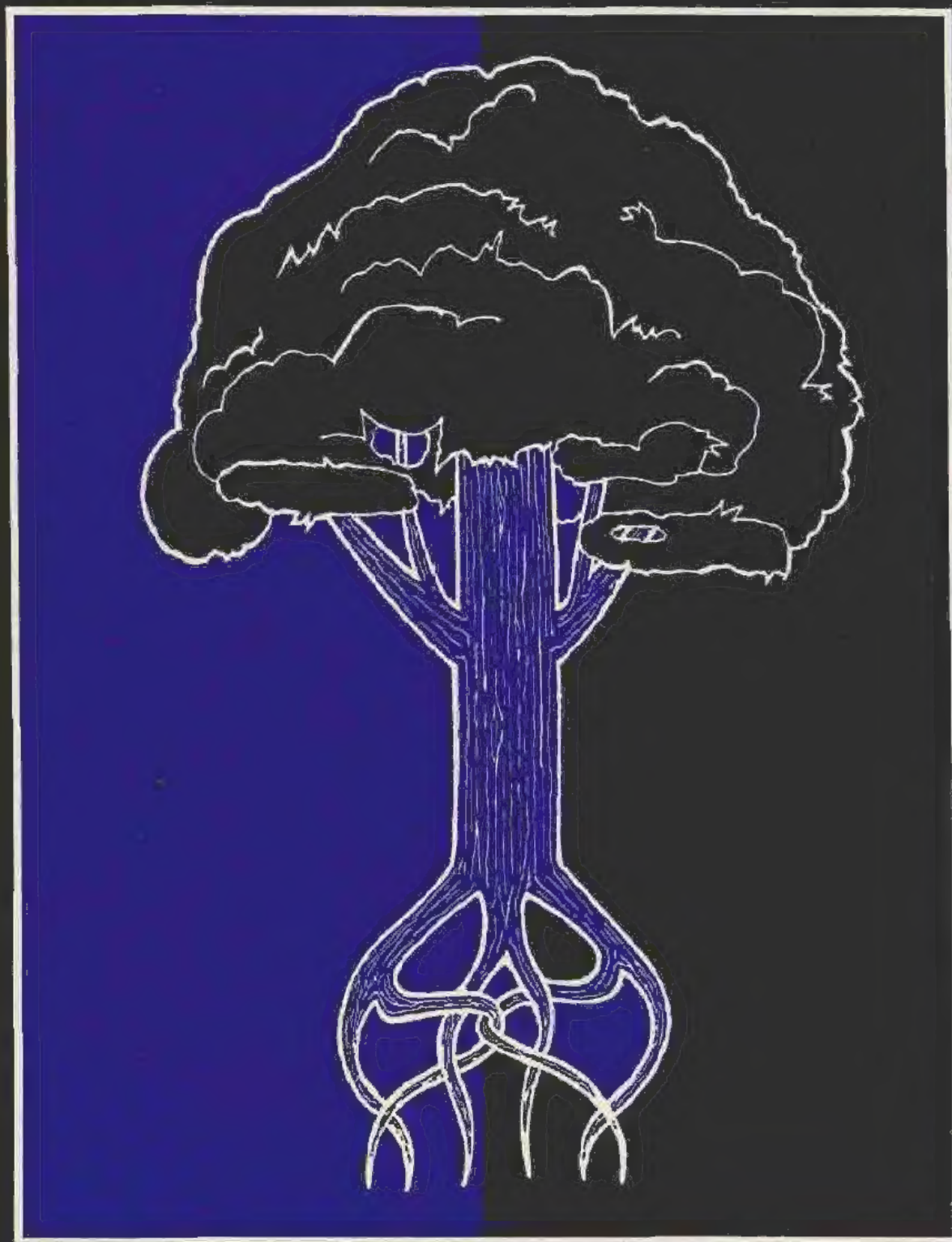


Oak Leaves

Issue 5: January 1998

The quarterly journal of Ár nDraíocht Féin



Oak Leaves
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Ann Arbor, MI 48106-5259

Oak Leaves is the quarterly journal of *Ar nDraíocht Féin: A Druid Fellowship, Inc.* It is intended to be both a newsletter informing members and the community of ADF's activities, as well as a forum for our scholarly and artistic explorations. It has a circulation of approximately 550.

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Subscriptions: *Oak Leaves* is free to members as a part of the membership benefits of ADF. To become a member of ADF, send a check for \$30, payable to ADF, to the above address. Annual subscriptions are available to non-members for \$20. Individual copies of *Oak Leaves* and back issues are available for \$5 each through the Regalia department at the address above.

Advertising: Ads in *Oak Leaves* are available for purchase. Please send camera-ready copy to the Chronicler at the above address. Rates are as follows:

Full page: \$60

Half page: \$35

Quarter page: \$20

Business Card: \$13

Classified: \$0.05 per letter or space

Envelope Insert: \$70 per 2-sided page

Submissions: *Oak Leaves* welcomes submissions of artwork, articles, poetry, letters to the editor, and anything else that might be of interest to our readers. If space is constrained, preference will be given to submissions from ADF members. Text should be typed double-spaced with one-inch margins. Electronic submissions are fine, as long as they are in ASCII, Word v6, WordPerfect, Publisher or Write, on IBM-compatible diskettes or sent via email (one attachment per email, specify the format in the cover memo.) Artwork should be black and white or gray-scale, and scannable (or in pcx, cgm, bmp, jpeg, tif or wfm format). Please include a 30-word bio of yourself for listing in *Our Contributors*. Due to handling costs, submitted materials will not be returned to the sender.

Editing Policy: The Chronicler and assistant editors reserve the right to edit all submissions as they see fit. They will make a reasonable effort to inform the author of any changes in the meaning of articles prior to publication. Grammar, typos and awkward or wordy phrasing will be corrected without notification.

Ownership: The content of all submitted material remains the property of the author/artist. Copyrights should be respected, and articles should not be reprinted without express permission from the author. All opinions expressed in *Oak Leaves* are those of the authors of the articles, and not necessarily of ADF.

Submission deadlines are as follows: January issue: December 1; April issue: March 1; July issue: June 1; October issue: September 1.

Copies of the some of the text material in this publication may also be found on ADF's web page, at <http://www.adf.org>

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Chronicler's Corner

By: *Ril Howard*

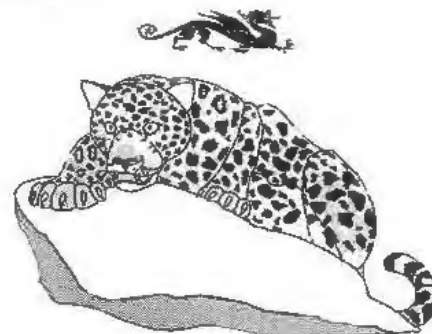
As always, the New Year is a time for reassessing priorities. It is a time for laying the past to rest, and for making commitments to the future. It is also a time for reflecting on what went well, and on what could use some attention.

1997 marked a banner year for *Oak Leaves*. We issued all of our quarterly issues mostly on time, each fulfilling my goal of balancing spiritual exploration and organizational news. I had the help of many hard-working folks, to whom I am deeply indebted. These include (although are not limited to): Fox, who helped with content, proofing and chasing down reluctant authors; Liafel, who did a magnificent job with Kids' Pages; Ian Corrigan, who provided a wealth of spiritual inspiration (and both Liafel and Ian were extremely supportive of me, personally); Londubh, who meticulously stuck to the published deadlines for *Falling Acorns*, and provided numerous other fascinating pieces as well (sticking to deadlines ranks *very* high in my book!); Anthony and Jan, who not only submitted articles, but also managed our on-line presence that led to many subscriptions; Deborah Kest, who supplied excellent material about the study program and other interesting issues; Ann Niven, our publisher, who has been very generous with deadlines and payments, along with guiding me through the many nuances and subtleties of zine layout and publishing; and many others, too numerous to mention, who have helped in myriad ways

to make this publication a success. To all these people, I send a deeply heartfelt 'thank you'.

As happens at the New Year, I have taken stock of my life and realized that something has to give. I work full-time, in a job that requires some travel. I am the mother of an 18-month-old son, whose custody I share with his father. I am in a full-time Master of Science program at the University of Michigan, and I am the course director for a 4-day professional course offered to people from all over the country. Oh, and I edit *Oak Leaves*, which takes approximately 80 hours per issue. The point of this litany is to say that I am on the prowl for help. This help must be extremely reliable, however, because I cannot bail anyone out. I have had volunteers (thank you, thank you!!) for Passages and Advertising/Exchange, a nibble for Layout Editor, but desperately need an Artistic Editor (see the ad elsewhere in this issue) as this consumes a major portion of my time. If you, or someone you know, is interested, capable, and RESPONSIBLE, please let me know.

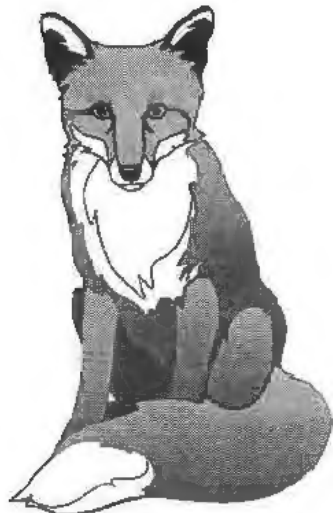
In the meantime, stay well and Happy New Year!



By: Fox

Fox Tracks

*We're on a roll and
there's no stopping
us!*



The past quarter has been one of steady progress. Most of the activity has centered on the organization of the guilds. The majority have now written and ratified their bylaws and elections are underway for guild officers. Once this important foundational work is completed we will move to the task of laying out the study program requirements in earnest.

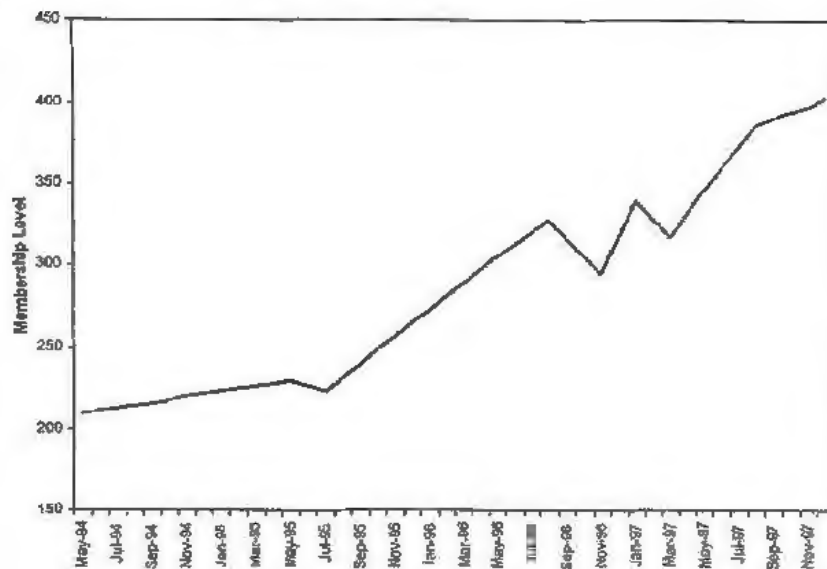
The most exciting news that I have to report for this issue pertains to the health of ADF. Later in this article you will find a graph of membership levels. I am very happy to report that in just over two years we have nearly doubled the size of our fellowship! ADF is now far larger than it has ever been and there's no sign of that growth slowing. As if that wasn't enough, we have just broken the ADF record for the number of groves as well! I am very proud of what we are building together, and these numbers confirm that we are on the right track.

Our financial situation is also far better than last time I wrote. The increase in the membership rate and brisk sales in the Regalia Department have begun to pay off. Although the net cash flow in the Financial Report may look a bit alarming, you should be aware that most of that cash flow has been converted to Regalia inventory as an investment for the future.

We have also been busy getting the ADF central office set up. We aren't exactly running smoothly yet, mostly due to some computer problems, but within the next month we should have it down to a routine. From then on, you can expect very fast service from ADF. We have also set up a new email address, adf-office@adf.org, where you may direct all of your questions about your membership and regalia orders.

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ADF's Membership History



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We have had a couple of personnel changes on the Mother Grove during the past quarter as well. Vicki Mieth resigned from her position of Vice Archdruid. I regret that it came down to that, but it was a difficult situation from the start. Vicki was unfortunately caught in the transition between Study Program versions. She had been awarded her third circle by the previous Preceptor but had not yet been approved for ordination when the new Preceptor took over. Vicki submitted her request for approval and the Mother Grove began the process of reviewing her. After exploring her knowledge and experience for a year and a half, the Mother Grove was still not able to agree on her ordination.

I feel that Vicki's frustration over the situation was more than justified. The change in Mother Grove personnel definitely made this process more difficult for her. At the same time, I also feel that the Mother Grove's concerns were justified. Try as we did to get through this situation, it was never resolved. Early this past fall, the Mother Grove voted to continue withholding ordination until additional issues were addressed and Vicki, feeling

Membership Statistics

Current: 402

Regular: 326

Family: 36

Lifetime: 34

Prisoner: 4

Complimentary: 2

Third Quarter 97

New members: 68

Expired: 35

Renewed: 8

Fourth Quarter 97

Expiring memberships: 64

that it had drag on long enough, submitted her resignation to the board. Regardless of the difficulties that this situation caused, we wish to thank Vicki for her service to this organization during her tenure as Vice Archdruid and wish her well. She brought an important point of view to Mother Grove discussions that made all of our decisions a little better considered for the effort.

Fern Bernstein, one of our Non-Officer Directors, also announced just prior to Samhain that she could no longer continue working on the Mother Grove. She stated that priorities in her personal life had made it increasingly difficult to continue finding the time necessary to keep up with the work of the MG. Our good wishes go with her as well and we are grateful for the time that she devoted in service of ADF. Anthony Thompson has been appointed to the Non-Officer Director position vacated by Fern and Ian Corrigan has been reappointed to the position of Vice Archdruid.

Lastly, I would like to call your attention to two important items, the call for nominations for the position of Member's Advocate

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Attention!

AREA CODE CHANGE

The area code for the main ADF phone number is changing on July 15, 1998 from 313 to 734.



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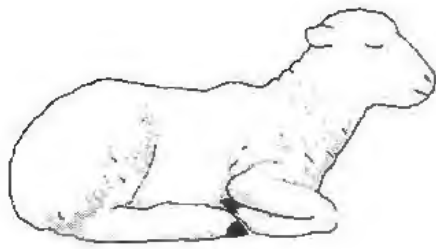
(page 33) and for the 1999 Annual Membership Meeting site (page 40). Each year, these items will be presented to you for your consideration and I urge you to take part in this process. This will be the first year that we have included the vote for the festival site. This change was made in response to concerns from the membership that the Annual Meeting should not always be held in the northeast U.S. Please see the notices elsewhere in this issue for details.

So, in the interest of letting you get on to another fine issue of Oak Leaves, I'll bid you farewell for now. May your holiday season be filled with good cheer and hope for the coming year.



ADF's Financial Report Third Quarter 1997

	3rd Qtr. '97	3rd Qtr. '96
Income:		
Donations:	\$25	\$15
Publishing Activities		
Donations: Land Fund	\$45	\$3.75
Donations: General Fund	\$296.75	\$139
Magazine Subscriptions	\$15	\$135
Membership Dues	\$2,315	\$1,204
Regalia Sales	\$1,408.5	\$147
Theft Repayment	\$300	\$0
Unidentified Deposits	\$0	\$458
Total Income:	\$4,405.25	\$2,101.75
Expenditures:		
Banking Fees	\$158.05	\$87.19
Email Provider Fees	\$50	\$0
Legal Fees	\$264	\$0
Office Supplies	\$170.18	\$124.11
P.O. Box Rental	\$55	\$0
Postage	\$401.72	\$439.41
Printing Costs	\$2,785.13	\$1,362.33
Refunds to Members	\$11.25	\$0
Regalia Stock	\$2000.70	\$0
Telephone Charges:	\$41.30	\$0
Theft	\$0	\$1,518
Total Expenditures:	\$5,937.33	\$3,531.04
Net Cash Flow:	-\$1,532.08	-\$1,429.29
Current Balance: (12/11/97)	\$1,360.73	
Current Inventory Assets:	\$1,170.49	



By: Fox

Brigit, Behind the Veil

*Tracing the roots of
the goddess and
saint.*

The goddess Brigit has been the object of reverence for thousands of years over a wide expanse of Western Europe. Even today, her devotees grow in number, among Neopagans and Christians alike. Although the intention of many of these devotees is to restore Brigit to her pre-Christian glory, the image of the goddess that is honored today is, in many ways, very different from the Brigit whom our Pagan ancestors knew.

Brigit belongs to a large and diverse group of Celtic mother goddesses. Her mythology and folklore bear unmistakable marks of her

membership in this group, but there are many differences that set her apart as well. At least in part, these differences are due to the enthusiasm with which the Christians adopted her into their pantheon as a saint.

To understand the more ancient nature of Brigit, we trace her evolution, and that of the other mother goddesses, from a time before the Celts had become a distinct language group. Among the Proto-Indo-European people, the origins of the Celtic mother goddesses can be traced to two distinct figures: the transfunctional goddess and the virginal goddess. Of particular interest for our purposes is the interaction of these goddesses with the principle of kingship.

The Transfunctional Goddesses

The transfunctional goddesses are first and foremost mother goddesses, embodied in the local rivers and lands through which they flow. As the very sources of life, their primary concerns are with the fertility and abundance of the land and the creatures that dwell there. An example of a transfunctional goddess is the Indic Sarasvati.

These goddesses were also sources of knowledge and wisdom. Theirs was the ultimate source of numinous wisdom flowing from the otherworldly well. They were venerated at wells, springs and rivers.

These goddesses are referred to as "transfunctional" because they usually transcend Dumézilian function to benefit the society at large. This behavior is in contrast to their male counterparts, who tend to be more class-conscious. One of the results of this transcendence is that many of the goddesses that descend from these ancient deities possess three-fold aspects or personae. That triplicity is the result of the individual goddess's reflection in each of the three-fold divisions of tradi-

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tional IndoEuropean (I-E) society. Examples of these descendant triple goddesses are Brigit, Gwenhwyfar, Macha, and the Morrigan.

In terms of the transfunctional goddesses' relationship to kingship, the paramount role of these goddesses is as givers of sovereignty, the validation of the worthiness of a king. Traditionally, the very survival of a people depended upon the fitness of their king, as indicated by acceptance by the goddess of the land. Unlike the concept of sovereignty that was to arise in later Celtic cultures, this ancient predecessor did not involve sexual intercourse between the human male and the sovereignty goddess. For the purposes of this article, this is a key distinction.

The Perpetual Virgin

The second ancient goddess type I call the perpetual virgin. She is probably best represented in the tales of the Indic goddess Madhavi. In the Mahabharata, Madhavi is willfully sold by her father to provide royal progeny for four kings. During the tale, she reveals that she is gifted with renewable virginity and thus was suitable to perpetuate the four royal lineages that would have otherwise ended childless.

This theme, the salvation and perpetuation of kingships by the carnal intercession of a virgin, is common in the I-E family of cul-

tures. In the Celtic world, for reasons that I will explore in a moment, the emphasis on virginity is obscured but the theme is prevalent nonetheless. Medb (from *Medus, the same root as Madhavi) had the same willful role in the continuation of a number of legendary Irish royal lines. The important distinction from the role of the transfunctional goddess above is that the perpetual virgin does not establish sovereignty, but rather provides for salvation of existing kingships.

Celtic Hybrids

The fragmentary remnants of these two types of goddesses may still be observed in Norse, Roman and Indic mythology. But, somewhere along the road, as the Celts emerged from the mists of time, these female roles became combined. This combination led to a unique new generation of hybrid goddesses with often contradictory attributes. The traditional struggles of chastity versus promiscuity, of asceticism versus sensuality, were recast among the Celtic divinity in terms of sexual power and jealousy.

Another important factor in this evolutionary change was the characteristic leveling of divine and human strata among the Celts. As these boundaries blurred, characters emerged who were no longer clearly divine or mortal. Combined with the crossbreeding of goddess roles, these changes yielded a

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The vast majority of Brigit's lore concerns the granting of fertility, prosperity and inspiration.

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sovereignty myth that, unlike the original, centered on the mating of mortal kings with divine beings.

These new hybrid mother goddesses/virgins expressed their power by the ability to withhold sexual acceptance of the would-be kings. Validation of kingship became a matter of choosing sexual consorts, a choice usually based upon virtuous behavior of the male. This placed the females in a dominant position that was expressed as overt sexual and martial prowess.

In other cases, the virginal goddess's chaste nature, that had originally acted as a deterrent to sexual contact, became replaced by ugliness or shrew-like qualities. As a result, the classic Celtic tale of the sovereignty goddess disguised as a hag attempting to seduce heroes emerged. More often than not the actual mothering roles of these goddesses became incidental to their sexual exploits.

Pre-Christian Brigit

Brigit is about as close to a pan-Celtic deity as they get. According to Ptolemy, she was the tribal goddess of the Brigantes who resided in north Britain and south Leinster. To the British, she was *Briganti'. In Romano-British times she was Brigantia ("The High

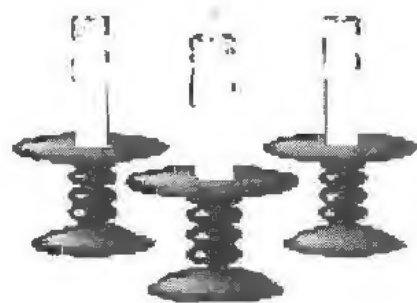
One"). The Irish usually call her Bríd (an epithet meaning "Exalted One") and alternate spellings of Bridget, Brigid, Bride and Breed can be found. The Welsh call her Brigantia and among the Gauls she was Brigindo or Bergusia. Her name also survives in the river Brent in England and the river Braint in Wales.

Her closest classical cognate is Minerva Belisama ("Brightest") and her name was once identical with the Sanskrit feminine adjective *brhatī* ("great" or "lofty"). Like Brigit's famed sanctuary at Kildare, there was a temple dedicated to Minerva, with an "eternal flame" in Britain in the 3rd century BCE. Minerva is a goddess of wisdom and the originator of arts and crafts who is often depicted as a warrior woman, as is her cognate Athena. Brigit can also be seen as a cognate of Artemis, who is closer to the virginal Madhavi in character.

There are a few accounts of Brigit that confirm the broader extent of her pre-Christian character. In *Cath Almanac*, "The Battle of Allen," Brigit appeared as a battle specter floating over the heads of the army of Leinster, and thus terrified their enemy, the army of Leth Cuinn. Also, in the tale of the *Bórama*, "The Tribute," Mo Ling protected himself from his enemies by praying to Brigit.

In Brigit's case, it is abundantly clear that the qualities of mother goddess and goddess of wisdom have been retained through all of these

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changes. The vast majority of her lore concerns the granting of fertility, prosperity and inspiration. In some tales she is depicted as an equivalent to Danu, the mother of the Gods.

As an expression of her transfunctional nature, Brigit is both one goddess and three, sometimes linked with two eponymous sisters. The triple Brigit or three sisters of Brigit are goddesses of poetry, smithcraft and healing.

Monastic Whitewashing

Despite her obviously substantial role in the minds of the ancient Celts, there are very few references to her in the tales recorded by the monastic scribes. Where she is present, it seems that she has been greatly diminished. In the *Lebor Gabála Éirenn*, ("Book of Invasions of Ireland") all of the female characters are in the background of the tale. Despite that, the sheer volume of folklore that has been passed down to us concerning Brigit lends much greater testimony to her high status.

What the monastic writings do relate is that Brigit is the daughter of the Dagda and she was among the Túatha dé Danann who migrated to Ireland. She had, at one point, borne a son by Bres (named Ruadán) and three sons by Tuireann. Ruadán was slain during the second battle of Mag Tuired while attempting to kill the god Goibniu. When Brigit came

later to the battlefield to bewail her son, it was the first time crying and shrieking were heard in Ireland.

Brigit As Christian Saint

Brigit is one of the few Pagan deities to make a smooth transition from goddess to Christian Saint. Unlike the usual pattern of overlaying the Pagan deity with a pre-existing Christian icon, Brigit was simply christianized, name and all. She is known in Ireland as St. Brigit (St. Ffraid in Wales) and in popularity is second only to St. Patrick.

The tales of St. Brigit make efforts to fabricate a story of a living human saint but the parallels between the accounts and what we know of the goddess, along with the magical symbolism of the tales, leave no doubt of her true origins. According to the *Rennes Dinnsenchus*, she was the daughter of a druid, Dubthach, and a woman named Broiseach. She was born around 455 AD at Faughart when her mother was delivering milk into the druid's house. Her mother gave birth as she crossed the threshold of the doorway, thus being born neither in nor outside of the house.

She was reportedly raised on the milk of magical otherworldly cows, and as a young girl was said to have presided as a midwife over the birthing of Christ. In the southern Hebrides, Christ is known as Dalta Bríde "the foster son of Bríde" and she is sometimes called "Mary of the Gaels" by the Irish. In the light of the I-E concept of the perpetual virgin mother of kings, it is not at all surprising that the Celts could easily make such a substitution.

There is a great deal of intense fertility goddess symbolism in the tales of her life. Even though she herself was a virgin, she supplied limitless food without her larder ever dwindling. She could provide a lake of milk

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from her cows, which were milked three times a day, and when she presided over ale brewing at Easter, one measure of her malt made enough ale for her seventeen churches.

St. Brigit's feast day takes place on the first day of February, which coincides with the original pagan festival to the goddess Brigit. She is said to travel about the countryside on the eve of this festival to bestow her blessings on the people and their animals.

She is recorded as founding her first religious settlement at Kildare (*cill-dara* "church of oak"). In this monastery, there was a perpetual fire that was guarded by nineteen virgins and no man could approach her shrine. She reportedly died in her monastery in about 525 AD and the flame was maintained until it was ordered extinguished during the reign of King Henry VIII. Today, a new flame has been kindled at Kildare and it has been passed all around the world. Many paganfolk, including some of our groves, are involved in the effort of devotion to keep the flame of this mighty goddess alive once more.

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Letter to the Editor

Dear Kit:

Thanks for including *Summer on the ADF Lists* in the last *Oak Leaves*. I try to keep up with what is happening on-line, but what with staying on top of my job, the Grove, and my personal life, to say nothing of laundry and dishes, there never seems to be enough time to stay current with the lists I subscribe to. It is also nice to have an idea of what is going on with the other lists.

My love wanted me to pass on that he liked it because he has even less time to keep up with his email, and also that it must be useful for those people who aren't on-line yet. Anyway, thanks for including it, and thanks to Anthony and Jan for doing their part to keep the lists up and running.

Blessings, Lynxx

- tions, 1995
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By: Fox

Imbolc Traditions

Imbolc is a festival of purification and a celebration of the first signs of spring. It is the time when the milk begins to engorge the udders of the livestock in preparation for the first births of spring. It is an important date in the beginning of the agricultural year. Preparations for spring sowing, hiring of farm workers for the coming season, fishermen taking out their boats after staying in for the winter season, seaweed gathering on the coast to be used for fertilizer, and the gathering of shellfish all begin at that this time. The larder of the housewife and the hay stores of the farmer were also checked to make sure that only half had been consumed.

Most of the elements of the traditional celebration can be seen as referring to sexual intercourse and fertility; the men having the charge of making the "little Bríd doll", often from the phallic dasher of a churn; the women preparing the "bed" for the doll; the churning of butter; the emphasis on birth and milking; and the use of straw, which was the traditional material for the birthing bed for human and beast alike, etc.

Explore some of the ways you can add folk practices into your Imbolc celebration.

In folk practice, it appears mostly as a holiday centered on the household, but it can easily be turned into a community celebration as well. Below are some customs that have long been associated with this sacred holiday. Feel free to modify them to match your needs and the particulars of your family and community.

Spring Cleaning – This is the time to give your home a good thorough cleaning in preparation for a visit from Brigit. If you happen to have a fireplace, it especially should be cleaned very well. As a part of the magical purification of the house a birch branch should be used to symbolically sweep the floors. Birch has strong associations with Brigit, and has long been used for rites of purification and new beginnings.

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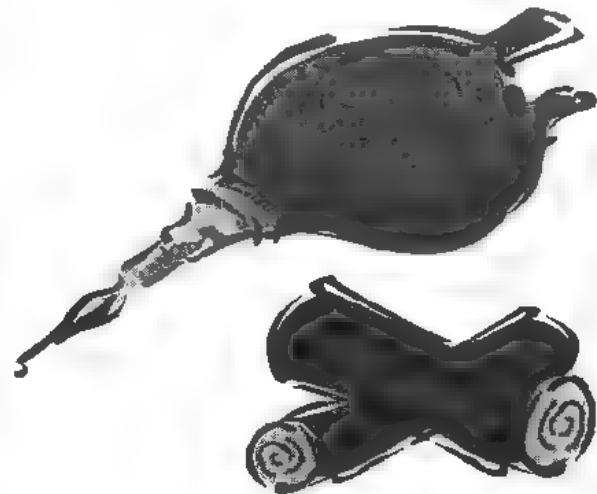
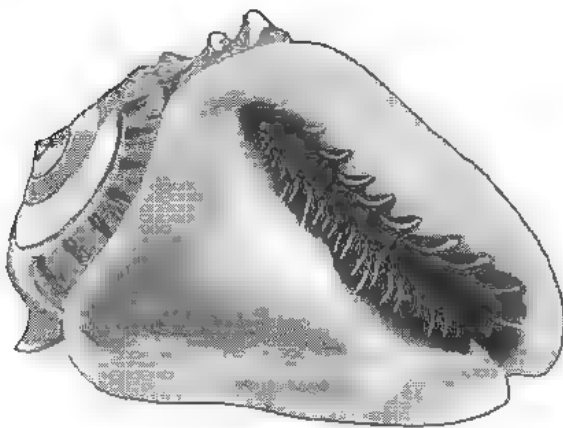
All of this work should be completed prior to the eve of Imbolc, when a small dish of butter should be placed on a windowsill and a fresh fire kindled in the hearth or a candle lit in honor of Brigit.

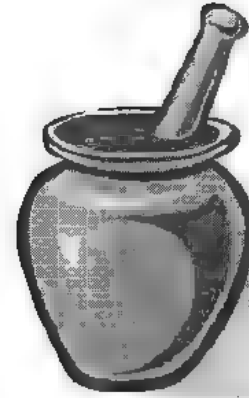
Making the *Brideog* - If possible (and applicable) this work should be done by the man of the household or a group of men in your grove. Long pieces of straw or rushes should be gathered and fashioned into the shape of a doll. The image should be dressed in white doll clothing or merely wrapped in a white cloth in the manner of a dress. Her image should be decorated with bits of greenery, early flowers, shells and pretty stones. An especially pretty shell should be placed over her heart. For the greatest magical effect, the doll can be built around the handle of an old butter churn dasher. When finished, she should be consecrated with a few sprinkles of sacred water while invocations to Brigit are spoken. The resulting effigy is called a *Brideog* (BREE-JOG), or "little Bríd," and is an important component of the traditional Imbolc celebration.

Brigit's Crosses - This is the most widely practiced custom associated with Imbolc. Following the making of the *Brideog*, the extra

straw should be gathered up and saved for use at the family or grove feast on the eve of Imbolc. For the best results, the straw should be soaked in water for a couple of days prior to the feast. Part of that evening should be devoted to making Brigit's Crosses. These are weavings of straw that can be as simple as a few strands or amazingly elaborate. Most folks are familiar with the three or four armed variety but there is a great number of different regional patterns including what most people in America know as a "God's Eye" pattern woven around two sticks. At the end of the evening each person should take their cross home, sprinkle it with a bit of sacred water and speak a request of Brigit for blessing and protection of the home and family members. Old crosses from previous years should be moved to the rafters or attic of your home, and the new crosses hung in their place near the entryways to the dwelling. Crosses that were woven by the children should be hung on the wall over their beds, and if you happen to have a barn or out-building you should hang one there as well. They are especially effective in protecting the household and its inhabitants from fire and lightning. Throughout the year, the crosses may be taken down temporarily when a Brigit blessing is needed: the a healing of a sick child; tucking between the mattress to

(Continued on page 15)





(Continued from page 14)

assist in conception; placed upon a basket of seed being carried out to the garden for planting, etc.

Divination – The eve of Imbolc is the best time of the year to perform divinations specifically pertaining to the future welfare and prosperity of your family.

Imbolc Feast – On the eve of Imbolc, a family or community feast should be held. When all is prepared, and the table is set, the persons who were involved in the making of the *Brideog* should go outside and retrieve her. The doll should be placed on the outside of the building next to the open door. The men should get on their knees before the doll (the traditional gesture of respect for the *Brideog*) and shout into the house, “Go on your knees, open your eyes, and admit Brigit!” The celebrants inside should answer, “Welcome! Welcome! Welcome to the holy woman!” The *Brideog* should then be carried into the house and leaned against a leg of the feasting table. Begin the feast with a prayer of thanks.

Brid’s Bed – As the evening of the Imbolc feast winds down, the women of the household or grove should gather up the last of the straw and fashion an oblong basket in the shape of a cradle called “*leaba Bríd*” (LAWA BREEJ) or “the bed of Bríd”. Place the bed near the hearth if you have one. Then place the *Brideog*

into the bed and place a small straight wand of birch with the bark peeled in the bed beside the figure. This wand is called “*slatag Bríd*” (SLAH-TAHG BREEJ) or “the little wand of Bríd”. If you have burned a fire during the evening the ashes of the fire should be scraped smooth. In the morning check the ashes for marks of Brigit’s wand or better yet, her footprint to prove that she had visited during the night. If no marks are found, burn some incense in the hearth or near the spot where the bed was placed, as an offering.

Brideog Procession – This is a special type of procession, similar to caroling, that members of your grove can do on the eve of Imbolc (or one of the preceding nights if necessary). Arrangements should be made ahead of time so that people can sign up for a visit and know what to expect. They should also be advised that it is best to do the spring cleaning before the *Brideog* visits. Assemble a company of participants, called “*Biddy’s*” or *Brideogs* and prepare the songs for the event. Take the *Brideogs* from house to house to offer blessings and entertainment to the families who live there. Dressing in unusual clothes and wearing funny hats will add to the fun of the event and is quite traditional. A young lady, traditionally the prettiest of the crowd, should be selected to carry the Brigit doll. When you arrive, ask for admittance to the house (it is considered very bad luck to be uncivil to a *Brideog*) and everyone should file in. Entertain the household

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(Continued from page 15)

with a couple of songs (traditionally song, rhymes and music on flute, violin, and later, accordion were used) and recite a prepared Brigit blessing for them. If the household does not already have one, they should be presented with a Brigit's cross for protection and blessing through the year. Before going, the family should present the *Brideogs* with an item of food, especially one associated with dairy, to be used at the community feast (or as an alternative you can collect non-perishable food items for a homeless shelter).

Blessing of the *Brat Bríd* - During the day before Imbolc, the woman of the house or women of the grove should take a small piece of cloth (larger if it is for the entire grove) and lay it on a bush outside. During the night, as the goddess roams to bless the houses of her followers, she will pass by, touching and blessing the cloth. Collect the cloth in the morning and tear it into small pieces. These pieces of cloth, individually called a *Brat Bríd* (BRAHT BREEJ), should be distributed among the children and females of the household. The *Brat Bríd* will give them protection throughout the year where ever they go. These pieces of cloth may be sewn into the clothes or jackets of the children to insure that it won't be lost.

Blessing the *Bratach Bríd* The *Bratach Bríd* (BRAH-TOCK BREEJ) is a large piece of cloth, such as a shawl that Brigit will bless in the same fashion as the *Brat Bríd*. Instead of being torn into pieces on the next day this cloth should be kept as a sacred relic and charged repeatedly year after year. The *Bratach Bríd* can become quite powerful over time and can be used to help insure safe childbirth and to cure sterility by placing it over the patient and asking for Brigit's help. It was once fairly standard equipment for country midwives in Ireland. In addition to being used for human mothers during childbirth, it was

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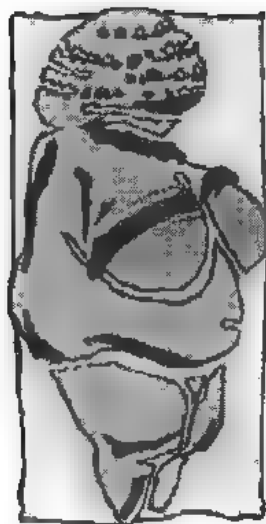
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also spread across the back of birthing cows to ensure the health of the calves and an abundant supply of milk.

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By: Ian Corrigan

Imbolc

Imbolc can be celebrated on the night before February 2, or midway between Winter Solstice and Spring Equinox or full moon of February.

This holiday is the feast of the goddess Brigit, in her aspect as nurturing mother and protector. It has special significance in the Scottish Highlands and is celebrated in Erin as the beginning of Spring. In the cycles of the land, Imbolc is the end of the coldest and darkest winter days. The meat and grain stored for the winter are nearly used up, but the land has not yet begun to yield the new year's herbs and roots. The clans offered to the goddess to stave off hunger and illness until the warming of the earth. In Erin, the climate often permits planting in February, and the ewes come into milk as they gestate their lambs. Thus, the feast is called Imbolc, which means "in the great belly". The earth is pregnant with the year's good, but has not given forth.

Imbolc is a feast of home and hearth. The other three Celtic holy days were observed with tribal gatherings, while Imbolc seems to have been a private matter. It was focused on the house, hearth and land, and on what might be called women's ways.

The mythic elements of Imbolc center around the important Gaelic goddess Brigit, or

*A seasonal rite to mark
the turning of the
wheel.*

Brid. Recorded in Irish lore as a daughter of the Dagda, one of the Túatha dé Danann, she was the ruling goddess of the north British Celtic tribe, the Brigantes. She is mentioned in Irish lore as a triple goddess of poetry, healing and smithcraft, but in Scots lore she is clearly an earth mother, who rules the bounty of the land. She passed into Christian legend as Saint Brigit. In this form she is sometimes called the midwife of Christ, revealing her nurturing nature. In the folkways of this holy day, she is asked to grant fertility and growth to land, herd and clan.

Our modern Druidic holy day combines the worship of Brigit, the Mother, with that of the Lady of Triple Skills. The goddess is, in home traditions, put to bed with her phallic

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counterpart. She appears as the *Brideog*, a corn image that carries healing powers. In other traditions the child is put to bed, with Brigit to watch over it. She receives offerings of bannocks and beer in prayer for a spring soon to come.

1: Procession - as usual

2: Opening Prayers - as usual

3: Awen Invocation - as usual

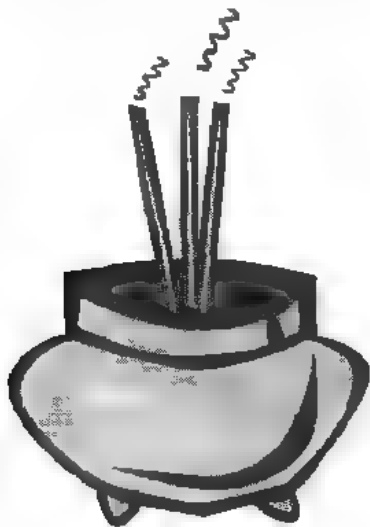
4: Outdwellers - as usual

5: Statement of Precedent:

As our ancestors once did, so we do today, and so our children will do in the future. We are here to pay homage to the Brigit, lady of fire and to Dagda, the all father, to the Gods, dead and the nature spirits and to the rising light of the year.

Now is the time of stirring when the earth begins to soften and the waters to flow. While frost still bites and winds blow, the light is growing stronger, and life begins to wake.

This is the feast of Brigit, the goddess of fire and water. She is the year's midwife who births the sun. Also, we make offering to Dagda, the lord of



perfect knowledge. Through the union of fire and water, the ancients, our forebears, worked magic to call in the spring. So let us join together as one folk to make our offerings in joy and reverence.

6: Grove attunement - as usual

7: Vertical axis - as usual

8: Opening the gates - as usual

9: Kindred offerings - as usual

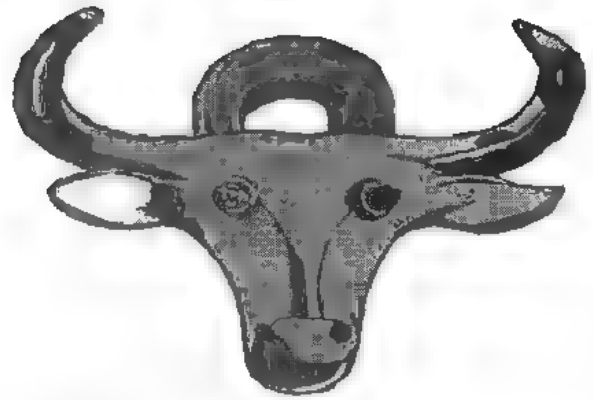
10: Key Offerings

Imbolc is the time of the hearth fire, and the thawing and stirring of earth's waters. First we will offer to the red god, the hungry god, the best of the gods, Dagda

*Dagda most honored
To you we make sacrifice
To Eochaid the All Father
You, the fire beneath the cauldron
Hear us, Old Giant, god with the great
staff
Ruad Rofessa, lord of perfect knowledge
Fire of the sacrifice, great in appetite
To you we do honor, excellent god
Mate of the great queen
Fergus the mare's son
Chieftain of Danu, bountiful giver
Flame in the belly that sustains life,
Flame in the eye that comprehends life
Be in us as we are in you
Boiled in the cauldron
Upon the sacred fire
O harper of the seasons, taker of sacrifice
Druid of oak and hazel
Dagda Mor - great good god
Accept our sacrifice*

The porridge is offered into the offering bowl
Sound three knells

(Continued on page 19)



(Continued from page 18)

Invocation of Brigit

*Behold the lightener of the stars
Brigit of the mantels
She comes on the crest of waves
With harpers of the sidhe praising her
Arising in splendor
From the mighty one below
Brigit of the auguries
Song and the voices of the bards for her
Brigit of the waters
Brigit of the kindling
Brigit thou source of joy and life
Healers and artisans honor your spirit
Brigit, woman of wisdom
Thou mid-wife of sweet wisdom
Of bright beauty shining like stars
Joy were it to those who behold you
O Brigit the skillful
O Brigit of the triple spirit
O Brigit who comes in light and shadow
Thrice blessed be your flaming path
BRIGIT ACCEPT OUR SACRIFICE*

Ale is offered into the offering bowl.

O triple one, lady of fire and water, goddess of poets, healers and smiths, we give you the gift of welcome. Come into our temple and bless our rite.

Door to the hall opens and a maiden carries in

the *Brídeog*, once around the center as a Hymn to Brigit is sung
The *Brídeog* is placed in the bed and a bannock offering is made
Surround her with 9 candles and place a wand by her side
Other bannocks, milk and beer are offered

Praise Offerings

11: Prayer of Sacrifice - as usual

Offer oil, milk and bannock

12: Omen - as usual

13: The Blessing Cup - as usual

Final Blessings:

(This may be read as the blessing cup is passed or after all have drunk, as a meditation.)

THE DESCENT OF BRIGIT

*Brigit of the mantles, Brigit of the hearth fire,
Brigit of the twining hair, Brigit of the auguries
Brigit of the fair face, Brigit of the calmness
Brigit of the strong hands, Brigit of the kine*

*Brigit, friend of women, Brigit, fire of magic
Brigit the foster mother, Brigit woman of wisdom.*

(Continued on page 20)

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*Brigit the daughter of Danu, Brigit the triple flame.
Each day and each night I call the descent of Brigit.*

*That the power of healing be within us,
That the power of poetry be within us,
That the power of shaping be within us,
In earth, sea and sky and among all kindreds.*

*Kindle your flame in our heads, hearts and loins,
Make us your cup, your harp, your forge,
That we may heal, inspire and transform,
All in your honor, Brigit font of blessing.*

*Brigit above us, Brigit below us, Brigit at every art about us.
Brigit in our truest heart.*

Receiving the Fire

The fire is used to light candles, and they are passed to each of the folk, as all sing a chant to Brigit's fire. When all have the flame, the Seer leads a meditation to draw the flame into each of the folk. It might flow in this order:

Renew the Center

Feel the presence of the blessing in the belly. Recall the nature of the omen, and open to the potential for manifestation.

Feel the drink as water, flowing through the whole self.

Allow the flame to be reflected in the water within. Reflected in the loins, in the heart and in the head.

This is the fire of quickening, of warming, of illumination. When it shines into the water of blessing it stirs it, and brings the future out of the

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winter's past. May it bring to each of us the inspiration of the poet, the strength of the smith, the compassion of the healer. Now moisten your fingers and snuff this outer flame...

Draw the fire into yourself, the warmth of your own heart's hearth...

Take home the candle, and may the fire of Brigit see you through 'til spring.

14: Closing - as usual



From the beginning of ADF's work, we have sought to base our Neopagan work on the actual ways of Indoeuro-pean Pagan cultures. We know that the religions we are making are, and must be, modern. We are modern people in a modern world, and we will inevitably bring with us ideas shaped by our experience. However, like many Pagans, we seek to move beyond many of the common paradigms of our times. We see things in the modern world that we consider to be less than desirable, and we hope to relieve those ills, at least in our own lives, by looking to the ways and values of the old religions. The old ways are our inspiration, their sages, magicians and priests our spiritual mentors.

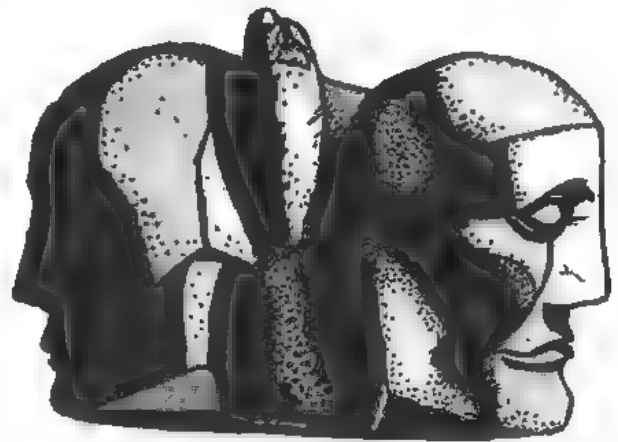
In accordance with that philosophy, one of the core instructions of ADF's work is to study the cultures of Pagan Europe with the intention of comprehending them as fully as possible. We work to learn the facts about Paganism, but also to understand the minds and hearts of the people who lived it. To do this, we must comprehend not just the religious symbols and forms of the ancients, but their lives and work. We must know their art and artisanry, the structure of their families, tribes and nations. We must know what they ate, what they wore and, to the best of our ability, who they were. If we do not seek a grasp of the essence of a people's way of life, then we will fail to understand what their spiritual ways have to teach us. We risk doing no better than pounding the triangular peg of religious symbolism into the square hole of our modern preconceptions.

In addition to the study of archeology and ancient customs., insight into the modern cultures that descend from the Pagan past can contribute to our understanding. Getting involved in the folk cultures and more modern history of the Irish, Welsh, Danes or Greeks

(Continued on page 22)

By: Ian Corrigan

The Case for Choosing a Pantheon



Did you honor ADF
Regalia among the
dead this past Samhain?

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ADF Regalia is alive and well
at <http://www.adf.org/regalia>

offers insights into the spirit of a people that cannot be gained from academic sources alone. So we encourage students to listen to the folk music of these cultures, learn their traditional dance, and especially to learn at least some of the native tongue of the gods they wish to address.

On the most basic level, we strongly recommend that each ADF ceremony be focused on a single pantheon. That allows the rite to be unified in esthetics and cultural detail, and it ensures that the powers called will be in harmony with one another. Even in early stages, when you are examining various traditions, it is best to keep each rite focused on a specific culture. Experiencing the gestalt of each culture in turn gives a clearer understanding of each.

In our Druidry, we have learned to view the deities as real persons - independent, freely acting individuals of great wisdom and mighty magic. We try to avoid viewing the spirits as 'archetypes' in the 'collective unconscious'. We do not, in general, find that Deities with similar function are 'aspects' of one another, or of a greater whole. So we would consider Thor, Taranis and Zeus, despite the association of each with thunder, to be separate, individual deities.

So it seems only right to address the powers in the cultural idiom to which they are accustomed. When we invite the gods and

goddesses to our rites, we feel it is proper to treat them with honor. We feel it is best to use Greek customs for Greek deities, and Welsh for Welsh gods and goddesses. We see it as less proper to construct ritual out of bits and pieces of many cultures and try to 'plug in' whatever powers one wishes to 'use'.

On a more personal level, we recommend that each student choose one Indoeuropean culture to work as their 'home' culture. If we wish, we might refer to this as one's Hearth Culture, or Hearth Ways.

Ancient Paganism was certainly fairly open and inclusive. It seems likely that neighboring cultures influenced one another's ways, including their religions. But the people of those cultures would have begun life with a child's immersion in the ways of their local religion, at their family's hearth. If, when adult, they chose to include spirits or works from other cultures in their personal religion, they would do so with the particular world-view of a Celtic tribesman, or a woman of the Hellenic cities.

This is very different from a person whose native land is in the modern, industrial west,

(Continued on page 23)

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You'll find a history of the Study
Program discussions in the
adf-study archive.

www.adf.org

(Continued from page 22)

who tries to absorb Pagan ways directly, without regard for the cultures in which they grew. Far from bringing the wisdom of the ancients into modern life, that approach may only superimpose the form of Paganism on the attitudes, beliefs and lifestyles of our materialist, Christian-influenced culture.

So you might think of yourself as a new human, freshly brought into the world of ancient Athens, or Ireland or Scandinavia. Or you might think of yourself as a voyager thrown up on the shores of a Pagan culture. As a newcomer among the people, it is your duty to learn their ways and, in time, to be accepted as one of them. It is by the kind of cultural immersion that a child or a castaway might experience that you can truly move past modern upbringing toward more Pagan perspectives.

Please understand that we are not recommending an exclusivist or fundamentalist approach to this choice. The ancients seem to have had little of such attitudes. There is little evidence to show that they wished to preserve 'purely' Celtic or 'exclusively' Germanic ways. Every European Pagan culture was (and is) the result of thousands of years of intermingling and mutual influence, and the cultures of the Pagan Iron Age all drew freely on one another's cultural and religious ideas.

So while you should work to understand your 'hearth' culture fully, you need not feel required to limit your personal work only to those forms. If you have a relationship with a deity from another culture, you should certainly continue it. If you have spiritual practices from various cultures that work for you, use them. Perhaps you will find yourself adapting your older patterns to fit your hearth culture, as you move more fully into its model. In the end you should be able to find a balance

between formal work in your ethnic tradition and a more personal eclecticism.

Respect for the cultures from which we seek to learn asks us to go beyond simple borrowing, or 'cut-and-paste' approaches. Wisdom suggests that to comprehend the gods and goddesses, and the spirit and magic of the old religions, we must comprehend the cultures in which they existed. Practice has shown that involvement primarily in a single culture leads to solid, practical results. So we earnestly suggest that you take up a hearth culture for your work in Our Druidry.



READ ANY GOOD BOOKS LATELY?

We have. Take a look at www.adf.org/reading/ for ADF's suggested reading list

By: Ian Corrigan

A Trance Journey to the Three Worlds

*Embark on a magical
journey to the three
realms of land, sea
and sky.*

Here is a trance journey you can take on your own to visit the three worlds.

Preparation

i: Basic breathing and relaxation

ii: Mist induction

a: Deepening as mist rises

b: Drifting downward

c: Come to rest, mist clears...

1: The Land

You have come to rest on strange ground. The mist clears, shredding in a gentle breeze. As

your vision resolves, you are in a clearing in a wood. You remember your quest - to seek contact with the essence of the three worlds.

All 'round you is the forest, dappled in gray light through the leaves of trees. The floor of soft leaves and plants is beneath you, the smell of loam and earth around you. You rise to your feet in vision. Above you, the sky is silver-bright, but sunless, the light broken here on the forest floor.

As you stand in this clearing, turn now to the four directions. Gaze in each direction, and let the vision become full and clear. As you turn, an animal or bird will appear in some place before you. You begin to walk, going toward that messenger, seeking the land-folk.

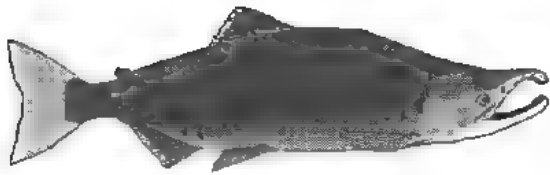
As you walk through the forest, you observe its nature. Open your heart and seek loving contact with the land spirits. Observe any response, but keep walking, walking on through the woodland.

At last, you emerge into a wide glade in the wood. In the center of the glade is a mound, of the ancient kind, a small barrow, ringed in stones. Before you is the door into the mound, a narrow arch of giant stones, with the lintel-stone carved in spirals and rings. Inside the doorway all is dark, but from the door a thin stream of smoke creeps.

You know that this is your destination, so you stride fearlessly to the portal and step into the dark, into a downward tunnel, with walls of cold stone. The tunnel turns to the left, turning downward in darkness, turning rightward back on itself, until before you a dim red light becomes visible. You walk down into a chamber with high roof and walls of giant slabs. The light comes from a fire, burning in a round raised altar in the center of the chamber. Flickering firelight reveals carvings of animals and plants.

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You go to the fire and gaze into its changing light. You turn your mind toward the land. As you watch the fire, the spirits of the land may come to you, may reveal themselves. Let your mind range to the deserts and jungles, the tundras and woodlands, the plains and mountains. Call out to the living minds that lie within the stone and soil.

You find yourself in the mound, the ground beneath your feet, the fire before your eyes. You feel a presence at your back and you turn. You see a spirit standing before you.

The form of the spirit becomes clear - its face, its body, its garb or raiment. The spirit holds out a hand, offering you a gift. You accept the gift with thanks to this guide of the land.

The spirit gestures, and behind the burning altar a panel of carved stone opens. Through the door, you can see the ocean. You step around the fire and out onto the sea strand.

2: The Sea

You stand on the sea shore, and remember the land, and its gift. You look out over the sea, hearing the sound of the waves on the sand, feeling the wind off of the water, smelling the salt air.

A beautiful silver gull flies from right to left across the sky. Your eye follows the bird. By the shore you see a ship, a ship of white wood, with blue sails and silver fittings. A gangplank runs from the ship down to the shore.

You walk down the shore and up the plank onto the deck of the ship. No crew is visible, but the plank draws up, the sails fill with a freshening wind, and the bow turns away from the land as the boat sails away.

The ship sails with magical speed, scudding over the waves as gulls call overhead. Fish come to follow,

(Continued on page 27)



(Continued from page 26)

and leap around the vessel. Three dolphins come to leap and play, running before the fleet ship

Far from the sight of land, the ship slows to a halt. In the calm and gentle roaring of the waves, the gangplank lowers again, down into the water. At the bottom the dolphins wait.

You walk down the plank and into the waters of the sea. The cool water is refreshing and supporting. The dolphins come and bear you up, then laughing, they carry you with them as they dive down, into the sea.

You feel no need to breathe as you pass beneath the waters as you travel down among the life of the sea. Open your heart to the life of the sea as you travel in their country.

You are carried on through the sea by the strong, friendly beasts until you come to a great undersea mountain, its peak deep beneath the surface. The water has grown warm, and you see that the top of that mountain is flat. Upon it is a ring of stones, and at its center a pool of lava steams and bubbles. It glows hot red, and flows of lava run into the sea, cooling.

The dolphins carry you down to the lava, and you gaze into its glow. You turn your mind to the sea. Let your mind range to the trenches and reefs, to the strange upwelling sources, to the warm shallows and the whale roads, to raging storm and calm depths teeming with life. As you watch the lava, the spirits of the sea may come to you, may reveal themselves. Call out to the living minds, within the ancient depths.

Floating there at the mountain, the dolphins waiting beside you, you feel a presence at your back. You turn and there stands a spirit of the

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Ads from ADF members get 10% off!*

sea. The form of the spirit may come clear to you, its countenance, its garb. It offers you a gift, and you may choose to accept it.

The spirit gestures, and the dolphins carry you up again. They begin to carry you upward, speeding up through dark water into lighter seas, up toward the bright surface. They break the surface and leap high, bearing you over the waves. You suddenly feel yourself caught on a powerful body, that carries you toward the sky.

3: The Sky

As you rise into the air you look down to see a huge white swan, carrying you gently into the sky. Its mighty wings beat and its noble neck stretches out before you. You remember the sea, and its gift to you.

You are lifted higher and higher, turning wide, back over the land. You rise through banks of cloud, past flocks of singing birds. You feel the crisp, cold air of the sky, see the passing of the clouds and currents of air., the sky that circles the whole globe of the world. Open your heart to the sky, seeking awareness of its spirits, storm and clear night, wind and gentle rain, as the swan bears you onward through the silver sky.

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The swan levels off, flying at remarkable speed. You approach a huge cloudbank, towering up white and fleecy, high above your head, you see canyons and hills of cloud. Near its base it is black, and you hear the rumble of thunder.

The swan carries you to a shelf in the cloud and, as you descend, you discover that you can slide from the swan and stand upon the grey-white surface. Before you the convolutions of the cloud open like a maze, and you walk in.

The way is clear, through a valley of cloud, until you come to a great arch of purest white, with a tower of cloud rising behind. In the center of the arch flashes a free-floating ball of fire, crackling and hissing in the moist air.

Gaze into the fire, and turn your mind toward the sky. As you watch the fire, the spirits of the sky may reveal themselves to you. Let your mind range into the air, to the cycles of rain and wind, to the kingdom of birds just above the treetops, to the high, racing winds of the upper airs. Call out to the living minds that lie behind wind and rain.

You find yourself standing at the temple of cloud, the towering white, the rumble of thunder and the fire's blaze. You feel a presence behind you and you turn to see the messenger of the sky.

The form of the spirit becomes clear, its gaze, its appearance. It offers you a gift, which you may accept if you choose.

The spirit gestures, and the swan catches you up onto its back, speeding upward again, upward above the clouds, upward until the silver sky is left behind, until the sun and moon are both visible in their glory.

You remember the three worlds, your experience of each, the three gifts you've been offered, and remember, that when you wish to return to the inner worlds, to contact the spirits, this work has made that easier. It has opened the way.

4: The Return

You ride on the back of the swan, and it begins a gentle descent, back toward the swirling mist below. Together you sail downward toward the common world, remembering all as you descend toward your body.

The swan departs and you are again drifting downward on the upholding mist. You remember your body, seated here. You drift back down into your body, settling gently.

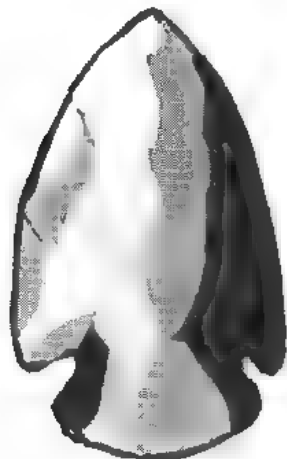
Breathe deeply. Stretch and feel your flesh move. As you open your eyes, you are returned to your common life. Your mind clear and rested, filled with the memory of wonder, but ready to return to common life, with the blessings of the three worlds!



By: Deborah Rest

Warriors and Their Weapons

*An argument for
continuing to permit
warriors to carry
weapons at festivals.*



At Wellspring and at Muin Mound Madness, a member of ADF and of the Warriors Guild carried a sheathed spear around with him. At both festivals, there were individuals who felt justified in criticizing him for doing so. At Wellspring, someone was indignant at the fact that he would carry a weapon when there were children attending the festival. At Muin Mound Madness, someone criticized him for carrying a tool of war in a spiritual setting with no obvious purpose for doing so. The first individual raised the topic on the ADF e-mail lists, where it has created much controversy since. It is my purpose here to present the issue to the greater membership of ADF, and to argue for the position that the organization should not adopt a policy against the carrying of sheathed weapons at festivals.

For the purpose of this article, "weapon" will refer only to those weapons which do not have an obvious utilitarian purpose. No one is proposing that knives and staves be regulated. The weapons at issue are those with blades or points. While there are those who question the legitimacy of weapons in any ADF contexts, they appear to be a very small minority. The debate, instead, concerns under what circumstances weapons should be allowed. Most have agreed that warriors should be allowed a space in which to practice. The most controversial topic is whether the privilege of the warrior to carry a sheathed weapon should be restricted.

There have been five arguments presented thus far for a policy to limit the carrying of sheathed weapons to going to or from practice or a ritual where the person is allowed to bring his weapon. The first argument is that sheathed weapons are inherently unsafe, and especially dangerous to have in the presence of children. But what is so dangerous about a sheathed weapon? I have not verified the claim

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made by one person in the discussion, but have no reason to disbelieve, that in the SCA they have had large events with many people carrying weapons for over fifteen years, without a single incident. They train their members from the first day in the safe handling of weaponry and protocols. The perfect record, given the number of people and the length of time involved, would seem to indicate that sheathed weapons are not inherently unsafe, so long as sensible rules are in place and enforced.

As for children, the argument is that they could get into the weapons and hurt themselves. But how would a child get into a weapon being carried by a responsible adult? Further, there are plenty of dangerous things that a child could get into at a camping event, like knives or other sharp tools, fire, tent stakes, hammers, thorns, insects, etc. But we do not have policies to ban these things, or to prohibit children from going barefoot. Since sheathed weapons carried on the warrior's person represent a far smaller danger to the child than these other common camping hazards, why should they be singled out for proscription?

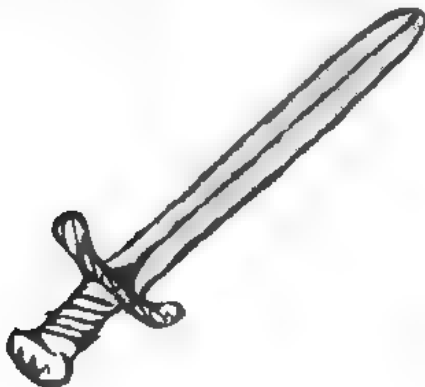
Finally, although the warrior is responsible for the safe handling of his or her weapon, the parent is responsible for his or her child. If the parent is worried about the child's "getting into things," then perhaps the parent ought to be watching the child more carefully, or not

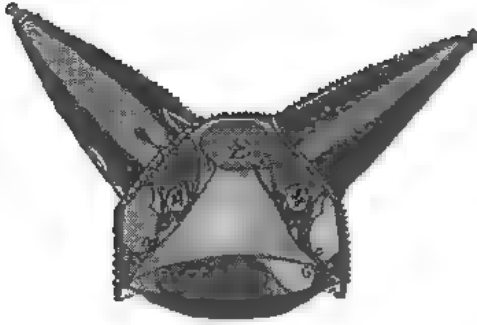
bringing him or her to a camping event in the first place.

The second argument is that visible weaponry gives us a bad image—that if a roving reporter came and took pictures, we could receive bad national publicity. But this seems rather far-fetched. Once again, if the SCA can hold huge events with lots of people carrying around weaponry, and yet do not receive bad publicity, why should this be a likelihood at a small festival with a few people toting around spears or swords? Further, if the reporter is looking to feed the fears of society, he is more likely to focus on the fact that we are worshipping ancient gods, or have members whose sexuality the general populace finds threatening, than on the fact that there are a few archaic weapons floating around. Is possible bad publicity something on which we should be basing our policies?

The third argument is that weapons are a tool of war, and that killing has no place in ADF, and seeing the tools of killing should not be forced upon people who just want to attend a religious festival. My response is that ADF is not a pacifistic religion. Our very concept of the Druid as a magico/religious functionary of any of the Indo-European societies is based on Dumézil's work showing that Indo-European societies had a social structure of three functions. The warriors, as Dumézil's second function, were basic to the very structure of soci-

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ety. Their function was to keep the dangerous outdwellers at bay, and in order to do that, they had to deal with death and killing.

The response given for this argument is that although we draw our inspiration from the ancients, that does not mean that everything the ancients did is meaningful for us. We do not want our warriors defending our community against outdwellers, since we do not perceive any external threat. And I agree that the lesson to be learned from the ancients has nothing to do with creating an armed guard against possible intruders. But death and killing are part of our reality. Living in the modern world does not make conflict, death or killing obsolete. By looking at how the ancients understood these issues, we can find the hero's journey for ourselves.

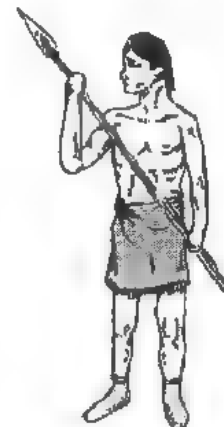
As for the argument that killing has no place in our religion, I think it is safe to say that ritualized literal killing of humans does not have any place in ADF. Ethically, however, I don't think our religion has a problem with someone killing in self-defense. We have no belief that we should be pawns of fate. The emphasis on self-responsibility would suggest that we have an obligation to defend ourselves in case of attack. If someone is skilled enough to do so without harming his attacker, that's great. If it is a choice between his life or mine, I would argue that ADF religion would support my decision to take his, assuming I could. Further, until we declare ourselves vegetarian

as an organization, we implicitly accept the killing of animals in a context other than self-defense.

Metaphorically, killing definitely has a place within ADF. Killing is about putting one's own needs before those of another, either in the context of making a decision that an animal's life should be ended so that you may eat or have his skin, or in the context of defending against harm. Recognizing the role of killing may help us to take on the responsibility of being prepared to defend ourselves in case we should be attacked. Drawing and defending boundaries that hurt others' feelings in order to protect oneself emotionally is a metaphorical killing. To knowingly decide to cut off support to someone because you need to use your resources on your own needs is a metaphorical killing. One can kill a friendship, a relationship, a marriage, a business partnership, an organization, etc. I don't think we have any belief in eternal relationships—"what is united by the gods shall not be parted by man." So long as our ethics accept endings as well as beginnings, we accept the metaphor of killing.

So long as the warrior function, and all it entails about protecting boundaries, dealing with conflict, accepting death, taking responsibility for causing harm to that which threatens the boundaries we protect, is a basic element of

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our spirituality, the claim that killing has no place in ADF is unjustified. We would be doing ourselves a grave disservice by not embracing the lessons to be learned from the warrior path, and it would be a violation of the very concept of the organization, committed to drawing its inspiration from the ancients.

The mythology about the gods and the heroes is full of conflict. Combat is part of our cosmology. The cosmic order was partly established through combat. The social order is partly maintained through combat. Not everyone in the social order is willing to play by the rules. (And, of course, there are those outside the social order.) Warriors stand between the city walls and the outwellers. They need their weapons to fulfill their function of keeping the dangerous forces at bay. Thus weapons, as the symbol of the warrior, and the tool of death, have a vital place in our religion. Though there are those who may not wish to be reminded of this, they are not justified in the belief that killing is not part of ADF religion, and do not have the right to demand of those who wish to carry weapons that they not do so, simply because they do not want to see them.

The fourth argument, following on the third, is that even if weapons have a legitimate

role in the religion, the warriors should be considerate of those who do not want to deal with them, those who do not wish to have the lesson of death and killing thrust into their field of vision. To this I have proposed that "safe space," where no weapons are allowed, be set up for those who wish to camp without having to deal with weapons. Further, I have suggested that there be specific areas set up, not immediately next to the weapons-free space, where warriors can practice with their weapons. This way someone who does not wish to deal with weapons has the option of not doing so. But consideration goes two ways. If those who wish not to see weapons would like the consideration of the warrior who would like to carry the weapon, then they need to be considerate of the warrior's needs as well.

The fifth argument is that if the community has concerns about the warriors carrying weapons, and the warrior has no obvious reason for doing so, then the warrior has no inalienable right to carry a weapon, and it should be restricted. The idea is that because weapons are perceived as a threat, it is up to the warrior to prove the necessity of carrying a weapon before he has the right to do so. While I certainly agree that the warrior does not have an inalienable right to carry a weapon, why should the onus be on him to prove the necessity of carrying the weapon, when no one has been able to show that his doing so causes any actual harm? The pagan community in general accepts the precept that if an action does not cause any harm, there is no reason why someone should not be allowed to do it. Simply making people nervous is not causing harm. More is needed to prove that the carrying of weapons represents a real threat.

Even if we give consideration to those who dislike weaponry merely because it makes them nervous, we still need to weigh their

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concerns against the needs of the warriors who wish to carry their weapons. To do this, we need to discuss the several purposes working with weapons serve for the warrior. While I recognize that the legitimacy of working with weapons is not at issue, in order to explicate their overall significance to the warrior, I'd like to start there.

Most obvious, working with weapons helps hone the warrior's skill at using the weapon. Physical dexterity is one of the virtues most basic to the warrior. Another of the virtues of the warrior is discipline. Practicing and competing with a weapon requires more concentration, hence more discipline, than practicing and competing without one.

Third, the ability of the warrior to defend himself is augmented by knowing how to use a weapon. Fourth, use of tools from the past links us with the past. Properly learning how to handle a weapon links the warrior with the heroes whose craft he honors. It is an offering the warrior can make.

Fifth, weapons can be used to act out combat, through competition and through dance. These are valuable spiritual exercises. They allow the warrior to get a taste of the "glory of battle" without fatal consequences. The warrior can't get much of a sense of the glory of battle the further the competition is away from battle-like conditions. To be dealing with something that can inflict harm is much more serious than to deal with styro-foam toys.

The relationship of the warrior to his weapon is very personal, as we see in historical accounts and mythology. The ancients played games with weapons, they practiced with weapons, they danced with weapons, they took care of their weapons, they passed on

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CALL FOR CANDIDATES

MEMBERS' ADVOCATE

THE ELECTION FOR THE POSITION OF MEMBERS' ADVOCATE WILL BE HELD AT THE ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING AT WELL-SPRING GATHERING IN MAY. IF YOU WOULD LIKE RUN FOR THIS POSITION, PLEASE SEND A NOTE TO THE ADF OFFICE, P. O. BOX 15259, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN, 48106-5259 (ATTN. MEMBERS' ADVOCATE NOMINATIONS), OR EMAIL ADF-OFFICE@ADF.ORG. THE DEADLINE FOR NOMINATIONS IS MARCH 1, 1998.

THE MEMBERS' ADVOCATE IS ELECTED EACH YEAR TO SERVE AS AN OFFICER OF THE MOTHER GROVE AND TO REPRESENT THE INTEREST OF INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS. THE MEMBERS' ADVOCATE ALSO SERVES AS AN OMBUDSPERSON AND A MEMBER OF EVERY COMMITTEE ORGANIZED BY THE MOTHER GROVE.

ALL CANDIDATES FOR THIS OFFICE MUST HAVE A PUBLISHABLE PHONE NUMBER AND ACCESS TO EMAIL.

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their weapons to their children as great treasures, or were buried with their weapons, and they fought with their weapons. Their weapons were an integral part of who they were. The weapon completes the warrior. It gives him his characteristic tool, with which he can do what he has prepared to do. His weapon is part of his identity. What would Herakles be without his club?

In addition to practicing with his weapon, the warrior benefits from carrying it with him, attuning himself to it, and attuning it to him. The weapon is to the warrior almost a living entity, with a soul of its own. Its character is partially defined by the material of which it is made, and by its form. These determine what kinds of tasks the weapon can do well, and the physics of how it will behave. Its character is partly defined by the history of the kind of weapon it is. The noble tradition of a Samurai sword will be part of a Samurai sword, even if it is newly created. Finally, its character is defined by its individual history. If it has a particularly bloody history, for example, it may have a "bloodthirsty" quality to it.

By spending as much time as possible with a weapon, the warrior can get to know it. If the weapon is meant to be part of his iden-

tity, he will feel it. If not, he knows to put it aside, or pass it on to another. The time he spends handling it allows him to attune the weapon to him, so it will perform optimally. It also allows him to know what not to do with the weapon.

Simply carrying the weapon, thus, has a value for the warrior. In addition, although he may not be practicing, he may choose to do a kinetic meditation. He may alter his consciousness to a state of heightened awareness, anticipating possible danger. It is part of the role of the warrior to accept responsibility for death. His weapon serves as a constant reminder of this responsibility, and of the seriousness of his role, during his meditation.

In conclusion, one of the nice aspects of going to a festival is that one can wear the clothing of one's choice, one can spend one's time outside, doing activities one can't normally do in one's mundane existence. It is a retreat, where one can express oneself in a way one can't normally, and can engage in activities one can't normally. It is precisely because this is one of the only contexts in which one can walk around carrying a spear that the right is so precious. This right should not be taken away when the only weight on the other side of the scale is that seeing weaponry makes some people nervous.



The 1998
Wellspring Gathering
 May 27th to 31st
 Brushwood Folklore center,
 Sherman, NY

Wellspring is Stone Creed Grove's annual Druidic festival, held at the site of Starwood, about 2 hrs east of Cleveland. We are pleased to host ADF's national membership meeting, and offer the chance to meet our leadership and participate in the Members' Meeting and discussions. Brushwood is also the site of our first Nemeton, the earth temple that we have been constructing and using for the last 7 years. We will light the sacred fire and draw water from the well, to seek the blessing of the gods and spirits.

We will also host the first Druidic Collegium, a round of formal workshops from each of ADF's new guilds. The Collegium will provide introductions to the work of the bards, liturgists, naturalists, seers and magicians, and warriors. The workshops will be informative and practical, meant to increase your skill as well as your understanding. We hope to make this a fun and very educational retreat that can help move ADF into its future.

Costs for the event will be the same as last year. Here are the amounts, but **PLEASE DON'T SEND MONEY AT THIS TIME**. We will open registration after Imbolc.

Wellspring 98 Registration

Please fill out completely, maximum of two registrations per form, and return to:

Stonecreed Grove, ADF
 POB 18727, Cleve Hts, OH 44118

Legal Name(s) _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

E mail address _____

If you are bringing Children, how many? _____

ADF membership: Membership is \$30 dollars per year and can save you \$10 to \$20 dollars on Wellspring admission alone! Includes a one year subscription to Oak Leaves, our national magazine, as well as our Member's Guide and Druidic Dedicant training material:

Yes! Sign me up.

Enclosed find _____ registrations, as follows:

ADF Members: Before 5/20: \$55 _____

At the door: \$70 _____

Registration Fri - Sun only: \$45 _____

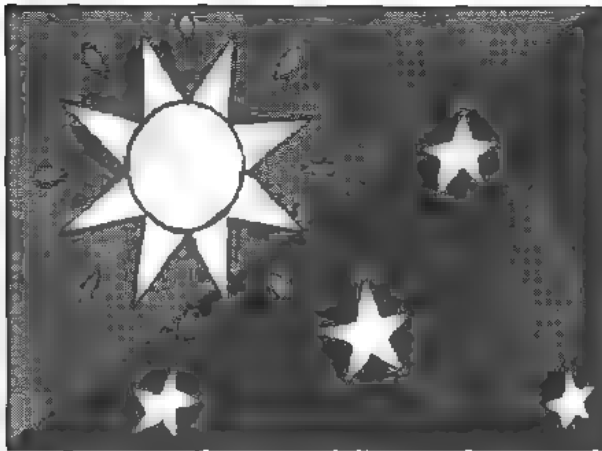
ADF Membership: \$30 _____

(enclose a membership form!)

Non members: Before 5/20: \$65 _____

At the door: \$80 _____

Total: _____



By: Fern Bernstein

Insomnia: Gift, Not Curse, of the Gods

It's 2 am. You're in bed, but awake after a few hours of sleep. Try as you might, you can't seem to get back to sleep, and not only are you tossing and turning but you are now obsessing about sleep deprivation.

Congratulations! You are blessed by the god(s) and goddess(es)!

That's right, blessed not cursed. In the middle of this dark sleepless night of the soul, you have a time out of time in which you can work to your spiritual advantage - and without falling asleep after lunch the next day.

WHY WE NEED THOSE MIDNIGHT HOURS

Our days are filled with many challenges and only 24 hours. For most of us, this includes:

- * Personal care: Shower, exercise, eat, keep up on news.
- * Work: 9-5, plus travel time for 'regular'

In today's frantic life, insomnia can be a blessing sent from the gods, a time out of time to do serious work on one's spiritual path.

jobs, although we home-based business folk eliminate the travel time and *sex* hours for the advantage of deciding *which* 80 hours a week we want to work.

- * Family and homelife: cleaning, cooking, parenting, spousing, loving, exhausting.
- * Community, both Pagan and secular: all those group activities that take up our time, such as PTA, organizing rituals, putting out newsletters, volunteering at the Library or as an EMT, etc
- * Recreation: Read fiction! See a movie! Take a hike!

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Many thanks to Vicki Mieth for her service as Vice Archdruid, and to Fern Bernstein for her service as Non-Officer Director.

The Davis family (John, Lillian, and Gwendolyn) welcomed Richard Sean Benton Davis to the world April 30, 1997. He was brought home the day of Cedar Light Grove's Beltaine celebration. He currently has his mother's Irish family trademark— red hair.

Victor Foshion and Elizabeth Harvey of Shining Lakes Grove married Nov. 1, 97.

In what could be the first Druid handfasting in Las Vegas, Philip Krell and Anastasia Brightfox of Stone Creed Grove pledged their troth on November 5.

ADF and Mugwort Grove bid condolences to Dave & Doreen at the passing of Dave's father in November this year.

Kit and Fox were divorced on November 18.

The Grove of the Wild Hunt is no longer an ADF protogrove, although most of its members still belong to ADF. They are active on the York University Campus, with new members, elected officers, and a training program and a seminar on self defense in the works.

Passages is now being edited by J. Y. T. Kennedy. If you have any news to share, please contact me by email at salan@planet.eon.net or by regular mail at:

*5003-109 Ave
Edmonton, AB
Canada, T6A 1R9.*

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- * Pathwork: read, practice, meditate, visualize, study, experiment, create rituals, keep up your Book of Shadows, etc.

Because of all of these challenges, that last category rarely gets the time it needs. Maybe a morning meditation, before making sure the children are washed, fed, clothed, and their homework and lunches are packed for school. Maybe you even get to eat breakfast, too. Lunch is often spent on chores if there is time after eating. Evening has dinner, dishes and other housecleaning, doing or supervising homework, going to meetings and/or classes, and, of course, trying to have some time to be a family.

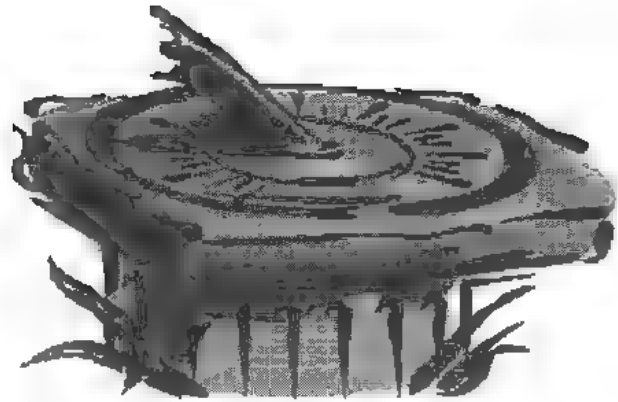
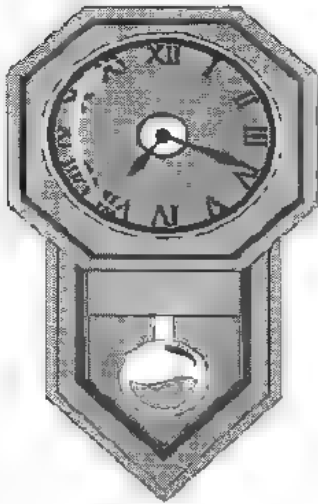
As a result, most of us feel the need for a few extra hours a week. And a bout or two of insomnia a week can just provide just that. The house is blessedly quiet then, with few distractions. The children are asleep. The cat is awake, but doesn't talk very much. You can't vacuum or scrub bathrooms or do other housework that might wake folks up.

Now, while there are plenty of gods and goddesses who are matrons or patrons of dreams, and at least one patron of sleep, there doesn't seem to be a god or goddess who sponsors insomnia. Oh, I suppose that it might be a part of Caffeina's domain (except for the fact the coffee relaxes me to sleep....) So, it seems safe to assume that if you are blessed with insomnia, it comes from your own matrons and patrons, not from some divinity who is new to you.

TYPES OF INSOMNIA

Insomnia comes in three different patterns. First is the inability to fall asleep easily, watch-

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ing those hours slide by, watching Nightline or Geraldo and Greg Kinnear (and why doesn't The Learning Channel show 'Archaeology' and 'Ancient Warriors' all night long?)

Second is the inability to stay asleep, where you fall asleep soon after going to bed but wake a few hours later (one sleep cycle) and being unable to get back to sleep for 2-3 hours. And the final type is where you wake up earlier than you want to. My suggestions for using your insomnia hours are useful for all of them, but really aimed at the first two, where you'll be getting more sleep after your working.

STRUCTURING INSOMNIA

What's the best way to make use of these 'found hours' so you can get the most out of them but still function the next day? As always, it comes down to planning your work then working your plan!

Figure out before bed if this is a night you'd like to use wake time. Most of us *could* wake up at the end of each sleep cycle, and applying one's will is the first step. And all of us tend towards one or two of the types of insomnia. I, for example, tend to be wakeful from 1 am to 4 am. Know thyself.

Plan on about two hours of work, and that none of it should be physical exercise of any type, not even stretching, unless a part of your personal needs really demands the extra stretching. Exercise can too easily interfere with getting to sleep after the working.

Plan on major rituals or pathworkings only once every week or so to give yourself time to assimilate the working (but you already knew that from your 'regular' practice, of course.)

Some of the things you could decide to do in your two hours include:

- * **Meditation:** I always like to start with this, just like I like to start my day with it.
- * **Rituals or pathworkings:** planning, preparing, memorizing, or doing one.
- * **Studying:** Around here we make and use flash cards a lot, they are great for things like herb lore, learning runes, ogham, or tarot cards, or other things that involve rote memorization.
- * **Arts & Crafts:** Grab paper and ink and create images of the gods and goddesses.

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Write spiritual poetry. Work with clay. Take all the grains/peas/beans you have and use them to make a design. Start a loaf of bread to use as an offering the next day (don't bake it - the smell of baking bread can awaken household members!)

- * Read: There's never enough time to do all the reading we'd like to do. I save this for the *end* of my insomnia working. There are plenty of really really dry books that I'm trying to get through that really really put me back to sleep *fast*. Eliade's *Shamanism* put me to sleep within 6 pages for the entire Winter of 93/94.

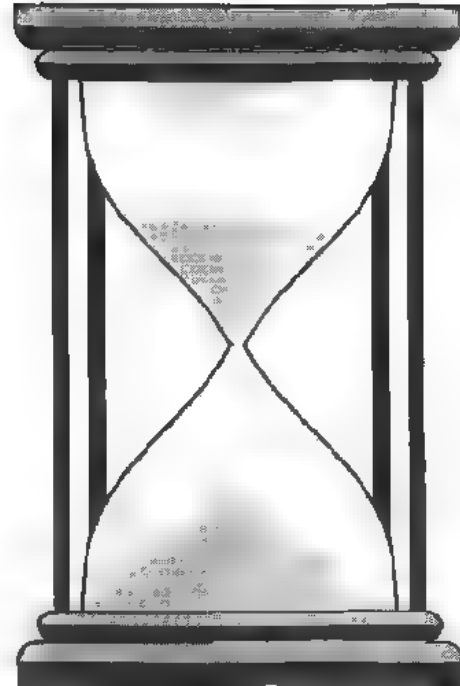
* Write articles for some Pagan publication.

HOW MUCH SLEEP IS NECESSARY?

Since the National Commission on Sleep Disorders Research recently came out with a 77 page report saying that some 40 million Americans suffer from insomnia and that most Americans are 'functionally handicapped by sleep deprivation on any given day,' let's look at how much sleep really is necessary.

Many authorities say that adults need at least 7 hours of sleep a night, possibly more, every single night. Maybe some people do, but I suspect that most people really need less than that. Certainly I know many people who function beautifully on 5 hours of sleep a night every night, and my absolute needs are on the order of 5 1/2 hours most nights and 7 1/2 hours twice a week.

Looking at sleep in terms of sleep cycles completed, rather than in hours slept, seems to be a better approach. We need two to three cycles of sleep a night, and feel most rested when we wake at the end of a cycle.



Length of sleep cycles vary, both by individuals and by which cycle per night it is - the first one is longest, with subsequent cycles becoming shorter (the time spent in each stage of sleep changes in subsequent cycles as well). I feel that the symptoms of 'sleep deprivation' really come from being forcibly awakened in the wrong time of a cycle, and are related to the dissociation that occurs when forced out of a deep meditative state suddenly. Avoid the dissociation and I believe you'll avoid having any problems.

EMBRACING INSOMNIA

Once one is mindful of insomnia as sacred time, magick happens even when we don't have a planned working. Here's one friend's experience:

....I woke up, and went to the bathroom, then came back and settled into my bed. Then for some reason, I decided to roll over and look out the window. The moon was just about at

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its zenith and I could see a ... planet nearby (Saturn maybe?)

The sky was a really intense midnight blue-royal purple combination and it seems as though all the stars had disappeared EXCEPT for the ones in a straight line from the planet to the moon. The configuration looked something like a trident without the center tine.....

Then, as I was watching, the brightness almost seemed to leak out of the moon and create this, like, silvery cloud or aura around it and the moon became a buttery yellow-gold.

At this point, even though I'm not totally freaked, I'm feeling a little odd about what I'm seeing and so I decide to sit up, and I feel this light pressure on my back. It didn't hurt, but was firm enough to keep me where I was, and I felt REALLY sleepy and then I heard a whispered voice ... and she said "You have never to fear. I am with you always."

And then it felt like my back was being patted and the next thing I remember is my alarm going off."

Now that's a mighty effective bout of unplanned insomnia! And with planning, or at least mindfulness, all bouts can move us forward in our connections to the gods and goddesses.



Festival Site Nominations!

Here's your chance to help determine the location of the ADF Annual Membership Meeting in 1999.

Send in your nomination for a festival site for this meeting.

Preference will be given to recurring festivals that have been held for at least one year, and are sponsored by ADF groves or other ADF-affiliated groups.

Please send your nominations to the ADF Office, at P. O. Box 15259, Ann Arbor, MI, 48106-5259, or email adf-office@adf.org.

Deadline is March 1, 1998.




The Burning Soul

Newsletter of the Bardic Guild, ADF



Volume #4

January 1998


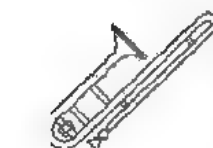
A Fond Farewell




It was with deep regret, and equally deep understanding, that I accepted the resignation of ADF's Assistant Chief Bard., Richard Mac Kelley, just a few days ago. As he, himself, has stated (in his 'resignation post,' he will continue in the Bardic Guild in a 'continuing member' status, still watch the ADF Bards' List on-line, and voice his opinions on topics dear (and dire!) to him. And, of course, still retain his Doss Bard rank, and will remain on the Mother Grove, in ADF, and in Stone Creed Grove.



For all of the years of effort and patience with the Bardic Guild; for all of the "ADF - chant 101 - oh !#&\$ Gwynne - do - we - really - have - to - teach - Walk - with - Wisdom - again - ?! - lectures" you have taught; for all those phrygian melodies and wonderful jazz harmonies; for all of the times you have shown us that holding to one's own opinion - remaining steadfast - is the honorable way; we, the ADF Bardic Guild and Guild faculty, thank you.



Never has the clarinet been played with such intensity and passion (eat your heart out, Pete Fountain)!!






As a friend, I will miss you, but understand that as our lives change and grow, our priorities must often change as well. Richard, you will be missed.





With fond memories and sincere regret,
Gwynne Green, Chief Bard, ADF.

Yes, Virginia, There MAY Have Been a Taliesin


By Subbno Geilt
ADF Fochloc Fili (Poet), Member Bardic Guild




A feller once said "There are more men of knowledge in the service of men of power than men of power in the service of men of knowledge." Sounds profound, don't it? Well, it isn't. It's a truism, and a mathematical one to boot.




If Taliesin, the poet, lived - and let's say he did, he lived in the 6th century, in a place called Powys (I adjure thee, fellow folklorists, get a map. Map, hell, get an atlas.) Scholars think Powys because of a poem Taliesin wrote to the Powys lord, Cynan Garwyn.



Taliesin was indeed a man of knowledge. John Morris-Jones and Ifor Williams thought that Taliesin's poems to the Warlord Urien were the work of a professional bard, a master of the short eulogy, or "praise poem."



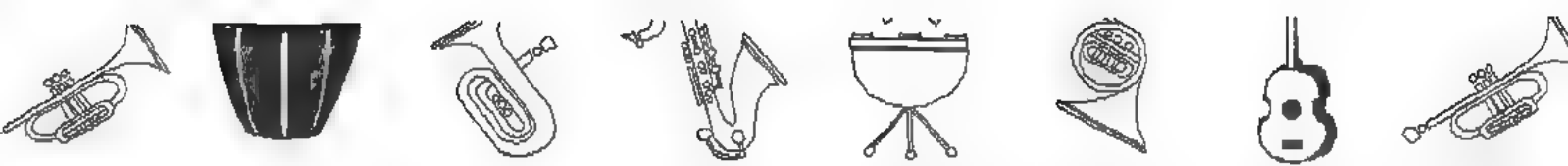
On the buffet table of literature, praise poetry is the Jordan Almond; it is colorful and faux. You either love it or you find it despicable.



In that magical moment of the 6th century, Taliesin seems to have been the reigning elf who opened up more aesthetic territory than any other Celtic poet of his time. His

(Continued on page 42)





(Continued from page 41)

'spiritual children' have been drawing on his work, scarcely realizing it, ever since. For sheer tenacity, and enthusiasm of engagement with the great spectacle of Celtic warmongering, no one is Taliesin's equal.

On the other hand, Taliesin mightn't have been one guy. Taliesin might have been the 6th century equivalent of our own esteemed Bardic Guild. Might have been a group of grad students from L'Université Druidsme. If he/she/it was Urien's P.R. department, they had monopoly status, right up there with the Drexel-Burnham junk bond department, or the First Boston mergers-and-acquisitions department. Lots of hacks were writing pretty much identical product. To distinguish him/her/itself from the competition, Taliesin had to resort to extramarket devices over and above extreme brown-nosing.

As a warlord, Urien was good. He was up there with John Wayne and Dirty Harry and Rambo. Urien was no R.E.M.F. Urien led, chucked spears, and everything. How do I know? Taliesin tells me so.

"If there's an enemy of the hill
Urien will make him shudder
If there's an enemy in the hollow
Urien will pierce him through."
-What if Urien Were Dead

And Taliesin is funny. To my mind, (and a lunatic mind it is) the funniest line in Taliesin is from *The Battles of Gwallawg*¹.

"These men can take outhouses by storm."

Right. Throw a frag. Blow up an outhouse. I love it. I love it.

* Rear Echelon Motherf**+*er

The work of Taliesin the eulogist was done mostly in the North; Cumberland, West-moorland and Galloway (get a map). These places formed the Brythonic or North Cymric kingdom of Rheged, of which Urien was king.

Taliesin also penned eulogies to Owain, Urien's son, and to Gwallawg, the Lord of Elfed, near Leeds.

Whether these eulogies are actually the work of the 6th century bard has been discussed by scholars.

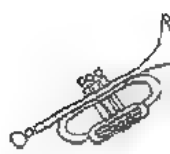
What was the Brythonic language like at the end of the 6th century? Had it lost its 'terminations'? Kenneth Jackson seemed to think so. If not, then the Taliesin poems would have been quite different, and they would have been emended, that is to say "corrected," to their present form at a later date. Trouble is, how could a poem survive linguistic changes without losing its form?

The well-defined structure of the Taliesin poems, with a primitive Welsh rhyming system, is proof to scholars that Brythonic did lose its "terminations" very early, and very quickly, and by the time Taliesin was writing, Cymric or Cumbric, the insular branch of the Western (Celtic) dialect of the Indo-European languages as spoken by the people of Cornwall, Wales and Brittany, (Manx, by the way, is of the Goidelic dialect) had already been born. Two poets, Taliesin and Aneirin, were among the first to compose in it. They did so with *panache*. Hence their enduring fame.

These are the salient points about the historical Taliesin. There is a wealth of fascinating information in Meiron Pennar's book *Taliesin: Poems*. Check it out. Now ain't you glad I've made you privy to the line about the outhouses? And don't you love a good mystery? I know I do.

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Wait a minute. We ain't through yet. There's another Taliesin.

After a seven hundred year snooze, Taliesin resurfaces again. This time he's a poet with supernatural powers and a propensity for the occult akin to the Taliesin of the medieval legend entitled *Chwedl Taliesin*, an English translation appears in the 'Guest' translation of the *Mabinogion*. Personally, I'd rather flunk a Wassermann test than read the *Mabinogion* by 'Guest'.

The Book of Taliesin, a late 13th century manuscript, some of which is connected with neither the eulogist nor the legend, was done as an "act of love by the last in a possible series of monks involved in the medieval cult of Taliesin."

Now what was that cult all about? My wild guess is that it might have been an abortive push for sainthood.*

Latin interpolations, such as *Lauda*, *Laudate, Jesu*, and several other religious poems contained in that manuscript, point to a religious involvement in the compilation of the book. *Marwnad y Fil Felb* is an invocation of the saints of the ages. Some of the other poems have secular titles, and appear to have had pre-Christian roots, have been reworked or recreated with a devotional Christian slant.

Even though these poems are 'covers' from different periods and by a motley crew of secular and religious authors, what is remarkable is that there is no tampering with the poems of Taliesin the eulogist.

Of the *Book of Taliesin*, the poems now widely accepted on Ifor Williams' formal

* Hoping to bring an infusion of tourist dollars into what is basically a jerkwater region.

recommendation, are those to Urien, the elegy on his son Owain, and poems to Cynan Garwyn and to Gwallawg. There does not seem to be any need to challenge this list of the most likely poems of the historical Taliesin.

The other poems in the *Book of Taliesin* have attached themselves to him in some cases because other poets, as actors, have spoken as 'Taliesin.'

The following bibliography comes with a *caveat emptor*. It contains a couple of interestingly 'garbage' works about Taliesin. Moreover, some of the poems book are very heady, bitchy stuff, but hey, we all read *People* magazine, don't we?

Some Taliesin trivia:

- * Frank Lloyd Wright's design studio was named 'Taliesin Design.'
- * W.C. Quantrill's horse was *not* named Taliesin.

A select Bibliography

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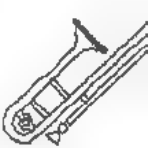
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(Continued on page 44)





(Continued from page 43)

The Eve Before Yuletide

By Lion's Dream

ADF Fochloc Seanchais

Senior Druid, Red Oak Grove, NJ

(With my tongue out to Clement C. Moore)

Author's note: Although technically a piece of satiric poetry, this was originally submitted to Gwynne as part of my storytelling work. Since I am now working on a Rindile (Satirist) concentration, too, I intend to re-submit it as such. Who knows? I might just put it to music and get credit for it four times! (Now if only you could DANCE to it!)

T'was the Eve before Yuletide and all through the Grove
Not a Druid was sleeping - we were wearing just Woad!

The cauldrons were hung on huge stones, standing still
In hopes that An Dagda, with Mead, them, would fill.

The children were laughing, all naked and skinny,
Squealing, "Mine is an 'Outie'! Look! Your's is an 'Innie'!"

The Teens were off doing what they've always done,
While their parents pretended, "My kids are too young!"

A Wicked Witch winked, and asked, "How's it hangin'?"
Then she dragged me behind a big bush for a bangin'.

(She was interested in Druidry, that I could tell,
'Cause she asked if my Bilé would fit in her Well.)

When out in the Circle we heard a loud wran-

gling
I leapt from the bush with my magic wand dangling.

Away to the Heelstone I ran, like a pup
Peering wildly 'round me it see what was up.

The moon on the surface of sacred stones bare
Gave the luster of Fairylight to everything there.

When, what do my mead-addled eyes actually see?
But a Part in the Veil and a bunch o' the Sidhe.

With a God who was radiant from His head to His toes
I could tell from His horns: it must be Cernunnos.

More rapid than eagles His companions they came
And He greeted them warmly and called them by name:

Hail Brigit! Hail Balor! Hail magical Gwith-ion!
Hail Dagda, Hail Danal Hail powerful Mod-ron!

From the Sea of the Underworld to the Sky up above
They filled up the Circle and infused it with Love.

As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky,

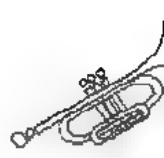
So, up to the Lintel stones everyone flew
Bright Gods and Great Goddesses, Fairy folk, too.

And then, round the stone tops, Divinity danced
Filling the Circle with bright radiance.

As I shielded my eyes from the light all around

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Cernunnos came and He sat on the ground.

He was surrounded by animals, from all over
the Wood

Attracted by power and forces of good.



The knowledge of Ages He held in His head;
The words of the Living, the thoughts of the
Dead.



His eyes, full of wisdom! His smile, so serene
His staff, it was Rowan, His garment was
green.

His magnificent horns were a wonder to see
Like a stag's they protruded, it looked like, to
me.



A snake twisting madly, He held in His hand
And at the near end was the head of a ram.



He had a wise face and a slender physique
The sight of His form made my own legs go
weak.

He was handsome and strong - a right power-
ful God

And I worshipped Him there and admired His
bod.



The glow from His head, like starlight, so near
Soon put me at ease, I had nothing to fear.



He chanted a sound like the wind in an oak
And He granted our Boons before they were
spoke.

Then twisting His Torc 'round his neck, with
a flair

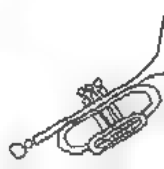
He hovered and floated up into the air.



He parted the Veil, to the Sidhe gave a blessing
And away they all went, without any messing.



But I heard Him pronounce, ere they all disap-
peared,
"Blessed Yuletide to all, and a Magical year!"



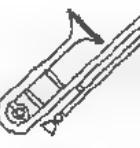
The 3rd (nearly) Annual Triple Guild Weekend

is planned for
May 8, 9 & 10, 1998

at

Skip Ellison's Property
(near Syracuse, NY)

For more information, please call
Chief Bard Gwynne Green
(508) 378-2870
(please leave a message)



Kids' Pages



Feed the Birds!



It's fun to make useful things and watch them being used by living creatures. Many birds stay north during the winter. The snow and cold make it difficult for them to find food. Making a bird feeder and hanging it in a place where you can watch the birds will be a lot of fun!

Make a list of all the different types of birds you see. Compare your list with friends in different parts of the country. Make sure to hang your bird feeder away from fences and other bushes where cats could get to them.

Pipe Cleaner Bird Feeders:

Take a pipe cleaner and turn one tip into a tiny L-shape. Then string the pipe cleaner with Cheerios, leaving a short length to be bent over to hold the cereal. After shaping the pipe cleaner in to a cane shape, hang it outside for the birds. When the birds have eaten all of the cereal it can be refilled.

Milk Carton Feeder:

Use scissors to cut a large rectangle out of two opposite sides of a

milk carton leaving a three to four inch lip on the bottom. Make two holes in the bottom lip and slide a thin dowel rod through, letting it make a perch on two sides for the birds to sit on as they eat. Cut a hole to insert a string for hanging.

Jug Bird Feeder:

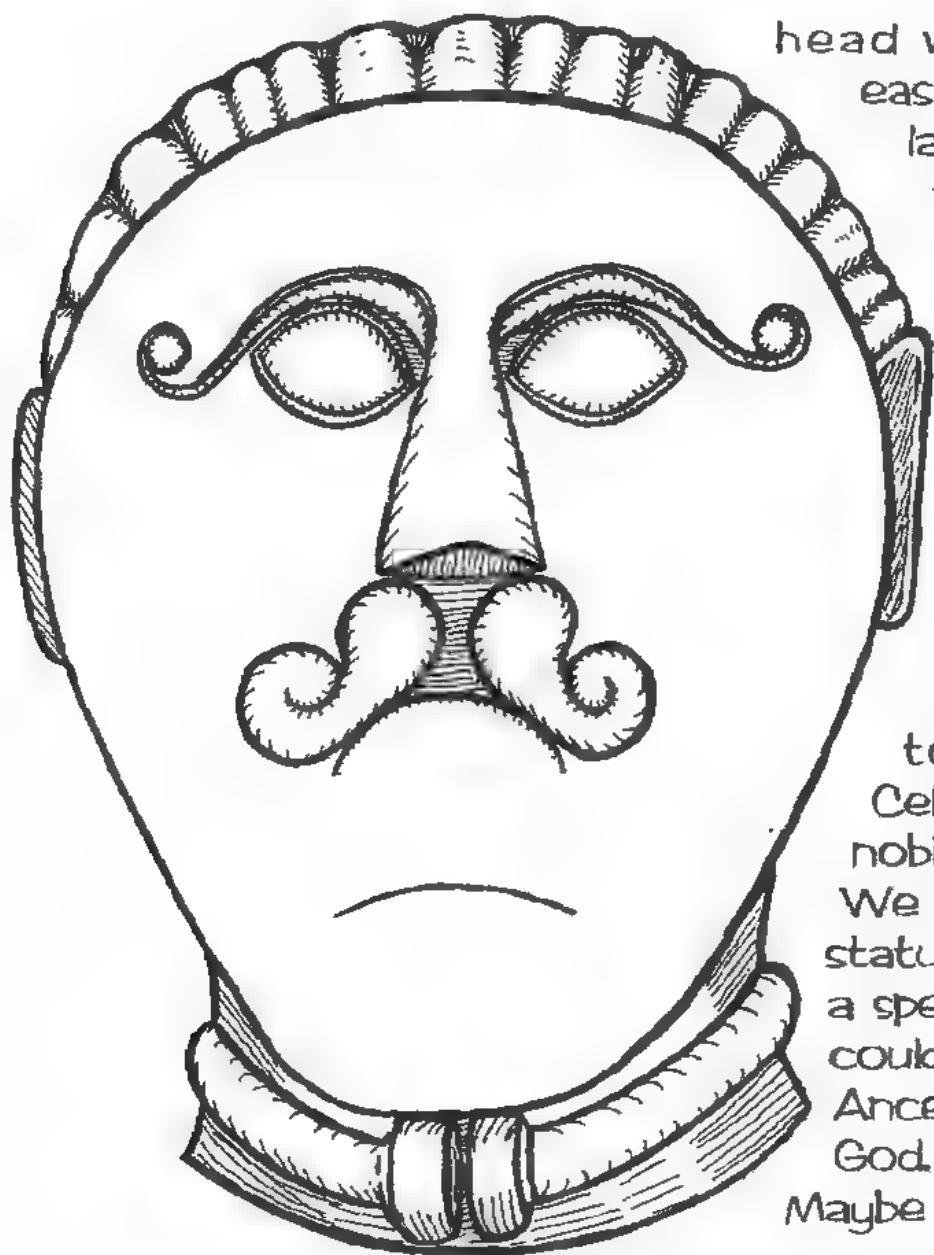
Cut away the sides and top of the jug, leaving a base of about 1 1/2 inches. Poke 2 holes in the plastic with a nail, using scissors or a knife to enlarge the holes if needed. Push a stick or dowel through the holes, so it pokes out both sides to give the birds a perch. Poke two holes through the top and insert a wire or string for hanging.

Pine Cone feeder:

Use a plastic or butter knife to spread peanut butter all over a pine cone. Be sure you cover the whole pine cone. Place a layer of birdseed in a pan and roll the cone in the seed until it is covered. Tie a string around one end of the pine cone and hang it from a tree branch. If you don't have a pine cone, use an empty toilet tissue tube.

A Celtic Head

To the Pagan Celts the human head was a symbol of the soul, of the power of Spirit, of speech and of vision. They carved many heads of stone and wood, and seem to have used them in their places of worship and their ceremonies. They even practiced the taking of heads in war, sometimes keeping the heads or skulls as magical objects.



This carved stone head was found at the eastern end of the Celtic lands, in what is now the Czech Republic. It shows a Celtic man, in the traditional style of his people. His hair is combed straight back, his big, curling mustach covers his lip, and his strong jaw gives him a courageous look.

Around his neck is a torc, the symbol of Celtic tribal identity or nobility.

We don't know who the statue might be. It could be a specific Chief or King, it could be one of the Holy Ancestors, or it could be a God.

Maybe it's the Dagda!

Word Search

Find all the words, and the leftover letters will spell this fun
Imbolc activity!

T R I P L E F L A M E M
N F S E F I W D I M R A
E P A I M B O L C K I E
P O M R U A D A N A F G
R E E K C O N N A B O M
E T L W S H T R A E H O
S R D T E C T K D O L T
E Y N R T G N I L A E H
R D A G D A R N M I D E
B O C L L B C B Y S M R

Bannock

Bres

Brideog

Candlemas

Cattle

Dagda

Ewe

Fire

Healing

Hearths

Imbolc

Lamb

Midwife

Milk

Mother

Poetry

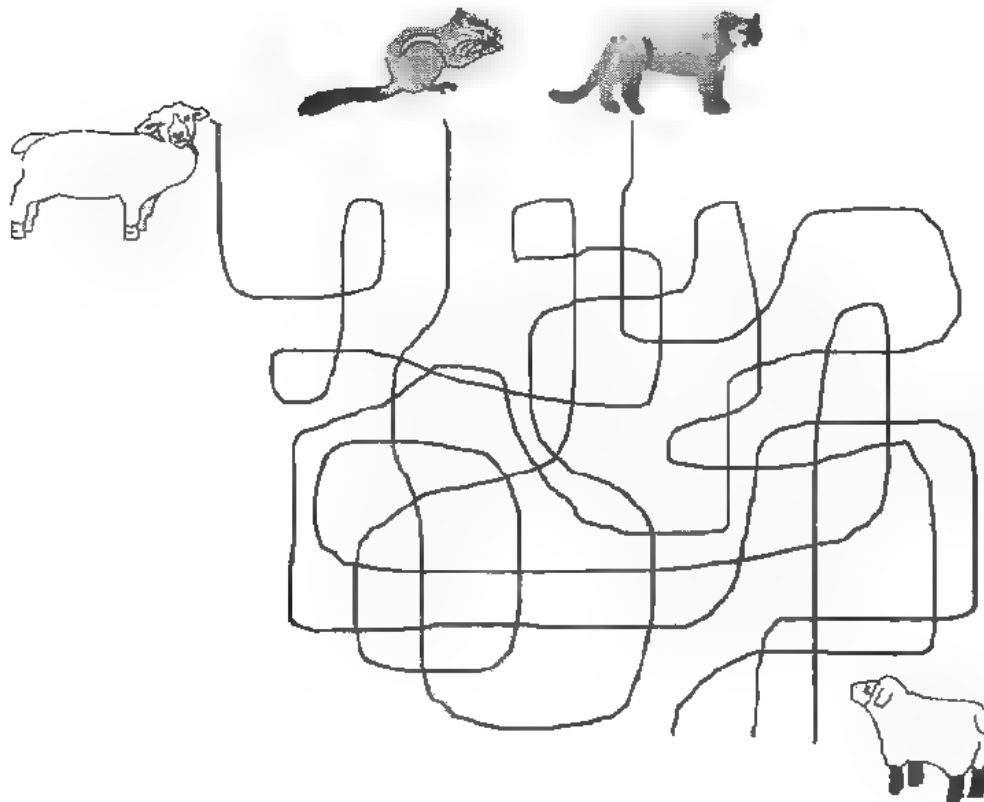
Ruadan

Serpent

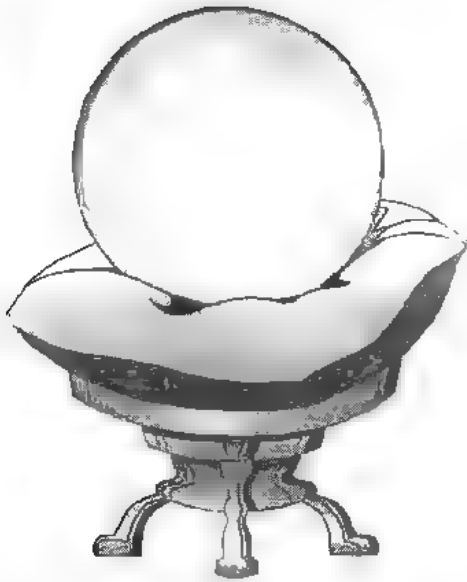
Smithcraft

Triple flame

Maze



Help the lamb
find its
mother.



*By: Lion's Dream,
Chief Seer*

A Vision of ADF's Future

The past few months have been a very exciting time for the ADF Seers' Guild! On November 13th we announced that the bylaws were officially ratified. At last count, 23 members out of 29 had voted to approve them. There were no dissenting votes!

We immediately held officer elections, and within a week the results were in. The following team of officers were overwhelmingly elected to lead the guild forward for the next three years:

Chief: Lion's Dream
Preceptor: Linda Demissy
Scribe & Registrar: Pandora
Pursewarden & Archivist: Lisa Kamp

Let me tell you that it's a great honor to be elected the first Chief of the ADF Seers' Guild. I'm very proud that our Guild is the first to officially ratify its bylaws, and the first to elect a team of officers! I think that is an indication that this guild is full of forward-looking individuals with clear vision. And I'm enthusiastic about what we can accomplish together.

*Our Seers' Guild has
many plans for its
growth.*

The seers are charged with creating a study program that covers divination, trance-work and counseling. We are fortunate that our officers are extremely talented and experienced in these fields. For example, I've seen Linda deliver an outstanding workshop on seer-ship and divination and I have 25 years of experience in meditation and hypnosis.

We have seen first hand how these three areas of study work together and we're very excited about creating a study program that leads our members, and ADF as a whole, forward.

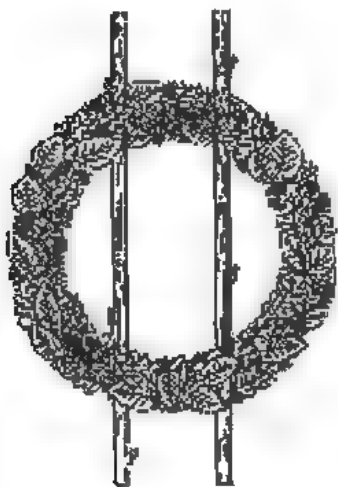
As Chief of the Seers' Guild, I will work very hard to promote the guild within ADF and the Pagan community, and I will strive to create a place where we can all learn, develop our skills and network with each other in an enjoyable way.



Edited By: Londubh

Falling Acorns

*News from around
ADF's groves, proto-
groves and SIGs.*



News from Red Oaks Grove

The Mother Grove gave Red Oaks provisional 'grove' status over the summer and we have been acting more and more like a growing grove every since.

Our first Fall Festival and Druid Gathering was a big success. We had almost 30 participants, who traveled from as far away as Ohio and Montréal to join with us. There were rituals every day and workshops of meditation, labyrinths and seership as well as several children's programs.

We had great food and fellowship and a midnight hike to visit the lake and howl at the moon. We look forward to repeating this success every year, and adding a Spring Festival, too. Keep Beltaine open, folks!

We've been meeting twice a month and doing ritual in our very own private nyfed (that's Welsh for 'nemeton') in the woods. Our largest gathering was Samhain, where we had 16 people. The woods were full of illuminated jack-o-lanterns and there was plenty of both serious worship and a lot of fun!

We have recently completed a grove brochure whose purpose is to explain our beliefs and practices to visitors, and promote our grove to interested people. Special thanks to Ian, who wrote most of the copy and allowed us to steal it. We've also developed a grove logo, that's based on the ADF logo - so special thanks to whoever designed *that*!

Myrddin has done a fantastic job of putting up the beginnings of our web site. Be sure to stop by and see what we have stolen lately.

Our newest member, Mari, has taken on the task of organizing a grove library. She

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already has about a hundred books cataloged and we're almost ready to actively start borrowing. (Actually, I've already started borrowing - maybe we're about to actively start *returning*!)

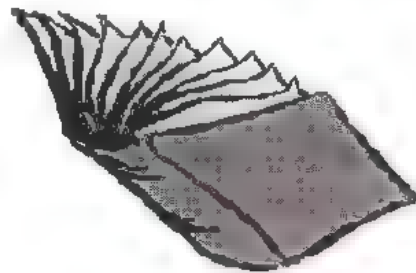
Have a great 'Alban Arthan' (Winter Solstice), and Dark Blessings, Dream

News from Stone Creed Grove

Stone Creed Grove celebrated a Hellenic Fall Equinox in the ACE office, our local free site. The rite included a dramatic reading of the Hymn to Demeter performed by several of the participants, with offerings made to each of the gods. We've been pleased to welcome Marae Price from Shining Lakes Grove to our rituals, her presence adds much to our bardic inspiration. In October, eight of us met together to work a Druidic Circle of Magic and blessing, the first in our resumed monthly series. We had new faces and old and plenty of good will as we drummed and sang up the power to charge spell candles for several of the participants. The monthly rites use a simplified, practically focused outline that stresses individual participation, and personal offering to the spirits. The text should be available on our webpage. Over the winter months we hope to add a lecture or teaching session to these monthly rites. This year we added masks to the work of invoking our gods and spirits. We made copper, leather and feather mask-idols of Donn, Lord of the Dead and Morrigan the Cauldron Queen, see our web site for pictures. About fifty adults (plus kids) joined the celebration and feast with plenty of drumming and dancing. The ever growing population of children enjoyed carving pumpkins and coloring Pagan-oriented pictures. Samhain was also the culmination of a successful membership drive.

Stone Creed Grove added six new national members to the roster as well as several local members who we will be working on to join the national. The grove had adopted a red, white and black chord as a symbol of membership and plan a public oath taking at Imbolc. The grove retained the current slate of officers for the coming year. Sue Parker as Senior Druid, Ahmie and Ian as co-scribes, Richard MacKelly and Anastacia Brightfox as co-pursewardens.

Thanks to the efforts of Shawn Miller and Ahmie, Stone Creed Grove now has a phat new web site. Beginning with basic introductory info, the site offers new ritual resources and a full schedule of grove events.



Shawn has also created the Stone Creed Grove Yule Song Book complete with traditional wassailing songs, Paganized carols and Yuletide lore. The songbook also includes midi and WAV melodies for many of the tunes! Kewel, Shawn!

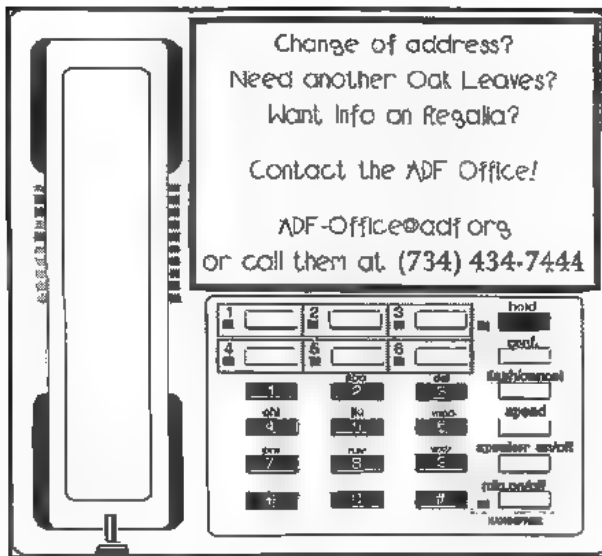
We would also like to congratulate Anastacia and Phil on the marriage, in Las Vegas no less!

Yours in the gods and spirits,
Sue Parker Senior Druid

News from CedarLight Grove

Baltimore's bright and lingering fall finally fades to November gray. Within CedarLight's Sigil, our young bilé, so bright

(Continued on page 53)



(Continued from page 52)

and fresh all spring, then clinging to life through its first long, hot, dry summer, stands stark now, ready for winter's rest. Our well, filled with autumn's drenching, overflows, flooding to a spongy wet marsh across our gathering ground. The fire flickers bright, but barely stretching either light or heat to our Samhain circle. The Morrigan, in true form, brings a cold and windy rain to Baltimore all Saturday, offering a gloomy welcome to our Samhain guests, but, too, in preparation for passing the water's of life, filling our bowl with fresh fallen water.

Just before seven, as we prepared our procession, the rain drizzled into a drifting and damp fog. The active soaking rain stopped. The Morrigan holding back her chilling breath, until, as retired from our rites to revels, we felt the first few drops of her returning rain. Samhain's rite was soft, and subtle, as the light dancing from our ring of candles, and the flickering fire, and the drifting mists whispering with Samhain's ancient voices. Revels found the walls of Druid Hall bursting with new and old friends and faces. There is already talk of our needing a bigger place for Yule revels.

Our Samhain rite capped a busy season of celebrations. We held a rite in preparation for Samhain October 15. This rite, held by invitation at a new downtown venue, allowed us to meet and be met by a new part of Baltimore's folk, and launched our extended season of individual, communal and social change. CLG sent a delegation to the BBM-MDC rally in Washington, on the banks of the Potomac. There we joined a festive evening of drumming, and dancing, though sadly, lit only by a few candles rather than the usual bonfire. The weekend event drew both local and national luminaries, including our own beloved AD emeritus.

The UMBC Pagan Student Association invited CLG in for a splendid evening of conversation on things Druidic. This season also marked the first transition at Druid Hall. One of our resident members (and one CLG's founding members) moved on to find a more intensive experience of the Buddhist Tradition. While sadly missed, we wish her our blessings on her way, and our thanks for being a part of our grove. The loss is also a gain, as we use this opportunity to extend a welcome to a new and highly valued resident at Druid Hall.

As the new year begins and our first year at Druid Hall comes to a close, with its many new friends, and experiences, CLG looks forward to the excitement of Yule and of participating in and contributing to Baltimore's community.

News From Silver Fox Grove

Silver Fox Grove has been very busy since our last note in *Falling Acorns*. We have been preparing our official New Member's Guide which will be including our new book of customs, our grove's standard liturgical outline, a description of our pantheon, and a brief explanation of our cosmology. We hope to

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have it ready to be adopted in time for our official magickal and religious joining of our founding folk at Yule. After this, new members will be sponsored into the community and adopted at a similar rite.

We have also been busy in the Montréal pagan community at large. *SFG* celebrated Loaf-Fest for the Montréal Open Circle and the Harvest ritual for the Concordia University Pagan Society (CUPS) and participated in CUPS' Samhain Fair activities, including staffing an ADF information table. If that's not enough, two of our members have recently become involved with reviving the Montréal Open Circle Council, an umbrella organization for the Pagan community here. Between our public activities and planning for our founding ritual, we are going to be very happy to spend the rest of the winter quietly among ourselves!

All this work has paid off for us, though: we've been multiplying more like silver rabbits than silver foxes. We've gone from three active members back in May to about a dozen, nine of whom are planning on being part of our founding rite. We'll be having an all night vigil to discuss our dreams for the grove and decide who will be leading us into the next year since all positions on the Leadership Council will be opened at that time.

Just in case we get bored, we have also been working on holding a welcoming rite for each of the deities with whom we work closely in our rituals. So far we've done one for Forseti, and one for Sif before our Harvest ritual. We've got about half a dozen or so more to go, so there's plenty left to do while we hibernate from Montréal's winter weather! Oh yes, and we can't forget the ongoing brewing of our mead, now bubbling in our SD's living room..

Brightest blessings to all!
Dimitra Barnard, Scribe
Silver Fox Grove, ADF
Keeper of Pandora's Box
One little peek can't hurt...

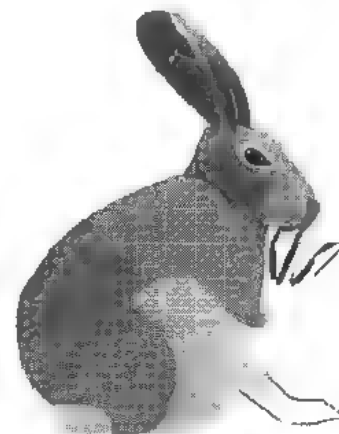
News From Protogrove of the Emerald Rose

Protogrove of the Emerald Rose will be celebrating its one year anniversary this Winter Solstice.

News From Sassafras Grove

We're very busy here - as usual - willingly bound and tied to the wheel of the year. It's been an interesting harvest season, full of new activity and outreach. Our Autumnal Equinox ceremony was held in the Singer Mansion, previously the site of our Vernal Equinox this year. The mansion was the "summer home" of the Singer family - early steel magnates that (some say) were integral to causing the infamous Johnstown flood. A friend of our grove owns it now and had generously offered it for public ritual use (also helping out its karma). Yeeha! We had a ball there last spring, when we did a whole ritual to the Earth Mother - with grove members invoking her by the names of Gaia, Nerthus, Erte, Magna Mater, and an East Indian name for the

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primal mother that is about 12 syllables long and begins with an "s" (forgive me, Anne.) Anyway, we counterbalanced this rite by calling upon the many faces of the Harvest at our Autumnal rite. For further details, please see the latest issue of *Faoi Na Creen*, our newsletter, but our rite culminated with the revealing of the most bountiful and beautiful cornucopia I've ever seen. Major fun had by all!

HELP!

OAK LEAVES NEEDS AN ART EDITOR!

THIS RESPONSIBLE PERSON WILL FIND ARTWORK FOR INCLUSION IN OAK LEAVES, SCAN IT AND SEND IT TO THE CHRONKLER. ACCESS TO A GOOD SCANNER AND TO EMAIL ARE A MUST.

ARTWORK CAN BE FROM ADF MEMBERS OR FROM PUBLISHED COPYRIGHT- OR ROYALTY-FREE SOURCES.

INTERESTED?
PLEASE CONTACT KIT AT (734) 665-8428 OR VIA EMAIL AT KITJAGUAR@AOL.COM

For Samhain, we outdid ourselves - literally. We had another one of our infamous loooooooooong rituals that the poor participants suffered through with us. Carrying on our Samhain tradition - we gave honor and praise to the Norns: Urda, Verdandi and Skuld. Ritualists set up individual altars to "the ladies" and participants got a personal view of past, present and future when the veils were thinnest. Again

- great fun but very long! We'll tighten it up for next year. I had another opportunity to work with Odin as our gatekeeper and do some intense connecting with our bilé as Yggdrasil. I'm still getting crap from Earrach for putting so much honey on it (the tree). Ooops.

So now, we're busy planning our Yule Solstice. Originally scheduled for my house, we had to move it to the mansion again - just because we are expecting a higher-than-usual attendance this year. Earrach was recently interviewed by *In Pittsburgh*, our local free weekly, for an article on Xmas alternatives. He had a chance to promote the fact that so many of our Yuletide traditions are pre-xian and extend an open invitation to attend our Solstice rite. The grove line has been a-ringing! We're scheduled to celebrate in our usual style - working with Mabon, Divine Golden Child - with due honor to the mother, Modron. Earrach & Earth Eagle made our sacred spiral a few years ago now & we will continue to use it as a symbol of the end of the old sun and the birth of the new. Singing re-worked carols, we're also planning our first wassail. Wish us luck!

Other Sassafras activities include our monthly lore meetings, religiously led by Judy. Pun intended. Right now, we're almost through with the Cuchulainn myth cycle. Our small Druid moon rituals continue, while each of us search out and practice our Druidry individually as well. This brief overview of our activities took so little time, I'll try to continue it on a regular basis. We love reading about other groves in Oak Leaves and perhaps now I won't get so many e-mails asking "hello Sassafras Grove— are you alive?"

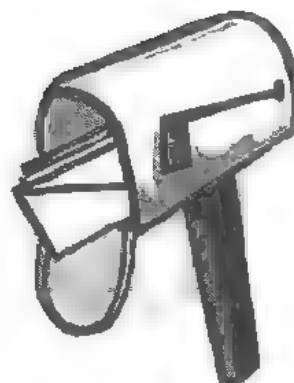
Alive & well, thank you!

Wishing all our brothers & sisters in ADF a blessed and bright Yule Solstice,

Diana for Sassafras Grove ADF



On-Line Mother Grove Minutes: 19 September - 11 December 1997



By: Fox

ADDING DEDICANT PROGRAM AS PREREQUISITE TO THE STUDY PROGRAM

Motion that the following be added to the "Revision of Study Program" policy:

"ADF DEDICANT PROGRAM

Completion of the ADF Dedicant Program is a prerequisite for entry into the ADF Study Program."

RESULTS: Motion Carried: 8 Approved, 1 Opposed (Vicki), 2 Absent (Fern, Ian)

TRANSFER OF MAIN POST OFFICE BOX

Motion that a post office box be opened in Ann Arbor, MI and that all ADF literature list that location as the main ADF mailing address.

RESULTS: Motion Carried: 6 Approved, 1 Opposed (Vicki), 2 Abstain (Kit, Paul), 2 Absent (Fern, Ian)

APPOINTMENT OF GROVE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Motion that the Mother Grove appoint the Council of Senior Druids to serve as the ADF Grove Organizing Committee per ADF By Laws article 14.1.

RESULTS: Motion Carried: 8 Approved, 1 Opposed (Blacktiger), 2 Absent (Fern, Ian)

GROVE ORGANIZING POLICY

Motion that the Mother Grove establish the following policy to govern the processing of Protogrove and Grove Charter applications:

1. All applications will be forwarded to the Chair of the Grove Organizing Committee.

2. Copies of all applications received by the Committee Chair from sources other than the Scribe must be forwarded to the Scribe within two weeks of receipt.

3. The Committee Chair must report the results of the review of each application to the Scribe within four weeks of receipt or the application in question must be returned to the Scribe.

4. All applications returned to the Scribe will be distributed to the Mother Grove for review and approval.

RESULTS: Motion Carried: 7 Approved, 2 Opposed (Blacktiger, Vicki), 2 Absent (Fern, Ian)

APPOINTMENT OF VICE ARCHDRUID

Motion that Ian Corrigan be appointed to the office of Vice Archdruid per ADF Bylaws Article 8:14 to fill the seat vacated by the resignation of Vicki Mieth.

RESULTS: Motion Carried: 6 Approved, 2 Opposed (Blacktiger, Paul), 1 Abstain (Ian), 2 Absent (Fern, Vicki)

APPOINTMENT OF ANTHONY THOMPSON TO NON-OFFICER DIRECTOR

Motion that Anthony Thompson be appointed to the office of Non-Officer Director per ADF Bylaws Article 8:14 to fill the seat vacated by the resignation of Fern Bernstein.

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(Continued from page 56)

RESULTS: Motion Carried: 8
Approved, 1 Abstain
(Windweavvr)

NEW OFFICER TRANSITION TIMING

Motion that Article 8:15 of the ADF Bylaws which reads:
"All Officers and Non-Officer Directors elected or selected at the annual meeting, including an elected Archdruid, shall take office as of the second High Day following that annual meeting."

be modified to read:

"All Officers and Non-Officer Directors elected or selected at the

annual meeting, including an elected Archdruid, shall take office on the next day following the announcement of the election results."

and Article 11:3 which reads:

"Upon the recall, death, retirement or permanent incapacitation of an elected Archdruid the Vice Archdruid shall become the Acting Archdruid, and shall exercise all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of an elected Archdruid until the second High Day following the next annual meeting."

be modified to read:

"Upon the recall, death, retirement or permanent incapacita-

tion of an elected Archdruid the Vice Archdruid shall become the Acting Archdruid, and shall exercise all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of an elected Archdruid until the day after the announcement of the election results at the next annual meeting."

RESULTS: Motion Carried: 7
Approved, 1 Opposed (Paul), 1
Abstain (Deborah)



Classified Ads

General

Retreats

Triple Cauldron Covenant - rustic retreat accommodations in beautiful upstate NY, instruction in Celtic Faery Wicca on site or correspondence course available. Write Heidi Pangrati/Kia Marie Wolfe, Box 31, West Edmeston, NY 13485.

Your ad here! You can place a classified ad in *Oak Leaves!* Advertise your wares. Search for a partner. Sell your new or used regalia. Trumpet your skills! Rates are posted on the inside cover of *Oak Leaves*. Send your ad with your check or money order made out to 'ADF' to our advertising editor at the main ADF P.O. Box.



Exchange Publications

Here are some other zines that you may find interesting.

Crow's Cause
P.O.Box 8281
Roseville, MI 48066

Enlightenments
5449 Marina Drive
Dayton, Ohio 45449

Free Spirit Rising
P.O.Box 5358
Laurel, Maryland 20726-5358

Gnosis
The Lumen Foundation
P.O.Box 14217
San Francisco, California 94114

Harvest Moon
P.O.Box 1506
North Wales, Pennsylvania 19454-1506

Hecate's Loom
P.O.Box 5206, Station B
Victoria, British Columbia
V8R 6N4 Canada

The Midnight Drive
P.O.Box 1932
Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania 17055-1392

Notes from Taychopera
P.O.Box 8212
Madison, WI 53708

Of a Like Mind
Box 6677
Madison, WI 53716

Pagan Personal Pages
16451 El Camino Real #5
Houston, Texas 77062

Pagan Dawn: Journal of the Pagan Federation
BM Box 7097
London WC1N 3XX England

Red Garters
P. O. Box. 162046
Sacramento, CA 95816

Renaissance Magazine
5A Green Meadow Drive
Nantucket, Massachusetts 02554

The Rosegate Journal
P.O.Box 23149
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

The Serpent's Tail
P.O.Box 07437
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53207

Silver Chalice
P.O.Box 196
Thorofare, New Jersey 08086

Silver Circle
P.O.Box 473
NL-3700-AL ZEIST
The Netherlands

Solitary
P.O.Box 6091
Madison, Wisconsin 53716

Touchstone: Oak Tree Press
Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids
P.O.Box 1333
Lewes, East Sussex
BN7 1DX England

Tree Talk: Tree Leaves Folk Fellowship
P.O.Box 6563
Tallahassee, Florida 32314-6563



Grove Listing

United States:

An Bhandia Protogrove
GO: Sean Schluntz
P.O. Box 20121
San Jose, CA 95160-0121

Dragon Mountain Grove
SD: Tara
P.O.Box 771
Bristol, CT 06011-0771
Voice: c/o Brian, (860)583-9434
Internet: dmg_adf@hotmail.com

Iron Hill Protogrove
GO Nisza Zeron
29 Ashkirk Place
Newark, DE 19702
Internet: Nisza@aol.com

Protogrove of the Living Oaks
GO: Londubh
PO Box 10266,
Savannah, GA 31412-10266
Voice: (912)231-1745
Internet: londubh@worldnet.att.net
www.geocities.com/heartland/hills/8203/

Wild Onion Grove
SD: Chris Sherbak
P.O Box 87651,
Chicago, IL 60680
Voice phone: (312)489-5766
Internet: drubear@aol.com

Crescent Dragon Protogrove
Urbana, IL Area
GO: Hawke
c/o ADF
P.O. Box 15259
Ann Arbor, MI 48106
Internet: windstrm@asylum.sf.ca.us

Garrán ná bPréachain Naomh:
Grove of the Sacred Crows
SD: Gwynne Green
P.O. Box 388
East Bridgewater, MA 02333
Voice phone: (508)378-2870
Internet: ArdPard@aol.com
Newsletter: The Wild Avocado

CedarLight Grove
SD: Will Pierson
Box 21723,
Baltimore, MD 21222
Voice: 410-319-8981
Internet: cedarlight@juno.com
www.packetex.com/cedarlight
Newsletter: A Walk with the Old Ones

Mugwort Grove
SD: Bob Knox
Box 835,
Greenbelt, MD 20768-0835
Nathair: nathair@oceanstar.com
Newsletter: What's Brewing
Email: c/o Alex Cauthen Zach
alex@alembic.crystal.com

Garrán Lochanna Gealla:
Shining Lakes Grove
SD: Fox
P.O. Box 15585,
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-5585
Voice: (313) 434-7444
Internet: FoxADF@aol.com
Newsletter: Ripples, \$5/yr

Whispering Pines Protogrove
GO: Grey Wolf
P.O. Box 302
Lawton, MI 49065-0302
Voice: (616) 624-1122

Green Man Grove
SD: Bryan Perrin
Box 3495
Jersey City, NJ 07303
Newsletter: MetroDruid Nuz

Red Oak Grove
SD: Lion's Dream
Box 327
Mount Laurel, NJ 08054
Voice: (609) 261 1048
Internet: dream@uscom.com

Muin Mound Grove
SD: Skp Ellison
Box 592,
E. Syracuse, NY 13057
Internet: SkpEllison@aol.com
Newsletter: Muin Light

Red Tail Creek Grove
SD: Sandi Marcin
P.O. Box 715
McGraw, NY 13077

Sycamore Hills Protogrove
P. O. Box 141,
Albany, OH 45710

Garrán Abhainn Triskele
Triskele River Grove, ADF
SD: Carlyne Deaver
P.O. Box 54081
Cincinnati, OH 45254
Voice: (513) 752-5409
Internet: epona@witchs-brew.com

Stone Creed Grove
SD: Sue Parker (Liafel)
Box 18727,
Cleveland Hts., OH 44118
Internet: sueparker@ncweb.com
Newsletter: A Whispering Among the Trees

MudFireWindSpirit Grove
SD: Rikki Hannah
P.O. Box 16412
Columbus OH 43216-0412
Voice Mail: (614) 628-9056
Internet:
76714.1544@compuserve.com

Sassafras Grove
SD: Earrach Canali
Box 100091,
Pittsburgh, PA 15233
Internet: veruca@sgi.net

World Tree Grove
SD: Jan Curran
Box 10036, Cranston, RI 02910
Voice: (401)785-9605
Internet: ivydruid@tp.net

Bri Leith Grove
SD: Deja Flite
P.O. Box 3322
Texas City, TX 77592-3322
Voice: (713) 339-0696

Garrán Mesen Bach
Little Acorn Grove
SD: Robert Holbrook
P.O. Box 7515,
Fredericksburg, VA 22404
Internet: gwyndewin@aol.com

(Continued on page 60)

(Continued from page 59)

Protogrove of the Emerald Rose
GO: Dragon
PO Box 5241, Vancouver WA 98668
Voice: (503)524-2442
Internet: Dragon00@mindspring.com

Sun Raven Protogrove
GO: Beket-Asar Edithsdatter
Box 8212, Madison, WI 53708
PODS: 93:9706/0 (Beket)
FIDO: 1:121/45
Internet: beket@scribe.magsystems.com

Canada:

Clairière du Renard Argente:
Silver Fox Grove
SD: Linda Demissy
2624 Jeanne d'Arc
Montreal, Quebec H1W 3V9
Voice: (514) 259-8916
Internet: one@CEDEP.COM

Europe:

Schevia Castle Protogrove
GO: Bran
Flyvägen 18
S-280 22 Vittsjö, Sweden
Internet: starman9@algonet.se

~~~~~  
Guilds and SIG's:  
~~~~~  
Alternative Gender & Sexuality SIG
Callista, P.O.Box 141, Albany, OH
45710, evenstar@frognet.net

Anthro-Archaeology SIG: Londubh
(Protogrove of the Living Oaks)

Artisans' Guild: Jimmy Smith
jsmith@resdgv12.er.usgs.gov

Bardic Guild: Gwynne Green
(Grove of the Sacred Crows)

Children's Education SIG
Pete Gold, POBox 1432, Littleton,
MA 01460, petegold@tiac.net

Druid Corps of Engineers:
Nizsa Zeron (Iron Hill Protogrove)

Ecology & the Environment SIG
Sylvan, (540)582-5593,
adelach@erols.com

Fire and Ice Kindred (Norse):
Paul Maurice (World Tree Grove)

Grove Administrators' SIG
Black Tiger

Healers Guild
(reorganizing)

Kitchen Witches' SIG
Branawen, P.O Box 27412,
Towson, MD 21258-7412

Liturgists' Guild
Fox (Shining Lakes Grove)

Lawspeakers' SIG
Chris Sherbak (Wild Onion Grove)
drubear@aol.com

Magicians' Guild
Ian Corrigan (Stone Creed Grove)
tredara@ncweb.com

Polyrelationship SIG: Gar Nelson
finn@nameless.com

Prisoner Relations Committee
and Prisoners SIG:
Camille Grant (Bri Leith Grove)

Seers' Guild
Linda Demissy (Silver Fox Grove)

Solitaires' SIG: Chris Sherbak
(Wild Onion Grove)
Internet: drubear@aol.com

TechnoDruids' SIG:
Londubh (PG of the Living Oaks)
Internet: londubh@worldnet.att.net

Warriors' Guild
Robert Barton(Grove of the Sacred
Crows), Internet
RobtBarton@aol.com

~~~~~  
ADF Mother Grove and Leadership:  
~~~~~  
Archdruid, Fox:
(Shining Lakes Grove)
adf-archdruid@adf.org

Vice Archdruid, Ian Corrigan
(Stone Creed Grove)
adf-vicearchdruid@adf.org

Acting Pursewarden, Fox:
(Shining Lakes Grove)
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(Muin Mound Grove)
adf-scribe@adf.org

Assistant Scribe, Merrie Forbes
(World Tree Grove)
address@ici.net

Preceptor, Deborah Kest:
(World Tree Grove)
adf-preceptor@adf.org
Voice (401) 273-6517

Registrar, Black Tiger
(Bri Leith Grove)
adf-registrar@adf.org

Chronicler, Kit Howard:
adf-chronicler@adf.org
Voice: (313) 665-8428

Members' Advocate, Windweavyr:
(Dragon Mountain Grove)
windweavyr@aol.com

Non-Officer Directors:
Paul Maurice (World Tree Grove),
Anthony Thompson (World Tree
Grove)
Richard Uhler (Stone Creed Grove)

Chief of the Council of Senior Druids,
Tara: (Dragon Mountain Grove)
Adf-seniordruidschief@adf.org

Acting Chief Information Officer,
ADF Webmaster
Anthony Thompson:
adf-webmaster@adf.org and

ADF Electronic Mailist Mistress
Jan Curran:
adf-listmaster@adf.org

Archdruid Emeritus, Isaac Bonewits:
ibonewits@aol.com

~~~~~  
ADF World Wide Web Page  
http://www.adf.org

ADF Central Office  
adf-office@adf.org  
~~~~~  
SD = Senior Druid
GO = Grove Organizer
Last Updated 12/14/97



Ár nDraíocht Féin: A Druid Fellowship, Inc.

Office of the Registrar, P.O. Box 15259, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-5259

Membership and Subscription Form

One form per person, please.

Secular Name: _____ P S C
Religious Name: _____ P S C
Address: _____ P S C
City: _____ State/Province: _____
Zip/Post Code: _____ Country: _____
Phone: _____ Birth date: ___/___/___ (mm/dd/yy)
Email Address: _____ P S C

In which ADF Grove do you intend to participate, if any? _____

Beside your name, address, phone and Email address, please indicate whether the information is Publishable (P), meaning it can be printed in ADF publications and we can give it out freely to people who might wish to contact you, Sharable (S), meaning we can give it out to ADF members who request it; or Confidential (C), meaning that only the Mother Grove will know it.

The information on this form represents a:

- New Membership Renewal Revival of Expired Membership
 Information Update (if name/address changed, indicate previous: _____)

If this is a new membership, where did you hear about us? _____

ADF Membership Rates

Regular Membership (includes Oak Leaves): _____ years @ \$30 = \$ _____
Family Membership* (no duplicate mailings): _____ years @ \$15 = \$ _____
Prisoner Membership (includes Oak Leaves): _____ years @ \$20 = \$ _____
Associate Membership** (does not include Oak Leaves): _____ years @ \$15 = \$ _____
Subscription to Oak Leaves _____ years @ \$20 = \$ _____

* Family memberships are for blood relations and spouses living with Regular or Associate Members, and do not include duplicate mailings.

** Associate Memberships may be purchased by members of ADF groves and protogroves ONLY. To purchase an Associate Membership, this form must be submitted to ADF by your local grove or protogrove.

Your membership will officially begin on the postmark date of this form.

Money Matters

Membership Donation = \$ _____
Earmarked Donation for:
 Publishing Activities = \$ _____
 Land Fund = \$ _____
 Other: _____ = \$ _____
Unrestricted donation to ADF General Fund = \$ _____
Minus amount paid earlier on ___/___/___ - \$ _____

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Checks or money orders should be made payable to "ADF" in US dollars only. Sorry, no credit cards.

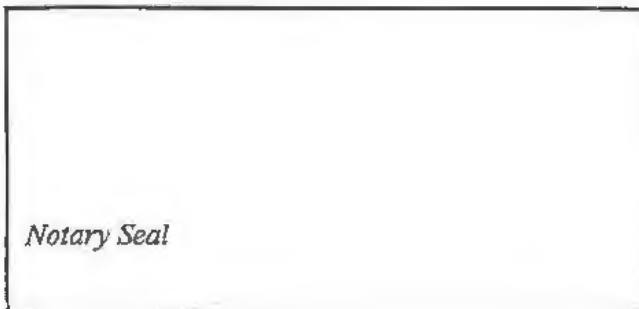
I am 18 years of Age or Older: Yes No (Check one)

Waiver

If you are under the age of 18, you *must* have a parent or guardian sign here to indicate his/her permission for you to be a member of ADF, and that signature must be notarized.

To whom it may concern: _____ has my permission to
(enter child's name here)

become a member of ADF, and I am fully aware of the Neopagan nature of this organization.



Parent or Guardian's signed name

Parent or Guardian's printed name

Please allow 4 to 6 weeks for membership processing.

Our Contributors

Read a bit about the folks who have contributed material to this issue of *Oak Leaves*.

Fern Bernstien, *Insomnia: Gift, Not Curse, of the Gods*: Fern is a long-time member of ADF, and, until recently, served on the Mother Grove as a Non-Officer Director.

Ian Corrigan, *The Imbolc Rite, The Case for Choosing a Pantheon, A Trance Journey to the Three Worlds, Front Cover Art*: Ian is deeply involved in creating rituals that enhance our growing spiritual work. He has been newly reappointed Vice Archdruid of ADF.

Fox, *Fox Tracks, ADF's Financial Report, Brigit, Behind the Veil, Imbolc Traditions*: Fox is the Senior Druid of Shining Lakes Grove, as well as the Archdruid of ADF. He is also guiding the formation of the Liturgists' Guild and managing ADF's finances.

Suibhne Geilt, *Burning Soul*: Suibhne is a solitary ADF member who is a member of the Bardic Guild. His primary interest is in Manx Paganism.

Gwynne Green, *Burning Soul*: Gwynne is the Senior Druid of the Grove of the Sacred Crows, as well as being the Chief Bard of the ADF Bardic Guild. She also coordinates the contributions for the *Burning Soul*.

Jennifer Kennedy, *Passages*: Jennifer is a

member of ADF from Canada, and has recently taken over editorship of *Passages*.

Deborah Kest, *Warriors and Their Weapons*: As ADF's Preceptor, Deb has been busy providing the vision for the development of our Study Program. She is part of World Tree Grove, and has long been active in ADF.

Liafel, *Assistant Editor for Kids' Pages*: Along with taking on the significant challenge of creating a kids' corner for *Oak Leaves*, Liafel is co-leading the Magicians' Guild with Ian, and is Senior Druid of Stone Creed Grove.

Lion's Dream, *A Vision of ADF's Future, Burning Soul*: Apart from being a fine poet, and the leader of ADF's Seers' Guild, Lion's Dream is also the Senior Druid of Red Oak Grove, in New Jersey.

Londubh, *Assistant Editor for Falling Acorns*: Along with contributing to *Oak Leaves*, Londubh is a leader of the TechnoDruids' SIG, the head of the Anthro-Archaeology SIG, and the grove organizer of Protogrove of the Living Oaks.

Starbringer, *Back Cover Art*: Starbringer has been a member of Shining Lakes Grove, and has contributed artwork to past issues of *Oak Leaves*.



