

OAK

LEAVES

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IMBOLC ISSUE No. 13



## Oak Leaves

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# Fox Tracks



toward a life of balance in both the physical and spiritual realms.

Don't get me wrong. I'm not saying that it isn't important to build strong groves, train and ordain multitudes of religious specialists, educate and enrich the lives our members, publish a fantastic magazine, build the world's best web site and run an organized and responsive organization. On the contrary, these are the very vehicles by which we will accomplish our greater mission.

And don't worry that I'm calling for us to become evangelical, to dress up in robes to go from door to door or to shout platitudes from street corners. We don't need to force our message on others, people are coming to us in droves, overwhelmed with the desire to learn. When that ancient voice awakens within them and guides them to us,

With the celebration of the New Year I find myself reflecting upon the progress of our fellowship and its future course. During the past four years ADF's leadership has concentrated the majority of its collective energy on mundane matters such as organizational structure, magazine publishing, online services, office procedures and the like. With the majority of these issues now under control, and with very competent people in place to make sure things stay that way, I would like to focus a greater portion of our attention on matters of the mind and spirit.

When reflecting upon our fellowship and its *raison d'être*, my mind is often drawn back to my first moments as your Archdruid. A crisp Spring evening in upstate New York found our encampment in preparation for the evening's rite of transition. I was disrobed, aspersed (more like soaked to the bone!), blessed and sent off into the forest to prepare myself in meditation. Sitting upon a clump of moss in the darkening woods, I was overtaken by a vision.

The vision was complex and multifaceted, speaking of many possibilities for the future... some grim, some grand. The clearest message of all, which I attempted to articulate later in the evening, was that **WE HAVE BEEN CALLED TOGETHER FOR A REASON.** It is my belief that the individual act of seeking the old ways is an answer to that "call."

I have come to believe that the upwelling of interest in the earth spirituality movement over the last few decades has come to pass at the will of the gods and spirits. I don't believe that our fellowship has come into being merely to provide a social outlet for anachronists, nor for us to lose ourselves in pomp and ceremony as the world falls apart around us. We have been called together in this time because we, as well as the wisdom of our ancestors, are desperately needed.

We are needed by our Mother Earth and our fellow kin of the wild. We are needed by victims of cultural oppression and religious intolerance. What's more, we are needed by our people, the modern Indo-Europeans, to lead the way



we need to be prepared to fulfill their desire for knowledge and to enliven their spirits.

As to our greater mission, I see our long-term responsibilities divided into three primary areas:

1. Bringing the wisdom of our cultural ancestors to the aid of a troubled world and future generations.
2. Protecting the freedom and welfare of those of our faith and fellow earth religions.
3. Protecting and speaking out for our wild kin and our Mother Earth.

I have long seen the role of the priestly class of the ancient Indo-European world as runners in a relay race across time, passing knowledge from one mind to the next, over uncounted generations. The druids, and their like in related Indo-European cultures, devoted their lives to making sure that the intellectual and magical baton was never



dropped in its passing from one generation to the next. So many lives have been given to this massive effort, the knowledge and history, the treasures of our civilization carefully fostered from the minds of the aged into the minds of the young.

Somewhere along the way, some eighteen centuries ago, catastrophe struck. The greatest fear of generations of priests unfolded at once. Over much of the Indo-European world those precious and ancient batons crashed to the paving stones, shattering into a million pieces. Some of the shards were recovered and carried forward in folk memory, but these treasures were no longer borne by trained and skilled runners. Instead, clumsily carried by the crowd, they were dispersed, dropped and forgotten.

Now we find ourselves more than 80 generations further down the racecourse from that calamity. We stand ready and willing to bear the weighty responsibility of carrying the ancient wisdom of our people to the next generation, but when the relay finally reaches us we are handed naught but a few faded scraps. Jeers from the crowd around us lend discouragement, saying that the relay ended long ago and that our chosen role should be forgotten in the dust of time.

Far back along that track, a thousand souls cry in anguish for what has come to pass. They had toiled over the ages to preserve and protect the ancient lore, only to see it scattered and lost. They search among the rocks for broken bits and desperately hold them in outstretched hands. I see them in my visions. I hear them when I pray. I bear their loss as my own.

I believe that many of you, although you may not even be aware of it, have been touched by these ancient souls as well, have heard their distant cries in your heart. This spiritual outpouring from the past is what I refer to as "the call." It is this summons that we have collectively answered.

The task before us is daunting. We must reach into the

past to grasp the treasures of our people. We must use our minds and souls to search among the rubble, to reassemble what has been lost, and pray to the gods and ancestors to guide us. If we are to gain an understanding of what it means to be the modern descendants of these noble people, to interpret the facts of our 21<sup>st</sup> century lives in terms of our cultural and religious values, many must dedicate their lives to that search.

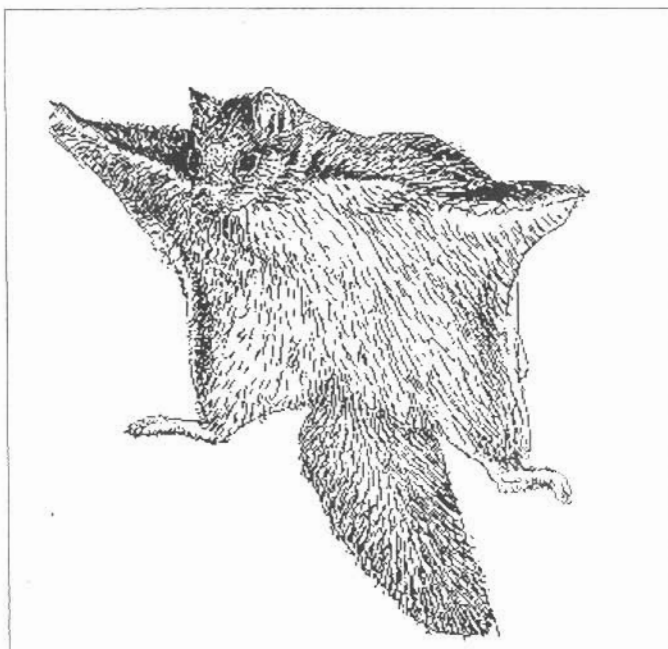
Pulling together and making sense of the ancient lore is only half of the task. What good is wisdom if it is not passed on? The other half of the work that history has lain before us is to teach, to assume the role of the bearers of tradition and cultural memory for our generation and the next. With each passing day, more of the knowledge that we seek is being unearthed, by scientists and scholars, by Neopagan writers and spiritualists, but much of its relevance is lost on the general public.

This educational gap is where I believe we can make a difference. In addition to our ongoing commitments to excellence in research and education, through our publications and web site, through local grove and festival education programs, it is my belief that we must make the knowledge of our heritage more readily available to the

general public.

To this end, I hereby propose that we begin the groundwork of an ambitious project. I would like to suggest that we strive to establish a network of Indo-European Cultural Education Centers, where people who are in search of an understanding of our history can go to learn. Of course we will have to start small, but eventually we should strive to establish such centers near a number of major population centers in North America.

I will write about this idea in greater detail in a future issue of *Oak Leaves*, but in brief, the idea is to begin by building a model village or perhaps multiple village sites representing various Indo-European cultures. We would strive to





make the dwellings and other structures as authentic to particular time periods as we possibly could. These village sites would be living educational museums, with interpretive guides, demonstrations of life and technology in various ages.

I have toured a number of operations of this sort during my travels in the British Isles and studied their operations. These living history museums are scattered throughout Europe, but to my knowledge there is nothing like them in North America. There are, of course, a number of wonderful establishments to educate the public about the lives of Native Americans and early European inhabitants, but I have something a little different in mind.

Part of the point of establishing museums about Indo-European history on this continent is to make a statement about Americans and their place in history. Despite the common notion to the contrary, the migration of Europeans to the American continent was yet another chapter in the history of the Indo-European people, rather than the end of it. Our ancestors, beginning with their nomadic precedents, have been in migration across the face of the earth for thousands of years. The fact that our wandering was temporarily stalled by the bounds of the Atlantic has more to do with the state of technology than the significance of the place where we were delayed.

I believe this perspective on history is an important one. Further, I believe that it is a part of our mandate, as modern day Indo-European priests, to carry this message to the public. If our perspective is ever going to be understood as relevant, if we are ever going to have a significant impact upon the welfare of this planet, the populations of such places as North America, Australia and Europe must learn that they are the descendants of an ancient and noble parentage. Once this message is established we will be in a far better position to make a difference by bringing our cultural values and religious perspective to the debate of current affairs.

We should be able to secure funding for the initial project through educational grants. This can mean jobs for our people, training in ancient arts for our artisans, and opportunities for research for our scholars. As the projects grow, and begin to produce revenue from gate admissions, donations and workshops, we will be able to expand our facilities to include indoor museums and research libraries. As well, the centers can host field trips for school children, host classes in ancient arts, hold concerts, storytelling competitions—the possibilities are many.

As to the second portion of our long-term mission, I believe we need to make a greater effort to reach out to the other Neopagan and earth religious people of the world. ADF has become far too focused upon itself in the last few years and I believe it has caused some of our priorities to drift. All over the planet our brethren are struggling for the right to worship as they wish.

My email is filled every day with stories of intolerance and our post box regularly contains letters from Neopagans in prisons and the military whose rights are being denied. On a much grander scale, indigenous people the world over struggle to hang on to traditional nature-centered ways of belief. If our children's children are to have a planet worth living on, we can't sit by in silence while those of a like mind are pushed into extinction.

I would like to see a greater effort to bring these issues to the awareness of our membership. I suggest that we make space in this magazine, as well as on our web site, to highlight some of these struggles and urge our members to get involved. In order for such a forum to work, individual members are going to need to investigate the cases, determine what the general membership and Neopagan community can do to help (such as letter writing campaigns, donations, etc.), and supply the information in publishable form to the appropriate editors.

Last, but not least, I believe it is high time that we pay



more than lip service to our responsibilities toward the environment and plight of our wild kin. As an individual with a long history as an environmental activist and organizer, I confess that I was disgusted to learn that many Neopagans feel that the environment isn't their concern. One of my early encounters with this movement included someone saying, "I am sick and tired of people assuming that just because I am Neopagan that I am an environmentalist!"

I reject that notion as a theological oxymoron and can't imagine how a faithful person who has regular contact with nature spirits or an animal spirit ally could maintain it. Unlike much of the rest of the population, who in a brief fit of conscience became green, Neopagan environmentalism as an expression of faith will never go out of style.

I would like to suggest that those groves that are not already sponsoring environmental service projects begin doing so. The same goes for our solitaries as well. In addition to the usual park and stream cleanups, I would also like to suggest that each of us make an effort to learn about the particular environmental problems in our watershed and do something about them. I would hope that our Regional Representatives would be briefed on these concerns, so that region wide responses can be coordinated.

In addition, I would like to see some of these local environmental concerns communicated to the general membership. If each grove were to take a turn at writing up a local environmental problem for *Oak Leaves*, and include actions that the rest of the membership could take (such as letter writing, boycotts, protest marches, etc.), we could make a real impact on the health of the land. If nothing else, this is a great job for your grove ecologist.

The land upon which we live is sacred to us, but it is quite evident that this point of view is not widely shared. I have lived in enough places to know that there is no corner of this land that is not under serious assault due to greed, ignorance and apathy. I look forward to the day when potential polluters think twice about setting up shop in a town as soon as they hear that there is a well-established grove in the neighborhood.

In conclusion, I hope that you will welcome my thoughts on our future with enthusiasm. There is so much that we can do, for the good of the earth, for the health of our children, in honor of our heritage and our gods, if we work together toward a common aim. I welcome your

thoughts and meditations on our future course. May the gods see you and yours safely through the winter season.

Brightest Blessings,  
Fox, ADF Archdruid



## ADF Regalia

We have a number of excellent items, including ADF hats, t-shirts, publications, and audio cassettes, as well as jewelry, and statuary. Of special interest is our newly expanded Jewelry section and Sacred Source Statues, reproductions of authentic religious artifacts.

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<http://www.adf.org/regalia>

# Religio Romano: Simple Daily Home Rites and Prayers

by Jenni Hunt

*(This article is the third 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 Rituals for Roman Hearth Worship and Roman Methods of Divination. Disclaimer: Even though I worked very hard on them, my Latin-to-English translations may be less than perfect. If you know Latin and find grammatical errors in any of the prayers below, please let me know!)*

Early Romans were simple farmers and shepherds, and their gods and religious practices revolved around their homes, farms, and immediate community. Every household had some kind of shrine for the household deities, the *Lararium*, and would perform daily prayers honoring the *Lar*, the guardian spirit of the household, and the *Penates*, the guardian spirits of the pantry or cupboards. In previous articles, I have discussed the basics of Roman hearth religion (see OL 9) and elements of prayer (see OL 10). I am now offering to share some very simple household prayers and rites that are suitable for a Roman household.

## MORNING LARARIUM PRAYER

The *Paterfamilias* was traditionally responsible for leading the household each morning in a prayer to the deities of the household (the *Lar* and *Penates*) to thank them for keeping watch over the welfare and prosperity of the home and household and to ask that the coming day be fruitful and safe. In ancient times, the *Paterfamilias* was the male head of the household; however in modern times, this need not be so. Just as the *Paterfamilias* of the community is responsible for the spiritual welfare of the community, the *Paterfamilias* of the household is responsible for maintaining a proper relationship between the deities and the household.

This particular prayer is designed to be performed before the *lararium* early in the morning after the *Paterfamilias* has been cleaned and purified, but before breakfast. The *Paterfamilias* stands before the *lararium* with arms outstretched and greets the household spirits:

*Salve Lar Familiaris!*  
Greetings, household Lar!  
*Salvete Di Penates!*  
Greetings, Divine Penates!

{If you are making an offering, do so while speaking these lines; otherwise, omit the passages in brackets.}

*Vos precor {hoc sacrificio obmovendo bonas preces} uti sitis volentes propitii mihi, {liberisque mei,} domo meo, familiaeque meae.*

I humbly ask that you may bestow your blessing upon me, {my children,} my home, and my household.

*{Mactete hoc sacrificio}*  
{Be thou increased by this which I give to you.}  
*Ita est!*  
So be it!

This is a great time for a few moments of daily meditation, particularly giving thought to what your plans, expectations, and hopes for the day may be and how the kindred spirits may be included and helpful during the day. A daily



offering is not necessary, but is always an option, particularly if you seek especial favor that day. Moreover, this would be an ideal time for making a prepared or extemporaneous prayer or vow to a deity (or deities) for assistance in a particular situation. For example, when I had to leave my car at the shop for the day, I prayed to and made a vow to *Mercurius* (as one who is associated with commerce and fair business deals), *Vulcanus* (as one who is associated with metalwork and the forge fire), and any other deity who may have been able to assist me in keeping the cost of the repairs to a minimum. (It seemed to work, by the way; I had a loose spark plug, which was easily reconnected, and my mechanic didn't charge me a dime!)

### DAILY MEAL PRAYER

At the evening meal (or whatever is the main meal of the day), it is appropriate to honor *Vesta*, the living flame, who is associated with the cook fire and the *Penates*. If, like me, you live alone and have irregular, quick meals, make a point of offering to *Vesta* a bit of whatever it is you're

eating whenever you do sit down for a meal. Ideally, a place should be set for *Vesta* at the table with a serving of all that which the family is eating, then after dinner, but before dessert, the contents of the plate be cast into the fire on the hearth. As the offering is made, a short prayer to *Vesta* is made:

*Salve, Vesta Mater!*

Greetings, Mother *Vesta*!

*Accipe hoc sacrificium factum meo artificio de tua auxilia beata.*

Accept this offering, made by my own handiwork with your blessed help.

*Te precor humiliter uti sis volens propitia foco meo, domique familiaeque meae.*  
I humbly beseech you to bless my hearth, and the home of my family.

*Macte hoc sacrificio.*

Be thou increased by this which I give to you.

Throw the offering to the hearth (or place it in the offering bowl, as the case may be).

*Dea propitia sit!*

May the Goddess be favorable!

### PRAYER WHEN LEAVING HOME

*Janus* is the deity most commonly associated with doors in Roman religion. He protects our homes from that which would bring harm to it or those within it. Not only is it a good idea to invoke *Janus* as a protector of the home, but *Janus* is also the gatekeeper between us and the realm of the deities, so establishing a good relationship with *Janus* may aid in enlisting his help in opening the gates in more elaborate rituals. It's not a bad idea to invoke him every time you enter and leave your home.

As you cross the threshold and close the door behind you, say:

*Semper salve valeque, Jane Clusive*

Greetings always, *Janus*, closer of doors!

Extend your hands in supplication and say:

*Me absente te precor uti sis domum meam vigilans et ab injuria protegens.*

I humbly beseech you to watch over my home in my absence, and protect it from harm.

Lock the door, then kiss your hand and touch this hand to the door, saying:

*Ita est!*

So be it!

### PRAYER UPON RETURNING HOME

As you approach the entrance to your home, greet *Janus*, saying:

*Salve Jane Patulci!*

Greetings, *Janus*, opener of doors!

Extend your hands in supplication, saying:

*Tibi gratias ago quod in me absentia domum meam vigilasti et ab injuria protexisti*

Thank you for watching over my home in my absence and keeping it safe from harm.

Kiss your hand, touch this hand to the door, and unlock it, saying:

*Gratias tibi ago!*

I give you thanks!

### PRAYER OF ABLUTION (CLEANSING):

This is a short prayer that can be used whenever you bathe, shower, wash your hands, before a ritual or anytime you feel the need for purification. While washing, say:

*Haec aqua a corpore impuritates, mode simile plumbo mutando ad aurum, eluat.*

May this water cast out all impurities from my substance as from lead to gold.

*Purga mentem. Purga corporem. Purga animum.*

Purify my mind. Purify my body. Purify my spirit.  
*Ita est.*  
So be it.

If they were going to be attending or participating in a formal ritual, Romans would cover their heads, *capite velato*, to protect themselves from any evil omens en route to or during the ritual. If this prayer is used as an ablution prior to a ritual, it would be proper to cover your head with a shawl or length of cloth. As you do so, say:

*Purus(-a) sim*  
May I be pure.  
*Immunis ex impuritates sim*  
May I be free from all impurities.



*Mei facti fidi et justi sint*  
May my deeds be true and just.

Stand straight, your hands in a supplicant position, and say:

*Juppiter mihi induat pietate.*  
May Jupiter enwrap me with Pietas.  
*Ita est!*  
So be it!

## CONCLUSION

These are the first Latin prayers I have written, and they are ones I have begun to use on a regular basis. It's not necessary to address the Roman deities in Latin, and I

wouldn't recommend anyone doing so without first learning some basics of Latin pronunciation. However, if you understand how to pronounce the Latin and feel more comfortable using it (speaking in Latin always reminds me of the days of Latin Masses and feels more formal to me), I believe the gods prefer it. The most important thing to remember, however, is that the more often you perform these small, daily rites and prayers, the closer you will grow to the deities. Your relationship will grow and you will feel their presence a little more each time you pray to them. Use the prayers in English or put them into your own words once you are comfortable with them. The gods will hear you and appreciate your efforts and your piety.

*Valete!*



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## WARRIORS GUILD ANNUAL MEETING



March 31 – April 2, 2000  
at **Trilicium**: ADF Spring Gathering  
in the Prince William Forest Park, N. Virginia

See the Guild Web Site for more details:  
<http://members.home.net/seabhac-fionn/wg>

### Events will include:

- Orienteering Workshop
- Blacksmithing Workshop
- Whisky Tasting Workshop
- Warriors Guild Championship
- Archery & Axe throwing ranges
- Fire Starting with Flint and Steel
- Celtic Martial Arts by Rob Barton



Water -- it not only covers 70% of the Earth's surface, but makes up 90% of our bodies as well. We can live for over a week without food, but without water we would die very quickly. Luckily for us, it constantly bubbles up out of the ground, washes up onto the shores, and falls down upon our very heads. How wonderful! And as if that isn't enough, it is also the main ingredient in whisky and beer.

Since water is so very important in every other area of our lives, it makes sense that water would be crucial to our Mythology, Cosmology, and Ritual as well. This article will explore some of the methods we've developed in Red Oak Grove to use Sacred Water. We will discuss what water means to us, where we got our Sacred Water, some of the special containers we use to hold our Water, what we do with it, and how we take care of it. This article should give you many ideas of ways you can use Sacred Water to enhance the meaning and power of your own Rites.

(By the way, since we're from New Jersey, we pronounce it: 'WOOD-ur', but you can say it any way you want.)

Water itself is a magical thing: a combination of two very flammable gases. It's somehow a liquid at room temperature and hard as stone when frozen. In all three states, it's colorless, but when sunlight shines through it, it refracts a brilliant, multi-colored rainbow that can be seen for miles.

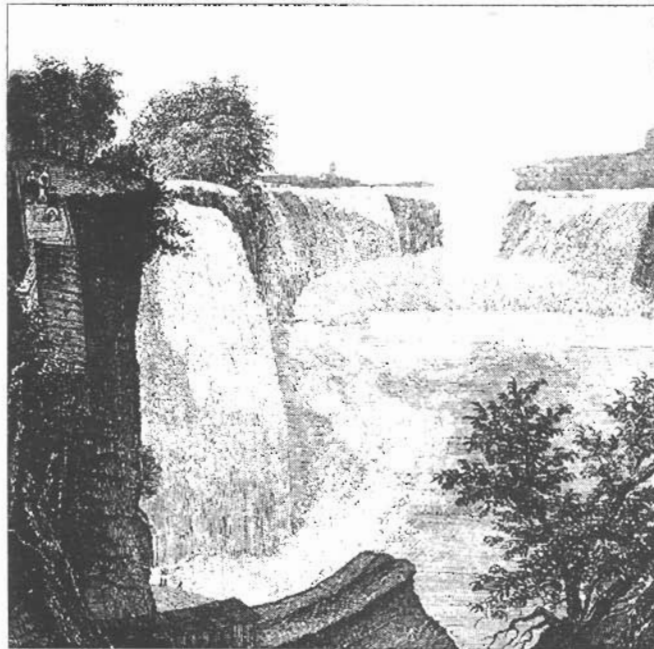
The three states of water, solid, liquid and gas, can be seen as symbols of the three Realms: Land, Sea and Sky. The Sea is commonly associated with the Ancestor Kindred and is seen both flowing beneath the Land and surrounding it.

In Red Oak Grove, we use water to purify both people and place and as a symbolic vessel for the Ancestors and Their Blessings. We use the symbol of the Well as one of the three Gates to the Otherworld and as a special home or symbol of our beloved Goddess Bridgedd.

When we first began working together as a Grove, we got some bottled distilled water to use in our Ritual. We consecrated it by the simple act of intentionally devoting its use to a religious ceremony. Since it was being set aside for the exclusive use of the Kindred, it was, therefore, sacred (cut off) from mundane use. During the Ritual, this water was blessed by the Kindred, so it became even more special and precious. You wouldn't pour something like that down the drain, would you? Of course not. We saved it and it became our Sacred Water.

# Sacred Water, Flow in Me: A System for Using Consecrated Water in Ritual

by Bardd Dafydd



We used this same Water at the next Rite, and the one after that. As time went by, we occasionally got together with other Groves to do combined Rituals. We would always bring our Sacred Water, and if the other Grove brought theirs, we would pour them together in a little private ceremony before the public Rite. Our Waters would mingle and mix on the Altar and be used and blessed together in the Ritual. When the people dispersed, we would carefully divide the Hallowed Waters between the Groves and take them home.

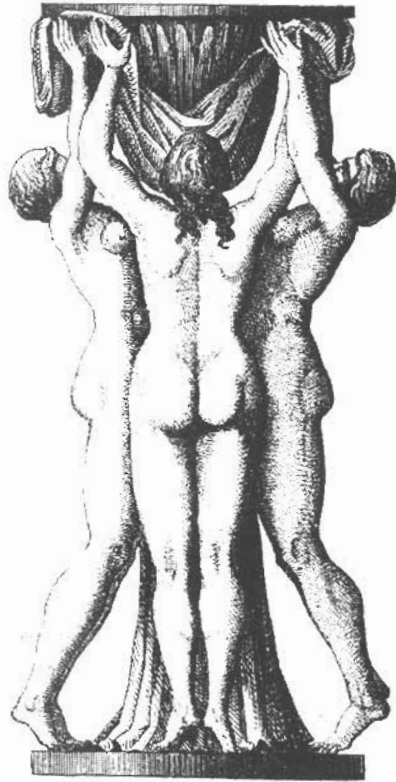
At Wellspring 1998, we did this with about 12 Groves who also brought water from home. In addition, the water was charged by the very powerful magical working and the combined will of everyone there.

A small amount of our Water came from the Atlantic Ocean, gathered at different ceremonial times. For example, last Spring Equinox at dawn, we went to the beach, planted a staff in a dune, lit a candle, and scooped some sea water up in a shell. We did a short but powerful Ritual, thanking Briggedd for the return of the warmth to the land. We took some of this water home with us to add to our Sacred Water.

During our Rituals, the majority of the Sacred Water is in a bowl in the bottom of our Well. Our Well looks like a real well, with a peaked roof and a turn-crank. It's really a lawn ornament, purchased at a garden supply store, and stands about 2 feet high. We have decorated the roof supports with plastic ivy. There is a silver ladle in the bowl of Water. We also have a large glass pitcher full of plain fresh water sitting next to the Well.

Before the Ritual, we ladle some Sacred Water from the Well into the Ancestor Bowl. This is one of three special Bowls used during the Kindred Invocations, described below.

Once the Ritual begins, the people have been called together, and the Outsiders have been honored, we begin the purification. D2 picks up the pitcher of fresh water and D1 ladles three scoops of Sacred Water into it, visualizing the blessing and sanctifying of the water. D2 then pours some of the water onto the hands of D1 and hands him a clean white hand towel. D1 takes the pitcher, pours water onto the hands of D2, and hands her the towel.



The celebrants are asked to turn and face the outside of the circle and hold out their hands. They are told to turn back toward the circle once they have been purified. D1 walks around the circle, constantly trickling water onto the ground from the pitcher. The celebrants extend their hands forward into the stream of water as it goes by. D2 follows with the towel so they can dry their hands.

This process not only purifies the people with Sacred Water, it makes the Ritual area Sacred by cutting it off from normal space with a sym-

bolic barrier of water. In effect, the Sacred Ritual Space is now an 'Island' surrounded by Sacred Water.

We also honor water when we Open the Gates. To help us, we call upon Manawydan ap Llyr, who is cognate with Manannan mac Lir, Lord of the Sea.

When we invoke and honor the Three Kindred, we use three bowls, each one different. For the Nature Spirits, we use a rough clay bowl filled with local soil, and for the Gods, we use a brass bowl containing a glowing charcoal briquette upon which we sprinkle granulated incense. The Ancestor Bowl is a small white ceramic bowl, decorated with a sea shell pattern. My mother made it before she died (if she had made it after she died, we'd really have something special!) It rests on a small hand-woven blue mat which was given to my mother's sister on a trip to Wales. My aunt gave it to me just before she died when I told her I was a Druid. So you can see that this bowl has plenty of associations to the Ancestors.

After the Nature Spirit invocation, the appointed celebrant goes to the Altar, holds the Ancestor Bowl up high and says:

Mothers and Fathers,  
Old Ones, and Ancestors,  
I reach across the Veil with my words  
and call to You.

Mothers and Fathers of our Families,  
Parents of our Parent's Parents,  
I call you into this Sacred Water.

Old Ones of this Land,  
Loving Tribes of Caretakers,  
I call you into this Sacred Water.

Ancestors of our Culture,  
Ancient worshippers of our Gods,  
I call you into this Sacred Water.

I call you with the water of the deep  
blue oceans,  
I call you with the water of the gentle

rains,  
I call you with the water of the darkest wells.

I bid you: Enter this Water now!  
That we may be Blessed, Guided and Inspired by our Communion with you.  
Gadael hi bod! (Welsh for "Let it be!")

The Celebrant then walks around the circle and blesses each person with the Water by dipping their finger in it and making the Awen mark (three lines radiating down from a central point) on their forehead and saying:

With this Water,  
Celebrate your Communion  
With the Ancestors.

After the Kindred and the special Deities of the occasion are called, and after praises are offered to Them and an Omen is taken, we share the Waters of Life. There is a pair of large matching goblets on the Altar. Whisky (Gaelic for "Water of Life!") is poured into one of them and water from the pitcher into the other. Remember, this water had three scoops of Sacred Water added to it just before the purification of the people. The goblets are held up, everyone concentrates upon them, and the Kindred are invited to send their blessings into them -- into the Waters of Life. D1 makes the pronouncement: "Behold! The Waters of Life!"

The goblets are passed around the circle, with each person drinking or pouring a few drops onto the ground, as they wish. When the first person chokes on the whisky, we always say, "Don't worry, the 'Chaser of Life' is coming around right behind it!"

While we always manage to finish the blessed whisky, we try to leave a few sips of the water to pour back into the Well. We might change that and put some of the water back into the Well before we pass it around.

When the Ritual is over, and the people have dispersed, we pour the water from the Ancestor Bowl, and any remaining in the goblet, back into the bowl in the Well. This all goes into a special 16 oz. plastic jug we use to store the Sacred Water (or is divided with the other Grove(s) who brought their water), then we top off the jug with water from the pitcher.

The next day I perform another short ritual in my kitchen: I strain the Sacred Water through a paper coffee filter to remove bits of dirt and leaves which always find their way in. I then boil the Water for five minutes to disinfect it and then filter it once again. The jug is also washed out with boiling water. Then the Sacred Water is put back in the jug and once again topped off, this time with distilled water, and kept in my refrigerator until the next Ritual.

Those are the procedures that we follow for every Ritual we do. There are also a few special uses for Sacred Water that we do from time to time.

When a new Magical Tool is added to the Grove collection, or someone brings a personal Magical Tool that they want to purify, bless, and dedicate, we will use our Sacred Water. It can both purify and bless, but it can't dedicate; only we can do that.

Once we went to a group campsite and felt an unwelcome and unwelcoming presence in a covered pavilion. We used our Sacred Water to purify the pavilion and banish any Spirits that didn't wish to celebrate with us. Afterwards, it felt clean.

Emerald Dragyn, Senior Druid of the Grove of the Midnight Sun, and I used our Sacred Waters to purify the Bride and Groom at a Handfasting we conducted last Samhain.

I've been asked to do a Pagan Baptism this Spring, and I will use the Water for that.

I believe it would also be very effective to use in Healing Magic.

As you can see, we have a pretty elaborate and complicated procedure for using our Sacred Water. It is obviously a lot of work and requires quite a bit of determined attention to detail, but we believe that one of the purposes of Ritual is to show the Kindred how much They mean to us. If we make it all easy and convenient, we aren't showing that we care very much. To some extent, I think the more time you take for Ritual preparations and performance, the better it works.

We are very proud of our Sacred Water and treat it like the extremely precious substance it is. Feel free to adopt or adapt any of our ideas that you like or use your own inspiration to develop other ways of handling this special symbol and marvelous stuff. May the Sacred Waters flow in you!



# The Afterlife, The Heroes, and The Dead

by Ian Corrigan



What is known about the afterlife beliefs of Celtic peoples is sketchy and often contradictory. The classical authors are unanimous in declaring that the Celts held an unshakable belief in a happy life after death. It made them fearless in battle and was so strong that debts were said sometimes to be deferred until the next life. While this belief in personal survival is well attested, there is much less agreement on the details of the fate of the dead.

Several classical authors say that the Druids taught the transmigration of souls. In that doctrine of reincarnation, spirits may be reborn into any of nature's forms - human, animal, or even inanimate things. That doctrine is supported by evidence from the tales. We find humans becoming pools of water, their own descendants, or sacred animals. Fintan, last survivor of the first folk, lived successive lives as a man, a stag, and an eagle. The two great Bulls of Erin, the Brown and the White, began their existence as a pair of swincherds and underwent rebirth until they reached their exalted state as sacred bulls. In Welsh tales, the wizard Gwydion undergoes a series of animals lives, and the Irish tale of Edain depicts transformations or rebirths in human, insect, and inanimate forms.

If we assume that these tales reflect a doctrine of the fate of souls, then we might conclude that human spirits can be reborn, and into non-human as well as human forms. A non-human rebirth was clearly not always a punishment. Rebirth as an animal could involve increase in honor or spiritual authority. Mortal humanity was only one of the many kinds of beings who kept the World Order whole.

Of course, these tales may also be interpreted in a mythological, initiatory, or shamanic way. They may represent the magical journey of a particular individual rather than remnants of Pagan afterlife belief. So while the tales strongly suggest a belief in reincarnation and transmigration among the Celts, they fall short of proving that it was a broad, general doctrine.

When we look at the archeological remains of Celtic burials, one thing becomes clear: the Celts, at some periods at least, expected their afterlife to be very similar to the tribal life they left behind. Chieftains, both male and female, were buried, either whole or after cremation, with chariots, jewelry, weapons, drinking equipment and food. They clearly expected to retain both their status and their obligations. The tales also support this model. When various heroes are transported to the

Otherworld, they find a land of perpetual feasting, horseracing, and revelry, not unlike the Vikings' Valhalla. These tales give little evidence of an expected reincarnation of any sort. However, it is unclear that the beings met in these journeys are actually mortal spirits and not "sidhe-folk" of some stranger kind.

The destruction of Celtic Paganism by the rise of Christianity is nowhere more evidenced than in after-life beliefs. Still, as moderns working to revive the Old Ways, we need to formulate some sort of more or less coherent attitude toward death, the afterlife, and the place that the Ancestors hold in our worship. A speculative reconstruction of a Celtic afterlife doctrine might be expressed thus:



For almost everyone, the afterlife will be an improved version of this one. The soul is guided by proper ritual, and by the King of the Dead, to Tir na Marbh, Land of the Dead, where they dwell happily. This land is a lovely and joyous place, where the songs of the Goddess' birds ease pain and sorrow, where feasting and entertainment are the order of the day. The magical Boar and Stag are hunted, and the Mead of Poetry flows freely. Many tales tell that the souls of the newly dead linger, as shades, in the living world until Samhain eve. Then Donn, the King of the Dead, winds his horn and calls all souls to his House, Teach Duinn, and then west across the Sea to Tir na Marbh.

While we find no doctrine of universal reincarnation among the Celts, it is clear that Spirits are often born into flesh for various reasons. For some, the Way of return is their fate. Those chosen by the Powers for some destiny, or who choose rebirth themselves, or are placed under a geas by a magician, may return to the mortal world to work out their path. We may know a series of rebirths until our specific destinies are fulfilled.

There is no evidence, at this time, that the Celts believed in a process of regular reincarnation leading to movement up any sort of spiritual ladder or stairway. Spirits came into flesh to aid their folk, to do the Gods' work, etc.

All Indo-European peoples seem to have practiced, in various ways, a Cult of the Dead. This seems to have included veneration of the generations immediately passed, as well as more broadly important cultural figures. The

Grandmothers and Grandfathers must be respected and given proper offerings if the clan's prosperity is to thrive. The Graeco-Roman Cult of Heroes was probably present in some form, remembered in Celtic countries in their active Christian Cult of Saints.

All over the Aryan world it was known that by great deeds of martial, magical, or other sorts, an individual could become more like one of the Powers. This is the mark of the Hero (a word we will use both for men and for women). He or she must display in their nature and action one of the archetypes by which the tribe lives. The blacksmith, the bard, the warrior, the ruler, in fact all traditional professions, have magical power. When a mortal fills the traditional image of a skill especially well, and when her deeds do very well for her folk, she may become a hero.

In a very real way, such a person makes a sacrifice of themselves for their folk. Often, the Hero must give up many of the potentials of common life, take on terrible risk and pain, even die young. Most of us hope to be left in peace by the Powers, to offer to them, and to be blessed in turn, without being singled out for a great "destiny." So we can only be humble and grateful to those who give themselves to let the Light and Shadow show through their lives. When such folk die, they may become Noble Spirits - guests at the feasting table of the Shining Ones. They gain insight and wisdom and the ability to aid their living tribesfolk in some of the same ways as the God/desses themselves. In effect, these great mortals become Powers themselves, able to bless in return for the gifts of the sacrifices.

## Exercise 2: Hearing

# Connecting with the Natural World

## A Series of Meditative and Physical Exercises for Journaling

by Judith Anderson Morris  
(ladytoad)

Of all our senses, hearing allows us to go inside most easily. Hearing is not linear like sight; it cannot be shut off by “closing” the ears. Hearing surrounds us. It comes to us in vibrating waves, whether we are conscious of the sound or not. Even in silence, there is sound. Remember the old conundrum: If a tree falls in the forest, and there is no one there, can it be heard? The logical mind says: “No, hearing is dependent upon the receiving, the presence of ears;” but the intuitive mind tells us that, of course, it is heard. Its very vibrations are felt by the trees that surround, and thus, its falling is acknowledged. Hearing is not dependent only upon the ears. Hearing is dependent upon the entire consciousness.

Close your eyes. Listen to the sounds around you. Try to identify their source; as you identify and connect with each sound, let it go and move on to another. Ah, yes, there is a bee buzzing, and in the distance I hear the drone of a machine – two buzzes that merge and dance. The wind rustled the leaves. Do the leaves of the oak sing a different melody from the leaves of the willow?

### LISTEN.

There is a beautiful old clock in my sunroom. In times of greatest peace, its ticking is the only conscious sound, reassuring and reaffirming that calm center of all things, steady as a heartbeat. With the sunroom windows open, the clock’s calls mingle with the natural sounds of the garden and become symphonic. There is wholeness. Hear the clocks in your life.

After a while, you will find yourself so bathed in sound that the sound itself disappears. At first it will “blink” on and off – you realize that you aren’t hearing, and it comes rushing back to you. After a time, you will hear nothing.

The true center of sound is SILENCE, something we have very little of in our mundane lives. That point of silence is the very center of your Self.

In winter or inclement weather, this same experience can be done inside. Concentrate on household sounds or listen to music wearing headphones. Try to pinpoint the various instrumental sounds that make up the whole; then let the whole take over. (Do NOT use music with lyrics; words interfere with the source).

If you practice this deep hearing often enough, you will be able to use it at any time. You might be in a crowded grocery or walking down a busy city street, but if you concentrate first on the individual sounds, then the symphony of sounds, you will find yourself being instantly transported to your calm center of silence.

Each time you consciously set out to do this exercise, go to your journal immediately afterwards and record your experience "within the sounds of silence." (Simon and Garfunkel)

Happy journaling!



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May 17 - 21, 2000

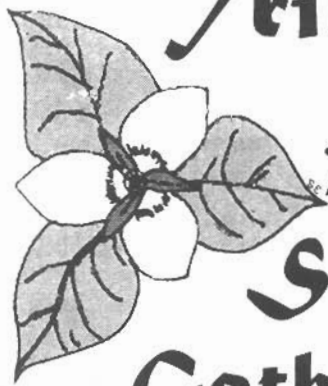
Brushwood Folklore Center, Sherman, NY

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Bardic Open Mic  
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#### This year

**Trillium will be hosting:**

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**Including a Warrior Championship  
come ready to compete**

Unsharpened Edged weapons will be allowed

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Heated Dorm-style Cabins  
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Covered Pavilion & Fire Circle  
Hiking/Mt. Biking Trails  
Lots of Woods and Open Space



# The Land And The Spirits: Attuning to Nature and the Kindreds

by Ian Corrigan

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*The exercises in  
this article are the  
newest addition to  
the ADF Dedicants  
Program.*

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The heart of the work of Druidry can be seen and known in nature. There is no doubt that the work requires intellectual effort, study, and training of the mind. In the end, all of those skills only allow us to relate more deeply to the reality of the physical world. Through understanding of nature - its processes, forms and wonders - we come to understand the meaning and means of the Otherworld and the Spirits.

Simply put, intellectual and meditative work must always be balanced with experiences of the real presence of the natural world. Of course, Indo-European Paganism was strongly "artificial." That is, the old ways valued the human ability to shape the things of nature into things useful to humankind. Much of the symbolism of Pagan ways is concerned with human efforts to gain good from the indifferent, even hostile environment.

When a mortal clan enters a new land, they must begin by comprehending the wilderness. They must approach and ally with the Gods and Goddesses of the forest and win a place in which to carve out their lives.

Modern Pagans face a different challenge. Most of us come from societies cut off, by distance and by layers of technology, from wilderness and even from the common processes of nature. We live in boxes many feet above the ground, eat packaged food, drink bottled water. Our cities and farms were built without regard for the spirits of place - for the intrinsic holiness of the land.

As Paganism reawakens in our modern lands, we can make it part of our work to restore the relationship between mortals and the land. We can go to the woods and absorb the patterns and forms of the wild. We can become aware of the natural places even in our own cities and suburbs. We can begin re-enchanting the landscape of our homes - our wells and pools, our crossroads and hill-tops. All that begins by getting out of our living rooms and into the natural world.

## **PART 1 - THE BASICS**

Your relation to the natural world should be both practical and spiritual. Practically, you should make it your business to learn the facts of your landscape. Learn the trees and herbs, the animals and birds, the stones and soil most common to your region. Learn how water flows through your land, where the weather comes from, and what crops come from farms and gardens.

In the same way, we encourage you to consider yourself an active defender of the land on which you live and worship. Human inattention and greed are threatening the World Order - upsetting the balances that sustain our lives and those of our non-human co-dwellers on Earth. As people who consider the land to be part of our holy ways,

we should make it our business to protect it from poison and destruction.

Here are some study questions to help you understand your land:

- 1 What is the source of your drinking water? What rivers make up your watershed?
- 2 What are the prevailing winds? What are the major influences on your local clouds, rain and storms?
- 3 What is the composition of your soil? Is it acid or alkali? What are the major crops grown in your region?
- 4 Identify five species of trees in your area. Add four more!
- 5 Identify five herbs for health in your area. Add four more.
- 6 Identify five species of birds common to your area. Five species of other animals.
- 7 Know the three major sources of air and water pollution in your area.
- 8 Know how your area deals with trash and garbage. Consider recycling and/or composting.
- 9 Learn about environmental action groups in your area. Consider joining and/or working with one or more.

### NATURE MEDITATION

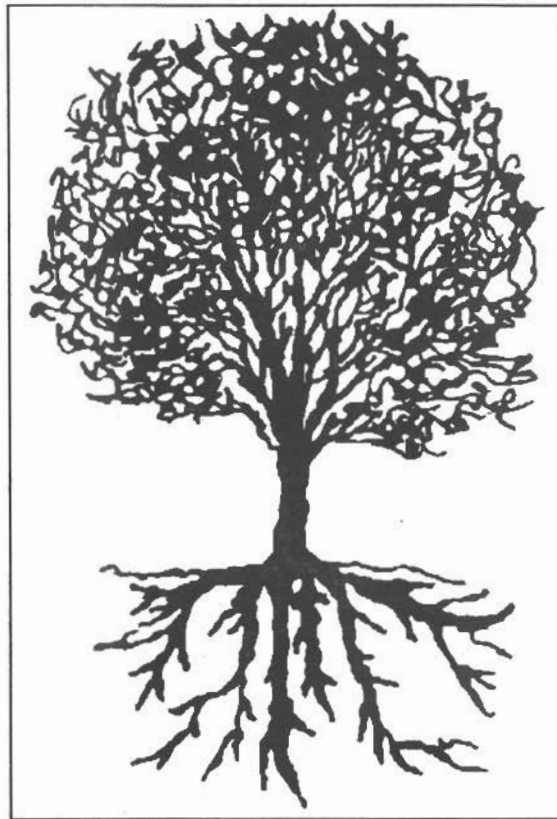
It is vital for you to make a true and deep contact with the forms and processes of nature. One way to approach this is to use open meditation to absorb these patterns.

While it is good to actually leave the city when possible, it is not necessary to go deep into the wild to do this work. Every city has park land, backyards, and even decorative trees that allow contact with forms not shaped by humankind.

When you have a little skill in open meditation, go out to a place where

you can sit quietly on the grass, a low bench, or a mat. If you can find a place where more than one kind of natural form occurs - trees, herbs, beasts, stones, streams - then that is best. Seat yourself as comfortably as possible, and begin your pattern of rhythmic breathing.

Sitting with your eyes closed, find the rhythm that takes you toward your Silence. After awhile, allow yourself to begin to listen to the sounds around you. Let those sounds enter your mind and flow through you like thoughts, hearing all but holding onto nothing. The goal is to keep your



mental balance and calm whatever the input. When you wish, open your eyes. Let the sights of the natural world move through your mind. Allow your eye to flow over the forms of the natural world; spend more time looking closely. But when any thought or image grasps or holds the attention, return to counting the breath and let eye and mind move on. The goal is to sit in silence - your mind transparent to the reality of the

woodland, offering no obstacle to the flow of nature's sights and sounds.

The final phase of this work is to stand and walk while maintaining the "open eye." When this can be managed with a minimal number of breaks, you will have a skill that can help you in every part of your life, from labor's drudgery to the sublime moments of vision and magic.

So begin the work of mental training and keep to its discipline as well as you can. Regular practice and an open heart will always produce results in this most basic of meditation practices.

### PART 2 - THE SPIRITS IN THE LAND

The work of Druidry is about building relationships between mortals and the Spirits. We seek to reach out to the Spirits whether of our land or of our folk. In order to comprehend the vast families of the Gods and the non-Gods, we think of them in the categories which we call the Three Kindreds.

As your skills in Druidry grow, you can begin to seek an understanding of each of these groups of Spirits. Your readings in mythology and Pagan culture should give you the basic concepts of the nature of the Deities, the Dead, and the Land Spirits. However, it is proper to look to the land itself to find out how the God/desses and Spirits are present in your region.

### THE SHINING ONES

The Divine Ones, the Gods and Goddesses, are those beings mightiest among all the Spirits. As you study the culture and religion of an ancient people, it is usually the Shining Ones who stand out, who are most apparent. Their help and love, their power and beauty, have resulted in their being remembered even as other aspects of Pagan cultures are forgotten.

In any region, there are places that are

unique - natural features that command the attention and respect of the communities near them. In many places, especially in the U.S., these places have been made part of public parks and preserves. These can be reached easily by car or on foot. In other cases, important natural features, such as mountains, stones, or caves, are found outside the city in wild places.

These notable natural places are proper for seeking contacts with the Shining Ones. It is helpful to go to these sites, taking with you a collection of the tales of the God/desses of your choice of culture. There, you can sit and read a key tale or two - perhaps even reading



aloud - while sitting in communion with the site. You might choose to imagine the form or presence of one or more of the Deities in the natural setting and make a small offering, perhaps of precious metal or stones, or whatever is proper for those Powers that you seek.

In attuning to the Gods and Goddesses, two major land features are often central. First determine what the major river and/or source of drinking water is for your region. Find, if you can, the source and headwaters for the river and make an effort to reach them. At your local waterside, you should contemplate the Goddesses, seeking to attune yourself to the Lady of the Land.

Secondly, determine where the highest

point is in your region. Ancient Indo-European religion always looked to the high places to find the Shining Ones, and the principle applies today as well. On the high places you can call out to all the Shining Ones, and especially to the Gods of sky, of storm, and of the sun.

In all such places it is proper to attune to the Gods and Goddesses. Go with an open heart, make a simple offering, and, with your spirit, listen to the land.

### THE MIGHTY DEAD

The Ancestors, the Dead of the Clans of Mortals, are our own kin and folk in the otherworld. The tales and traditions of Pagan cultures are full of the heroes - men and women - of the Old Ways. These great mortal lives stand as an example to the living of cultural virtues and the power of the Spirits. The heroes are the link between present mortal lives and the human past.

Just as important as the great ones of any tribe are the past members of one's own clan. Grandmothers and grandfathers, one's own forebears, are worthy of veneration. Cultures with strong traditions of ancestor worship place great importance on the relationship between the living and the Dead. The Mighty Dead have vision and magic beyond those of mortals and can have great influence over the lives of their descendants. So it is proper for us to give love, reverence, and offerings to the spirits of our own Beloved Dead.

The Dead are honored in our local environment in several ways. Most common are the cemeteries used by modern religions and civic governments. While many of these are filled with very un-Pagan symbols and sentiments, they can also have some inspiring statuary and natural places. In cemeteries, we sometimes find great trees, glens of flowers, and images of classical beauty.

Most cities also have a variety of civic, non-religious, monuments. We remember those who died in war and those who fell in service to the culture for various causes. Finding these places brings us into contact with our urban environment, and they may be enshrined in green places amidst the concrete and glass. These places can provide a sense of contact with the history of local culture, something always sacred to Pagan ways.

In these places, you can make contacts with the green places in our cities and with the spirits of the mighty and beloved Dead. Go to these places and read the tales of the legendary heroes of your chosen Pagan culture. Be aware also of the stories of famous heroes of your region, and learn the tales of the Dead of your own family. Take with you offerings of food and drink, make your offerings in love and reverence, and open your heart to the voices of the Ancestors.

### THE NOBLE SPIRITS

Throughout the worlds, in every place, there are many Tribes of Spirits. Beings of wonderful diversity, some beautiful, some hideous, the Noble Spirits are beings who serve the Gods in maintaining the Order of the Worlds. Some dwell in lonely places apart from company, keeping a pool or stone or tree as their domain. Others dwell together in glittering courts, keeping their revels and feasts. These beings are neither Gods nor Dead. They may rightly be considered as lesser relations of the Deities, assigned by them to hold the natural world in proper order.

The Gods are our allies, the Dead our kin, but the Spirits are, in many ways, quite separate from us. They are the Other and, as such, they are not automatically our allies and friends. In many tales, they are the enemies of humankind or must be carefully placated. When we approach these spirits today, we approach nature in the wild - the untamed reality that is the basis of all tame life.

Yet we also see that some of the Spirits choose to work for, or with, mortals, especially for the fertility of the land. So we know that they can be our allies as well, if we approach them with respect.

When we seek contact with the Nobles, we seek places wild and tangled, untouched as much as possible by human work. Go out from the cities, park lands and fields, or find places within them overgrown and untended. If you keep a yard or field as your own, it might be good to leave a small section of it completely untended as a place in which the Nobles can feel welcome and honored. In many places, there are patches of relative wilderness even in inhabited places. Look closely in your own area, but remember to get out of the city and farmland and into the real wilderness.

Even in cities, the Nobles watch and ward, keeping the lives of the non-human kins. There may even be a greater Lord or Lady keeping a court. But it is in the wilder places that you may come to glimpse the greater Spirits, the Wild Powers. When you go to seek them and make your offerings, go with care. Be certain to be fully prepared for the reality of the wilderness, and go with the greatest respect both for the wild land and for the Spirits that you seek.

These first efforts to attune to the land and the spirits are an opportunity to begin simple ritual. We provide, below, a very simple approach to greeting the spirits in a natural place. It requires a minimum of tools and allows attention to be focused on the natural locale.

The skills of the basic nature attunement, 'open-ness' type of meditation are central to this work. While there is value in using the imagination to construct forms for the Spirits, it is perhaps better to begin by simply offering worship, then opening your eyes, ears, and heart to the real presences



of the land. Expect nothing at this stage, or expect everything, but set aside your expectations and open to your senses. Then, when vision comes, it will be ensouled by the reality of the land.

It is also possible, and useful, to approach the land and the spirits with no ceremony at all. Simply working the open-eyed meditation in various settings will go some way toward making strong natural contacts. The Druid's way is, however, a way of ritual, and greater results are likely to come from even simple ritual work.

### **KINDRED ATTUNEMENT WORK**

Take to the place a simple vessel for water and a fire-bowl. The fire bowl can be as simple as a bowl with three candles or, perhaps, a bit of fire-starter or fatwood in an iron cauldron. Take, also, whatever offerings you mean to make to the Spirits.

Find a spot where you can comfortably sit to meditate. Sprinkle the water deosil around the space, then light the fire bowl. Lift the fire to the sky, then set it on the earth, saying:

The Fire, the Well, the Sacred Tree,  
Flow and flame and grow in me.  
By Land Sea and Sky,  
Below and on high,  
I come to this place to greet the spirits.


Then sit, with the fire and water before you, and draw the Two Powers

into yourself. Then take up your offering and, if you like, imagine the form and presence of whatever kindred you are seeking. Recite aloud a simple invocation, such as:

Ancestors: O Mighty Ones, my ancestors, my kindred, I, your worshipper, honor you. You, whose life and death creates my life, whose wisdom upholds my wisdom, I come to you in peace. Mighty Dead, I honor your presence, offering my love and worship, and this (sacrifice). Be with me in my heart and in my work, and accept this gift in token of our kinship. Ancestors, I pray you, accept my sacrifice.

Nobles: Oh Noble Ones, my allies, with whom I share the worlds, I honor you. Spirits of stone and stream, red kins and green kins, peoples of the Otherworld, I come to you in peace. Noble Spirits, I honor your presence, offering my love and worship, and this (sacrifice). Be with me in my heart and in my work, and accept this gift in token of my friendship. Noble Ones, I pray you, accept my sacrifice.

Deities: Oh Shining Ones, my Elders, Goddesses and Gods, wisest and mightiest, I honor you. You, who sustain the worlds, first Children of the Mother, Tribe of the Goddess, I come to you in peace. Shining Deities, I honor your presence, offering my love and worship, and this (sacrifice). Be with me in my heart and in my work, and accept this gift in token of my worship. Shining Ones, accept my sacrifice.

Give the offering to the land in whatever way, and then practice the Earth Attunement meditation. Allow all ideas of the form of the Spirits to flow away into the silence and bask in direct experience of the land. 

# Two Rituals For Brigid

by Ceisiwr Serith

This ritual is designed to be performed as a part of the standard ADF ritual, inserted immediately before the opening of the gate. It replaces the lighting of the fire.

The nemeton is set up indoors, both for practical reasons in much of ADF territory and because, as a hearth goddess, Brighid should be worshipped inside. The door to the room is closed. In the center is a Brighid's cross about three feet across, made up of four boards arranged in the proper shape, with a gap in the center. The gap must be just wide enough for the brass Brighid's cross, which will be carried in to fit over it, with no danger of falling through. Such crosses are available in stores that sell Irish goods; if there are none in your area, the brass cross can be left out of the ritual.

In one of the spaces formed by the cross's arms is a large candle; in another is an offering bowl; and in another is a basket. In the fourth will be put the bowl of water used to purify the participants after it has been used for that purpose. On the arms themselves are at least as many candles as there are people present. Surrounding the cross is a circle marked on the floor, perhaps with a cord (we used clothesline--a nice domestic touch).

On a table are matches and a container of milk.

The celebrants are two druids, at least one of whom (D2 in this ritual) must be a woman; a fire tender, also a woman; a young girl who will impersonate Brighid; and a Bard, who may also be one of the druids.

### PROCESSION

As people leave the assembly area to go to the ritual site, they are each given a Brighid's cross.

### HISTORICAL PRECEDENT

This may be said either at the very beginning of the ritual or when everyone has assembled in the nemeton.

D1: We are here today to celebrate the feast of Imbolc.

D2: It is the feast when the promise of the return of warmth is affirmed.

D1: It is the feast when we are purified in anticipation of this event.

D2: It is the feast when we are honored by the presence of Brighid.



## LIGHTING THE HEARTH

D1: In the midst of our world we light the hearth fire, where the sacred and the mundane meet under the care of the Triple Brighid.

Bard: We call to Brighid, the flame on the hearth.

All: Come to us, come to us, bless us with your presence.

Bard: We call to Brighid, inspirer of poets.

All: Come to us, come to us, bless us with your presence.

Bard: We call to Brighid, strength of smiths.

All: Come to us, come to us, bless us with your presence.

Bard: We call to Brighid, power of healers.

All: Come to us, come to us, bless us with your presence.

There are three knocks on the door.

D2: Lady Brighid, come in, come in, come in, you are thrice welcome!

All: Lady Brighid, come in, come in, come in, you are thrice welcome!

The door opens and a girl enters. She is dressed in red and carries a brass Brighid's cross in her left hand and a container of water in her right. She comes to the nemeton and goes straight to the center. She stops there and hands both cross and water to D2. She steps back to take her place in the circle. D2 pours the water into a bowl and then washes the brass Brighid's cross with it. This done, she places the brass cross on top of the wooden cross and places the large candle on top of it. She lights it and begins to sing:

Burn in our midst, O fire of Brighid, Opening to the sacred world,  
One who inspires our every deed, Center of the spiral unfurled.

The others pick up on this song and come forward one at a time to the hearth. When each reaches the center, she stands to be anointed with water by D2 on the forehead, the hands, and the feet. If there are too many people for one person to do this comfortably, another woman may help D2. After being anointed, each person goes to the wooden Brighid's cross and lights a candle with a match lit from the center candle. She then puts her Brighid's cross down in the basket provided and returns to her place. After one person has been anointed, the next one comes forward. Males may not cross the circle around the cross and, instead, are handed first the basket to put their crosses in, and then a candle and a match lit from the center candle by the fire tender. They light the candle and then give it back to the fire tender, who puts it into place.

When all are done, D2 lights any remaining candles and D1 says:

D1: Be our priestess, Brighid, drawing the gods near and conveying our offerings to them.

D2 pours milk into the offering bowl for Brighid.

D2: Mother Brighid, unite us all, for by worshipping at a common hearth we are made one family, one people.

D1: She is there at the hearth fire, tall and lovely, with red-gold hair, clad in flames, with shining face and hands held wide.

All: Brighid is in our midst!

D2 takes the bowl of water and asperges the bowl of crosses, saying:

D2: Bless these crosses, Gentle Brighid, and with them the homes to which they go and with them the people who enter those homes, and with them all that occurs within.

She puts down the bowl and goes to stand beside D1.

From this point on, the ritual proceeds as usual. When the waters of life are distributed, the crosses are distributed as well.

## COMMENTARY

The traditional elements of Brighid's Day celebrations, such as encircling the home, marking crosses on structures, and washing, all imply a purification aspect to this day. It is indeed possible that the original meaning of "Imbolc" was "purification" (Hamp 111). This may be compared with "February," which has that meaning.

The young girl impersonating Brighid is taken from Irish folk custom (Danaher). The brass Brighid's cross may be used at other rituals as a way of marking the center fire as the grove's hearth, either by putting it under a cauldron, if one is used, or hanging it from a short pole, if the fire is built on the ground. "Burn in our midst" are words by Ceiswer Serith, music by Gwynne Green. Men are not allowed within the circle around the cross, first, as an honor to the hearth deity, who is uniformly a goddess in Indo-European cultures, and second, as a reflection of the hedge of Brighid described by Gerald of Wales. This hedge surrounded a sacred area in which a perpetual fire, tended by women, burned in honor of Brighid. Men were not allowed to cross it.



(Sources continued on page 22)

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## A Rite for Brighid

This is a ritual to invite Brighid into your home to be your hearth guardian, or to renew your acquaintance with her if she is already that. It may also be used to ask Brighid for favors, or simply to enjoy her presence.

If you have an image of Brighid, put a candle or oil lamp in front of it. (An image is not necessary; the flame itself is an image.) If you are fortunate enough to have a fireplace, lay a fire in it instead, but do not light it. In front of your fire source, put a bowl. Next to it put a pitcher of milk. Stand or sit so you are at a comfortable level with respect to the fire. Extend your arms, bent up at the elbow with your palms facing forward. This is called the "orans position," and is a common one for Pagan prayer. Nod your head or bow to the fire source and then say:

I invite you into my home,  
you who are the Queen of the Hearth,  
you who are the fire's bright flame,  
you who are the burning shining.  
I call to you, Brighid, to come to me.  
I ask you, Brighid, for your bright presence.

Light the fire source, saying:

The fire of Brighid is the flame on my hearth.

Pick up the pitcher in your right hand. Hold it up before the fire (you may put your left hand under it to steady it if necessary), and say:

A gift for you, Brighid of the Cows,  
A gift for you, Brighid of the Blessings.

Pour the milk into the bowl, saying:

My prayers are poured out with this milk.  
My words and deeds flow straight to Brighid.

Put down the pitcher, and, if you have a request, make it now. (I usually pray to Brighid for healing, inspiration, or home protection.) If you are not making a request (and it is good to just commune with the goddess for a while

from time to time), sit or stand in meditation on the flame. A good mantra to use is, "The fire of Brighid is the flame in my heart," while visualizing a fire burning in your heart. This mantra may be used at other times, to renew or establish a relationship with Brighid, or just to feel her comforting presence. It may be considered an offering to her in and of itself. When you are done, extinguish the candle or oil lamp, saying:

She ever burns, Lady of Fire,  
in my heart, in my home, on my family hearth (or  
"every hearth" if you live alone.)

Take up the orans position again, nod or bow, and the rite is done.

If you are using a fireplace, use the same words and the nod or bow, but leave the fire going. Spend some time by it, especially as a family. Brighid likes that.

Leave the bowl of milk in place for 24 hours, and then put it outside for the land spirits.



## Oak Leaves

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Our intention here is to rebut this recent article written by our fellow student of Celtic matters. Specifically, we wish to give an alternative view to the subject of the Secret Language of the Druids {*Bérta na Filid*}, the opinion of our colleague being that it was merely the use of metaphor within traditional stories. While we agree that the use of metaphor is present within the tales, we do not believe it to be the nature of the secret language. We also wish to address certain points or areas in the interpretation of the subject tale where we feel that our colleague may have erred or was extremely selective in data presented. We hope to do this by presenting a much broader and in-depth survey of academic sources.

We would first question the position that the secret language reportedly used by the Druids compares to metaphorical methods of composition. While the subtleties of metaphor and other literary devices certainly would have been known and used at the time and place of the ancient Druids, there is no reason to believe that these were the nature of their secret language. There is, in fact, good reason to believe that there was a specific approach or set of approaches to the secret language or languages of the Celtic educated class. Riddling was indeed a common Celtic practice and, as such, would have been used as a device by the Druids. But there is, again, no reason to believe that riddle was the nature of the secret language.

There are some details about the secret language of the Druids and Filid in the manuscript material, a language often referred to as the *Bérta na Filid*. *Teimh Laid* (the art of poetic interpretation in order to gain or divine secret knowledge hidden within the information) is also known to have been used in ancient times. So, we see that there were two different terms for these practices in use by the same people at the same time. Is it not reasonable to assume then that they were, in fact, two different things? While we agree that study and interpretation can be applied to the poems and stories of Old Irish material in order to gain insight, we do not believe that this is the nature of the Secret Language of the Druids.

We should also question the presumption that the Druids were students of philosophy and magic only, and that there is no evidence that they were Priests connected with any "special positive worship." We would point out that the quote from Professor O' Curry is originally from a set of lectures that were done as a survey of Irish *literary* evidence as contained in passages from manuscript materials. O' Curry made those remarks in reference to a specifically defined and intentionally limited body of evidence. Though ingeniously selected and presented as evidence in the article by Cathbad, when taken in context, the statement by O' Curry does not in any way support the argument for Druids as exclusively philosopher/magicians. The theory of the Druids as simply philosopher/



## Commentary

# Critical Analysis of "Initiation and the Druid Secret Language"

by Rob Barton and  
Gwynne Green

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magicians (popular in the Meso-Pagan era of the last two centuries) rather than the multi-faceted priest/poet/philosopher/judge/diviner/ seer /magicians that the evidence clearly shows them to be, is currently in disfavour and would find very little support in the halls of academia. We would also wish to query, if not the Druids, then who *were* the priests of the Insular Celts?

In order to show that the Druids included religious functions in their societal duties, we will begin with a re-



Dolmen in the Burrens Area of W. Ireland, near Galway.

turn to O' Curry, "where the Druid's altars and Idols were." Dr. Miranda Green, "They (Druids) probably possessed powerful religious and political influence during the free Celtic period." Caesar and Diodorus Siculus both describe the Druids as performing religious functions. Dr. Simon James: "The Druids were greatly esteemed in Celtic society - as intellectuals, judges, diviners, astronomers and mediators with the gods." Dr. Anne Ross: "Lucan describes groves of trees as being the favourite places of the Druids for their rites, and there is no need to contest this, all existing evidence supporting the statement."

Dr. Stuart Piggott: "The Druids are the first priesthood, or witch-doctors, or shamans, or seers in prehistoric Europe of which we have direct literary knowledge." Pr. Proinsias Mac Cana: "of the Druid/*fili* - priest, poet and erudite custodian of the tribal memory."

We will now look to the interpretation given of the famous tale "Cormac's Adventures in the Land of Promise." Cross and Slover believe this tale to be compiled from earlier works based upon legal cases, while we believe it to be intended to function as instructions for a King. It should also be noted that there is another related story giving the details of Cormac's advice to a Prince. The oldest known version of the tale, which is the object of this examination, is from a fourteenth century manuscript, but there is a reference made to it in a list of titles contained in an eleventh century manuscript.

We must also take issue with the use of the term "summoner" here, due to the source for this being an unrelated modern practice. One of the most serious mistakes that can be made in this type of research is to look for or apply modern details to ancient material. There is also the predisposition of a large section of the neo-pagan community to accept this due to current familiarity. While we do see messengers in many of the ancient tales, we do not see any type of summoner represented. If it were a part of some type of initiatory formula, one would expect to see this detail present in more of the stories. The character who initially meets Cormac and gives to him the branch is clearly Mannanan mac Lir, the God who eventually instructs Cormac, and not a messenger or "summoner" acting as his agent.

As to the description of the clothing of the Warrior whom Cormac meets,

we would like to point out that the bronze shoes {*assai*} appear quite commonly in the tales, and they are made of white bronze {*findruine*}. These shoes do, in fact, appear on the feet of Druids, Kings, messengers, and Queens, and essentially any member of the upper two classes of society. The shirt with gold thread is described as proper attire for a Poet {*Fili*} and also as attire for a King. There is another detail of clothing given in the tale, but not by my colleague in his article. The Warrior wears what is described as a "purple, fringed mantle around him." There are descriptions of the cloaks of Druids and Filidh. They are not purple: they are speckled or covered in feathers. There are several well-known references to purple cloaks in the tales, one upon Mannanan in this tale and another upon the shoulders of Midir; both of them Gods and both of them kings. The purple cloak does appear quite often in the tales; it is a common detail of the descriptions of the dress of a King. As to the multi-colored clothing of the Druid or Fili, they were allowed six colors and a King was allowed seven. Different ranks of society were allowed different numbers of colors in their attire, so being described as having multicolored attire is only significant of higher rank and not necessarily the position of Druid.

Though commonly honored as a gatekeeper among modern neo-pagans, Mannanan actually acts as a guide through liminal places by nature of his being a God of the Sea. Celtic society was very much a community that was stratified according to rank. Mannanan had the rank of a King, not that of a gatekeeper. There are two gatekeepers listed among the Tuatha De Dannan and they are Gamal mac Figal and Camall mac Riagall. Again, here our colleague is attaching a familiar modern practice to an ancient tale without legitimacy.



Interesting though the supposition is that the message here is "that in order to join the ranks of the Druids, one must break associations with one's own tribe," we believe it to be flawed. There are many instances of the practice of leaving clan and relations behind in order to become liminal to society and, by doing so, learn a new skill or establish a new place for one's self in the society upon return. This subject receives excellent treatment by Professor Joseph F. Nagy who demonstrates that this practice was common among young warriors. Even the Druid Cathbad left society for a time to establish himself, as did the female warrior Assa, who later became Niassa {*Ness*}. A detail of this practice is that the person leaves behind their connections with tribe and family, and all rank, position, and legal ties to their people. We would point out that Cormac remains King, retaining his attachments to kith and kin and his status within his society.

A few details about the people in the feasting hall and the hall itself. First, the descriptions of the people as being dressed as Druids: the few details given of the couple can apply to a King and Queen as easily as to a Druid. Cormac has his feet washed by invisible hands and then proceeds to take a bath, proposed in the article by our colleague to be some type of ritual purification. It was actually common practice in ancient Ireland to wash the feet of an honored guest, to which a King would qualify. The detail of having a bath before the evening meal was also a common Irish practice. The story would appear very strange were these simple matters of hospitality overlooked, and so we propose that they are just that: simple matters of hospitality due a King.

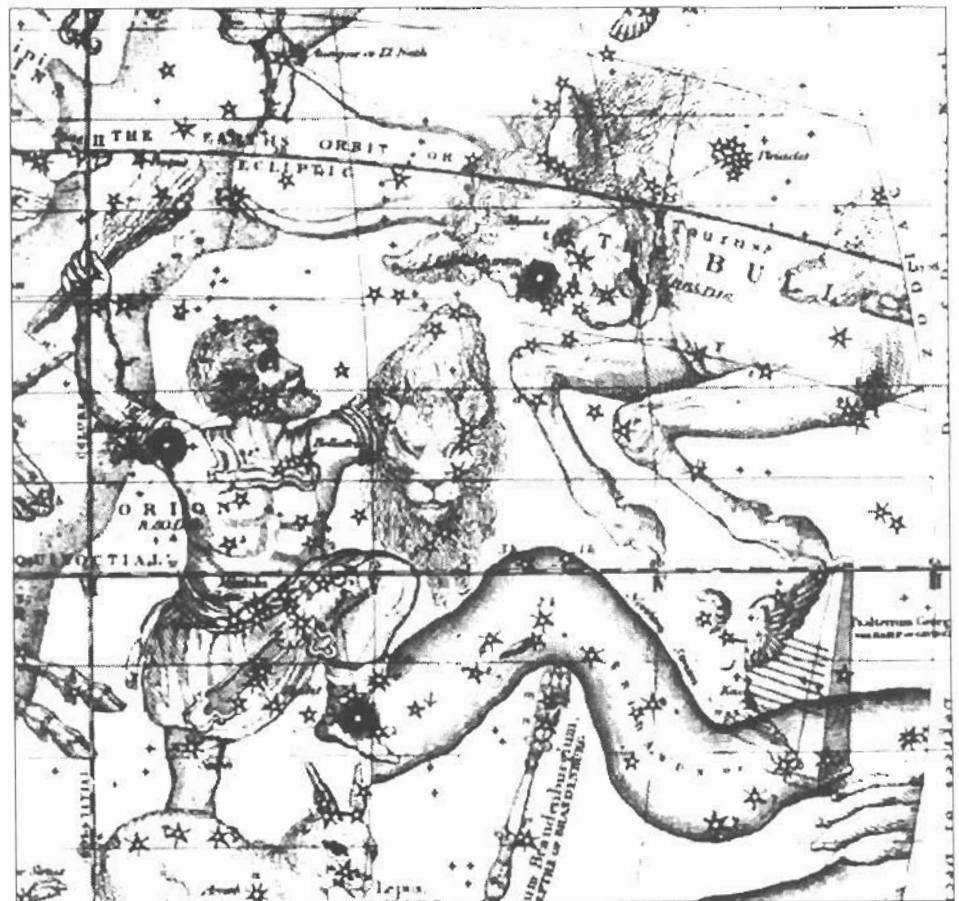
Next, we must address the position that the four people in the Hall were significant of the four cardinal directions. First, we would like to point

out that the Irish of that time recognized "here" as a direction giving them five primary directions and this, in fact, is a common detail of several IE cultures at that time. As for the archaeology of sacred sites showing any type of ritual significance for the four directions, again, we are seeing the injection of modern practice into ancient evidence. Irish sacred sites are marked by the inclusion of three things: Well, Tree, and Stone. Many known cult sites of the ancient Celts have easterly facing entrances and perimeters established by walls and ditches. There is usually an area inside the enclosure that contains pits, poles, or other details of the exact ritual area within the location. The danger here is that the reader may be led to inappropriately relate modern elemental-based symbology of the compass directions to ancient Celtic practice.

The significance of "fifty armed men" is, in fact, the number of attendants

expected to accompany a High King. Cormac himself points out that it is his custom that he not sit to eat without "fifty in my company." It was his custom long before his supposed "initiation," and this due again to his station as king.

Yes, Cormac was given several gifts and is taught several lessons of wisdom on his journey. Some of these lessons have to do with the several class divisions of society. Were Cormac being taught to be a Druid, his lessons would have been concerned with that particular class of society. King Cormac mac Airt stands at the center of all of the divisions of society and must understand the importance of each of the classes and their place in the world, and thus he is taught. This story seems to exemplify the education of a King, especially this particular monarch who would later have his lessons on the ruling of nations quoted and remembered for over a thousand years.



## Commentary

# A Reply to the Critical Analysis of "Initiation and the Druid Secret Language"

by Cathbad

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Druid Secret Language  
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Honourable companions,

There is a certain sense in which to contend with someone's ideas is to do honour to that person, because contending with someone's ideas presupposes that the ideas are worthy of contention. I am, therefore, grateful for the this criticism; I see it as a marvelous gift and as a chance to extend honour to them by composing a reply.

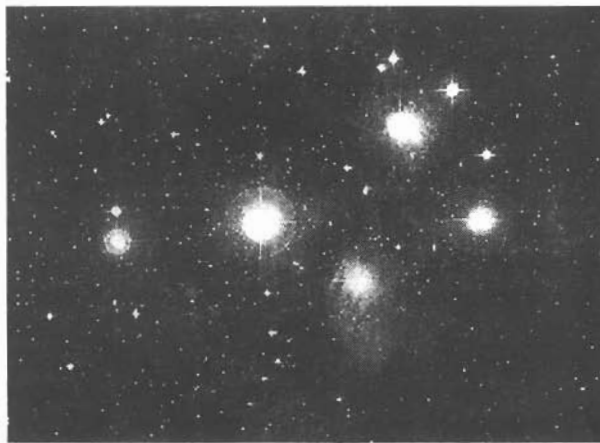
In the very first sentence of my essay, I defined a secret language as "a means of communicating ideas to selected persons in such a way that everyone else will not be able to understand the message." The thrust of my argument that followed, as my interlocutors correctly observed, was that poetic metaphor was the means used by ancient Druids to hide their meaning from some, while simultaneously making it known to others (presumably, other Druids). These good critics state that "there is no reason to believe that this was the nature of their secret language." Well, why not? I am not asking this rhetorically. I am drawing attention to the absence of any substantial argument to support their conclusion. The commentary offered alternatives, but not counter-propositions.

One of those alternatives was the *Teinm Laida*. Given the definition above, it seems implausible to include the *Teinm Laida* as a secret language. The *Teinm Laida*, one of the Three Illuminations," as it is sometimes called in contemporary Druidism, is not really a mode of communication, except in the very broad sense that the commentators have used. Fergus Kelly, in his *Guide to Early Irish Law*, tells us that *Teinm Laida* means "breaking the marrow" (although this translation is unclear) and is described as one of three specifically prophetic or supernatural powers that poets (*fili*) had to be able to practice. Patrick outlawed it, as well as the *Imbas forosna*, because they required the seer to call upon Pagan gods, but did not ban the third illumination, *Di/chetal di chennaib*, which did not. It's certainly a method for acquiring information, but not really a mode of communication.

This leads me to the point where, in my essay, I wrote that perhaps the Celtic Druids did not worship the gods. I had supported that claim with a comment from an essay by Dr. Eugene O'Curry. The commentators, by placing the quote in the larger context of Dr. O'Curry's work, suggest that this selection is misleading because it apparently presupposes an invalid assumption about the Druid's social functions. Now, I am aware of the multi-faceted nature of the Druids' social function. I am aware that they were more than magicians and philosophers, and I am also aware that those in the early period of the Druid revival (what they call the "mesopagan" period) emphasized those functions to the exclusion of other functions. I doubt that anyone studying Druidism seriously for a few years would

overlook those facts. I suggest to you, dear commentators, that my work is largely a work of literary theory and is not primarily about history, so to use an historian's rebuttal to counter a literati's arguments is misleading. Like Dr. O'Curry, I too am working primarily on a certain range of literary sources (in particular, Lady Augusta Gregory's two works of popular Irish mythology) and am trying to do nothing more than "report what the text tells me," as I indicated in my essay.

The reason I prefer using literary sources is because they report to us not only what the Druids were, but also, in an indirect way, what the Druids could be, what the meaning of the Druid could be, for us, today. In the Pagan community, I could announce



myself as a Druid, but I cannot reproduce the social power of the ancient Druids as the histories report it. The social order today is too radically different. However, as a primarily spiritual undertaking, I certainly can attempt to reproduce the spiritual power of the ancient Druids as the mythologies report it. This is the thrust of my intention for my recent essay, as it has been for my other publications in other contemporary Pagan journals.

Of course, that is only vaguely related to the substance of the commentator's missive. My academic training is philosophy, not history, after all, so please excuse the digression. Back to the commentary...

I read in that an objection to my use of the word "Summoner." All I can say in response to this is that, as indicated in the essay, the term is convenient and already well understood in the Pagan community. I disagree that it is a "serious mistake" in research to use terms that are common in our community; rather, I think that it is by using common terms that we develop a cross-divisional, common language, to facilitate understanding between all the different facets of Paganism. Moreover, there is no equivalent term that I know of in contemporary or ancient Druidism. The vague supposition that I am of Wiccan background is false (I entered the Pagan community via Druidism, and learned about Wicca some years later). I fully realise that, in the situation in the story, it is Manannan himself and not someone else acting as his agent; recall that I wrote "the figure who approaches Cormac is probably Manannan himself, or a Druid impersonating the God, for although the name is not given in the text it is implied by the title."

Regarding the issue of leaving one's tribe: The commentary says it is wrong of me to claim that "in order to become a Druid, one must break associations with one's tribe." I read in their argument something that seems to actually confirm my claim, where they wrote about the acceptability of "leaving clan and relations behind in order to become liminal to society and by doing so learn a new skill or establish a new place for one's self in the society upon return." I believe that this was the very point I was trying to communicate; breaking associations with one's tribe need is necessary to learn certain life wisdoms, but need not preclude re-establishing those relations at a later time. However, I will certainly consider the possibility that

my writing, and not their reading, was ambiguous or incomplete.

Another criticism that I happily accept is the issue of what Cormac becomes, at the end of it all. I am ready to accept that the story may have been expressing not Cormac's induction into an order of Druids, but his education for kingship. This seems reasonable, given the evidence of clothing, etc. presented here. I can accept that the offering of a bath was a common aspect of Celtic hospitality, and that the fifty armed men were his royal retinue. I must reject the supposition that the presence of the four ritual operators would somehow lead towards a Wiccan-style elemental correspondance. There is something of a slippery slope in this. Rather, I think that the presence of four ritual operators is a common feature of Irish ritual; it is how Dian Cecht enchanted his healing well with his three children, for example. It is replicated in the division of Ireland into four provinces, with Tara in the center. In the center of the circle of four in Cormac's story is the roasting pig, and that is where we get the direction of "here."

Of more vital interest to me (as a philosopher) is the nature of that education, which I speculated about in sections five and six. My good critics did not address the association I made with Plato's threefold soul and threefold state, which was part of the foundation for my argument. Perhaps, in the future, if I continue writing and these honourable companions continue critiquing, we could look together for more clues about the thoughts and ideas that animated the intellectual life of ancient Druids, with an eye for which among them we can bring back to life in our time.



Commentary

# February Thoughts

by Judith Anderson Morris  
(ladytoad)

February, our shortest month...When I was a child growing up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, February seemed interminably long, despite being the shortest month. By the time it arrived, we were weary of cold and snow, and only the prospects of February holidays gave us respite until March bustled in with spring nipping at her heels.

Valentine's Day was, of course, very exciting and occupied much of our time in those first weeks of the month, and a Leap Year added a touch of magic (just where did that extra day come from?). But, living as close as we did to a little town called Punxatawny, it was Groundhog Day that opened the month and brought with it the anticipation of a much-awaited prize.

On the morning of February 2nd, every school child for miles around discussed Phil (the famous Punxatawny Groundhog/weather forecaster's) prediction. Did he see his shadow at sunrise and go scampering back into his den for an additional six weeks of winter? Or would robins soon be arriving from their sunny winter playgrounds, bringing with them warm air and sunshine?

Phil's prediction was as important to me as the arrival on that same day (but hundreds of years before and an ocean away) of the high holiday of Imbolc was for my Celtic ancestors. February 2nd was a significant day for those farmers and herdsman, for it celebrated the fertility of the ewes and held forth the promise of full flocks and strong young lambs.

While I no longer worry too much about the fertility of the ewes, I can still identify with that ancient willing for fecundity, and for all that would help to nourish, to keep the cold at bay, and to add to the wealth of a farmer's pocket. Lambs are (stubbornly, and in one of those strange quirks of nature) born long before the height of spring. They are brought forth in snow and ice, and are anticipated as much by great hungry ravens, sly foxes, and other animals of prey as by the herdsman and his family. Thus, the bounding of playful lambs across the fragrant, flower-filled grasses of spring is as much a miracle as nature can produce - life against the odds; as much a gift from the gods as the return of the sun each year.

This year, as I perform my Imbolc ritual, I will light candles against the darkness, give gifts of bread and wine to encourage the yield of field and vine, and remember (in my blood, if not in my actual experience) the humility of a people before their gods, blessed by the miracle of fecundity that nature offers so grandly.

Whether Phil sees his shadow or not doesn't really matter; I know the promise of spring. It's waiting, as always, just around the next corner.



# On the Solitary Path

## On the Spiritual Path . . .

### Footnotes to a Spiritual Life

by ladytoad (Judith Anderson Morris)

It's easy to be a pagan as a member of a group; it's easy to practice Druidry with fellow grove members and experienced teachers. It's difficult to be a solitary Druid. Many good people with the best of intentions and the genuine desire to learn fall along the wayside for lack of fellowship; some join more accessible pagan paths, others simply give up. The singular most difficult task you will ever face is to practice as a Solitary Druid.

As a solitary of many years, I have found that the most important part of maintaining my spiritual Self is daily practice of meditation and/or ritual. If we aren't getting the support of a group gathering or chatting with another Druid, then we must rely upon the support of our gods. The Dedicant's Program puts us on the right path immediately by focusing us on the most important beliefs of our faith and providing us with the tools with which to later embrace more specialized study. The meditation learned in the DP is a Solitary's best friend.

I meditate every day – twice when I am really in the mode. Meditations do not have to be long periods of time. Ten minutes of quiet meditation in the morning puts you in “the zone” for the entire day. It takes you from your mundane plane to your spiritual one and allows the two to meld into an awareness of the world that is sharper, more focused, more open to possibilities. This habit of daily meditation over a period of time becomes a new way of looking at the world in general, of living your religious beliefs. It is a method of practicing our belief in Piety.

I have a simple altar in my living room. On it are a small cauldron representing the well, a bundle of birch sticks for the bile, and a small votive holder with a tea light representing fire. I light the candle and whisper a thanks offering to the Earth Mother and call upon the gods, spirits, and Ancestors to be with me that day. Then I sit on a pillow before the altar – sometimes with music, sometimes in simple silence – and meditate. At times, my meditations are simply quiet rejuvenation time, at others I am filled with great peace or awe, have distinct visions, or find that the answers to problems or questions in my life suddenly pop into my head full-blown. When I am finished, I bow in thanks and allow the candle to burn until I need to leave the house, at which time I extinguish it physically, but not mentally. If I am meditating in the evening, I allow the tea light to burn itself out.

I leave regular offerings during my meditations. These might be a pouring of sea salt, a feather I have found, or an acorn, a flower, or a beautiful leaf. I often leave fresh herbs from my garden, allow them to dry, and then burn them over the flame. Offerings are outpourings from our hearts to our gods. With the physical offering, we rededicate ourselves over and over again.

Try this simple plan. Resolve to make ten minutes of your day a ritual and meditation. I believe that in six weeks or so, you will have settled into a stronger, more fulfilled, daily Druidic life.



## BRIGHID

She who brings forth water,  
she who feeds the fire,  
helps them live together,



Better than live together.  
What is water in fire  
or fire in water but us?

Each living cell a drop of water  
burning inside, as do we all,  
toward more than elemental grace.

Goddess who banks the fire,  
goddess drawing from the well,  
goddess of holy fertility.

Farmers, poets, women birthing,  
all people of craft living fire, living water,  
owe homage to she who brings them together.

Through acts of creation we each have the power  
to help bring forth water, to help bank the fire,  
to mingle their magic, and keep them entire.

- Rye Wellwood




## ÉMIGRÉ

On this homesick day in spring  
when wind and rain  
have brushed a new-washed glitter on my world,  
a migration of starlings  
showers down upon the marsh  
like inky stains,  
insouciant--  
rowdy ruffians scolding  
in voices like rusty wheels  
chide me  
for straying so far from home  
and scorning explanation,  
dash and dart in exaggerated haste,  
a slapdash cloud  
hastening northward,  
trailing my heart like a kite-string.



- Judith Anderson Morris (the ladytoad)

## A POSSIBLE TALE OF COSMIC ORIGINS

Before all there was the Frost  
Wide and Deep, without end  
Undifferentiated - the Chaos Deep  
That frost was a Goddess  
Domnu was her name, and she slept.   
Into her sleep crept a dream,  
A fleeting thought, a sudden spark  
A Fire that caught and grew  
And shone amidst the Frost.  
That Shining was a God  
His name was Bel, and he was awake.  
Heat stirs the Frost  
She moves in sleep.  
She melts and flows.  
Domnu wakens by her lover Bel  
So ancient frost made melt  
Flows salt and starry, the First Sea,  
The Sea of Space, the Womb of Every Birth  
Danu, the First Mother, and she loves.  
The First Triad: Domnu the Frost, Bel the Fire, Danu the Sea  
Danu and Domnu, light and dark  
Bel was their lover, day and night  
Two tribes they bore, two tribes at war  
The Shining Gods and the Fomor Giants dire  
Set one against the other  
Their fate the making of the Worlds.  
The Fomor Domnu's children  
Danu bore the Tuatha De  
Never would their strife cease  
Til the Wonder-Child gained the victory.

- Ian Corrigan





## BRIGHID ?

At that in between place where sky hits water and water smacks at the shore.  
Stones burnt soot black of various size encircle flames forming a cauldron.  
The flames lick up to the sky.  
Maybe that's where Brighid resides.

Over a hill, rolling green or frozen brown. In lands where my ancestors have  
stepped, fallen, and risen.  
Where you never know if your going to disappear over each new mound of Earth.  
Maybe that's where Brighid resides.

In distant times a flame flickers eternal, in Kildare a devoted priestesshood.  
Around the world a flame is lit and burns. Each day a different woman, another candle, one flame.  
Maybe that's where Brighid resides.

As a poet's words flow into melody taking shape from inspiration.  
Divinely pouring from pen to mouth and mind to hearts.  
Spinning tales of Heroes, and landscapes, of Sun, God, Moon, and Goddess;  
prayers that become hymns.  
Maybe that's where Brighid resides.

Forged in dark lair or modern day factories, from metal of Earth, blood, sweat, and fire.  
Weapon of olde, of honour, of ornament, of war, is burned into existence by her touch.  
Maybe that's where Brighid resides.

On a day of hope, at the brink of cold desolate world soon awakening form sleep.  
A turning point of peoples looking toward the newness of life.  
In the hearts and minds and spirits of men and women;  
who speak and dream and thrive.  
Maybe that's where Brighid resides.

- Melissa Jenkins



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## OFFERING

Take this heart of mine--  
frayed and tattered as it is  
and stretch wide the fabric  
so sunlight webs through.  
Pull away its edges and tie them  
like prayer rags  
on an oak whose life has surpassed mine--  
victory banners  
to dance on the spirit of the wind.  
Make it the stuff of visions and dreams--  
small, torn pieces for those I love.  
Put to good use this ragged patchwork  
of old longings  
for might have, could have, should have  
beens.  
I give it freely, this heart of mine,  
frayed and tattered by love.

- Judith Anderson Morris  
(the ladytoad)



## MAPLE SYRUP

Photons, widely scattered, free...  
Impacting chlorophyll  
Synthesis from carbon, oxygen, water,  
Complex carbohydrates, stored deep in taproots,  
Sap and sugar for the long, cold winter months.

In Spring, the sap begins to flow anew  
And taps are set in maple bark,  
Slowly dripping heartsblood into buckets  
Tip... Tip... Tap...  
And soon, collected and boiled,  
Comes to fill the vats,  
Distilled to sweet and pungent syrup.

We wake to savory smells and run to table  
While mothers stack the wheat cakes on the plate  
And we uncork the pot  
And pour a long and golden stream  
Upon the steaming stack  
And, fork in hand, we eat our fill  
Until, at last, we are sated.

And thus in wholesome contemplation we reflect  
That every drop that we collect  
Is a small and tasty bit of sunstuff  
Burning deep within.

- Davroz (David Rozian)



tree  
shadow  
on the  
Emain  
Macha  
temple  
mound



Essay

# A Wobbly Bard at Imbolc

by Betz Ring

I am a bard. I remind myself of this as I sit and wish for words to come. The topic is Imbolc, and the deadline is soon. I have been feeding the fires of my inspiration with symbolism and correspondences, lore and legends... waiting for the birth of my own synthesis. I have been waiting for quite awhile.

I have named my challenge in this writing assignment; I know where the block is coming from. I am writing about Imbolc, but I am living in a personal Samhain. There is much ending and dying in my life right now, my marriage, my home, some friendships and some finances... there is much room for darkness and fear. Yet Imbolc is a time of new beginnings and of faith restored. A seeming polarity attends this block, how to write of faith when feeling fear. Yet I know both the Universe and myself rarely offer only two options. It has been my experience that when feeling trapped in polarity, it is helpful to combine the two poles into a third. Combine the endings and the beginnings into a place of both – which is where I sit today at my computer.

On the wheel of the year Imbolc is a place to be visited not only on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, but anytime the vibration of hope is needed. Can I take my Samhain self to my Sacred Grove and there bathe in the waters of Imbolc?

I break from the computer and enter my small temple... light some incense and make peace with my grove. Settled into my usual nook, I am overcome with both the deep comfort of the woods, and the deep sorrow of my soul. I am home, and I am sad. Like a child I run home when I am hurting, and the woods minister to my wounds. My back up against the huge Oak of the North, I pour out my story... my divorce, my fear, my excitement, my insecurities, my writers block and my embarrassment that my faith is not stronger. I ask for the Grove to lend me its knowing of Imbolc, that I may not only connect with renewal but may write of it as well.

The Grove is still. I am lulled by the wind in the trees, the sun on my face, the grounding of the Oak behind me. A rustle in the Western quarter calls my attention to the small pond there. A beautiful woman steps through the trees. She is sky-clad, the breeze blowing her long hair around her. She holds in her arms a swaddled babe and in her hand she carries a water pitcher. She moves towards the pond and settles herself on a large sun bathed rock. She offers a full ripe breast to the infant, who nurses with sounds of satisfaction. The woman closes her eyes and lifts her face to the sun, a half smile on her lips. She sings in a voice both gentle and strong:

“Come unto me my little Yule child, suckle my breasts full of love... come unto me in springtime so mild, suckle my breasts full of love”

She sings this way until the babe has finished eating, and then she rocks back and forth until the child is asleep. She finds a sun-warmed spot among the roots of a tree, and nestles the sleeping infant there, returning to the pond. She steps one foot into the pond and bends to fill her pitcher. Turning back she offers some of the water to the earth. Then bending, she pours the rest over her own hair. Her hair is so long... it floats on the ripples she makes... she gathers the length of it and dunks completely under, swirling her head back and forth and emerging laughing. Stepping from the water she wrings her hair out and faces East. With a whispered word the winds pick up, and she combs her long tresses with her fingers as the wind lifts and dries them. She checks for a moment on the sleeping child, then lays on the rock, clean beautiful tresses behind her, milk filled breasts skyward. She hums the song to herself again, and I am suddenly very very tired. I find myself wishing to be young again, wishing to be nursed by my all-loving Mother, wishing to be warm and fed and sleeping in the sun. I feel my back slip down the trunk of the Oak, am vaguely aware of laying down in the soft dirt. I hum the song of the Mother and rock back and forth. I remind myself that this Grove is now my Mother, and that I am free to nurse here anytime. I remind myself that I am warm and fed and almost asleep in the sun... and that all I have to do is remember to show up. Just remember. Sleep overtakes me, and I wake to find myself in my Temple, curled up in the smallest ball, a half smile on my face.

Back down to the computer. It frequently seems sacrilege to confine the experiences of the Inner Planes to the page, so much is lost... and yet I suspect I have brought back some kind of useful information to share with my companions on the path. Something about milk... sheep maybe....

First off I notice that I am no longer afraid, or sad. How did that happen? I sat next to my favorite tree, which is always good. Is the message simply to remember nature? What about the milk memory? Were there some sheep there... is the message that milk will be provided when necessary? Why does it seem that one little lamb was taking first wobbly steps... was there a wobbly lamb in the grove? Is the message that one must wobble before walking? I am visited with advertising campaigns of past and present... "We Bards wobble but we don't fall down" and "Got milk?" I groan and keep typing.

Washing some thing... did I wash my feet maybe... is the message to remember that cleansing is a necessary step towards renewal? I seem to remember feeling beautiful, did I do a naked dance perhaps, with my Grove Guides? I do so love to dance naked, it would explain why I am no longer sad or afraid.

Hmmm. So tie it all together now. The living in Samhain and writing about Imbolc. The divorce, the endings, the beginnings, the milk and the wobbling and the dance.

I am reminded of a birthday party that I attended last week, at a restaurant. There was a small boy, just toddling, who had wandered a few feet away from his Mother. He was thrilled with his freedom, but frequently looked back to make sure she was there. I was sitting with a group of psychologists, and we commented on how perfectly he was expressing both the need to separate and the anxiety of separating. His mother must have read a few books herself, for she allowed him his adventure, and smiled at him whenever he looked back for reassurance.

So it is for me at Imbolc... and I have often said that what is true for me it is likely true for others, for I am not so different from my companions... We are once again toddling and wobbling in the New Year, all within us is yet potential to be actualized. We are scared and excited. We know we must proceed, around the wheel of the year, yet we wouldn't mind just one more breast full of milk before we get on with it. If we remember to look back we will see our Mother smiling her encouragement. If we forget, we will feel lonely and scared, but nonetheless we will be fine, for She has fortified us for our journey. We need only remember. Just remember.



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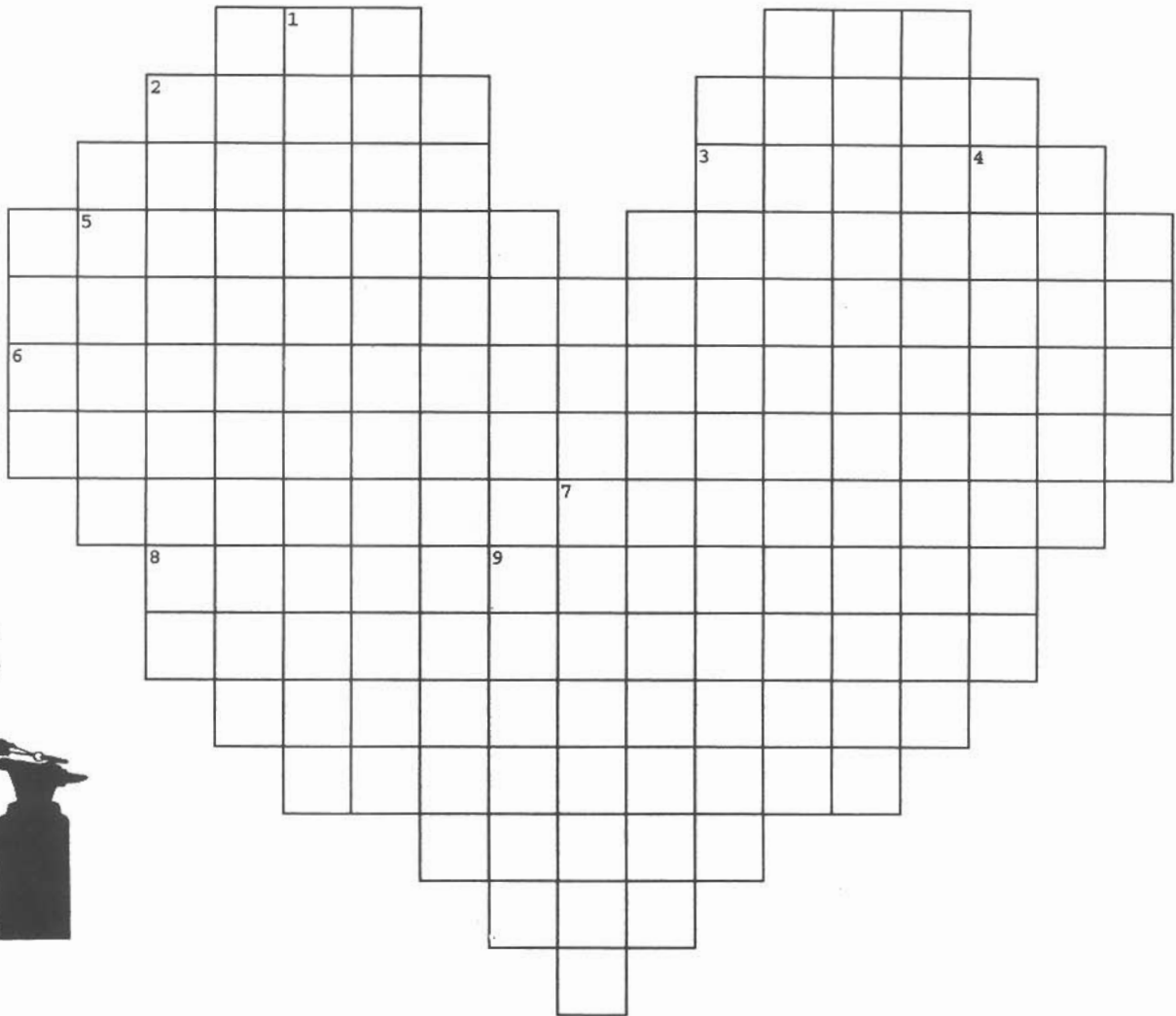
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## Brigid's Blessings

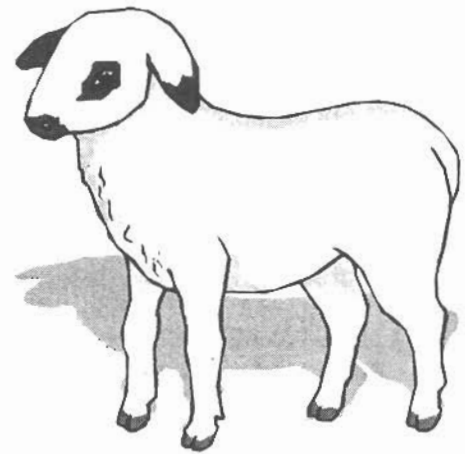


### ACROSS

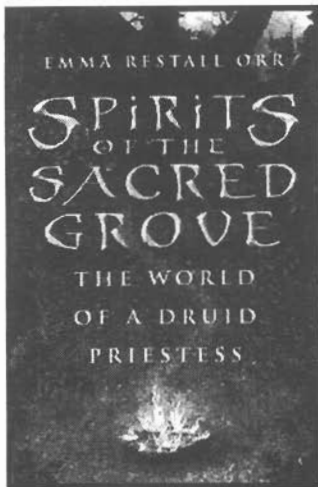
2. Smiths use these to melt ore
3. Brigid was a goddess of these folk
5. Another spelling for Brigid
6. Bards ask Brigid for this
8. Person who sings and tells stories
9. She's also a goddess of this

### DOWN

1. Make these to honor Brigid
3. Make these to represent Brigid
4. Brigid's special day
7. A place to tend Brigid's flame



# Book Reviews



## SPIRITS OF THE SACRED GROVE: THE WORLD OF A DRUID PRIESTESS

BY EMMA RESTALL ORR  
Thorsons, An Imprint of  
Harper-Collins Publishers.  
1998.  
ISBN 0-722-53596-1

reviewed by Dragnyphyre

### A SURPRISING FIND

This book was a find at the local B. Dalton's bookstore, amidst a number of questionable books on Tarot, and many published by Llewellyn. The title intrigued me, so I brought it home and began reading it.

Emma Restall Orr was in the news this year as one of the Druids who was denied access to Stonehenge for Summer Solstice after "New Age travelers invaded Stonehenge Monday, spoiling Summer Solstice celebrations before British riot police moved in to clear the ancient stone circle and arrested 22 people..."

"...There's a disappointment and also a great sadness," Emma Restall-Orr, joint chief druid of the British Order of Druids, told BBC radio. "The greatest sadness is perhaps seeing people standing and dancing on top of the stones. It's not only dangerous for them, it's desecration of a sacred site..." (Reuters newswire, 6/21/99)

Her book is no less spiritual in nature. There are nine chapters, each one corresponding to a Druidic holiday. It begins and ends with Samhain, the Celtic New Year. She explores what each holiday means to her with stories drawn from her own life. As I read into the book, farther and farther, I really felt that I was there with her as she walked through her sacred Grove, through the turning of the year.

Also included in her book are some rituals that she has done, as well as personal conversations that she has with her patrons. She goes over a brief history of Druidry and Celtic migrations, as well as looking into the religion of Druidry as it is practiced today.

All in all, it is a very entertaining and informative book,  
*(Continued on page 37)*



## CELTIC SUNSET: THE CULANN SCROLLS

BY ROY EDWARDS  
ISBN 0-646-32537-X

reviewed by Peter Mawson

### A NOVEL

I am not over fond of lengthy introductions. However, from the start of Chapter One, I was hooked and remained so until I reluctantly turned the last page. While reading this novel, I had to pause now and then to remind myself I was reading a work of fiction. *Celtic Sunset* is a brutal and surprisingly profound first-hand account of a lone Druid's struggle to save his people, the Averní Celts, and the ancient wisdom from total annihilation as the Legions of Rome advance, destroying everything in their path. Finally, after years of attrition and bloody guerrilla combat, the Druid abandons the remnants of his people to their fate, in a desperate attempt to save something of what is known as the Druidic Fourfold Way.

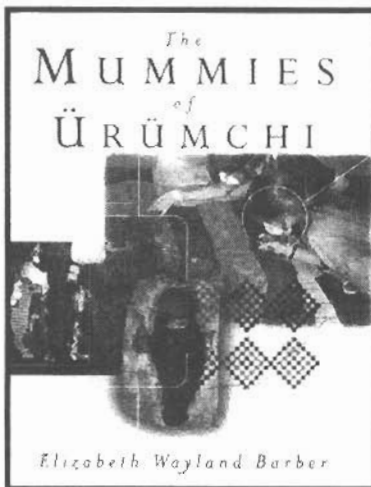
In a distant land he begins to merge aspects of druidry with the spiritual earth wisdom of an ancient tribal people, only to discover a shocking prophecy that predicts his new people, in generations to come, will also face the threat of ruthless extermination. All does not go well.

The author's style is very much his own, with evocative imagery that haunted me for days. The intimation of similarities between Celtic and Native Americans' holistic worldview is handled with care and respect.

I would highly recommend this, and the author's subsequent books on the subject, to anyone who has an interest in the origins of Druidry and the Celtic Tribes.

So far as I am aware this book has not yet been published in America although it has been on sale in Australia for a few years now. It is available through Edward's Book Agency (no relation to the author!) at Edward's Book Agency, PO Box 177, Jolimont, Western Australia 6913, and also through Amazon.com.





## THE MUMMIES OF ÜRÜMCHI

BY MARY WAYLAND  
BARBER  
W.W. NORTON & CO.  
1999.  
127 pages  
ISBN 0-393-045218

reviewed by Cynndara Morgan

### WEAVING HISTORY


What did a subsistence farmer, buried in the high, arid mountains of western China, and a salt miner toiling in the mines of Hallstatt in 800 BCE have in common? How can the homeland of the Proto-Indo-European peoples be located by mapping the technology of weaving? What do textiles tell us about the lifestyle and beliefs of people who lived thousands of years ago and left no written records? In *The Mummies of Ürümchi*, Elizabeth Barber deftly weaves archeology, craft expertise, and scholarship to reveal amazing answers.

Language barriers, remote location, and decades of political unrest long combined to render the western highlands of China, a key link in the ancient "Silk Road," virtually unexplorable by foreigners. As China's government seeks to normalize relationships with westerners, scientific teams have gained access to priceless archeological opportunities. Benefiting from a combination of arid climate and high soil salt concentrations, burials in the Tarim Basin have survived in a remarkable state of preservation for up to 4,000 years. These sites provide us with some of the

vanishingly few examples available of actual fabrics produced in the era of the later Indo-European migrations. And those textiles offer astonishing clues to the cultural affinities of these people who settled in marginal farming villages from the northern steppes.


Barber, a practicing craftswoman as well as a trained archeologist, begins with careful description of mummies whom she personally examined. Line drawings and photographs liberally illustrate the mummies themselves, and technical points of weaving methodology. Although the author is a credentialed scholar, her language is clear and addressed to lay readers rather than academics. She follows the initial description of her unique studies with a more in-depth background on the history of archeological finds in the same area, then moves backward through time to trace settlements and peoples recorded by history. Finally, she demonstrates how Indo-European linguistics and cultures physically distant from her burials link them to the entire world of Eurasian prehistory.

Barber's book is worth its price for the photographs alone. But the photos and the description of the mummies is far from all it contains. Keeping to broad ideas tied firmly to a specific set of archeologic relics, this author succeeds in describing the scope of late Bronze Age migrations, early Indo-European physical culture and even religious practices. Thus, key concepts in Indo-European studies are covered, without the distraction of excess academic or linguistic details which might overwhelm the beginner.

The anchor of physical evidence prevents wild theorizing, and where possibly excessive hypotheses of other scholars are quoted as authoritative, the excellent references provide all that is necessary to pursue further research. *The Mummies of Ürümchi* is one of those rare books that can be enjoyed by both the scholar and the confirmed layman. I recommend it as an ideal alternative to Mallory as an introduction to Indo-European studies, whether for new ADF members -- or for your mother-in-law. 

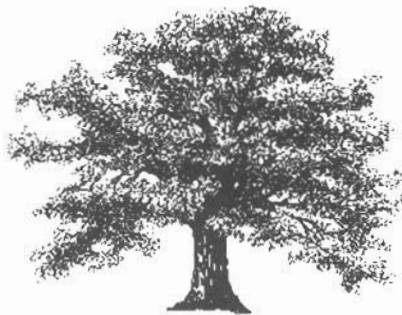
(Continued from page 36)

and I feel that I learned a lot about Druidry from it. I would highly suggest it to those people who are just first starting to delve into the study of Druidry.

The British Druid Order can be contacted at PO Box 29, St. Leonards on Sea, East Sussex, TN37 7YP, UK. The Order can also be found on the Internet at <http://www.druidorder.demon.co.uk> 

For inquiries email the new Book Review Editor, Jennifer Kennedy <[falan@planet.con.net](mailto:falan@planet.con.net)> or send to Flickering Shadows Protogrove (see contact info in ADF Directory).

# Falling Acorns



## 6<sup>TH</sup> NIGHT GROVE Amergin, Senior Druid

The quarter from Lughnassadh to Samhain, 1999, has been a period of tremendous growth for our Grove. We started the quarter with 11 members and added eight new members in August! Fifteen of our members are active (having a vote on all Grove business coming up in this present quarter) and four are currently inactive.

During the past quarter we celebrated the Festival of Lughnassadh at the Germantown Metropark with a camp-out and games. (Next year we'll win back the White Horse from Triskele River Grove!) We had a wonderful Harvest Feast in our home Nemeton for Mean Foghamar. We continued to hold regular Rites of Offering to our Grove Patrons on the first and third Sunday of each month, as well as a monthly Dedicant's Program Study Group. We now have 10 titles in our Grove library. Many thanks to all those Grove members who donated books!

We will begin our present quarter on Samhain with a day trip to Ft. Ancient State Park to perform a Rite of Offering to the Ancestor Spirits there, and then return to hold our regular Samhain Rite in our home Nemeton. We are planning a large Yule feast and Mean Geimredh rite at Kim, Gary, and Michelle's home this year, with a gift exchange among Grove members to follow. We will end this quarter with the Imbolc Hearth Rite at John and

Karen's home, and the lighting of individual candles from the eternal Flame of Brighid, which Grove members can take back to their own homes. I am very excited that we have kept the Flame of Brighid perpetually lit since last Imbolc! A whole turn of the wheel with daily devotional praise in Her honor!

I want to wish every member of The 6<sup>th</sup> Night Grove and Ár nDraíocht Féin a hale and hearty "Merry New Year," and send the blessings of the Gods to each and every one of you as we enter into this new season, and the Dark Half of the year.

## Scribe's Report Ansara, Grove Scribe Special Elections and Bylaw Changes

The 6<sup>th</sup> Night Grove began the quarter from Lughnassadh to Samhain, 1999, by holding a Special Election to fill the office of Grove Pursewarden vacated by Chris A. The official results of that election were as follows:

Of the eleven (11) active 6<sup>th</sup> Night Members, eight (8) ballots were received, all with votes to the affirmative. Pam P. was duly elected the new Pursewarden of the 6<sup>th</sup> Night Grove, ADF, with her term ending Samhain 2000.

The Liturgy Committee proposed on September 26<sup>th</sup>, 1999, to alter the Bylaws of the 6<sup>th</sup> Night Grove with the following amendments to the Standard Liturgy:

1. Page 5, in the "Opening the Gates" section: That "Manannan Mac Lir, accept our sacrifice" be added as a responsorial, and that the instructions "the Senior Druid takes the Bile from its stand" be deleted.
2. Pages 9, 10 and 11, in the "Patron Offerings" section: That the liturgy for

each of the 3 Patron Deities of the Grove, which now ends "Show us your True and Holy light," be amended to now read, "Accept our sacrifice," added as a responsorial.

3. Page 15, in "The Closing" section: That the instructions "The Senior Druid takes the bile from its stand once more" be deleted.

4. That the Songs of The 6<sup>th</sup> Night Grove, as currently listed in Appendix E, Page 30, of The Druid's Handbook, no longer be used at the Grove's Rites of Offering, but be replaced by the songs from the *Sharing Blessings* tape produced by Stone Creed Grove, ADF.

Ballots were prepared and sent to each of the 19 active voting members of the Grove. The results were as follows: 9 ballots were returned with 8 voting in the affirmative to accept the changes, and one voting no. The motion to accept these changes was passed.



## MUIN MOUND GROVE Skip Ellison, Senior Druid

In the past quarter, we celebrated Lughnassadh on 7/31, Mabon on 9/25 and Samhain on 10/30. We've had business meetings on 8/1, 9/12, 9/26, 10/10 and 10/31. It's hard to keep to a biweekly schedule in the summer. We hosted Muin Mound Madness here from 8/20 to 8/22, and we took a field trip to the local "Pagan Picnic" on 8/29.

We'll be celebrating Yule on 12/18 and Imbolc on 2/5. There will be business meetings on 11/14, 11/28, 12/5, 12/18, 1/8, 1/23 & 2/5.

I just started a database to track membership this quarter, so I don't have a

breakdown for the start. At the end of the quarter, we had 14 members of the Folk of the Grove, 1 full member (hasn't joined the Folk yet), 1 national member (isn't a local member), 37 local members and 28 newsletter subscriptions.



## SHINING LAKES GROVE Rob Henderson, SD

On September 12th, we had our Guild Barbecue, and each of our local guild chapters gave brief presentations and answered questions from interested new folks. (And we've had a lot of those lately!) Several of our local guilds put together FAQ lists for the occasion, which have been added to our Web page.

On September 18th, we held our Fall Equinox rite. We performed our now-traditional Stag Dance, based loosely on the Abbots Bromley horn dance from England. Ritual leader Rob Henderson danced while holding our carved wooden Stag head, and Kirn, Kestrel and Qr\*wfunder wore antlered headbands. These four danced around the nemeton before heading off into the woods, dragging the rest of the participants with them! We finished the rite by blessing those members who chose to go on the Sacred Hunt, which was held the next weekend. At this event, which is held each spring and fall, we hike out into the woods, and, divining with the appearance and movements of animals, travel the land in search of our Stag God. The site where each hunt ends is where the next one begins. September 24th saw Annette, Kestrel and Kirn head off to the wilds of western Washtenaw County. Sadly, there was some confusion as to where the Spring Hunt had finished, and they ended up at the

wrong site! October saw our first ever election for a new Senior Druid, with Fox stepping down from the role he had held since 1994. The winners of the election were:

Senior Druid: Rob Henderson,  
Pursewarden/Registrar: Patrick Monagin, Scribe: Jan Henderson,  
Outreach Coordinator: Genevieve Stoyak

Also, the following officers were appointed:

Assistant Senior Druids: Annette Gabriel and Rodney Cox, Grove Ecologist: Don Clayton

On the weekend of October 29th and 30th, SLG participated in the local mirror event for Blessed Be and Meet Me in DC. Our event was in Sterling Heights (one of Detroit's northern suburbs) at Freedom Hill Park, and approximately 800 people attended. Several musical acts performed (including SLG's own Brook Ratliffe), and Rob Henderson gave a presentation on ADF's standard liturgy. We also held a flower drive for a local hospital and a canned food drive for a local food bank.

On November 5th, we held our inauguration rite for our newly elected officers. As the new officers stood together, the rest of the Grove members faced away, and Fox called upon the Three Realms to rise against these officers if they were unworthy. We all proved worthy, thankfully! The new Senior Druid was particularly singled out, as he was forced to take oaths to the Kindreds while Fox held a knife to his throat, and was then forced to eat horse's hair! We held our two Samhain rites the day after the inauguration. Our family-friendly afternoon rite had six children and

twelve adults in attendance. We all helped our tribal patron Lugh to find our local river goddess Ana and reunite them for the winter. At the evening ritual, about fifty participants gathered in our nemeton after dark. We made a symbolic journey to the Otherworld, where we called upon Manannan and the Ancestors, and held a group dance as an offering.

At the November meeting of our local Healers' Guild, Rodney Cox did Reiki attunements (levels I and II) for those present. Also, at our local Magicians' Guild meeting, Rod presented the finalized version of our guild ritual structure, for use in personal or group workings. This should be available on the SLG Web site soon.



## GARRAN ABHAINN TRISKELE TRISKELE RIVER GROVE Antonyus Kaleal, SD

I find myself looking back this past year at the incredible growth this Grove has had and I am amazed at all that has happened. At Samhain last year there were four active grove members and one on a temporary retreat in Florida. During this past year our Grove Bylaws have been approved. Our grove warden has changed, as well as our grove scribe. Each of their reports from the last quarter follows this report. Our number of grove members has grown dramatically, to twenty-four adults and fifteen children, despite very little active outreach into the local community. Our outlook has always been that true daily spiritual fellowship with all people builds a strong community. Our grove has a food pantry, which donates canned items to local shelters. We clean some of the area parks and

rivers on a regular basis. Our community Services Committee has donated walking equipment to the elderly people of Cincinnati. Harmony with the people and creatures of the Earth gives our grove members strength. It gives us a reason and purpose to what an 'Earth centered Religion' should be for the people of our grove and the others of our community.

Our Dedicant's study group usually has ten to fourteen members attending. I hope to be able to send some of their completed work to the national office as soon as we archive it here. Our new web site is under construction and should be running shortly after Imbolg 2000. We have in our grove four active guilds including the Warriors Guild, Healers Guild, Mages Guild, and Artisans Guild, plus a Bardic Guild to be formed shortly.

Our Great Hall is almost complete. It has been given the name 'Sigil Hall' and truly was the work of the entire grove. Sigil Hall is a renovated two-car garage with a cathedral ceiling and post and beam. After Mean Geimredh (Yule) we plan to complete the interior paneling, which will fully complete the Great Hall. We use the Hall for all our Tribe meetings, High Council, Dedicant's study group, Ritual meals and Guild meetings. Our stone circle Nemeton is just outside our Hall.

The current officers of Garran Abhainn Triskele are; Antonyus Kaleal-Senior Druid; Phourest Silverwolf-Scribe-Chamberlain; Hepsabeh-Grove Warden. Our Guild Chiefs are Cullen Windwalker -Warriors Guild; Phourest -Healers Guild; Antonyus -Mages Guild, Jezrieal -Artisans Guild.

We have various active committees for fund raising, community services, outreach committee (not active), chil-

dren's activities, and grove fun events. Now that we have members in the grove that participate and share in fellowship we are becoming a very close Tribe. We find compassion, strength, and spiritual growth here in the southern Ohio River Region. May the Shining Ones continue to uphold our lives.

### **Scribe's Report** **Phourest Q. Silverwolf,** **Grove Scribe**

We have had a very active turning of the Wheel these last few quarters. At Midsummer we worshipped with 6<sup>th</sup> Night Grove in the Glenn Helen Nature Reserve at their first annual Summerland Gathering. Glenn Helen is a small preserve owned by the local college and kept in remarkable condition. There is a freshwater spring that bubbles up from the face of the rocks and creates many beautiful waterfalls and natural pools for cooling tired feet.

Not far from the spring is a burial mound that has been honored for many years. We left silver and tobacco as our offering and knew that the ancestors were pleased. For me it was an especially wonderful time. It was the first time that I had been able to worship during the wee hours of the night without worrying about being run off or disturbed. It is a piece of land that has truly been blessed by OmMa Giea.

We also celebrated Lughnassadh with 6<sup>th</sup> Night Grove. The event was held at the Germantown Metro Park, Shimps Hollow, and included a campout Saturday night July 31<sup>st</sup>, with a Ritual on Sunday August 1<sup>st</sup>. Following the Rite we enjoyed a community cookout and the summer games. We won the White Horse from 6<sup>th</sup> Night Grove, and if

they think they're going to take it back from us next year they have another thing coming. Unfortunately, only a few of our tribe were able to attend the Rite. The rest of us spent a quiet time with our families, contemplating the year to come.

Mean Foghamhar (Mabon) was the first festival for the tribe at Sigil Hall. It was a great event. Seventeen people came to the Ritual, feast and Norse sumbel. Most spent the night sleeping together in the Hall. We truly felt like a tribe, and a family. The feast consisted of stuffed turkey, roast pork, baked potatoes, fresh breads, and more food than I can remember or name. The ale and mead flowed freely and the drumming and dancing took everyone back to the days of old.

This year's Samhain festival was held at Sathavyn Sanctuary (Property owned by one of the tribe members). The site opened Friday evening and by late Friday night the entire tribe had gathered. We spent the wee hours recounting the year and all we were grateful for. We laughed together, cried together, and sat silently together listening to the great dragon breath. By cock's crow the last of us had rolled up in our cloaks for a few hours of slumber before the day began. Saturday started with a vengeance as the tribe finished the final preparations for the evening Ritual. The day was filled with workshops for the adults and crafting for the children. There was wood to be hauled, pumpkins to be carved, and general mayhem to be enjoyed. The children of the grove found the remains of an animal and asked that we reassemble it for the rite. With the help of all involved we managed to get an acceptable likeness of the beast. It was an honored passed kindred. I will not give much detail of the rite save this, many ancestors joined us for our ritual and passed

over to the Summer Lands. Sovereignty of the Tribe was bestowed upon Antonyus, Cullen was distinguished as the Marshal of the grove, and the Gods observed and were pleased.

Now for the Business side of Triskele River Grove:

Work on Sigil Hall began in earnest on August 21<sup>st</sup>. Our goal was to have it completed by second harvest. By the sweat of our brow and the grace of the Gods, we met the deadline. The Hall is finished. All that is left is a little cosmetic work (paneling).

At our business meeting at the end of August, Open stepped down as Grove Warden. Hepsabeh is acting Grove Warden until completing her Dedicant's work as per our By Laws.

The council of elders has been asked to pick tasks the tribe can take care of and began delegating some of the responsibility to the tribe itself. All the members that have been approached have welcomed the opportunity to assist and serve to help the grove grow.

The Guild Chiefs have decided to hold guild meetings on opposite Saturdays from Worship Services. This, they feel, will give the tribe added time together to socialize while other members are in their guild meetings.

We now have a local listserv for the grove. Open and Krystal Wolf are moderators of the list, which has become fairly active.

Now that there are a number of children in the grove some decisions need to be made for their safety and care. All parents gave permission to all adults to correct any child should it be deemed necessary. All children in the tribe have been taught the respectful and proper way to approach

any member of the grove during ritual and how to participate in worship without interrupting. (As a single adult I should like to add that the kids are wonderful and bring a spirit to our worship that I truly appreciate.)

Due to the short absence of our Senior Druid (do to his work out of the area), Phourest has been appointed to Chamberlain and has been leading ritual for the grove until Antonyus' much awaited return.

Community Worship Services, High Council, Dedicant's Study Group, Guild meetings, and Business meetings are being held at Sigil Hall. Full moon services are being observed at Sherwood Grove. Our next full year of Worship has been scheduled so that more of the tribe can attend rite if they are so inclined.

### **Pursewarden's Report Hepsabeh, Grove Pursewarden**

Donations are up from almost nothing to an in-the-black amount of \$259.15.

Members of the grove have donated money to pay for our expenses. It seems that regular amounts are being offered at each rite.

The largest expense the grove has is the printing costs for our seasonal publication. That has been running just under \$180.00 per quarter. We maintain a high standard of quality, as "The Portal of the Well" is our grove's journal to the community, so at this time the expense is worth it.



## **STONE CREED GROVE Liafal, Outgoing SD**

Stone Creed Grove's Lughnasadh celebration, held at Tredara, began with tests of strength, endurance, and wit. The Wiccan stick competition was especially fierce. This game takes place in a 6' by 2' court, where two people take opposite ends of the stick and attempt to push each other out of the court. As the games continued, we had three top contenders for the title based on their accumulation of points. The winner was finally decided by the poetry competition. The poetry competitors are given a subject related to Lughnasadh and, after twenty minutes, they must recite a nine line poem. This year the subject was the wedding of Aine and Lugh. JR, a former Senior Druid of Stone Creed, who came in second in the poetry contest, was the ultimate victor of the games, but first place honors for the poetry contest went to Fran Rosen.

Sean and Melissa then led us in the rite to honor Lugh and Aine. In our traditional way, the champion was given the honor of spearing the loaf that represented Balor.

Election of officers took place. Sean Miller was unopposed for Senior Druid, as well as Fran Rosen for Scribe, and Anastacia for pursewarden. Sean is a founding member of Stone Creed Grove and is currently local and national webmaster. Fran has been an important part of the grove for the last two years. She brings her impressive computer and editing expertise to her office. Anastacia has been working as pursewarden since the beginning, and we are always amazed and relieved that she happily continues in the job. We are very happy to have some new and enthusiastic folks in leadership.

Tredara also hosted our Fall Equinox rite where excessive amounts of offer-

ings were made to Manawyddan. He is the Welsh form of Mannanan, a trickster God of magic and initiation. Once more, Sean and Melissa guided us through the ceremony. Celebrants were greeted by beautiful weather and much feasting.

Stone Creed's Samhain ceremony honored Morrigan and Donn. The roll of the dead was read by John, who has taken that job upon himself for several years. We made sacrifice to the dead using the three functions: producers, warriors, and the wise. Sean and Melissa led us on a journey to the hall of the dead where Morrigan and Donn were enthroned. Sacred masks were used as a manifestation of the Gods as they offered their blessings. During the ceremony, our new officers took their oaths before the Gods, spirits, and the assembled people.

After the busy summer schedule had calmed down, we began to hold our monthly Blessing Rites at the new Starwood Center in Cleveland. These rites use a modified ADF ritual outline that contain all of the usual ritual elements. We give the participants

scripts and read the parts in unison. The rite focuses on practical magic, as the spirits are asked to grant specific boons for the folks.



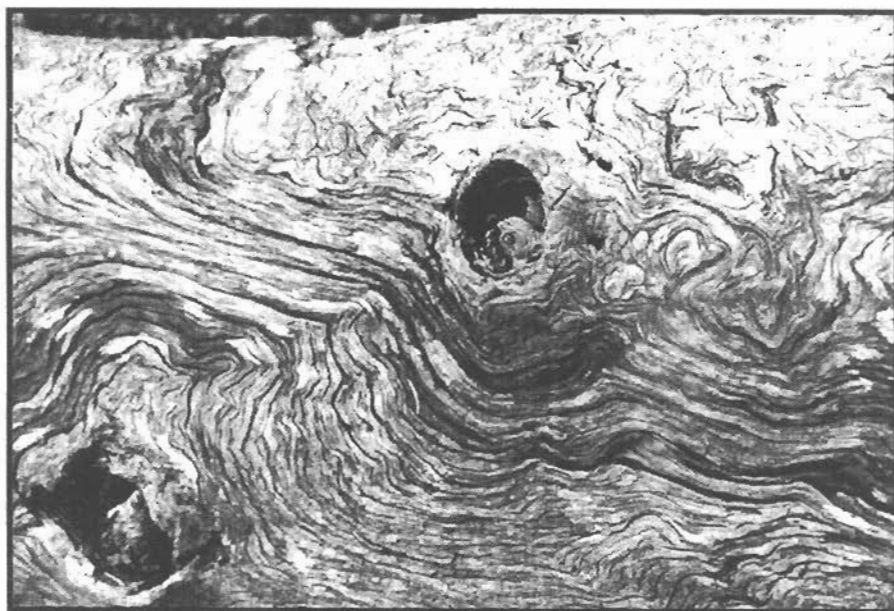
## TWIN DRAGONS PROTOGROVE Bard Corragh, Grove Organizer

Phoenix, Arizona is nicknamed "The Valley of the Sun." What better place for a group of Sun worshipping Celts to be than the deserts of the Southwest? Twin Dragons Protogrove is pleased and proud to be a part of the growing ADF community. Currently the core group consists of four fantastically devoted people who put up with me on a regular basis. I could not have done it without them. Our former affiliate, Red Hawk Grove, disbanded in October due to personal reasons. However, there is no ill will, and we believe Twin Dragons has greater potential for success.

We have begun work with group devotionals. The members who have registered with ADF are exploring their personal beliefs and learning to express them in a group setting. We are culturally exposing ourselves (keep your minds out of the gutter, kids) by exploring the Celtic culture through music, poetry, art, and legend.

Our Pacific Regional Rep, Dragon, came down to Phoenix with his lady companion to visit shortly after Winter Solstice. We enjoyed his company and appreciated his efforts to meet us. When he left, he took our feelings, concerns, and opinions about ADF and grove work along with him. This type of dedication and concern for our welfare should be a model for other volunteer administrators to follow.

In closing, we hope that you will accept our hospitality if you're ever in town. If you ever have advice for an aspiring provisional grove, please contact us. May the Old Ones guide you and yours to the path of peace.



# Guild Notes

## Warriors' Guild

**Rob Henderson –  
Chief Warrior, ADF**

November 1999

Our Study Program work is moving along. Our Guild Preceptor, Rob Barton, is currently developing exit standards for several of our proposed requirements, and Seabhac Fionn is working on the requirements for campcraft. So if you need help setting up your tent at a festival, ask a Warrior!

We're looking forward to the Trillium festival in Virginia next spring, when the Warriors will be having several special events, including archery (a personal favorite of mine) and testing for the self-defense portion of our Study Program track. For more info on Trillium, and particularly on the Warrior events, contact Seabhac Fionn at [seabhac-fionn@home.com](mailto:seabhac-fionn@home.com) or via Little Acorn Grove. (Contact info for all ADF groves can be found in the back of this issue.)

May the Kindreds give you strength in all the empty places where you must walk.

**Robert Barton -  
Warriors Guild Preceptor**

No further progress has been made in getting the Warriors' Guild proposal approved by the COL. The Guild has begun to implement the proposed Warriors' Guild Study Program within the Guild and will be giving internal Guild ranks for completion of the requirements. At this time all interested Guild members are starting on the proposed Functional Requirements which they will turn in when they completed them. I have also asked that various guild members help with the writing of the course descriptions and exit standards for the Specialty Requirements, so that these may be in place when the first people begin to complete their Functional Requirements.

## Magicians' Guild

**Skip Ellison –  
Magicians' Guild Chief**

The only Guild activity in the past quarter that was not related to the Study Plan was a workshop I presented at Triple Guild festival called "The Role of the Magician in ADF." It was attended by about 15 people and seemed to be well received. It explored the role of magicians in ancient societies and then showed what the Guild expects from a member, using the Third Circle Knowledge Set, and how that should define their role in ADF.

For the next quarter, I'll be spending more time on the Magicians list, moving along the process of finishing up our first and second circle requirements, then helping Sue develop courses and exit requirements.

Bright Blessings!

## Vice Archdruid's Report

**Vice-Archdruid  
Quarterly Report**

Since this is the first of my quarterly reports, I'll start back in the summer after I took office.

In July, I attended both Sirius Rising and Starwood festivals at Brushwood to promote ADF. I also took one of the main parts in the Thursday night ritual at Starwood.

In August, I attended Shining Lakes Grove's Lugh Fest in Ann Arbor and hosted Muin Mound Madness here in Syracuse. At Muin Mound Madness, I facilitated a discussion on a conflict resolution system for ADF.

In September, I attended Triple Guild festival in Massachusetts, representing both the MG and the Magician's Guild, and presented a workshop for the Magician's Guild.

In late September, I embarked on a two and a half week tour of the West Coast for ADF. I visited with groves in Chicago, Oregon, Los Angeles, Phoenix and Denver. I also visited with solitaires in Tacoma, Portland, Tucson, and Catalina, California. I gave workshops on ADF in Chicago, Portland, Los Angeles and Phoenix.

The weekend after getting back from the West Coast trip, I drove to Perrysburg, Ohio, to return the regalia travel pack to Lisa Kamp. Sales of

regalia from August 6 to October 24 totalled \$511, which I sent to the ADF office.

Since July first, I've traveled 11,328.6 miles for ADF. I've also spent a lot of time monitoring the ADF email lists. I'm on every one of the ADF lists as well as all the private member lists I've found out about. Even while on the West Coast trip, I was still checking email twice a day, except when there was no regular or cellular phone service where I camped!

For the next quarter, I plan on spending time finishing the Dedicant's program, writing articles for *Oak Leaves*, and doing more work with the Magicians' Guild.

# Regional Reports

## Amergin Aryson – Ohio River Region Director

Greetings!

The Ohio River Region of ADF has been a booming place during the quarter from Lughnassadh to Samhain, 1999. Triskele River Grove, in Cincinnati, Ohio, and 6th Night Grove, in Dayton, Ohio, have both been growing exponentially. Triskele River Grove now has around 23 members, and 6th Night Grove 21 members! I don't have any membership numbers for Sassafras Grove in Pittsburgh, but they continue to be very active in their community.

All of the three Groves in the ORR do regular, open to the public, ADF rites and hold special events that are geared to serving the whole Pagan Community in their respective communities. I am very happy to announce that the three Groves regularly share their newsletters and calendars of events with each other (The "Portal of the Well," "An Rotha," and "Faoi na Grainn"). Many thanks to Antonyus, SD of Triskele River, and Earrach, SD of Sassafras Grove, for all of their hard work and dedication.

I have been very busy in my (still) new role as Regional Director for the

ORR. I have voted on all but one motion that has come before the MG since I was elected. I try to consider how all the members in the region will be affected by any new proposals for bylaw amendments and vote for the overall membership's best interests. If any members in the Region have concerns, problems or suggestions, I would love to hear from you and be your voice on the MG. Let me know what you would like to see changed, improved, etc.!

We will soon be meeting to discuss holding our first Regional Event for the Ohio River Region. We are tentatively planning a festival to be held around Lughnassadh of 2000. We hope to make this a truly Regional Event and draw interested Pagans from Kentucky, Indiana, West Virginia, and Tennessee, as well as from Ohio, western Pennsylvania, and eastern Illinois! I am hoping that all three Groves in the Region will actively participate in making this Regional event a reality.

If any ADF solitaires in the Ohio River Region wish to contact me, or if anyone in the Region is interested in establishing a Protogrove, please feel free to email me directly at [Amergin9@aol.com](mailto:Amergin9@aol.com).

Brightest Blessings to All!

## Jason – Pacific Region Representative

In October we were blessed by a trip from our Vice Archdruid, Skip. His visit to the region was both beneficial and encouraging.

Inspired by Skip's visit, we are planning a regional festival for the year 2000. There will be two events, one for the southwest area and one for the northwest area. For the southwest area, I will leave the planning in the capable hands of someone in that region (yet to be determined). For the northwest, I have two ADF Groves and two other Druid Groves willing to participate in the planning and running of a 4-day festival in October.

The Pacific Region mailing list has 23 subscribers. It is open to all who live in the Region. I can be emailed at [northwest.dragon@yahoo.com](mailto:northwest.dragon@yahoo.com) for anyone interested in subscribing.

After Yule, I will be going on a two week road trip to visit the other groves in the Pacific region. I hope that putting a face to this office will allow a more personalized representation for ADF members.

# Prisoner Relations Committee Report

## Prisoner Relations Committee

Robert Barton

The prison ministry has several new advisors and all of the prisoner members of ADF who have requested an advisor have one. The office for prisoner relations is a month behind and in need of a volunteer to begin helping with the work of prisoner introduction and placement with advisors. Our

prisoner relations continue as they have for many years through one-on-one spiritual advisors who work directly with the prisoners. We also need help converting our basic 15-page information package, which is strictly Celtic at this time, into various cultural specialties. Anyone interested in helping as an advisor, coordinator or with writing material, please contact the ADF Office or Robert Barton of Prisoner Relations.



# Administrator's Report

As I wrote in my last report, *Oak Leaves* is now being published regularly thanks to the diligent efforts of our Chronicler Sylvan, our *Oak Leaves* Editor Scabhac Fionn, and a number of great staff members. As you may know, there was a problem delivering the journal to some members and we are in the process of correcting it by sending out second copies. I offer my sincere apologies to those members who should have received *Oak Leaves* but did not.

In the area of finances, I am happy to announce that the Mother Grove recently approved my appointment of Chris Sherbak to the position of Pursewarden. Chris is a long-time member and extremely dedicated leader in ADF. He has substantial experience in finance and I am confident that he will perform the duties of Pursewarden with care and excellence. Chris's term will end with my own in May 2001, and I look forward to working with him to examine, refine, and document our financial procedures over the next year and a half.

For those of you unfamiliar with the position of Pursewarden, our bylaws define it as follows:

"The Pursewarden shall supervise, but not directly sign for, the disbursement of funds for the corporation; shall have responsibility for all monies of the Corporation received or disbursed; shall supervise the deposit of all monies and valuables in the name of and to the credit of A.D.F. in such banks or other financial institutions as the Mother Grove shall designate. All checks or other financial instruments involving sums greater than (US) \$5,000 shall require the signatures of both the Administrator and the Archdruid. The Pursewarden shall be responsible for keeping the Corporation's financial records according to generally accepted accounting principles for nonprofit

corporations; will generate quarterly financial reports for the Mother Grove; and may perform all those other duties that would otherwise be performed by a corporate Treasurer. This position shall be filled and vacated by appointment of the Administrator with approval from the Mother Grove."

At one time in our past the Pursewarden actually wrote checks, but now the Pursewarden's role is purely one of oversight and reporting. Rob Henderson, our Office Manager, will actually write ADF's checks, and Chris will reconcile our account activities with the statements from our financial institutions. As I've written before, Rob and Jan Henderson put in many long volunteer hours for ADF to make the Office run, and deserve our greatest thanks for their efforts. Chris's fun has just begun!

Another area I've promised to report on is that of receiving repayment from Gwydion apMorrygan, who committed theft against ADF and his grove for approximately \$20,000. At the time of this writing the collection agency has not collected any funds from Gwydion. The agency's fee is based on what it collects, however, so we will not be charged if nothing is collected. As our new Pursewarden, Chris Sherbak will be working with the collection agency. We will continue to keep you informed on this issue.

Returning to the area of the Office, I spent about two months developing a high-level interface to the information in our membership database, which enables a number of web-based applications to be developed. For example, at Chris Sherbak's suggestion I have added an "email my login info" option to the Members Only login page at <http://www.adf.org/members/> so that if you forget your expiration date it can be e-mailed to

you. A related application is the page at <http://www.adf.org/members/org/myinfo.html> which will show you the information ADF has in its database about you, allowing you to check if your address was updated when you moved. I have also created several tools for our Office "helpers" to use when answering the e-mail that comes in to [ADF-Office@ADF.ORG](mailto:ADF-Office@ADF.ORG). In this regard I must offer my thanks to Laurel Eire and Suil Bhran for volunteering so much time to answer the e-mail our members send. Chris Sherbak has also been extremely helpful in this area. Lastly, there is now a separate form for renewing membership located at <http://www.adf.org/joining/renew.html>, while the new membership form is still located at <http://www.adf.org/joining/join.html>.

In terms of future directions, after working with Chris Sherbak and the Mother Grove to establish ADF's first budget, I will focus primarily on the Office. Specifically, I will concentrate on setting up an e-mail based renewal reminder system to eliminate many of the paper-based reminders that are currently sent out; I will concentrate on empowering the Office staff to update information on our web site directly; and I will work tenaciously toward the important goal of establishing online joining and renewal in ADF.

My goal is to eliminate the handling of checks which has caused us so many problems in the past, and instead process payment online so that new member packets can be sent immediately. The vision that I am working toward is reducing our membership processing time from several months to two weeks, and doubling our membership retention rate from 30% to 60%.

brightest blessings,  
Anthony Thompson –  
ADF Administrator

Below is the current listing of ADF Groves, Protogroves, SIGs, and ADF officers. Groves are listed alphabetically by region, and as of this writing there are a total of 43 groves (40 in the U.S., 3 in Canada).

If you find errors, please contact the ADF Office at [ADF-Office@ADF.ORG](mailto:ADF-Office@ADF.ORG) or at P.O. Box 15259, Ann Arbor, MI, USA 48106-5259

## GROVES

### CENTRAL REGION

#### **Crescent Dragon Protogrove, ADF**

Grove Organizer: Hawke  
c/o ADF Main Office  
Urbana, IL  
Areas: IL  
E-Mail: [windstrm@apocalypse.org](mailto:windstrm@apocalypse.org)

#### **Golden Aspen Protogrove, ADF**

Grove Organizer: Loren Eason  
P.O. Box 260354  
Lakewood, CO 80226  
Areas: CO  
E-Mail: [nous\\_athanatos@yahoo.com](mailto:nous_athanatos@yahoo.com)

#### **River of Fire Protogrove, ADF**

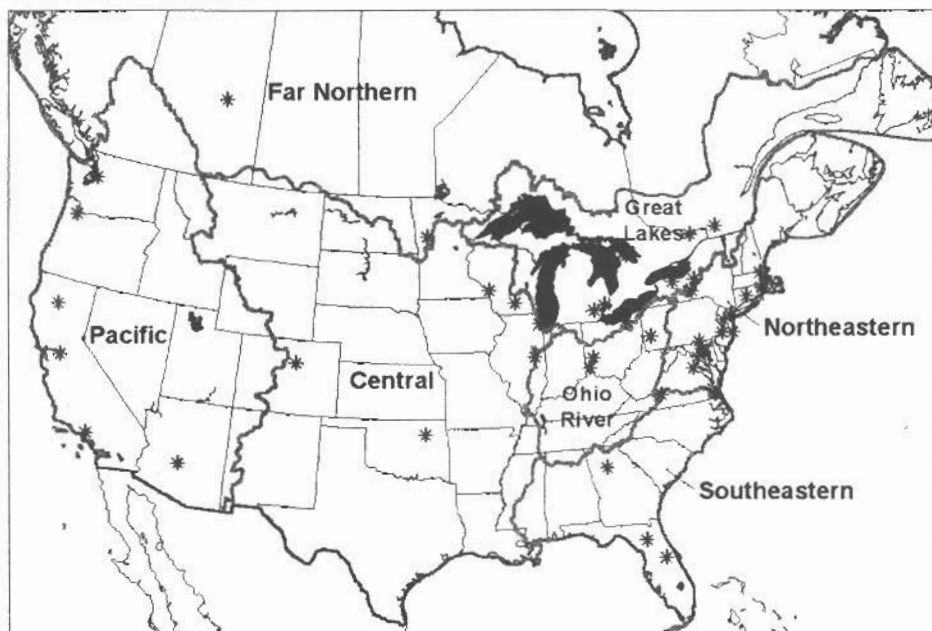
Grove Organizer: Hekatatia  
P.O. Box 3443  
La Crosse, WI 54602-3443  
Areas: WI, MN  
E-Mail: [riverfire@aol.com](mailto:riverfire@aol.com)  
Web: <http://www.adf.org/groves/river-of-fire>

#### **Sun Raven Protogrove, ADF**

Grove Organizer: Suil Bhran  
PO Box 8212  
Madison, WI 53708  
Areas: WI, MN  
E-Mail: [suibhne@centuryinter.net](mailto:suibhne@centuryinter.net)  
Web: <http://www.adf.org/groves/sun-raven>

#### **White Rose Grove, ADF**

Senior Druid: Estelle Newton  
539 South Richmond  
Tulsa, OK 74112  
Areas: OK



ADF's new system of Regional Representation includes seven regions related by common watersheds rather than artificial political boundaries. Each star on the map represents an ADF Grove or Protogrove.

Phone: (918) 836-0907  
E-Mail: [candlemajik@juno.com](mailto:candlemajik@juno.com)

#### **Wild Onion Grove, ADF**

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

### FAR NORTHERN REGION

#### **Flickering Shadows Protogrove, ADF**

Grove Organizer: Jennifer Kennedy  
PO Box 65  
Ardrossan, Alberta T8E 2A1, CANADA  
Areas: Alberta  
Phone: (403) 922-2499  
E-Mail: [falan@planet.eon.net](mailto:falan@planet.eon.net)

#### **Song of the Hounds Protogrove, ADF**

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

### GREAT LAKES REGION

#### **Clairiér du Renard Argenté**

**Silver Fox Grove, ADF**  
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: <http://www.adf.org/groves/silver-fox>

#### **Red Maple Protogrove, ADF**

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shining-lakes

Publication: Ripples, \$5/yr

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Publication: Stone Facts

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Publication: A Walk with the Old Ones

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Publication: Northern Lights

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Publication: Muin Light

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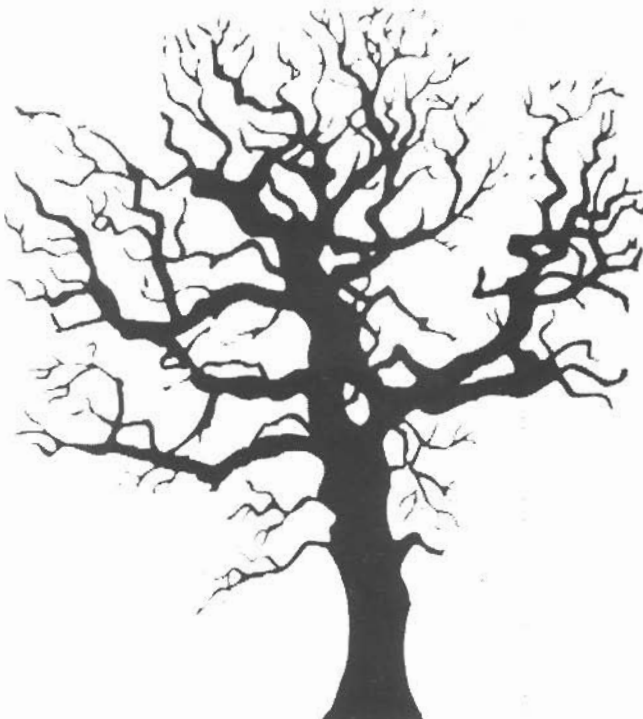
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*Updates to the ADF Directory should be sent to the ADF-Office <[ADF-Office@adf.com](mailto:ADF-Office@adf.com)> or c/o: ADF Office PO Box 15259 Ann Arbor, MI, USA 48106-5259*



**The ADF Mother Grove wishes to inform ADF members of the following:**

Tammarigan Silverwater's ADF membership has been suspended, effective until Lughnassadh 2000. This includes her being banned from all ADF events outside of her local grove, and loss of any leadership positions in the organization until the period of the suspension is complete.

# Ár nDraíocht Féin: A Druid Fellowship, Inc.

P.O. Box 15259, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-5259  
Membership and Subscription Form

One form per person, please.

Legal Name: \_\_\_\_\_  P  S  C  
Religious Name: \_\_\_\_\_  P  S  C  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  P  S  C  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
Country: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ (mm/dd/yy)  
Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_  P  S  C

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

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

The information on this form represents a:

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

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

## ADF Membership Rates

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

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

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

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

Membership Donation ..... = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Earmarked Donation for:

    Publishing Activities ..... = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

    Land Fund ..... = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

    Other: \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Unrestricted donation to ADF General Fund ..... = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Minus amount paid earlier on \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ ..... = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed: = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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

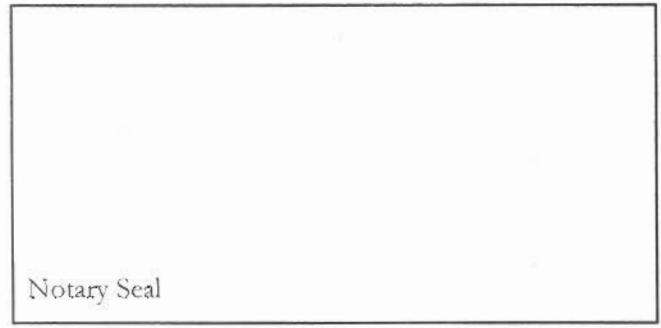
I am 18 years of age or older:  Yes  No (Check one)

### Waiver

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

To whom it may concern: \_\_\_\_\_ has my permission to become a  
(Enter child's name here)

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



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

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

Please allow 4 to 6 weeks for membership processing.

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Davros won the poetry segment of the Shining Lakes Grove Champion's Contest. (Lughnasadh Festival, August 7, 1999) with his poem "Maple Syrup."

Dragynphyre

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Dragynphyre is the Chief of the Grove of the Midnight Sun in NJ

Peter Mawson

Email: petermaw@accessin.com.au

Peter is an ADF member in the "Wild West of Australia"

Cyndara Morgan

Email: cmorgan@hsc.vcu.edu

Grove Affiliation: Little Acorn Grove in VA.

Cyndara is a citizen of Alexandria-in-the-Aethyr, a matriculated student of Miskatonic University on-line, and the Preceptor of the Liturgists' Guild. She maintains a garden in honor of Apollo in the suburbs of Richmond, VA.

Jennifer Hunt — I. Ovidia Luna

Email: moonloon@ici.net

Grove Affiliation: Solitary

teacher, poet, and friend of cows, Jenni is a member of ADF and Nova Roma, is interested in reviving Religio Romano for modern pagans, and is interested in needlework and bardic endeavors.

Cathbad

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Cathbad is a member of the Order of the White Oak and holds a Master's Degree in philosophy.

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Bardd Dafydd

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Dafydd is Senior Druid of Red Oak Grove, Chief of the Council of Senior Druids, and active in the Bradic Guild.

Ceisiwr Serith

Cei, who is currently on sabbatical from ADF, is the author of numerous rituals and is interested in Proto-Indo-European study

Melissa Jenkins

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## ARTISTS

Curucahm

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Mique Maltzer

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Gwyndewin

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Gwyndewin is the founder of Little Acorn Grove and is currently the Grove Organizer for Dogwood Protogrove in Roanoke, VA.



Hekataia Ruadhbran

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Hekataia is Grove Organizer for the River of Fire Protogrove in La Crosse, WI



Seabhac Fionn

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Grove Affiliation: Little Acorn Grove, VA  
Not much of an artist, but I do like taking pic-



