily offerings, to "respect," "feed," or "bribe" the spirits by setting aside something they want to "pay back" the gods for the kindness of giving it to the devotee in the first place. Taxes operate on a similar level, by our repaying society for the conditions that gave us a good business environment. The ancient Celts, to take but one collection of cultures, would sometimes bury sacrifices of food, animals, disliked neighbours, in special pits; perhaps as a fertility-death cyclical bargaining (I give you one skinny deer in the fall, you give me six months' interest...say, three fat deer in the spring?) The Celts were also quite fond of throwing treasures and leaden body-shaped-parts into hot springs, pools, rivers, wells, fountains, oceans or anything wet. The Romans drained them and took the loot; initiating perhaps the first recycling campaign? Hopefully, the gods will further bless us and the government will further improve our economic security and quality of life; a cycle of thanking. Uh-huh, that's the theory. And what is the greatest of material

losses, but the death of our physical body? What do we get in return?

As a falling tree produces an arboreal opening for a new saplings to grow towards the sun; so does death provide new space for youth to grow. What we call ourselves now, is not the same self we will become in five minutes. You can't step in the same river twice. Even physically, parts of us come and go, with every breath and excretion. I was told that our complete skeleton is reformed on a cellular and molecular level within every seven years, and few cells in your body were atomically or biologically present 10 years ago. Life is a process not a stationary condition. (Decomposition and reclamation are processes too.) We merely do not notice the death that is around us, when the forces of growth are more apparent or ascendant. Yet we fear the loss of something we've lost many times before. We want quid pro quo; "if I die and give up this body, I WANT eternal life, or...I'll be really miffed about it!" The truth of the matter is that we probably didn't choose to be in this world and we likely won't be able to choose when and how we'll go. They also say, you can get by in this world with only half of what you're born with, if used rightly. That's all a hard pill to swallow and many religions and industries are built upon this grievous issue. I guess, it's what you do in between that makes all the difference, and be glad that we are such a potentially long-lived species among animals.

Some of us have gone beyond a greedy desire for maximum duration of life to assist others (but not me, yet). We all revere our parents, teachers and heroes for the hardships and injuries they have sustained on our behalf. Why do good people suffer? That's a \$60 billion dollar question. I'm not going to go into a good and evil debate, because I'm not convinced they actually exist beyond the level of concepts. Some say that death and suffering inspire us to use our time wisely, and they are inherent to the biological reality of life on Earth. Around Sept 25th, the Rev. Jesse Jackson said the 9-11 disaster has had some positive impact;

"Suffering breeds character, and character breeds faith, and in the end faith will prevail. This suffering has allowed, in the darkest hour, the light to shine most clearly."

Some of the reasons for tragic death are probably poor preparation, unforeseen consequences, and just plain bad luck. Such comfort takes a long time, if ever, to reassure the victims. Starvation and wasting away are not inherently noble in themselves. Mother Theresa once said, "I pray much better when well-fed and dressed comfortably." Another troubling issue, is that the people most directly responsible for the tragedy died in hopes of receiving divine reward for what is mostly a political statement in a "David and Goliath" act, where we were the loser. While suicide for reasons of depression or cowardice is often not esteemed, but doing fool-hardy acts for a cause or to save a group is often considered heroic; even if the same result is dead people. I guess for many moderns, it's not a question of "if" they die, but how they live and die. I believe, however, that you shouldn't make that choice to die for others without their permission. All too often, violent acts are result of cheating and are used in place of long-term remedies, ostensibly due to time constraints; thereby dampening rather than solving a problem.

Now, as you all know in the Druid Chronicles "The Early Chronicles," it was determined in April 1963, that the RDNA would not choose animal or human sacrifices (lawyers

and politicians were included in 1965), regardless of their purported effectiveness. Most, if not all, Druid, Wiccan and Neo-Pagan organizations since then have followed a similar tradition to ours. There is, of course, the agonizing issue of whether fungi are to be treated as plants or animals, as they have characteristics of both! There are strangely no records on how to choose a sacrifice, but there is some guidance on how to do think about a sacrifice:

"For one man, the sacrifice of life is the offering up of himself to a god or gods. To another, it is an offering up of his mind to a search for truth."—Book of Faith, v.9

"If one but says "Dalon ap Landu" with the knowledge of the power of it, truly the whole Universe will be forever consecrated."—Thomas the Fool, 1970

Many peoples believe, that spirits with feelings inhabit all objects and creatures, not just "Homo Sapiens Sacrificius." I, personally, try to take only willing sacrifices by divining the feelings of the plants or objects, which might take a long time. And as always, thanks and apologies before and after are to be recommended. I'm moving towards vegetarianism, but still occasionally eat reptiles, fish and bugs. I try to reduce the frequency of consumption and have rarely done the butchering (cowardice on my part, not unlike many Hindus) but I try to be respectful. After all, according to "Babe" they say, "What you eat, walks and talks tomorrow" and "You are what you eat, from your head down to your feet." What goes in, will come out. My wife says that means I'll become a vegetable as I grow older.



In my experience, a sacrifice is rejected when there is a hastily chosen unwilling plant, a poorly directed purpose, misguided intentions of participants, or the gods are in a plain weird mood; and killing for no purpose is not commendable. From my observation, the most common sacrifices in the RDNA have been; leaves, branches, berries, tufts of grass, acorns (plantable afterwards), flowers, home-grown vegetables, ect. The divination of the winds will decide whether the sacrifice is acceptable, and we must patiently await and abide by their decision, not ours. I sometimes cheat though, by only holding services on windy days in areas with

many birds... (By the way, bringing hand-held fans is strictly prohibited! An area, largely unexplored, is how to have an RDNA service or activity without intentionally harming anything, (if such is possible, counting the squashed grass under our dancing feet, airborne microbes, ect. See Jainism.) Would it be too much to bring the ceremony to the uncut offering, which would then live a life of service?

It would be well for the squeamish Neo-Pagans to remember that animals are still routinely raised and killed for religious feasts throughout the world. Examples could include Thanksgiving Turkeys, Christmas Goose/Ham, Easter Lambs, July 4th BBQ, Sajigor goat sacrifice in Kalasha India, Kosher meat preparation, the ever-popular Uidhyah goat sacrifice for Eid holiday in Islam, the reverent buffalo slaughters among Native American plains tribes to teach their children, pig feasts in Borneo, Santeria rites, etc. Christianity prizes the voluntary human sacrifices of its founder and martyrs. Historically, the pre-diasporic Judaic kingdoms had their own fair share of temple sacrifices (and possibly may have again if a few hard-core Orthodox Jews can ever remove the "Dome of the Rock" mosque from the site of the Solomon's Temple.) For those tribal hunters who are still in an ever-present-holy-moment-union with the Earth, any act of hunting is a religiously imbued activity. Ancient tribes are especially afraid that angering an animal's spirit, would reduce the hunt next year. All this goes on, yet journalists would be delighted to uncover a report on a dog killed by some pathetic Satanists. And yet in America, home of the top animal protein consumers, husbandry and abattoirs are conveniently efficient and simply barbaric; if not unhealthily operated as a whole, tastefully out of sight. No one prays during their deaths.

But why do people kill things in a religious service, if most religions are life-affirming, in theory at least? A possible theoretical liturgical reason, offered by the venerable Isaac Bonewits (2nd Epistle, Chapter 7), is that a living (plant, fungal, bacterial or animal) creature allegedly releases energy on its death, (and some while it's alive, too), which might amplify the resonance of a magic raising activity. (I wonder if a flashlight, a plutonium cell, dancing, sex, or campfire could substitute the necessary energy in place of living sacrifices?) Perhaps it is so.

I also disagree with the above definition's hint that only "victims" are sacrificed. While all religions have offered material sacrifice in some format, most ancient cultures freely accepted the necessity or advantage of sacrifice of living creatures, some even considering it such an honor as to volunteer themselves. In some cases, the volunteer would be instructed with lengthy messages to convey to the deities involved, kind of like a court witnesses being briefed by lawyers to present their village's case. However, I suspect that the vast bulk were less than thrilled with their candidacy, often being the criminals, disliked trouble-makers, or prisoners of war of a society. Civilization helped make it possible, as self-sustaining small villages needed as many people alive as possible, due the death rate; but cities often have less-than-necessary inhabitants to be mistreated or sent to war.

With rare exceptions, death is irreversible and final; so unsanctioned killings have been punished more severely than non-fatal injuries by legal codes of most states. It's not my purpose to wade deeply into the debate the pros and cons of capital punishment (see China, Florida, and Texas), but it's interesting that priests are still an integral part of the execution process, although few would label these priests as "blood thirsty," rather, they're merely there to comfort the victim and restrain the vengeful passions of bystanders, and perhaps to mitigate the executioners' guilt for breaking one of their 10 commandments. To their credit, that great Fertility Cult,

(known as the Catholic Church) now tries to sacralize life; and prevent such state-sponsored murders, albeit sometimes to excess. The Druids, themselves, were often also present at matters of life and death, like councils of war, exiling (which equaled death) or executions. Depending on the individual, perhaps they enjoyed or dislike the responsibility involved. One could also make the case that vendettas and war are a "viral" form of human sacrifice that is out of control and self-feeding (like an inferno), soon bereft of whatever religious impulses that may have motivated or restrained the initiators. Once life is stripped of its holy aspect, fearful things become conceivable.

I can think of three attitudes towards death. 1. If you feel that death is an end to all existence, it is a dirty distasteful thing to be feared and avoided at all costs and deeply mourned. 2. If you feel that death is a one way journey to a (hopefully) pleasant place, then death should be an acceptable; if not desired. Of course, "A man's dying is more the survivors' affair than his own," so you shouldn't recklessly hasten your death, widows really hate being told "He's in a happier place." 3. If you feel that death is a two-way or cyclical journey, then the above applies, plus any apprehension or anticipation of having to start all over again from scratch; either in re-birth or re-incarnation. Perhaps it is so.



The ancient Celts and Europeans, on first glance do not seem inordinately afraid of death; in fact, many literary heroes hardly even notice their death until long after the fact. After all, "A brave man dies but once—a coward many times." In the case of the Celts, there are references to ancient Celts loaning money and expecting repayment in the next life. People would keep the heads of enemies or friends, occasionally talking and giving them a feast. But, how the average Joe McBlow felt is less certain. Perhaps, it's along the lines of "It's a good day to die...tomorrow" or "Who wants to live forever? Okay, but who ELSE?" or "I am not afraid to die, I just don't to be around when it happens."

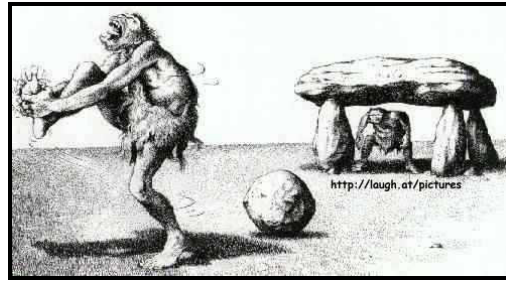
In Celtic myth, there are tales of Avalon (island of apples), Tir nan Og (land of youth), Islands out West over/under the Ocean (America?), Hybrasil, Annwyn (in the Tales of Pryderi), and the Faery underworlds of mounds and tombs. See the Voyage of Mael Dun for another interesting journey by boat. A general sense of connection is thought to exist in the same place, like parallel universes, that are crossed-over sometimes (especially on holidays like Beltane and particularly Samhain). Ghosts, spirits, saints, saints, monsters, faeries are rampant in their mythology that continues to this day.

So, finally, as you know, the greatest traditional remnant concerning death is the great fire-festival of Samhain (or the triple holiday of Halloween, All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day). You've read already read oodles about Samhain on the

internet, you know its roots and know all that stuff about it being a Celtic new-year (a new calendar year in the NRDNA). I'm a "do-er" not a "liturgist," festivals for me are about doing interesting related projects. Here are a variety of uncommon activities (I tire of pumpkins) that I believe are appropriate during this period of time.

Suggested Activities for Samhain

- Visit and tidy-up the graves of family, friends and respected people.
- Séances are popular at this time of year, but book in advance!
- Hold a "dumb feast" with no talking and plates for ancestors.
- Contemplate your own funeral arrangements, especially if you want to fight "The Industry" and have a natural funeral free of chemical and air-tight sealed caskets.
- Include the dead in your thoughts during the daily grind.
- Begin a custom of thanking the things we kill and eat.
- Visit an abattoir or kill your own dinner (fish is the least unpleasant), which will open your eyes and heart to some cold facts.
- Work on your will, living-will, powers-of-attorney, and insurances.
- "Sacrifice" some fun, for retirement planning.
- Discuss deeper issues of after-life with your children and spouse.
- Research genealogy and visit elderly relatives (research for Eulogies).
- Get a health check-up and other medical appointments. Quit smoking.
- Rake leaves, plan a composting heap (done properly, they don't stink)
- Plant acorns, salt meat and jerky, pickle things.
- Go hunting or fishing [or "camera-stalking" of prominent politicians...]
- Volunteer to escort children for Halloween (you get candy, too!)
- Adopt an overseas child or assist a charity.
- At Carleton, we'd pour molten-lead or wax into cold water and divine things.
- Protest the most recent prejudiced horror-flick of the season.
- Lobby against the funeral industry.
- Make a list of 100 things you've done, and 100 more you want to do.
- Contemplate capital punishment, war, crime, sanitation and vegetarianism.
- Bless your pets with smoke (yes, jumping through a fiery hoop is okay...)
- Clean your home, extinguish your oven/furnace's pilot-light and relight it.
- Replace the batteries in your smoke detector, buy a fire extinguisher, etc.
- Write long-winded, disconnected rambles and lists about Samhain and Sacrifice.



Neolithic Farmhouse Discovered in Scotland

Sources: The Times (7 September 2001 <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/>) and The Daily Telegraph (9 September 2001 <http://news.telegraph.co.uk>)

The remains of a Stone Age farmhouse, built more than 1,000 years before the pyramids, have been uncovered by archaeologists in a cornfield in Perthshire (Scotland).

The 6,000-year-old home, complete with a living area, bedroom and cooking area, lies close to Britain's longest Stone Age burial cairn near Callander. Historians believe that it and the Auchenlaich cairn were part of the same Neolithic settlement.

The discovery, by archaeologists from the universities of Glasgow and Stirling, is one of two such structures uncovered in Scotland. The other is at Balbridie, Deeside. Gordon Barclay, an archaeologist from Stirling University, said: "This type of enormous timber building is only the second of its kind ever found. This is a very important site, even longer and possibly even older than what we have found before. There is nothing like it anywhere else in Europe." The building is 25 metres long and nine metres wide with walls formed by massive timber posts each about one metre apart. A second line of posts one metre in, along with posts inside the massive room, once supported a thatched roof.

Dr Barclay said the size and built strength of the farmhouse indicated that the Neolithic people were skilled engineers. "This is no shack that somebody has thrown up. It is an enormous, very sophisticated piece of engineering, built to last. The only other evidence we had was of much smaller, lighter structures. This proves that the Neolithic people were engineers as skilled and intelligent as modern man." Because there were no metal nails, the house was made almost entirely from timber shaped to fit together with timber pegs. The farmhouse was split into compartments by light wooden partitions set into the ground. On a large sunken area to the north, the team discovered burnt red gravel, showing that fires had been regularly lit there.

The archaeologists discovered more than 200 pieces of Stone Age pottery and cereal remains which will be radiocarbon-dated. Dr Barclay said: "These were the first farmers ever to cultivate land in Scotland."

Bronze Age Trove Found at Sewage Site

From the Irish Times, Friday, September 28

A £6.5 million Co Limerick sewage scheme has unearthed a rich vein of archaeological treasures.

The scheme, at Castleconnell on the banks of the River Shannon, has yielded a range and density of finds. The finds are unusual for such a confined area according to archaeologists. They also indicate there has been human activity there for thousands of years.

To date, four fulachta faidh, or ancient cooking places, three hut sites, a furnace and four human burial sites as well as nine other pits have been excavated. According to a spokesman for Limerick County Council's archaeological unit all of these are tentatively dated to the early Bronze Age of 5,000 BC to 1,500 BC. Charcoal samples have been sent for analysis and the results will clarify the date range. Numerous artefacts have also been found including over 100 pieces of worked flint, 10 stone axes and a fragment of a rotary quern.

Three locations along the route of a pipeline were archaeologically tested in advance of the work being carried out.

At one of these sites, Hermitage, the farm of Mr. P Moran, significant remains were uncovered and Aegis Archaeology Limited is currently excavating this area.

According to Limerick County Council yesterday the sewage scheme will provide for expansion of the village and its hinterland. It is also expected that the scheme will provide for the improvement of the water quality and amenity value of the River Shannon.

Resources

Book Review

By Mike Scharding, Monument Grove

Pagans and Christians: The Personal Spiritual Experience, Guz DiZerga, Ph. D. Llewellyn Worldwide, St. Paul.

Dr. DiZerga is a political scientist and Wiccan elder with Brazilian roots who has released this new book, with the aim of establishing and promoting a framework for inter-faith dialogue between Pagans and Christians that is philosophically based. He is apparently a very wise man who has learned to temper his anger and delves into the deeper core issues that Ecumenical talks rarely reach. His supportive arguments make heavy reference to Roman/Greek Classical forms of Paganism, which of course is has great amounts of textual support as opposed to other forms of European paganism. (He also draws upon Latin-American forms.) There are areas of weak spots, he is not an expert on early Christianity; and there are some gloss-overs of some touchy issues; e.g. sexuality; so I finished it with some unanswered questions. This book, while not perfect, is very well written with many golden nuggets buried amongst numerous semi-precious stones. It should be part of the library of anyone working with ecumenical councils.

Part One gives an overview of paganism's central general beliefs, focusing on the authority of personal spirituality. I would hesitate to give this book to your mom as her introductory book. It assumes a lot of general factual knowledge about Paganism, but would be a good follow-up.

Part Two: Christian Criticisms of Wicca rebuts some myths focusing on the relationship of Spirit and the Natural world, why good things happen to bad people, and claims of ultimate authority. This is his best written section.

Part Three: Pagan Criticisms of Christianity. He shows that the Pagan view of nature is already present to a degree, without being an apologist, in Scripture and that Christianity does not depend in any sense upon a claim to spiritual

superiority. He finally reconciles the two faiths and talks about the ways they can mutually benefit from interaction.

Some Quotes:

"Many Pagans who take such a view of Christianity define themselves against it. In doing so, they remain to some extent still within its power, even to the point of avoiding those Pagan practices that most overlap with Christian practice, such as prayer. By defining Pagan religion as different in all respects from Christianity, some Pagans unintentionally narrow their own spiritual lives..."

"Christianity does offer a unique and valuable path to the Sacred, but unique does not equal exclusive in the worth of religions any more than it does in the worth of people."

"[Paganism] exemplifies personal responsibility, for no one can hide behind scripture and disclaim responsibility because of its supposed objectivity."

"Love can only be fulfilled by the existence of the beloved. It is even more fulfilled when the beloved in turn is also fulfilled. A being loving unconditionally will therefore find delight even in the beloved's loving another. This is why the concept of a jealous God is utterly incomprehensible to me, as it has long been to many Pagans."

"Suffering is an enriching manure for the human spirit. It is a compost for the heart. Genuine empathy for others often arises most readily after we have suffered ourselves."

Carleton College Calendar Available

This year's has a beautiful picture of the Hill of the Three Oaks, showing the oaks in silhouette against an orange sky. Additional copies of the calendar are available from the Carleton Bookstore for \$3.00 plus shipping:

Carleton Bookstore
One North College Street
Northfield, MN 55057
(800) 799-4148

Calendar

Astronomical Samhain, when the Sun is midway between Equinox and Solstice, will occur on November 6, 2001 at 11:20 p.m. PST. (By the alternative method of calculation, the Sun will reach 15° of Scorpius Nov. 7 at 12:38 a.m. PST.) Samhain services will be held on Nov. 4 at Sundown, which is 5:07 p.m. Please call for carpool arrangements (510) 654-6896. For the social observance of Samhain we will be going immediately after the service to Le Bateau Ivre Restaurant in Berkeley.

Regular services will be held at Solar Noon on Nov. 11, Dec. 2 and 16. Please call the above number to confirm.

A Druid Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are \$6.00 and online subscriptions are free, but might not include everything that is in the post mail edition. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's subscription free. Write The Missal-Any c/o Weinberger, 309 63rd St, Apt. C, Oakland, CA 94618.

A Druid Missal-Any Yule Y.R. XXXIX Vol. 17 Number 8 Dec. 3rd, 2001 c.e.



Yule Essay: Tree Lore

By Stacey Weinberger



Yule, Winter Solstice, the Shortest Day of the Year, is one of the minor High Days of the Druid calendar. Though there is an association with trees at each of the High Days, none of them so strongly evokes the image of the tree than Yule with the tradition of Christmas or Yule tree, a latter-day symbol of pagan tree-worship. The Yule tree as we know it is a German custom brought to England in 1840 by Prince Albert, prince consort of Queen Victoria. Perhaps a parallel to the May-pole in the Summer half of the year (see *A Druid-Missal-Any Beltaine* 2001), which also was a tree cut down for a particular celebration and placed as the center of ritual, the Yule tree harkens back to an older tradition and can perhaps be traced back to the ancient Druids and other pre-Christian Indo-European practices.

In southern Europe there was the midwinter custom pertaining to the celebration of the god Phrygian god Attis that is very reminiscent of cutting down the Yule tree and decorating its branches. Certain priests of the Attis called dendrophori, meaning “tree-bearers,” annually selected a pine tree (*pinus silva*) from the sacred grove to carry the effigy of the god into His Roman temple. The dendrophori were charged with the duty of setting up and decorating the tree upon which the god was presented for sacrifice. The pine tree stood for a promise of eternal life because being an evergreen it kept its vital appearance even in winter. The boughs did not wither and die, and signified the continuing presence of life.

In Celtic culture there is also archeological evidence of ritual involving trees. At two large sacred circular enclosures, the Goloring near Koblenz and the Goldberg in Southern Germany, that date from the sixth century B.C., a huge central post was erected, possibly imitative of a living tree. Similar pre-Roman ritual activity can be observed at the La Tene site of Bliesebruck where over one hundred sacred pits filled with votive objects had been planted with tree trunks or living trees. In the Rhineland, one of the four regions of the Celtic World, the great sanctuary at Pesch contained many temples and ancillary buildings grouped around a sacred tree.

There are legendary tales of royal halls with a living tree in the center of the building, and trees may have been used this way, as in the Old Manor House at Knaresborough in North Yorkshire and the hall of Huntingfield in Suffolk. Positioning the tree in the center of a building as a source of good luck and protection for gods and men is confirmed by the custom in Germany, continuing as late as the 19th century, of having a

guardian or lucky tree beside a house. Does bringing the tree inside symbolize bringing the luck inside? Symbolic offerings were made to the tree, and ale poured over its roots at festivals, as in the case of a huge birch tree that stood on a mound beside a farmhouse in western Norway until it fell in 1874. Adam of Bremen, wrote of a huge tree that stood beside a temple in Uppsala, the holy center in Sweden, that remained green summer and winter (signaling perhaps an evergreen), but no one knew what kind of tree it was. The existence of sacred trees in Germany in the pre-Christian era is borne out by reference to their destruction by early Christian missionaries such as St. Boniface.

Memories of sacred trees at holy places can consistently be found in Irish literature, where a number of sacred trees are mentioned. The sacred tree, in Old Irish *bile*, was apparently a usual feature of the site where the inauguration of the kings of each tribe or confederation took place, the sacred center of the tribal territory.

Sacred trees are found mentioned in pagan texts of early Ireland, most notably in the *Rennes Dindshenchas* (“History of Places”). Holy trees were particularly associated with sacral kingship and the inauguration rites surrounding the election of a new king. Five special trees are mentioned in the *Dindshenchas* marking the sacred ritual and assembly centers of Ireland: “The Tree of Ross and the Tree of Mugna and the Ancient Tree of Datha and the branching Tree of Uisnech and the Ancient Tree of Tortu.”* Three of these trees are recorded as ash trees, while the Tree of Ross was a yew (an evergreen), and the Tree of Mugna was an oak, although it was not an ordinary one as it bore three crops of different fruits each year: “apples, goodly, marvelous, and nuts round, blood-red, and acorns, brown and ridgy” (together which symbolize the fruits of the Otherworld). It too appears to be an evergreen: “Its leaves were upon it always,” as with the tree at Uppsala described by Adam of Bremen.

A characteristic of the Otherworld tree in Irish tradition is that it bears blossoms and fruit of gold and silver, which the more modern Christmas tree is reminiscent of.

This Winter Solstice when you go out to purchase your Yule tree, preferably a live one, keep in mind that you are maintaining the pagan tradition of honoring the tree and making it the focus of the modern day tribal assembly of home. During this time when all seems dead and asleep the pine or fir Yule tree remains green, symbolizing the promise of life that is to return.

*”The Prose Tales in the *Rennes Dindshenchas*,” ed. W. Stokes, *Rev Celt* 15 (1894) and 16 (1895)

News of the Groves

Carleton Grove: News from Minnesota

Warm salutations from campus. Things here are getting hectic, as 9th week comes to a close and finals bear down on the hapless Carleton students. In September we had a weekend of celebration, reflection and meditation.

There was a sweatlodge in the Small Grove. The lodge is a place for physical and spiritual purification, and a time to center and focus yourself. To prepare for it, we spent the day cooking, baking, chopping wood, and setting up the lodge. All were welcome to participate in the lodge and/or to help with preparations.

Samhain was splendid. A cool night, a clear sky, a bonfire and the talking stick--everything we could want. Good turnout and good ritual. And the god died, as planned. All according to schedule.

Monument Grove: News from DC

Our grove is doing fine. Mike's in a new house and preparing for Yule. Did you know that in front of the White House there is the tasteless National Christmas Tree? <http://www.apollonius.net/christmastrees.html>. Ok, did you know that they have this god-awfully chunky "National Menorah." Well, now did you know there is 10' deep pit, 20' long, 10' wide, filled with the huge "National Yule-Logs." That's right. And my, isn't it toasty from 20' away! Very elemental and pleasing.

Sent off druid-care-packages to Ehren in Carleton, Irony in Tonga, Nozomi in Japan, and Ian in Antarctica. Let's see how D.C. postal efficiency works on those!

As Brother Ian from Down Under so wisely stated; it's about time we all lighten up and admit something:

English is a Celtic Language

Now before you linguists begin a howling, yes, English is technically a Germanic language. But, it is now a language spoken natively by Dravidians, Tamils, Singaporeans, Nigerians, Israelites, and Irishmen; few of whom would claim to be ethnically or culturally Germanic. Each culture has taken the language (which is a tool) and used it to buy potatoes or rice (as Sister Joan put it) and imbued it with their cultural heritage.

Now, I studied Scots Gàidhlig for one year in Scotland, and I'm one of the registered 85,456 speakers in the 1991 Scottish Census; so I have no desire to drop these languages (70% of the world's 6,000 languages may be gone by 2100), since the heart can speak a bit differently through either language. Every language colors the thoughts communicating them, but I'd anger many a Welshman by saying he's just a Sassenach because he doesn't have the Cyrmaeg any more. All Celts today (and in the past too, probably) have at least two languages to bear and to disseminate their cultures, and I'd like to look on it as a positive thing to keep both. As a friend told me, when you learn a new tongue you grow a new soul, and it never hurts to have a spare one, eh?

Ice Floe Grove: News from Antarctica

"Where did all the real Celts go? Long time passing..."

I couldn't be farther away from Ireland (or my native Belgium) but my thoughts fly to that distant land, and I'd like to write a little about it. The RDNA is not exclusively Celtic (we're not, but we all have our favorite traditions), but most other Druid groups are definitely in the Celtophiles section. The problem as I see it, is that people study ancient Celts, but ignore the modern Celts.

We appear to be in a love-hate relationship with traditions. We love ancient Celtic Traditions but not modern Celtic traditions with hundreds of years of shaping by Celts (yes, under Christian and alcoholic influence). Certainly, age sometimes empowers the survival and attractiveness of some beliefs beyond their practical usage (i.e. "fossilization"). For me, the age of the tradition is just one pointer on its feasibility; but it's applicability, wisdom, timing and associations must also be taken into account. As an example, we don't do ritualistic murder anymore. As Mortus said in his/her essay on Death and Sacrifice in Samhain's issue, the RDNA dropped human sacrifice when our mores and perceptions on the issue had changed, even though livestock (deadstock?) is cheaper now than ever before in history.

Irish and country folk of Europe still carry out several life-affirming (and life-denying) activities that may or may not have continuity from pagan times, often under the guise of various saints, despite the otherworldly orientation of monotheism in general. You know this, already. It's hard to tell whether or not these traditions were carry-overs from a bygone organized religion or rather, perhaps, simply natural developments from working daily with (or against) Nature's mysteries on the farm and forest. But the Celts are still here, but they're mostly speaking English nowadays, so no complaining about the difficulty of translating "Old Irish," just go next door and talk to McPherson and start or revive traditions.

How many American Neo-Pagans can explain the Dail of Ireland, name seven living Irish poets or dramatists? Talk about the devolution process' effect on Celtic nationalism? Explain the economic situation of the Welsh economies? What about Brittany's (ahem, not Ms. Spears) engulfment by France or Galicia by Spain which we don't hear about because most of us don't read French or Spanish after high school? Mad cow and foot-and-mouth disease (I've got that I suppose)'s role in the devastation of the crafting culture? I'm not calling upon you to march the streets of Dublin with placards, but if you feel such a connection to these ancient Druids; how about helping their grandchildren continue the living culture?

Enough ranting. Happy Holidays, I'll tell you if I see Santa or his evil twin brother, who lives on the south pole and also gives coal and credit card bills (how do YOU think Santa supports his philanthropy?) Oh, it's still cold here, enough even for a hothead like me. Next year, I should work in the Amazon!

Akita Grove:

News from Northern Japan

We had Samhain on a mountain nearby. We made a big fire, danced and asked the gods questions. We used info from Sister Stacey's article. It helped.

I am the judge of Bardic contest. I want to have your songs! See rules at:

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

and send them to me at nozomikibou@hotmail.com This contest is over at Beltane 2002, but I send out new songs every few weeks for you enjoy.

Hazel Nut Grove: News from California

ArchDruid Stephen Abbott has returned from exile! He is currently looking for a pagan household in which to live in Sacramento. If you know of anyone looking for a roommate with an incredible library of 8,000 Druid, Celtic, and pagan books, and a very nice iguana named Iggy, please contact A Druid Missal-Any and the information will be forwarded on.

White Rabbit Grove: News from Wisconsin

Hi, I'm Katya Whiterabbit (CL78:Olin), the dolt who mislaid the Carleton Archives in 1978. I made the Third Order and discovered the depths of my own personal Chaos, one could say. I was swept during the next decades between the Scylla and Charybdis of Sufism and Anthroposophy. In the mid eighties, having washed up in Wisconsin and gone back to grad school, I reaffirmed my fundamental Druidness, but without the impetus to conduct actual services.

Though randomly asked for Druid bibliographies by the curious, solitary Druidity seemed a waste of my elevation to Third Order. Happily the nineties brought the Internet to me and mine. But imagine my dismay to find the Usenet overrun with costume-loving Celtic Revivalists! Thus began my campaign to advocate for the RDNA way of being among them. Yes, it is I who am known as "healingline" in the posts of alt.religion.druid.

My small business, you see, is called The Healing Line. I have certifications in Thought Field Therapy and distance Reiki, as well as decades of nutritional expertise and other esoteric miscellany to offer the public over the phone. On the side I deal in collectible tablewares, a very highbrow form of recycling. So my Web presence projects me, the public utility, as my ministry, rather than a grove per se.

A seed I sowed back in 1978, before the rest of me blew away in the wind, was The Order of Lugh. Reading about the recently invented "side order" of Hephasteus reminded me. OL is also a non-hierarchic one, like Diancecht, and is meant for artists and craftsmen. At the appropriate spot in the Service, the dedicant commits a work of his or her own hands to the flames, as a token of dedication of all one's works to the Mother and her glories. If it is accepted (and it is highly recommended to work in a flammable medium), you're in. My token, with which I made myself Matriarch of Lugh, was a hand-calligraphed copy of the Order of Lugh Liturgy. Perhaps Lugh of the Long Hand, Master of All Arts, also bestowed on me the confusion from which I was reborn after a cycle of years.

Another copy of the Lugh Liturgy was in the box with the Archives when they were lost. But anyhow, there's nothing very tricky about answering the call of Lugh, if any others in congregations that actually hold services would like to join me.

Peace, peace, peace,
healingline@netzero.net

Note: See Part-Three of the ARDA for Lugh ceremony

Swamp Grove: News from Florida

The Swamp was alive with Druidry and revelry on Samhain. It was actually dry enough to have a celebration, and we certainly did just that. It was the first time that we had gathered for an observance since Solstice last December. We are planning to have some new pictures made of ourselves frolicking and capering, (well perhaps not so much capering) giving ourselves to wild abandon and using magic beans. We have consecrated a new circle area because the gators and swamp have claimed the old one for three months out of the year, the new area is relatively dry all year round.

Creeks-Called-Rivers Grove: News from Ohio

White Land Dinner: This dinner occurs on the evening of the first day during which snow completely covers the grass. Or as close as we can get. This is an indoor feast, usually accented by complaints from those Druids in the grove who wish they lived farther south. Around Dec 15th.

Feast of Coloured Paper: This feast pretty much comes when everyone else is doing Christmas. Well, a day or two before or after, usually, to allow us to do the Christmas thing with our families. Anyway, it's a time that we make it special point to let each other know that we appreciate each other. Around Dec 28th.

Big Ash Grove: News from Michigan

Grove of One has folded and been replaced by Big Ash Grove. The Archdruid's ritual name is Iggy. The ELDAR Tree CD-Rom project is on hold, but the "Big Ash Codex" of rituals is in progress for solitary Druids.

Corn Grove: News from Iowa

May the Mother bless and keep you this year and all years!

Not much to report--Corn Grove seems to have gone dormant, not inappropriately considering the season!

I've been devoting too much time to a songwriter's workshop, but I expect to be passing leadership of that on to some other fool as soon as possible. Not that it hasn't been successful--we started with 16 participants and the very next month had 29, and people are writing songs, which is GREAT. I just did not realize that this was going to be taking up so much of my time and energy! And it's not that I'm unwilling to "sacrifice" my time for what I believe in...but I'm also sacrificing my son's time and my husband's time, and that's not mine to do.

Otherwise, just grooving along quietly and trying to stay off as many radar screens as possible. I hope to have some time this winter to refocus and dive in to my own heart a bit, and see about figuring out how to satisfy some things in me that the mundane world makes very difficult. Getting out of the music business may be a start (the ultimate sacrifice for me!). Ugh.

Golden Oak Grove: News from Minnesota

The weather here is snowy and looks to be perfect snowman temps for the next few days, it's our first snowfall this year but I'm all but certain it's here to stay as I do live in Minnesota and we should of had snow on the ground already by Nov 9th but didn't...Years like this, it usually ends up being very snowy and near Solstice gets extremely frigid...

As for winter plans, I'm not a big fan of winter but I do have some more generalized plans for the season like braving the cold to make a snow-dragon or a snow-gargoyle depending on how much snow we actually get...If ya mix cornstarch with a bit of water and add in paste or gel frosting dyes you can actually paint your snow creatures, add more water, put it in a spray bottle and it really gets interesting (specially when it starts to melt hehe)

This next week I'll be getting the house in order for decorating and a place to put the tree, I'm excited as in this house with such high ceilings we can have a huge one, last year the kids were disappointed as we had a sweet yet poor little tree that resembled the one off of Charlie Brown's Christmas...

Poor little thing drooped under the weight of even the tiniest ornaments and we had to hang the topper from the ceiling on a cord as to not completely crush the little tree...

Cute and memorable but I'm looking forward to a big one this year...In years past when we've had bigger trees I string them with two separate twists of twinkle lights...The first set being a mix of blue and green lights that are kept to the inside of the tree...those are lit up until Solstice eve, then the other set of Amber and Pink get lit on Solstice Day, those lights are more to the outside of the tree...It makes it nice and

helps the kids with understanding the different light symbolologies, the soft glow of the tree approaching solstice is perfect for stories and such, then solstice morn it's all ablaze with bright sunny lights...

We also have two tree toppers, the first being a garden mask that I made that has golden acorn antlers, the second being a copper lantern in the shape of the sun, it has a very youthful male face on one side and the face of a womyn on the other...

So we sorta get to cover the baby sun god and (as my kids say) the sunshine-momahn Brigid, a little bit of a bend but hey that's why I'm Pagan...

A couple of years ago my eldest son, then 12, had some friends over during our holiday time for treats and such... Well two of his buddies were afraid of my tree, they said it had a scary head on top of it and that all the celestial decorations were bizarre, they were from Baptist-Christian families...

His little Jewish friend was very interested in all of it and had no problem understanding it, he even brought his mother into see our tree because he was so thrilled that they weren't the only ones with different beliefs, the mother was just as interested as her son...

The little Mexican boys were so cute, they knew what it all meant even though they said that their main families were catholic, that they had other family in Mexico that celebrated the dark of the year and the solstice, that their aunty puts a bull skull with lights inside on a shelf above her tree and feeds it wine, it was no big deal to them...

And the African American boy said that he thought it was kinda freaky but that his granny down in Louisiana used to do some freaky stuff for the holidays so he knew it was all cool...

I just find the different traditions surrounding this time of year (specially) very interesting...

Mojo Grove: News from Down There

The Protogrove we've been working on is on hold for a short while, but we got enough members of both human and nonhuman species (mainly dog) to make a go at it. We humans routinely get out-voted on such things as where the next gathering will take place (the woods) and what sort of activities will be engaged in (the hunt) and sheer pandemonium usually rules. But the exhilaration of letting the dogs lead the way puts the human members in close touch with nature in a way that is indescribably wonderful. We still haven't gotten around to name.

Dravidia Grove: News from Out There

The Grove is doing well, have been contacted by a new member from online who lives in Essex area. She actually seems closer to Monument Grove, but since she seems to be a Christian based Druid, I have decided to help get her started on the right path.

Also, as a note... Saturday, I realized the very essence of nature and life all over again. Here is what happened. My wife has recently had a heart attack, she is well recovered now, but I have taken to smoking outside instead of inside around her. While outside on my front porch a squirrel came down the tree in my front yard, and proceeded to walk up my sidewalk to the base of my porch steps. I moved around a little to let the squirrel know I was there in case it chose a different course of direction. It still proceeded to move toward me. It climbed the first two of three stairs and stopped, my toes were on the top step and it reached out and touched my shoes and commenced

to tap me on the foot several times. I looked at the squirrel in amazement, since it is not everyday a squirrel will walk up and try to get your attention.

I called to my wife since the front door was open and she came to the door. She then told me that she had been filling a bowl on the front porch with sunflower seeds. The bowl was empty, and the squirrel was asking me to refill it. I grabbed a handful and placed them on the steps where it started eating a couple and then started taking every 2 out of 3 seeds and hiding them in the grass in the front yard. In the mean time, my wife had finished filling the squirrel's bowl and it made a point of finishing the ones on the steps before proceed to eat the ones in the bowl. Definitely an enlightening and humbling experience the Great Mother bestowed upon me Saturday, and it is one that I will not forget in my lifetime...

Mulberry Grove: News from Arizona

“Beating Around the Mulberry Bush.”

Greetings global brothers and sisters,

To make this short and sweet, here's my entry. I'm having a very difficult time at the moment with local law enforcement. I have a court date set for February 26, 2002, precisely one month before my birthday. For almost no reason at all, they will probably take away or suspend my license. I don't even have a job right now! I am majoring in English at Pima Community College here in Tucson, Arizona. My heritage oddly enough happens to be almost pure Celtic with a little Potowatomis Native American. This is strange to me, as life usually is, because at the moment I happen to live in the middle of no less than five Mulberry trees, and no less than five ethnic groups (French, German, Welsh, Scots-Irish, and Potowatomis) make me up (how else do you say that?).

I have not yet been indoctrinated into any Henge or mystic circle, but I do welcome any Druids, or Wiccans, to Tucson with open heart and mind. I hope that you will pray/chant/whatever you do for my victory in the legal arena, as I have no familial support, and am not rich, being a full time student. I am so sick and tired of being a scapegoat on a motorcycle, and of putting up with the way(s) that local law enforcement treats long-term residents of this city of Tucson. I have nothing against them, while they seem to have everything against me.

Right now I'm painting (yes, painting, not scribbling with markers and pencils) a map of France in acrylics for my first French class (French 101). I noticed that the nation of France is shaped like a five-pointed star, which is also interesting, and there seems to be a dog or a demon or something that extends from the northwest portion of the map. Weird. Weird as life really.

Druid Heart Spirit Grove: News from California

Up here in the mountains, the brighter seasons come late, but winter always comes early. The grove's site is peaceful. I've been seeing and hearing a lot of ravens, and owls around the grove lately. We'll do our winter solstice in the snow this year, if there is any covering the earth up here by then, we'll get to have a large fire. Looking forward to a nice peaceful winter, time to do all the Druid arts and crafts and get-togethers for potluck feasts. We are going to gather for staff making, and Ogham carving, and bell branch making (hopefully!). Other than these things we are going to keep it

simple for this dark season, time for me to keep writing and painting.

Baccharis Grove: News from California, Publisher of "A Druid Missal-Any"

The community association where the Grove site is located held a meeting in November to discuss with the local residents the guidelines for the woodlands to be turned over to the Orinda Park and Recreation Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving open space. Emmon, founder of A Druid Missal-Any and Third Order Druid, who passed away two years ago, had established a trust to preserve the land as a recreation area or wilderness area. The guidelines were set up to protect the ecological values of the area, encourage use by local residents, provide safe access, prevent hazards to the surrounding property and develop revenue for maintenance and other Foundation projects

There are also plans to have a memorial plaque to Emmon on the land so hikers passing by might think of him and who gifted the land to stay preserved as a natural wildlife habitat.

We Get Correspondence!

Dear Order of Grannos,

Please consider our invitation to join a new Healing Arts and Artists Regional Directory designed to showcase Holistic Health Practitioners, Personal Growth Facilitators, Workshops, Schools, Body workers, Artists, Musicians, and providers of Healing Services and Natural Products. Regional visitors and locals alike can now conveniently explore your area's rich and diverse Healing Arts and Artist Communities.

Please go to <http://www.byregion.net>. Click on your country, state or region and look for "New Member Signup" in the upper right-hand corner of the page.

Please contact me if you have any questions or comments. Mail to: kranier@byregion.net

Peace and Prosperity,
Kristan Ranier

To the Council of Dalon Ap Landu:

Liturgical Notes

As Third Order Druid active in the Reform I propose the following additions to the enactment of the Samhain Special Order of Worship. For Groves fortunate to have altars, after the Second Reply the altar fire is extinguished, and all Third Order Druid exchange their red ribbons to white. This makes sense as the next lines to be recited by the officiating Druid are:

"Lo we are as wraiths; our fire is turned to ashes, and darkness walks the land."

After the Second Chant the fire is then relit, thus reproducing the extinguishing of the house fires in Ireland and Scotland at Samhain, and then relighting them from the ceremonial bonfire. The bonfire was lit by friction, and that is something we could work on devising to relight the fire in the future.



Hot Tub Healing

By Pat Haneke and Nozomi Kibo

Well, last time, we gave you our Shugyo service, which relies on cold pounding water to purify from above; so we'd like to balance that by stressing the warm waters bubbling to heal you from below. Japan is well known for its plentiful (over 14,000) natural onsens (i.e. thermal spas) due to the volcanic nature of the islands. Many were discovered by shivering hunters during the winter in the mountains, where they had melt through the heavy snows, providing a refuge for wild animals (especially snow-monkeys). Myths often state that the hunter was led there by an injured animal seeking to have their wounds healed by the waters.

According to my research, many onsens are located in nearly-inaccessible rustic locations of great scenic beauty, often requiring hours-long hikes from nearby roads. Most of these have been deepened and lined with natural stones, bamboo screens, hand-built changing areas. The best are open to the sky year round ("rotenburos") and sometimes are mixed bathing, especially late at night (if you're lucky). Many romantic movies pivot on a humorous rendez-vous that occurs there. Onsens are still one of the top five destinations for travel-crazy Japanese, indeed dozens of books and studies have been written on their bathing customs. After all, "cleanliness is next to Godliness," which is why the Japanese are such a sacred people? Their public bathing houses ("sento"s) yet remain in the poorer sections of the cities, and artificially heated "onsens" (with bowling alleys and recreational sports) are built in the midst of sprawling urban centers. Nozomi says that entire offices or companies will stay at the traditional inns for weekend retreats; drinking, eating, bathing, rough-housing, drinking, singing, having a short business meeting, more drinking, etc.

Now, the Celts were also big fans of spas, springs and natural wells, when they could find them. Specific deities (e.g. Grannos, Suliva) were assigned to each one, and offerings were thrown into the pool for those seeking healing or similar blessings. These holy wells of "Saints," who offering healing and good fortune, continue to attract Catholic pilgrims to this day, and this phenomenon is well documented in bookstores. Many famous springs, such as Baths, were expanded and commercially developed by the Roman conquerors.

According to Mike, back in the misty 70s, the NRDNA Berkeley Grove's very own Order of Dian Cecht (apparently, a substitution for the Order of Grannos) would hold regular healing seminars and workshops followed by, you guessed it, hot-tub healing. So, to revive an older custom, I give you our version in simplistic format; which of course may be done in a warm bathtub. I defer to those women out there, who have raised functional bathing to aromatic tactilely pleasurable

ritualistic experience, and ask that each expand it in their own way. It could be an hour-long and suitably womb-like.

1. Disconnect phone and turn-off all annoyances.
2. Stretch thoroughly
3. Open windows and let in cool fresh air and sun/moonlight
4. Take a short shower and then clean tub.
5. Dim the lights.
6. Fill with piping hot water. Welcome it.
7. Allowing a little water to drain and keeping the tap or shower open.
8. Add accessories (candles, salts, herbs, oils, mineral supplements, etc.)
9. (Some add Waters-of-life blessed for the occasion.)
10. Place a guardian statue in the waters to address (i.e. rubber-ducky)
11. Let water cool down to just above tolerable.
12. Bless your self and the tub
13. Ask to enter, and then slowly enter the tub.
14. Assume desired position or perform mudras.
15. List current ailments. Remember the healthier days' feelings.
16. Internally focus on feeling the afflicted areas.
17. Humming mantras is particularly pleasant when half submerged.
18. Channel the heat and such to those parts, melting and smoothing them, making things flow where they have stopped.
19. Ask for advice, wait and listen. This part takes a while.
20. Contemplate life-style and diet changes or divine requests that come to your mind.
21. Thank the Gods or guardians involved and ask to finish.
22. Pull the drain and bid farewell to the waters.
23. Ask the healing spirits to remain with you as the waters slowly drain away.
24. Let the waters pull away illness as they drain.
25. Quick rinse and dry.
26. Wrap in something warm and take a nap in a dark, quiet place.

Yule Time Caroling

By Sine Ceolbhinn

Strangely enough, Christmas is one of the few times of the year that we feel like singing with our neighbours outside of a karaoke bar. Easter songs? A few. Groundhog Day songs? Not likely. We all want to sing, but trip over the uncomfortable lyrics, right? I decided to but together a little list of songs that a pagan could use in company with their monotheistic friends.

A few hours of scanning the internet has given me a collection of popular songs that didn't dwell on babies in food troughs, righteous crowns, deceased people with bird wings, and ecstatic shepherds hearing voices in the dark (won't even go there). I prefer my own improbable stories (grin). Just change "Christmas" to "Yule time" and most are okay. Santa Claus is rather unavoidable, but he's nearly pagan, and so I let him slide. Many of the songs on the list below have on-line free music-files and lyrics at:

<http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/~ai251/xcarol.html>

- Auld Lang Syne
- Christmas Song (Chestnuts roasting)
- Deck the Halls
- Do they know it's Christmastime at all?
- Frosty the Snowman

- Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer
- The Grinch's Theme Song
- Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas
- Here Comes Santa Claus
- Holly Jolly Christmas
- Home For The Holidays
- I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus
- Jingle Bells
- Jingle Bell Rock
- I'll Be Home For Christmas
- It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas
- It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year
- Jolly Old Saint Nicholas
- Let It Snow
- O Christmas Tree
- Rocking Around the Christmas Tree
- Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer
- Silver and Gold Silver Bells
- Sleigh Ride
- That Christmas Feeling
- Up on the Rooftop
- We Wish You a Merry Christmas
- White Christmas
- Winter Wonderland

Now, I was going to make a list of filkable songs, but surprise, somebody's gone ahead and re-done most of the Christmas songs in a Neo-Pagan flavor. Isn't it great that people do all the work for us? You could spend weeks studying the solstice. Enjoy!!

- http://www.catcreations.com/chatte/library/Y1_songs.htm
- <http://www.locksley.com/greenbook/#YULE2>
- <http://home.intranet.org/~maggi/true/bardicarts/songs/Sabbats/Yule/yulecarolbook.pdf> (with piano sheet)
- <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Parthenon/1574/yulesong.htm>
- <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/5341/carols.html>
- <http://www.pacificcoast.net/~hornowl/Yulesong.html>
- <http://home.talkcity.com/SpiritCir/willowfiresong/Frames/Author.html>
- http://members.tripod.com/Willow_Firesong/Frames/tuneHome.html
- <http://www.mothermountain.org/solsticetunes.html>
- <http://www.celticsilverspiral.org/Wicca/Songs/Pagan.htm>
- http://www.spirit-paths.com/pagan_songs.htm



Various Winter Customs

By Eric, ex-Akita Grove, now in NYC.

I enjoyed the Samhain activities, and spent four hours searching for good customs to complement the next issue. It's a simple list of what I plan to do, because I'm not much of a writer.

- Nov 23 Divining the best presents after a hearty Thanksgiving meal by asking relatives and the Gods.
- Dec 1st Cleaning out the house thoroughly--Any remaining dust is "Not mine, please ignore it."

- Dec 2nd Light “advent candles” or Yule Candles marking down the Solstice Sun’s arrival.
- Dec 15th Decorating the House- Holly, Mistletoe, tree setup, bunting, Yule-logs, front lawn décor. Mail out blessings (Christmas cards) to friends and curses to enemies.
- Dec 19th Donate 10% of December Paycheck to charities closest to my house. And carry small presents to distribute to beggars and muggers in NYC.
- Dec 20th Wassailing and Caroling. Nothing more than Trick or Treating for the winter, fun to do with the Christians.
- Dec 21st Vigiling in the Grove. Spend the longest night of the year in the grove with a fire, several blankets and some friends to encourage the sun to make a come back.
- Dec 21st Mari Lwyd in Wales (Lair Bhan in Ireland)-- The Welsh visited houses with a draped horse skull, interrogated their neighbours with strange questions, and got free booze if the homeowner couldn’t come up with decent answers. I think Barney’s head on a stick would be fine and appreciated.
- Dec 22nd Namahage. In Akita, drunken barefoot men in demon masks, straw clothing, flaming torches (my that’s dangerous sounding) would burst into pre-decided homes “surprising” a family at dinner and terrorizing the bejezus out of small kids. The father would ransom their children’s lives with more booze, and the demons would bless the house to protect it from fires and further burglar intrusions. Very similar to German house visits by Father Christmas (Weihnachtsmann or Julknep) and his point man, the “Black Moor” (Knecht Ruprecht) Don’t you pity my neighbours?
- Dec 23rd Celebrate the Emperor of Japan’s Birthday (he is the descendent of the Sun Goddess after all).
- Dec 24th Presents and Party
- Dec 25th Hanging out sheaves of corn or birdseed AFTER Christmas for the all-winter birds.
- Dec 26th Divination by dropping a handful of pine-needles into a bowl and rohrsarching
- Dec 26th Boxing. Put away boxes and decorations. As for the Tree: Put the tree in a safe spot in the yard (needles still on) away from the house. Allow to thoroughly dry and use it to light Beltane fire. WHOOSH! What a sight!
- Dec 27th Return presents and buy discounted goods at stores for next year! A gift of the Gods!
- Dec 30th New Year Resolutions. Adding thanks for last year’s completed ones and a tweak from everyone in the room for not finishing the last ones.
- Dec 31st Fireworks, all-night parties are fine to continue.
- Jan 1st Sleep to Noon. Pray to Braciaca for forgiveness and mercy.
- Jan 6th “Epiphany.” Credit card bills arrive. Holidays are officially over.



Christmas Plants and Picking the Yule Log

By Mairi Ceolbhinn, D.C. Grove

Druids love and respect their plants and truly wish them to return to full vitality in the spring. Without plants, how'd we do our sacrifices? What we'd eat? What'd we wear? It's nice to know that in the depths of winter, when the days are shortest, that some plants are doing rather well. We wish to celebrate this with Christmas trees and such and bring their blessings into our homes.

Mistletoe, as we all know, was considered sacred, by our ancient Siblings and has remained such throughout the years. Its Gaelic name still means "all healing," although I'm not sure how to use it safely, since it is rather poisonous. Perhaps, it is by its poison, that it fends off winter's blight, and manages to bloom around the solstice? Its persistent fertility is therefore an established trait that gives us that great custom of "kissing under the sprig of mistletoe" which would happen in a night of partying and debauchery. That age-old theme of commemorating the death of the "old Sun" and birth of the "new Sun" is now popularly incorporated into the images of "Old Man Time and Baby New Year" doing a tag-team on January 1st every year.

Holly berries, like Mistletoe, bloom amidst the snow as if to defy winter and encourage the return to life. Its green boughs were of course common decorations on buildings, holy places and public buildings during the winter festival, and this tradition has fortunately continued to this very day. Even the Japanese, Mike Scharding says, have a "kadamatsu" placed in front of the door at New Year's Eve.

Yule Log Tradition:

Not to be morbid, but a sacrifice is necessary to rekindle the life of the dying sun (no, I'm not pro-Aztec, which sounds like a marketable drug), and it seems the Yule Log has filled that role for several centuries. "Yule" comes from "hweol," meaning "wheel," which is a frequent European symbol for the Sun. So you're basically giving the Sun a good-needed torching to warm it up.

According to various sources, it is widely agreed that the hearth of the Celtic House was the home of a protective spirit, and (for practical and symbolic reasons) the fire was rarely allowed to die out except once or twice a year during the big fire holidays. Special prayers were and are still spoken before leaving the banked fire of turf for the night in rural areas. Much magic also went on around the fire during cooking, story telling, and entertaining of guests. The hearth was basically the pre-modern "Home Entertainment Center." If

you've ever noticed, televisions also send comforting relaxing flickers of light into a darkened room while you stare blankly?

Now, back in those days, people had access to common forests surrounding their village. The choice of the wood varied greatly among locales, but one good size tree would provide several logs for a neighborhood. But under no circumstances, should you steal one from a neighbor's private land (and no buying one at a parking lot, good religion is do-it-yourself). I've not heard of any special methods of cutting a tree down, but a short ceremony, and posting a few days advance notice for malevolent or uninterested spirits to depart, would certainly be in order. (No, that Golden Sickle is no more effective than a haddock, get a good steel axe.) Angry spirits will make the tree conk you on the head; so be forewarned.

Once cut down, a goodly size log was the festooned and regally dragged back to town through the streets. As the Log entered the house, some cultures would give it a hearty drink of oil, salt and mulled wine, with a song perhaps. In more recent times, it was burned on Christmas Eve (which is close enough to the Solstice), with music, activities and frolicking. To kindle the fire, splinters from last year's logs (saved by the eldest daughter) were used to get the substrate of dry logs going, since those Yule-logs are hard to burn by themselves. Guests were encouraged to toss sprigs of holly on the fire to take away bad luck. The way it burned would prognosticate the future.

Splinters of the log and cinders were taken home to protect against fires, lightning and tax-collectors at their home. Now the Yule Log tradition, widespread since the 12th century, nearly died out with the change to pot-belly stoves and grills in the late 19th Century. The tradition still survives in sizeable pockets today in the country-side today. For fire sensitive areas, a smaller log-shaped cake now decorates the dining room table. I've tried this custom for a few years in my little BBQ next to my house (sneaking one from the Rock Creek National Park), and saved some ashes, and no disasters have yet befallen my home (well, except the Pentagon in the Virginian Commonwealth, but that's the workplace, perhaps the White House and the "Mystic District" of Washington, D.C. were spared because of their National Yule Log?).

For me a Christmas tree is just another elaboration on "bringing the greenery in," and it certainly is a younger tradition than the Yule Log, perhaps a merger of pagan Nordic tree worship and perhaps the 13th century morality plays' "Tree of Life" (from the Garden of Eden) which was often the only stage prop, and conveniently performed around the Solstice. Perhaps, the inability to have a Yule Log burning and urbanization led to the soaring popularity of the Christmas tree in the 19th century? So go get your plants!

The Wood Song

Taught to Mike by Sam Adams

You don't have to live in a forest to have a Yule log, just a saw, a car, and a nearby park with some dead or fallen wood. But what kind of wood do you want? Here's a song that's been around awhile and should help you.

Oaken logs will warm you well, That are old and dry;
Logs of pine will sweetly smell, But the sparks will fly.
Birch logs will bum too fast; Chestnut, scarce at all.
Hawthorn logs are good to last, Burn them in the fall.

Holly logs will burn like wax, You may burn them green;

Elm logs, like to smouldering flax, No flame to be seen.
Beech logs for the winter-time, Yew logs as well.
Green elder logs it is a crime For any man to sell.

Pear logs and apple logs, They will scent your room.
Cherry logs across the dogs Smell like flowers of broom.
Ashen logs, smooth and grey, Burn them green or old;
Buy up all that come your way, Worth their weight in gold

Source: <http://www.earthspirit.com/twnls.html>.

Recorded on: "This Winter's Night," *Mothertongue*, 1998
(earthspirit@earthspirit.com, EarthSpirit Community, P.O. Box 723-N, Williamsburg, MA 01096)

Gifts for Yule

Yule is traditionally the time of year to share gifts with family and friends. As our thoughts turn to prospects of what to buy A Druid Missal-Any offers these ideas that have a decidedly natural theme.

California Oak Foundation:

Acorns and Eat'em: A How-to Vegetarian Cookbook by Suellen Ocean. Contains complete acorn leaching instructions, nutritional information, and 35 acorn recipes. Paperback \$10.95.

Native Oaks of California Poster. Designed by Good Nature Publishing, the "botanically correct" renderings are bordered by drawings of each species' leaf and acorn. Also shows locator maps. Full-color; 24" x 36." \$15.99.

Oak Leaf Pillar Candle. Hand-poured 100% beeswax, and embossed with a beautiful oak leaf design, this long-burning candle has natural golden color and subtle honey scent. Decorative gift box. 4" tall, 3" diameter. \$14.50.

To order mail orders to: California Oak Foundation
1212 Broadway, Suite 810, Oakland, CA 94612
Credit card orders: Tuesday-Friday 10 am-4 pm (Pacific time)
Call: (510) 763-0282 or fax: (510) 208-4435

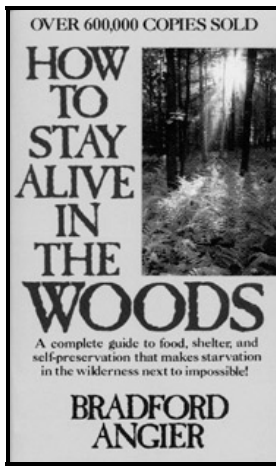


Bat Conservatory

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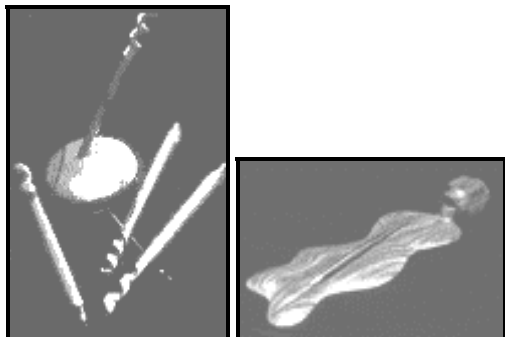


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Elliot Landes is a designer/woodworker. Landes designs and produces various writing instruments, desk accessories, and Judaica in his studio in Winters, California. He makes his work available through craft galleries and other outlets that offer fine writing accessories. Landes grew up in Oakland, California and studied at Hebrew University in Jerusalem for two years, followed by studies in product design at the California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland, where he received his B.A. in 1975. He began woodturning in college, and conceived the idea of turning wood writing instruments in his last year of college.

Today Landes produces more than three dozen types of writing instruments and desk accessories.

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<http://www.penmakers.net/pens2000.html>

Shepherd's Watch

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The nocturnal dial was first used by navigators in the 16th century who needed to tell the time by the position of the stars. It is actually quite simple to use. The North Star is sighted through the center hole and the pointer arm is aligned with the two "pointer" stars at the end of the scoop in the Big Dipper constellation, also known as Ursa Major. Shepherd's Watch® offers: available in pewter, \$25 and \$30, and in silver, \$90.

Set the middle wheel to the month.
Hold the dial upside down.
Sight the North Star through the hole.
Align the top of the arm with the two end stars of the Big Dipper to read the time.

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Software Games:

"The Mystery of the Druids"

Sounds Fun, but is it Good for the Druids?

Despite Mike Scharding's initial reservations, he found it to be actually great fun! The conversations are non-linear, amazingly enjoyable, witty, and have a tantalizingly dire undertone. The 3-D graphics and amazing audio-visual backdrops are beautifully rendered with tiny minor details that add palpable authenticity. Your sidekicks feed you reasonably correct historical Celtic information.

The game takes about 45 hours (in total) to complete or 10 decent gaming sessions. There are 16 brain-wrackers that require you to carefully search and touch EVERY nook to insure you get all the items. There are only a few places in the game where you can die, so don't worry too much, you can save often and replay favorite parts. Mike, who bought the game (and wrote this review), occasionally cheated, and built a cheat page:

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

However, it is definitely not positive PR for the Druids, as it represents these modern "gentlemen's clubs" as sinister, murderous people bent on taking over the world. While Mike is interested in taking over the world too (on a part-time basis), he does object to the murderous bit. For the more activist members, you may wish to protest the merchandization of Druidism. But there are good Druids involved in the plot, too. It should be jolly good rollicking fun for your PC-owning friends in the seasonal holidays (\$45 or \$1 per hour). Don't get it for your mother.

Applicable Homepages

You can buy it here for \$45:

<http://www.mysteryofthedruids.com/english/index.php3>

Search for Mystery of the Druids. You can buy it here:
http://www.cdv.de/english/_index.html

(Click the English flag) and send Coded Rune e-mail messages to your friends.

<http://www.mysteryofthedruids.com> the actual home-site

This is America! There is also a free downloadable English demo version, which allows you to question the gardener and solve some puzzles and sneak into the courtyard of Lord Sinclair. Go to:

<http://www.mysteryofthedruids.com/english/index.php3>



Oak Death Fighters Get \$1 Million Grant

By Richard Halstead,
Marin Independent Journal, Nov. 16, 2001

Scientists searching for clues to stem the sudden oak death epidemic plaguing Marin and nine other California counties will receive \$1 million from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation in San Francisco.

"That's really good news," said Matteo Garbelotto, a forest pathologist with the University of California at Berkeley who has done much of the pioneering research on the scourge. Government red tape has prevented researchers from getting the money they need to purchase necessary lab equipment, Garbelotto said.

The best thing about the grant is that the Moore Foundation--founded by Intel co-founder Gordon Moore in 2000--allowed researchers to determine how they would spend the money, said Susan Frankel, a U.S. Forest Service scientist.

Word of the grant was probably the brightest news to emerge from yesterday's fourth annual meeting of the California Oak Mortality Task Force, the group of government officials and scientists formed to organize the state's response to the disease. Nearly 100 people turned out for the meeting at the Community Center in Petaluma.

In July, Gov. Gray Davis approved \$3.6 million in state funds to respond to sudden oak death. The funding is in question, however, due to the subsequent economic free-fall. On Wednesday, Davis proposed \$2.24 billion in cuts to the current state budget.

"We haven't got word from the governor's office yet as to whether or not we'll have to take a cut," said Mark Stanley, an assistant deputy director of the California Department of Forestry and the task force's chairman.

Stanley said that the federal government is still moving forward with plans to impose a national quarantine on the movement of disease hosts from infected areas. But any action is several months away, said Carolyn Pizzo, a U.S. Department of Agriculture official.

Marin County Agricultural Commissioner Stacy Carlsen said he has yet to receive any funding for enforcement of state regulations adopted in May aimed at preventing the spread of the disease. Carlsen said he needs money to hire a full-time employee, who could devote all his time to enforcing the regulations.

"I need a person," Carlsen said. "I'm shouldering this whole thing with my existing staff."

Gov. Davis allocated \$266,000 in his current budget to the 10 agricultural commissioners who preside in areas where sudden oak death infestations have been identified. Carlsen

estimates the commissioners, who are charged with the bulk of the enforcement responsibility, need \$800,000.

Problems in interpreting the regulations and standardizing their enforcement throughout the 10 counties have also emerged, officials said. The commissioners are scheduled to meet Dec. 13 in an effort to develop a more uniform approach, Carlsen said.

"We do have a problem right now with high-risk material moving from infected counties to uninfected counties," said Monterey County Agriculture Commissioner Eric Lauritzen.

Alan Kanaskie, a forest pathologist with the Oregon Department of Forestry, said California waited a long time before adopting the regulations.

"I think they should have done that right away," said Kanaskie, who detailed Oregon's efforts to eradicate the disease from nine sites in his state. After discovering the disease there in July, Oregon officials immediately quarantined the area and are in the process of clearing it of all trees and plants that host the sudden oak death pathogen.

Because the disease appeared in Oregon in isolated spots, Kanaskie speculated that birds, most likely pigeons, or insects might be spreading it.

Researchers yesterday said they now believe that green waste--vegetative matter under four inches in diameter--poses the greatest risk of spreading the disease's spores.

Under the current regulations, Marin residents who chop down a dead or dying tree are supposed to get a permit before moving it off their property, Carlsen said. But Carlsen said he has no problems with people transporting wood to local composters, such as Redwood Landfill and the Marin Recovery Center.

Shipping wood outside of Marin, particularly to uninfected counties, is forbidden, however, without government approval, Carlsen said.

Garbelotto said that preliminary tests indicate that heating infected wood--to 131 degrees Fahrenheit for up to at least one hour--kills the sudden oak death pathogen, a kind of brown algae of the genus *Phytophthora*. If done under proper conditions, composting should be safe, he said. Results from additional tests are expected soon.

"We should know for sure in a week," Garbelotto said.

Other research results announced yesterday indicate that the disease reduces the density of the wood it infects, making its use as lumber impractical.

The meeting concluded with some hopeful news. A controlled burn conducted in an area of Marin affected by sudden oak death in September indicates that the disease may not make wildland fires significantly more dangerous, as feared, said Mike Swezy, a vegetation specialist with the Marin Municipal Water District.



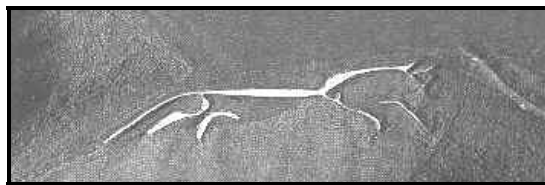
Massive Iron Age Hillfort Unearthed

Sources: BBC News (1 November 2001 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/>), The Guardian, The Independent, The Times (2 November 2001 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/> <http://www.independent.co.uk/> <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/>)

English Heritage archaeologists announced that they have finally discovered a long-lost massive prehistoric fortress. Traces of the sophisticated complex on precipitous Roulston Scar, near Thirsk in North Yorkshire (England), have been recorded over the centuries, but it is only now to be given its proper place in the schedule of ancient monuments. Suspicions that a hill fort existed in the area date back to the mid-19th Century, when an Ordnance Survey team mapped a stretch 670ft long of "tell-tale" Iron Age earthworks, but they were later confused with medieval boundary ditches and deleted.

A combination of global positioning technology by mappers' satellites and "good old-fashioned legwork" revealed the true nature and the awesome scale of the fort. The survey revealed that the fort was enclosed by a two-metre-deep trench and a four-metre-high "box rampart," fronted by a timber palisade and topped by a defended walkway; only two entrances were detected, adding to the site's impregnability.

"We were shocked to discover such a huge complex," said Alastair Oswald, archaeological field investigator for English Heritage. Preliminary examinations of the remains suggest it was more than twice the size of most other prehistoric strongholds. Built of timber palisades and girdled by a 1.3 mile circuit of ramparts, 60 per cent of which are cut out of solid limestone, the fort has been provisionally dated at 400BC.



As well as its defensive function, archaeologists think it may have been a "statement of power," possibly housing the Iron Age equivalent of a regional assembly. "Such a large fort would have taken a vast amount of timber and labour to build, which poses many more intriguing questions," said Mr. Oswald. The fortress must have taken several years--and more than 10,000 cubic metres of earth and rock, and 3,000 trees--to build, but nobody seems to have lived there for any length of time. Most hillforts were more akin to fortified villages or

walled towns, often with substantial permanent populations. The evidence so far from Roulston Scar suggests it never was a permanent settlement. Significantly, the stronghold faces what was in Iron Age times the territory of the Brigantes tribe, on the border between the Brigantes and their neighbours, the Parisii. One possibility is that the fortress was built by the Parisian king or paramount chieftain to impress, deter or intimidate their Brigantian neighbours.

Roulston's colourful history has been one reason for the fort's elusiveness; the famous White Horse of Kilburn, carved in the chalk, obliterated a stretch of rampart with its head. Richard Darn, for English Heritage, said: "The Victorian schoolmaster who carved the horse created a fake prehistoric monument by destroying part of a real one, which he didn't know was there." The site was also damaged during the second world war, when defensive works were dug in the main area, which has been the base of the Yorkshire Glider Club for 80 years. So many German gliding enthusiasts had used the grassy hilltop in the 1920s and 1930s that it was seen as a possible Nazi invasion site.

Interesting Reindeer Fact

According to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, while both male and female reindeer grow antlers in the summer each year, male reindeer drop their antlers at the beginning of winter, usually late November to mid-December. Female reindeer retain their antlers till after they give birth in the spring. Therefore, according to every historical rendition depicting Santa's reindeer, every single one of them, from Rudolph to Blitzen, had to be a female. We should've known...only women would be able to drag a fat man in a red velvet suit all around the world in one night and not get lost.

Calendar

Yule, Winter Solstice, when the Sun enters Capricorn, will occur on December 21, 2000 at 11:22 a.m. PST. Yule services will be held on Saturday, Dec. 22 at Solar Noon. Please call for carpool arrangements (510) 654-6896. For the social observance of Yule we will be going immediately after the service to AD's house. Regular Druid services will be held at Solar Noon on January 13 and 27. Please call the above number to confirm.

The Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are \$6.00 and online subscriptions are free, but might not include everything that is in the post mail edition. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's subscription free. Write The Missal-Any, c/o Weinberger, 309 63rd St, Apt. C, Oakland, CA 94618.

