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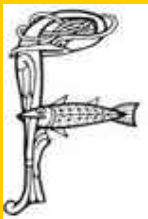
Fall Equinox, Year 44 (Sept 21st, 2006)

Volume 22, Number 6



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Fall Equinox, a minor High Day in the Druid calendar. This is the time of Cernunos, the Horned God, Lord of the Animals, God of the Hunt. The name means "Horned" or "Peaked One," and might be a title rather than the name of a deity. Cernunnos became associated with being the Horned God based on an early first century AD Parisian monument dedicated by sailors in the reign of the Roman emperor Tiberius, Nautes Parisiaca. The lower half of the monument is broken off but what remains is the head of a bearded god with antlers, and human and deerlike ears, with the inscription "[C]ernunnos" above it. Although this association has been found only on this one monument, Cernunnos has become identified other images of an antlered god. These images occur before as well as during the Romano-Celtic period in Gaul. The earliest that we know of in of is from an early rock

carving from Val Carmonica in northern Italy which dates from about the seventh century B.C. Here again there is the depiction of an antlered god and in these he is portrayed as part of a hunting scene and takes on a dual role as divinity and quarry. In one of the scenes he is dressed in a long garment that could be a deer hide and appears to be half-human and half-stag. In another carving he is portrayed again as half-human and half-stag, with the human part emerging from the back of the stag, and he is surrounded by hunters. The most famous image presumed to be Cernunnos is on the Gundestrup Caldron, pictured there with antlers of the deer sitting in a classic meditation or "Buddha" pose. Here he depicted as the Lord of the Animals, surrounded by stags, dogs, and bulls, and he is folding a ram-headed serpent. As Lord of the Animals he performs a multi-functional role: as protector of the animals, as benefactor that they would be plentiful to insure a good hunt, and provider bringing the game to the hunters. The image of Cernunnos with antlers and wearing a deer hide evokes the image of the shaman taking on the personae of the animal spirit by wearing the hide and head of the animal they wish to contact or connect with for assistance in healing or beseeching the animals to insure a good hunt and fertile herds for the tribe.



Though open season for deer hunting began in March, the most popular time was the fall in ancient Celtic society. After Christianity was introduced the height of the hunting season coincided with Michaelmas, which takes place just a few days later on the 29th of September. Meat would be salted and preserved during this time to last through the winter months. Scottish sources (Book of the Dean of Lismore, 15th century) describe the hunting season lasting from Beltaine to Samhain. Fall was the time when the deer would be in their peak condition after feeding all summer and taking advantage of the acorns that began falling late August. Acorns contain high fat and starch contents and would fortify the deer for survive the cold months of snow and scarce food. Also the does would have been mated by this time and the loss of stags would be possible without being detrimental to the survival of the herd.

Large scale hunting of game animals was conducted by the equites, the warrior/noble class. Though hunting was not a significant source for food of the tribe it was an essential component of the equites as a form of practice for military warfare. Although the boar was the favorite animal of the hunt, the deer was a close second. The haunch of a deer was used on occasion for the hero's portion at the ritual feast instead of pork and this practice was recorded in Irish sagas. Deer were hunted via the chase or trapped either in a pit or on a spike. It was considered an offence to set a trap on another's land without permission. There was a legendary judgment that ruled if a hunted deer is brought down by dogs on another's land, its belly went to the owner of the land. The rest was divided amongst the hunters. Deer were also hunted for sport, and to protect farm land. Here they were hunted by farmers to protect their crops from damage.



There is also evidence that deer were hunted for ritual purposes in Gaul and in Britain. Miranda Green writes in her book titled *Animals in Celtic Life and Myth* (Routledge: London, 1992, pp. 48-7), "At the Digeon shrine (Somme, northern France), ten stags were slaughtered and their skull caps with antlers attached were utilized, probably for some ritual, perhaps shamanic purpose, as head-dresses. In Britain, there is some evidence for stag-hunting, sometimes apparently for ritual purposes: deer bones and antlers occur in Iron Age shafts. The first period at the Danebury hillfort in Hampshire (between about 1000 and 500 BC) is indicated by a series of pits which follow the line taken by the later defences. One of these contained an undoubtedly ritual assemblage of carefully selected species, including red and roe deer. Antlers were found in a ritual pit at Newstead in southern Scotland. At Wasperton in Warwickshire, a Romano-Celtic ritual pit contained a deposit of two sets of antlers with parts of the skull caps attached, arranged to form a square. These had been placed beneath a layer of burnt material; and in the centre of the square a fire had been lit." And so we come full circle again back to the deer as divinity and symbol of Cernunnos. We don't know the exact purpose of these offerings. These configurations might have part of a ceremony dedicated to Cernunnos done to insure the fertility of the tribe's herds and flocks, and ultimately

the tribe's survival. The elaborateness and nature of them demonstrate that they held a great importance and the importance of the role of the animal in Celtic society.



News of the Groves



For the [Full Grove Directory](#)



Carleton Grove: News from Minnesota

Mike Scharding of Digitalis Grove had a very long talk with Arch Druid Ian of Carleton. Arch Druid Allison is on a semester long trip overseas, leaving him in charge of recruiting this fall at the College. Mike had not actually met Ian, so this was their first contact, although you can see pictures of Ian and his friend Thomas in Mike's Druidic Treasure novel (<http://www.rdna.info/treasure.html>).

Ian has all the necessary characteristics of dedication, background knowledge, and an intimate knowledge of the nooks and crannies of the woods surrounding Carleton. Currently there is a glut of seniors (he is one) in the group, and it will be vital that lots of new students join the group and pick up the reins. This is a cyclical recurrence at Carleton, and hopefully the beauty of the woods, and the sheer fun of the various activities will snare the hearts of several first year students at the Fall Equinox service this weekend.



The Local Woodland Druids: News from Canada

Here in the local woods, summer was pretty quiet for us. We each explored many pathways on our own. Our paths did not cross often so we did not see each other much. The summer weather has kept us apart. Summer in this neck of the woods is short so everyone tries to grab as much summer as we can. Fall is here, so we are sure to gather. For my self, the pottery shop and my family kept me pretty busy.

From your friends from the Grove of the Local Woodland Druid,

Sebastien Beaudoin



Digitalis Grove: News from D.C.

I have officially moved from Capitol Hill of Washington to Arlington County of Virginia, in order to be closer to the language lessons that I will be taking from September to February. After that I will be moving to South East Asia to work at the Embassy there to help Americans living abroad and to issue visas to foreigners travelling to America. My current home has a dogpark near by, and beyond that is

Arlington Cemetery itself, and a golf course a little the other direction. Lots of trees near my home and near my school makes Mike a very happy Druid.

I'm helping Thomas of MOCC to put together the 2005 version of their Liturgy Manual, which will be a nice little 80 page anthology when all the pictures are scanned in. I'm also pondering writing a small children's novel based on the old story The Little Engine Who Could, about a little girl who wants to raise a standing stone for her grandfather, the Archdruid. One or two other RDNA artists have expressed interest in illustrating it for me.

In the Samhain issue, I'm hoping to start a new column as a lead in to showing how I set up an RDNA mission overseas. It will be titled, aptly, Missionary Impossible? and I'll write up little sermons (oops!) I mean essays of topics that come up in my new job in yet another Buddhist country.



Rockspray Proto-grove: News from Indiana

The group is still active and going, but it is the busy time for most of the members. With hope we can become more active once the things slow down here. We are never gone and we are looking for other to join in group discussions.

Thanks

Matt



Dravidia Grove: News from Southern Indiana

The Equinox is upon us once again, and I shall be doing a small private ritual here. My work schedule does not allow me the time I would like for all the things I want to do.



Moose Breechcloth Proto-Grove: News From Minnesota

Gone camping.

Ok... we've been crazy mad running on the Pow-Wow trail, too.

Had a fabulous experience last weekend taking four of our friends who had never been to a Pow-Wow in their entire lives to their very first Pow-Wow. They had a blast. And I was really appreciative of all the questions they asked. They were really genuinely curious about the Native culture. We also took a Native buddy of mine, and his ten-year old son as well. We had quite the little tribe going. His son is just a living doll - chatty, inquisitive, brilliant - and not at all intimidated by hanging out with a bunch of schleppey grown-ups all day. Seeing that amazing mind in action in one so young has inspired me to offer my services to my buddy to mentor his son in some Native skills that he won't learn in his school - tanning animal hides, flint knapping, beading, Native dance, and basket work. He's a great kid; and I really look forward to spending a lot of time encouraging him to discover his own path on the Red Road. His dad has done an outstanding job thus far; and anything I can throw in there, I'll do happily.

It takes a whole tribe to raise a child...indeed.

We're heading west this weekend to hit some open prairie, and I'll also be stopping off at the Pipestone National Monument. I want to pick up some pipestone for the aforementioned prodigy to practice on. While I know it will be years before his father will let him actually USE the pipe, it's never too early to hone your skills for the creation of the pipe. Hey...mine is strictly ornamental. And I can help out with beading the calumet, too.

Looks like I won't be going ricing this year. I was really hoping to get out there. But with the drought, the water table is dangerously low. And the ricing fields are mostly mud... several feet deep. The few pockets still in open water will be the first to be harvested. And if you aren't there just as it ripens... no rice for you.

Not to neglect the other half here - St. Paul hosted its yearly Irish Fair - or "the Mick Pow-Wow," as I like to call it. Lou was out there with bells on his toes, and it took all I had just to keep up. I got to watch my very first hurley match. Now there is something that could only be Irish. Grown men running around on a large field swinging large ominous sticks at top velocity....and no one is wearing pads. The spectators weren't any safer, either...as the ball spent equal time whizzing past our collective skulls. One player went down hard with cramps. He was very unceremoniously picked up by his extremities by the other players, and dumped on the sidelines - while the game continued. Had to laugh. Lou's share of the food tickets were spent in encores at the fish and chips stand. I set up camp in front of the Irish stew stand. Gaelic Storm (whom many know as the "steerage band" from the movie "Titanic") was the evening's headliner.

Well, siblings - I think that's pretty much it for this installment. This summer has been all about camping, camping, camping - and Pow-Wow after Pow-Wow - mixed in with the requisite home projects that never seem to go away. And I don't anticipate the onset of autumn to be any different.

Nothing but camping plans on the horizon. Potentially ricing if we get about four feet of rain between now and then. And wrapping up Pow-Wow season. But it also looks like I'll be putting on a new hat this autumn as well...that of a mentor. And the jury is still out on what I'm looking forward to the most.

Gigawabamin nagutch,
And yours in the Mother,

Julie Ann and Lou



The Nine Oaks & Mystic Well Protogrove: News from Nevada

As the wheel is turning unto the Fall Equinox, our plans are to perform the NRDNA rite this year, as here in the desert heat usually lasts far into this season anyways. The rite was chosen under "vote" and will be enacted upon the astrological time of the Equinox. The rites will be held in our reseeding sanctuary up in White Pine County, and we for our connection to the Earth Mother will be planting a flatbed load of new trees, mostly white oaks and pines just prior to the Equinox rites itself.

Our theme for the Equinox is "branching as the trees" and we intend to have more of attunements with the earth mother and we again also plan to conduct an earth and Sky healing rite we composed ourselves, for this season both by vision quests and working with Earth techniques to become more "attuned" with Her, and our own "ways" of working with our inborn "creativity."

We wish all members Groves and protogroves, a merry time in this the coming balance of light and dark, and the waters of sleep season soon to begin thereafter!

We can be reached at nineoaksnmysticwell@gmail.com

Finegas



Clan of the Triplehorses: News from Oregon

Some of us from Clan of the Triple Horses have just returned from a visit to Yellowstone National Park. We agree it should be experienced by everyone who feels the calling of the Druids path. It is a place that will fill even the most jaded soul with a renewed sense of appreciation for Nature and our country.

For more information regarding Yellowstone from the World Wide Web especially for those with children, we recommend the following websites:

<http://www.nps.gov/yell/>

<http://www.yellowstonegeographic.com/flashsplash.html>

<http://www.ypf.org>

Along with requests of the Gods for help bringing balance into all our lives, our local Fall Equinox ritual will include prayers for global unity in honor of International Peace Day <http://www.peaceday.org/>. We hope you can join us.

We would like to also remind everyone that our group holds a public meet and greet in Medford, Oregon the first Wednesday evening of each month.

For details please send an email to triplehorses@gmail.com
And our website is <http://home.earthlink.net/~triplehorses/>



Nemeton Awenyddion: News from Cohasset, California

Hi Stacey! I hope things are going well for you and yours. Things here busy as always. Just to let you know that the celebration for the Equinox this year will be solitary. But, I have been contacted by some old members who want to start gathering again and I'm quite excited about that so hopefully we will be having a ceremony for Samhain this year with two of our old members returning. So we have an up and running Nemeton again!

Deep Peace,

Rhiannon

[Redwoods Proto-Grove: News from Turlock, California](#)



The name of the grove is "Redwoods Grove," we are located in Turlock, Ca. I founded the grove on Lughnasadh 2006. So far it's just myself, but I am currently scouting for members in the area. We are celtic and Norse oriented. And this e-mail address is the grove's official e-mail address: redwoodsgrove@yahoo.com and our homepage is: <http://caldruids.bravehost.com/>

Adam Mann /\



Duir De Danu Grove: News from California

To me, the quest for balance is the third tenet of every New Reformed Druid. It is just the right amount of this, just the right amount of that, like when one is putting together a certain kind of sauce in cooking, which has an alchemical aspect to it. It is when the pendulum does not swing too far in either direction, for if it does, it must be countered with a swing in the other opposite direction. It is when the level is just that, level, not tipping in any direction. During Mabon, (the term I use for the Autumnal Equinox, named after the son of Modron, who was stolen on the third day after his birth) I ponder a lot on the nature of balance. Nature Herself must have everything in balance. If animal populations get too large, predators increase, or there are diseases which kill off all but the strong. Nature is doing much the same with the human population. It is getting too large for the resources of the Earth Mother to support, so diseases are on the rise, many of which are bacteria and viruses resistant to the vaccines and medicines that human science has invented. Humankind has thrown everything out of balance, and needs to get back into balance with Nature, with the Earth Mother for its own survival. We must all seek balance, within ourselves and in the relationship of the human race with the Earth Mother.

Tegwedd ShadowDancer



Sunset Proto-Grove: News from California

Balance.

Balance is a hard thing- not just to strive for, but also to stay in that blissful state is difficult. Daily we balance our physical needs with our spiritual needs as well as the needs of those who depend upon us.

Some days can be harder when trying to balance our lives.

It is interesting what images come for us with certain prompts. When I think of balance I get the image of a juggler, who is juggling three or more pins, all the while standing on a board, which is placed on a ball. What does that say about me? I would venture to guess that it says that being in balance is work for me. Mostly because there are so many responsibilities in my life right now, that it requires a conscious effort for me to seek balance. But I do consciously work to find and maintain that balance.

As far as the act of achieving balance well there is no real prescription for me, only that going to the ocean or the woods to walk, sit, read, or write usually quiets my inner voice and lets me take in more of those quiet earthly whispers. Other things I do that act as reminders to me to work for that balance are; creating, dusting, rearranging my personal altar; shopping for, and preparing healthy organic meals.

Knowing my body's cues as to when it is time to find the balance is something I am learning as I go. I have

found that feeling stretched, fatigued, or tired are clues that my body needs rest and rejuvenation.

My moment of balance today? Making tea, eating my homemade yogurt for breakfast, and reading the quote on my tea bag. Today it is:

"Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony." Ghandi

Sounds like balance to me.

Maybe incorporating the song, 'Don't Worry...Be Happy!' will help in balance? Couldn't hurt!

Skye



Poison Oak Grove: News from California Publisher of "A Druid Missal-Any"

Whenever the thought occurred to me about one day being able to buy a house I knew that I wanted one in the woods where the deer would come down to eat my roses and that I'd get to know them well enough to tell them apart. This year that dream came true. There was a buck last year with harmless tumors that would pass by, but nothing like this year where two seem to have made the area around my house their home base. As I mentioned in the last Missal-Any there are two

bucks, a younger one maybe one or two years old, with two points and a soft brown coat. The other one is older and grayer with two deformed antlers that go straight up and have no tines, and one is much shorter than the other. I was told that this was the makings of a medicine deer. Deformed equates to wounded, and that I should watch him, that the young male deer is his prot?? the classic shamanic scenario in North America.

I've become obsessed with these deer. They seem to like it here, coming by nearly every day either sleeping under the front deck or in the nest that they have dug for themselves beneath the back, or grazing on the hillside above the house. Two weeks ago when I went out to the grove site to water the trees the older one was there in the middle resting. He jumped up but didn't go far, just up the hill above the grove site where he started to graze. They are usually quite close, often coming within 20 feet, either grazing or just resting and ruminating.

One of our members attended a two-day ancestor training workshop in August as part of shamanic practice training. The workshop was about connecting with blood ancestors from either the mother's line (mother's mother or mother's father) or the father's line (father's father or father's mother) and working in partnership with them for healing intergenerational patterns of disconnect as well as uncovering some of the unique gifts that have been inherited from these ancestors. It was an intense and intensive two days that included practices such as prayer, shamanic journeywork, song, dance, and much storytelling from the journeys and family histories.

Shelton's Credo



By Richard Myers Shelton,
AD of Carleton Grove 1969-1971, Order of Bracica
Presentation given to
Pilgrim House Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
October 9, 2005

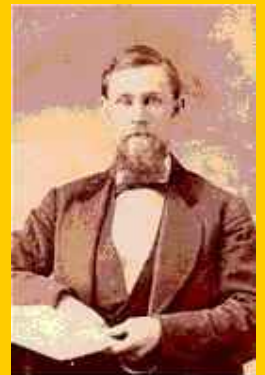
This talk grew out of an evening discussion group at Pilgrim House that encouraged participants to "build your own theology." One of the suggested exercises was to write down a Credo statement summarizing one's own beliefs. For presentation at Pilgrim House, I expanded my Credo statement to include a discussion of the spiritual milieu at the time of my college years, when my spiritual beliefs began to gel into their current form.

Childhood Religious Experience

I should start with a brief summary of my spiritual background. My parents were not religious. My father, a chemist from a very early age, would call himself a scientist, and would include in the meaning of that a solid, unblinking atheism. His parents were not strongly religious, either; when I stayed with my grandfather (many years after my grandmother had died), we went to church exactly once, on Easter Sunday—and this was probably meant more for my benefit than his.

But there are skeletons in any family's closet: my great-grandfather, John Nelson Shelton, was in fact a minister—for the tiny splinter denomination that called itself the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. This was a frontier offshoot of the mainline Presbyterian Church; it grew up in Tennessee and Kentucky not long after Daniel Boone led settlers into that area. The Cumberlands split from the main branch in about 1810 over three issues: the excessive education required of Presbyterian ministers (which was simply not possible on the frontier, quite apart from the general mistrust of book-learning), excessive interference from the church hierarchy in local affairs, and a complete rejection of the notion of pre-destination.

My great-grandfather, the first of his family to leave farming as a line of work, served as pastor for a series of small rural churches, most now defunct since family farming (let alone frontier living) has become largely a thing of the past. The Cumberland Church attempted a re-merger with the mainline church in 1910, but this brought about the sudden death of most of their smaller congregations, and my great-grandfather (part of the vocal minority who had opposed the merger) suddenly found himself out of work. So he settled down comfortably (this time in the city) and served the remainder of his days as a Justice of the Peace in Springfield, Illinois.



John Nelson Shelton
circa 1875

The Cumberland Church reminds me in many ways of Universalism: largely a frontier phenomenon, promoting self reliance and self determination, rejecting outside authority. I know next to nothing about the spiritual precepts of the Cumberland Church, or indeed about my great-grandfather's own beliefs. He died in the same year that my father was born, so I have but scant connection with him. But looking at my grandfather and at my father in turn, there cannot have been too much to object to in John Nelson's house, for both are honorable men of sterling moral character, with intellectual curiosity and a willingness to meet anyone halfway. A favorite family story relates how John Nelson (as JP) performed the first inter-racial marriage in Sangamon County, proclaiming that after talking with the couple he found them more ready and suitable to be married than most. (But don't jump to conclusions: the races involved were black and oriental. Comfort with mixing black and white—for my family as for any white family in southern Illinois—would come only in my time.)

I have spent some time rehearsing my great-grandfather's history (and it is only a late insertion into my text) because as I thought about it, I realized that what I will call this Frontier Independence is one of the foundations of my intellectual and spiritual framework. I will not be led. I will not accept direction from you, stranger; though you too have a right to your own independence.

(And the Cumberlands have maintained their own independence. The re-merger did not work out, and the group is still around today. They even have a denominational website, though I will allow that it has a certain southern mountain frontier roughness about it. The website does not say much about the denomination's current theology; and in today's spiritual climate I admit I am hesitant about asking too closely.)



Paul Myers
"The Boy Preacher"
circa 1934

My mother's world was very different. She grew up in a Pennsylvania Dutch family that was only on the fringe of that culture. Grandpa Myers was a shrewd businessman. His family was Amish, and my grandmother's Mennonite; so they were kicked out of their respective churches when they got married, but my grandfather made a good living supplying financial services to both communities. But during the Depression they were destitute. They ended up traveling the revival circuit. My uncle, "the boy preacher," ordained a Methodist minister at the age of 12, was a star on the revival circuit. He put most of the food on the table in those difficult times. Mom played her part in all innocence, leading the Hallelujahs earnestly from the front row. But she lost her faith as a teenager in biology class, and never looked back. She would now say simply that we cannot know the answers to religious questions. In her private moments she would probably agree with my father.

When I was 5 or 6, I was sent for a while to Sunday school, as an attempt, I suppose, to acculturate me to prevailing religious expectations; but I never went to church with my parents, because they never went. These early brushes with organized religion had almost no effect on me: the only clear memory I have involves threading string through a picture of the city walls of Damascus to raise and lower a basket so that St. Paul could escape the wrath of the mob. In retrospect, I must have seen him as something of a frontier hero.

Far more important to me was a thick book of Bible Stories for Children given me about this time by my devout aunt (who had traveled the revival circuit with my mother, but managed to keep her faith). I devoured this book, re-read it many times, and learned the stories well. At about 12 or 13 I spent a year attending the Baptist Church that my closest friend's family belonged to, but again, it was more about learning the stories and the Bible; it never once occurred to me to ask for baptism. It was not long after this that I took a special summer course in paleontology that meant far more to me in terms of my intellectual beliefs. But the story book and the stint in Bible study class gave me a knowledge of the Bible that I still value, for our civilization cannot be understood fully without it. And I think it was critically important that the Bible Stories for Children presented the Lord as a loving God; those stories, their values and aspirations, were a positive influence in my life, and they still occupy a warm spot in my memory.

But they did not convert me. I'm not sure how I would have answered then if asked point blank whether I believed in God. Certainly by the time I graduated from high school I was almost as hard-bitten an atheist-I mean scientist-as my father. I remember visiting my high school during Christmas break as a college freshman and telling the principal—a kindly elderly man—when he asked, that no I did not believe in God, and I was annoyed when he smiled condescendingly and assured me I would find faith as I grew older.

Old Testament Course at Carleton

In college there were three important influences on my religious beliefs. Fall term of my freshman year, determined to put the distribution requirements behind me quickly, I signed up for a course in Old Testament. What a revelation! A critical scholarly application of modern textual and historical criticism to a book at the cornerstone of our civilization—and something to which I had close emotional ties—was a truly eye-opening experience, as college is supposed to be. I had jumped into the deep end of the pool right off the bat, and found my vision and understanding expanded in ways I had never imagined.

But in retrospect, this course had one important failing: it encouraged me to respond to the Old Testament strictly in rational and academic ways. Never once did I question my non-belief in God, or wonder at my instructor's belief. Indeed, I could not have told you from his classroom presentation whether he did believe;

but during that term, at a special campus Chapel service, he was ordained a minister. It was clearly a deeply emotional experience for him, and as three other Carleton profs circled around him for the laying on of hands, I too felt a deep frisson—perceiving as it were the presence of God—but I was oblivious to the disconnect between this emotional response and my non-belief, as I was to the apparent contradiction between the rational academic roles of these professors and their calling to the Christian ministry.



I do remember well a key event in this course: a long discussion with one of my classmates one day after class, about what precisely she meant when she said that she was Christian. It was very puzzling, for she clearly did not believe in Christ as the Son of God in the conventional sense, and yet professed that being a Christian involved more than accepting the moral teaching of Christ. I could not understand what she was trying to describe.

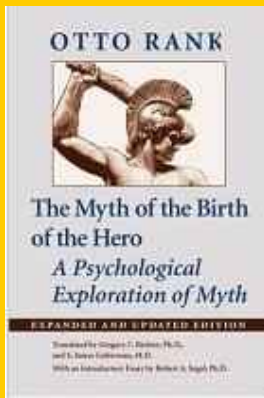
Classical Mythology

This darkness began to lift with another course I took Fall term the following year. The course was Classical Mythology, taught by Classics Prof (and later College President) David Porter, from whom I also took beginning Greek. I am amused to recall that I signed up for this course because I thought it would be an easy A: after all, I already knew about all there was to know about Classical Mythology, having read Edith Hamilton and Charles Bullfinch. And it was an easy A—not because I knew all the material already (for it was clear from the first day of class that Hamilton and Bullfinch were but tips of icebergs), but because I quickly became glued to my books for this course as for no other in my life. I discovered, finally, that Mythology is the key. It addresses what is in the height and depth of our souls in ways more powerful than any other in our culture. Think only of Star Wars - Modern Mythology, B films at best, that nonetheless grabbed and held the subconscious attention of an entire generation.

The stories as related in Hamilton and Bullfinch are pretty dry. What neither book manages to convey is the amazing emotional depth of myths and fairy stories, which keeps them alive even in this modern age. Before Freud and Jung gave us alternative languages for this, myths (along with art) were the primary tools of mankind for exploring the uncharted areas of the human psyche not illuminated by Aristotelian logic. Modern artists (painters, writers, musicians), starting in the Renaissance, have increasingly left the focus on Christian piety for images and themes that even today stand behind some of our most powerful works. We still explore this; it was only relatively recently that Bruno Bettelheim pointed out the psychological power of the Brothers Grimm, and how we short-change children of the emotional efficacy of these stories by sanitizing them. These tales give us things to chew on, ways to explore and to work out the knots in our lives.

The use made of myth varies widely from artist to artist, even from culture to culture. French playwrights, for example, like Anouilh and Cocteau, often put the protagonists of classical myth directly on-stage, but in modern situations, exploring how their mythological behavior adapts to our times; while English-language playwrights (O'Neill is a good example) keep their characters modern, but underline the parallels between their lives and classical myths.

One of the important modern insights is that, in broad strokes, many of these stories are remarkably similar, no matter where on the globe you find them. Otto Rank's book *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero* derives a common shape from the lives of mythological heroes: from mysterious birth of uncertain parentage, through early accomplishments, a period of wandering or hiding (typically in the company of a mentor), trial by combat or by wits, often culminating with killing the king / villain / father and marrying the princess / queen / mother. A tale may follow its hero further into later years, as he battles with forces or dragons that threaten his kingdom — and ultimately succumbs to them. This story in its broad outlines appeals to us so deeply that we recognize it immediately. We see it everywhere, from Oedipus to Ulysses to Beowulf, to Cyrus and Alexander, to Christ and Mohammed. George Lucas took the outline as expounded by Joseph Campbell and



wrote it down as a play book forming the mythological basis for Star Wars. (This playbook made its way around Hollywood and made a big impression there. Alas, movies have stuck so close to it that a certain sameness has set in.)

Early in the days of modern historical scholarship, such similarity could only be explained by borrowing: one story was similar to another because the later author had heard the earlier tale (somewhat like Hollywood today). Elaborate theories tracing the influence of one story on another were developed. But we have come to recognize since then that the stories are similar because we are similar, and share many common psychological needs and desires. All of us face the fundamental tasks of growing up, of fitting into society, of facing death. Somewhere in this process we must transform our parents from gods into fellow human beings — and our attempts are not always pretty. It is no accident that the first psychiatrist should have fastened upon Oedipus as the model for his theories.

The reason all this stuff hit me square between the eyes is that I had grown up largely repressing all the non-rational parts of my soul. Indeed, I like to say that it was in Classical Mythology 101 that I learned that I have a soul. I remember once in high school talking with my Mom about poetry; the point of the poetry, I said, was the artful use of language, the rhymes, the alliteration, the assonance. She just looked at me and shook her head. "You have no appreciation for poetry at all," she said, and I felt as annoyed as I would later feel when the principal reassured me that I would come to believe in God. But my Mom was right. I had missed the poetry for the words.

My emotional incompetence I lay directly to my relationship with my father. He himself had difficulty expressing any emotion (except impatience). Even his love of me and his pleasure and pride at my accomplishments he kept pretty much to himself. While teaching me explicitly how important it was to deal with the world of facts with carefully honed rationality, he taught me implicitly that one keeps emotions bottled up. One does not admit to them publicly; one tries not to think about them in private.

I remember vividly the first time I saw a chink in that armor. His department had purchased a tape recorder (a rare and wonderful instrument in those days), and he had brought it home to learn how to use it. We read various things into it (I remember Hamlet, Act I, Scene 1 going in), and at one point he read "In Flanders' Fields." He had been a soldier in WWII, and this poem evidently meant a lot to him, for he choked up in the middle of it and couldn't finish. He was terribly embarrassed, but my eyes were opened wide.

It was, however, quite clear that choking up in front of a tape recorder was an anomaly, and did not constitute an invitation to embark on a closer investigation of my own emotional landscape. In retrospect, I poured so much of myself into music then because it was one of the few safe channels I had available. When I was a freshman in college, my amused and incredulous roommate had to explain to me what to him were the blatantly obvious Freudian references in a play we had seen together. (I was nonplused that a playwright would say such things on the open stage.) It was David Porter in Classical Mythology who finally gave me permission to look. Until then, the only point of an education had been pursuit of a rational, academic view of life. But the message I finally heard was that "there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy, Horatio." Forget heaven and earth: look but into your own soul, and at how much lies there beyond the light of philosophy and reason. And we must deal with such things (as I was discovering) to become functioning adults.

Druidism and Bishop Robinson

It was later in my sophomore year that I stumbled headlong into my third important spiritual influence. Some have heard this story in more detail before, and it would be easy to speak at great length on it. But this talk is about my personal Credo, not about the Reformed Druids of North America, so I shall try to be brief.

One day in early spring, I was walking in the Carleton Arboretum with a good friend of mine, Steve Savitzky, a fellow geek with similar interests in math and computers, but two years ahead of me. He was to graduate in June, so we had little time left together. And as we had been discovering, he and I shared more than just an interest in math. We spent a long time talking about a whole host of issues that day, and at one point he turned to me with a speculative eye and said (out of the blue): "You'd make a good Arch-druid." As calls to ministry go, it came as something of a surprise!



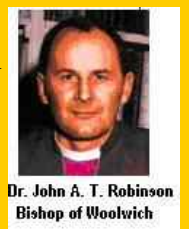
I had known that Steve was involved in the Druids, whatever that might mean. There had been an article about them in the campus paper the previous fall, with a picture showing all three of the surviving Druids at a service in the Arb. I hadn't known anything about the Druids, and the article hadn't made much of an impression. But Steve was leaving campus soon and needed a successor.

So in short order I learned the history of the Druids: how in 1963 (six years earlier), three friends at Carleton had founded Druidism to get around the College requirement that you attend Church every Sunday — or as the regulation said (to be a bit more inclusive), to "attend regularly scheduled religious services." The three founders believed, and I agree 100%, that the college really had no business imposing such a requirement; that it served no clear pedagogical purpose. It was just the College trying to run yet another aspect of our lives.

This was, after all, the 60s. It was still the early 60s, so students hadn't yet gotten around to protesting interference in other parts of their private lives, but this is where it began. The first claim of students (and young people in general) to freedom was to religious freedom: the right to make their own spiritual choices and to determine how to express them.

The year (1963) is important, and not entirely accidental. It was an amazing watershed year. It was the year that the Supreme Court ruled that public schools could not require recitation of the Lord's Prayer or Bible verses. It was the year of Martin Luther King's "I have a dream" speech, challenging us all to re-examine our moral obligations toward fellow human beings. (My family visited Washington the very next day, and marveled at all the folding chairs still out on the Mall.) It was the year that Pope John XXIII died, having convened Vatican II and putting in motion major modernizing changes in the Catholic Church; many worried whether these would survive a new papacy. It was the year that Dr. John A. T. Robinson, Bishop of Woolwich in the Anglican Church, published a short book called *Honest to God* that (against all probability) became a best seller and ignited a firestorm in mainline Protestant churches throughout England and North America.

Robinson's book was, as the Archbishop of Canterbury later wrote, "an unlikely best seller." It was written primarily for clergy and theologians in the Church of England, and it uses technical theological terms without apology or definition. (Some of these I have yet to find in a dictionary.) Perhaps most problematic, it does not appear to reach a very definite conclusion; it was intended by Robinson as a warning shot, not as a definitive solution to the problems he perceived. But the main problem turned out to be one that grabbed everyone's attention (especially since it was a bishop saying it), and one that was relevant to most of Christendom, not just the C of E.



Dr. John A. T. Robinson
Bishop of Woolwich

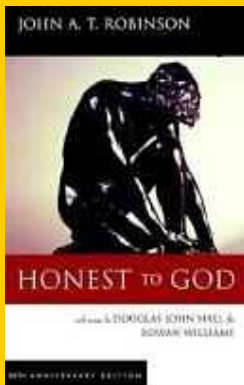
Basically, his main point was that—despite advances by theologians going back into the 1800s—the main body of the Church was still teaching a theology that, from the viewpoint of modern educated people, seemed absurd and self-contradictory. The Church's language on God, Christ, Worship, Prayer, and Morality was no longer meaningful in the modern world, and people did not derive spiritual fulfillment from a Church still stuck in the old rut. These issues, he said, have already been addressed by theologians like Bultmann, Bonhoeffer, and Tillich, but their work was largely unknown among the laity, and the Church was ignoring

it. The danger, he wrote, is that by insisting on the old language, the Church risked convincing modern Christians that their beliefs were anti-Christian, and that they should therefore leave the Church.

But the real bombshell was the popular exposition of just what it was that Bultmann, Bonhoeffer, and Tillich had been saying. In baldest terms, they were saying that the language the church uses to speak of God was a metaphor that modern science had made obsolete. People of Christ's time already understood that the Tripartite division of the world into Heaven Above, Earth Below, and Hell Down Under was a metaphor. Educated people of that time would not have expected to find God "up there", any more than they would expect to find Zeus on Olympus. God was not "in the world"; he was "out there," "beyond," "transcendent." The modern theologians said that in a similar way, modern science has now made it clear that the God "out there" is also a metaphor; the traditional personal God existing outside and independent of us is something "no educated person can seriously believe in." Robinson writes:

Suppose the atheists are right—but that this is no more the end or denial of Christianity than the discrediting of the God 'up there', which must in its time have seemed the contradiction of all that the Bible said? Suppose that all such atheism does is to destroy an idol, and that we can and must get on without a God 'out there' at all?

For these theologians, God moves within. Tillich calls God "the ultimate ground of our existence, the depth of our being." To seek God, seek a deeper immersion in your existence. It's almost the opposite of early Christian monasticism, which sought holiness by withdrawing from the world. But, says Robinson, the clear message of the Gospel is that you should seek out and love your neighbor; that the proper focus of our spirituality should be the selfless giving of self to the community. Without that, our traditional ritual offers nothing; it is a sham.



The book goes on to discuss how, given this wrenching shift in the concept of God, we need to revisit our understanding of Jesus, of Worship, of Prayer, of Morality. Robinson insists he is not advocating a simple naturalism: there is a fundamental Christian message, namely, that the ground of being is (as St. Paul wrote in the letter to the Romans) the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord, i.e., in the manner that Jesus taught. The message of the Bible is that true divinity can only be experienced by humans in dealing righteously with other humans.

But for most of his readers, Robinson seems to have given away the store. The Church had always claimed that its authority derived from God; if you believe that such an external authority does not exist, it is natural to claim that any authority based on it, especially moral authority, becomes null and void.

So it was not entirely unreasonable in this climate for three highly educated Carleton students to wonder just why the Dean felt he had the authority to send them into Church. If all it took was "regularly scheduled services," well, by George, we'll schedule some. And they did. They put a fair amount of work into this, so that the services could be believable as a reasonable alternative to a Christian service; but the intent all along was to hold the whole attendance requirement up to ridicule if it included things like the Reformed Druids of North America. The underlying principle approaches Frontier Independence: forced religion is not religion; it is tyranny.

So people came to services and filled out their Chapel slips. Most also went to regular Chapel and filled out slips there as well; no point in jeopardizing your graduation just to make a point. (People tell me even today that I should go to a real church for much the same reason.) The men sent their slips in to the Dean of Men, the women to the Dean of Women. And the Dean of Men's office, as expected, rejected all the Druid slips. (Curiously, the Dean of Women's office didn't, which muddied the waters a bit; but they were probably just not reading the slips very carefully.) But the point had been made, and the following year the College dropped the Religious Attendance Requirement — the first of many such steps toward barbarism extracted

from the administration, on the well-paved path to Coed Dormitories.

Druidism and the influence of Tao and Zen

But the shocker for the founders of Druidism came the following year: people didn't want the services to stop. There was no requirement to satisfy by attending them any more, but in developing services that they felt would be "believable," the founders had unwittingly created a spiritual environment (listen carefully to this) that many people found not only spiritually rewarding, but more rewarding than any traditional church available in Northfield at the time. That's a terrible indictment of mainstream religion in the 60s! And it was exactly that kind of spiritual bankruptcy that Bishop Robinson was addressing.

When I came to Druidism some years later much of the original message was still there. Even some of the Liturgy was still used, like the following Invocation that hit home the first time I heard it:

O Lord, overlook these three errors that our due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, yet we worship thee here;
Thou art without form, yet we worship thee in these forms;
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices,
yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices.
O Lord, overlook these three errors that our due to our human limitations.

The original emphasis on a vague pantheism ("God is all around us") was still there, and the central suggestion that Nature can be an important part of spirituality, that by cutting ourselves off so completely from the natural world (as modern westerners so often do), we lose an important spiritual source. Another central precept encourages all to search for their own personal path to spiritual awareness, and the founders were careful to create services they felt should exclude no religious persuasion. Services offered suggestions from a variety of different religious traditions, but no hard answers. (When we tried to start a grove in Ann Arbor during graduate school, one young man who came frequently said we were just Unitarians who meet out of doors! I didn't know then what he meant, but I did take note of the term "Unitarian" for future reference.)

Druidism also exposed me for the first time to Eastern religious traditions; in particular Taoism and Zen Buddhism. If I could offer one suggestion to anyone seeking spiritual answers, I would say, do not consider your search well begun until you have considered how different the Eastern and Western traditions are from one another. Each has much of value to offer; neither has all the answers. At a very gross level the West deals with Salvation; the East with Harmony. These may at root be the same thing, but their expression at the surface looks very different.



From the East I learned of Questions Not Tending Toward Edification. Other than what I might call the Unitarian aspects of Druidism, this was for me the most important lesson. It simply reminds us that worrying about ultimate causes and meanings tends to distract us from our true vocation, which is finding a path to keep ourselves in harmony with the rest of the world. I think many Western theologians could profit from this lesson. Bishop Robinson, after he recasts the metaphor of God, spends much ink looking for ways to reinterpret various traditional theological categories, like Grace and Worship and Eucharist. The precise nature of any of these, I think, would become in the East Questions Not Tending Toward Edification. They are distractions. That we have burnt people in the West over such questions is something approaching Original Sin.

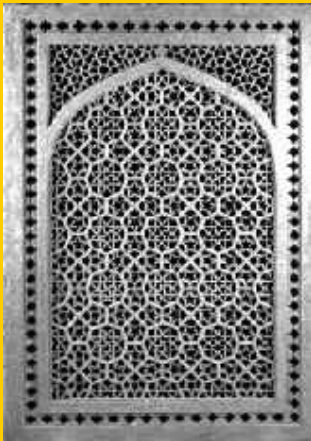
Credo

So, what, after all this, do I believe?

I believe that Humans have a great capacity for good, and have the capacity to develop well-honed powers of perception. I believe both of these require some effort and discipline. I believe it is our responsibility to make the effort and to acquire the discipline.

I believe that the Scientific Method is the most successful and reliable way to determine the facts of the world. I believe that the world is not wholly amenable to understanding, by the Scientific Method or any other. It is such a large collection of facts that we cannot get our minds around all of it. The old materialist dream of starting from the Universe in some known state and deducing its future from scientific principles is not just impractical, it is also scientifically impossible, as Relativity and Quantum Mechanics have shown.

It's hard to say that I believe in God, which is so charged a word that we hardly know what anyone means by it anymore. Partly this is because so many have wrestled so long with not believing in the Biblical God, but want to avoid saying flat out (to the world or to themselves) that they don't believe in God. God has become, in the words of Harvard theologian Gordon Kaufman, "God the Problem."



There is something of a cat and mouse game in the traditional view, which makes me responsible for believing in God if I want salvation. Since the evidence for the traditional God is lacking, I find it difficult to believe. How can it be my responsibility to believe what my mental framework convinces me not to believe? Can I plead insanity at the Last Judgment?

Christian apologists like C. S. Lewis even suggest that if I do not believe, it is because I have allowed the Enemy to convince me not to believe — that it is my fault and not God's that the evidence is not convincing. I don't believe that. All of these arguments from authority (like the billboards: "There will be a test — God") just rile the old Frontier Independence of the Cumberlands. I am convinced that if God wants me to believe he would send me a sign I can recognize. This is as close as I can come to understanding the notion of Divine Grace: salvation through means

I cannot control. If it comes, believe me, I won't fight it.

An argument I am more careful to refute is that my pride keeps me from believing in God. And I will admit that pride often blinds one's reason and makes one do terrible things. The Qur'an reminds us that nothing is more worthy of worship than God—and the second of the five pillars of Islam requires worship through prayer, kneeling five times a day to remind us to put aside our pride before the Almighty.

But no one outside can reasonably make this argument for me, since no one outside knows my mental state. I myself am too aware of my own failings to muster enough pride to keep God out. The mythological Christian story—God so loved the world that he came to mankind and died for the love of us—reverberates so powerfully because my own father had so much trouble showing any kind of love at all, that the story moves me even to tears when presented well. If I could believe its truth were literal rather than mythological, how would I resist it through pride?

The Universe humbles me, who am but a small cog in it. I do not bow down to the Universe, I marvel at it. God, did he exist, would humble me even more. If I were to bow down to God, what is the purpose? Who is the audience? Does God need it? Do I need it? Or would it become simply another meaningless ritual like so many others?

I believe with Bishop Robinson that God, such as God exists, exists in us. Unlike Bishop Robinson, I take God "inside us" to be yet another metaphor, like God "out there" and God "up there" before it. God and other terms for the sacred and holy aspects of our lives are, I believe, shorthand words that we use to convey that they are sacred and holy, things that are deeply important to us, what we feel to be near the root of our being. These terms are old, invested with many layers of history and civilization, and they convey an immense emotional power that is worth retaining even though they come with increasingly freighted meanings. These

terms are, in a word, mythological.

Three areas in particular of our psyche seem to call on this vocabulary more than others. I call this the "3M Theory of God," for the areas are Mystery, Morality, and Meaning. These are areas for which the rational vocabulary doesn't work well, at least not yet. Perhaps as we learn more about the science of the brain, we will feel less of a need for the sacred vocabulary, but I doubt it. For these areas are not just things we don't yet have good scientific explanations for, they are things that we experience with our emotions, not with our reason, and that is not likely to change.

1. Mystery

Who has not felt awe at the beauty, majesty, or power of Nature? This is but one example of the perception of the Numinous. Some have visions. Hildegard of Bingen had migraines, and transformed them into divine revelations. I commune with the world deep in the woods or on the tops of mountains, and sometimes I get so caught up I feel I am in a trance, touching the living world through an almost tangible connection. I hunger for the Sacred, and resent that it is so absent in America, both religious and secular.

I do not worry about where this all comes from. Scientists will work out the mechanisms, the dance of endorphins that makes it all possible. Seeking religious explanations would probably lead to questions not tending toward edification. The right response to Mystery is not to ask "where do you come from?" but "how can I embrace you?"

2. Morality

I freely admit that there are times I would like to believe in Hell, because there are so many people I think ought to be consigned there. But I do not believe in Hell, other than the hells we make for ourselves here on earth, which are real enough, and hard enough to escape from.

But the one question I hear most often from traditionalists is, "How can you have any morals without Hell to keep you honest?" That's easy. We all have morals; we were taught them when we were very young, and we do not outgrow them. We may adjust the boundaries somewhat as we grow older, but the fundamental compass is set very early. There is even growing evidence that some aspects of morality are instinctive; they are part of our mental architecture from birth, like the capacity for learning language.



This is not to say that we all follow our morals with the same diligence, and perhaps this is what the traditionalists are getting at. But even that, I believe, is behavior learned at an early age. The threat of punishment does not help much once we reach adulthood; and as Jesus reminds us, the temptation of sin hurts about as much as the sin itself.

So teach your kids well. Teach them honesty and loving kindness; you can hardly go wrong with those. And above all, teach by example: it is a fundamental error to promote what one believes by any way other than by example.

3. Meaning

I saved Meaning for last. It's the hardest to write about; it's what I keep coming back to whenever I think about Life and God. Who am I? Why am I here? Where am I going?

The last, at least, is easy for me: I am going to die. To rest, and not, I think, to dream. I have felt this to be true for as long as I can remember, and nothing shakes my belief in its fundamental truth. But it begs an

answer to "Why am I here?" with some urgency, since anything I am to accomplish must happen within my mortal lifespan. Science remains unusually uncooperative in this instance: the only answer it seems to come up with is "to reproduce," and that's not enough. It doesn't fill the void.

I have not yet found the definitive answer. I see a divine spark in creativity; what I create helps answer this ultimate question. I see, with Bishop Robinson, the divine warmth of community, of helping to make the world a better place. Above all, I feel the truth of what I think is the primary tenet of Unitarian Universalism, one that until recently set us apart from most Christian churches: that this world matters, that what we do here is important.

And so, ironically, I who look to science for most of my answers, fall back on sacred vocabulary to plumb this riddle that is closest to my heart. I am here to do the work of God. I come to a church that gives me insight into what that work is. I bless you all for helping me to find my path.



An Introduction to Modern Druid Groups

By Susan Reed

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Section Seven: Focus on Ritual for Each Group

The sample ritual outlines I have included below are just that – Examples. In many of the groups, ritual content may vary depending on the nature of the ritual and the preferences of the individuals or groups performing the ritual. Sometimes the ritual outline and content may vary greatly from one ritual to another within the same group. Other groups may have a basic framework that is always or nearly always used with minor variations in content.

OBOD

In OBOD, the purposes of ritual are to help the participants change consciousness, so that they may contact sources of inspiration and wisdom; to make them aware of the sacred nature of the time and the space they are in; to create a time and space from which beneficent forces may be radiated; and to express deep interconnections among ourselves and between the participants and other realms, beings or forces. (1)



OBOD has both seasonal rituals and various rituals for each grade to introduce the student to experiences taught within a grade or to mark progress within a grade. The seasonal ritual calendar includes: Samhain, Alban Arthan (winter solstice), Imbolc, Alban Eilir (spring equinox), Beltane, Alban Hefin (summer solstice), Lughnassa, and Alban Elfed (fall equinox).

There are no ritual tools required for all rituals, nor is there a set way to physically prepare the ritual space that applies to all rituals.

Ritual components may be reordered, modified, omitted or added to as fits the particular ritual or group or individual performing the ritual. Often, rituals will combine some elements from the BDO ritual format, such as honoring the Spirits of the Land and the Ancestors.

Notice that invoking or inviting Gods is not a usual part of OBOD ritual. This is partly because OBOD regards Druidry as a spiritual philosophy rather than a religion. Individuals and groves/seed groups may include invocations to deities as they wish.

Sample Ritual Outline

Grounding Meditation
Opening Statement
Call to Spirit(s) [spirits of place, spirits of the grove, God(s), etc.]
Peace to the Quarters
The "Universal" Druid's Prayer (AKA "[Gorsedd Prayer](#)")(2)
Awen Chant
Casting the Circle
Consecrating the Circle (with water and fire)
Opening the Quarters
The Working
Unity Prayer
Awen Chant
Thanking the Quarters
Unwinding the Circle
Ending Statement

View the text to a [Samhain ritual](#).

BDO

At the time she wrote *Ritual: A Guide to Life, Love and Inspiration*, Emma Restall Orr was the Joint Chief of the British Druid Order. Her take on what Druid ritual is:



Ritual is a "pause in time," a break from the tumbling swirls and eddies of life's river. It gives an opportunity to check our beliefs, both those that are sound and those that need to be changed. It reveals the world as sacred, guiding us to relate more closely to its creating and its essence, to understand more respectfully the spirit of nature, its power and potential. (3)

I could find no example of BDO ritual from the BDO web site. The sample ritual below is derived from examples given in books by Emma Restall Orr and from a book by Philip Shallcrass (see resource list), who at the time of writing were Joint Chiefs of BDO. Both Orr and Shallcrass are OBOD members as well, and their rituals have much in common with OBOD rituals. (4)

Much of BDO ritual is done at public gatherings, such as Druid camps, Gorseddau, etc. The ritual calendar includes: Samhain, Alban Arthan (winter solstice), Imbolc, Alban Eilir (spring equinox), Beltane, Alban Hefin (summer solstice), Lughnassa, and Alban Elfed (fall equinox).

Ritual set up varies with the particular ritual being done.

Sample Ritual Outline

Call to Spirit(s) (guardian spirits of place)
Peace to the Quarters

Casting the Circle
Consecrating the Circle (with water and fire)
Honor Directions
Honor Spirits of the Land
Honor Ancestors
The Declaration of Purpose
Invoke the Gods (optional)
The Working
The Grounding
Eisteddfod (optional - may be held after ritual closing)
Feast
Thanking the Gods, Ancestors and Spirits
Thanking the Quarters
Unwinding the Circle
Closing Prayer

AODA



The AODA doesn't require a specific liturgy for its members, and in fact the task of writing a personal set of rituals for the holy days of the year is one of the things members do in the course of the study program for the AODA's Second Degree. Solstices and Equinoxes are the main seasonal rituals; the Celtic cross-quarter days are optional.

There are, however, set rituals for AODA Solitary Grove opening and closing and for the Candidate's Initiation ceremony (the latter is only available to members). See <http://www.aoda.org/about/lodge.htm> for an example of the opening and closing ritual.

Rituals may be open to non-members, except for rituals involving initiation, confirmation or exaltation for a particular grade.

AODA Grove Opening and Closing Ritual (5)

Set Up

- Altar in center of grove, covered with a white altar cloth.
- Incense and incense burner (east of altar).
- Oil lamp or candle (south of altar).
- Cauldron half filled with water (west of altar).
- Platter of earth (north of altar).
- Golden sickle and mistletoe in West of the circle.
- Sounding board in the North (for staff-rapping).
- The elements alternately can take form of four identical cauldrons containing incense, a lamp or candle, water and earth each.
- The Chief Druid carries a staff; Druid of Air carries a sword in scabbard; Herald, Pendragon and almoner carry staves with golden sickles; Druid of Fire carries matches or a lighter.

AODA Grove Opening and Closing Ritual Outline

- Declared Opening
- Call for Peace

Purification of the Grove by the Four Elements
Statement of Purpose
Druid Prayer
Awen Chant
Banishing Negative Influences for Each Quarter
The Center Working (grove meeting, holy day celebration, etc.)
Determine That Work Is Done
Open grove in the cross quarters and invite the Candidates (NE), Druid Apprentices (SE),
Druid Companions (SW) and Druid Adepts (NW) to speak or share with the grove.
After they are done "peace" is reiterated for each quarter
Oath of Officers to serve the Earth
Awen Chant
Banishing the Elements/Quarters
Procession Out

RDNA

RDNA rituals were developed from Episcopal liturgy and emphasize sacrifice to the Earth Mother and receiving blessings from the Earth Mother. Rituals are not required, if done, are usually performed on Samhain, Imbolc, Beltane and Lughnasadh. Solstices and Equinoxes may also be kept, but are optional. RDNA ritual can be very loose; anyone can omit any part. Rituals are open to anyone who shows up. (6)



Sample Ritual Outline

Invocation (to Be'al?)
Processional
The Praise (to Earth Mother)
The Sacrifice
The Reply
The Catechism of the Waters of Life/Waters of Sleep
Consecration of the Waters of Life/Waters of Sleep
Communion
The Meditation
The Benediction
Drawing the Three Sigils in the air and Proclaiming "Peace"

ADF

ADF gives the following intentions for Druidic ritual :

To rectify and empower the souls of the worshippers; to serve the God/desses and Spirits; to bless the folk and the land. (7)



Rituals should honor only one pantheon in each rite. Each ritual usually has one or two Patron powers to whom the central offerings and callings are made. Which ones are chosen depend on the specific nature of the rite. Usually these are a God and Goddess pair, but may also be the ancestors or spirits of the land.

Rituals may celebrate the seasons, rites of passage or for personal needs. ADF "High Day" rituals are open to the public and ADF encourages its groves and protogroves to advertise the rituals far and wide. There is usually a pre-ritual briefing to inform participants about how the ritual works, what will happen, how it happens, background on the mythology behind the ritual, etc.

High Day rituals include: Samhain, Winter Solstice, Imbolc, Spring Equinox, Beltane, Summer Solstice, Lughnassadh, and Fall Equinox. Some groves also have lunar rituals as well.

ADF ritual requires a representation of a well (for example, a pan, a basin, a cauldron), of fire (such as a fire pit or fire bowl, or one or more candles, if inside), and the world tree (a pole or branch or, perhaps, an actual tree) and often a sacrificial branch or other sacrificial items/offerings. One of the groves local to my area also has altars for the realms of land, sea and sky or for ancestors, nature spirits and Gods, depending on the cosmology used in a particular ritual. ADF ritual does not create "sacred space"; space is already considered to be sacred all the time. The ritual space is open and people may leave or join in as they will.

ADF ritual structure can be quite complex and some groves have simplified liturgies that follow the basic format. Order of service may be different from grove to grove.

Sample Ritual Outline (8)

Establishing the Grove

- Procession in
- Opening Prayers and Offerings to the Earth Mother
- Grounding meditation
- Establishing and affirming the Center/"Three Worlds"
- Opening the gates to the Powers.

Offerings to the Powers

- Preliminary Offerings (to poetic inspiration and to the Outsiders)
- Offerings to the Three Kindreds
- Offerings to the Patron Powers
- Sacrifice and Omen

The Blessing

- Meditation for Blessings
- The Waters of Life Blessing
- Other workings (if any)

Giving Thanks

- Giving Thanks to the Powers
- Closing the Gates
- Releasing the Grove
- Procession out

View an example of an [ADF Samhain ritual](#).



Henge of Keltria (9)



The Keltrian *Book of Ritual* (fourth edition) states that ritual is a way through which faith is expressed. Ritual also provides ways to keep in time with earth cycles and life cycles, to honor the Gods and the spirits of nature, to integrate participants with the essences of earth and sky, the energies of male and female, so that harmony can be obtained.

According to the *Book of Ritual*, all Keltrian ritual is public except the Vervain Rite, an initiates-only ritual and any initiations or elevations.

The Keltrian ritual calendar includes: Samhain, Winter Solstice, Imbolc, Spring Equinox, Beltane, Summer Solstice, Lughnassadh, and Fall Equinox. There are also rituals done at the sixth day of the moon (the Mistletoe Rite -focus of this ritual is healing the community, finding balance in our lives and the sharing of food and drink) and, for initiates, rituals done at the third quarter of the moon (the Vervain Rite -focus is on working magic). Two other yearly rituals round out the calendar: The Feast of Age (or its equivalent; this celebrates "our spiritual immortality and the invincibility of our faith") and The Feast of Remembrance (this honors Druids slain at Mon in 60 CE and all who have been persecuted or killed because of their beliefs).
(10)

Ritual space is considered sacred space, which is set up so that it is separate from the mundane world, but not moved "outside" the mundane world. In the ritual, a portal is opened to allow the Divine to come to the ritual space. Ritual space should be outside, whenever possible.

Within the ritual space, Keltrians stand in a horseshoe shape, rather than a circle. Altar placement may be placed in the east, by tradition, or may be placed in any direction according to season or purpose of ritual.

Ritual set up

Altar tools: Bell branch; sickle; three "cauldrons" or bowls, one for each of the triads; altar plate; two chalices; libation bowls; two white candles; a freshly cut "sacrificial branch"; a fire pit/place/candle; a shell or other symbolic tool for the Deity who parts the veil; essential oil for anointing; an offertory basket or container; two "remembrance" bowls; gong or bell; mead or other spirit and water. All tools must be of natural materials. Appropriate dress is some kind of ceremonial robe (white preferred for clergy roles) and participants should have bare feet, if possible, or wear soft shoes of natural materials. Street clothes are discouraged and there is a phobia of any man-made materials.

Sample Outline of Keltrian Ritual

According to the *Book of Ritual*, there is no "official" Keltrian ritual, but variations to the suggested outline are limited to moving a few parts around. The following is the suggested outline given in *Book of Ritual*:

- Designating parts
- Individual preparation
- Site Preparation
- Processional
- Marking sacred space
- Tracing the Sigil
- Invocation of the Bards, Seers and Druids of past, present and future in the Southwest, North and Southeast
- Greeting the Four Directions
- Announcement of the Rite
- Establishing Group Mind
- Unity chant

Tree meditation
 Parting the Veil
 Invoking the Powers
 Invoking the Triad (Ancestors, Nature Spirits and Gods)
 Statement of Purpose of the Ritual
 Invoking the Principals (Matron and Patron) of the Rite
 Lighting the Sacred Fire
 The Devotionals (dedicating something to the service of the Principals, such as a tool or a poem or some similar thing)
 Offerings to the Gods (gifts to the Gods such as grain, incense, libations, etc.)
 The Divination
 The Working/Grove's Choice
 Giving of Remembrances
 Consecration of the Blessing
 Distribution of the Blessing
 Closing
 Closing Announcements
 Returning the Patrons
 Thanking the Triads
 Closing the Veil
 Dissolving Group Mind
 Parting Message
 Recessional

Notes to the Ritual & Ritual Structure

1. Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids. *The Book of Ritual*. Lewes, Sussex: Oak Tree Press, 2001, 4. (Generally unavailable to non-members, but the information is not restricted to nonmembers.)
2. The original Gorsedd prayer is usually attributed to Edward Williams, who was also known by his pen name, Iolo Morgannwg. Williams published several variants of this prayer, which he claimed to be by a medieval Welsh bard named Talhaiarn, in his book, *Barddas*. This book is available online at The Summerlands web site, <http://216.67.248.139/crossroads/library/slideviewer/slideviewer.cgi?list=barddas_1> (Accessed July 27, 2004.), William's exposition of the prayer can be found on slides 223–225. One modern variation of the Gorsedd Prayer can be found on the British Druid Order's web site, <http://www.druidorder.demon.co.uk/gorsedd_bards.htm> (Accessed July 27, 2004).
3. Emma Restall Orr. *Ritual: A Druid's Guide to Life, Love & Inspiration*. London: Thorson's, 2000. XX.
4. Emma Restall Orr. *Ritual: A Druid's Guide to Life, Love & Inspiration*. London: Thorson's, 2000 and *Thorson's Principles of Druidry*. London: Thorson's, 1999; and Philip Shallcrass. *Druidry: A Practical and Inspirational Guide*. London: Judy Piatkus Ltd, 2000.
5. Ancient Order of Druids. "AODA Grove Opening and Closing" n.d. Accessed July 27, 2004. <<http://www.aoda.org/about/lodge.htm>>.
6. A collection of RDNA liturgy can be found in: The Reformed Druids of North America. *A Reformed Druid Anthology, Part Three: Liturgy*. Drynemeton Press, 1996. Available in [PDF format \[1,488K\]](#).
7. Ian Corrigan. "Intentions of Druidic Ritual." Published 2003. Accessed July 27, 2004. <<http://www.adf.org/rituals/explanations/intentions.html>> More about ADF rituals can be found at: <<http://www.adf.org/rituals/index.html>> (accessed July 27, 2004).
8. Ár nDraíocht Féin. "Standard Liturgical Outline." Published 2003. Accessed July 27, 2004. <<http://www.adf.org/rituals/explanations/brief-lit.html>>.
9. Henge of Keltria. *The Book of Ritual*. 4th ed. n.p., 1997. The following information about Keltrian ritual is derived from the *Book of Ritual* unless otherwise noted.
10. Henge of Keltria. *The Henge of Keltria By-Laws*. 2003–2004 Edition. Published 2003. [Available online in PDF format \[212K\]](#).



Oak-killing pathogen appears in Indiana

Associated Press
Tue Aug 1, 7:49 PM ET

A tree disease that has killed hundreds of thousands of oak trees in California is now in Indiana after arriving in a shipment of shrubs from Oregon, state officials said.

The funguslike organism that causes Sudden Oak Death by encircling oak trees and strangling them was found two weeks ago in a Viburnum shrub at a Sears Hardware in Portage, state entomologist Robert Waltz said.

"It's worrisome. It's a very bad pathogen, no doubt about it," he said.

The disease, *Phytophthora ramorum*, doesn't spread from oak to oak but to oaks from host plants such as rhododendrons and maple trees.

The infected shrub in Portage was buried in a landfill, but Waltz said there is no way to know whether other plants sold to the public might have been infected.

"All we know is that at least one plant was infected, but whether there were two plants or 10 plants, we don't know," he said.

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources tested the plants after being alerted by federal officials.

Officials have not decided whether to track plants bought at the store, which might be difficult in the case of cash purchases, Waltz said, or to put out a public alert.

The pathogen, which appeared suddenly in California and Western Europe in the mid-1990s, has been found in 14 California counties, southern Oregon and Washington, said Brian L. Anacker, a researcher at Sonoma State University in California.

Indiana is considered at moderate risk, but Waltz said most of its forests are in the southern part of the state, where the pathogen might be able to gain a foothold. If it did, the damage could be significant.

About half of all Indiana trees more than 20 inches in diameter are oak, state foresters have said, and the state has about 1.8 million acres of oak and hickory-type forests. Lumber is the fifth-largest industry in the state.

Notes to Picture on Right:

Research assistants scan the trunk and branches of a buckeye tree while out collecting leaf samples on the campus of University of California at Berkeley on Tuesday, Jan. 8, 2002. The leaf samples will be used for experimental research on the pathogen *Phytophthora ramorum*, which causes sudden oak death syndrome. The tree fungus is now in Indiana, state officials say. (AP Photo/Julie Jacobson)



Information from: The Indianapolis Star, <http://www.indystar.com>



Chris Kelly

Tree Huggers Embrace Eco-Friendly Logging

A nonprofit buying North Coast forestland aims to save vital stands by taking over timber operations. Some say it's going out on a limb.

By Tim Reiterman, Times Staff Writer
Los Angeles Times
August 6, 2006

POINT ARENA, Calif. — From a lonely outlook in the coastal mountains of Mendocino County, Chris Kelly takes stock of the dark green ridges of redwood and fir stacked against a light-blue skyline. It is there that he plans to log roughly two dozen square miles of forestland in the coming months and years.

Kelly works for the new owner of this stretch of working forest in the Garcia River watershed, a haven for endangered Coho salmon and threatened northern spotted owls. But his employer is not one of the timber titans that have pulled lumber from California's Redwood Empire for more than a century. He manages the land for the Conservation Fund, a 21-year-old Arlington, Va.-based organization that strives to balance natural resource protection with economic goals. And timber sales here will be used to pay for forest and watershed restoration.

"People will say, 'A conservation group doing logging?' " said Kelly, who manages its California operations. "This is all new to me. I am learning as I go."

The group says it is the first nonprofit to own and run a major timber operation in the state. And the second- and third-growth redwood forests it has chosen are in a region where intensive logging has left a legacy of environmental problems and relatively young trees.

More than 95% of the ancient redwoods along the North Coast have been felled, according to the Save-the-Redwoods League in San Francisco. The heaviest logging came during the rebuilding of San Francisco after the 1906 earthquake and during the post-World War II housing boom, when companies such as Georgia-Pacific, Louisiana-Pacific and Masonite operated here.

"There now is much less ancient redwood forest in Mendocino County than in any other part of the range," said Ruskin Hartley, conservation director of Save-the-Redwoods League. "You have an opportunity to do restoration on those lands."

The Conservation Fund is banking on transforming the sustainable production and sale of timber that has grown back on previously logged land into dollars that can be used to permanently shield the property from development while improving wildlife habitat and providing jobs.

After buying 24,000 acres along the Garcia for \$18 million in 2004, the Conservation Fund is purchasing an additional 16,000 acres in two nearby watersheds for \$48.5 million ?mostly with state financing. And the group hopes to buy 165,000 acres more, which would make it one of the biggest timber concerns on the North Coast.

Private forest ownership here is concentrated, with hundreds of thousands of acres held by half a dozen companies and families. But the industry is struggling, and with land values rising, there is increasing pressure to sell off the least productive parcels ?a trend that forestry officials say results in thousands of acres being developed statewide each year.

"We're not talking about conversions of forests to subdivisions," said Bill Stewart, assistant deputy director of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. "We are talking about very low density... But it does alter the forest ecosystem. Lots of animals do not like dogs, cats, horses and cars coming in and out all the time."

Although old-growth timber has all but vanished, the land still provides valuable habitat for wildlife.

However, today's financially stretched government agencies often cannot afford to make large-scale acquisitions to create parkland, which is where the Conservation Fund's idea for carefully planned timber operations comes in.

"I think this is the future of conservation," Kelly said. "I am enthralled with the idea of protecting entire watersheds ... but I don't think it is practical to do it by turning them into parks."

Two years ago, the organization bought the Garcia lands from Coastal Forestlands Ltd. for \$18 million in partnership with the state Coastal Conservancy, the Wildlife Conservation Board and the nonprofit Nature Conservancy.

Now the Conservation Fund has designated 35% of the property as forest reserve. On the rest, it plans to continue commercial timber production ?although the project participants acknowledge that could be a tough sell to people who find logging inconsistent with conservation.

"We can get foresters to say this would promote sustainable forestry, but it is hard to get society to accept this notion," said Louis Blumberg, the Nature Conservancy's state forest policy director.

In the shade of redwood groves, other challenges become apparent. The land has been logged repeatedly, and most trees are spindly offspring less than 2 feet in diameter, not the kind of timber that brings top dollar.

Kelly and his consultants show visitors a cluster that sprouted from the stump of a behemoth tree felled decades ago and now needs thinning to let the remaining trees thrive.

The key, said forester Craig Blencowe, is "cut less than you grow and leave good trees."

The problem is that in the short run, the strategy might not produce enough timber to cover annual operating costs of at least \$200,000 for road improvements, stream restoration and forest management.

"Economically, it is a question mark," Blencowe said.

The nonprofit faces other issues that have caused timber companies to clash with government regulators and environmentalists.

When Kelly recently submitted a plan to the state for logging a few hundred acres, local environmentalists who had been supportive of the purchase issued a stinging critique and questioned the proposed use of herbicides to kill tan oaks that have taken over in some previously logged areas.



Craig Blencowe, a professional forester, takes a core sample from a stand of redwoods near the Garcia River near Mendocino, California. (Robert Durell / LAT)

The harvesting proposal was withdrawn for revisions. And Kelly said herbicides will not be used.

"It's unfortunate the very first project called for use of herbicides," said Greg Giusti, the University of California's forest advisor here. "People are looking for them to develop new ways to manage these landscapes."

But forest activists say they applaud the Conservation Fund's responsiveness and its decision to run a working forest rather than a park — partly because the region needs the jobs.

"Our thinking has changed," said Linda Perkins, a onetime Earth First! protester who helped form a local foundation that also plans to buy and run working forests. "We tried direct action and litigation, and nothing worked. We kept losing forests."

Peter Dobbins of Friends of the Garcia said he believes that the new owners are committed to protecting the river. "The best you can hope for is someone with goodwill and good luck," he said.

The Conservation Fund hopes to close a \$48.5-million deal with Hawthorne Timber Co. by Sept. 30 to acquire 11,600 acres in the Big River watershed and 4,345 acres in the Salmon Creek watershed.

The state water board recently approved a \$25-million loan for the project. To repay the loan and cover management costs, logging will need to yield more than \$1.8 million a year, which project officials say is feasible because the land has plenty of merchantable timber.

The Conservation Fund wants the property because it provides habitat for endangered species and is near the coastal town of Albion, 20 miles north of here, making it vulnerable to development.

However, industry experts warn that managing a working forest will not be an easy matter.

"It is wait-and-see whether they understand what they are getting into," said Steve Brink, vice president of the California Forestry Assn. "It is an arduous journey — sustained yield plans, timber harvest plans, water boards, Fish and Game, threatened and endangered species, cultural resources, global markets."

During a recent tour of the Hawthorne properties by four-wheel-drive vehicle, Kelly got a taste of what is to come.

He spotted tiny Coho in Salmon Creek where Hawthorne strategically placed big logs to provide shelter. He inspected a culvert that the company must replace with a bridge to allow spawning fish to pass.

And he walked through a magnificent grove of redwoods that could be worth thousands of dollars each but are off-limits to logging because spotted owls live nearby.

"Spotted owls are the No. 1 constraint on the land because of the number of owls," said Stephen Levesque, area manager for Campbell Timberland Management, which runs the forest for Hawthorne.

"The owls," Kelly said, "are why we want the property."



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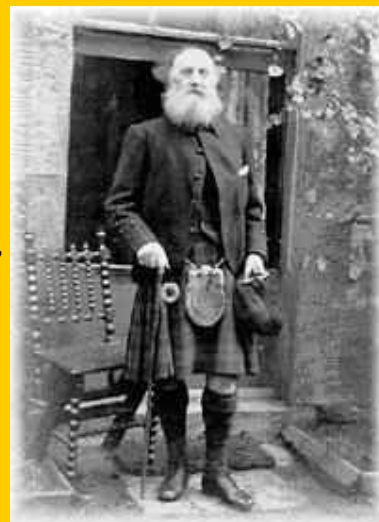
Carmina Gadelica, or *Ortha nan Gaidheal* (Charms or Songs of the Gaels) in the original Gaelic, is an anthology of poems and prayers from the Gaelic oral tradition, the most comprehensive ever collected. Coming from communities all over the Highlands and the islands of Scotland, they were often shared or performed at the evening ceilidh and thus passed on from generation to generation.

Alexander Carmichael compiled this collection during the late nineteenth century, creating a lasting record of a culture and way of life that has largely disappeared. In his introduction, Carmichael recalls with great warmth and obvious pleasure the hospitality he received from the people whose songs and stories he was anxious to record. "I have three regrets," he tells us: "that I had not been earlier collecting, that I have not been more diligent in collecting, and that I am not better qualified to treat what I have collected." Nevertheless, *Carmina Gadelica* quickly became an invaluable resource for all those who wished to study and understand Gaelic culture, as well as for those who simply wanted to experience the beauty and wisdom

of the Gaelic oral tradition.

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Alexander Carmichael (1832-1912) was born in Lismore, off the coast of Argyll, and was educated at Greenock Academy and in Edinburgh. As a civil servant with the Customs and Excise ministry, his work took him to Skye, Uist, and Oban, where Gaelic still dominated during the mid-nineteenth century. He collaborated with the folklorist John Francis Campbell (1822-1885) in his folklore collection and made his own large collection between 1855 and 1899, in particular from 1865 until 1882, while the family lived in the Hebrides. His collection consists mainly of Gaelic prayers and invocations, hymns, blessings, charms, as well as numerous songs. The material was collected from both mainland and island sources and range in time over several centuries. Carmichael eventually settled in Edinburgh. His best-known publications include *Grazing and Agrestic Customs of the Outer Hebrides* (1884)-which had been requested for the report of the Crofter Royal Commission-and *Carmina Gadelica* (1900).



Aengus' Sweet Duet

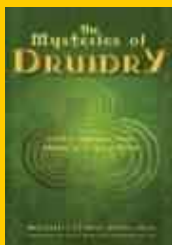
Dear Sisters and Brothers in the Earth Mother,

On August 12th, my story, *Aengus' Sweet Duet*, under my pen name of Rita Trevalyan, was published as an ebook by Silk's Vault. It is the story of what happens when the Celtic God of love, Aengus Og, arrives in present day San Francisco, California under a powerful geas, before he can provide love for anyone else, he must find love for himself.

Also, coming soon, around Samhain, my other story, *Arianrhod's Bracelet*, also under my pen name of Rita Trevalyan, comes out from Silk's Vault. <http://www.silksvault.com/home.html> *Aengus' Sweet Duet* is the central cover under Just Released. It costs about \$4 per download and comes in three formats. I can use all the downloads I can get. Thank you.

In the Earth Mother,

Tegwedd ShadowDancer



The Mysteries of Druidry

Review by Daven, Roving Druid

By Brenden "Cathbad" Meyers
New Page Books, 2006, \$15.99 US
ISBN 1-56414-878-5

Well, as a Druid myself I have looked at the texts out there on Druidism and been sorely disappointed. At one end of the spectrum are the excellent works by such people as Isaac Bonewits, Philip Carr-Gomm and other such noted Druids. They are packed full of information, dense with it, and as a result of that, they tend to lose the audience since most of what they write about is beyond the average reader.

At the other end of the spectrum are the popular books on Druidism which are good for use in paper-mache; works like *21 Lessons of Merlin* and other such landfill fodder.

There has not been a book to successfully bridge the two ends, making a good book that has lots of information which has the potential to become popular because of how that information is presented to the reader. That is, until now.

Make no mistake, I have known Cathbad from a list we were on together and I have spent many hours reading his articles on that list and off. He is an extremely knowledgeable man and I consider him one of the contemporary masters of Druidism. In this book, he brings his formidable knowledge to those who wish to know what he knows.

What emerges in this book is a snapshot of what the Druids could be now, and might have been in the distant past. He uses myth and story to construct possible rituals that the Druids could have performed. He shows how the myths fit together and what principles the Druids and Celts could have lived their lives by. He uses all this and then he admits that he is constructing from what he has been able to assemble in years of study, not that this is the only way or that this is the way. He is very clear in saying that this is only an extrapolation based on what we do know.

But, oh boy, what an extrapolation. I found myself amazed with the contents of this book. Everything I had discovered through my studies with one group and on my own, things that I had thought were unverified personal gnosis (UPGs) and guesses, were upheld and expanded upon. It was really an exciting revelation for me.

But I was also able to learn a lot. I have studied the myths of the Druids of Ireland, and I thought I understood them, but Cathbad was able to reinterpret those same myths and give me a different understanding of what was happening and what the story meant. He took me on a mythic tour of the seasons and explained those holidays with a sensitivity one would find only in someone who lived with the Land day in and day out as our ancestors did when they struggled to grow food for themselves. Reading this I began to wonder where his time machine was.

The only quibble I have with this book is the text and typesetting itself. The publisher saw fit to break each page into two columns of text, like a newspaper. The problem here is that the size of the book doesn't justify doing this. It's a standard "trade paperback" size, approximately 9-1/2 inches by 6-1/2 inches. That gives a reading area of about 8-3/4 inches by 5-3/4 inches, and given that size, it is not a strain to read across the entire page at one time. This is why this technique is normally reserved for large volumes, more than 15 inches tall and nine or more inches wide.

In fact, breaking this into columns made it harder to pick out the quotes Cathbad uses in his text. Normally a quote is indented in the text about five characters. Given that this layout mandated less than half a page of room per column, the quotes would be indented maybe two characters. This is not enough of a visual difference for most people to notice that indentation, making the quote look like part of the regular text. I expected that the publisher would italicize the quotes to set them off, but they don't. And when a picture is dropped into the text, they plunked it down right in the middle of the columns. This shoves the flow of the words to tiny little one inch space on either side of that picture, making it very hard to read.

New Page would have done better to leave the text flowing across the page.

But, for this work as a whole, I must give it four and a half stars out of five. There is nothing like it on the market that I have seen. There is finally a work on the market that takes a serious look at Druidism for the 21st century and teaches the old way in a manner that new Druids can understand and participate in.

This book IMMEDIATELY goes on my "recommended reading" list.



Autumnal Equinox will occur on September 22 at 6: 05 a.m. Pacific Daylight Time. This is also the New Moon and there will be a Solar Eclipse 4:45 a.m. Grove celebrations will take place on Sunday, September 24.

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This is the end of the Fall Equinox issue



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Webmastered by Mike Scharding

