

# OAK LEAVES

THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF ÁR NDRÁIOCHT FÉIN

ISSUE No. 9



# Oak Leaves

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*Oak Leaves* is the quarterly journal of Ár 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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Half page: \$35	Business card: \$13
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Submission Deadlines are as follows: Imbolc issue: December 1st, Beltaine issue: March 1st, Lughnassadh issue: June 1st, Samhain issue: September 1st.

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

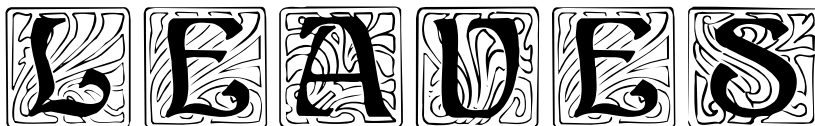


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See inside the back cover for more information about our contributors.

Cover art by Curucahm
It is a modern interpretation of a Celtic roundhouse as a future ADF ritual space.

Back cover art by Alyssa

# Chroniclers' Corner



by Sylvan



Hello, all! Please note the position of the apostrophe in this installment of the Corner: Seabhac Fionn and I have been working since Wellspring as interim co-Chroniclers to get this issue to you in something resembling a timely fashion. We recognize, however, that this issue should have reached you before the time we started to put it together. Consequently, in tandem with assembling this issue, we have been working with Anthony Thompson, who was elected Administrator at Wellspring, to devise a more workable system for the publication of *Oak Leaves*.

As you may know, the Chronicler position was revamped this year, to no longer be an elected Mother Grove position, but rather an Administrator-appointed position. In July, Anthony honored me by asking if I would be willing to undertake this task. I accepted this position knowing that as ADF grows and our Guilds complete their Study Programs, the Chronicler will be responsible for numerous publications in addition to our quarterly journal. Fortunately, Seabhac has designed a system to maximize the efficiency of *Oak Leaves* publication, and to guarantee that the work will not fall on one or two sets of shoulders.

Under this system, the Chronicler will act as a managing editor for *Oak Leaves*, largely an oversight role. The actual production will be managed by an Editor-in-Chief. Anthony and I concur that the Editor-in-Chief of *Oak Leaves* should be Seabhac Fionn. Lest anyone cry "nepotism," I should mention that Seabhac brings to this position his experience as the editor of our graduate school newspaper. His excellent work on the layout of this issue should speak for itself. Seabhac will lead a team of copy editors, artists, layout artists and proofreaders,

so that the responsibility of producing *Oak Leaves* will be shared by many, hopefully burning out no one. If you are interested in adding your skills to our team, please email me <Sylvan-ADF@usa.net> or Seabhac <rdelach@erols.com>.

To coordinate work between this diverse group of people, *Oak Leaves* is going on line. The ADF web site now contains an archive of new submissions, copy edited submissions, layout-ready articles, clip-art, original art, and borders, plus the master file for the issue. Once all is operational, this system should provide sufficiently wide access to materials to eliminate any roadblocks caused by illness or crisis on the part of one person. We are testing this system with OL 11, which, thanks to the outpouring of material from recent calls for submissions, is running less than two months behind OL9. OL10, by the way is already in the layout phase.

Seabhac and I would like to extend our thanks to everyone who submitted work for this issue, and especially to Jenni Hunt for all her work copy editing. Enjoy *Oak Leaves* 9, and watch your mailboxes for Number 10!



## Fox Tracks

With the issue, and the election at Wellspring, comes the end of the first third of my term of service. I want to say that I am proud of the many things that have been accomplished and am equally proud to have had the opportunity to serve with the members of the departing board. Together we took on some very hard tasks, taking a long look at the health and welfare of our fellowship and making many important changes. These changes will surely position ADF for growth and prosperity in the future. I thank you for the many hours of dedicated work that you contributed to our cause.

At this time I also wish to welcome the incoming Mother Grove members, some of whom are continuing from the previous board. The blueprint for the coming years has been drawn, but this board will see those dreams to fruition. The work of laying the foundation for the College of Druidism, and with it an unparalleled system of scholastic and spiritual training, and the task of bringing our standards of service to our members to a professional level await you. May the gods grant you wisdom, patience and tenacity to speed you along the way.

One of the most important changes to our fellowship during the last election was the addition of the position of Administrator. Anthony Thompson, newly elected to that position, will have a critical role to play in the coming years. Given the tremendous benefits that ADF has already enjoyed

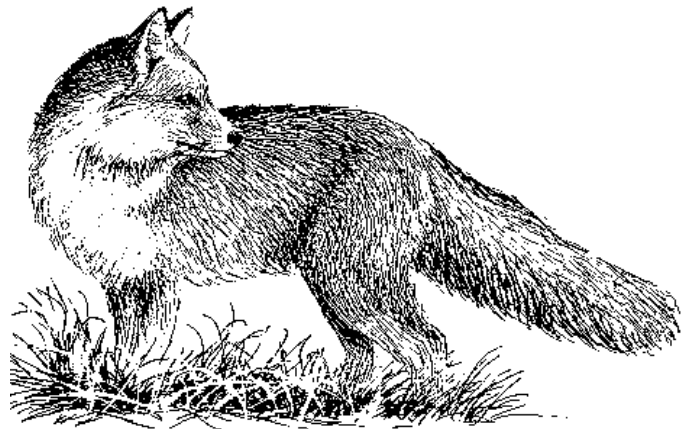


from his work in creation of our web site, I am quite confident that we have been placed in very capable hands.

Of course, there were many other key positions filled during this election, far more than my allotted space will allow mention. Please review the election results contained in this issue and join with me in congratulating and supporting our leadership.

Until next time, may the corn rise high and the gods smile upon you and yours,

Fox 



# Commentary

by Jenni Hunt

Having just returned home from an absolutely fabulous experience at Wellspring, I have some comments I'd like to share with those who associate with ADF in any capacity. As Issac pointed out at the main ritual Saturday evening, we are a tradition growing from its infancy into lusty adolescence. The Gods have granted to us the a gift which we may desire the least, yet need the most: patience in this new phase of our growth. With that in mind, I'd like you all to take a long, hard look at your relationship with ADF in the past and where you will be going in the future. I have found that you get back from things what you give to them. Look not upon what you have given just to individual members, a grove or guild, but to the *whole* of Ár nDraíocht Féin. If you contribute to the fellowship \$30 a year and an occasional comment or complaint via email, that's about the extent of what you can expect in return: a few copies of *Oak Leaves* and probably a sense of isolation. If what you give is nothing but complaints, insults, and self-persecution, then you can expect in return a good deal of very nasty karma, at the very least.

On the other hand, if you ponder the question, "What do I want from ADF and what

do I have to offer ADF in return?" and *follow through* on your answer, then you can expect to feel the return of your efforts a thousand-fold. When we worship the gods and make sacrifice and offerings to them, we are giving a gift for a gift. The Romans referred to this type of relationship as DO UT DES: "I give so that you may give." If this is how we deal with our beloved deities, why would we not do less for our fellows? I would challenge all of you to give a good, hard look at yourselves and your relationship with ADF over the past year. What have you done for ADF? Were the things you offered given with an open heart or given up grudgingly? Have you dealt honestly and lovingly with all or only a chosen few? What feelings have you harbored in your hearts and voiced before the gods and the fellowship? Have they been positive, patient, and sympathetic, or have they been peevish, hostile, and combative? I'm sure we're all familiar with forms of sympathetic magic -- look and see if what you have contributed has yielded you in kind.

Nine blessings upon Ár nDraíocht Féin and its folk.





## The Dedicant Program

# The First Oath

by Ian Corrigan

No one is born into Neopagan Druidry. Even as we work to build long-term, organic Pagan traditions and institutions, we must accept that each and every person who chooses our work must do exactly that. Even children raised by their parents in our ways will at some time in their lives make a conscious decision either to take up our work as their own, or to leave it for other ways. We all must consciously and individually decide first to identify ourselves as Pagans and, more importantly, to actually perform the deeds that will give that identification meaning.

For Paganism cannot be a way of beliefs and feelings alone. Traditional Paganism is, in fact, much more concerned with the performance of specific rites, meditations and deeds than with any specific beliefs or theologies. To be Pagan is much more about keeping Pagan ways than it is about believing Pagan ideas.

The Dedicant's work is one example of a pattern of Pagan ways and deeds. You will be asked to learn key practices and to practice them regularly. If you are at the beginning of your training, the road before you can seem to stretch out far indeed.

While the Pagan way requires work and will, it does not require you to have completed the work before you call yourself a Pagan. Our Neopagan movement is usually open-hearted and welcoming to those who wish to take up our ways. It can, in fact, be easy for a new Pagan to be accepted by a local group or community, begin attending rites, and fall easily into the feeling that this is enough. In an unspecific and general way, such people are Pagans, although they could not be called devout ones.

To formally take up the path of Druidic Paganism is a more serious matter. In Our Druidry we are open and welcoming to all who wish to attend our rites or participate in our work. However, we also hope that many of our folk will desire a deeper wisdom, a stronger bond with the Inner. We are looking for those who wish to take up Indo-European Paganism as a path of spiritual work and growth. For those people the first step is the decision to do the Dedicant's work.

In order to focus your mind on the road ahead, the work begins with a simple oath. We ask each student to swear to her God/desses and Spirits (whether or not she knows their names), and to her community to do her best to pursue a Pagan way.

We hold that the Pagan way should not be worked alone if it is at all possible to be part of a greater Pagan community. The Old Ways are ways of community, of mutual respect and obligation among the individuals. So we recommend that the Oath be taken before Pagan witnesses.

If you are working with an ADF Grove, that will be a simple matter. The Oath can properly be made as a Praise Offering, since it is a giving of serious commitment to the Powers. It can also be done as work, with the full power of the Blessing in your flesh and spirit. In either case, the Oath is witnessed by the Grove's community.

If your area has a Pagan community but no ADF Grove (yet...), you might choose to take the Oath at one of the community's public rites or gatherings. While we wish to build our own path, we should also be willing to respect our local community and to seek their respect in turn. You should always speak with the local leadership to be certain that your Oath-taking happens at a time that will not intrude on the main work being done.

In other circumstances you might gather a few witnesses, even just a friend or two. If need be, of course, the Oath can be taken alone with only the Spirits to witness.

If need be, the Oath can be taken in informal, non-ritual circumstances. The presence of fire and water and a cup of ale or milk spilled as an offering is all that might be required, although a hallowed Grove is the ideal place.

With this simple Oath you choose to admit publicly that you are a Pagan, and you pledge that your Paganism will be more than a feeling that you keep in your heart. You pledge yourself to the three basic principles of Pagan spirituality: honor in your deeds, diligence in keeping rites and spiritual practice, and earnest study of the facts of the Old Ways.

If it is your will to make Pagan spirituality your personal path, if you wish to become more than just a casual worshipper, the Dedicant's work is a fine course to keep, and the First Oath is its beginning.

Here is one form of the Oath:

Stand before the fire and by the water, and hold the cup of offering in your hand. Say the Oath:


I (your name), son/daughter of (your parents names), do declare before the world and the Otherworld that I will be a keeper of the Old Ways. I will seek to understand my own spirit, the ways of the world and the ways of the Gods, Goddesses, and Spirits. So in order to set out upon the path, I swear these things:

That I will seek virtue in my life and deeds. I will seek to live well and to do right in wisdom, honor, and diligence.

That I will strive always to keep piety. I will observe proper rites and works and seek to perfect my personal practice.

That I will work to learn all I can about the Old Ways. I will study the remnants and seek the opinions of learned people so that my work may be strengthened.

Before the Gods and Spirits, and before these witnesses, these things I swear. Biodh se!

Pour the cup onto the earth, or into the fire, as you give the final affirmation. 



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## The Dedicant Program

Using the ADS  
Dedicant Program  
for

# Grove Building

by Ian Corrigan

As ADF grows into our next stage, we hope to offer more and better instruction in the basics of our Druidic religions. The first stage of that instruction has been published as the Dedicant's work, a set of articles meant to introduce basic spiritual skills. The work was designed primarily for individual students, working alone if need be.

The Dedicant's work can also be a guide for the building of an ADF Grove. With a little adaptation, the work can help the founding members of a Grove learn our symbolism and rites, and begin building the spiritual content that will form the core of the new Grove.

This short article will suggest some uses of the program for developing a new Grove.

### **Part 1: Getting Started and Making a Commitment**

The first triad of the Dedicant's work offers a new group the opportunity to clarify its ideas and direction. Members make commitments to each other and to the spiritual work of Pagan Druidism. The order of the Dedicant's work is somewhat arbitrary and conventional. In using the work for group development it might be best to begin with step two -- piety.

#### **PIETY**

Grove cannot be built by a single person. Even when one individual provides the moving and directing spirit of a group, there must be at least two others who put their names to the founding documents of a Grove. The best situation is when the three founding members of the group are all equally involved in the invention and development of the new organization.

The virtue of piety is about keeping faith and about keeping commitment to specific practices and works over a long period of time. Those who commit to a Grove's work will be involved in working public rites every six weeks, year after year, as well as holding or attending other rites and meetings. So a new group might begin by choosing to commit to attendance at a Dedicant's training circle.

The founding group of three or more might choose to make an agreement to view their work as an experiment with a specific time commitment. Of course we would like all of our Grove organizing teams to be prepared for a lifetime commitment to Druidry and to ADF, but we know that to be less than reasonable. Organizers are more likely to approve our work on a kind of trial basis and take an experimental attitude to our doctrines and works. In many ways this is a good thing. Those who commit after a period of trial may be more likely to stay committed.

## THE THREE TRIADS OF THE DEDICANT'S WORK

### Lifetime Commitments

1. Virtue - the students commit to seeking virtue in their life.
2. Piety - the students commit to keeping the observances of the way.
3. Study - the students commit to learning all they can about the Old Ways.

### Meditation and Devotion

4. Basic Meditation - the students practice mental relaxation and stillness
5. Energy Work and Trance - the students practice the Two Currents work and learn basic trance skills
6. The Home Shrine - the students begin their own Hearth religion, by establishing a shrine.

### Ritual and Dedication

7. Full Ritual worship - the students learn and practices the ADF Order of Ritual
8. Dedicant's Oath - the students proclaim their achievement, and their commitment to the Druid's Way
9. Patronage - the students choose a traditional culture in which to work, and begin relationships with specific Deities.

To get a sense of the pace of Grove organizing, a training circle should commit to meeting twice monthly or more. The circle might decide on a time limit for the first experimental commitment. If the members (three or more) can tolerate a full year's involvement, they should conclude that they are ready to work well as a public Grove. Other groups may choose a shorter initial experiment, perhaps six months or even three.

This initial group can choose to take the First Oath together as a mutual commitment.

It is important for a training circle to discuss early in their process how it will handle new members. One of the most important policies for any ADF Grove is that it must be open and inclusive. A Grove is not a coven -- it must be able to operate even when

the group is less than like-minded. Membership in a Grove cannot be contingent on a personality compatibility between new members and the existing membership. All interested persons of good will and honest intentions must be welcomed into a working Grove.

In a new study circle there may be an inclination to limit the group to the founders or a certain list of early members. This can be a useful technique for the first few months, perhaps. It is, however, strongly advised that a new training circle be prepared to seek and be open to new members as quickly as feasible. The founding group should become accustomed to accepting and integrating new members, a task they will need to continue throughout the life of the Grove.

In setting a meeting schedule for its first commitment, the group might also set a target date for their first public ceremony. An ADF Grove is defined by commitment to providing open, public rites to its local Pagan community. In many ways this is the primary mission of a Grove; the core of the effort is to build a Pagan institution that can serve a larger community. By choosing a target date for the first public rite, the founding group is given a fairly short-term goal for which to prepare. A period of six months to a year from the first meetings might be reasonable, though groups with members who have ritual experience from other systems may be able to begin sooner.

### CONTENT OF EARLY MEETINGS

Virtue: It can be interesting and productive for a new group to discuss their impressions of the basic lists of Pagan virtues offered in the Dedicant articles. Members can write their journal entries on each virtue and share them with one another. Members will thus get to know one another's ideas, share insights and perhaps uncover important issues in the Grove's new work. Members may also discover or clarify where they fit in the model of the Three Functions - Wise Ones, Warriors and Providers.

ADF does not intend to impose any one list of Pagan virtues on our members or Groves. We do mean to recommend that all of our lives and work be based on the idea of virtue and that we draw that virtue from the lore and wisdom of ancient Paganism. It may be that local Groves will develop their own sets of virtues which can be taught along with national and traditional versions.

It might be interesting for a training circle to condense their understanding of the virtues into a single poem, song, or invocation. As well as focusing that understanding, this would provide a valuable piece of ritual speech for future work.

Study: ADF's work has been and must be based on direct study of reputable

scholastic sources, combined with earnest aspiration to the flow of poetic wisdom and inspiration. In order for inspiration to have its greatest value, it must have a full supply of solid information with which to interact. Scholarship is the hardwood fuel in which the spark of inspiration catches, the pure mash in which the leaven of inspiration works.

One of the first tasks of a new training circle is to begin systematic reading and discussion of the works on the reading list. The training circle might choose to have all members read the same book at the same time, discussing chapters at



meetings. Alternately, students may read different books and report on them to one another. In any case, the goal is for all members to read a minimum of three solid books during their Dedicant training, at least one of them an introduction to Indo-European comparative mythology. It should also be said that three books is the absolute minimum that should be read. In this case more is certainly better.

One of the central considerations at this stage is the question of a new Grove's ethnic focus. ADF encourages each Grove to choose a specific cultural complex on which to build its work. As a new group gathers, this focus may or may not be obvious. Some new Groves

coalesce around a desire to work a specific culture's mysteries, drawn by the call of the Gale or the Norse, or some other Indo-European way. Others are drawn by ADF's commitment to public Paganism, or our ceremonial patterns, and have members interested in several I.E. paths.

If a training circle can agree early on the cultural focus of their work, they have a considerable advantage. The group can begin to systematically study their culture of choice with excursions into related cultures for depth and support. If no focus is apparent immediately, the circle should study broadly, work to find their personal Patrons, and expect that, along the way, they will also find the cultural path that will suit their Grove.

In this first step we find a group of students meeting regularly to discuss ideas and study. In many groups this might be enough for a first phase. Other groups may wish to begin immediately with the practices in part two, as well.

## Part 2: Training the Mind and Attuning to the Powers

**Meditation and Energy Work:** The work of training the mind is the foundation on which all spiritual practice is built. The Dedicant's material places considerable emphasis on these techniques, and a new training circle should, too.

Any and all of the meditations in the Dedicant's work can be directly adapted for group practice. Silent meditation might be practiced with a timer, beginning with three or five minutes and working up to fifteen to twenty.

The scripts for the Two Powers meditations, or the basic trance induction, might be read by one member onto tape and played back. There could be an advantage in having the members take turns reading the scripts, allowing

each to develop skill in guiding trances.

In that context, a word should be said about critiques and evaluations. It is always ADF's goal to help our members improve their skills and abilities. To that end we encourage Grove members to ask one another to criticize and examine the work done by members. Likewise we ask ourselves to be open to honest criticism, and willing to adjust our style and methods to the needs of those with whom we work. A study circle should be a place where all efforts will be appreciated, but also where these efforts may be analyzed and dissected. Those who wish to stand forward as presenters, ritualists and artists in our work need to be prepared for gentle, thoughtful criticism.

Here is a simple outline for a group guided meditation session.

1. Musical signal - a chime, perhaps, struck three or nine times.
2. Rhythmic breathing - all practice the complete breath together, perhaps with one member counting the first few breaths. Nine breaths together is enough.
3. Silent meditation - perhaps with a timer, perhaps with a monitor, who rings a chime when the time is done.
4. Two Powers - one members reads the induction, or extemporizes. (Add other group exercises here as skill increases)
5. Musical signal - to indicate the end of the exercise.

Steps one through three can be completed in just a few minutes with a new group. Once the group is doing five to seven minutes of silent meditation or more, they might go on to Two Powers work, extending the length of the silent work as they gain intensity in the energy work.

This work will provide good opportunity for discussion and material for

formal journal entries. Unlike performance skills, the results of meditation are a very individual matter. The circle should be open and accepting of descriptions of meditative and internal events. Critical judgment should not be abandoned, however. If a member begins transmitting orders from a Goddess, or whatever, his claims should be tested and judged.

It is suggested that early exercises be kept to a specific length of time. There may be a tendency to want to sit in meditation indefinitely, but this should be avoided. The willed act of entering an altered state, staying there, then ending it through will is an important lesson in itself.

## THE SHRINE - BEGINNING DEVOTIONAL WORK

As individual members begin to establish their home shrines, the new Grove has the opportunity to gather their first set of ritual objects.

The Grove's approach to beginning ritual work will depend on the experience and skill level of the members. Those who are making their first efforts at Pagan ceremony should probably follow the outline of training closely. Beginning with simple meditation, the group adds the shrine and the Simple Devotion, and works up to simple versions of the Order of Ritual. A training circle with members that have solid previous ritual experience might choose to work more quickly toward the Order of Ritual. However, if they are trained in ADF's symbolism and ways, they might still do well to work through each step in order.

In any case, creating the new Grove's first group shrine should be an exciting and creative process. Assembling the tools and hallows can combine the group's scholastic work with their inspiration. It is a way of beginning to manifest the group mind of the Grove, and of planting a physical seed from which the grove's spiritual work can grow.

The shrine should be focused around symbols of the Sacred Center. Many Groves use the Fire, Well and Tree as a triple complex of the center. This is recommended, though not required. The circle will need to consider whether to begin by creating 'tabletop' versions of the Hallows, or starting out immediately with a set large enough for larger group ritual. There are advantages to both.

Beginning with an 'altar-top' set insures that the Grove will

have proper tools for a small-group working. Larger group rites do require large tools that can draw the eye of many participants. In smaller groups these can be clumsy and burdensome; a smaller-scaled set may serve better. Creating a small set of hallows can also help the Grove decide what they want for their larger items.

A small set of indoor ritual items might consist of:

**Fire:** A wooden or ceramic platter, approximately 12 inches in diameter, on which are placed a ring of nine small candles (tea lights are ideal). In the center of the ring of candles is placed a small censer or fire bowl, in which fire offerings are burned.

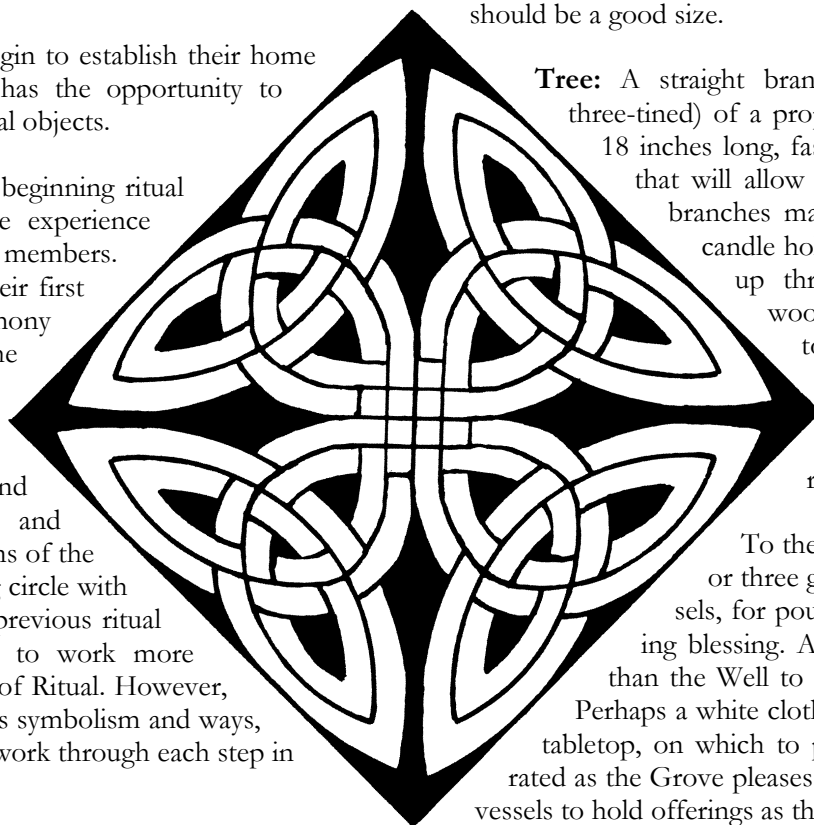
**Well:** A metal or ceramic cauldron. A fist-sized vessel should be a good size.

**Tree:** A straight branch (perhaps forked, or three-tined) of a proper wood, no more than 18 inches long, fastened securely to a base that will allow it to stand firmly. Some branches may fit comfortably into a candle holder. A nail can be driven up through the bottom of a wooden base of the kind sold to display nick-knacks. The branch is then fastened to that nail. The Tree can then be decorated as the group sees fit.

To these should be added: Two or three good quality drinking vessels, for pouring offerings and drinking blessing. A vessel as large or larger than the Well to receive poured offerings. Perhaps a white cloth to place on the floor or tabletop, on which to place the Hallows, decorated as the Grove pleases. Several small dishes and vessels to hold offerings as they wait to be given.

If the group wishes, this can all be arranged on a low table that can serve as an 'altar' This might be especially proper to those Groves working, for example, a Hellenic system in which altars are traditional. Other I.E. systems seem not to have used altar type tables. In that case the white cloth might be placed directly on the earth. The Tree is then placed in its center and the hallows arranged around it in a pattern symbolically meaningful to the members. That process can, in itself, help the new Grove to clarify their mutual understanding of the powers represented by the Fire, Well and Tree.

There are several small-group devotions and simple rites available to new groups. The Simple Devotion in the Dedicant articles can be adapted, and a new script will be the



next issue of *Oak Leaves*. The Simple Rite of Offering could be used by a new group fairly quickly as its language and gestures are elementary.

Study circles may find it valuable to begin by reciting the rites in unison, with various individuals performing the actions. That allows each to begin learning the text of the rite, relieves one person of all the work of recitation, and helps to build the group mind. On the other hand there is value in rotating the leadership among the most committed members, or in dividing the parts among the group. The Grove should experiment widely in their first months, to better understand their skills and preferences.

As the Grove learns ritual together, the strengths and weaknesses of the various members will become apparent. The work of excellent ritual will be enhanced by honest evaluation and discussion of those talents. All members should be aware of such variables as voice volume, clarity, ability to fill scripted speech with feeling, and timing. Members should be frank with one another, give and accept criticism graciously, and work earnestly to correct their own shortcomings. In some groups it will become plain that some members can best serve as ritual leaders, while in others levels of skill will be more equal.

This final phase of the second triad of the Dedicant's work flows naturally into the beginning of the third and final triad.

### A FEW REMINDERS

Before moving on to the final steps of the work, it is well to review the ongoing work of the training circle.

From the first triad, the work of study will continue throughout the Grove's life. From its founding onward, every member of the Grove should be encouraged to read and discuss the best, most recent, and most relevant scholarship on the Grove's cultural focus. As the training circle moves on to later works, it may be pleasant to move dis-

ussion of current reading to more relaxed meetings such as a coffee night, for example.

Of course, insights into Pagan virtues and their meaning and application in everyday life are always a proper topic for similar discussion.

In the second triad it is important for the members to pursue their individual works of meditation and shrine devotion. However, the occasional meetings of the training circle should not substitute for more regular personal work. Again, these efforts and their results make excellent topics for group discussion.



## Part 3: Full Ritual Worship and Basic Theurgy

If the circle has been working with simple group devotional rites, the next stage is to move on to the full Order of Ritual. If solid work has been done to develop the group's ritual skills it should be a fairly simple transition.

The Simple Rite of Offering is the easiest script with which to begin. If the circle has already worked it as part of their training, the Small Group Liturgy may be useful.

If the group feels comfortable in their writing skills they may certainly write

their own basic ritual, following the outline of the Order of Ritual. Scripts are provided to give students a model for ritual speech. They need not be followed slavishly, and can be rewritten or discarded. The outline of the Order of Ritual is all that is actually mandated.

That opens the topic of scripted versus extempore rites. There are advantages and disadvantages to both. Scripted ritual offers the chance to carefully develop ritual language, refining it through several drafts. In that way, the Grove can be satisfied that the content of the rite will be focused and uplifting. However, scripts can pose several difficulties. If the group does not have strong skills in the effective presentation of written materials, the reading of a script may be dry and stilted. The need to shuffle papers, keep one's place in a script and read by candlelight creates logistical problems. These can be reduced by arranging the scripts in small booklets or by placing individual parts on index cards to be handed to participants. Handwritten, lightly-typed or corner-stapled scripts should be avoided.

If at all possible, scripts should be memorized before the rite. This provides all the benefits of scripting without the difficulties of reading and handling. However, memorization doesn't come easily to everyone. Some members may find that the stress of performing memorized lines is more distracting than dealing with a physical script. Even when a part is being read, the member should spend time becoming familiar with the part, and planning how to read it well.

Many groups find compromise in using a standard script for the parts of the rite that remain the same in all cases, reading from paper until memorization comes through repetition and familiarity. When that way is taken, paper scripts should be abandoned as soon as possible.

Some groups will feel more comfortable with unscripted, extempore rites.

Quality performance of this sort requires a thorough familiarity with the order, symbolism and meaning of the rite, and the ability to create expressive, poetic language at will. Stumbling, clumsy speech, bad timing and errors in the Order of Ritual are the dangers in extempore rites.

Perhaps the best compromise is to begin with simple, scripted rites, performed either in unison or with parts rotated among members. That will allow all members to become familiar with a body of ritual speech. They can then draw on that base in creating extempore speech. When the new Grove can work a simple liturgy without script and with eloquence and grace, they will have finished an important step in their training.

## THE INNER WORK OF THE RITES

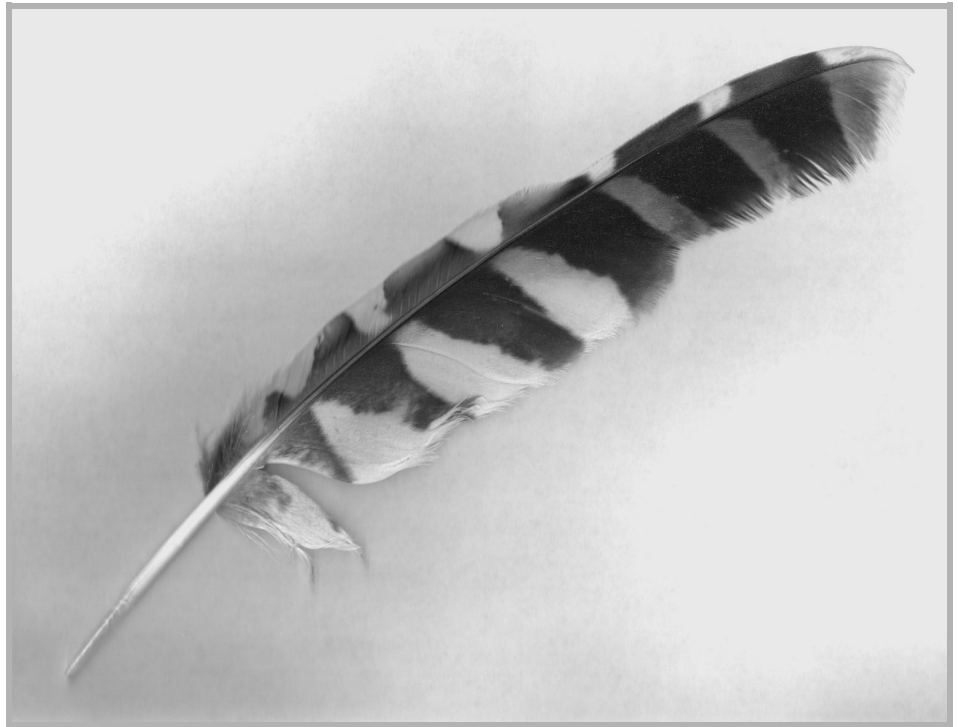
As the new Grove learns the basics of performing our Order of Ritual, they should also be focusing on the inner, psychological and spiritual portions of the rite.

In ancient times, people grew to adulthood immersed in the religious symbols and ideas of their Pagan culture. When they attended a rite, their own imaginations would supply mental content appropriate to the work at hand. Modern students bring no such store of lore with them, and so we recommend the use of guided or planned imagery to fill in that blank.

In the middle stages of training the circle will wish to work with the "Meditative Rite of Offering," or similar exercises. Such scripts can, again, be read onto tape, or led by various members of the circle.

Different groups will evolve different patterns of understanding for the inner and spiritual realities of our rites. We won't spend time here on detailed instruction. Instead, here are the broad categories of myth and vision that will apply to nearly every rite.

1: The Order Of The Worlds - In the opening sections of the Order, the



Sacred Cosmos is called into being in the Grove. Members should have a store of images for the Underworld, Midrealm & Heavens, the Land, Sea & Sky, etc. This leads directly to:

2: The Sacred Center/Gate/Boundary - One of the central intentions of constructing the Sacred Cosmos is to create the Sacred Center, the Boundary Between All Worlds. Members should have images for this process, and a store of experiences to deepen those images.

3: The Presence Of The Kindreds - The members should develop a store of images of the presence of the Gods and Goddesses, the Honored Dead and the Spirits of the Land.

4: The Presence Of The Patron Powers - These images must be developed specifically for each rite. The members should have clear images for the Deities or Spirits that receive special offerings in any rite.

5: Value Offered, Value Returned - In the works of offering and sacrifice, and in the work of receiving blessing, some kind of "energy" or means of exchange, should be envisioned. Members may envision this as some form of energy -- light or shadow, for example -- or as some more physical symbol -- such as mead flowing or flame shining.

If the members of a study circle enjoy

trance-work, they may choose to incorporate guided visions into the course of ritual. This should certainly be done several times during the basic phases of training. Study circle time can also be used to practice guided visualizations focused specifically on one of these sets of images. Trances to experience the Kindreds or grasp the mandala of the Sacred Cosmos, for example, can be valuable content for meetings and provide fodder for later ritual experience. In addition, the work of reading and study can provide a valuable store of images directly from the tales. In reading the actual myths and tales of the ancients, we can find images on which to base our modern works of vision.

As with physical forms of ritual, the group might experiment with various forms in its early work. After a time, a Grove finds traditions of symbolism and trance that work well for them.

## THE FIRST PUBLIC RITES

When the study circle has worked at least a few rites in the full Order of Ritual, and worked with the inner symbols of the work, they should consider opening their Holy day rites to the local Pagan public. The work of serving the Powers along with a community is central to ADF's vision. Our Groves are not meant to be closed circles of friends or to turn faces inward in a circle. We

seek to serve other Pagans, and serve the Gods and Spirits by creating powerful opportunities for worship and blessing. Many Groves find that when they offer our work to a community, people respond happily. A well-received Grove can expect attendances of 30 - 50 people, even by the end of their first year.

In the first seasons it will be the members of the Grove's initial study circle who will be best qualified to lead rites. The circle should again assess their skills and assign roles according to ability.

The first public rite should probably be one of the Holy Days, according to the calendar of the preferred culture. There are scripts available for many versions of the High Days which have been used successfully by other Groves. They are available as resources, whether worked as written or mined for ideas. There may be advantages to using a proven script for the first public outing.

The topic of the first public rites really deserves an article of its own.

Here is a list of considerations in organizing a public rite.

**Ritual Personnel:** There are several ways to divide the leadership roles in our rites. Some groups name a Sacrificer, a Seer and a Bard.

Sacrificer - does invocations, makes or supervises offerings.

Seer - performs/manages trances and divinations

Bard - performs/manages music, poetry & story

The group may also choose a Chief of the Rite, or a team of co-Chiefs.

These handle the 'standing in the middle' part of the rite, while other parts are done by other members. Sections of the Cosmos building and Kindred Offerings can be done even by fairly new members simply and well.

**Rehearsal:** New Groves should certainly hold rehearsal for their early rites.

There may be some resistance to the idea, and we certainly don't mean that members should 'pretend' to do sacred work. Working as leaders and in front of guests offers special challenges. The Grove should work to make their first ritual smooth, competent, and inspiring. Even a single walk-through rehearsal, with attention to actions, intentions, and outline will help to ensure that outcome.

**Location:** If possible, the Grove's work should be done in a public place. Most cities have spaces available, whether in city parks, local friendly churches, community buildings, or book shop meeting rooms. Such a facility allows the Grove to advertise freely and welcome interested strangers without the issues that arise when meeting in homes. Of course many Groves must meet in homes, especially at first. It then becomes a matter of virtue as to how the homeowner and the Grove balance openness and hospitality with privacy and control issues. In any case, a member who hosts Grove meetings should never be allowed to gain special influence as a result.

**Advertising:** This will be regulated by the social climate of the Grove's region. Some areas have active local Pagan communities. In such cases, the Grove can do extensive outreach, perhaps using flyers in local Pagan-friendly merchants. Others will need more discreet methods.

**Equipment List:** The Grove must ensure that every item needed for the rite is available, clean and in good condition, and that it gets transported to the ritual site. If the Grove hasn't obtained larger Hallows, now is the time! Drinking vessels, platters, offerings, must be brought along; the leaders should read through the script or outline and be certain that everything is available as needed.

**Hospitality:** The Grove should arrange some simple welcome, whether coffee and biscuits or a full feast. This should not be left to the owner of the

house in which the rite is held, but should be paid for by the Grove. Most Groves practice potluck feasting, though the members should plan to bear the early costs. (Note: if the Grove has collected even \$5 monthly from its core group, some budget will be available!)

## THE OATH OF DEDICATION

The Dedicant's Oath was written for solitary students, aimed at those with little access to other training. The ceremonies presented were written



for solo work, and will need some adaptation.

Some Groves might choose to make their group Oath Rite their first 'fully produced' Druid rite, before taking up public worship. Parts can be divided among the members, with one performing the Vertical Axis, one the Gate Opening, three the Kindreds, or whatever the numbers of the Grove will allow. The sections of the script can easily be adapted for group work.

The Oath-Offerings should probably be made individually. Perhaps each member should privately choose their offering and bring it to the rite. Each chooses something meaningful and symbolic of their path and their vision of the Pagan way.

In the same way, the group must choose whether to write a single Dedicant's Oath for the whole Grove, or allow members to write and speak their own. Making a single Oath can help the Grove build a strong group mind, as long as each member is truly in accord with the contents of the Oath. For each member to sit in honor of the others as each gives a personal Oath can also build mutual respect and affection. It must be said that personal Oaths may greatly increase the length of the rite. The company should be prepared to sit attentively through about five minutes per member.

The Oath leads directly to the Prayer of Sacrifice. Perhaps the whole group should pronounce the final sentences of the Prayer together, whether they've made group or individual oaths and offerings. Again, the Grove may choose to make a single, corporate offering, perhaps in addition to individual sacrifices.

The Omen should perhaps be taken for each student. Perhaps each should simply draw three runes or ogham staves and note them. The group might then spend a few minutes in silent meditation on the Gate, the Powers, and the Omen. An additional Omen might be taken for the Grove itself.

The hallowing of the Blessing can probably be divided among the group, with all joining in the final cry.

The hallowing of the tokens of Dedication might be done in unison, passing the tokens through the Fire and Water and giving the consecration together. After the tokens are put on, a good length of silent meditation should be allowed.

This group Dedication rite might be made the occasion for celebration, followed by a Grove feast. The event should be journalized immediately by each Dedicant.

The Grove Rite of Dedication can take place either before or after the choice of Grove Patrons, culture and pantheon.

## PATRONAGE

The Dedicant's work requires that individuals choose one or two Deities from their primary culture to whom they will pay special devotion. We refer to this commonly as a Patron Deity. This Patron becomes the center of the personal or household religion of the individual.

In an ideal example, a Grove is formed around a single cultural complex, and the Gods and Spirits that come with it. This imaginary ideal Grove would then recruit members who are drawn to that pantheon, and do all or most of their work in that context.

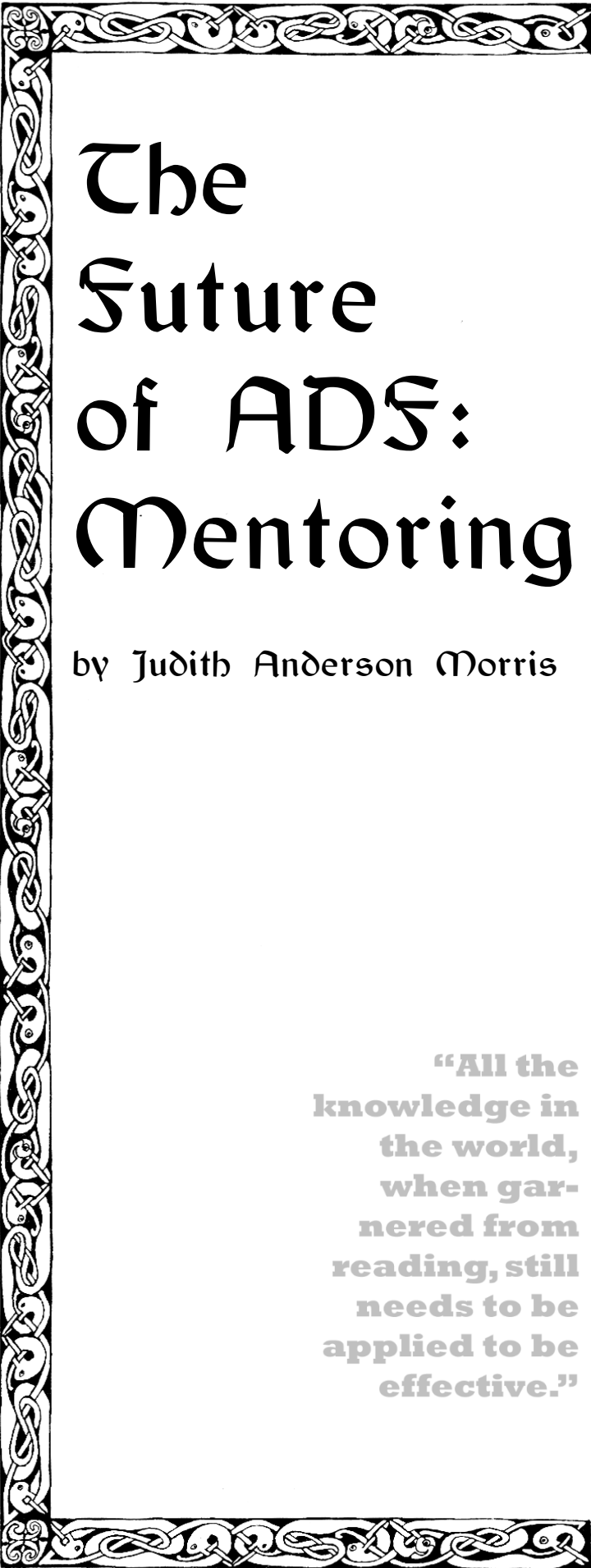
However, this is often not the case. Groves attract members with widely different interests, even in their start-up phases. Members find their way to many pantheons and cultures and desire to have these Deities honored. A Grove is often under pressure to work rites in several cultures. The group will need to make a conscious decision whether or not to focus only on a single path.

If the organizing members of the Grove are willing to make a strict decision on a single culture, then some version of a Patronage Rite will be simple to devise. The Grove could swear, as a body, to honor their cultural pantheon primarily. (Groups might be advised not to swear to keep any path to the exclusion of all others; life can lead in many unexpected directions.) If, instead, the Grove finds itself serving several pantheons it might be best to refrain from swearing to any single one.

Our Archdruid, Fox, has been developing a model for discovering a Grove pantheon that reflects both the traditional patterns of a Celtic tribe and the real features of the local landscape. His Grove has worked systematically to discover their local River Mother, Tribal Father and are establishing their work based on these results. In this way they are growing a distinctive local religion that is in accord with what we know of tradition. Articles will be forthcoming from Fox on the details of his approach.

Remember that the building of a Grove is an organic process. We hope that these ideas can be seed and light for those who take up this challenging and rewarding path.





# The Future of ADF: Mentoring

by Judith Anderson Morris

**“All the  
knowledge in  
the world,  
when gar-  
nered from  
reading, still  
needs to be  
applied to be  
effective.”**

When I was a student in the writing program at the University of Pittsburgh, I was required to work one-on-one with a mentor, a professor who was himself a published writer and a master in the field. My work proceeded quickly from raw talent to the polished and the publishable. Later, when I sought a second degree in education, I was mentored by the head of the Education Department, a man who favored the peripatetic method of teaching and learning and who embraced our partnership with both zeal and empathy. I learned from his assignments, from picking his wonderful brain, and from his model as a mentor. Many years later as a teacher in a public high school, I became a mentor myself to a student whose goal was to become a Presidential Scholar, one of only two students chosen from each state -- a successful project, I might add. In all of these situations I benefited -- first, as a student learning my trade and then, as a mentor, passing on the knowledge that I had amassed.

Mentoring is an age-old method of teaching and learning. Its name, in fact, comes from Greek mythology. Mentor was the trusted friend of Odysseus, King of Ithaca in Greece. When Odysseus was called off to battle in the Trojan War, he left his young son, Telemachus, under the care of his best friend. In the twenty years that Odysseus was absent, Telemachus grew into a worthy young man under Mentor's tutelage and later went on to become a fine king himself.

Other renowned mentoring partnerships in history include: Merlin and Arthur, Aristotle and Alexander, Freud and Jung. During the Renaissance, with its resurgence of learning, mentoring of young people was the accepted form of learning; but mentoring fell out of use when the printing press made reading widely available to all. Why focus on the ideas of one when the ideas of many were so readily available?

Why indeed? And that seems to be the thinking of ADF. ADF has a Dedicant's Program that spells out precisely what the student must learn and achieve before going on to the Study Program. The DP spells out the books to be read, but what it lacks is the human touch -- the ability of the students to enhance their studies, to ask questions, to get specific feedback on their work, and to learn from those who have walked the path themselves and known the pitfalls firsthand. The human touch, an important part of learning.

We know that the Druids themselves were teachers and mentors, and ADF, in instituting such a program, would benefit greatly in membership growth, membership retention, knowledge base of its members, and the creation of an ADF "tribe" -- members loyal to and dedicated to the others in their group.



Mentoring, at its base, is simply people helping people, sharing time, knowledge, and experience with those committed to learning. Mentoring doesn't replace the learning found in research; it enhances it. It allows the student to ask questions and receive answers from those who have studied before him. It provides a springboard on which the student can be sent to many resources for help. It introduces the student to a network of Druidic learners. It provides multiple tools for learning, and it allows the student to be guided to solving his own problems himself.

Sophocles said: "The reasonable thing is to learn from those who can teach." ADF has a strong resource base of those who can teach.

### **WHY MENTORING WORKS**

1. Experience is the best teacher when it comes to learning. All the knowledge in the world, when garnered from reading, still needs to be applied to be effective. A mentor has experienced the path and knows its pitfalls. A mentor can supply immediate answers. Often those who don't have immediate and timely answers to their questions seek out inappropriate and inaccurate sources. Mentors can help students to avoid straying. Having another person explain and answer questions after reading is a time-honored, preferred method of learning.
2. Mentoring creates synergy. Two people sharing interactive energy not only create benefits for both, but also a stronger force than either could have created on his own.
3. Mentoring perpetuates positive action. It allows information to be passed from generation to genera-

tion. A well-taught protégé knows the model for good teaching and can himself become an effective mentor.

4. Because mentoring is immediate and personal, it creates increased motivation to succeed in a student who might have given up on his own, overwhelmed by the task at hand.
5. Mentoring provides the personal, and research has shown that it contains elements of the spiritual. Stumbling on life's path affects one's work and learning. Sharing one's fears and doubts allows both to be laid aside. Mentoring helps strengthen a student's (and a mentor's) beliefs.
6. In the mentoring relationship, a bond is established between one more knowledgeable and one eager to learn. The student is thus "invited in" to learn thousands of details that distinguish the outstanding learning experience from the ordinary.


### **WHAT A STUDENT GETS FROM THE MENTORING EXPERIENCE**

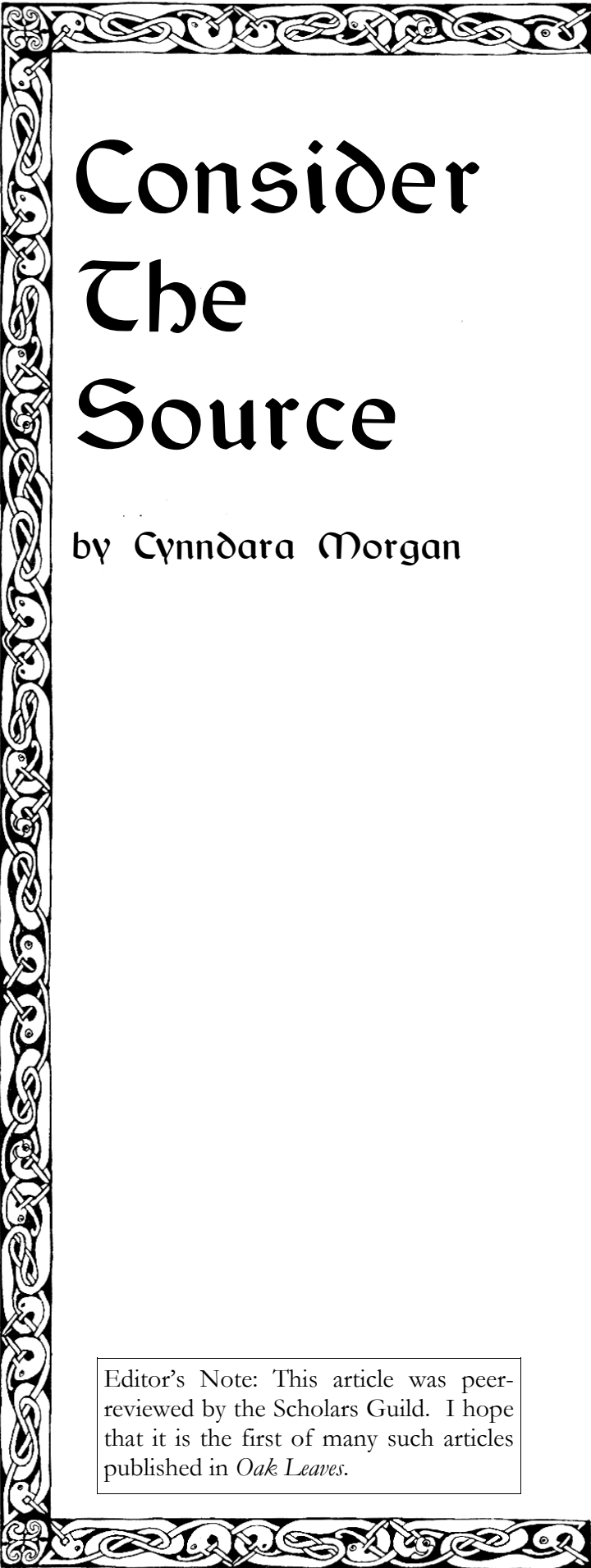
1. One-on-one instruction, including "trade secrets" and the benefits of another's learning.
2. Immediate feedback on his progress and suggestions for his immediate and long-term goals.
3. Networking: being introduced to others whose expertise they might never have known.
4. A more balanced path to follow.
5. Savings in time, money, and frustration.

### **WHAT THE MENTOR GETS FROM THE RELATIONSHIP**

1. What he puts into it. Commitment and caring produce their own rewards. "You get by giving." Mentoring cannot be approached as "What's in it for me?" Mentoring is a gift and produces its just rewards.
2. Because the mentor is setting an example, he is reminded to be on his best behavior, to follow an ethical path, stopping to think before speaking, and refraining from insulting others.
3. Feedback: immediate and satisfying results from his input. To see a student "catch on," to feel his excitement is to relive the joys of one's own pathmaking.
4. Increased personal creativity: the mentor must come up with metaphors that describe, suggestions that take the student onward and upward, motivations, and ideas.
5. Sharpened skills and a review of what he already knows. The mentor digs into his brain for answers, pages through books read long ago, forges immediate re-learning for himself in helping another.

Mentoring must, of course, be based on a program -- an understanding of what is required of both the mentor and the protégé. A mentoring program is easy to set up; it costs nothing; and it greatly enhances the stability of an organization because it produces members who are not only better informed, but committed to their learning.

Mentoring should be included in ADF's Future. 



# Consider The Source

by Cynndara Morgan

Editor's Note: This article was peer-reviewed by the Scholars Guild. I hope that it is the first of many such articles published in *Oak Leaves*.

Evaluating information is a fundamental part of everyday life. When a friend tells us a scurrilous piece of gossip, our critical faculties automatically swing into operation. We consider our friend's sources of information, whether they were revealed or not; his or her general powers of observation, ability to understand and communicate without muddling what has been heard, and likely personal biases. We question whether or not they are trying to "sell" us something, whether tangible or intangible. We weigh his or her expertise in technical fields. Almost subconsciously, we analyze the probable truth, level of certainty, and potential sources of error in everything that we are told.

Unfortunately, we don't always exercise the same skills when *reading* information. For a variety of reasons, written communications in our society carry a subconscious aura of certainty. We are taught to respect the written word; and historically, the written word has been produced by people of higher status and therefore implicit credibility than everyday verbal communications. As a result, we often approach written materials with a less critical attitude. It is important for us to remember that writers are simply *people* -- people who have chosen to talk to us in one-sided conversation from a printed page. Since we usually can't ask them questions about these lectures directly, we must use our own critical abilities to evaluate the accuracy, certainty, and potential sources of bias in what we read. In so doing, we change reading from a passive absorption of information into an active exercise of our abilities as intelligent *readers* to sort out facts from what is often a mass of error, fallacy, and speculation.

## EVALUATING REFERENCES

The first step in evaluating our friend, the writer, has nothing to do with his or her personal insight and intelligence, but rather with who he relies on to define that most difficult of terms, "fact." Elementary teachers of research have long divided resources into three broad categories; i.e., primary, secondary, and tertiary sources; however, in reality all of these present a continuum from higher to lower quality. For comparison, consider a percentile scale, where the percent represents both a relative value between two sources, and the progressive loss of original information due to editing, corruption, translation and interpretation by successive hands:

### PRIMARY

**100** Oldest known original manuscript, in fairly good condition, in your hands, in the original language, with all of its gaps, smudges, scribal errors and run-on words. You are also an expert in the area, fluent in the original language of the period, and familiar with the vagaries of the period's handwriting and abbreviations.

If the writer is himself considered a "primary" historical source, he still may or may not be a primary source for the

events he describes. In this case, the question is, was he *there*? Does he speak as a first-hand witness, a second-hand historian who interviewed the witnesses, or is he reporting general hearsay? And again, are you reading the original manuscript in the original language?

**95** Definitive scholarly transcription of text above, compiled by an expert, with editor's best guesses for the smudged and missing parts, with alternative readings in the footnotes and a photocopy of the original in back. You are fluent in the original language, but not necessarily a cryptographer of ancient handwriting.

**90** Definitive scholarly translation of text above side-by-side with the definitive text. A few alternate readings are footnoted, the rest are discarded. You have some basic competence in the language, but finer distinctions escape you; you use the professional translation to check against your own reading.

**85** Same as above, but you have only the roughest idea of what the original language means, perhaps based on knowledge of word-roots or a similar modern language.

**75** A good translation of the original by a professionally-qualified expert who worked from 95% above. The original language text is not available for comparison.

**65(-)** A "poetic" or "free" translation/paraphrase of the text by a writer or journalist who read 90-95% above and tried to "capture the spirit" of the original in his own wording.

## SECONDARY

**60** A peer-reviewed professional article about the source by a professional scholar, appropriately referenced.

**55** A non-peer-reviewed review article, topical study, report given at an academic society meeting or dissertation by a professional scholar, appropriately referenced.

**50** A scholarly textbook covering this text along with others grouped according to some academic category, with references given as a general bibliography rather than notes on individual statements or claims.

## TERTIARY

**40** A topical book written by a journalist who references only sources at the 50th percent mark or above and has a reasonable percentage of sources classed as "primary," although they may be in translation.

**30** A topical book as above, but most sources are in the "textbook" category or less. This means that almost all the information quoted is at least 20 years out of date

(time required for research in the humanities runs on the order of 5 to ten years to publication, and another ten years before it is well-enough integrated with former knowledge to appear in basic textbooks).

**20** A topical book as above, but the majority of sources quoted are themselves tertiary.

**15** A popular magazine or newspaper article.

**10** A science fiction/fantasy novel.

**5** A popular TV show.

As can be easily seen, the usefulness of the best sources is limited by the abilities of the reader. A researcher who is unable to read materials in their original form or language is forced to rely on the interpretations of others, which automatically involves the loss of some contextual value. Even a fairly sophisticated reader who lacks foreign language skills will be unable to use historical materials from which less than roughly 25% of the original information has been removed by successive handling. Lack of knowledge regarding the original culture, the use of words and ideas at that time, and relevant social, political, or theological constructs and controversies will reduce understanding of even well-translated material even further.

At this point, original sources may even be misleading to the unprepared reader. This holds both for us, and for the authors of the texts we rely on for our information. A journalist familiar with Celtic triads, for instance, but not with Church history, can easily make the mistake of imputing Celtic background to the Trinity, a concept which is in fact rooted deeply in Greco-Roman philosophy of the early Christian era. It is very easy to jump to inaccurate conclusions when we lack detailed knowledge of a field; both for ourselves and for our gossipy friend, the writer.

Missing context can be re-established by reading original sources with the assistance of scholarly notes, summaries, and biographical information on the author. Such additional information should not be considered to substitute for reading at least a good translation of an original text, but they can supplement our lack of prior expertise. A bonus feature of good scholarly translations of important works is that they usually include commentary and supplemental notes by recognized experts on the original material. Just as we would seek these sources for ourselves, we should also look for them in the bibliography of a good reference book.

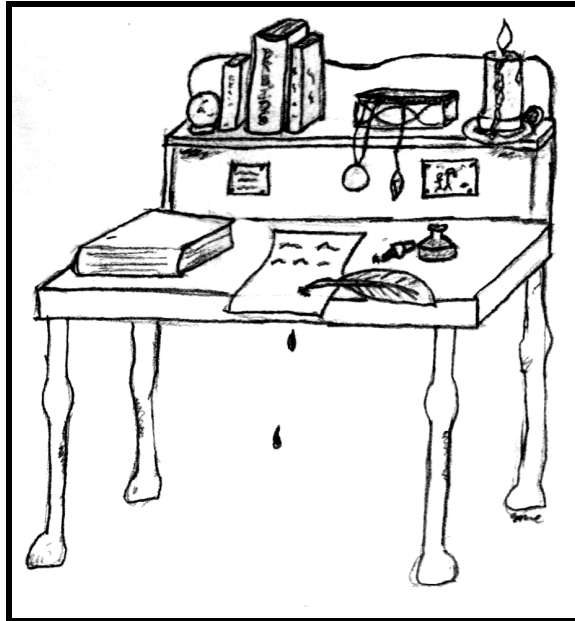
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## EVALUATING THE WRITER

The term “recognized expert” brings up another important issue in research: the qualifications of the source itself. Ancient writers may be good, poor, or indifferent, precise as modern scholars or wildly inaccurate; original thinkers or blatant plagiarists. Nevertheless, a writer commenting in 100 BCE always represents documentation of a pre-Christian thinker. We may not agree with Plato, but we must recognize that he was accepted in his community of 400 BCE Hellas as a legitimate teacher of what Christians would call “theology.” Caesar may have been writing propaganda against the Celts and Tacitus suffering from Noble Savage Syndrome, making them both somewhat questionable on matters regarding their northern neighbors, but both were pagan Roman gentlemen, and to the extent their writings reflect not their enemies, but themselves, they are primary sources.

A more recent neopagan source can be, according to the topic covered, as much a Primary Reference as Pliny, or as poor a reference as a Star Trek episode. When Bonewits writes as the Founding Father of ADF about his own life history and the original program leading up to ADF's genesis, he is the first and only authoritative primary source. When he writes on the relationships between Modern Science and Modern Magic, however, he writes as an undergraduate magician with a BS from Berkeley who once took a physics course. Gerald Gardner, Doreen Valiente, Aleister Crowley, AE Waite and others must be similarly regarded. In reference to the history of the immediate neopagan past, they are invaluable sources, the equivalent to modern pagans of the Christian Apostles. This does not mean that everything they say is The Word of God. However, they most definitely were “there” at the Beginning Of It All.

With secondary and tertiary sources, the quality of the writer must be weighed as one of the most important factors in the credence we choose to give his or her material. This quality can be determined by several methods, including credentials, experience, internal consistency of the work itself, and documentation of sources.



While academic standing is neither the exclusive outward sign of good scholarship nor even a perfect guarantee, it does provide an unambiguous marker to assist us as readers in evaluating sources. A Ph.D. in the humanities represents between five and ten years of concerted effort to master the material, with mentoring from acknowledged experts, access to rare sources, and hands-on opportunities, as well as enforced minimal competence in the broad knowledge necessary to support specialization in an area. A faculty appointment means that in addition to this long period of study, this person has been recognized by others in the same field of study as being qualified to teach it. A full professorship or position as Chair of an academic department means that this person is one of the hundred top experts in his general field in the world. Certainly, not even all the department chairs at Harvard or Oxford are broad-minded, insightful, open to new ideas or sympathetic to neopaganism, but they are tested and proven to be brilliant intellects with a masterful command of their subjects. Their opinions and writings should not be ignored without good reasons.

A second manner in which qualification can be established is by long experience in a field. In general, this claim can be made by some few neopagan researchers, 19th century clergymen, and many professional writers and journalists. Expertise as expressed by this group of writers usually consists of having read much source material, usually of the lower “primary” and higher “secondary” categories, but not having produced independent work such as is considered “publishable” in academia. Experienced

journalists approach the competence of young PhDs and older graduate students; their backgrounds tend to be wider, but not as deep. From this, they may provide insightful commentary on broad comparisons which academics may miss or be too cautious to attempt. They may also make mistakes in interpretation that are glaring to the academic, due to their lack of understanding basic materials.

Even without any biographical information or credentials, some information concerning an author's reliability can be discerned from the work itself. This information comes in two forms: 1) the sources referred to, and the professionalism with which they are documented, and 2) the quality of argumentation used by the writer.

## USE OF RESOURCES

Documentation is the heart and soul of scholarship. Its purpose is to provide a clear chain of “custody” for each

thought and unit of information, allowing any reader to either replicate the original work, or to double-check it for errors. The underlying assumption of scholarship is that Truth does exist, can be demonstrated, and can be verified by anyone with the necessary training. Documentation allows this to be done, thereby making it unnecessary for scholars to actually do so in the vast majority of cases. The fact that scholarship requires complete transparency of input reduces the probability of fraud. In academic research, a secret, lost, stolen, or unexaminable reference is automatically suspect. If sources cannot be produced upon demand, they must be assumed not to exist.

Everyone knows that a good research paper is supposed to have footnotes and bibliography, but few people who have not received scholarly training know exactly what statements require a footnote or what sources should be considered good bibliographic references. Those who are trying to impress, therefore, may attempt to shower their readership with unnecessary references to sources of poor quality. Under most circumstances, no source less authoritative than a definitive textbook is worth referencing among scholars. However, sources for material supporting an author's argumentation should be referenced; and sources for major theoretical concepts or organizational schemes, such as the "functions" of Dumézil, the defining factors of shamanism per Eliade, or the Switchboard of Bonewits, which are not original to the author, should be referenced. Typically, a scholar will begin his paper or text by describing the development of his topic in scholarly work over the last 20 to 100 years, referencing each major step to the original author and paper (not a secondary source who described it). All quotations must of course be documented. Academic or equivalent sources (listed 50% and above) can be recognized by the presence of footnotes following these criteria. Lack of footnotes, footnotes existing only to express a tangential opinion of the author, or footnotes referring to articles in *Time*, *Life*, or the *Washington Post* (except for contemporary historical subjects), reveal a writer's ignorance or unwillingness to submit his work to academic criteria of documentation.

On the other hand, only resources which were actually used in the preparation of a paper or text should appear in the bibliography. The point is to provide full information allowing another scholar to independently verify statements made in the paper; not to provide "general background" on a subject. "Padded" bibliographies full of general titles published by popular presses or "gristmill" writers (unless, of course, the study is of popular literature) without credentials should be suspect. Large numbers of out-of-print sources present a problem in verification; large numbers of older texts suggests that the research on which the book or article is based may be far behind current developments. Huge bibliographies unaccompanied by footnotes suggest undisciplined thinking; it is unlikely that the author remembers where he got any particular

<b>SCALE FOR EVALUATING REFERENCES</b>	
<b>PRIMARY SOURCES</b>	
<b>100</b>	Original information – oldest source
<b>95</b>	Definitive scholarly transcription
<b>90</b>	Definitive scholarly translation: some competence in the original language
<b>85</b>	Definitive scholarly translation: with rough idea of original language
<b>75</b>	Good translation of the original
<b>65</b>	Poetic or free translation of the original source
<b>SECONDARY SOURCES</b>	
<b>60</b>	Peer-reviewed professional article about the source
<b>55</b>	Non-peer-reviewed article – topical study
<b>50</b>	Scholarly textbook with general bibliographic notes
<b>TERTIARY SOURCES</b>	
<b>40</b>	Topical book with higher rated sources
<b>30</b>	Topical book with Tertiary sources
<b>20</b>	Popular magazine or newspaper article
<b>10</b>	Science fiction/fantasy novel
<b>5</b>	Popular TV show

piece of information, and therefore, again, it is unverifiable.

### **RHETORICAL FLOURISHES**

The substance, quality, and personal biases of a writer can to a certain extent be judged, regardless of his credentials or documentation, by the style of writing itself. A good thinker deals with his material honestly, intelligently, and in an organized manner. This requires enough skill with words to forego easy attention-getters such as printing in all caps, use of multiple exclamation points, and other techniques more appropriate to advertising. It requires persuasion by solid argument, rather than resorting to personal attacks against opposing writers; and the use of information, not emotion, as the major thrust of his work.

The good source -- regardless of academic credentials -- is modest, careful, and painstaking in attention to detail. When he uses a word (such as magic, religion, druid, Celt) which represents a complex of difficult, abstract ideas, he


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makes no attempt to gloss these over with a quick assertion as to the “real” meaning; instead he may devote a paragraph, a page or a chapter to discussing the relevant difficulties of interpretation before settling on his own choice for the duration of the work. When quoting the work of other writers, he is sensitive to the differences between their interpretations and his own.

Furthermore, a good source is aware of the differences in standards of evidence or “proof” in different fields and of his own competencies. When David Bohme, the physicist, writes on experimental physics, he recognizes that the standard of evidence is not “why” something happens, but “what” happens; for instance, when a particular substance is bombarded with a particle beam at a particular frequency. When he writes on theoretical physics, he understands that the standard requires mathematical rather than physical proof: each step of his deduction must follow inherently from the initial assumptions, stated as mathematical relationships. When he speaks on metaphysics, a subdiscipline of philosophy, he understands that such deductions must not only be internally consistent, but must be consistent with some kind of overall meaning. Just as each area of study has a different purpose in the development of human knowledge, so it must judge whether that purpose is accomplished by a separate strategy. A good source is aware of the shifting sands involved when crossing interdisciplinary boundaries and uses them to reveal insights which are unavailable from within those domains. What's important is not whether a writer accepts evidence from both a documented archeological dig and a trance working done at the site of that dig, but that he carefully distinguishes between them, and does not conflate the two sources in one undifferentiated description of “life in ancient Camelot.”

Finally, the good source “fights fair” in his or her argumentation. He is careful not to misquote sources out of context in order to make a point, and grants his opponents the decency of a good hearing by summarizing the basics of their points of view and supporting details. He recognizes subtle distinctions, and avoids demonizing persons or ideas with wide brushstrokes that ignore the fine differences between them. He also recognizes and admits to his own agendas and biases, and makes efforts to offer opponents the benefit of the doubt in compensation where appropriate. He renounces the “easy points” won by cheap shots, personal attacks, and broad generalizations. Instead of attacking an opposing viewpoint, he builds his own hypothesis from the ground up, even exposing his own weaknesses freely.

## CONCLUSION

The signs of rhetorical excess, careful thinking, and good scholarship are clear to an attentive reader. They can be judged independently of the source material, and regardless of whether we are ourselves expert in the field. If the writer quotes good sources accurately, takes the trouble to address opposing viewpoints honestly, builds his hypotheses from a deep array of carefully-evaluated and organized details, uses words with attention to their multiple meanings and acknowledges the appropriate standards of evidence for various fields, then chances are good that even if he does not know what he's talking about, he will acknowledge his ignorance clearly. If on the other hand his writing is composed of vague generalities, emotional arguments and broad concepts unsupported by details or authoritative references, the chances are even better that this author has not yet exerted enough discipline to make his thoughts useful to anyone else. By seeking the better and avoiding the worse of these options, and above all by being aware of the difference, readers can progress not only in understanding of specific subject matters, but in the strategies by which to approach them. We become active, rather than passive, consumers of knowledge by exercising critical judgement in our reading. 

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When we were children, many of us learned about Greek and Roman mythology as if they were one and the same. Perhaps our parents alternated reading to us at bedtime watered down versions of classical mythology and Grimm's Fairy Tales. Even college Classics departments usually lump together the Romans and Greeks in classical mythology classes for students trying to meet their liberal arts and humanities requirements. For this reason, most people hold rather misguided assumptions about Roman religion. At one time or another, most people have seen (or even had to memorize) some kind of list equating the twelve Greek Olympian Gods with their Roman counterparts (i.e., Zeus = Jupiter, Hera = Juno, Poseidon = Neptune, *ad nauseam*).

But while Zeus and Jupiter share certain characteristics, they were *not* the same gods. Those who discuss a conglomerate of Greco-Roman mythology or traditions are referring to a period in history when the Roman gods had been so diluted by foreign influences that the differences between the Romans and their neighbors had blurred. The deities of the early Romans were very different before they became so heavily influenced by the Greeks and Etruscans.

Early Romans were simple farmers and shepherds, and their gods and religious practices revolved around their homes, farms, and immediate community. Their deities reflected their simple lifestyle and were not depicted in statues or artwork until later during the Republican era. For example, even when villages and cities began to spring up, the temples of Vesta were small, round buildings where an eternal flame burnt. Like most deities, Vesta was the embodiment of the living flame itself, not just associated with it, and therefore, there were no need for images of gods and goddesses.

### **BASIC RELIGIOUS CONCEPTS**

While it is difficult to ascertain exactly what early Romans believed about gods and how they worshiped, there is much we know from the writings of Romans like Cato, Ovid, Virgil, Plautus, Cicero, and many others. In general, Roman religious practices were not associated with dogma or morals, but were based on a more or less contractual agreement with the gods. The fundamental religious ethic for the Romans was *pietas*, which implies a sense of duty, honor, and respect for the deities. Moreover, the moral fiber of the officiant was of no consequence; all that mattered was whether or not he performed the ritual with the proper *pietas*. Unlike other religions, the concept of purity had more to do with cleanliness and being sheltered from ill omens, rather than good thoughts and deeds.

Furthermore, Romans generally believed that gods and spirits were omnipresent and responsible for all natural phenomena, and therefore must be propitiated in order for the home and community to thrive. *Do ut des*, meaning "I



# Roman Religion: Hearth, Home, Farm, and Community

by Jenni Hunt

*This article is intended to be the first of a series of articles outlining the basics of a Roman focus of worship and practice. Other topics may include Early Roman Gods and Goddesses, The Roman Calendar, State Religion, and Public Rituals; as well as more practical issues as Prayers, Devotionals, and Rituals for Roman Hearth Worship; Basics of Roman Prayer Formulae and Sacrifice Rituals; and Roman Methods of Divination. Specifically, in this first article, I intend to discuss what I believe are the fundamental concepts of Roman religion, as well as some general information regarding private hearth and home beliefs and practices.*

give so that you may give” was the most common form of prayer. The whole idea was to contract with the gods and contribute to and increase their power by augmenting it with sacrifices.

This concept is exhibited in many Roman prayers which were accompanied by offerings that contain some form of the phrase *macte esto* (“Be thou increased”). The verb *macto*, *mactare* is linguistically derived from the same root as the word *magnus* (“great”). Thus, *macte esto* literally is an imperative suggesting that the deity being addressed be increased or enlarged by that which has been offered to it. In a sense, Romans may have believed that the gods needed humans to sustain and increase the power of the gods -- gods were not omnipotent and needed such human attentions.

When one considers the words and phrases Romans used to describe their practices, it becomes clear just how important religious ritual was to the welfare of Rome. For example, the verb, *religo*, *religare* means literally “to bind,” and so all the sacred practices which bind the gods together with mankind are known as the *religiones* of the Romans. Another commonly employed phrase, *Ius Divinum* (“Natural or Heavenly Law”) was a set of procedures developed over generations, handed down, and kept secret lest enemies of the people might learn how to use it against the community and steal their gods away. People had faith that if the traditional rules of ritual were properly followed, the result would be *Pax Deorum* (“Peace of the Gods”) which is a sort of harmony between the worlds of the gods and mankind. Indeed, according to Plutarch, Q. Marcus Philippus said, “The gods look kindly on the scrupulous observance of religious rites which have brought our country to its peak” (Ogilvie 23). Undoubtedly, Romans believed their prosperity was dependent upon the gods.

## DEITIES OF THE HOME

To better understand the deities associated with the Roman home and farm, it is helpful to consider the layout of the

Roman home along with the entities and practices associated with each.

In Latin, *focus* is the “hearth.” In the central or, sometimes, the far end of the house, farthest from the door would be the hearth fire, home of Vesta, the living flame and central to Roman home religion. The name *Vesta* is derived from the Indo-European *\*wes*, which means “to dwell,” making her name mean “she of the household” (*The American Heritage Dictionary*). As the last part of the home to be seen upon entering (opposite the main door or later in a



separate kitchen), Vesta was always the last to be invoked in a list of deities and last to receive offerings. Vesta, along with the other household deities, received a portion of the family's main meal each day. After the main part of the meal, a young boy from the family would toss the contents of the plate into the fire and say, *Di propitii* (“the gods are favorable”). Then the “second tables” could be brought in, being something like a dessert (Rose 29). The women of the household were responsible for proper maintenance and observance of the hearth fire and food stores. Later, the house of Vestal Virgins was instituted, who were responsible for tending the flame in the temple of Vesta and rites associated with the community hearth.

Moving outward from the *focus* of the home, generally Roman homes had an entry room called the *Atrium* where families would keep their *Lararium*, a household shrine which would be the first thing one would see upon entering the home and the last to be seen upon leaving. The *lararium* could take many forms, from a sort of cupboard, a wall painting, or even a separate room. Whatever the form, *lararia* usually contained representations of the three groups of household deities which were worshiped within the house: the *Penates*, *Lar Familiaris*, and the *Gens Patris Familiaris*.

*Penates* were the deities of the *penus* (“pantry; larder; or storage cupboard”). They protected the household's food supply and were propitiated so that the family would not go hungry or be unable to offer hospitality. Most families would keep a salt cellar and first fruits of the season on the family dining table for the *Penates*. A morning prayer, led by the *Paterfamilias* (the male head of the household) each day included recognition of all the household deities, but a more formal ritual for the *Penates* would be held on the *Kalends* (first day of the month), *Nones* (the ninth day before the *Ides*), and *Ides* (the 13th or 15th day of the month), when a formal prayer was addressed to all the deities of the household and an offering made to the *Penates*. Horace suggests that offerings of corn, wine, or the occasional suckling pig were most appropriate for such occasions (Rose 28).

The *Lar Familiaris* (the family *Lar*) was a sort of patron deity of the family, although the *Lares* (the plural form of the word *Lar*) in general were originally deities of the cultivated land. As powers of the earth, they helped the land (and therefore the household) to be more fertile and prosper. Apparently one or two of the *Lares* took up residence indoors and became the *Lar Familiaris*; even though the *Lares* were still considered to be the gods of the fields and farms. The oldest form of the name is *las*, *lases*, suggest-

ing *lascivus*, or “playful” (Rose 40). Lares probably were jolly, little godlings, as they were later depicted as young men holding drinking horns and dancing with their tunics kilted up. They may also be associated with a sense of cheerful hospitality. Some modern authors have interpreted that the Lares were spirits of dead relatives, although this is not likely since ancestor worship of this type took place at the grave, rather than in the home.

The *Gens* (or sometimes *Genius*) *Familiaris* was the guardian spirit of the family. Literally, the *Genius* is the “Begetter” -- the deity who promotes the begetting of children and sustains the family line. In Pompeiian wall paintings, the *Gens Familiaris* is depicted wearing a *toga capite velato* (covering his head, as if in ritual), sometimes holding a cornucopia, sacrificing, or pouring a libation to the Lares. Such representations suggest that the *Gens Familiaris* was associated with the pious observation of honoring the gods led by the *Paterfamilias*. Indeed, the *Gens Familiaris* was worshiped on the birthday of the *paterfamilias* and on his wedding day, as well. In addition to the *Gens Patris Familiaris*, Individuals each had their or her own guardian spirit, their *Gen-*

*ius* (for men) or *Iuno* (for women). Even certain places were occupied by *Genius Locus*, or the guardian spirit of that particular place.

Bridging the interior and exterior of the household was the guardian of the threshold, *Ianus*, the god of doors, gates, and beginnings. The door was very important to Romans, as is demonstrated by the fact that doors had several different gods associated with different parts and functions of the door: *Limentinum* and *Lima* were the god and goddess of the threshold (*limen*); *Cardea* (or *Carna*) was the goddess of door hinges; *Forculus* was the god of the door itself; and *Portunus* was the protector of doors. There were also many aspects of *Ianus*: *Ianus Pater*, the god of creation; *Ianus Patulcius*, the god who opens doors; *Ianus Clusivus*, the god who closes doors; and *Ianus Bifrons*, or “*Ianus* with two faces” who was symbolic that gateways go both ways. In fact, *Ianus* was so instrumental a deity, being both the god of beginnings and openings, in rituals of all kinds, he was always the first to be named in a list of the gods or to receive an offering. The first month in the Julian calendar, January was named for him. His temple in the Roman form was a small shrine with an east-west arched

passageway with doors at both ends; it was closed only in times of peace.

## DEITIES OF THE CULTIVATED LAND

Outside the home, beyond the influence of the various Lares who presided over the cultivated land, was *Terminus*, god of boundaries. Boundaries were sacred places indeed to Romans. To interfere with or move a boundary stone was not just illegal, but a sacrilege. Each boundary had its own god, collectively known as the *Termini*; who were honored at the festival of *Terminalia* on February 23. At that time, the two neighbors whose land bordered at a particular boundary stone would meet on opposite sides for a small ritual and sacrifice conducted by the each neighbor’s *paterfamilias* and wife. *Terminus* was also recognized at the festival, *Ambularia*, where landowners would “beat the bounds” in a procession to purify and protect the land in a solemn procession around the borders of their land. *Terminus* was important not merely to establish the household’s domain, but to keep at bay the forces of the wild, uncultivated lands surrounding it.

*Sylvanus*, the god of the woods, hunting, and wild things, was associated with all the other uncultivated land beyond the boundaries of the farmed and settled land. He can behave with abandon and disregard for humans and it was always necessary to placate him when land was being cleared. In fact, throughout the bounds of what was once the Roman Empire, thousands of shrines have been found to *Sylvanus* --probably more so than any other Roman deity. *Sylvanus* was early associated with *Mars*, which may suggest that the two deities were originally related. *Mars* was initially an agricultural God before he became known as a war deity, which is logical in that he may have originally been



photo by art historian and photographer Allan T. Kohl

responsible for the protection (and expansion) of the farm, then later the community and state.

## THE BIRTH OF STATE RELIGION

Gradually, as farms grew closer together and villages and cities were formed, private home and rural practices grew into the State religion. The Paterfamilias had always been the head of the household whose role was maintaining the proper relationship with the deities and seeing to the welfare of the entire household. He led the morning ritual each day and oversaw that a portion of the main meal of the day was offered to the household deities. He was also responsible for the timely and proper performance of various other seasonal rituals and practices around the home and farm.

Gradually, communities grew and began to look to a group Paterfamilias whose role it was to maintain the proper relationship between the community and the gods, just as the Paterfamilias of a family did. An early indication of such consolidated effort is exemplified in the festival, *Compitalia* (a moveable feast in late December/early January) which included a ritual observed among immediate neighbors honoring the Lares, and other deities of the land, especially cultivated land. It took place at the *Compitum*, the point where four farms meet. A shrine was erected there which overlooked all four directions. Once a year, farmers would hang a plough and a doll for each member of the household and make a sacrifice. The day would be a holiday for everyone, including the slaves and work animals, which signifies that community relations were considered important enough to warrant a day from regular routine.

Another larger festival, the *Paganalia* (January 24-26) was a festival observed among residents of a village or rural community, and later, among blocks or parishes in Rome, which demonstrates how Romans adapted small rural festivals to urban life. *Paganalia* was a festival of spring sowing, and worshipers (both rural and urban) sacrificed to Tellus (Mother Earth) on the first day and Ceres (goddess of growth) on second day.

Eventually, the King took on the role of Paterfamilias of the city. Priesthoods were developed to maintain the complex relationships between the deities and the city. People did not have to be involved or even take an interest in the rituals; they were satisfied to know that the relationship was being maintained on their behalf. Most priesthoods were not full-time jobs and were filled by members of the aristocracy or later, by anyone who could afford the expensive and elaborate sacrifices necessary. Therefore, priests were not the experts liturgists we expect them to be nowadays. However, there were those who made their living studying ritual traditions and hiring themselves out to assist the officiant with music, prompting, and sacrificing. Such aspects of ritual were crucial to its success, but talents most priests did not have the time or ability to cultivate. It

was perfectly acceptable -- even expected -- to have an ancient version of teleprompter standing beside the priest, softly reading from wax tablets each line of the prayers to be repeated by the priest.

Such innovations may have been more pleasing to the gods in that they resulted in more perfect worship which covered increasingly larger groups of Romans, but they also had the effect of distancing most individuals from the traditions and the gods. By the time Ovid wrote the *Fasti*, a description of the Roman festivals for the first half of the year (he never completed the second half), many traditions were followed simply because they always had been, not because anyone had the faintest idea why. Some of the deities associated with certain festivals had by then faded from the memories of all, and therefore, new gods, such as Lupercal, were fabricated to replace those that had been forgotten, even though their festivals were still celebrated. Roman aristocracy filled the positions of priests, considering such responsibilities its duty to the state, and as Rome grew, such positions became increasingly merely social or political positions. By the time of the late Republic, the sentiment behind the early Roman religion was all but lost. Although Augustus attempted to revive home and state religions during his lifetime, Roman religious traditions were never again what they once were in Rome's early days.

## CONCLUSION

It is for this reason I have chosen to focus my research and rebuild practices of Roman religion beginning with the earliest and most simple of rituals within the home and immediate surroundings. With the proper *pietas* and respect for ancient traditions, it may be possible to reconstruct a Roman religion which draws upon the successes of our ancestors while learning from what became their downfall.



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In this essay, it is my intent to explore the dynamics of celebratory Group ritual as embodied in the personages of the primary liturgical functionaries, as well as some of the optional or secondary functionaries. There are, to be sure, many possible models for the combination and application of the liturgical identities herein examined. However, for the purposes of this paper, I will be discussing the subject predominately within the context of the practice of Indo-European Revivalist Paganism, with Celtic being the focal subculture.

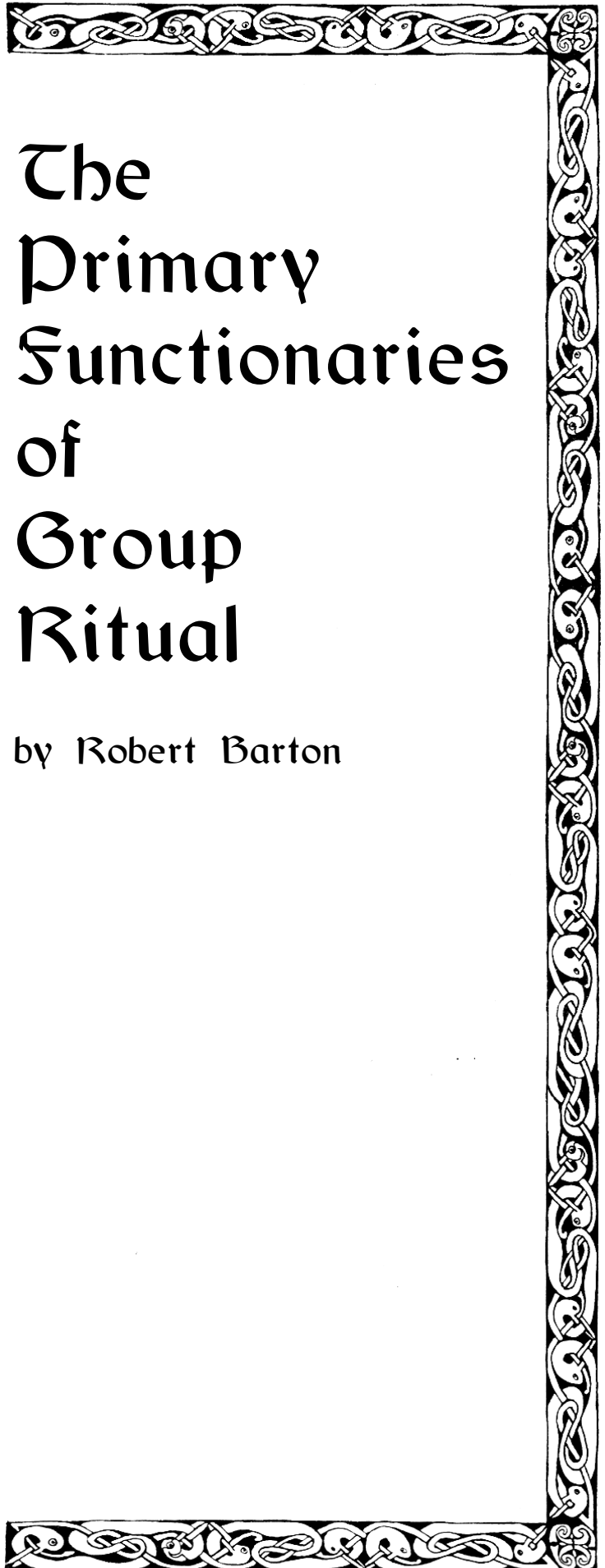
First and foremost in the performance of ritual is the Officiant or 'Druid' who is the primary celebrant of the rite. Preeminent among the duties performed by this person is the execution of appropriate liturgical structure. The Druid is to ensure the adherence to the ritual as written. Much like the stage director of a play, this person makes sure that the script is followed and that all parts are performed on cue.

The Druid is the person who focuses the group mind, or "egregore," formed by those present. Endeavoring, through the use of symbology, oratory and many other skills, the Druid keeps the spiritual egregore directed upon the goals of the rite to a smooth and successful completion. Establishment and maintenance of borders, gates, realms and all of the other details of structural symbology, and meanings of the tools used are also found as a part of this job.

To be a successful Druid requires a very high degree of training and experience. Among the knowledge set of the Druid, great weight must be given to theology, cosmology, symbology (both general and cultural), magic, general liturgical structure, spiritual dynamics (group and individual) and the specific structure of the ritual at hand. Some important skills which the Druid should possess are rhetorical oratory, ritual gesture, dramatic expression and the use of props, sets, and effects.

Though the specific acts of and spoken parts within a ritual may be divided among various acolytes or participants, the Druid remains the one who directs and focuses the ceremony in progress. This is the largest and most visual job of a ritual, and the confidence and ability of the person in this role will have the most pronounced effect on the participants and outcome of the rite.

The second functionary is the Bard, whose primary concern is the inspiration of the participants. The main duty of this person is to facilitate the emotional and spiritual involvement of the participants. Guiding the feelings of the celebrants to the proper level of intensity and the appropriate emotion, the Bard provides for the commitment of energy to the rite. Bards often participates in the writing of a ritual, with language being their focus, being sure that the



# The Primary Functionaries of Group Ritual

by Robert Barton

spoken parts are said in the most effective and inspiring manner possible.

At each stage of the ritual, the Bard must be aware of the required energy of that section. The Bard must know what type of emotional and spiritual foci are required at any given stage of the rite. It is then the responsibility of the Bard to find ways that work well within the present context to bring to participants to the needed emotional and spiritual state and excitement level.

The prerequisite knowledge areas of the Bard are symbology, language, music and poetry as they affect listeners, how rhythm may be used and manipulated to produce ritual effects, general ritual structure, and specific structure of the ritual at hand. Skills required of the Bard include chanting, singing, poetry, rhetorical oratory, drumming, gesture, good stage presence and a rapport with the participants and the Kindred.

Next we come to the Diviner, Seer or Faistineach (pronounced "FA-schti-nyak") with the primary duty of reading the ritual energy and interpretation of information received. This person watches the participants and environment to note the effects of the rite. If the ritual contains a formal divination, the Faistineach is the person conducting that step. Perception and interpretation of spontaneous events in and around the ceremony are also part of these duties. Our Faistineach looks for and interprets the Divine acceptance of the sacrifices, offerings and ritual and the subsequent return of blessings and favor.

Among the knowledge areas most required for the Faistineach are symbology, dynamics of energy, personalities of Deities of the rite, a specific structured divination system and interpretation of spontaneous events relative to the ritual and stages thereof. Skills required of the Faistineach include application of a divination system, awareness of the environment within and around the rite, reading people and their reactions to events and a relaxation of the mind in order to receive multiple forms of information simultaneously.

Our fourth and final primary functionary is the Divine Fool or Suibhne (pronounced "SWEEny"), whose job is often considered as optional in that some groups do not make use of this specific ritual role. The major concern of the Suibhne is to see that the ritual maintains an active and dynamic balance throughout all of the various parts and stages. A Suibhne does not have any specific active role or spoken part within the ceremony. The suibhne generally

combines the knowledge set of the Druid with the skill set of the Faistineach, and requires a very in-depth knowledge and awareness of the ritual.

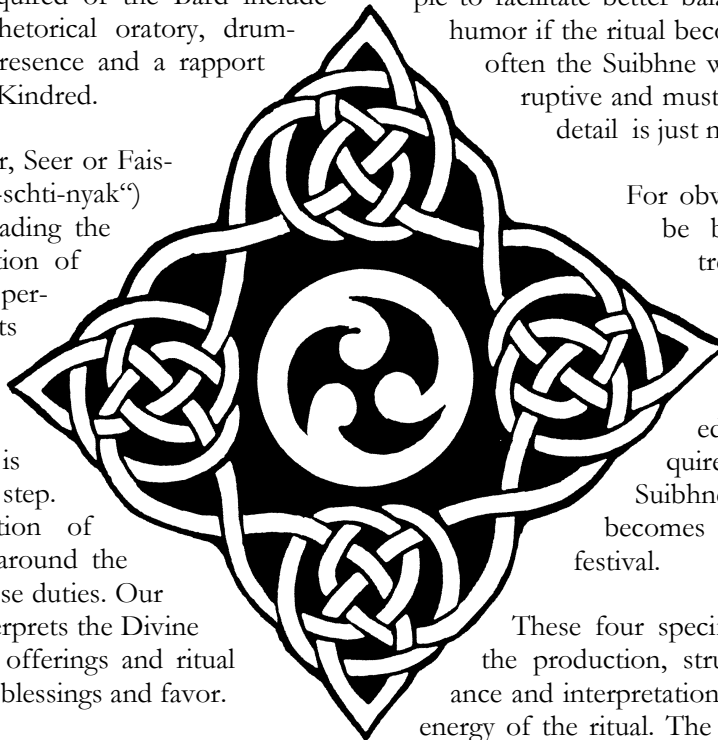
It is never known what, if anything, the Suibhne will do in an upcoming rite. The person in this role must have the ability to perceive subtle imbalances in energy, and know how to counter those irregularities. With no specific task on which to focus, this person is able to move about freely, while making any ongoing changes needed to fine-tune the ritual. At times the rite may be so well written and executed that the Suibhne does practically nothing. While at other times the ritual may have problems so severe that the Suibhne must call a halt and demand that it start over or even be postponed. The Suibhne may move props or people to facilitate better balance, or may interject a bit of humor if the ritual becomes too dour in attitude. It is often the Suibhne who decides if someone is disruptive and must be removed, or if some other detail is just not right.

For obvious reasons, a Suibhne must be both highly trained and extremely experienced as a ritualist. The reason that some groups do not have a Suibhne, is that there is no person available with the knowledge, experience and ability required of such a role. When a good Suibhne is found, however, he or she becomes a great asset to any ritual or festival.

These four specific people are responsible for the production, structuring, maintenance of balance and interpretation of the emotional and spiritual energy of the ritual. The Bard raises the proper energy through the inspiration of the participants. The Druid provides the structure and direction of the energy so raised, with the Suibhne ensuring the balance of that energy as needed. And finally the Faistineach reads and interprets that energy, and any divine messages or interaction. Though some of these duties are often performed either by the same individual, or divided among several people, as functions within ceremony they remain separate and should be thought of within that context.

The possibilities for jobs that people can do in ritual certainly are not limited to those discussed above; in fact, there are a great many secondary liturgical roles that can be used to allow people to participate in a rite. Often these various roles are used to start new people on the road to learning about ritual and developing their individual liturgical abilities.

A Fire-tender can be a big asset to a ritual, in that this per-



son will see to the control and maintenance of the fire. Often the details of the fire are not well in place and it becomes a last minute thing to address. By having a specific person with the duties of preparing and caring for the fire, problems in this area can be avoided. This is a great introductory job for someone who is new, especially an adolescent and would like to start participating in ritual, but is not yet ready for spoken parts.


Cup-bearer was a very traditionally important duty in Pagan Celtic society, and was generally filled by a youth or foster child in the great households. This job often requires small formally spoken parts that are repeated as each participant is given the cup. Again, here we have a job that is suitable for the young or relatively new, in that it teaches them to be aware of the other participants and to speak and move in a prescribed manner. Though this job is an excellent step on the way to becoming a Druid, more experienced people often still find this job a joy to perform.

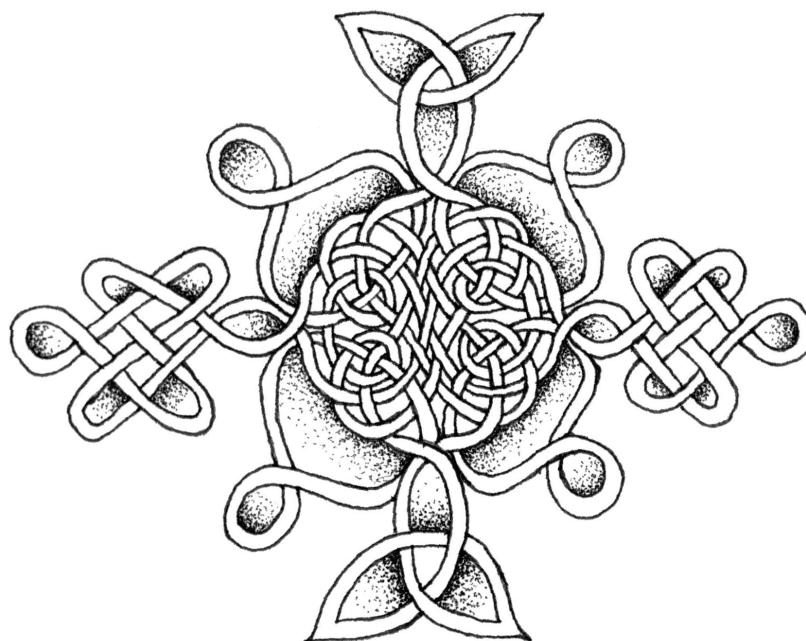
The Sacrificer is a role which provides excellent training in ritual propriety, and communication with Deities, ancestors and attendant nature spirits. This person performs all group sacrifices, offering the various Deities and others being honored with such gifts. Often individuals pass their personal sacrifices over to this person to give in the prescribed manner. The Sacrificer previews all individual offerings to be sure that they are appropriate for the rite. The fact that this job is completely focused through the gates, into the other realms and upon the residents thereof causes the development of an intense awareness of the other side and interactions through the gates. Obviously this duty should be performed by anyone with hopes of

eventually being Faistineach, Druid or Suibhne.

Liturgists write and construct rituals and ceremonies. The Druid for a specific ritual may or may not also be the liturgist for it. The job of the Liturgist requires knowledge of the general principles or ritual structure and patterns, and specific ritual and symbology systems relative to tradition and type of celebration. Serving in this capacity is a great way for potential Druids to learn about the subject of ritual, prior to actually stepping into the lead role of performance.

General Acolyte is often the final preparation for the Druid in training. The person performing this role serves as a ritual assistant to the Druid before, during, and after the ritual. The wise Druid uses this job to slowly develop ritual skills in the next generation of Officials. The Acolyte begins standing beside the Druid to fill cups, open bottles, pass tools and ritual gear, and return blessed objects to their owners. But as time passes, the Acolyte is given more to do, perhaps preparing the ritual site to be sure that all things are in place and ready. Gradually, the Acolyte should also be given more speaking parts and ritual acts to perform until they are ready to act as Druid.

While I recognize that there are many different possible liturgical dynamic models, it is hoped that the above model has demonstrated a system whereby ritual dynamics can be attended to in order to provide for a smooth, well constructed, and properly executed ritual. The secondary intent in this paper has been to show how the various ritual roles may be used to educate the student of ceremony by providing opportunities to concentrate on the many different parts of ritual each in its turn. 





## Creative Writing

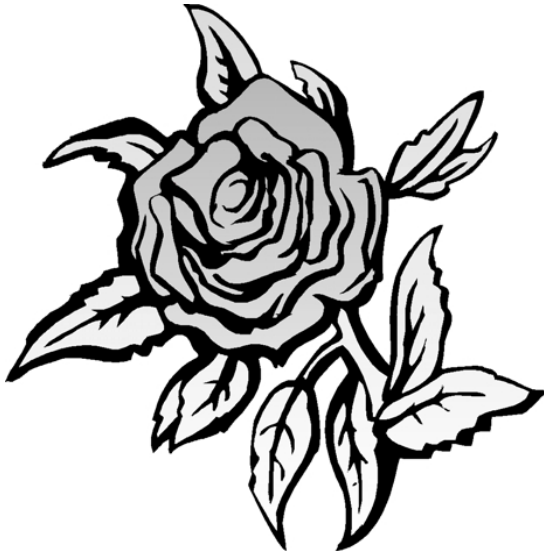
# Dancing Green and Naked in the Sun

by Jenni Hunt

Last week I was speaking with a friend, Marie, about our experiences with epiphany. She told me about one of those precious, golden moments of absolute enlightenment she once experienced upon disembarking from a commuter train in Boston. She had been contemplating a major life change at the time, so this particular epiphany signaled her acceptance of the changes she was to make with her life. She had been writing in a journal on the train and described feeling that her heart was tightly bound in metal bands. However constricted, her heart was growing and growing, straining its bindings until it finally burst free and spread out all around her like an aura of nirvana. She walked down the street meeting the eyes of every person she passed and knew that some of that remarkable sense of liveliness spilled out into each and every one of them.

Such moments of rebirth don't come without a price. I am reminded of a time when I moved into the guest house on the California ranch of my friend, Victoria, who had been giving me riding lessons. Along the north side of the house was a fabulous tangle of an ancient rose bush which had spread the width of the house. As Spring came upon us, I watched with expectant fascination while the thorny mass of growth came to life, but I was bit of dismayed. It was growing scraggly and each cane looked like a desperate stab at survival. When I hung my laundry out on the line, which paralleled the rose bush, I had to maneuver myself carefully to avoid getting hooked on the prickly canes that reached out to grab me. So immense and snarled was that rose that it looked like it had been planted a century ago and had never been pruned or had any dead wood trimmed out of it. As anyone who has ever grown roses knows, they require regular pruning, and this plant was a perfect example of what happens to a bush whose maintenance has been neglected. Some of the bright green shoots had to stretch themselves three or four yards through a dim wasteland of dry, brittle wood before they made any attempts to leaf or branch. They put so much energy into growing out of that ancient detritus that they were too tired and weakened by the time they reached the daylight to produce more than a small, feeble bloom or two. After securing Victoria's permission to prune the bush, I armed myself with pruning shears and saw to ravish and enliven the plant.

More beast than bush, it seemed to react to the my presence with sharpened tools as a smelly dog might to a tub of sudsy water. Its persistent, long branches blew in the billowing breeze, catching my skin and clothes in their thorny embrace, and exacting a blood price in return for my selective slaughter. As I cropped off spans of the spindly, bare shoots that reached out from the base of the plant, what I found beneath was almost entirely dead wood. There was one especially thick branch which had lost its grace and managed to look gangly in spite of its girth. I hated to chop up such a noble plant -- decrepit




though it had become -- and I paused to admire the smooth, graceful grain of the wood. It reminded me of a lovely, old contrabass clarinet made from rosewood I played every chance I could in high school. As I continued to prune and maul away at the remainder of the rose bush, I imagined the mournful, mellow tone of that magnificent woodwind, and as I did so, quietly humming to myself, the blustery wind faded, and the sticky canes ceased to ensnare me.

That afternoon, I managed to cut back about two-thirds of the rose bush, filling my entire front yard with its discarded waste. When Victoria came home from work that evening, she spied the heap of brambly branches I was bundling to take to the dump. I didn't realize how easily someone who'd been such a fast friend could turn on me so thoroughly. She didn't want to hear my explanations; she didn't want to know how much experience I'd had with gardening and pruning; she just wanted me to understand that her grandmother had planted that rose, and as far as she was concerned, I had utterly destroyed it. Her sister Carol, who held the plant in particular esteem, would be home for the weekend, and if I didn't want my butt kicked into the next county -- and I'm talking about San Bernardino County, mind you -- I'd better make myself scarce.

Duly chagrined, I ceased all slaughterous activity upon the bush, even though I hadn't yet touched the far end of it, and focused on coaxing it to grow healthy and bloom before Carol's arrival. I blanketed it with peat moss and nourished it with libations of the best rose feed I could find. I watered it twice daily, and even planted a flat of annuals at its base to help obscure the bareness there. And I discretely left for the weekend on a camping excursion in the next county.

Of course, I can't speak for the rose, but I believe that although my pruning was rather a traumatic experience, it must have felt much like Marie's heart did, bursting free from its bindings. I could have parked a lawn chair beneath my clothes line and watch it grow. Within a week, I could measure its growth with a ruler, and there were new buds forming within two weeks. Where the rose had focused all of its energy into growing canes out past the dead wood, now it could concentrate this new found vigor on spreading and branching and blooming. And oh, what blooms it had! By midsummer, there were dozens and dozens of robust, fragrant blooms.

It seemed to me a truly uncommon comeback, although I have seen such everyday miracles countless times before. Each tiny green seedling that curls itself out from beneath the earth; each slithering vine that stretches and enwraps its host; each bud that cracks apart its sepals, allowing its petals to erupt forth -- these commonly unnoticed epiphanies are just as precious as that remarkable rose's rebirth and my friend's brimming aura on the streets of Boston. All living things periodically shed their skins -- comfortable and familiar as they may be -- and dance green and naked in the sun. 



# Special Section



Annual  
Membership  
Meeting

21 May 1999

## 1999 Election Results

### Minutes from the Annual Meeting

### Reflections on the Wellspring Main Rite

### Outgoing Preceptor's Report

### Incoming Preceptor's Report

### Call for Nominations



# 1999 Election Results

#### VICE ARCHDRUID

Robert Ellison (Skip Ellison) - 369 votes  
Chris Sherbak - 252 votes  
Jeff Wyndham (Ian Corrigan) - 1 vote  
(write-in)

#### Scribe

Jan Curran (Ivydruid)- 584 votes  
Judith Morris (toadie) - 4 votes (write-in)  
Jennifer Hunt - 2 vote (write-in)

#### Preceptor

Jeff Wyndham (Ian Corrigan) - 417 votes  
Jennifer Hunt - 135 votes  
Kathryn Cutright - 64 votes  
Bryan Perrin - 2 votes (write-in)  
Matt Ducar - 1 vote (write-in)

#### Member's Advocate

Matt Ducar - 327  
Renee Carlson - 169  
Maria Valayil - 125

#### Administrator

Anthony Thompson - 390  
Cynndara Morgan - 169  
Chuck McEachern - 66

#### Non-officer Directors

Rob Barber-Delach (Seabhac Fionn) -  
205 \*  
Rob Barton - 173 \*  
Edith Lit (Emerald Dragyn) - 99  
Carlyne Deaver (Epona) - 83  
Michael D. Gale - 49  
Turtle Woman - 2 (write-in)

## REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

#### CENTRAL REGION

Barbara Wright - 83  
Kieran Rhysling - 10

#### FAR NORTH REGION

Jody Kennedy - 8

#### GREAT LAKES REGION

Sue Parker (Liafal) - 142  
Mark Gabriel - 55

#### NORTHEASTERN REGION

Paul Maurice - 140  
Pete Gold - 72  
Eugene McCarthy - 13 votes  
(write-in)  
Robert Ellison (Skip Ellison) - 2  
votes (write-in)

#### OHIO RIVER REGION

John T. Harrison - 28

#### PACIFIC REGION

Jason G. Crowder - 33

#### SOUTHEASTERN REGION

John W. Kennington (Londubh) -  
13

When a region reaches a membership density greater than one ADF member per 1/2 million residents, that region's Representative shall be automatically placed on the Mother Grove with the title of Regional Director. As of the election, 3 regions fulfilled the population density requirement; Northeastern, Great Lakes, and Ohio River.

\* - Receiving at least 25% of the total votes cast was required to qualify for a post as Non-Officer Director.

Total Votes Cast: 628  
Total Votes Available: 1,776  
% Votes Cast: 35%  
Number of Voters: 194  
Total ADF Membership: 545  
% Member Participation: 36%

**F**ox read Anthony's motion on electronic communication forums and got the votes from the Mother Grove members present. Motion reads:

Motion by Anthony Thompson that all ADF electronic communication forums shall be moderated. Moderators shall be appointed by the Administrator and will be responsible for enforcing the following policy. This policy shall apply to all participants of the forums. Each moderator shall monitor the contributions to the forums and respond to policy violations by issuing public warnings to the offender. Said warnings must cite the offending communication and the specific conduct rules in violation.

If three such warnings occur within a three-month period, the participant will be suspended from all ADF electronic communication forums for one month. If three suspensions occur within a twelve-month period, the individual shall be suspended for one year.

Unacceptable behavior shall include, but not be limited to: insults, threats, name-calling, harsh sarcasm, personal accusations, or defamation of character. Additionally, excessive disruptive behavior as judged by the forum moderators, may warrant immediate suspension from the ADF electronic communication forums. All moderator decisions may be appealed to the Administrator and Mother Grove in turn.

**RESULTS:** Motion Carried: 9 Approved and 2 Absent (Black Tiger and Linda Demissy).

Fox told us that the current membership of ADF is about 550 people.

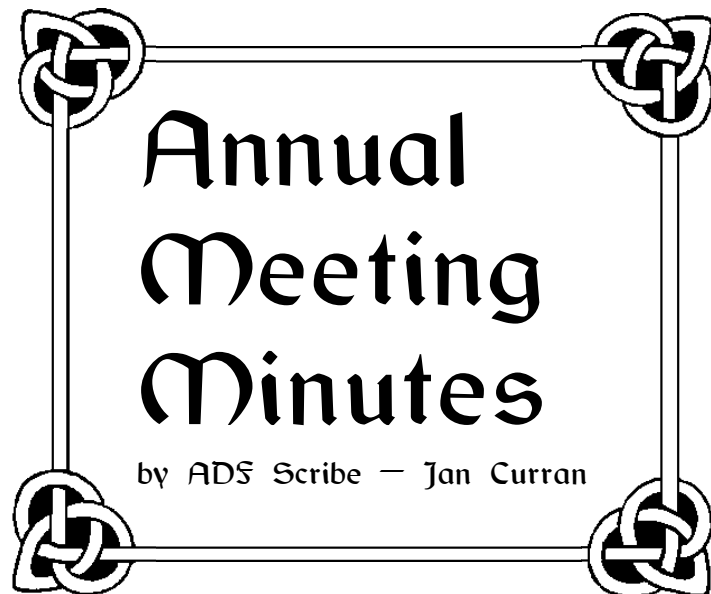
Fox gave a quick financial report. Donations are down, dues are up, product referral (Amazon.com) is up, regalia is down, theft repayment is down. Total income is about \$18,048. Net income is about \$10,856.

### OFFICER REPORTS

**Non-Officer Director (NOD)** - Bardd Dafydd - Talked about the Grove organizing committee. They have revamped the Grove Organizing policy, but still need to get it approved by the Mother Grove.

**Pursewarden** - Janet Kniaz - Talked about the reasons for her resignation and the changes she had made before resigning.

**Vice Archdruid** - Ian Corrigan - Told how it had been a pretty uneventful term. He talked a little about the Best of *Oak Leaves* that he put out.



**Non-Officer Director** - Paul Maurice - Talked about how much better the continuous on-line Mother Grove meeting was than the old way of having it in chat rooms or on a conference call. He predicts that the Study Program will be running by summer.

**Member's Advocate** - Dimitra Barnard - She's been working about two hours per day on email and Mother Grove complaints. She has also been doing a lot of informal mediation. She believes that the new Mother Grove's top priority should be on developing a form of conflict resolution.

**Scribe** - Skip Ellison - Not much to report. All the mail goes to Ann Arbor, so the biggest job is keeping the by-laws, policy manual and Mother Grove agenda up to date.

**Chronicler** - Farrell McGovern - *Oak Leaves* is late. There is not much material coming in now, but it should get better when the Study Program is up and running. His main complaint was that he didn't have good enough contacts within the organization when he started to know who to push for material. He has been learning this and the flow of material is improving. He has found two stores willing to test market *Oak Leaves* for us. He is working to get more advertising.

**Preceptor** - Anthony Thompson - He's been working steadily with the Council of Lore (COL) for the past six months. The general and functional requirements third phase are up for a vote right now. He has gotten the "Member's Only" pages up on the web site.

**Administrator** - Matt Ducar - He talked about the office and how it has new people in place to make it work more efficiently. He's restructured the membership database and has appointed Rob Henderson to the position of of-

fice manager. The main copy of the database is now stored online and is checked by the people working on it. This prevents the problem of two people making changes at the same time with not all the changes being recorded properly. He has many ideas to pass on to the new administrator.

**Non-Officer Director** - Richard MacKelly - He spends lots of his time reading email and sees lots of good trends happening lately.

**Registrar** - Black Tiger - Not present.

**Non-Officer Director** - Linda Demissy - Not present.

Fox then talked about what has been done over the past year. We have worked on conflict resolution, streamlined the Mother Grove decision-making process, put in place a policy for censure for leadership, and added the position of "Administrator" to the Mother Grove. We've also restructured the organization by changing the Pursewarden and Chronicler positions to appointed positions, removed the Registrar position, added Regional Representatives, and added the Chief of the Council of Senior Druids and the Guild Master to the Mother Grove. We've changed the term for Mother Grove members from three years to two years. We've also re-issued clergy credential to Camile Grant for her work with prisoners on death row. We've held two leadership retreats and changed the way the office email is handled. It now goes to the ADF-Tech list and is handled by a group of helpers.

There was a question from the floor from Amergin Aryson on what can be done to relieve the email problem. There was some discussion but no answers.

Fox then talked about some of his plans for the organization. He wants to see us have Lay Clergy, wants to keep working on getting the motion passed to help prevent "Archdruid burnout," and wants to do something about getting Gwydion to repay the amount he owes us. Matt Ducar is working with a collection agency to see if we can get anything from them; if not, we'll go back to court to get a warrant for his arrest. Out of the \$20,000 he owes us, we've only collected about \$3,039. Other things that need to be worked on include publishing Ellen Evert Hopman's book and publishing a Regalia catalog. We've also been talking about changing the compassionate membership process. The question of the Acorn Fund is still unresolved but closer to a solution than it was. One big thing we would like to get done is to get on-line credit card capability.

Fox, Ian Corrigan, and Sue Parker are working on Phase 2 of the Druid Way training classes.


There was discussion on the question of splitting the spiritual and administrative heads in local groves. Some groves have adopted the model of having both a Senior Druid and a Chief.

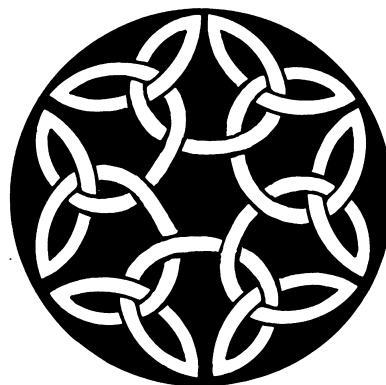
There was discussion on the various plans for further restructuring of the organization.

We talked about the regional representative plan. The population figure on which the plan is based one druid for every 500,000 people. This means that for this election, the Northeast, the Great Lakes and the Ohio region all receive seats on the Mother Grove as Regional Directors. The rest of the Regional Directors will not get seats at this time. As the number of druids in a particular region grows over the per capita number needed, then that Regional Director will join the Mother Grove.

We talked about conflict resolution. This has been a problem that has taken up a large amount of members of the Mother Grove's time. Paul Maurice proposed using Brehons for settlement of disputes. Each side of the conflict would pick its own judge, and then those two chosen would pick a third. The three would make a decision based on the evidence presented to them, and it would be binding on all parties.

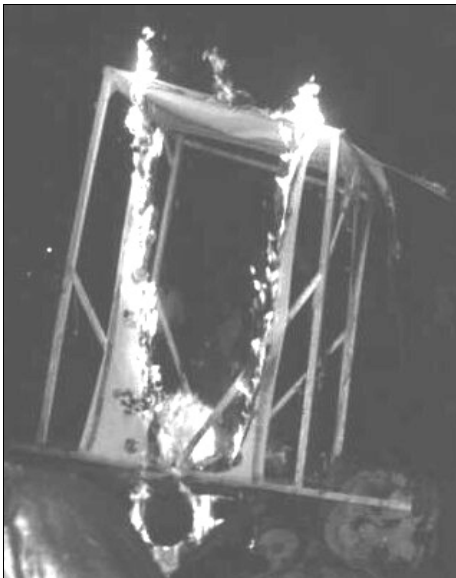
Richard James presented a motion from the floor. He wanted to see the Mother Grove and the COL lists opened up so the members could read them but not comment. There were not enough votes present, either in person or by proxy, to make a quorum. The Mother Grove will consider the motion and the discussion that resulted.

Chris Sherbak brought up two points from the Solitaires list. They would like to see a mentor program for members and Dedicants (Dedicant mentors were selected at a later meeting). Second, there was a suggestion made that the Mother Grove should not be allowed to change the bylaws; the bylaws should only be changed by a vote of the members. 



**F**or the main Ritual at Wellspring 1999, Ian Corrigan constructed a large Shrine House to be used as the main sacrifice. When I first heard the idea I thought it would be a special and memorable event, but I had no idea that it would be the focus of the most powerful example of Pagan Magic that I have ever seen.

Ian constructed a rectangular framework out of clear pine "one by two's." It stood about seven feet high and was four feet wide and five feet deep. It looked a bit like the framework for an outhouse. He brought yards of plain muslin that people decorated with Celtic stencils and paints, then attached to three of the sides and the top, leaving the front open. Liafal and I made a loose shelf from another piece of muslin and tied it with string to the middle of the four uprights. This would hold our offerings and sacrifices.



Some people had decorated the framework with various objects: a painting of Bran, by Bryan Perrin, was attached inside, a Brigid's Cross was attached above the front opening and some Mistletoe was attached to the frame, among other things.

Because we intended to burn the Shrine House with all of its offerings, it was decided to use the main fire ring at Brushwood, where a large bon-

# Brigit's Blessings

## Reflections on the Wellspring Main Rite

by Bardd Dafydd

fire could be built. As we processed to the Main Ritual, the Shrine House was carried in front of us, and set in the Circle in a place of honor.

When it came time to give Praise Offerings, we filed around the circle, placing our gifts on the shelf until it was heaping with flowers, oils, shells, incense, precious stones, jewelry and many other valuable things. The mood of the crowd was both solemn and joyous simultaneously.

Then it was time for the final sacrifice! Fox called upon the Kindred to accept our gifts, and four bearers carefully lifted the Shrine House by poles that extended out the front and back and placed it directly on top of the roaring bonfire.

As the flames licked the thin pine boards and muslin sides, we sang a song of burning to send our praises up to the Gods in a burst of flame.

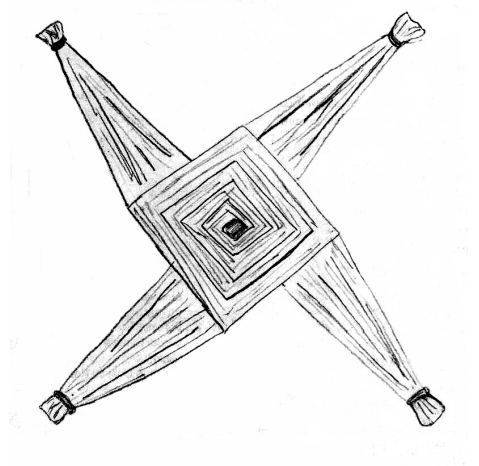
And we sang....

And we sang....

And we sang....

For fifteen solid minutes we sang that chant, over and over and over, until our voices were hoarse, and that Shrine house would not burn. Eventually the shelf gave away, spilling our offerings into the fire, but the house itself just stood there - it seemed inde-

structible! Fox moved it so that one of the muslin walls was directly over the hottest part of the fire and the cloth did burn away. Then he moved it again so another one of the walls burned. But no matter how he moved it, the framework stood with little more damage than a few scorches. The Brushwood staff who had built



the fire began throwing large logs onto the fire with apparently two purposes: to feed the fire and make it larger and hotter, and also to break up the Shrine House by snapping one of the cross braces. But the logs had no effect.

This didn't make sense! This was the same kind of lumber that my grove uses for kindling to get our small oak fire going. We pour a few tablespoons of alcohol on a paper towel, place three or four pieces of pine lumber on

(Brigit's Blessings – continued from page 33)

it and toss in a match. Within seconds the sappy pine is blazing away, and it quickly burns up. But this pine house just stood there, perched on top of a huge blazing bonfire. It was unbelievable.

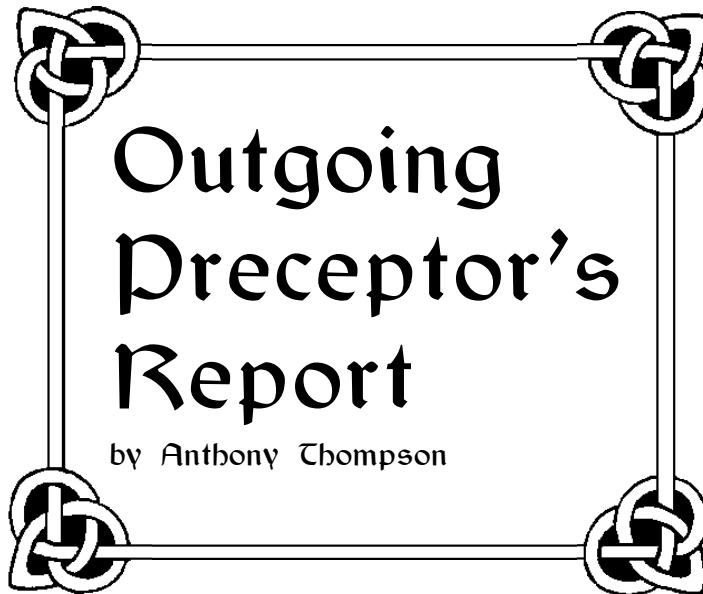
At about this time I looked up at the top of the Shrine House's doorway and stared at the Brigit's Cross that was still attached there. I suddenly recalled what our guest of honor, Sitheag Bochannon, had told us in her Gaelic Workshop that very afternoon: that in Ireland the Brigit's Cross was attached over the doorway of a home for one main purpose: to protect the house from fire!

I pointed this out to Ian and we discussed the possibility of removing the Cross, but decided to let it be. We finally had to go on and conclude the Rite, even though the Shrine House was still virtually untouched.

After the Rite was over we stood around the circle and looked at the unburning sacrifice. Isaac Bonewits pointed out to me that in addition to the Cross, the Mistletoe was offering protection, as well. Then the fire tenders pushed the Shrine House around some more and finally managed to snap a few of the uprights, bringing the top a few feet closer to the fire. The Brigit's Cross was caught in an up-draft of heat and flame and stood out sideways. A tongue of fire licked it and instantly it incinerated to nothing. A moment later the whole Shrine House was consumed in fire and within minutes, there was nothing left.

In my mind, there can be only one explanation for why that flimsy little structure stood there not burning, while logs twelve inches in diameter were consumed all around it: Magic.

I don't know about you, but I'll be putting a Brigit's Cross over my door real soon!



# Outgoing Preceptor's Report

by Anthony Thompson

*"If you believe in what you are doing, then let nothing hold you up in your work. Much of the best work of the world has been done against seeming impossibilities. The thing is to get the work done."*  
- Dale Carnegie

**T**his article will review the fundamental principles our Study Program and is based on the progress we have recently made and some issues for the future. It is written by one who observed the Study Program development for two years and then had six months to affect its course. Ian Corrigan, our newly-elected Preceptor, has written a companion article describing his vision for the ADF Study Program, and the combination should give readers a real sense of where we have been, where we are, and where we are going with the training program for Our Druidry.

## The Foundations of Our Work

### PURPOSE OF THE STUDY PROGRAM

I believe that the Purpose of the Study Program is twofold. In our religion, we seek to honor the Kindreds in the best ways we can -- with excellence. While we do High Day rites eight times a year, we do them from a primarily modern perspective, and we acknowledge that our ancestors who were closer to the natural world than we are, likely knew how to worship the kindreds better than we do. We may decide that certain aspects of their worship are incompatible with our modern society (e.g., animal sacrifice), but as an organization, we are dedicated to researching the ways of our ancestors so that we can honor the Kindreds with the greatest excellence possible.

Just as someone can be given a piece of paper and phonetically read a greeting in a foreign language flawlessly, so is it possible to fulfill the forms and gestures of our liturgy with technical excellence. However, as a religious organization we are committed not just to technical excellence, but spiritual excellence. Just as we would expect a greeting in another language to have more meaning and power when spoken by someone fluent in that language, so do we strive to understand the social and cultural context of the Indo-European peoples in order to practice our religion as fluently as possible. One purpose of the Study Program, therefore, is to provide its students with a structured method of knowing the social and cultural context of the ancient Indo-European peoples in order that they may practice Our Druidry with understanding of its roots and achieve spiritual as well as technical excellence.

In addition to giving individual students in our Study Program an understanding of the Indo-European basis for our religion, we seek also to build the religious community itself. We recognize that part of learning — perhaps the most

important part — is teaching others and giving back to one's community, and so the second goal of our Study Program is to produce religious functionaries who will use their knowledge and expertise to maintain the spiritual well-being of our community. An essential aspect of this aspect of learning corresponds to the Study Programs's first purpose, namely that its guiding feature is to bring the students and their community closer to the old ways and honoring the Kindreds with excellence.

### **PURPOSE OF THE GUILDS**

The Guilds exist for two purposes. First, they are general associations of ADF members who share interests in certain areas. Second, they exist to develop and eventually teach and administrate their specialty requirements for the ADF Study Program.

### **PURPOSE OF THE COUNCIL OF LORE**

The membership of the Council of Lore consists of the elected Preceptors of each Guild. The present purpose of the Council of Lore, in terms of the Study Program, is to formulate a set of General and Functional requirements to submit to the Mother Grove for approval. It will also review Guild specialties as the Guilds submit them, and then will pass them on to the Mother Grove for approval. The long-term purpose of the Council of Lore will be to administrate the General and Functional requirements (or delegate them appropriately), led primarily by the ADF Preceptor.

### **PURPOSE OF THE GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

The General requirements will provide the main training for our students in the general social and cultural context of the Indo-European peoples. Considering, for example, an ADF Artisan, there are two components to his/her roles: The Artisan part will be taught and evaluated in the Artisan Guild, but the "ADF" part of training will be taught and evaluated outside of the Artisan Guild. The General requirements are what makes an ADF Bard an *ADF Bard* rather than merely a Bard who is an ADF member. The primary purpose of the General Requirements is to provide a student a thorough understanding of the Indo-European cultures from which ADF draws in its religion, so that the student may progress in the Guilds of her/his choice, learning Guild specialty skills with that knowledge and perspective.

### **PURPOSE OF THE FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

Deborah Kest, former ADF Preceptor, described the Functional requirements as follows:

The second kind of requirement is the Functional requirement. These relate to the three Dumezilian functions and are for the purpose of putting into

context the role of the specialist... The functional requirements for first, second and third functions thus will vary, but in each case will prepare the specialist for the wider role he or she is meant to play. They are intended to broaden the training of the specialist beyond his or her field of expertise.

While the General requirements give a broad yet comprehensive understanding of the social and cultural context of ancient Indo-European cultures, the Functional requirements refine that understanding by bringing the student into the perspective of the Functions associated with her/his choice of Guilds. Again, as with General requirements, the purpose is to provide the background context which makes the Guild specialty practice part of our ADF religious system.

### **PURPOSE OF THE SPECIALTY REQUIREMENTS**

The Guild specialty requirements make up the core of a student's practical work in a Guild in relation to the Study Program. Whereas the General and Functional requirements are oriented to study and expression of knowledge, specialty requirements will be much more oriented to the practice of useful skills related to Guild areas. While there will certainly be study involved in acquiring the skills and knowledge associated with Guild focuses, the basic religious knowledge and context will be covered by the General and Functional requirements.

### **RELATIONSHIP OF THE GENERAL/FUNCTIONAL AND SPECIALTY REQUIREMENTS**

A student's work in the Study Program will generally consist of General and Functional requirements in the First Circles with progressively less General and Functional requirements, and progressively more Guild specialty requirements as s/he moves up through the Circles. Training for First Circle in many Guilds will thus be somewhat similar as students gain a deep understanding of the basics of our religion, providing a firm grounding and context for future Study Program work. Training in the Second and especially Third Circles, however, will be increasingly different in the various Guilds as students move from a general foundation into specific areas of study and practice that interest them.

### **OUR DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

In an attempt to break the mammoth task of revising the Study Program down into more manageable chunks, we have decided to use a four-phase process, described below.

#### *Endpoints*

In the first phase, "endpoints," we seek to determine what our true goals are. In the case of a Guild, this phase means considering what a Third Circle member of that Guild

should know. In this way, we hope to get the main issues of overall direction for the Program resolved early. This phase specifically avoids questions such as which courses will be involved or what tests for knowledge will be given. While we certainly cannot avoid such questions completely in this phase, it is about directions, not details, so we avoid questions about courses and tests as much as possible in order to consider things at a high level and move through the phase quickly.

### *Components (Courses)*

The “components” phase is where we define the specific components students will need to know in order to reach the endpoints (areas of knowledge) determined necessary in the previous phase. In this phase, considerable debate on which courses students should proceed with in order to fulfill specific requirements occurs. Issues of specific resources for students to do that work, as well as specific tests needed as exit standards for the requirement components, are avoided in this phase. For each goal determined in the first phase, this phase determines what specific areas or components students will need to know to meet that requirement.

### *Resources*

In the “resources” phase, we actually compile sets of required and suggested resources which students will use in attaining the knowledge outlined in each course determined in the previous stage. In many respects, this is probably be the most fun of the planning stages, since the Guild Preceptors will be able to make personal recommendations on suggested and required resources for students. The resources phase avoids major discussion of testing for these resources since that is the subject of the final phase. For each course (knowledge component), this phase determines what specific resources are required and suggested to achieve those particular objectives.

### *Exit Standards*

The final phase, “exit standards,” is potentially the most contentious one because it tackles the details of how to make sure students have learned each knowledge component sufficiently and whether any applicable required resources were utilized appropriately. The question may be simple to ask, but is more likely to be difficult to answer: How can we adequately verify that a student in the Study Program has completed a given component adequately and used any of the applicable required resources to do so? This stage is especially challenging because some students may wish to use different resources or may have existing knowledge in certain areas and wish to “test out.” The strategy we are employing is to have the exit standards focus on the necessary knowledge, rather than the resources themselves.



## Recent Progress

### WHAT HAS BEEN DONE

#### *Cultural Focus*

In March, the Mother Grove passed the following new policy on the Study Program:

“Upon entering the ADF Study Program, a student must choose a primary Indo-European cultural focus. While some students may choose to work with more than one culture, every student must have a primary culture as a focus for her/his studies. A student’s primary culture may be changed prior to completing First Circle, but any later changes must be approved by the ADF Preceptor.”

The addition of a cultural focus will allow students to orient their work toward a particular culture of interest, while the overall design of the Study Program will ensure that they will also receive exposure to cultures outside their focus. The latter is accomplished by the General requirements, and is especially true for the First Circle, where nine out of eleven courses are general in nature. As described above, however, it is expected that students will become more focused as they progress, and thus in the Second Circle there are only two general courses, and none in the Third Circle, while there are three cultural focus courses in both Second and Third Circles. The combination of cultural focus and general courses should provide a rich and diverse experience for our students.

#### *Guild Approval Revision*

The current policy on submission of specialty requirements by Guilds to the Mother Grove is as follows:

“Specialty requirements shall be proposed to the Council of Lore by the Guild Preceptor. Specifically, four separate parts must be submitted by the Guild Preceptor to the Council of Lore for approval before the aggregate specialty requirements may be submitted to the Mother Grove. The four

parts are 1) the skills and knowledge set which a student completing Third circle in that specialization must possess, 2) a detailed layout of courses for the first three circles in the specialization, 3) a set of suggested resources for students to use in completing each course in the first three circles, and 4) clearly defined exit standards for each course. Each of the four portions should be submitted in the order specified.”

For several months, there was another sentence at the end of the policy which read, “The Guild Preceptor must gain approval of the contents of each submission by a 2/3 vote of a 50% quorum of the Guild membership.” As several votes on Study Program specialty elements failed in Guilds, however, it became apparent that such a requirement was unrealistic and would only serve to slow progress on our Study Program, and in April the Mother Grove removed that clause from the policy. As a result, while Guild Preceptors are encouraged and expected to seek the input of their Guild in designing their Guilds’ specialties, they are given the freedom as elected Guild officers to design those specialties as soon as possible. The results have been very positive, and by working with members of the Council of Lore and the Mother Grove, the Guild Preceptors have made significant progress while achieving the balance provided by peer review.

### *General Requirements*

Just prior to the end of my term as Preceptor in May, the Council of Lore completed approval of phase three (resources) for the General requirements. Due to the length of the resource list, as well as for ease of reference, it will be posted to the ADF web site.

### *First Functional Requirements*

The Council of Lore has also completed approval of phase three (resources) for the First Functional requirements, and like the General requirements Resources, they will be published on the web site. The First Function consists of Bards, Liturgists, Seers, Magicians, Scholars, and Priests.

### *Second Functional Requirements*

The third phase (resources) for the Second Functional requirements was approved in May. The Second Function consists of Warriors.

### *Third Functional Requirements*

No work has been done on Third Functional requirements to date. The Third Function consists of Healers, Naturalists, and Artisans.

### *Specialty Requirements*

Guilds currently working on the second phase of their specialty (resources) include Liturgists, Seers, Magicians,

Naturalists, Bards, and Priests. Guilds working on the first phase (Third Circle Knowledge Set) include Warriors, Healers, and Artisans. The Scholars Guild has not yet elected officers.

## **WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE**

### *General and First Functional Requirements*

While there has been great progress in developing the General and First Functional requirements, it has happened by great amounts of time and energy. Part of the difficulty has been the large number of voices in each group. All Preceptors, of course, have a say in the development of the General requirements and 3/5 of them also have a say in the development of the First Functional requirements, with the result that debates on these topics on the Council of Lore have rarely been boring.

What remains to be done is the fourth phase (Exit Standards) and this might be the greatest challenge yet. Since the fourth phase will address such issues as how students may “test out” or get credit for academic/life experience, it will certainly be a challenge. On the other hand, with so many voices involved, we are also assured of an even and equitable result, and I wish Ian the best of luck in managing those voices so that progress is made!

### *Second Functional*

The Warriors are in the unique position of being able to define the requirements of not only their specialty, but their Dumezilian function as well. As such, they are making rapid progress in that direction, and at the time of this writing are finishing work on the fourth phase of the Second Functional requirements. After that, they will no doubt turn to the Warrior specialty requirements.

### *Third Functional*

The three very different perspectives of the Guilds in the third function, namely the Healers, Naturalists, and Artisans, have caused some difficulty in developing Third Functional requirements. Some close work will need to happen between the Preceptors of those Guilds to create the functional requirements, but this may need to wait some time while the Guilds move further along with their own specialties.

## **Issues for the Future**

### **PERSONAL ATTENTION IN OUR STUDY PROGRAM**

As I see it, there are two major issues regarding the implementation of our Study Program -- namely, the degree of personal attention students will receive and the amount of structure they will be given. In terms of personal attention, our current resources do not allow us to give much. The attention we will be able to provide will be primarily

given by the Guild Preceptors and the ADF Preceptor and will consist of mostly evaluations of work rather than actual teaching. The reason for the lack of teaching is that right now we have a great number of students and a relatively small number of qualified instructors. Furthermore, such a situation is likely to persist for some time.

I think I can say with confidence that the ADF Study Program containing instruction and teaching for students is a goal we would all like to work toward. The only barriers are available human resources and a system for ensuring consistency and quality. For the human resources, I believe that we should adopt a model that in order to advance further in rank, students in our Study Program must increasingly instruct students of lesser rank. This would not only help the overall program in terms of adding a number of instructors, but would also help those students of higher rank because they would be learning the material better themselves as they teach it. I believe firmly that one of the best ways to know something is to teach it to others, and thus I would like students in Second Circle, and especially those in Third Circle and above, to actively engage in teaching First and Second Circle students. I also believe that this is the only truly scalable solution for how we will instruct the hundreds, and later, thousands of students who will be in our Study Program. We cannot rely on small cores of individuals in Guilds to do the instruction when we reach that critical mass. In order to scale up to those numbers we must draw upon the only resource increasing with the overall enrollment, namely our most advanced students.

Ensuring the quality of our teaching is especially important, given our motto, "Why not excellence?" Since we may very well have Third Circle students instructing First and Second Circle students, and those Third Circle students may never have taught anyone before, we must have a second order system in place for instructing those students how to teach others. I believe that the most logical place to provide such "train-the-

trainer" programs is the Scholars Guild.

Some might disagree that our advanced students would need training on how to teach others, but I believe we can all learn useful things about how to teach others, whether learning new techniques or refining old ones.



Employing the Scholars Guild for that training would not only allow us to make sure that it occurs, but also to make sure that our best efforts aren't duplicated across many Guilds. For example, I know of several leaders in different Guilds who are currently struggling with systems for evaluating student work online. If those systems can be developed in the Scholars Guild, then the results may be shared easily with all Guilds at once. Our goal is quality and consistency for our training, and I feel the Scholars Guild is an ideal place to ensure it occurs.


### **STRUCTURE IN OUR STUDY PROGRAM**

The second major issue regarding the Study Program is the amount of structure we will provide for our students. The choices range from little structure on one hand, where we give students ideas of where to find information but focus primarily on testing their understanding, to great structure where we define exactly what students must do and the tests they will have to pass to prove they did it.

After talking with future students of the ADF Study Program, it has become apparent that we must provide a fair amount of structure for our stu-

dents, because most of them are seeking a very well-defined training system in which the resources and expectations are clearly spelled out. As a result, the current list of Study Program resources (included as a separate article in this issue) has a definite proportion of "required" resources, as well as a great number which are optional. In order to provide flexibility for advanced students, however, those who wish to exceed the required resources and work with more challenging sources may do so with permission from the ADF Preceptor or the appropriate Guild Preceptor. Furthermore, the exit standards indicating completion of each course will focus on knowledge possessed rather than specific resources, so students with prior knowledge will be able to get credit for that knowledge more easily. It is hoped that this combination of structure and flexibility will meet the needs of the majority of students in our Study Program.

### **Conclusion**

Despite the seeming impossibilities we have encountered in the work of our Study Program, I am confident that we can get the work done. Our tripartite functional division and our Guilds draw their inspiration directly from the ancients, and with the emphasis on excellence which has been displayed by our knowledgeable and dedicated Guild Preceptors, I can say that we are definitely on the right track. Furthermore, I do not think it is possible to understate the importance of our Study Program work for ADF and Neopaganism as a whole. There is an intense need in the Neopagan community for quality training, and ADF is the only organization I know of with a passion for excellence in training, public Neopaganism, and drawing its ways from the ancients. Let nothing hold us up in our work. 



# Incoming Preceptor's Report

by Ian Corrigan

**A**s ADF's incoming Preceptor, it will be my job to organize the emergence of our new study program from its formative stages into its first real service to the members. Let me say at the outset that I am honored to be trusted with this vital task by the membership. The effort to revise and improve ADF's training and accreditation systems has taken longer than any of us expected when we began the project three years ago. However, we are now nearly ready for students in several specialties, and in our general program.

ADF is founded on the principle of solid training based firmly in reliable scholarship, on direct personal practice and experience of the symbols and ideas of the Old Ways of the Indo-Europeans, and on well-documented records of each student's accomplishments. Our intention has always been to create systems in which anyone who bears a title as an ADF trainee can be shown to have completed a serious training program, and can demonstrate actual skills at a level appropriate to their grade.

Historically we have gone through two previous phases of this effort. The first program, designed by ADF's first Vice-Archdruid, was valuable but not specific and direct enough. The second phase was much more successful. It was an outline of self-directed study with a wide, interdisciplinary approach. Unfortunately, it seemed to many at the time to lack focus on the spiritual and magical arts, and had very little to do with ADF's developing religion(s). It was plagued by overemphasis on the academic, lack of training in religious, spiritual and magical work, and lack of actual support and mentoring for participants.

The Guild-based revision of the Study Program was initiated three years ago by the Mother Grove specifically to address these problems. I think that in many ways, it will do so nicely.

The Guilds have been established by small groups of our members, who are committing themselves to learn, practice and teach the many skills that contribute to our Pagan work. We designed a system in which Guild organizing groups would create bylaws, hold elections, and elect at least a Guild Chief (administrator and general head) and a Preceptor (official of the Study Program). The Guild and national Preceptors have been designing the next phase of self-directed outlines of study. While the approach of the new system will demand a fairly wide range of broad general knowledge in mythology, ritual and history, it will also offer the opportunity for much greater specialization and focus. The Guilds will provide outlines of self-study in their specialties, but will also be able to provide greater direct resourcing, some personal mentoring and some direct teaching. Rather than focusing only on the creation of clergy, as did the previous program, the Guild-based system is meant to offer a variety of skills. And rather than trying to fit the teaching we need into forms that formal academia would approve, as previous programs had done, we are working toward what we think students really need to know, and toward allowing various ways to get there.

The Guild system will also automatically provide more staff for the process of mentoring and evaluating students. The old program was run by no more than two or three advisors/evaluators, which created a serious bottleneck. In the Guild system there is a group of Guild Preceptors to take a share of the work, hopefully making the administration of the program much more effective. Guilds will also be more than training bodies, doing research and development, social and cultural activities, the spiritual path of their work, etc. While they will be closely involved with the larger ADF training system, Guilds will hopefully pursue many independent projects. Since those projects will largely be outside the scope of the Preceptor's office, I'll leave the topic for later discussion.

The national training and accreditation system will continue to be organized into five levels, called "Circles." The first three circles will teach and verify basic competence in each specialty, as well as in general knowledge. A Third Circle Seer, or Liturgist, Bard, etc., will be expected to practice those skills effectively in public service to her community, and to have a broad general knowledge of mythography, ancient Indo-European cultures and interpersonal communication. Students will be expected to choose a single Indo-European culture on which to focus their work, but will be required to read substantially outside that specialty as well.

I believe all of this first presentation of our training should be cooperative, complementary and more or less unified. We have a big vision, and a big goal - the creation of a multivalent training system both for clergy and general members. While ADF can sometimes seem huge and

monolithic, in fact the effort to create the training system has involved maybe 25 or 30 people.

There has been some discussion about just how separate the Guilds should be from the “study program” as an independent entity. It seems to me that for that small group of dedicated people to divide their efforts in creating separate training programs for the Guild and the national program is a waste of our resources, and risks creating factional division in the core of our work. The Guilds and the Study Program should not work in competition with each other. That would be like having two hardware stores across the street from each other in a little town — just not enough staff or customers for both to survive. If we get to the point where the Guilds/Study Program are thinking of “that Study Program/Guild over there,” we’ll be in trouble.

It seems sensible to me for those of us who are willing to work together to make a single solid system, and it seems good policy to mandate that those who want recognition as teachers and specialists should work through that system.

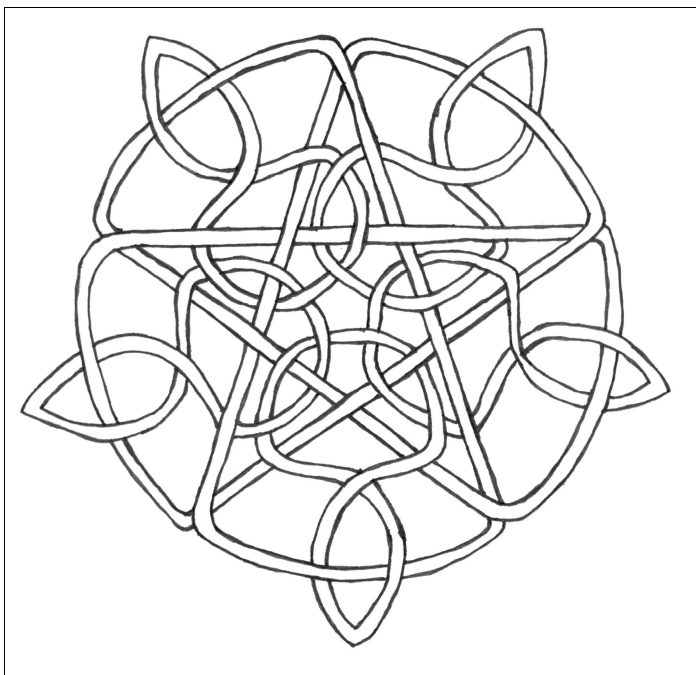
When we began the current revision of the Study Program, we assumed that all members would do the whole program, heading for full Circle status. Some of us argued that the Guilds should be allowed to offer specialty training aside from or inside of the program, and we have wrangled some over how that would work. More recently we have realized that we need a more multi-path model, that can allow students to choose from a menu of learning options:

- Guilds would be encouraged to offer their specialty programs to those members who want just that specialty.
- Members who want even less can take classes a la carte from the Guilds, or perhaps from the national Preceptor’s office, if they want a general rather than a specialist class.
- Those who want more complete training can work the whole Circle system. Those who seek ordination will complete one of the magico-religious Guild specialty programs, plus the greater General requirements. Or they will complete the Grove Priest program (or whatever we call it), a general priestly training program.

- There is a proposal to remove that generalist clergy track. On reflection I think I oppose that one.

This can all happen comfortably in context of a single program.

There has been some concern expressed that the 'study program' might overwhelm the Guilds if we tie the two tightly together. In fact, I would prefer to see ADF's training and certification programs vanish seamlessly into the structure of the Guilds. After all, the main operating officers of the Study Program will be the Guild Preceptors, and the teaching and mentoring will come from Guild leadership, etc. The national Study Program would provide the overall outline that guides the training of individual students, administered, no doubt, in the flavor of each Guild. We had thought for a while that students might join the Study Program in general, if they didn't wish to join a Guild. The new ideas propose/suggest that all Study Program members be Guild members. That will funnel people not just toward the national, overall program, but also toward the specialist tracks.



It seems to me that these new ideas make ADF training more accessible and open to every member, adding appeal for those who

might not want the whole Circle system. They will prevent duplication of effort by bringing all the Guild programs into general harmony, though not too tight a harmony I hope. There is a policy in place, requiring Guilds to administer only a single formal training program in their specialty, and that will be part of the overall ADF system. I'll say plainly that I think the policy should be loosely administered. Festival workshops, special caucuses, beta tests etc. should be no problem, and should be actively encouraged, especially in early phases. If a new set of classes is good enough for a Guild to offer to students regularly, I think we want it in the general training system. If it isn't good enough for the general system, it shouldn't be regular Guild teaching either.

On a much more speculative level, it seems to me that we could use a new name for the overall work of training students and building groups of co-workers. It should be a name that suggests the whole gestalt of our Druid Folk of

Skill, and one that turns our attention toward the religious aspect of the work.

The term that keeps returning to my head is "Order." Perhaps we could choose to call this body of co-learners "The ADF Druidic Order." I could see that Order including (again, very speculatively):

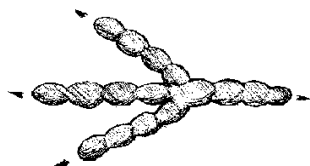
- Dedicants
- "Initiates" (see below)
- Guild Members, in their various levels and kinds of participation.
- The Council of Lore, and perhaps generalist students (that's still way up in the air...)
- The Council of 3rd Circle "masters," or ollamhs, or whatever cultural appellation is proper. This might or might not include/subsume The Council of Ordained Clergy

The "Initiate" term above (I'm not married to the term at all, but I like it) refers to the need for a next stage in Druidic training and practice, following the Dedicant's work, but not scholastically as rigorous as a Guild program. I'd like to see Initiate Druids able to work their own rites and community rites well, do adequate divination, have real personal contacts with the God/desses and Spirits, and have a simple means of working practical magic. It would empower the lay member, and raise the general level of spiritual practice in the organization. This might or might not replace the idea of a '1st circle generalist' track.

I know that I've concentrated here on the training and certification. Please understand that I want and would encourage other Guild activities. I will enjoy helping to build Guild religious cults, inner "mysteries," etc. Right now my focus is on finishing the start-up of the new ADF membership training system. Once there are students and mentors in the programs, the rest can come quite naturally. With the "Study Program" in the background there will be nothing to stand in the way of developing non-teaching-and-certification work.

The work of our years is about to come to fruit. We put our hands to the task of bringing in the harvest!

Nine Blessings



## FESTIVAL SITE NOMINATIONS FOR THE YEAR 2000

Here's your chance to help determine the location of the ADF Annual Membership Meeting in 2000.

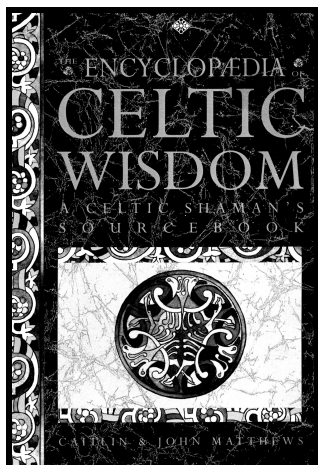
Send in your nominations for a festival site for this meeting by **September 15th, 1999**

Preference will be given to recurring festivals that have been held for at least one year, are scheduled between May 1st and September 1st, and are sponsored by ADF Groves or other ADF-affiliated groups.

Please send your nominations to:

ADF Office  
P.O. Box 15259  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-5259  
Or email [ADF-Office@adf.org](mailto:ADF-Office@adf.org)

# Book Reviews



## THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CELTIC WISDOM

BY CAITLIN &  
JOHN MATTHEWS  
Element Books, Inc. 1994  
456 pages  
ISBN 1-85230-561-4

reviewed by Skip Ellison

This is definitely a worthwhile source book for Neo-Pagans interested in the Celtic realms. The authors have done extensive research and are recognized as being experts in their field. They bring together many of the more obscure references from volumes not normally available to the general public.

The book starts out by talking about the shamanic memory that still stays with the people of the Earth. Included are the memories of Earth, Trees, Animals and the Ancestors. As well as giving a tale to illustrate the memory, they also provide brief descriptions of the sources used: i.e. for the memory of the Earth, they give us sections from the Dindsenchas (the travel tales), for the memory of the Trees, they give us sections from the Ogham Tracts.

Next, the book turns to shamanic guardians, Druids and poets. Folkloric examples are given of initiations and shapeshifting, and include tales of Druids and poets. Included in this section is a tale that has not been translated into English before. The tales used in the section on Druids are instructive in that they reveal some of the methods used by the Druids in their magic working.

The next section of the book is about different forms of knowledge, divination and prophecy, healing and soul-restoration and dreams and visions. Examples from the tales are given for all areas. The section on healing is very good and is worth the price of the book alone.

The book ends with a section on otherworldly journeys, based on the heart of shamanic belief. Even though examples from the tales are used extensively, much of the material in the book comes from the shamanic Matthews' experiences. This knowledge is such that its sources can't be referenced and checked, but it's still very valuable to us. Also included is a very large bibliography, with many worthwhile books to check out!



## TEX AND MOLLY IN THE AFTERLIFE

RICHARD GRANT  
Avon Fiction, 1996  
408 pages  
ISBN: 0-380-78676-1

reviewed by Edwin Chapman

I've read a couple of fiction books recently that feature the NeoPagan community with all its warts and wonders. The best one is *Tex and Molly in the Afterlife* by Richard Grant. I've bought remaindered copies for half a dozen people, they've passed them on to others, and I've yet to hear a negative review.

Tex and Molly are (or 'were'?) NeoPagan hippies living on a houseboat in a small Maine town. One night, after a botched Beltane ritual, they go to make an offering in a sacred well and fall in. That's in chapter 2. The rest of the book is about their adventures in the Pagan afterlife, where they have to get used to the idea that they're dead, and bargain with various Goddesses and Gods, bedraggled nature spirits, including a homeless tree spirit named Beale (Bilé), and powerful supernatural entities. They also try to help their still-living friends- a collection of Witches, eclectic Pagans, pompous Magicians, Dianics, survivalists, ecologists, stoned hippies, runaways, teenage hackers, wise Pagan children and wolf breeders.

The best stuff involves Tex, a sort of magical Huck Finn on the river of death, who never fails to be blown away by the whole idea that "This was, after all, the Ultimate Trip." Tex goes through the triple death, transforms into an acorn, a bear, and several other things. His encounters with The Morrighan had me laughing breathless- and thinking, yes, I know this Goddess, this is true-to-life, or, after-life. Molly is a kind of wise Becky Thatcher, wiser still for having imbibed of the Salmon of Wisdom- "How do you do that?" she marveled. "Some kind of butter sauce? Is that rosemary? And something tart..." Lying on the platter, the salmon looked dismayed. Molly had a sudden quirky feeling- a little niggle of intuition, as though she had just become aware of, you know, everything."

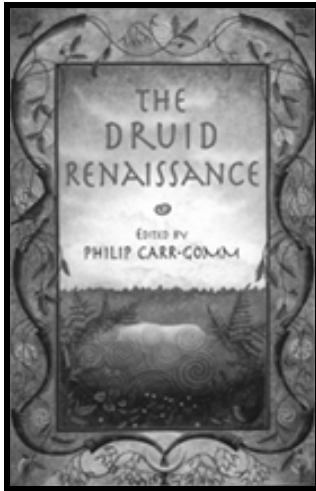
The best thing about *Tex and Molly* is that you'll recognize your friends, yourself, and the stuff you've got. Tex has an ADF "Fast As A Speeding Oak" bumper sticker on his car. Characters read *Green Egg*, and stacks of *Parabola*

hold up potted herbs. I kept feeling like I'd met these folks, and, actually, I probably have.

Tex and Molly is a laugh-out-loud book about the afterlife- much, much funnier than Dante's *Divine Comedy*- but, in the end, it's a book about the magic of community and of the heart. Read it and tell your friends. Better yet,

give it to your non-Pagan friends who don't understand why you talk to your weeds before you uproot them.

(Richard Grant is also the author of several more serious books, including *In the Land of Winter*, about a 'welfare Witch' fighting for the custody of her daughter.)



## THE DRUID RENAISSANCE.

PHILLIP CARR-GOMM,  
Editor  
Thorsons, An Imprint of  
HarperCollins Publishers  
1996  
288 pages  
ISBN: 1-855-38480-9

reviewed by Jen Llyne Burton

This 1996 publication may be a little challenging to locate, as only a UK edition was printed, but I believe that effort spent to obtain a copy would be well rewarded. Compiled in this book are essays written by Druid leaders and scholars from both the U.S. and abroad, including our own founder, Isaac Bonewits, along with Mara Freeman, Caitlin Matthews, Phillip Shallcrass and many others. The opinions under discussion span a very wide range, allowing the reader through a single volume to begin to grasp a sense of the broad spectrum of current Druid belief.

Carr-Gomm's engaging overview of where Druidry stands today in the hearts and minds of its followers is an inspiring beginning to the book, and is followed by excellent essays written in a variety of contrasting approaches. There are straightforward scholarly historical expositions, such as Ronald Hutton's "Who Possesses the Past?"; moving personal testimonials and reflections as in Caitlin Matthews' "Following the Awen – Celtic Shamanism and the Druid Path in the Modern World"; and speculative essays trying to reconstruct missing information, or reinterpret what we have, in order to make Druidry a clearer and more comprehensive path for the future. One particularly outstanding essay in the speculative category is Dr. Christina Oakley's "Druids and Witches: History, Archetype and Identity"; also noteworthy is Chris Turner's "The Sacred Calendar," the first half of which explains a very insightful theory into the reasons that an eightfold year evolved, though his premise is used in the second half to

advance rather farfetched arguments.

As brilliant as some of the essays are, the book definitely has some room for improvement. Some essays were simply not up to the level of writing and scholarship set by the other contributions to the compilation, and some were interesting but did not seem to fit within the boundaries of the work's primary focus, including one article discussing the parallels between the Celtic Wheel of the Year and the Chinese *I Ching Book of Changes*. Also, as I read, I found myself regretting the lack of a commentary before each essay that would give the reader a firmer context in which to place it, such as when it was written and a personal evaluation by the editor of the merits of the argument of each essay and its scholarly credentials. In a book that contains a sometimes bewildering and contradictory array of viewpoints, such commentary would have helped the reader adapt better to the occasional radical shifts in tone between essays.

I personally found that reading this book opened my mind to many perspectives I had not been aware existed within the modern pursuit of Druidry, and made me closely examine some assumptions I have held without ever investigating the reasons why. I believe that its undifferentiated offering of opinions could easily be overwhelming to a reader just beginning to look into more academic writings on the Druids, but that a student who has read enough to begin formulating some solid opinions will be able to take from this book many interesting and worthwhile concepts. It helped me a great deal in clarifying the answer to the question, "What do I mean when I call myself a Druid?"



Book Reviews are welcome from ADF members and non-members alike, on books that are relevant to our Religion and our Lives.

Contact Seabhac Fionn ([rdelach@erols.com](mailto:rdelach@erols.com)) or Sylvan ([Sylvan-ADF@usa.net](mailto:Sylvan-ADF@usa.net)) for submission information.

# On the Solitary Path

## Finding the Magick

by Judith Anderson Morris (toadie)

*This is the first in a series of articles meant for Solitaries, but I hope there is harvest enough for all to share.*

Long ago I read in an Irish legend that Druids were thought to have tattooed stars on the bottoms of their feet so they could spread magick wherever they walked. Whether the story is true or not, wouldn't it be wonderful if we all walked the path of our daily lives as Druids spreading magick?

One of the most difficult tasks for modern -day pagans of any persuasion is to learn that even in the trappings of the modern day world, the magick is all around us and can be tapped into at ALL times -- not just in ritual, not just on holidays, not just in grove meetings and gatherings, not just before an altar.

When we rise in the morning before we prepare for the demands of the day, we need only face the east and raise both arms, palms up, shoulder height, and greet the sun like our ancestors before us did. Our upturned palms represent both supplication and the willingness to receive. Make this simple gesture as much a habit as brushing your teeth and your world is charged with the divine. The day begins, pregnant with possibilities.

The ancients viewed the world in such a way and expected, as Matthew Fox says: "the divine to burst out of anyplace at any time." Energy - the dynamic molecules that make up what we call "reality" -- is the divine. That we never notice its constant presence is our sorrow. While I sit waiting in traffic, the world is recreating itself. Particles crash into each other and are jostled out of position. Matter rearranges itself. What was a second ago is no longer. My car is not the same car it was. Particles die and are re-born. The gods speak.

Are we paying attention? Or are we sitting in traffic, thumping our fingers on the steering wheel trying to get somewhere or accomplish something?

In one Tennessee Williams play, the main character's favorite expression is "Boom!" "Boom!" he says "is the shock of each new instant that you realize you're still alive."

I'm sitting in my car in traffic, and I'm alive, and the world is bursting into possibility, if only I can remember to pay attention. The universe dances on the tips of our fingers and we listen to the radio or grumble at other drivers. We are blind to the miracle of the everyday.

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**"...the magic is all around us and can be tapped into at ALL times ..."**

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Mary Oliver writes in her poem "Wild Geese,"

"...Meanwhile the world goes on...  
Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,  
the world offers itself to your imagination,  
calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting--  
over and over announcing your place  
in the family of things."

Stop in the middle of your ordinary day and look around you. THIS is the magick. On your commute, instead of listening to the radio, listen to the silence and open your eyes to the little gifts that nature provides -- even in the most unlikely places. The iridescence of a pigeon's wing; some grass poking stubbornly between concrete slabs; the play of light and shadow; a soft breath of wind; the perfect geometry of man-made buildings against the endless sky.

We see what we are open to seeing. The magick is all around us, but too often the mundane intrudes, and we lose our spiritual center in the bustle of completing all our tasks. Too often we are pulled into the frenzy, stress, anger of the world around us. We forget to connect. How can we let the world slip away and reconnect with the divine? My friend calls it "finding the sacred in the ordinary."

Often, we need reminders, talismans, tokens to jog our consciousness. My friend has a "prayer stone," a simple rock the size of an orange, but decorated with fabric and ribbons. She keeps it beside her bed so that when she stumbles on it in the morning, she remembers to find the beautiful among the ugly facts of life (like stubbing a toe). For years, I carried a lovely rose quartz in my jeans pocket. I could feel it against my leg, a tangible reminder of the divine. In the evening when I removed it, I would say a little prayer of gratitude, and again, in the morning when I picked it up. Another day fulfilled. You may not be able to grow a sacred oak in your office or in your bookbag, but you can carry acorns. I carry acorns in the pocket of my winter coat to remind me that spring is just around the next corner. I hang a quartz in the window to remind me of the light. We wear jewelry with symbols of the divine,

not to show others what we believe, but to remind ourselves.

Little things can keep your Druidic mind at the forefront of the pattern of your day. Spend five minutes of your lunch or break time in quiet meditation: Close out the world and recenter, remember your morning ritual. Breathe slowly and deeply and bring it into the rest of your day.

Take time daily to reflect, to ponder, to wonder. Open your mind as you opened your palms and accept what it receives. What magick is created there?

To find the magick, we must be open to it. We must create a space into which it can flow. Some will creep in anyway, through the cracks and crevices of our consciousness, despite us, but the act of preparing space for it invokes its presence.

Think about your surroundings. Our surroundings, like mirrors, reflect our hearts. As we change, so do they, and they change us in return. If you live in clutter and disorganization, you cannot be open to receive the divine; you have no empty space. Cleaning might be your worst enemy at the moment, but it is an act of purification and creation. It creates space, and space allows the possibilities in.

The Tao teaches us that clay is shaped into vessels and wood is made into walls, but their usefulness is in the empty spaces they create. Mozart claimed that it was not the notes that made a great piece of music, but the space between the notes. And philosopher Martin Heidegger said that the space between the words of a poem provides the "wellspring" of its meaning. When we consciously create space, magick flows through.

There's a particularly lovely poem by Scottish poet Norman MacCraig called "Presents":

"I give you emptiness,  
I give you a plentitude,  
unwrap them carefully.  
- one's as fragile as the other -  
and when you thank me  
I'll pretend not to notice the doubt in your voice  
when you say they're just what you wanted.

Put them on the table by your bed.  
When you wake in the morning  
they'll have gone through the door of sleep  
into your head. Wherever you go  
they'll go with you and

wherever you are you'll wonder,  
smiling about the fullness  
you can't add to and the emptiness  
that you can fill."

Irish poet and philosopher, John O'Donohue, says that "nothingness is the sister of possibility. It makes an urgent space for that which is new, surprising, and unexpected."

There is fullness in our emptiness because the divine seeps in and fills it up. We can create sacred space wherever we are by reverently cleaning a space and, with clear intent, adding a token that jogs for us a memory of the divine - a stone, perhaps, or a piece of sculpture, a bell, a plant. I keep on my altar a huge skeleton key from a lock long for-



gotten and a door I never knew. It reminds me that I am the key to my own understanding. I must open myself to it. Objects are memory-attached; they provide us with emotional stimuli; they carry power; they remind us of the divine.

In her Pulitzer Prize winning book, *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*, naturalist and mystic, Annie Dillard examines this business of being open to the possibilities, of "seeing." She writes:

"Then one day I was walking along Tinker Creek thinking of nothing at all, and I saw the tree with the lights in it. I saw the backyard cedar where the mourning doves roost charged and transfigured, each cell blazing with flame. I stood on the grass with the lights in it, grass that was wholly fire, utterly focused

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# Passages

Bardd Dafydd (aka Lion's Dream & Lyin' Stream) has been appointed as an Advisor on the Seanchais' Branch of the Bardic Guild. Michael Immonen (Reuladair) was elected as Guild Scribe, and Brian Morache as Pursewarden.

Sarah Lynne Barton who is a long-time ADF member, and High School sophomore honor student at East Bridgewater HS, has been chosen to appear in the upcoming issue of "Who's Who in American High School Students." Sarah is an excellent example to her four younger brothers, and to all of the children of ADF. Our children carry the future, and Sarah proves that it is in safe hands. Through her dedication to our Gods and to herself, she proves that our children can compete and win in any and all arenas of life. Her mother Gwynne Green and her father Robert Barton would like to congratulate her on her continued achievements.


Rob Henderson has become the new Chief for the Warriors Guild. He was selected by the Council of Honour to replace outgoing chief Rob Barton, who sends his congratulations, and says that the Warriors are looking forward to working with him.



Laurel Eire and Ananke of Loch Shea Meara Proto-Grove would like to announce the birth of their third child. Eva Bella was born May 7<sup>th</sup> by c-section. After 3 days in ICU she was allowed to come home. Both mother and baby are happy and doing fine. 7 year old Justin and 6 year old Carissa are very happy with their new baby sister.

Chris Zach and Alex Cauthen-Zach were expecting a girl and expecting

her to arrive somewhere around June 13th. Life does not always go as planned! They are ever so pleased to announce the arrival of Dylan Walter Zach born May 9, 1999 at 2:22 am. He was 19.5 inches, and 5 lbs, 12 ounces. His parents are tired, amazed, hysterical, euphoric, scared, and ever so excited - wish them luck!

ADF Administrator Anthony Thompson is pleased to announce a new ADF Webmaster, Sean Miller. Sean will be devoting his considerable talents to managing content and design on our web site, and judging by the excellent job he has done with the Stone Creed Grove web site ([www.stonecreed.org](http://www.stonecreed.org)), we won't be disappointed. Giving our web site over to Sean's capable hands will allow Anthony to focus more clearly on the job of Administrator, and will allow our web site once again to reflect the flourishing vibrancy of Our Druidry. Please join in congratulating Sean on his new position. 

*If you have some news to share, please send it to Jennifer Kennedy at: [falan@planet.eon.net](mailto:falan@planet.eon.net) or c/o: Flickering Shadows Protogrove (see grove listings)*

*(Solitary Path Continued from page 45)*

and utterly dreamed. It was less like seeing than like being for the first time seen, knocked breathless by a powerful glance. The flood of fire abated, but I'm still spending the power. Gradually the lights went out in the cedar, the colors died, the cells flamed and disappeared. I was still ringing. I had been my whole life a bell, and never knew it until at that moment I was lifted and struck. I have since only very rarely seen the tree with the lights in it. The vision comes and goes, mostly goes, but I live for it, for the moment when the mountains open and a new light roars in spate through the

crack, and the mountains slam...

Pascal saw it. He grabbed pen and paper; he managed to scrawl the one word, FEU; he wore that scrap of paper sewn into his shirt the rest of his life. I don't know what Pascal saw. I saw a cedar."


What will you see if you open yourself to the mystery?

There's a Celtic poem called "The Deer's Cry" that says, "I arise today through the strength of heavens, light of sun, radiance of moon, splendor of fire, speed of lightning, swiftness of wind, depth of sea, stability of earth, firmness of rock."

The world - with its limitless possibilities spreads itself before you.

A sixteenth century alchemist wrote of the philosopher's stone, "One finds it in the open country, in the village and in the town. It is in everything God created. Maids throw it in the street. Children play with it."

The universe dances on the tips of our fingers.

"Ring the bell that still can ring,  
Forget your perfect offering.  
There is a crack in everything.  
That's how the light gets in."  
- Leonard Cohen 

# Falling Acorns



## **Burning Skies Protogrove, FL** by Jen Llyne Burton, GO

Serious work to found Burning Skies Protogrove, ADF began in January of 1999, after about three months of evaluation to determine whether the Orlando/Central Florida area had the potential to support a new ADF Grove. There is one other Protogrove in Florida, about two and a half hours north in Gainesville, but that group has had rather limited success; it was thought that this might have to do with religious attitudes in this part of the country. After some networking, web publicity and word of mouth recruitment, interest was deemed high enough to turn in a Grove Organizer's Survey, in order to get Burning Skies Protogrove officially recognized by ADF, which was announced on March 6th, 1999. Since that time, the Protogrove has held three meetings, and performed its first ritual of Beltane on May 2, 1999. This was a private ritual held in the Grove Organizer's home, as only she is accustomed to performing public ADF ritual.

At this point, local lack of familiarity with ADF and Druidry in general is one of the biggest issues in the way of Protogrove growth, the other being a high level of expressed interest but low level of commitment in potential members. The current best way to cope with both of these issues seems to be to establish and maintain a pub-

lic presence - being around to spark curiosity and answer questions about Druidic beliefs and ADF practices, and drawing enough interest that some of it will eventually have to be from people willing to commit themselves to learning and working within the ADF framework. Means taken to date to establish such a presence have included the creation of a Protogrove web site and linking it to various on-line databases; the posting of fliers in local metaphysical shops and building relationships with the owners of these shops; and the Grove Organizer subscribing to pagan mailing lists, both of specialty and local focuses, and starting an open ADF-Florida list on the main ADF site.

## **Little Acorn Grove, VA** by Sylvan, SD

### **BELTAINÉ 1999**

For most of the winter, our grove essentially lived and breathed Trillium, Virginia's first ADF Festival. And, I'm happy to report, the hard work paid off. Trillium was attended by over 50 ADF members and other pagans, from as far away as the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

Kudos go to Seabhaic Fionn, who originated the idea for Trillium and put in a tremendous amount of work organizing the festival, which was named for a genus of spring wildflowers bearing three petals and three leaves. Thanks also go to Cynndara Morgan for coordinating the Saturday night feast.

In keeping with the spring theme of the event, Seabhaic taught an orienteering course, sending everyone out to explore the woods with map and compass. We also had workshops in herbalism, pre-Celtic history, working with local land spirits, and making mead. We even had a hands-on blacksmithing workshop taught by Curucahm.

There was also a ritual on Saturday night, music on Friday and Saturday, and quite a bit of late-night rowdiness and pirate revelry. Our hosts, the National Park Service, didn't seem to mind: the Park's ranger tried to convince us to start holding two events per year.

## **Stone Creed Grove, OH** by Sue Parker (Liafal), SD

I find it a little hard to believe that six months have gone by since I sent a report...

Our open rituals have been very successful and well attended. The weather has generally been helping to increase attendance and several people who had been absent for a while returned. As is our tradition in Stone Creed, we've celebrated the High Days in several different traditions. For Yule we honored the Norse Gods, and at Imbolc and Beltaine we offered to the Celtic Gods.

At Imbolc we incorporated a folk custom that we learned from Alexei, in which the participants passed through a large twisted vine hoop. At the return flow we revealed the Gundestrup cauldron which Ian and I had just purchased from JBL. We used it to draw bread for the blessing.

At Imbolc we collected food and personal items for a local battered women's shelter. Our folk were generous and we took several full boxes of kids' things, toiletries, and food to those in need.

Spring Equinox was a Gaulish rite led by Brennus (his first time running one of our rites, but not his last) with offerings made to Maponos and Epona. Marea constructed a clever bread-and-pretzel mare which acted as an emblem of Epona, a sacrifice and part of the return flow.

Earth Day weekend saw several Grove members participating in the replanting

of a sacred garden in the midst of urban Cleveland. Some people may have heard the story of the local man whose land was bulldozed and stripped by the city government over a dispute about natural landscaping. That land, which has been a meeting place for more than one urban Pagan circle, is now being restored. We participated in a rite of purification and blessing, and did shovel duty for planting as well.

Beltaine was particularly successful, with many new folks who had heard about us in various ways attending for the first time, which brought the crowd up to about 80 people. We had our usual raffle, may pole, singing and general merriment as befits the season. The weather was perfect, and the spirit of summer was plainly in evidence.

While our High Days have been very successful, it's been rather more difficult to get attendance at our monthly blessing rites. We're still looking for a formula for monthly meetings that can serve our current crop of folks well. Blessing rites can reach 12 or 15 people, but sometimes fall to three or four, and getting folks interested in teaching and practice has been somewhat difficult. We'll keep working on it.

We're now getting ready for the festivals. Stone Creed is ready for our big annual Wellspring Gathering, and from there to a summer of ADF-ery. SCG members will be at the Sixth Night ADF event in Yellow Springs Ohio, probably at Shining Lakes Lughnassadh, and Muin Mound. We'll also be taking Druidry on the road to WicCan Fest and Starwood.

**Triskele River Grove**  
by Antonyus Kaleal, SD

## HIGH DAY ACTIVITIES REPORT

The entries recorded in this journal are Rituals, events and feelings, and thoughts on the Eight High Holy Days

of our Tradition. I plan to use these entries as part of my personal dedicant work, however I submit them now as kind of a report on Triskele River Grove's activities for the past year.

### BELTAINNE 98

This was the first semi-public high rite offered by Triskele River Grove to the pagan community in the Cincinnati area. The rite was lead by Antonyus (Scribe) and Epona (Senior Druid). The Ritual was held at a beautiful park just outside the city. The park, Mount Echo Park in Price Hill, was chosen for the sacred space. The Ancestors, The Shinning Ones and The Nature Spirits were given offerings of scented oil, herbs, grain and Ale. The Waters were hallowed and shared with those present, which included 3 members of a local Wiccan coven. The presence of the local witches shows the fellowship between most pagans here in Cincinnati. Our hope for a loving and sharing community of worship and fellowship in the Old Ways begins here at this fertile time. After sharing the drink of the gods, honey mead was passed to all, and each present walked between the Fires, lighting their own candles to carry the divine light and the spark of fertility to their homes.

### MEAN SAMRADH 98

The Balanced time of the Big Sun was a smaller rite but the weather was fantastic. A crystal offering bowl trimmed with gold was given to the Grove from Jezrieal. It overflowed with offers of grain and herbs to Danu the Great All Mother, Bearer of the Children of Danu. The All Father Dagda was honored as well with porridge and stone. The attendees were refreshed in spirit from the Ritual and left the Boundary of all worlds to bathe in the heat of summer.

Quite a discussion followed the rite. We talked about the role of the warrior in today's perspective. It seems

that in one way or another each of us carries a small part of the Warrior Spirit within. During this turn of the Wheel our grove's Warrior chief, Romulus, relocated to Florida. He needed to journey I think, as at this time in his life much hardship came to him. His Father passed away, and his wife mate left him. Sometimes things must die for others to survive. As he leaves my thoughts and strength go with him on his path of growth.

### LUGHNASSADH 98

This was a personal rite this year for me. I was alone on the beach with the heat of the sun warming my body. I went easily into trance. A man with all the battles of daily life uses the best of his abilities to rise and meet those challenges each day. For whatever reason he thinks, it all comes down to a choice - The Warrior's Choice- Live or Die by Thy own Hand. To live in Love and Joy with the events that affect his life or die in self-pity and depression from those same things. The Great Wheel turns regardless if we choose to look at it or not.

### MEAN FOGHAMHAR 98

Another small ritual, this time at the Little Miami River with four members from the Coven of the Silver Cauldron attending. Jezrieal, our guests and I gathered the last of the walnuts and acorns we could find to bring to Jez's house for a freshly cooked meal and our Ritual. The warm wheat bread, just baked, with cheeses, hot tea and some of the nuts was great. The Harvest is complete; the warmth of the year is over, our labors in home and work complete. A portion of what we've reaped we set aside to save for the coming cold. This is the Time we light our Hearth Fire for the dark time is almost upon us.

Epona (Senior Druid) has informed me that she is moving to California and she would like me to replace her as Senior Druid here at Triskele River Grove. I want more than anything to

be able to gain enough knowledge of this path to provide the leadership in spiritual matters, in logistical planning and all the other things needed here for this Grove to continue to grow. With great visions of large public open pagan Worship, I accept the appointment. I only hope I can give enough of myself to succeed.

#### SAMHAIN 98

There are now two new members of our Grove, bringing the total to 6 people. Our Grove constructed a circle for our Nemeton with nine candle bags. The Well filled, The Fire lit, and The Bile standing tall and deep, we made our offerings to the Shinning Ones, Ancestors and Nature Spirits. We invoked the three patrons of our Grove; Danu, Daghdha, and Mananan Mac Lir. We honored Donn and Morrigan as Patrons of the Time. Morrigan made her presence known upon her arrival as she scattered logs from the Fire across the boundary of all worlds. Mador brought a wonderful wreath to the Grove and all the attendees placed ribbons around it to honor their own Ancestors. Open said a small prayer of farewell to the deity of his people and asked them for understanding, as he must continue his walk on another path. Fellowship comes to those who open their arms to others. A new beginning for a new Year.

#### MEAN GEIMREDH 98

A meal was held at my new home. Mulled wine and cider with fish and breads, sweet harp music and friends. Mador made a chestnut and pinecone basket for the centerpiece and a housewarming gift. Amergin the Senior Druid at 6th Night Grove in Dayton came to our dinner as a guest. After the modest meal we held a simple rite of cleaning and claiming the new home. We welcomed the Ancients and Nature Spirits of the new place and gave them a part of our food.

During this Turn, OpenNest constructed his home Shrine. He brought it to the Grove for a Blessing and dedication. A Stone bowl for his Well, a wooden box that slides open to make a tabletop for his offering bowl and candle Fire, a Tree made from wrapped branches for his World Boundary. He has put much time into the choosing of his Shrine symbols. The Core members of the Grove are becoming more in tune now. OpenNest has become our new Grove Warden, and Mador is resident Bard. Jezrial has taken on the position of Grove Scribe since my appointment to Senior Druid. I hope to begin a more rigorous outreach effort soon, my work outside the Grove is overwhelming at this time.

#### IMBOLG 99


This High Day was celebrated with The 6th Night Grove in Dayton. I hope that with our efforts together with other area groves we can build a stronger southern Ohio thread. This Ritual was moving to me, I needed an Inner warming and when I saw the beautiful Hearth altar I knew the stirring of the earth's waters was needed. There were flowers and herbs arranged around the Well with colorful candles lighting every side of the Space. We welcomed the Goddess Brigid, woman of Fire, Healing, Wisdom and Song. We welcomed the Red God, the Hungry God, the Good God, Lord of Perfect Knowledge, Daghdha.

Everyone lit a candle to take to their own Hearths to spread the warmth and thawing of the Great Mother to awaken the Land for the seed that will follow in turn. Every Part of each of us remains connected, tied to the Otherworlds and to each other. Honor, Respect, Love and Kindness fuel our lives. If not for these things it would be better to stay in the dark time, when the cold freezes the ground, where we rest for the work to come. Yet on this night, in these

times the children of the Earth still listen, still hear the calling of the Ancients of our ancestors our people, and still we care for the land. We give Honor to the Old Ways.

#### MEAN EARRACH 99

An early morning, to say the least, as the Sun broke the crest of the Land, our open public Ritual began. The Grove advertised the Rite with fliers and got a fairly large turnout. Even with Sunrise at about 5:50 am, fourteen people came to services. We paid honor to the Grove's Patrons and invoked our chosen Patrons for the Time. We typically follow only a Celtic path, however none of the deities seemed to fit at this Time. We decided to use a Welsh pantheon and we honored Beli, father of fathers; Don, she of the waters; and Amatheon, he of agriculture. As we called in the Spring and the season of growth, we planted seedlings in the Earth and into peat pots for the attendees to take home with them. The pounding drum strengthened the life pulse of the Earth. The fruit shared with all brings to mind the joy we receive from our Labor to come and that each new growth or dream starts from the seed of life.

This completes the cycle of the first active year of Garran Abhainn Triskele. Our tender shoot is lovingly being nurtured as best we can here. I look forward to the coming of the next Turn on the Great Wheel. The Old Ones have Blessed us and we carry that Blessing with our hearts open and our hands ready to lend fellowship. 

## Groves

### NEW GROVES

#### Three Songs Protogrove

Region: Great Lakes  
 PO Box 267  
 Spencerport, NY 14559  
 Grove Organizer: Wolf  
 Email: [threesongs@crosswinds.net](mailto:threesongs@crosswinds.net)  
 Web: <http://www.crosswinds.net/~threesongs>  
 Culture(s): Celtic, Norse

#### Red Hawk Grove

Grove Organizer: Stormseer  
 Region: Pacific  
 POB 115  
 1140 S. Country Club Dr. Ste. 108  
 Mesa AZ 85210  
 Phone: (480) 345-3393  
 Email: [redhawkadf@mindspring.com](mailto:redhawkadf@mindspring.com)  
 Web: [www.mindspring.com/~awen/](http://www.mindspring.com/~awen/)  
 Culture(s): Irish

#### River of Fire Protogrove

Region: Central  
 Grove Organizer: Hekatia  
 PO Box 3443  
 La Crosse WI 54602-3443  
 Email: [pythoess9@hotmail.com](mailto:pythoess9@hotmail.com)  
 Phone: (608) 784-9487

#### Triskele Ros:

#### The Rose Triskele Protogrove

Grove Organizer: Faolan  
 4130 SW 117th Ave. #305  
 Beaverton, OR 97005  
 Region: Pacific  
 Phone: (503) 469-9653  
 Email: [steelwlf@teleport.com](mailto:steelwlf@teleport.com)

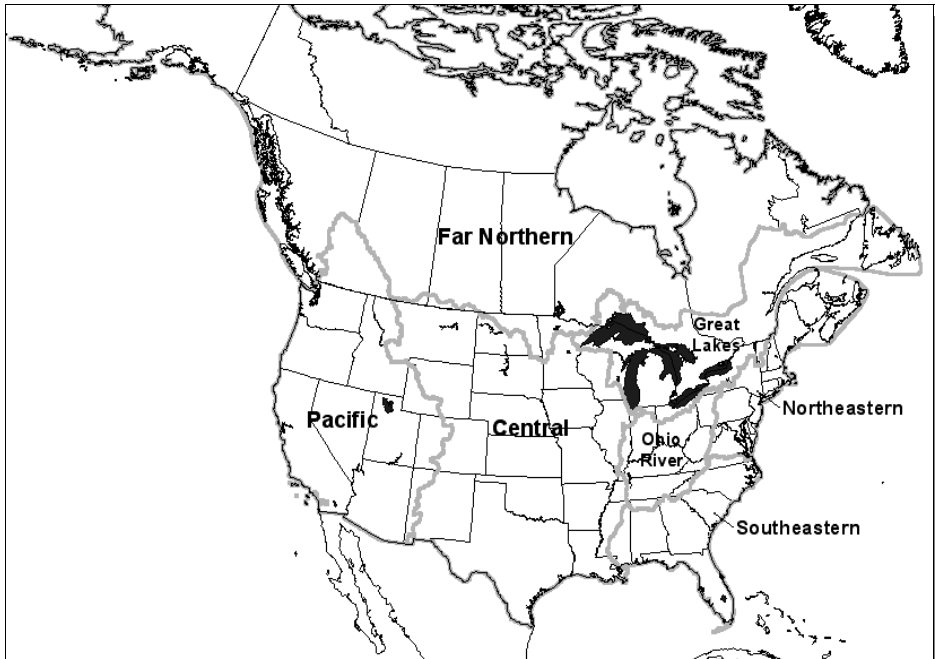
### CENTRAL REGION

#### Golden Aspen Protogrove

Grove Organizer: Kieran Rhysling  
 P.O. Box 260354  
 Lakewood, CO 80226  
 Areas: CO  
 E-Mail: [krhysling@yahoo.com](mailto:krhysling@yahoo.com)  
 Culture(s): Celtic, Norse

#### Sun Raven Protogrove

Grove Organizer: Suil Bhran  
 P.O. Box 8212



ADF's new system of Regional Representation includes seven regions related by common watersheds rather than artificial political boundaries.

Madison, WI 53708  
 Areas: WI, MN  
 E-Mail: [suibhne@centuryinter.net](mailto:suibhne@centuryinter.net)  
 Web: [www.adf.org/groves/sun-raven](http://www.adf.org/groves/sun-raven)

#### White Rose Grove

Senior Druid: Estelle Newton  
 539 South Richmond  
 Tulsa, OK 74112  
 Areas: OK  
 Phone: (918) 836-0907  
 E-Mail: [candlemajik@juno.com](mailto:candlemajik@juno.com)

#### Wild Onion Grove

Senior Druid: Chris Sherbak  
 P.O. Box 87651  
 Chicago, IL 60680  
 Areas: IL, IN, MI, WI  
 Phone: (773) 489-5766  
 E-Mail: [sherbak@ibm.net](mailto:sherbak@ibm.net)  
 Web: [www.adf.org/groves/wild-onion](http://www.adf.org/groves/wild-onion)

### FAR NORTHERN REGION

#### Flickering Shadows Protogrove

Grove Organizer: Jennifer Kennedy  
 Box 65  
 Ardrossan, Alberta T8E 2A1, Canada  
 Areas: Alberta

Phone: (780) 922-2499  
 E-Mail: [falan@planet.eon.net](mailto:falan@planet.eon.net)

#### Song of the Hounds Protogrove

Grove Organizer: Cirulious  
 P.O. Box 1444  
 Detroit Lakes, MN 56502-1444  
 Areas: MN, ND  
 E-Mail: [rdragon@djham.com](mailto:rdragon@djham.com)  
 Web: [www.adf.org/groves/song-of-the-hounds](http://www.adf.org/groves/song-of-the-hounds)  
 Publication: Acorns  
 Culture(s): Celtic

### GREAT LAKES REGION

#### Clairière du Renard Argenté -

#### Silver Fox Grove

Senior Druid: Paradox  
 2624 Jeanne d'Arc  
 Montreal, Quebec H1W 3V9, Canada  
 Areas: Quebec  
 Phone: (514) 259-8916  
 E-Mail: [one@cedep.com](mailto:one@cedep.com)  
 Web: [www.adf.org/groves/silver-fox](http://www.adf.org/groves/silver-fox)  
 Culture(s): Celtic, Norse

#### Crescent Dragon Protogrove

Urbana IL Area  
 Grove Organizer: Hawke

c/o ADF P.O. Box 15259  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106  
Areas: IL  
E-Mail: windstrm@asylum.sf.ca.us

## Red Maple Protogrove

Grove Organizer: Michael Demers  
200 Earl Grey Drive, Box 110  
Kanata, Ontario K2T 1B6, Canada  
Areas: Ontario  
Phone: (613) 282-5238  
E-Mail: drahkan@nitemaster.com  
Culture(s): Norse, Celtic

## Shining Lakes Grove - Garrán Lochanna Gealla

Senior Druid: Fox  
P.O. Box 15585  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-5585  
Areas: MI  
Phone: (734) 487-4931  
E-Mail: robh@cyberspace.org  
Web: www.adf.org/groves/shining-lakes  
Publication: Ripples, \$5/yr

## Stone Creed Grove

Senior Druid: Liafal  
P.O. Box 18727  
Cleveland Hts., OH 44118  
Areas: OH  
E-Mail: sueparker@ncweb.com  
Web: www.stonecreed.org  
Publication: Stone Facts  
Culture(s): Celtic, Norse, Hellenic, Baltic

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Web: www.adf.org/groves/cedar-light  
Publication: A Walk with the Old Ones

## Green Man Grove

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## Healing Stories Grove

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Publication: Little Acorn News  
Culture(s): Celtic

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Publication: The Midnight Sun  
Culture(s): Norse, Celtic

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Publication: Muin Light  
Culture(s): Celtic

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Web: www.adf.org/groves/mugwort  
Publication: What's Brewing  
Culture(s): Celtic, Norse, Hellenic

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Culture(s): Welsh, Celtic

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Culture(s): Celtic

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Publication: The Cacklin' Crow  
Culture(s): Irish, Scottish

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Publication: An Rotha - The Wheel  
Culture(s): Celtic

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Culture(s): Celtic

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\*\*\*\*\*  
**Call for**  
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 We are looking for articles, stories, essays, poems, artwork, etc. for a Special Issue of Oak Leaves for Yule '99.  
 Deadline: October 7th, 1999  
 Send your submissions to:  
 Oak-Leaves@adf.org  
 \*\*\*\*\*



# Ár nDraíocht Féin: A Druid Fellowship, Inc.

P.O. Box 15259, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-5259

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One form per person, please.

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To whom it may concern: \_\_\_\_\_ has my permission to become a  
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member of ADF, and I am fully aware of the Neopagan nature of this organization.



Notary Seal

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian's printed name

Please allow 4 to 6 weeks for membership processing.

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— Clive Barker

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## ARTISTS

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“Blacksmiths don't do horse-shoes!!”  
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Seabhac Fionn — Rob Barber-Delach

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Grove Affiliation: Little Acorn Grove in VA

We were both masquerading as artists in this issue, hopefully with the addition of real artists to the Oak Leaves staff, we will never have to do that again.

