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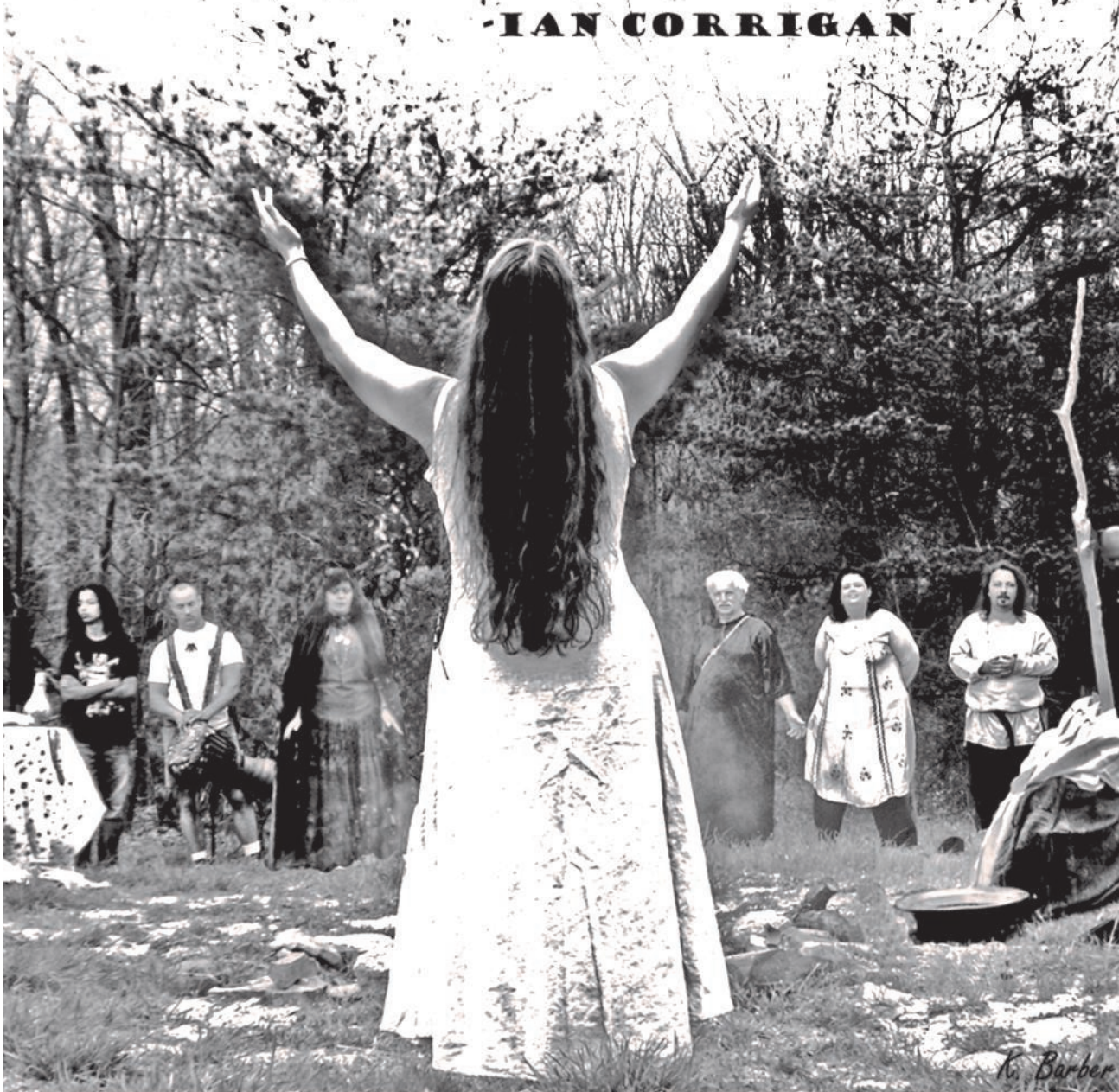
The Quarterly Journal of Ár nDraíocht Féin

Winter 2011-2012 ~ Issue No. 55



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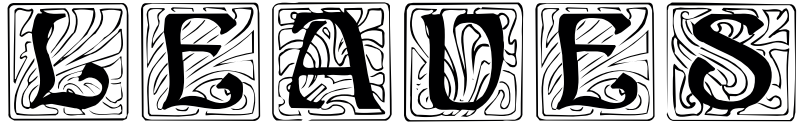
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On the magical front, new things have been happening in ADF. People may remember that some years ago the Clergy Council began creating alliances with the Ancient Wise, a group of Sacred Dead who are willing to work with all of us as advisors in our efforts to bring back the ways of old. Many of our members have begun working with these Spirits since then.

Now, at Summerland Festival last August, Rev. Jeff Wyndham (better known as Ian Corrigan) and his wife, Rev. Sue Parker-Wyndham (Liafal) organized the beginnings of a new set of alliances for us all. In ritual, the Court of Brigit was invoked, and the lesser Spirit-helpers of that Goddess who might be inclined to work with us were invited to show up and form alliances. Many of us present were approached by these new (to us) Spirits, and They have agreed to aid us in our works. This is exciting new stuff, and it's also just the beginning.

This Spirit Arte is a new direction for ADF. While some of our members have been doing things like this for years (think of our various Spirit Allies—mine is a black jaguar, for instance), these are our first church-wide efforts made in a long time, if ever.

We in ADF love our liturgy and our scholarship. We also love our fellowship in Groves, at festivals, and on our e-lists. And we have long valued unverified personal gnosis (UPG) as a way to fill in the gaps in our scholarship and knowledge. But as an institution, we have never really taken advantage of the many spiritual possibilities that UPG, backed up with scholarship, can bring to our spiritual selves. These efforts at the formation of Spirit alliances are a welcome new step that will enrich our lives.

Brightest Blessings

Rev. Kirk S. Thomas  
Archdruid, ADF

## OAK LEAVES

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**Cover:** *Solstice Sunrise* by Rev. James 'Seamus' Dillard

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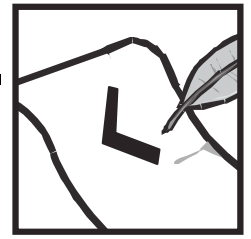
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# Letter to the Editor

## No Connection

by Lesley Domnu-Hooper



*Editor's Note: this letter is in response to Rev. Kirk Thomas' Archdruid's column from the Fall 2011 issue of OakLeaves.*

In 2010, I made an oath to the Kindreds. It was:

"I oath to continue to work on behalf of the Solitaries of ADF, and if I fail, I will not join the ADF internet community for one year."

I did not uphold my part of the oath and could not even manage my own life. Therefore, in December of 2010, I stepped down from all positions in ADF and left all the email lists. After reading the Archdruid's column in *Oak Leaves* #54 by Kirk Thomas, I decided to write of my experience not being part of the ADF Internet community. Kirk wrote: "As orthopraxic Pagans, our *praxis*, or practices, are what make us who we are." When you strip away all the titles, take away the connections with others and get to the bare basics, we are each only a spiritual being trying to have a human experience just as each of us is only one person making a connection and forging a relationship with the Kindreds. You are accountable to the Kindreds and to yourself alone. Only you know if you miss morning and evening meditations and prayers. Only you know if you are staying true to the practices you claim to keep. No one is challenging you to learn or develop your ritual skills. What matters is that which you do when no other human eyes are upon you.

So, how does one stay connected when not connected? In the beginning it was easy to keep piety true, but as time passed, it became harder and harder. As I began to improve other aspects of my life, I began to say things like "I can do that later," or "there is always tomorrow" regarding my spiritual practices. I began to slack in my piety. Over time, I lost my connection to the Kindreds. I also found that as my meditations on the virtues went down, so did my practice of those virtues that once were so strong in my heart. The result?

I began drinking again. I was no longer acting out of a *\*ghosti* relationship with the Kindreds or anyone else. I became a creature that looked out for self alone.

When life finally served the proverbial "two-by-four" to the head, I was ready to do things differently. I learned that it was not to the folks of ADF who were to help me hold true--it was up to me. I began to get back on track by first going to AA to stop drinking. I tore down the dust-filled altar and set it back up, consecrating it once more to the service and honor of the Kindreds. I got out my Dedicant Path documentation and reviewed it. I even put up signs that simply ask if I prayed today. These were not enough for me to really have piety in my life. I had to start doing what helps rebuild the connection and relationship to the Kindreds: I had to start doing the work.

The closest ADF protogrove is about two hours away. I tested my scooter and drove to their Imbolc ritual. This day, only the Grove Organizer was there. We sat out in a field and held the ritual. When it was time for other workings, I rededicated myself to the Kindreds and to those among them that I hold dear in my heart. The two of us had a wonderful time of laughing, and I admit a couple tears were even shed. I felt that it was important that I publicly gave my life back to the service of my Kindreds and was granted a special intimate ritual in which to do so.

Next, I needed to revive my morning and evening meditations. I kept thinking it was nothing for me to talk to my partner every morning and evening to build that relationship, so I resigned myself to not say good morning or goodnight to her until I had done so with my Kindreds.

Then, I made a prayer can out of a tape-sealed coffee can with a small slit for inserting slips of paper and other small objects. I labeled it my "Kindreds' Can." Every time I am overwhelmed or

worried, whenever I have a concern or a request, each time I am thankful and each time I feel compelled to give praise, I put it in there. I plan to take the tape off once a year to give the notes to a fire and the other gifts to a waterway.

I even set up a mini-altar at the office with a gem tree, water well and a battery-operated candle. At lunch, I take time to give thanks, ask for strength to finish the day and make offerings. It allows me to find a moment that is not about work, and ground.

To help me feel connected, I have been doing only High Day rituals written by others. This has helped me remember that when this year is up, ADF will still be there, that the fellowship will be waiting on me. I also wear a talisman I received at Wellspring 2010 that was blessed with the Waters in the Unity Ritual, which has been particularly useful on hard days and any time I need a reminder that I am not alone!

Currently, I only use Internet for work and Facebook. I have not logged in to my LiveJournal, ADF email lists or any other Internet site for seven months at the time of this writing. Being off the ADF Internet radar has been an interesting ride, but it can be done. No matter what titles we hold in ADF, the important thing is that we remember first we are each only one person developing a spiritual manner of living, with real relationships with the Kindreds. Hopefully, you have learned something in this and can use it when you think you are alone!

Sincerely,

Lesley Domnu-Hooper

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*Cedarsong Grove wants to thank  
Nick VanDenBrink  
for his years of service as Scribe.  
Without his brilliant idea of starting a grove,  
none of us would be here.*

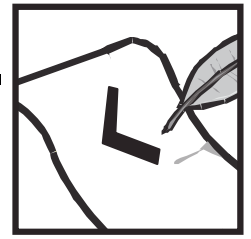




# Article

## The Twelve Days of Yule

by Leesa Kern



Modern Neo-Pagans often speak of “The Twelve Days of Yule.” I can’t find any lore to support that there was anything specifically done on each of the twelve days, nor any modern pagan or heathen customs that have taken that place. So, I did what all good Neo-Pagans do. I’m inventing my own! Feel free to join in, if you like.

The cultural focus is, of course, from the Norse perspective, but I believe it could easily be adapted for other hearth cultures as well. Some other adjustments involve the actual dates of the festival. Because the date of the Winter Solstice travels from year to year, we would need to make adjustments for activities on each of the days, with a few being fairly fixed. If you’re really observant, you will also note there are potentially thirteen days in our celebration. This takes into account what appears to be the modern customary start of the Yule on December 19. That’s also the earliest possible date for the actual Solstice to occur. One could just shift the entire twelve days back and forth, but then you’re potentially celebrating New Year’s Eve a few days early, which might confuse your guests if you have them.

The inspiration for this comes mostly from John and Caitlin Matthews’ book *The Winter Solstice: The Sacred Traditions of Christmas*. As suggested by the title, this book weaves together Christian and Pagan traditions. The Matthews are also known for much writing in the area of Celtic Paganism, but given the influence of Anglo-Saxons in the British Isles influencing both Pagan and Christian practices, it still gave me plenty with which to work. Their twelve (also really thirteen) days start on Christmas Day. So, I took the general themes they suggest for each day, took the Christian influence out of it, and then arranged around 2010’s Solstice date (December 21).

We set up an altar with twelve candles surrounding a large solar candle in the middle. On each night, we light a different candle, and on Solstice Eve, we light the central solar candle as part of the vigil.

Offerings of mead work for all days, obviously, but other things are suggested below. On each of the subsequent days, we add items to the altar until on the twelfth (or thirteenth) night, we have an altar full of things.

**December 19:** Odin as the winter wanderer; the Wild Hunt. I have a story/meditation about a winter wanderer from the Matthews’ book. Offerings could include mead, ale, and grain for Sleipnir. For the placement of Odin on the altar, I think the ‘woodland Santa’ figures work really well.

**December 20:** Mother’s night, Holda. Honoring the female ancestors, the disir, and Holda. Place a female figure in white on the altar to represent Holda, and if you have representatives of your Disir, place them. Since the Solstice occurs tomorrow, one could begin their Solstice Eve vigil. Vigils are popular, but since many of us have to work the next day, they are often not practical. (In 2010 there was also a very rare lunar eclipse beginning at 1:33am (December 21), so it was worth setting an alarm to watch it. Unfortunately, it was very cloudy.) Some of our grove mates followed along with us at their hearth, and the night of the vigil they toasted a deity on every hour.

**December 21:** Solstice Day: Honoring Sunna/Sol. The actual Solstice occurred on December 21, 2010 at 6:38 pm. Lighting of the solar candle, and placement of a solar figure on the altar.

**December 22:** Nature Spirits. Offerings of food, placement of images of the Nature Spirits on the altar.

**December 23:** Feast of Fools: Suggested by the Matthews. It might be fun for families with children, to put them in charge of something they’re normally not in charge of, including, maybe, dinner and then the evening’s ritual and candle lighting. The tradition is definitely one of switching roles and of ritualized disrespect (meaning it isn’t real). Another possibility is to honor the outdwellers or more chaotic elements that we

usually set apart, as they do have their place in the order of things.

**December 24:** Honoring the Alfar and the Housewights. If you have children whose friends are sitting out milk and cookies for Santa, this would fit in well with that.

**December 25:** The spirit of hospitality and gifting, and special blessings for children. This also fits well with the secular and mainstream day of gifting. Even if you do your home gifting on the Solstice, many of us visit family that day.

**December 26:** Celebration of winter, snow. Honoring Skadhi and Ullr is appropriate at this time. Placement of snowy-like things on the altar.

**December 27:** Celebration of the evergreen. Honoring and meditating (or even journeying) on the world tree, placing a sprig of real evergreen on the altar.

**December 28:** Honoring Frigga. There's a tradition in Europe to honor St. Distaff, and I can't think of a Norse goddess other than Holda maybe, who would be better associated with this than Frigga. Placement of a distaff if you have one, or other household-related things on the altar.

**December 29:** Bringing in the Boar. The boar's head would be used for swearing oaths, but most of us don't have access to one of those. So, a statue of a boar would be fine, and special honoring for Frey and Freya perhaps, given their associations with the animal. Offering of an apple for the Great Boar, in case it passes by your house.

**December 30:** The Shining Ones. As the spirits of home and land and ancestors have received honor, a special night for the Shining Ones.

**December 31:** Twelfth night. New Year's Eve! Traditional parties work well here, but a more spiritual aspect can be observed either quietly at home or as part of the party (like at our house!) Activities include divination (so placement of runes on the altar). There's also a suggestion I quite like from the Matthews' book of gathering juniper and letting it dry by the fire (or wherever that is in a modern home) for use to bless the home tomorrow. In addition, the burning of the Yule log, wreath, or whatever was used occurs.

We have traditionally hosted a Twelfth Night party on New Year's Eve, and incorporated a small blot in with it. We hang the wreath on the inside of the door, and guests tie ribbons on to represent remembrances, gratitudes, or resolutions for the coming year, and then, as weather permits, we burn it in our outdoor fire bowl. Obviously, weather does not always permit, so we burn it at a later time (including a somewhat dramatic burning at a Spring Equinox one year). Because we have friends from a variety of faiths, our blots are fairly eclectic, and last year we had toasts from Pagans, Christians, Buddhists, Agnostics, and Atheists. It's about community, and it was truly beautiful.

**Jan 1:** New Year's Day: No candles are lit here, but we do have some important work to do: getting ready for the New Year. Decorations should be taken down and the house returned to order, as the 'time out of time' is over. The juniper sprigs gathered last night should be used to asperse the home with water (melted snow would be awesome here) and then smudge the home.

Enjoy! And have a blessed Yule season!



❧

*Leesa Kern has been a member of ADF since 2003 and is the current Senior Druid of Three Cranes Grove in Columbus, OH and Preceptor of the Warrior's Guild.*



## Poetry

### All Three

*by Rev. Jean 'Drum' Pagano*



You drink at the well,  
Blue-black feathers,  
Beak as sharp as the edge of life  
Feather gleam in the  
Brilliant Sun.  
Black in shadow,  
Blue in Sun,  
Drink, Dark Goddess  
Drink

Up to the tree,  
Between the Earth and Sky  
You sing and your voice  
Raises the Sun  
In the morning;  
Calls the Sun  
In the morning;  
Pulls the Sun  
Across the sky

Up you fly,  
Up,  
Higher and higher  
Till you shine iridescent blue  
With the Shining Ones.  
They speak and you sit nearby,  
Watching;  
One eye on the Gods,  
One eye on the Sun,  
In all three worlds,  
You exist,  
Drinking,  
Singing,  
Watching:  
Black in shadow,  
Blue in sun,  
Waiting



## Poetry

### Yule

*by Maghnus na Mathanan*



The changing of the king  
Has come around again,  
And so it is time for all to ring  
Bells and chimes, welcoming then  
The approaching sun, and sing  
Out loud with joy and praise  
Longer and warmer sunny days.

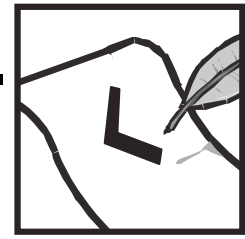




# Series

## A Welsh Wheel of the Year

by Rev. Kirk Thomas



The goal of this exercise is to create a system of Eight High Days that would fit the Welsh climate using Welsh tales that also incorporates some Welsh folk customs. There are many possible tales that could be chosen for this sort of project, and I have decided to stick with the Four Branches of the Mabinogi (with one exception) for this interpretation. When I could not decide which tales would be most desirable for what High Day, I would turn to the Irish High Days for inspiration. In many cases, a solitary practitioner could use the customs I have chosen, but in others, a group or Grove would probably be required to enact them. Please note that this is merely one of many ‘possible’ structures for a Welsh Wheel of the Year.

Some of the problems we face in an exercise such as this include the fact that we have very little historical or archeological evidence to draw from. Welsh, as a language, didn’t even come into being until the early Medieval era, after the Roman withdrawal from Britain and the chaos that ensued, and long after the arrival of Christianity (Celtic Culture 290). Just how much ancient material survives in the *Mabinogi* is debatable, and scholars have been debating this for decades (Welsh 52). Part of the problem is the very lateness of the text – unlike many of the Irish texts, the *Mabinogi* only dates back to the 14<sup>th</sup> century CE (though TM Charles-Edwards would argue for a date as early as 1100 ce)(Charles-Edwards 288). The current consensus is that while the tales reflect some mythological ideas and characters, they do not reflect a conscientious retelling or recording of ancient traditions (Davies, *The Four Branches* 51). So we can only take from them what we can, and what our own unverified gnosis allows us.

Also, in at least one case I have had to stop in the tale before there is an inconvenient occurrence (such as Arthur showing up and imposing a possibly Christian solution to a problem).

Indeed, any deities seen in the text have been euhemerized and are portrayed as kings, queens, and heroes. One striking aspect of the tales, though, is the very magical nature of many of the characters and events. Also, in the 1<sup>st</sup> Branch at least, some of the characters come out of, or go into, Annwfn, the Welsh Underworld or Otherworld. In time, this place would become equated with the Christian Hell, but in these tales, Annwfn seems much more benign and very similar to our own world.

There are some traditional names for the High Days in Wales. I have chosen to use some of them and offer alternative names in a few instances. I have completely rejected the names for the feast on February 1, Gwyl Fair I Canhwyllau (St. Mary’s Feast of the Candles) (Owen 70) or the Gwyl Fraed, the Feast of the Ffraed. The Welsh saint who shares the name of the Irish Brigid, St Ffraed (Baring-Gould 288), is typical of Welsh female saints who have to be dead before they can be sainted and usually lose their heads, eyes or breasts in some gruesome manner in order to preserve their virginity—a sainthood requirement (Cartwright 81, 85-88). The Irish saint, however, is arguably based on the ancient goddess, Brigid.

Before we get to the individual days, though, I’d like to address the problem that many people have with Welsh pronunciation. It can be difficult to really immerse oneself in a tale when the names look so intimidating, so I’d like to offer a simple pronunciation guide. This is aimed at American speakers of English.

### Basic Welsh Pronunciation

#### Accent

In almost all cases, the penultimate (next to last) syllable is accented. I will display this in my transcriptions of the pronunciation with capital letters. For instance, the word *bydded* (‘be’) is pronounced, BUH-thed, with the penultimate (next to last) syllable accented.

## Vowels

- a – pronounce like the a in ‘apple’
- e – pronounce like the e in ‘bet’
- i – pronounce like the i in ‘hit’
- o – pronounce like the o in ‘bottle’ (sort of like ‘ah’)
- u – pronounce as ee, like in ‘bee’
- w – pronounce as oo, like in ‘boot’
- y – pronounce like ‘uh’ when it stands alone or is in any syllable other than the last one; or like the i in ‘hit’ when it is in a single syllable word (other than ‘y’ or ‘yr’) or in the last syllable of the word.

When you see the caret symbol ^ over a vowel, it merely means to hold the sound longer. Thus *gŷyl* becomes GOO-il.

## Diphthongs

The best way to look at a diphthong or triphthong is to sound out each vowel slowly and then speed them up. For instance, the ‘ei’ in the name, Teilo, would be pronounced as T-eh-ih-lo, or TAY-low. Try it and see.

- ae - long i, as in ‘bye’
- ai - long i, as in ‘bye’
- au - long i, as in ‘bye’
- aw- like ‘ow’ as in ‘cow’
- ei - long a, as in ‘bay’
- eu - long a, as in ‘bay’

## Consonants

Most of the consonants are the same as in English, with the following exceptions:

- ch - pronounced like the Scottish ‘ch’ in ‘loch’
- dd - pronounced like the ‘th’ in ‘the’  
(*bydded* = BUH-thed)  
(th is pronounced like the ‘th’ in ‘thin’)
- f - pronounced like the letter ‘v’  
(*Dyfed* = DUH-ved)
- ff - pronounced like the letter ‘f’  
(*ffynnon* = FUH-non – ‘fountain’)
- ll - Oh, this is the tricky one. It’s sort of like ‘kl’, but without the hardness of the ‘k’ sound. Put the tip of your tongue behind your upper teeth, and blow around your tongue (but do not use your voice). That’s it! (In the transcriptions below, I will

use ‘kl’ to pronounce ‘ll’, but this really isn’t correct)

rh - This is pronounced like ‘hr’ where you make the breathy ‘h’ sound first, followed by the ‘r’ sound. (Rhiannon = hree-AN-on)

si - When ‘s’ is followed by a vowel it becomes like the English ‘sh’. So *siopa* (‘shop’) would be pronounced as ‘SHOP-uh’

## **Welsh Bardic and Gatekeeper Deities**

### Bardic Deities

One bardic deity you might run across is **Cerridwen** (ker-ID-wen). In the tale of Gwion Bach (GWEE-on BACH), she had a very ugly and unfortunate son named Afagddu (ah-VAG-thee - ‘Utter Darkness’), and she wanted to bring wisdom and poetic inspiration to him. So she spent a year boiling up a cauldron of wondrous things, knowing that at the end of the year it would be ready for him. Unfortunately, the three magic drops spilled on Gwion Bach’s thumb (the lad had been hired to stir the cauldron), and he instinctively stuck his thumb in his mouth to staunch the pain, thus gaining all the knowledge instead. Cerridwen, thus, is known for her cauldron of wisdom and inspiration (Ford 162-3).

Another bardic deity, or rather Ancestor (Ancient Wise), who might be helpful for bringing the *Awen*, or inspiration, might be **Taliesin** (tal-ee-ES-in), the great Welsh Bard. When Gwion Bach accidentally received those three drops of inspired wisdom, Cerridwen chased him across the land as they went through many shape changes. Finally, when he was a seed and she was a hen, she swallowed him, and he was reborn nine months later. He was so beautiful that the goddess couldn’t bring herself to destroy him, so she sewed him into a leather skin bag and threw him out to sea. A fisherman discovered him, and he was named Taliesin, or ‘Shining Brow’. He later went on to be one of the greatest bards in Wales (Ford 164-81).

### Gatekeeper Deities

**Arawn** (AR-own – the ‘ow’ is like that in ‘brown’) is the King of Annwfn (an-OO-vun), the Welsh Otherworld. He takes Pwyll (POO-ulk) down to Annwfn and changes places with him, changing their appearances so that their courts would think that they were each other (Ford 37-9). He also

gives the gift of swine (never before seen in Wales) to Pwyll (Ford 92). He is obviously capable of traveling between this world and the Otherworld and is able to take others with Him. Arawn is my personal favorite Welsh Gatekeeper.

**Gwyn ap Nudd** (GWIN ap NEETH – ‘Holy One, son of Nudd of the Silver Hand’) is described by Arthur as the King of the Dead, and tradition says that he leads the Wild Hunt on Mayday. In the poem *Mi a Wum*, he identifies himself with the figure of death. This identification later makes him the Welsh Angel of Death, called ‘Gwyn the Hunter’ in the *Prydain Chronicles* (Jones).

**Manawydan fab Llŷr** (man-uh-WUH-dan vab KLEER – ‘Manawydan, son of Sea’) appears in two Branches of the *Mabinogi*. While the first part of his name is cognate with the Irish Manannan, there are no references connecting him to the sea other than his father’s name (Koch 361-4), though in the Third Branch he is ‘landless’(Ford 75), but that’s a real stretch. I suspect most folks who call on him do so because of the perceived Manannan connection.

### **The Wheel of the Year**

A wheel, or circle, has no beginning or end, so we can start wherever we choose. As a result, we might come across the end of a tale in this paper before we hear the beginning of it, but who’s to say where we must begin when the circle is endless?

We will begin with the Winter Solstice in this installment, covering three High Days. Subsequent installments will each cover another three High Days.

### **December 21 (Solstice – June 21 in the Southern Hemisphere)**

**ALBAN GAEAF** (AL-ban GAI-av) – ‘*Winter Solstice*’

Another name for this holiday is *Alban Arthuan* (‘Light of Arthur’) a name connected with the sleeping Arthur, according to the OBOD website (Eilthreach).

In the Northern Hemisphere, this is the time of the longest night, when the sun begins its return to strength. There are also many customs for this time, probably due to those of the Christian holiday of Christmas. Toffee is traditionally made

at this time, and the hunting of squirrels is popular.

**Customs** – there are three main customs for this holiday that we should mention. The first probably isn’t really appropriate for a grove, but the other two could be adapted for use.

Hunting the Wren – A wren is captured and placed in a cage or box, and it is carried about the village on a bier to the homes of newly married couples. It is thought that this somehow promoted fertility. When the men carrying the wren showed up at a house, they were given money, because if they were not, they would wish great winds to come and blow the house down(Owen 63-4).

The Mari Lwyd (MAH-ree LOO-uhd), or Grey Mare – Here a horse’s skull, or a block of wood with a lower jaw piece attached with a spring, would be inserted on a pole. The men carrying it would have a cloth thrown over them to hide them, and the skull would be decorated with ribbon. A Leader, a Sergeant, Merryman, and Punch and Judy would carry the Mari Lwyd from house to house(Owen 55-6).

In order to gain admittance to the house, there would be an impromptu poetry contest between the party and the household. Should the party of the Mari Lwyd gain admittance, Judy would begin to clean the hearth, and Punch would push her down to the floor. Then Punch would run around kissing all the ladies while being chased by Judy.

In a grove, the Mari Lwyd could be the excuse for a poetry contest and general mayhem.

Wassailing (Looking for a Drink) – Here a group of folks would go from house to house, looking for their bowl to be filled with beer. They would wish fertile crops and an increase in livestock to all who obliged them.

The Wassail bowl is filled with baked cakes and apples laid in rows upon each other. Then this would be topped off with warm beer, mixed with spices, and allowed to sit until the beer permeates everything. Folks would sit in a circle drinking the beer until it is gone, and then the cakes and apples would be eaten(Owen 58).

I’m sure a solitary or grove could adapt this somehow.

**Lore** – The tale I have picked for this High Day comes from the *Fourth Branch of the Mabinogi* and is the story of Llew Llaw Gyffes (KLAY KLOW GUH-fes) and Blodeuedd (blow-DAY-eth). They could be the Deities of the Occasion for this rite.

*Synopsis* – One day while Llew was away from home, a neighboring lord, Gronw Pebr (GRAH-noo PEH-ber) was hunting with hounds and chased a deer near to Llew’s castle. Llew’s wife, Blodeuedd, saw the hunter and, since it was close to nightfall, invited him in to stay the night (a perfectly appropriate thing to do). However, the two fell madly in love with each other and plotted to kill Llew so that they could be together. After Llew returned home, Blodeuedd, pretending anxiety, asked her husband if he could be killed. Llew replied, “I cannot be killed in a house, nor outside; neither on horse or on foot.” But Blodeuedd persisted in asking how he could be killed, and Llew admitted that if someone were to put a bath on a riverbank, put a roof frame and roof over it, and place a billy goat by the tub, and if Llew would stand with one foot on the tub and one on the goat’s back, half inside under the roof and half outside, and should someone cast a spear at him that had been forged magically over the course of a year, then yes, he could be killed.

She tells Gronw all this and he forges the spear. Then one year later, she tricks Llew into showing her how he could die by building the bath and roof, and finding the billy goat, and when he stands in the fateful position, Gronw casts his spear and pierces Llew through the chest. Llew transforms into a wounded eagle and flies away.

Llew’s Uncle Gwydion eventually finds the eagle dying at the top of an oak tree on a hill, changes him back to human form, and heals him. (Ford, 103-7). So Llew is restored to health just as the sun is restored at the Solstice.

(NOTE: Blodeuedd’s behavior might be understood when one considers that she had no choice in who she married, or even in her creation. Also, in punishment for conspiring against her husband, she is turned into an owl, and her name changes from Blodeuedd, or ‘Flower’, to Blodeuwedd (blo-DAY-weth), or ‘Flower Face’, meaning an owl’s face.)(Davies 244 n. 63).

**February 1 (August 1 in the Southern Hemisphere)**

**CALAN GWANWIN** (KAL-an GWAN-win) – *‘First Day of Spring’*

Some groves call this holiday *Calan Gaeaf*, or ‘Middle of Winter’ (Red Oak Grove’s Rituals), but this doesn’t align with the Irish examples. A traditional Welsh name is *Gŵyl Ffraid*, the ‘Feast of Ffraid’, but as she bears little resemblance to the Irish Brigit, I think that this name really isn’t appropriate (see above). So I have invented my own.

At this time of year the day is getting long enough that animals can be fed on the farm and the cows milked without the need to light candles to see (Owen 70-1). In Ireland, this High Day centers around the hearth and home.

**Customs**– Most customs for this day revolved around candles, but this might be due to Christian origins through their holiday of Candlemas. But again, which came first?

Two candles are lit at each end of a high bench. A person sits between the candles, and drinks from a horn goblet or beaker, and then throws it backwards over his head. If it lands upright, it means a long life is ahead. If it lands upside down, it means a short one.

In a grove or solitary setting, this could be used for simple divination (or just as a game). Folks could sit between two candles and ask a question. After draining the cup, they would throw it behind them, over their heads, and see how it lands. Upright could mean ‘yes’ and upside down could mean ‘no’. Of course, if it lands on its side that would mean ‘no answer’ (Owen 71).

**Lore** – There are a couple of interesting parallels between the Welsh Branwen and the Irish Brigit. Branwen is forced at one point to work in the kitchen at the fire, cooking for the Irish court, and later, after her son is thrown into the fire and dies, causing a great battle, Branwen dies of a broken heart. Brigit is the Irish Goddess of the Hearth and Fire, and when her son dies in the Battle of Moytura, her cries of grief were the first time keening was heard in Ireland (Gray 57 § 125).

So for this High Day I have chosen the tale of Branwen (BRAN-wen) from the *Second Branch of the Mabinogi*. Branwen and her brother, Bendigeidfran (ben-dih-GIDE-vran), could be the Deities of the Occasion for this rite.

*Synopsis* – Matholwch (math-OL-ooch), king of Ireland, comes to Wales to seek the hand of Branwen, sister of Bendigeidfran, ‘Blessed Bran or Raven’, the giant king of Britain. An alliance is made, and the two are to be wed. But Branwen’s cousin, Efnisien (ef-NISH-en) was upset that he was not consulted, so he blinds the horses that had been given to Matholwch as a gift. To make amends, Bendigeidfran gives Matholwch new horses, a silver rod as long as Matholwch is tall, and a gold plate as big as his face.

But this was not enough to mollify the Irish king. So he is also given a magic cauldron that can bring a dead man to life, though he would not have the power of speech.

Matholwch and Branwen are wed and return to Ireland. But whispers in the court force the king to banish Branwen from his chamber and to the kitchens, where she must tend the fire and cook for the court.

Over a period of two years, Branwen teaches a starling to speak, and tells it about her brother Bendigeidfran. She then ties a message to its wing and sends it flying back to Wales. When her brother gets the message, he is furious and raises an army to sail to Ireland.

Irish shepherds see a forest approaching on the sea and a mountain with a ridge separating two great lakes, also approaching. They go to the king with this tale, and only Branwen can interpret it – the forest is actually the masts of the Welsh ships, and the mountain is Bran’s head, the ridge his nose, and the lakes his eyes. The Irish court flees, and peace is made only when Matholwch offers to build Bran a house (for he is so big he has never had one).

Branwen’s son is declared king of Ireland but at the feast, Efnisien, who is still angry, throws the boy into the fire, killing him, and causes a great battle between the Irish and Welsh. But the Irish have the magic cauldron that restores the dead to life, so their army doesn’t decrease in numbers. Efnisien, the cause of so much pain, pretends to be

part of the Irish dead so that he will be thrown into the cauldron, and when he is, he pushes against the sides with his legs until he breaks the cauldron and bursts his own heart, killing him. When the Welsh return home, Branwen dies of a broken heart (Ford, 59-72).

This Wheel of the Year will continue with the next issue of *Oak Leaves*.



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## Poetry

### Diasporant Dedicant's Poem at Imbolc (Bring on the Spring!)

by Leaf



In my snow-cruled garret, I immersed in the great lore of Imbolc, then  
Gazed upon the sun-bright drifted snow burying my neighbour's roof vents,  
Glimpsed the darting goldfinches, juncos and chickadees vying for our seeds,  
Held aloft from the evening storm's new blanket.

The Ancestors' lands now warm at winter's waning as they have since before The Invasions.  
We, who also invaded, yet walk in this realm where we dwell, still in the grip of winter.  
Our nether-rodent oracle emerges from Below and declares an early Spring and I choose to believe -  
His is a sign for those with the eyes to see - Brigh's herald has proclaimed!

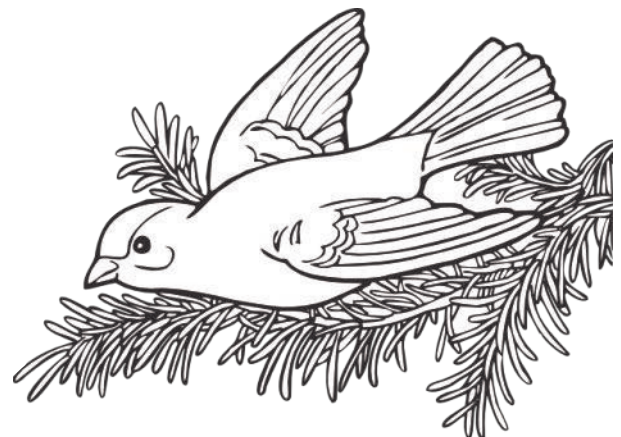
The Equinox approaches, known by all manner of kindred in their halls of the wise, though a factoid for most.

I will quietly seek out Spring, and ponder the gradual awakening, ever alert to the Mother's vastness and power.

Preparations must ensue; this is no time for dormancy! Our warning has been delivered, and we are called to attend!

This is a time for the stirring of wights, daemons, spirits, critters

And I will be out there with them!





# Children's Story

## How Brighid Saved Yule

by Chelley Couvrette



'Twas a wintery December night, three nights prior to the Solstice, when a young girl named Brigit was sitting by the hearth fire, crying. She was crying since she wouldn't get a visit from Santa Claus like all the other kids in her class, because she and her family didn't celebrate Christmas. They celebrate Yule on the Winter Solstice, and so there are no presents opened on Christmas morning when all of her friends would be opening their presents from Santa.

As she sat crying she looked out the window and through the snow she saw a woman coming up the path to her house. The woman was dressed in a cloak, whiter than the snow, with fiery red hair peeking out from the edges of the hood, and she carried a lantern that illuminated her way. The little girl wondered what the woman was doing out on such a snowy night and why she was coming up the pathway to her house. Then she realized the woman must have gotten caught in the storm and was coming to the house for help. So the little girl jumped up and went to the door to let the woman in from the snowy winter's night.

As the woman reached the door, the little girl opened it and extended her hand in welcome. The woman took it and as she entered the home, the little girl felt a warmth rush over her as if a great heat was radiating from the woman. The woman could see that the little girl had been crying and asked what the problem was. "All of my friends will be getting presents from Santa Claus on Christmas morning, but I don't celebrate Christmas so Santa isn't gonna come visit me," said the little girl. The woman smiled and asked, "Do you know who I am, Brigit?" and the little girl shook her head no. "My name is also Brighid, but spelled differently than yours; I am the Goddess that your parents named you after. I heard you crying and came to see what the problem was. Apparently I haven't come to visit you soon enough. I talked to the man that the children call Santa Claus and told him of the fact that you do not celebrate Christmas. He was very understanding, and do you

know what? He said that he would come visit you on the Winter Solstice instead of Christmas morning so that you would get presents too." The little girl's eyes lit up as the woman said this, and although she didn't completely understand, she felt as if she could trust this woman, and that she had truly talked to Santa, and that he would be coming on the night of the Solstice, just for her! "I have to go now, little one," the woman said, "but if you ever need me, just sit by the hearth fire and you will feel my warmth and know that I am here for you." "Okay," said the little girl, "are you sure you are going to be okay out in the snow?" "Yes, I will be fine, Brigit. You just go back to your chair by the window, and let the warmth of the hearth fire be your comfort." As the little girl got curled back up in her chair, the woman left back down the path, through the snowy winter's night, with her lantern illuminating her way.

The next thing that the little girl knew, it was morning, and she was still curled up in that very same chair. Her mother asked her if she was still sad about not celebrating Christmas, and the little girl shook her head, smiled, and ran up the stairs to her room.

Two days later it was the Solstice morning, and the little girl ran down the stairs to unwrap all of her presents. As she unwrapped each one, she looked at the tag, becoming more and more disappointed as each present was handed to her. This went on until the very last present, which had a card attached to it instead of a tag. She carefully opened the card that read:

**Blessed Yulefide,  
From Santa.**



## Poetry

### Song to Brigid at Imbolc

by Jennifer Lawrence



The hammer swings, the anvil rings  
At breaking of the dawn's first light.  
Like hallowed bell or solemn knell  
To sweep away the winter's night.

It ever burns for those who yearn  
For healing, skill of hands, or art,  
We turn to Her whose mercies blur  
The pain that burdens every heart.

The flame that shines in bright smith's shrine  
Has burned a thousand years or more,  
Undimmed by woes or rage from those  
Who bring on famine, plague, or war.

As gift to She who inspires me,  
I offer now my humble song,  
Its words of praise ring through my days,  
And makes the bond between us strong.

If these words meet approval sweet  
From her, I have achieved my aim;  
I am no bard, but labor hard  
That each verse sings her holy name.



## Poetry

### Around the Table

by Irisa MacKenzie



I wake from my dreams to  
Voices carrying from the rooms below  
Their warmth and laughter beckoning

Favorite memories are made round the kitchen table  
By morning with a cup of coffee and lazy smiles  
By evening with a drink and laughter

Rising I go and join the fellowship  
Wandering through the kitchen grabbing  
Coffee on my way

Living each day from the heart  
Drawing from the strength of friendship,  
Shared experiences and love

With a warm cup in my hands  
I join the fellowship round the table  
Trading stories, songs and sight

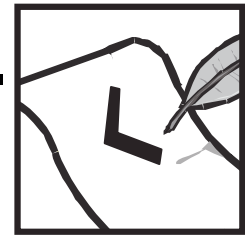
Bonds made, memories shared  
Carrying us when we are apart  
Until we gather round the next table



# Article

## Branching Out into Another Means of Divination: Ogham Interpretations from Daily Practice

by Rev. Barbara Wright



ADF is a multi-cultural organization, and I think our priests should be familiar with more than one method of divination. I also feel that, being experienced and very familiar with astrology and tarot, I should challenge myself to learn a new system. My own Celtic hearth culture influenced my choice of the Ogham as a new method to learn.

I began with the Celtic Tree Oracle book and cards by Liz and Colin Murray, but soon moved on to wooden discs which I bought from a craft store. The symbols and meanings are easily inscribed on them with a fine point pen. In addition to the Celtic Tree Oracle, I used four different sources to get a thorough grasp of the variety of meanings and obtain a feel for each symbol: Celtic Tree Mysteries by Stephen Blamires; The Druids' Alphabet by Skip Ellison; Ogham, Weaving Word Wisdom by Erynn Rowan Laurie; and the Auraiccept Na nces, The Scholars Primer. A single disc, or 'few', was drawn each morning for five months, comparing key words and meanings from each book and tracking the daily events that could be related to the omen in a journal. I came to a deeper understanding of each symbol as many subtleties, and hidden conditions to fulfill as well, emerged over time. These new understandings are summarized in the aicme lists at the end of this article.

Of the more than 100 types of Ogham, the Tree Ogham is the best known and most widely used system today. Beith Luis Nion is the old name for the Tree Ogham. The Scholar's Primer tells us that there are two kinds of trees, the natural trees of the forest and the artificial trees of the Ogham script. (Blamires 11) Each ogham symbol forms an alphabetic code of sounds and names that could be manipulated by poets for magical purposes. Ogham groups are five in number; each contains five trees and must adhere to a strict form of measure. The script has a central stem line, which may be horizontal or vertical. Notches or lines are carved along the central stem either from the left to

the right if it is horizontal, or from bottom to top if it is vertical. Each line along the stem is called a *flesc*. The word *flesc* means twig. The first twenty letters represent vowels and consonants and are called *feda*, which means wood (singular: *fid*). There are five additional letters, which were added later and represent the diphthongs. These last five are called the *forfedu* and are supplementary characters. Each group of five is called an *aicme*. The first four *aicme* form the traditional twenty letters used for divination, while the *forfedu* are optional. Blamires does not even include the *forfedu* in his book on the tree ogham. (Blamires 3-4)

When writing the Ogham on a horizontal stem, move from left to right. A feather-like, V-shaped mark is placed at the end of the stem to signify the beginning point. The first aicme is formed by a downward stroke that does not cross the stem; the second aicme is formed by an upward stroke that also does not cross the stem. The stroke for the third aicme is slanted and crosses the stem moving up and to the right at an angle. The fourth and final aicme also crosses the stem at a right angle forming a straight line and a cross-like slash from top to bottom. The grouping of notches, from one to five, indicates which letter of the aicme is being depicted.

The vertical stem changes things a bit. It is read from the bottom left side of the design to the top. The first and second aicme strokes do not cross the line. The first aicme is to the left, the second to the right. The third and fourth aicme strokes do cross the line. The third aicme is started high on the left side of the stem and angles sharply downward and to the right. The fourth aicme forms a cross shape with the line straight across the stem. The meaning behind this design is found in The Scholar's Primer.

What is measure with regard to Ogham letters? This is their number, five Oghmic groups, i.e. five men for each group and one up to five for each of them. These are their signs—right of stem, left of stem, athwart of stem,

through stem, about stem. Thus is a tree climbed-treading on the root of the tree first, with thy right hand first and thy left hand after, then with the stem, then against it and through it and about it. (Blamires 3- 11)

### First Aicme

† **Beith, B, fid one** –The birch tree is the first to return to any area which has lost its forest to fire or other occurrence. It signifies a return or rebirth of life to the area. In divination it classically means new beginnings. To begin again, you must also cast aside the past, cleansing and purifying yourself to accept the new beginning. If you fail to clear away the refuse of the past, you may become entangled in the issues which prevented you from succeeding previously, inhibiting your progress on this new path and even tripping you along the way. A journey must also have a clear goal, a purpose with intention and direction that leads you forward. If any of these are missing, your new start may not be what you hoped. It is an opportunity; it does not carry the assurance of success, only the potential for it. You still have to do the work.

‡ **Luis, L, fid two** - The rowan tree has a long-standing reputation as the tree of protection. Part of the reason is the presence of a pentagram on the bottom of its bright red berries. It especially means protection against enchantment, to ward off the ‘evil eye’, and to protect the home. To achieve this state of balance, one needs sound judgment, the ability to see through the false and find truth. This applies to situations and to people who may not be who you think they are, those who may cause you harm. A strong sense of intuition and spiritual strength are called for when this card is drawn. Do not allow yourself to be influenced easily by others, especially not when your inner voice is warning you to be careful.

≡ **Fearn, F, fid three**- The alder is an ancient tree, incredibly strong, with an oily, water resistant wood. It was used to construct spears and shields for warriors and in the construction of underwater foundations. Alder was used as piling material during the construction of Venice. It is closely linked to the God Bran, whose head was cut off after his death in battle and carried by his warriors as it continued to speak and prophesy warnings of the future. Thus does the alder stand for oracular prophecy. Guidance is being offered from the

Gods. The journey begun with Beith continues, but it will require courage to advance, a willingness to accept the challenges of the path. It also cautions us to look both above and below the surface, beneath the water to a secure foundation.

≡ **Saille, S, fid four** – The willow is also a water tree, but its meaning is connected with the female and the lunar rhythms of life. Imbolc occurs in the Willow month of February, and Brigid is the Goddess often connected to it. Selene, the moon Goddess, is also connected to the willow. The moon combines the properties of night vision with the rhythms of life. Timing is indicated. The flow of life, the depth of the well, and most of all, the ancestors are present when this symbol is drawn. Fertility is an additional aspect. As we progress through the first aicme, it seems we may be creating a familiar cosmos, from the beginning to clear direction of intent, protection from above and formation of a foundation, guidance from the ancestors. It creates a balance between our male and female energies.

≡ **Nuin, N, fid five** – The ash is the world tree, Yggdrasil upon which Odin hung to gain enlightenment. It is used to form spear shafts for warriors because of its strength. The wand of a magician was often made of ash as well. The ash forms a connection between the three worlds, past, present, and future. It is the ultimate connection between the worlds, linking the microcosm and the macrocosm. It signifies the union between ancient knowledge and creative force, the continuing circle of life. Every action undertaken has consequences beyond the immediate; look beyond your surroundings to see the larger pattern to which you are connected. The Hermetic saying ‘as above, so below, as without, so within, as the universe, so the soul’ comes to mind. It reminds us to be mindful of our place in the universe.

### Second Aicme

† **Huath, H, fid one** – The hawthorn is a dense, short tree with thorns, often used as a hedging tree. It is a symbol of caution and restraint signifying a time of waiting, keeping one’s own counsel and heeding the counsel of others. At the completion of the first aicme, one cannot rush ahead with impunity; patience is required. It is a period of cleansing and recharging. It is a time to face one’s

own limitations and acknowledge them. The sharp thorns will withdraw as you face your own difficult experiences, leaving you wiser and stronger in their wake. It warns against self-pride and ego and was connected to satire as a tool to promote humility in the overly proud. It can also symbolize despair and fear in those who fail to meet the challenge. It is not necessarily a negative symbol, but it is a serious warning.

☞ **Duir, D, fid two** – Slow growth and surety of purpose are the reward of those who learn the lesson of Huath, this is the pattern which leads to Duir. The oak is closely associated with Druids and magic. It is the King of Trees, strong and unyielding. Protection, endurance, and wisdom are its watchwords. The High King, as a symbol of the land, was connected to the oak spiritually. Kildare, the church of the oaks, was the home of Brigid; the town of Derry was named for its huge oak grove. You have survived the trials of Huath and emerged with new wisdom. All doors are open to you now.

☞ **Tinne, T, fid three** – Tinne is the word for fire in Irish. It also has strong overtones of male fertility and paternity. The holly actually berries during the summer season and loses them when it gets cold, regardless of the depictions in winter pictures. Its connection to fire is medicinal, as it is used to relieve fever. It is also one of three woods used in the construction of chariot wheels. It is evergreen and is a substitute for oak because of its strength. Holly signifies mastery of a situation. Both justice and balance, in addition to direction, are required to achieve your goal. Working with the energies of oak and holly together strengthens both synergistically. Holly falls at the center point of the fifteen consonants and forms a pivot point for the next level of work.

☞ **Coll, C, fid four** – The hazel features prominently in the legends and is also associated with water. Its nuts grow in small clusters of three or four per stem. The wood is pliant, much like the willow, and is often used for dowsing. In the tale of the salmon, the fish swims in the River Boyne and swallows a hazel nut that falls from an overhanging tree, obtaining the gift of poetic wisdom from the nut. It signifies wisdom and intuition and is associated with the Goddess Brigid. It is considered a fortunate sign when encountered in

visits to the otherworld and is often used in journeys to the otherworld to obtain wisdom. The hazel takes nine years to produce nuts; wisdom is not easily gained, and there is much to learn. One needs to return to the font of wisdom often to obtain the greatest benefit.

☞ **Quert, Q, fid five** – The apple has been associated with choice in many belief systems. It is closely linked to magical workings and the otherworld. Avalon, the 'Isle of the Apples' signifies the otherworld in legends. The apple offers a double-edged gift: many choices may be presented to you, and they may all seem attractive in nature. This may, in fact, be the case. The problem occurs in that you may only choose one thing. To try to juggle many things will lead to frustration, possible misfortune, even madness and poverty. You can lose it all by not choosing one thing. The otherworld is a difficult place; the shaman experiences disorientation from the normal and lunacy takes hold. You cannot have it all. You must choose.

### Third Aicme

☞ **Muin, M, fid one** – The vine, in particular the grape, grows upward, away from the ground. If apple begins an illusion, divine inebriation results from the fruit of the grape and may lead to new heights of inspiration. The vine grows upon a host tree, uniting with it for strength. Moderation is intended; one seeks inspiration, not insensibility. Enhanced perception, truth, and increased psychic sensibilities are the goal. Our inhibitions may be overcome, allowing us to open our senses and experience new levels of understanding. It lets us use instinct and emotion as a guide instead of only logic. There is an accompanying caution to beware of trickery.

☞ **Gort, G, fid two** – Ivy grows everywhere. It spreads and endures in harsh soil and inclement conditions and it is almost impossible to eradicate. Ivy will destroy brick and mortar, pushing its roots through to hold on tightly. It can smother and kill any tree upon which it grows. If encountered in an otherworldly journey you should stop and reconsider your intent, as there is danger ahead. It signifies growth, abundance, prosperity, and the search for self in a positive way. If negative

influences are present, selfishness will develop and others will be harmed as you pursue your own ends.

☞ **Ngetal, Ng, fid three** – The thin, straight reed or broom grows at the edge of a river. It is compared to an arrow due to its silver tip. The reeds were used to create household brooms and thus signify a cleansing time. Any damage incurred by Ivy may be healed and recovery is possible on the mental and physical level, one must reflect on what went wrong and find your way out of the chaos. The most important message of Ngetal is direction, keeping the goal in sight and never wavering from it. The arrow must strike true; conviction, determination, and strength of purpose are required.

☞ **Straif, St, fid four** – The blackthorn is a more serious extension of the hawthorn. Its thorns run deeper and inflict pain and injury that is not easily repaired. It represents the transformational energy of Pluto and the underworld. In nature, blackthorn is an impenetrable thicket, dense and forbidding. The berries are bitter and astringent, used to stop hemorrhage. Blackthorn is intimately connected with death, especially your own. Spiritual acceptance of mortality is essential, as is a strong connection with the underworld. On an earthly level, having one's 'affairs in order' is indicated. Do not put off what you need to do or say; there may be no tomorrow in which to do it. Facing the difficult and cleansing are hallmarks of this tree.

☞ **Ruis, R, fid five** – The elder rules a shortened thirteenth lunar month leading up to Samhain. The legends tell us that immersion into the Cauldron of Rebirth restores life and strength. A similar legend appears in many cultures including the Egyptian hieroglyphic depictions of warriors going into the cauldron and coming back to life. Thus is the ending the beginning in the eternal circle of life. As the wheel of the year turns, the old is cast aside and the new embraced. An 'Elder' is a wise person who has not yet joined the ancestors. It is not possible to change the past and regret may not compensate for the indiscretions of youth. When faced with this tree, consider your actions well and make amends wherever warranted. There is no time for intolerance, bigotry, materialism, or selfishness. The essence of Mars is passion,

intensity, anger and shame. We must choose to act with passion and intensity and use this energy in a positive manner or frustration, anger, and shame will be our lot.

#### Fourth Aicme

☞ **Ailim, A, fid one** – Ailim, or Fir, is the first vowel in the tree alphabet. The fir is tall, almost 130 feet, towering over all atop a mountain, seeing far into the future. It is conception; a new beginning that blends the lessons of the past, healing and regenerating power, insight and knowledge, as you progress toward the future. Ailim is also the 'ahh haa' moment, that spark of enlightenment which dawns suddenly when everything becomes clear. It connects all the threads which have led to this moment in time. Your intuition has served you well and suddenly it all comes together, revealing things which were secret or misunderstood previously. A new and deeper level of understanding emerges.

☞ **Onn/Ohn, O, fid two** - The gorse is continually in flower; it symbolizes richness and fulfillment. The skill of collecting and gathering things of value to you is being practiced. Your store of skills and information will grow. The gorse is similar to broom in that it is strong, but functions at a higher level of strength. Gorse is used when there is resistance to the work. One must clean up and dispose of what is no longer useful. This includes things which you may have created yourself. One cannot collect and save everything; we need to be able to discriminate what will be useful for future pursuits and what, however painful, must be eliminated. The gorse can signify a journey of the spirit in which everything works in harmony.

☞ **Ur, U, fid three** – Heather and mistletoe in conjunction. Heather is connected with death and with the earth, followed by a transition to a new stage of existence. Energy cannot be destroyed; it lives on in another form. Death is the first step toward reincarnation and new life in the otherworld. Reincarnation was a strong theme among the Celts. Spiritual healing is also a factor. Mistletoe is a great healer and can guide one on the path to spiritual regeneration. To grow, one must let go of the past and build a strong foundation for

the future. By combining the two, releasing the past and transforming the energy released into working toward the future, we recreate ourselves and our reality on every level.

☰ **Eadha/Edad, E, fid four** – Aspen or white poplar. The aspen is known for its behavior; it trembles in response to the slightest breeze. It seems to speak out and is said to carry the voice of the Gods. It is also a shield and offers resistance against destructive powers. The wood was often used to create shields for warriors, protecting them from injury and death. It imbues the user with the strength to face his fears and to overcome impossible odds. Erynn Laurie associates this tree with Neptunian energy, trance and intoxication. It rules illusion. This symbol can signify the danger of being led down a false path, the threat of addiction, destruction, even death. It takes moderation and wisdom in using altered states of consciousness to seek enlightenment. Caution and the ability to separate illusion and reality are required. (Laurie 124-26)

☰ **Idad, I, fid five** – The yew is the last of the original ogham and the final vowel. Tradition and the capacity to achieve great age led to the yew being placed over the graves of the Celts and Britons. The yew has a potential lifespan of thousands of years. Because of its longevity, it is connected closely with memory of the past and the ancestors. History, tradition, and age are all represented by the yew. It is the ultimate symbol of death and rebirth. The yew is poisonous, but the old word for it is Eo which is also the old word for salmon. The Salmon of Wisdom holds all knowledge within its body. So too, the yew holds all of the knowledge of the other trees in the Tree Ogham. To draw the yew signifies a change from which there is no return. It is time for rebirth.

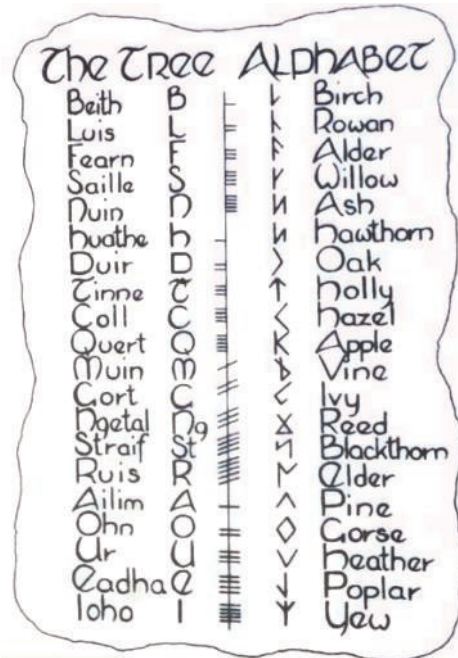
**Conclusion**

Ogham works well for spiritual questions. It is not really the correct tool for casual readings like "will I get the job." Tarot may be the better choice for those questions. I found drawing a single few each day to see what energy or influences were primary at that time to be quite revealing and meaningful.

Rev. Barbara Wright has been active in ADF since 1995 and has recently completed the Second Circle of the Clergy Training Program, and is now commencing on the Third Circle. She serves ADF as the Chairman of the Prisoner Relations Committee worships in Raven Wood Grove.

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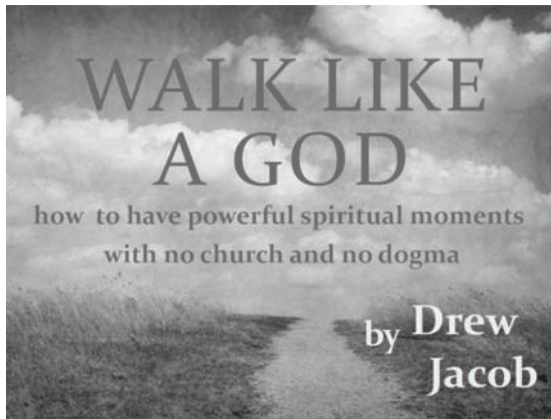
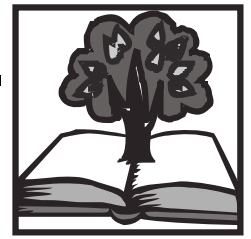




# E-Book Review

## Walk Like a God

by B.T. Newberg



### **Walk Like a God: How To Have Powerful Spiritual Moments with No Church and No Dogma**

**Drew Jacob, 2011**

**86 pages, \$8**

**Genre: Nonfiction**

**Self-published, available here:**

**<<http://roguepriest.net/mercantile>>**

As I read this e-book, memories flashed over me: long-forgotten memories of riding my bike in the rain as a boy; or trudging into the tall grass of a creek to be alone with my thoughts; or climbing the tallest mountain in Southeast Asia, just to prove to myself I could do it. These are the kinds of experiences evoked by *Walk Like a God*.

From simple walks in nature to challenging journeys, Jacob provides a manual for experiencing spirituality through action. He leads the reader gently but firmly into a world where adventure is possible.

The aim of the book is what Jacob calls the “Heroic Life.” By cultivating skills, facing fears, and pushing personal limits, one becomes the hero of one's own myth. One learns to “walk with the Gods.” The journey begins by entering a natural environ, opening to a sense of place, and beginning to listen:

*With this basic talent—this ability to listen to nature—you are witnessing something of immense importance. By addressing the natural forces around you as living beings, you re-enact the origin of religion itself. (p. 40)*

While this may not sound very heroic yet, readers are encouraged to push personal limits.

*“Challenging yourself to your limit is a tool of spiritual development. It is such a strong tool that I call it a weapon of spirituality. By racing into your fears, you radically alter the landscape. Everything changes when you yourself are changing.” (p. 17)*

But this is not a book about leaping off the nearest cliff. Rather, it contains advice on planning more elaborate adventures, beginning with outlining the skills you'll need and how you're going to acquire them, moving goals step-by-step into the realm of possibility.

The overall impression left by *Walk Like a God* is that of verve and potential. The visual layout works toward this, too: the 86 pages, set in landscape orientation, are full of short lines, half pages, and photographs of wide-open natural scenes. Each page gives a sense of the wide-open road expanding before you.

As for the prose, it is simple, but elegant. Vivid imagery gives a warm, personal impression, dripping with richness like dew on a vine of grapes. Most stunning was how often I saw myself reflected in these lines. It was as though Jacob had been peeking over my shoulder all these years, writing down what I was experiencing.

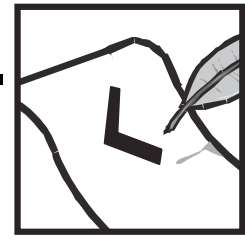
More than a manual of spirituality, *Walk Like a God* is a handbook for living. *Really* living. From connecting with nature to scaling mountains, this is how you'll do it. If you ever had a dream you thought wasn't possible, this is the book that will be with you when you achieve it.



# Story

## A Pagan Hunting Story

by Scott 'Bornavag' Boehm



As I sit here in the woods meditating on my purpose, part of my thoughts cannot help but to travel back to where my current practices started: my first hunt. I thought I was ready. I thought I knew what to expect. I thought hunting was just shooting an animal for food.

There was a crisp bite to the still autumn air. The corn fields to my left were ready for the harvest. A farmer out of sight was preparing his tractor for the harvest. The faint sounds of equipment starting and stopping a few minutes later carried so clearly it was easy to feel as if it was right on top of me. I can only imagine what was going through the thoughts of the area's wildlife. A food source that they had been waiting on was about to be taken away, just as it has been done in previous years. Shaking that thought from my mind, I continued to be on edge, ready for that first sighting and the first clean shot. The foliage around me was a wash of colors. I was on a mission that day. I was hunting squirrels and I would not be distracted.

I saw a quick flash of a fuzzy grey tail. My heart pounded, and I jerked my shotgun to my shoulder.

Too late! It was gone. My heart was still pounding as I continued, still on edge. I walked for hours without seeing anything else. How was that possible? The farmer assured me there were more than I could possibly shoot in the woods next to his fields. He was so happy that someone had wanted to rid him of some of the pests that took from his fields. How disappointed would he be to find that I had not been able to rid him of even one pest?

When I returned to report my failings to the farmer, he chuckled and nodded. "They're quick, aren't they? At least you were able to enjoy the beautiful day." Enjoy the beauty? I was shocked. He was not disappointed at my failing to get any of the squirrels. In fact, he found some humor that lifted his spirits for a moment. I left the farm still unsure what to make of the day.

How far I had come in realizing what hunting really means. I let a small smile form as I continued to meditate. I am still learning, but I know a few things I did wrong that first time. First and foremost I did nothing to get to know the land or the spirits of the land before I tried to take from it. Yes, I might have succeeded anyway. However, had I squeezed off a shot it would have been like stealing from that section of land and its inhabitants. I was a stranger trying to take what I had no right to have.

I am no stranger to the land I am on now. I have spent months working with it to clear invasive species of plants. I gathered downed limbs and stacked them for use as shelters for the smaller animals. Careless people had left their refuse for others such as myself to pick up and dispose of. Through all of that I came to know the spirits and even some of the animals. With one chipmunk in particular, I often share my snack of nuts. I have not yet seen it today. I had seen a hawk soaring nearby the last few times I have come here. My hope is that hawk did not get my little friend.

I know the hawk needs to eat as well, but I just hope the chipmunk is safe. Today I brought extra of its favorite nut, sunflower seeds.

As I continue to meditate, I start to get a feeling. It is the local spirits letting me know they recognize me and have news about my little friend. I asked the spirits to keep safe the animals that need to be kept safe and to show me the ones I can take. My heart sinks a little as the truth of the message becomes clear: I will not be sharing my stash of nuts with the chipmunk today. Instead I will leave them for the other wildlife as I pray that my little friend died quickly and with as little pain as possible. I do this the same way as I do when praying for an animal that I have shot. I can only hope that it is so for the chipmunk. I redouble my efforts and continue my meditation.

I am suddenly filled with a sense of anticipation and then I hear twigs breaking. Something is coming my way. Something rather large! I keep my

heart rate under control as much as I can. I slowly turn towards the sound. It is a beautiful buck. He is breathing very hard, like he has just run a very long way to get here. I sight him in. My breathing is slow and steady. I feel something from the source I recognize as the local nature spirits. They tell me, this is the one. He is not overly large but he is plenty big enough to feed my family for a good bit. I let another small smile form as I shoot. Later that night I load the pictures from my field camera onto my computer. There is the buck that will feed my family. I print the picture and put it on my altar in a place of honor and go to bed. I will need my rest for tomorrow. Tomorrow, I will not be hunting with a camera.



*Scott Boehm joined ADF little less than a year ago as a member of the Maple Hart Proto-Grove. Since then he has attended the Trillium gathering. An avid hunter and fisherman, he seeks to help anyone better understand these two activities as a spiritual practice.*



## Poetry

### Cailleach's Reign

by Inish



The Cailleach reigns, cold winds build  
Crows come close, land lies in sleep  
Whitened slumber, barren fields  
The Hag's chill, through bones will creep  
Lugh's radiance, strength faded  
Brigid warms, brightening hearthside  
Moon is queen, night is aided  
Hunter's time, warriors abide  
Livestock culled, winter's larder  
Harvest over, foxes roam  
People's toil, ever harder  
When Cailleach reigns, all cling to home

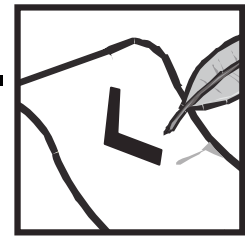




# Article

## Ogham Divination Sets

by Howard 'MacOgham' Scroggins



I am an artist with a broad spectrum of interests. I play piano, organ and pan pipes; mold clay; work with wood sculptures; paint in oils and acrylics; and yes, I even know how to knit and crochet. So, I found that I have an avid fascination for making Ogham Divination Sets.

They are not difficult to make, but they do require time and patience, of which I have vast amounts of. All the materials can be bought at an arts and crafts store or at a local lumber yard. The materials needed are: twelve-inch dowel rods, a wooden box, wood burning tool, saw, hand sander and oil or acrylic paints.

The wooden box is based on whatever size appeals. Just remember you have to be able to fit twenty wooden staves inside and still have some room for mixing or shaking them during divination. I take one-foot long wooden dowel rods and cut them into four three-inch staves. The ends of the staves are rounded off using a hand sander to give a smooth surface.

Once I have all twenty staves cut and smoothed, I burn the assigned Ogham Letter (Fedha) for each Ogham Tree upon each staff. I use twenty staves because most scholars consider the five additional letters to the Ogham Script as a later addition that was not used originally. If you want to include those letters, that is your choice. The next stage in

this process is to use carbon paper to trace a leaf upon the lower half of each staff. These leaves again represent the tree associated with that particular letter.

I hand-paint each staff using oil paints. I prefer oils because they blend more easily. This is the time-consuming part. It takes longer doing this stage because these miniature paintings are about one inch high by 1/2-inch maximum width. I then let the paintings cure outside in the Texas sun for about a week and a half before I varnish each staff to a high gloss.

While the paintings on the staves are drying I go back to the staff box, which has had the preferred image burned on it, and work on staining the wood and applying paint to my design based on personal preferences. I stain and paint the inside of the box. After the paint and stain dries on the box, I apply several coats of varnish to give it a high gloss.

Once my Ogham Set is completed, I perform a simple Ogham Consecration upon my altar. Here is the rite I use:

## Ogham Consecration:

I dedicate this box of secrets  
To serve as a medium between the Gods and  
Mankind  
For the good of All  
By the light of the Moon  
By the glory of the Sun  
By the generosity of the God Ogma  
And the inspiration of the Goddess Brigid  
Biodh Se Amhlaid (So Be It)!



*After studying various religions, from Catholicism to Islam  
(and even Hare Krishna), Howard Scroggins found a  
spiritual home in ADF in April 2011 and has been  
working his way through the Dedicator Path as a Solitary*



## Song

### Solstice Tree Carol

*by Maria Stoy*



*Melody: "See Amid the Winter Snows" by Sir John Goss  
1800-1880*

Oak Trees stands in circles round  
Steadfast guard of holy ground  
Crowned in mistletoe and vine  
Death and life in it entwine.

(Chorus)

Hail thou ever blessed morn  
Hail the New Year's happy dawn  
Sacred trees are met as one  
Branches raised to greet the sun

Ash tree heeds the ravens' cries  
Endless winter's curse defies  
Nine worlds in its branches bind  
Gods and elves to mortal kind (Chorus)

Olive tree with branch of peace  
Fruit provided for the feast  
Oil for the fires bright  
Mirror of the Heaven's light (Chorus)

Sassafras joins trees of old  
Gleaming stark in winter cold  
Many hearths are sheltered here  
To celebrate the turning year (Chorus)





# Festival Review

## Taking My Father to Eight Winds

by *Melissa S. Burchfield*



Yep, you read that right. I took my father to an ADF festival this year. I had to do it. Eight Winds 2011 was held at Prosser Ranch, just a few miles from Lake Tahoe in California. Though I have been in Ohio since 1990, I spent the better part of my formative years in Reno, NV, which is about thirty miles from Lake Tahoe. Lake Tahoe is where all of my fondest childhood memories live. It's the place my father taught me how to swim, the place we were truly a happy family, the place where I go to look back on my childhood when I want to remember. My father, Ed Caniff, Jr., has always thought of Tahoe as the one place he was truly at peace. In essence, it was the only place he ever really felt at home.

One day in 2004 around Yule, I had a rare and precious lucid conversation with him. You see, my dad developed drug-induced schizophrenia from all the "partying" he did. I would like to say that it was a casualty of poor decisions made in his youth, but the truth is that my father was a drug addict. He meant well. He was just never really good at doing anything "as prescribed," including taking medication. He was hurt badly in his twenties and had several back surgeries resulting in copious amounts of scar tissue, which is equal to pain for those of you not familiar with back injuries. He was placed on long-term pain management that ranged from Vicodin to morphine to oxycodon, which he happily crushed and snorted, because it was the only thing that would touch his pain enough for him to sleep.

On that evening, he was between prescriptions. A 'civilized' drug addict, he never purchased off the street. Though in great pain, he was completely coherent, and it was then that he made me promise him that I would take his ashes to Tahoe when he died. He said to me, "I don't care where. Just dump me somewhere nice." He finally passed, likely by his own hand and a combination of fragile health conditions, on April 20, 2007.

As you can well imagine, when I saw that Eight Winds was to be held in Tahoe, I immediately thought of my father, whose ashes had been the central part of my Ancestors shrine for three years by that time. It was as though the world had gone silent, and the beating of my heart seemed to echo back at me from my shrine. With little discussion, I booked a flight and even put in a proposal for a workshop. I sent my dad to a dear friend in Sierra Madrone Grove, ADF out of Sacramento, CA. His heavy behind cost me \$72.40 to mail across the country, but it was a small price to pay. He arrived safely, just in time for James to travel to the festival.

The festival itself was amazing. I met some very nice people, some I've met once or twice before, some I've only "met" online; attended several well-done workshops; and participated in several rituals, including a lovely handfasting. Much to my delight, Emerald, our lovely Bard Laureate, was also in attendance at this festival, and we shared many wonderful moments together, including a fantastic Saturday Night Bardic Night. There are so many talented folks on the West Coast!

On the final day of the festival, Emerald and I were chauffeured to Tahoe by James as we sought "somewhere nice" for my father to make his final resting place. We drove for a while before James found a quiet little off-road with a lightly-traveled path straight to the water. It was not really a place for visitors, and there was even a sign that read "No Parking on Street" in the entire area. James valiantly stayed with the truck, and Emerald and I walked down to the lake. Walking down that path was like walking back in time. I hadn't been in Tahoe since 1989. The solidness of the ground, the stones and the sand were triggering so many emotions that I couldn't even place them all; the box in my hands was getting heavy, as though he knew he was about to be home.



Caption: Lake Tahoe: Daddy's final resting place...

Credit: Melissa 'Missy' Burchfield

The end of the path went down a small set of stairs that led straight to a small beach, not nearly large enough for much more than a few locals to take a quick swim or fish, like one gentleman was doing on this Sunday morning. There were no real clouds in the sky, and the water was crystal clear, just as I remembered it. Off to our left, we found an enclave of sorts. There was a small area up a short hill that was home to a large tree and several large boulders between the spaces where three privacy fences met at the back of these properties. There were birds chirping in the tree and evidence of small wildlife. It was perfect. Emerald went to the shore to gather water and keep watch as I opened the box and the internal bag. As I poured my father's ashes around the back roots of the tree between the tree and the largest of the rocks, I felt a surge of joy course through my system. I had kept my word on the biggest promise I have ever made. I could almost feel my dad saying, "Thank you," as his ashes were set to rest in the land where he wanted to return to the Mother.

Not wanting to tarry, I returned to where Emerald was taking in the scenery and snapped a few shots of the view from his eternal home. We even passed a recycling bin for cardboard on the way back up the path. I tucked the plastic bag his ashes were in back in my pocket (which I returned to the urn when I arrived home) and recycled the box with a smile. James was waiting at the car with a look of anticipation on his face. He said, "Well? How did it go?" I smiled at him broadly and replied, "Wonderful. Thank you for your help, both of you."

I started to giggle on the car ride home, even though we were dangerously close to being late getting Emerald to her flight. James asked me what was so funny, and I had to share with him the thing that will baffle me for the rest of my days: When I "dumped" my father's ashes on the ground, two quarters and a nickel fell out of the bag. At first, I figured it must have been in his pocket when he was cremated, but he was wearing jeans and suspenders, and there were no other metallic objects in the bag. I couldn't help but wonder how on earth those coins ended up in with my father's ashes. The best explanation comes to me from something a good friend said to me some days later, "Apparently, Charon doesn't need exact change?" Rest well, Daddy.





# Song

## Demeter's Daughter

by Dave 'Thexalon' Kleinschmidt



### Demeter's Daughter

Dave 'Thexalon' Kleinschmidt

dm G dm G dm G

Snatched from our world, dear De-me-ter's daugh-ter, to Had-es court be-  
 Mourned all the world for De-me-ter's daugh-ter, with-ered the fruit-ful  
 Ma-ny the pleas to re-store her pre-sence, not on deaf ears they

am dm am dm G dm am

low, sev-'ral small seeds, that ti-ni-est mor-sel kept her a-mong the  
 crops, Stor-my and dry, the land would not yield, her mo-ther her grains did  
 fell, Re-turned that la-dy, re-stored the so-il, sea-sons will turn a-

dm F C F G am am C F

dead. So gen-tle mai-dens, de-fend your choi-ces, care-ful-ly make your plans, for  
 shun. So gen-tle mai-ten, de-fend your choi-ces, pre-pare to make your stand, for  
 gain. All for that god-dess, tak-en from beau-ty to the El-y-sian Fields, She

C dm am dm

Per-se-pho-ne, maids, keep this coun-sel: al-ways re-sist, you can.  
 ma-ny de-pend on your slight-est whim, the boun-ty of all the land.  
 waits for us all when gone from this wor-ld, deep in the dark-ened land.

During times of seasonal change, like so many of the folk, I look to the legends of why those changes occur. While Persephone's story is challenging to our modern values, it is a well-documented myth that commands my attention when the rituals turn towards the honored dead and the sunlight turns to darkness.

As for Persephone herself, there are ways of reading her story that make her no mere pawn. For instance, she might well have known exactly what she was doing and agreeing to when she ate in Hades' realm. Unlike all other deities, she made the journey to the Underworld the same way we mortals do, against her will and without warning or control. Like our ancestors have done, she had to come to terms with all that meant for her future, and by all appearances she managed to accept and embrace her role during the winter months.

As for the musical content, the strange-looking rhythm, taken straight from Greek traditional folk music, is best counted as 1 long beat (3 eighth notes) followed by 2 shorter beats (2 eighth notes each), to form a pattern of long-short-short or 3+2+2. Drummers may find it best to do something along the lines of Right-left-left-Right-left-Right-left with a special emphasis on the beginning of each measure. Guitarists will probably find the chords much easier if they transpose everything up a note to E minor. All performers should notice that there is no Bb - this is written on a modal scale (Greek: Phrygian, medieval: Dorian), rather than the standard minor key.

While I put forward a particular piece, nothing makes me happier than to see another performer take what I offer, change it a bit, and make it their own. We all gain from that: I learn what I could have done better or differently, other performers

get a chance to grapple with what I've come up with, and audiences get to hear it in a new way. I only ask that you give credit where it is due, and give your version of it back to the folk.



*Dave 'Thexalon' Kleinschmidt has been a member of ADF since 2008. He is working on completing his Dedicant Path and intends to pursue the Bardic Guild Study Program. He has composed and performed religious and secular music for voices and instruments since childhood, performs regularly for ADF rites, and has competed for the Wellspring Bardic Chair. He is active in The White Owls Kin (Oi Asproi Koukouvayies, the Hellenic subgroup of ADF), and the Bardic Guild.*



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Cedarsong Grove would like to thank  
**Amy Castner**  
for her years of service as Senior Druid  
without her, we wouldn't have this grove  
so many of us call home.





# Chronicles

## Alternate Uses of Ogham: Recording History with Ogham

by Rev. Jean 'Drum' Pagano



One of the Groves in the Upper Midwest Region recently folded: the Grove of the Twilight Flame. Situated in the Upper Peninsula (UP) of Michigan, Twilight Flame was a collection of people who banded together under the ADF banner from Ostara 2005 through Midsummer 2011. I was sad to see the Grove fold, but it is one of the things that happen – as some Groves and Protogroves are coming into being, others are disbanding.

Seven years is not an inconsequential time period. This Grove was around for the last quarter of ADF's existence, and I think it would be such a shame to have it pass from our memories, only to fade into its members' recollection. I would receive emails from Twilight Flame after each of their rituals, and there would always be a divination, either in Tarot, Futhark, or ogham. The divinations were taken after high days and moons. They provided a complete *divinatory* history of the Grove of the Twilight Flame.

Ogham, an ancient Irish writing system in use between 300 C. E and 800 C.E., was used as some form of markers, such as boundary markers, grave inscriptions, and memorial stones. (Ellison) It occurred to me that instead of writing down what *happened* to the Grove of the Twilight Flame, it might be more interesting to set down a history of the divinations in ogham (although one could also use Tarot and Futhark) of the Grove. Therefore, I put myself to the task of recording the divinatory history, in ogham, of the rituals of Twilight Flame.

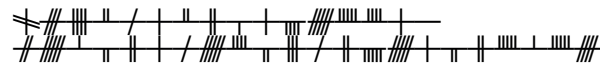
The divinations from Ostara through Mabon of 2005 are in tarot and are beyond the scope of this report. Similarly, Samhain 2005 through Ostara 2006 are in Futhark, once again a topic for a different report. Beginning with Midsummer 2006 through Midsummer 2011, many of the divinations are through the use of ogham.

I charted the oghams for each year, carrying forward the last ogham of one year as the first

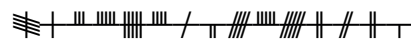
ogham of the next year. 2006 is indicated as follows, for Midsummer, Loaf Fest, Mabon, Winter Nights, and Yule:



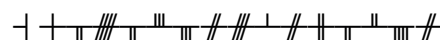
Carrying forward the last ogham, Gort, into 2007, with Disting, Even Nights, Full Moon in April, Full Moon in May, May Day, Midsummer, Full Moon in May, Full Moon in July, Loaf Feast, Full Moon in August, Mabon, Full Moon in September, Full Moon in October, Winter Nights, Full Moon in November, and Yule. Here is the graph:



Straif, the final ogham of 2007, becomes the first ogham of 2008. The Full Moon in January starts out 2008, followed by Disting, Full Moon in February, Ostara, Midsummer, Autumn Equinox, and Samhain. These omens looked like this:



Beith, the ogham of new beginnings ends 2008 and begins 2009. Oghams are pulled for Disting/Imbolc, May Day, Midsummer, Autumn Equinox, Winter Nights, and Yule, producing the following image:

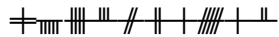


The last ogham of 2009, Gort, the search for the center, the search for the self, begins the new year of 2010. Perhaps, at this time, the Grove is beginning to take a look at where they have been, where they are, and where they are going. Imbolc, Ostara, May Day, Midsummer, Loaf Fest, Autumn Equinox, and Winter Nights all produce ogham readings. They are as follows:



Ohn, the last ogham of 2010, finishes out 2010 and begins the Grove of the Twilight Flames final year. Imbolc, Ostara, and Midsummer close out the ogham divinations for the year and also for this incarnation of the Grove of the Twilight Flame.

Here are the final few rituals:



With this, the divinatory history of the Grove of the Twilight Flame comes to an end. Interestingly enough, the history of the Twilight Flame begins with Coll, perhaps the ogham of the Mother figure or the Goddess and ends with Duir, the Oak, the Father figure, or the God. In this manner, the Grove comes full circle from nurturing and wisdom to strength, protection, and the doorway to the mysteries, at least how I read it.

What did the Grove have to say, from ritual to ritual about the ogham? They actually had quite a bit to say, but that is left out of this tapestry, to allow the viewer the chance to read the histories on their own and to try to divine, from one point in the past to another, what happened to this Grove

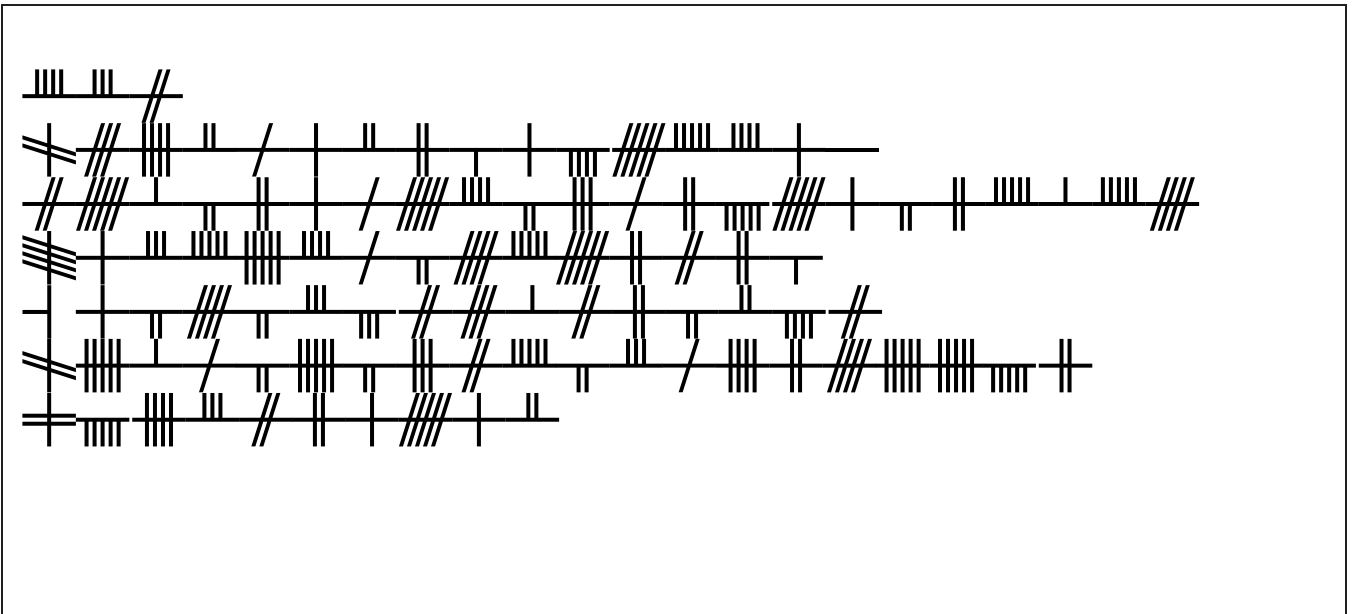
during these seven years. One does not see the rituals, hear the words, smell the food eaten, taste the Waters of Life, nor feel the hug of a fellow member or guest. One is left with only the words of the Seers and the interaction of the Gods, through Prophecy. What do you see when you look back at the Grove of the Twilight Flame?



*Since the early days of ADF (1984), Rev. Jean 'Drum' Pagano has long been a valued member. He has been serving ADF as its Listmaster for the past five years, and is a member of the Mother Grove. At Wellspring 2011, Rev. Pagano was consecrated as an ADF priest.*

#### Cited Work

Ellison, Rev. Robert Lee "Skip", The Secret Language of the Druids, Tucson, ADF Publishing, 2007



# Coming Soon

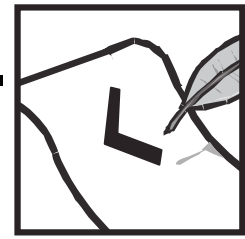


# Article

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## Wolf Oracle

by Ealasaí S. Witt



Credit: Ealasaí S. Witt

*This card is the very first one of the Winter Cycle. A pair of Arctic Wolves rest together in comfort on the Tundra as the Arctic twilight fades slowly into Winter. An old wolf rests his chin on an old antler bone. The scene embodies the concept of genuine rest, acceptance, respite, quietness and leisure. As I grow in my ADF studies, I will add symbols to the scene that are appropriate to IE cultures. For instance, the rune Wunjo can mean well-being, contentment, harmony of like forces, effortless ease, bonding and harmony, so to place such a rune in the corner would be workable to update this imagery for ADF use. That certainly would be applicable for this card, and both match and expound on the Gaelic name of the card, 'Fois', or 'ease'.*

Since beginning seems to be the hardest part for me, I'm just going to jump in and share a project that I've begun working on for my personal use for omen-taking in ritual. As a solitary for many years, but new to the ADF path, I have lots of skill sets that I feel need to be adapted to the ADF way, one of which happened to be a divination tool I began developing a number of years ago, an oracle deck I dubbed 'An Oracle of Wolf Wisdom'. Its origins are based on the wisdom I've learned from studying living wolves and their social systems.

As I have always felt a deep connection to wolves, I felt pulled to figuring out how to tie this knowledge into generating solutions for my own life challenges. I began to look to them as mentors and teachers. As a human and social being myself, I saw great wisdom and teaching in how wolves conduct their lives. Wolves are well known for their ability to create social structures and work both together and separately, and balance cooperation with competition, hierarchy and social

status with affection, loyalty, and group cohesion. I discovered that wolves embody very important archetypes, life passages, and social roles that are just as applicable to humans in general, and myself and the course of my life, in particular. They are part of my kindred.

I had also begun (over a decade ago, now!) to work with divination. I first studied the traditional Golden Dawn-based Tarot, and then extended these studies into runes and other oracle systems, the latest of which was Ogham. Putting the two together somehow in a cohesive, usable system, became a real priority for me a few years back.

The structure of my deck is based on the ever-changing cycle of seasons and the inherent challenges we face as we spiral through time. As it exists in its current form, the deck is broken down into four cycles, or seasons, each represented by a different environment, and a different species or subspecies of wolf. There is also a fifth section representing social roles, for a total of five cycles.

On the surface level, the deck follows the Wheel of the Year from a wolf's point of view. It has two tracks: first, there is a continuous narrative that uses story vignettes of wolves to illustrate the various concepts using a visual reference and

collection of symbols; track two has the underlying meanings and connections to our own human paradigm. For example, the Winter Cycle takes place in the Arctic Circle, to a pack and individual members of *canis lupis arctos*, the Arctic Wolf, a subspecies of the Grey. The Winter Cycle embodies such challenges as death and rebirth, wisdom of the Elders, old age and slowing down, embracing the inner sage or crone, isolation, and facing harsh challenges. My ongoing challenge now seems to be that.

Since I began developing this deck before I came to ADF, I now need to make changes to the symbolism used to reflect my growing knowledge of IE studies, ADF's Core Order of Ritual, and practice. My true goal is to develop this deck into a coherent system for omen-taking that does not violate IE tradition or my Gaelic Hearth culture, but adds to and augments the practice. Through

my ADF studies, I am learning that animal wisdom and the wolf have a rich symbolism and deep meaning in many IE cultures. The Wolf is also a European animal, and the Celts, Slavs and Norse in particular have a great deal of wolf lore.

Although much of what I have found is negative, there is truth in a wry face, and this shadow is also incorporated into the cards. What I'm finding is that creating this deck has become a dynamic process, and as I grow in knowledge and experience, the cards, the symbolism therein, and my grasp of the meanings - and by extension, my way of ritual itself - are becoming clearer and stronger as time goes on. It evolves as I do, and as it unfolds, I, too, change and grow. The wolves speak to me, and I will continue to honor it, and them.



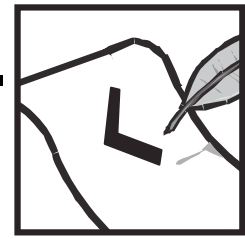
Black and White Winter Painting by Melissa Hill



# Article

## Nature-Inspired Simple Sand-Cast Offering Bowls

by Deb Field



If you are like me, you are probably always searching for “appropriate” bowls to use for offerings during outdoor rituals. I am often reduced to using odd serving bowls from my kitchen or sometimes a plastic bucket. I doubt the Kindred hold this against me, but it bothers me to have bright blue plastic in the middle of my outdoor shrine. I recently decided to add a semi-permanent well to my outdoor shrine. I chose to use a simple and common method of concrete work known as sand-casting. Every garden magazine in the world, and dozens of websites, have how-to articles for “sand-casting a concrete bird bath,” usually using a single big rhubarb leaf. I don’t have any rhubarb and never do anything the easy way, so I redesigned the project to suit my own needs. My single well project ballooned into multiple bowls with varying sizes. And I began to experiment with using different types of leaves. The results have been interesting, and I’d like to share the basics. This is a great, inexpensive project that allows for great creativity, if you want to express it.

The full materials list appears at the end of this article (with approximate costs from my local Home Depot). Some of the materials I already had, and I am a great one for substituting where I can.

Any kind of sand will do, as long as it doesn’t contain a lot of pebbles or debris. I usually have a bag around for garden projects, but I also collected sand from the “beach” that accumulates at the end of my driveway and sifted the debris out. I have experimented with several different types of concrete mix and for this type of project; I found that mortar mix works the best. The other mixes contain pebbles, which can create holes or cause the sides of the bowl to crack. The only caveat with using mortar is it will not hold up well if you live in a

freeze-thaw zone (I am in New England). So if you are keeping your well/bowls outside, you will need to move them in for the winter or risk them cracking.

For gloves, I found the nitrile palm “mud gloves” work well for mixing and slapping on mortar mix. I wear a pair of regular nitrile gloves under them for fine work. Latex or vinyl gloves will also work with a pair of leather work gloves. You definitely don’t want to leave out the respiratory protection when working with the dry mortar mix. I cheat on the dust mask and just cover my face with a bandanna. What you use to mix the mortar in and mix it with doesn’t really matter, as long as you remember you will probably be left with residue, even if you rinse everything well. I have a bucket and an old trowel that are now dedicated to concrete projects.

### The method:

First, decide what size bowl you want to make. My well is about 18” across and 5” deep, but the offering bowls range in size from 6” x 3” to about 10” x 4”. Remember, these will be much thicker and heavier than a typical clay bowl, so you don’t want to get too crazy with size, especially if you are going to have to move it. Pick a flat area to work in and make a mound of damp sand, about the size you want your bowl. The finished bowl will be a little larger than your sand pile. Try to smooth the sides as evenly around as possible, but one of the charms of these bowls is that they usually are not completely symmetrical. Be sure to slightly flatten the top of the pile, so your bowl will have a flat bottom to sit on.

Then go pick your leaves. Any good-sized leaves that are thicker, with obvious veins and good texture will work. Obviously, rhubarb works well. My

current leaf of choice is hosta, but I have also experimented with milkweed, grapevine, and fern. Thinner leaves like fern can be difficult to remove from the finished bowl without disturbing the pattern they leave behind. You can either cover the sand pile with plastic and lay the leaves down, or just place them directly on the sand. Plastic means any areas not covered by leaves will be smooth, *if* you can keep wrinkles out when placing the concrete. Directly on the sand means you may have spots that are rougher textured, but you can smooth those out in the finishing process. Arrange the leaves however you like and anchor them in place if it's breezy out, then go mix your concrete.

To make a medium bowl, I used about 6-7 trowels of mortar mix. I add enough water to make the mortar the consistency of sticky mud. Too wet and it will slide off the top of your mold and leave holes or thin spots. Too clumpy, and it won't stick together well and pieces will crack off the sides. It just takes a little practice to get to combination right. Start at the top of the mold and pat the mortar into place. Continue adding handfuls to the top and *pat* them down toward the sides. Don't try to smooth the mortar - your leaves will slip out of place. Patting the concrete gets it into place, removes any trapped air, and starts to force the excess water out. When you get to the bottom of the mold, smooth around the base, so you will have a fairly even edge on your bowl. Cover it with plastic, rinse off your tools and walk away.

Now comes the hard part - waiting. Do NOT try to flip your bowl in less than 24 hours, and 48 are really better. If you flip it too soon, you risk cracking it (the fate of my first well). You should slightly dampen the piece each day that it sits. If it's in the sun, condensation under the plastic may be enough. After 48 hours, carefully turn the bowl over. You should be able to peel the leaves off. Then rinse any sand or additional leaf material off. If anything sticks or is caught in a fold, you can use a dental pick or a small nail to scrape the pieces out. Also, run the side of the nail over any sandy spots to smooth them out. I also gently run around the edge of the bowl, to even out the rim. At this point, you can either leave the bowl for a few more days to cure, or you can paint it. A *light* wash of acrylic paint works best - too thick, and the paint will fill in the design from the leaves. Pour a small amount of paint into the bowl, add a lot of water, and brush it over the design. I do

the outside of the bowl also to make it look more finished. When it's dry, you can either seal it with water proofer like Thompson's water seal, or leave it as is. A 60lb bag of mortar mix made 2 wells, 2 small bowls and 4 medium bowls for me, with leftover for a different project I am working on. You can reuse the sand and plastic, so the investment here is really minimal. Time, patience, and a little creativity is all you need to outfit yourself with useful offering containers inspired by Nature.

#### Materials:

50 lb sand \$3.50  
60 lb Quikcrete Mortar mix \$4.50  
Latex or nitrile palm knit gloves \$3.50  
Dust mask (5pk) \$2.50  
Garden trowel \$3.00  
5 gallon bucket \$7.00  
1 gallon Thompson's Waterseal \$18.00  
2 in & # in Economy paint brush set \$5.00  
8 oz. acrylic paint \$5.00  
Plastic sheeting or trash bags  
Water

#### Additional tips and hints:

If working with a large piece, be very careful of the edges when you first flip it. The edges on a large piece will tend to be thinner and can break off easily.

If you discover any small holes in the bottom of your bowl (sometimes this will happen where the stems come together or if a leaf folds), you can fill it with a bit of modeling clay. Try to match the clay to the wash color you choose.

A detailed photographic version of the full process is available at: <<http://www.charteroakadf.org>>

*CS*

*Deb Field has been a member of ADF since 2010 and is currently Pursewarden of Charter Oak Grove. She belongs to the Artisans, Healers, and Naturalists Guilds and is a member of the White Owls Kin.*

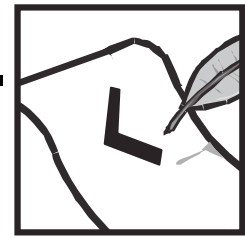




# Article

## Two Powers Dryad Meditation

by Skylark



When I was asked to lead the Two Powers meditation for Three Cranes Grove at Samhain 2010 I was both excited and nervous. I had always struggled with the Two Powers meditation, having a hard time visualizing myself connecting to both the water below and the light above. I have always been more successful in meditation when I have a more concrete guide to follow that is both visually striking and descriptive, but also vague enough that my mind can implant it's own imagery without conflict. As I began working through these struggles, I decided to use the imagery of the World Tree connecting the two worlds to guide me, in a very literal sense. This is a tree meditation, written for multiple people, with bits of season specific imagery that can be tweaked to fit the current season. The path of the meditation takes you into a forest alone. You find a tree, you become that tree, and use the tree's own knowledge to draw the waters up and process the light from above. The meditation ends with you noticing the rest of the trees around you. Each person then steps out of their tree and returns to their bodies together, a united grove.

If you are using this meditation as a solitary, it can be easily performed without alteration up until the very end. The way I perform it at home when I am not in a community setting is by envisioning myself stepping out of the tree into the presence and community of the Kindreds. By drawing the two powers into myself, my senses then are improved so that I can feel more strongly as I step out of the tree and into sacred space.

### Meditation Script

Children of Earth, take a moment to calm your mind and body. Breathe deep and close your eyes. Listen to the sound of your own breathing. Hear your heartbeat thrumming inside you. Pause for a second and just listen.

\*\*\*Pause\*\*\*

See in your mind's eye where you stand now and picture yourself walking away from where you are.

You're walking towards a deep and old forest. Feel the cool, damp earth on your feet. As you enter the forest feel the cool autumn breeze brush your cheek.

Notice the sounds around you. A gentle rustling of leaves, perhaps from the wind, perhaps made by a squirrel bounding by. Notice the sunlight dappling across your face. A last breath of summer caressing your face, heartening you for the colder days ahead.

As you are walking deeper and deeper into the forest you suddenly come upon a clearing. There is a small pond in the middle of the glade surrounded by trees around the water's edge. One of these trees calls to you and you glide over to it. Place your hands on the trunk and feel the rough bark against your palm. Feel the ancient wisdom emanating from it.

Turn and place your back against the tree. Feel yourself sinking into it, becoming part of the tree. Feel your toes mix with the roots twinning down into the earth. Allow your mind to follow those roots and tendrils as they creep ever deeper, until suddenly they plunge into the cool deep waters far below the surface of the earth. Use the knowledge of the tree to pull those waters up through your roots. Feel them approaching you, up and up, until they reach your toes.

Feel the waters pulsing up through your toes and heels, moving up your legs and pooling in your groin. Feel them surging up into your chest and down your arms. Feel your branches swelling and cool waters seeping into your fingers, your leaves. Feel the waters rush up and fountain out the crown of your head, your uppermost branches and leaves, and come cascading back down into the earth to soak back down cooling your roots again. Having taken your fill, feeling replenished, allow those cool, dark waters to bleed back down into the earth.

Again feel the wind brush through your hair, your leaves. Feel as the sunlight shines down on you, brightening and invigorating you. Allow your leaves to take in that bright, golden light. Let it convert to pure energy and infuse your head and chest with

light and energy. Let it saturate your branches and flow into your finger leaves. Feel as it washes down through your groin and flows down you legs and energizes you down to your roots. Having absorbed as much light as your body will hold, let the remainder reflect back off you, back into the sky.

Feel how the combination of the cool waters and the bright light mixes within your body. Feel how it mingles and brings a new awareness to every essence of yourself. Let your attention drift over yourself from your roots, to your trunk, and on up to your leaves.

Let a breath of wind catch one of your leaves and watch as it drifts downward to land fall lightly into the pond. Watch as the water ripples outward from this light touch. Allow your awareness to follow this ripple outward and see as it collides with other, similar ripples. As you follow those to their source you see that they also come from fallen leaves.

Now seeing all these leaves in the water creating ripples that touch and rebound off your own, you notice all the other trees surrounding the pond. Reach out your awareness and sense that these trees are all part of this grove. Reach out and feel that you are not alone in this glade, but rather you are surrounded by the warmth of your kin. You are all here together.

Take a moment and allow this feeling of togetherness and oneness to soak into your mind, your heart, your bones and your soul. Listen to the breathing of those around you. Your hearts beat as one now.

\*\*\*Pause\*\*\*

With this new realization that you are here among family, you begin to disconnect your self from the tree, just as all those around you do. Wiggle your toes and separate them from the roots. Wiggle your fingers and feel the leaves fall away. Roll you shoulders, allowing you to step out of the tree and once again become your own self.

As you now look around you see that while before you came to this glade alone, you now are leaving among friends. It is time now to turn away from the glade and walk back out of the forest. Listen, as before to the sounds around you. You can now hear the laughter of friends, and you feel now not just the

warmth of the sun, but the warmth of companionship. As you break out of the forest and head back towards you body here keep that feeling that you are now one with the people around you.

Now, step back into your body and take deep breath to settle yourself back in. Wiggle your fingers and toes. Now begin moving your arms and legs just a little as you feel yourself come back to this place. Here, among kinfolk, we may now move on with the work we have for today.

o3

*Skylark has been a member of ADF and Three Cranes Grove since 2008. She is an active member of the Bardic Guild and Hellenic Kin. Her lifelong interest in science and creative writing merges in this photosynthetic meditation.*

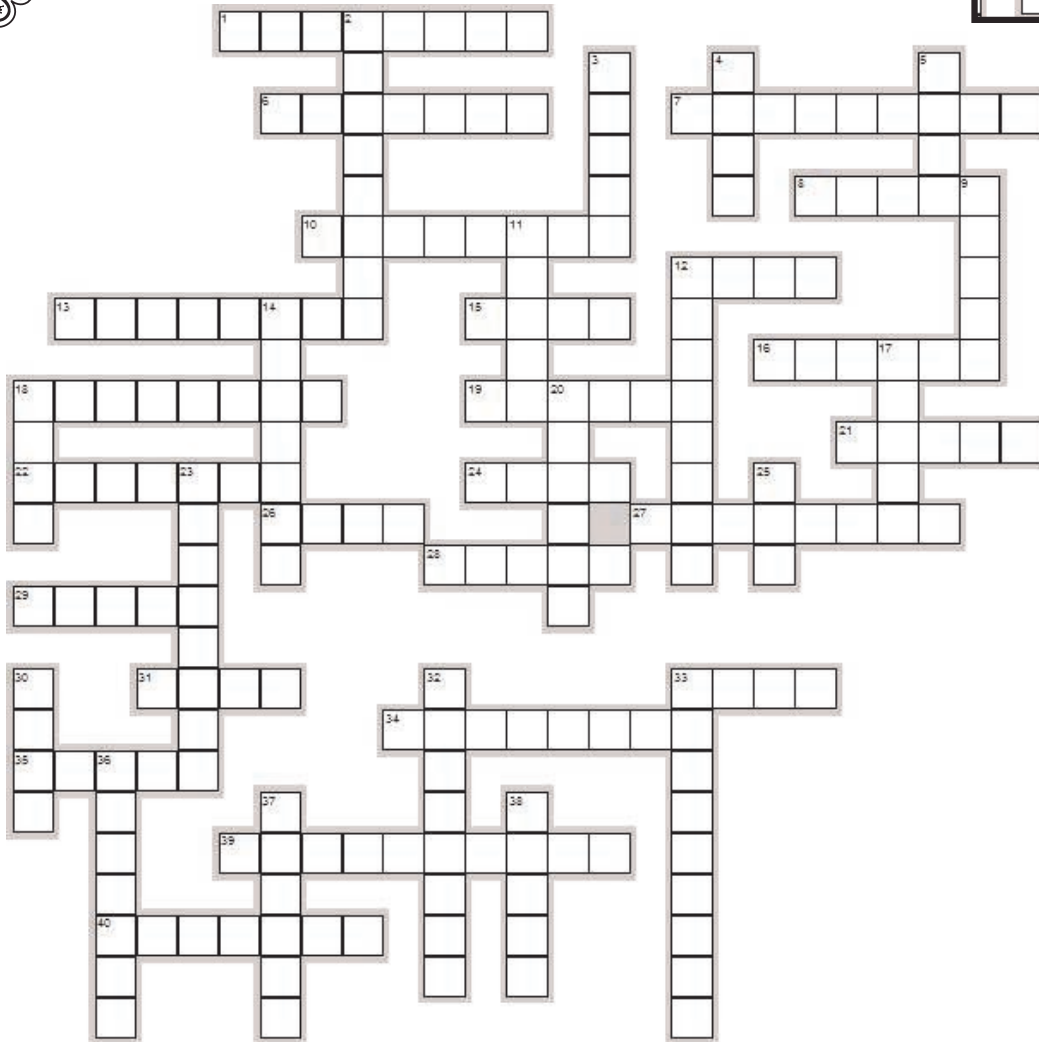
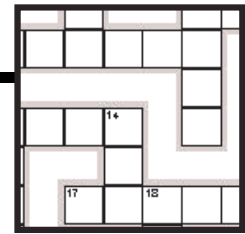




# Crossword Puzzle

## All Things Celtic

by Chris :)



EclipseCrossword.com

## Down

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 2. He taught Gwydion magic                | 30. Daughter of Ethal                         |
| 3. Her name means white cow               | 32. King of the Red Branch                    |
| 4. Melyngan Gamre belongs to              | 33. Welsh name for August 1st                 |
| 5. Queen of Connaught                     | 36. His wife was Scene                        |
| 9. He has an invisible cloak              | 37. The stone of destiny comes from this city |
| 11. Bres replaced him                     | 38. His father killed him with an axe         |
| 12. 1 of 5 provinces of Ireland           |   |
| 14. His mead gave invulnerability         |   |
| 17. She loves her chariot most of all     |   |
| 18. Welsh Mother Goddess                  |   |
| 20. Finns band                            |   |
| 23. His sons killed Cain                  |   |
| 25. Bodb gave 2 daughters to him as wives |   |

# Across

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1. He instituted the Feast of Goibniu
6. Gaulish God of healing
7. wife of lleu
8. His cauldron is never dry
10. she is accused of infanticide
12. aka Samhildánach
13. Battle crow
15. She terrorized Queen Medb's army
16. The Red book of Hergest contains...
18. His vulnerable spot was his heal
19. Rival of Arawn
21. His mother was a Deer
22. Sacred Space
24. AKA Bendigeidfran
26. Famous Scottish Island
27. Creirwy's mother
28. Gaulish Goddess of fertility
29. An Irish God of Death
31. Goewin was his foot holder
33. Welsh Craftsman
34. June 9 is his holiday
35. She married Midir
39. medieval welsh manuscripts
40. Welsh magician

# Last Issue's Puzzle Key

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## Down

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1. **MANDRAKEROOT**—Podophyllum peltatum
2. **PURUSHA**—(Indian) –primordial man
3. **YMIR**—(Norse)- Of his sweat the sea was made
4. **GORSE**—Ulex europaeus
5. **DYAU**—(Indian) Heaven Deity
6. **HERCULES**—(Greek) Stole the Geryon cattle
7. **DELPHI**—Located on Mt. Parnassus
9. **BOAND**—(Celtic) Dagdas lover
11. **RHIANNON**—(Welsh) she offered ppl rides on her back
14. **GRAEAE**—(Greek) These hags were sisters to the Gorgons
16. **BRES**—(Celtic) Satirized by Cairbre
17. **CUCHULAINN**—(Celtic) AKA Setanta
18. **HERMES**—(Greek) Saved Dionysus from the fire
19. **RATATOSKR**—(Norse) Yggdrasil squirrel
20. **ANGUS**—(Celtic) He had a cloak of invisibility
23. **VALHALLA**—(Norse) This hall is located in Asgard
25. **PLATO**—*Hyperbolus, Victories, Cleophon, Phaon*
26. **SOCRATES**—“As for me, all I know is that I know nothing.” - Author
27. **NIFLHEIMR**—(Norse) world of ice
28. **TAMARAC**—Pinus Microcarpa
32. **GLEIPNIR**—(Norse) Fenrirs chain
33. **HEIMDALL**—(Norse) Guardian of the Gods
36. **WOAD**—Ivatis tinctoria

37. **MARS**—(Roman) Ferae Marti festival was his

## Across

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8. **SISYPHUS**—(Greek) Pushed the rock up hill
10. **DRAGONS BLOOD**—Daemonorops drago
12. **PSYCHE**—(Roman) She collected the golden wool
13. **KVASIR**—(Norse) Fjalar & Galar killed him
15. **HESIOD**—(Roman) Father of didactic poetry
16. **BLACKBERRY**—Rubus fruticosus
20. **ARISTOTLE**—“All virtue is summed up in dealing justly.” -Author
21. **ATLAS**—(Greek) Son of Iapetus & Asia
22. **TYPHON**—(Greek) Father of the Chimaera
24. **CAMPBELL**—Follow your bliss author - last
29. **IRON**—Hesiods 5th age
30. **YAMA**—(Indian) First Ancestor
31. **ENBARR**—(Celtic) Manannan's Horse
34. **HOLLY**—Ilex aquifolium
35. **ANNWFN**—(Welsh) The Cauldron of Arawn is found here
38. **METIS**—(Greek) Zeus swallowed her and bore Athena
39. **RUDRA**—(Indian) -Born from Brahmas forehead
40. **INDRA**—(Indian) Airavata is his mountain
41. **SLEIPNIR**—(Norse) Loki's eight legged horse



# News and Announcements



## Dedicant Path Completions

**Irisa MacKenzie**  
Three Cranes Grove  
Date completed June 2011

**Julie Beckers**  
Stone Creed Grove, ADF  
Date completed July 2011

**Anthony Bentley (Marek Mathias)** Sassafras Grove  
Date completed July 2011

**Jan Krueger**  
Three Cranes Grove  
Date completed July 2011

**Bridgette Adkins**  
Solitary  
Date completed Sept 2011

**Ty Campbell, III (White-Elk Taliesin)**  
Red Oak Grove  
Date completed Sept 2011

**Philip 'Flip' Rutledge**  
Grove of the Midnight Sun  
Date completed Sept 2011

**Crash**  
Solitary  
Date completed Sept 2011

## Clergy Program

**Rev. Robert Lewis**  
Second Circle  
Date completed August 2011

## New Protogroves & Grove Approvals

**Ocqueoc Forest Protogrove**  
Onaway, MI  
Date founded Aug 23, 2011

**Blue Heron Protogrove**  
Dumfries, VA.  
Date founded: July 22, 2011

**Red Oak Grove**  
Mount Laurel, NJ  
Reactivation date July 2011

## Other Announcements

The ADF Clergy Council is pleased to announce a new ADF Order: **The Order of Bardic Alchemy!**  
Formed June 2011

The members of ADF would like to congratulate ADF Arch Druid **Rev. Kirk Thomas** on completing his Master of Arts in Celtic Studies in July 2011.

## Upcoming Festivals

**Harvest Nights Gathering**  
Otis, MA  
Oct 14-16 2011

**Pagan Fire Seminars**  
Reynoldsburg, OH  
Feb 11 2012

**PantheaCon**  
San Jose, CA  
Feb 17-20 2012

See [www.adf.org/events](http://www.adf.org/events) for further information

~ Congratulations to all ~

# Contributors List

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## Art

Rev. James 'Seamus' Dillard

Art: *Solstice Sunrise*

Melissa Hill

Art: *Black and White Winter Painting*

## Articles

Leesa Kern

Article: *The Twelve Days of Yule*

Rev. Barbara Wright

Article: *Branching Out into Another Means of Divination: Ogham Interpretations from Daily Practice*

Howard 'MacOgham' Scroggins

Article: *Ogham Divination Sets*

Ealasaid S. Witt

Article: *Wolf Oracle*

Deb Field

Article: *Nature-Inspired Simple Sand-Cast Offering Bowls*

Skylark

Article: *Two Powers Dryad Meditation*

## Columns

Lesley Domnu-Hooper

Letter to the Editor: *No Connection*

Rev. Kirk Thomas

Series: *A Welsh Wheel of the Year*

B.T. Newberg

E-Book Review: *Walk Like a God*

Melissa S. Burchfield

Festival Review: *Taking My Father to Eight Winds*

Rev. Jean 'Drum' Pagano

Chronicles: *Alternate Uses of Ogham: Recording History with Ogham*

## Crossword

Chris :)

## Bardic

Rev. Jean 'Drum' Pagano

Poem: *All Three*

Maghnus na Mathanan

Poem: *Yule*

Leaf

Poem: *Diasporant Dedicant's Poem at Imbolc (Bring on the Spring!)*

Chelly Couvrette

Children's Story: *How Brigid Saved Yule*

Jennifer Lawrence

Poem: *Song to Brigid at Imbolc*

Irisa MacKenzie

Poem: *Around the Table*

Scott 'Bornavag' Boehm

Story: *A Pagan Hunting Story*

Inish

Poem: *Cailleach's Reign*

Maria Stoy

Song: *Solstice Tree Carol*

Dave 'Thesalon' Kleinschmidt

Song: *Demeter's Daughter*

# ADF Directory

## The Mother Grove

|   |                             |                              |
|---|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Archdruid                               | Rev. Kirk S. Thomas         | adf-archdruid@adf.org        |
| Vice-Archdruid                          | Rev. James 'Seamus' Dillard | adf-vice-archdruid@adf.org   |
| Treasurer                               | Ed Reis                     | adf-treasurer@adf.org        |
| Secretary                               | Rev. Rob Lewis              | adf-secretary@adf.org        |
| Members Advocate                        | Melissa Burchfield          | adf-members-advocate@adf.org |
| Chief of the Council of Regional Druids | Jean Pagano a.k.a. Drum     | adf-cord-chief@adf.org       |
| Chief of the Council of Senior Druids   | Flip Rutledge               | adf-cosd-chief@adf.org       |
| Non-Officer Director                    | Francesca Hedrick           | athomps@adf.org              |
| Non-Officer Director                    | Rev. Sean Harbaugh          | seanthedruid@gmail.com       |
| Non-Officer Director                    | Rev. Medb Aodhamair         | knottydragon@hotmail.com     |

## Additional Leadership Positions

|                          |                            |                           |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Administrator            | Selene Tawny               | adf-administrator@adf.org |
| Archdruid Emeritus       | Rev. Isaac Bonewits        | [deceased]                |
| Archdruid Emeritus       | Rev. Ian Corrigan          | tredera@ncweb.com         |
| Archdruid Emeritus       | Rev. John "Fox" Adelman    | john.adelman@trw.com      |
| Archdruid Emeritus       | Rev. Robert 'Skip' Ellison | skip@dragonskeep.us       |
| Chronicler               | Peg Glosser                | adf-chronicler@adf.org    |
| Information Manager      | Rev. Rob Lewis             | adf-info-manager@adf.org  |
| Listmaster and Moderator | Jean Pagano a.k.a. Drum    | adf-listmaster@adf.org    |
| Preceptor                | Crystal Groves             | adf-preceptor@adf.org     |
| Regalia Manager          | Rev. Robert 'Skip' Ellison | adf-store@adf.org         |
| Webmaster                | Rev. Rob Lewis             | adf-webmaster@adf.org     |

## Committees

|                              |                            |                             |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Clergy Council               | Chair: Rev. Kirk S. Thomas | adf-archdruid@adf.org       |
| Council of Lore              | Chair Rev. Crystal Groves  | adf-preceptor@adf.org       |
| Grove Coordinating Committee | Chair: Rev Caryn MacLuan   | adf-gcc-chair@adf.org       |
| Grove Organizing Committee   | Chair: Aigeann             | adf-goc-chair@adf.org       |
| Prisoner Relations Committee | Chair: Rev Barbara Wright  | adf-prison-ministry@adf.org |

For information on **Regional Druids** please see the full listing at:  
<<http://www.adf.org/members/org/cord/>>

For more information on **Groves, Guilds, Special Interest Groups (SIGs), and Kins**, please see the full listing at: <<http://www.adf.org/groups/groups-list.html>>

# Submission Guidelines

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Oak Leaves welcomes submissions of artwork, articles, poetry, letters to the editor, and anything else that might be of interest to our readers. Submissions, and especially artwork, relating to the turning of the wheel of the year and the celebration of the High Days are particularly encouraged. Submissions from non-members will be accepted, however, if space is constrained, preference will be given to submissions from ADF members. Certain pieces may receive preference, depending on available space.

## References and Notations:

Since excellent scholarship is one of ADF's goals, please document sources of ideas and materials that you used for your writings. Detailed endnote references are preferred rather than simply providing a bibliography. Please follow the standards for references in the MLA Handbook or Style Manual. We will not accept submissions with footnotes, as they require considerable editing to convert to endnotes.

## Medium of Submission:

Electronic submissions are preferred, sent as email attachments to the Oak Leaves submissions address:

**[oak-leaves@adf.org](mailto:oak-leaves@adf.org)**

Please send one submission per attachment specifying the format, author's name, your email, and membership status. Be sure the title of the piece and your name are at the top of the page, and you have checked it over for spelling and grammatical errors.

We will also accept electronic submissions on CD, sent to:

OL Editor,  
P.O. Box 17874  
Tucson, AZ 85731-7874

Please do not upload the article directly to the wiki as this has caused some confusion. Written submissions should be sent in one of the following formats: Rich Text Format (RTF), PDF or MS Word. Submitted materials will not be returned to the sender, unless specifically requested.

## Art Submission Guidelines:

We now accept photos as well as drawings and computer generated pictures. Some of the color pictures will need to be modified to black and white but we will do that as necessary. We would like to have pictures submitted at 300 dpi, and in a useable format such as .jpg, .png, etc. Please send them to the Art Director at [adf-ol-art@adf.org](mailto:adf-ol-art@adf.org). We are not currently accepting hard copies of your art.

## Deadlines for submissions are:

Spring: December 1st,  
Summer: March 1st,  
Autumn: June 1st,  
Winter: September 1st





# Ar nDraiocht Féin: A Druid Fellowship

P.O. Box 17874, Tucson, AZ 85731-7874

## Membership and Subscription Form

One form per person please.



Beside your name, address, phone number, and e-mail 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.

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

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?  
 \_\_\_\_\_

If this is a membership renewal please state your ADF membership number:  
 \_\_\_\_\_

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

I am 18 years of Age or Older: { } Yes { } No (If no, see waiver below.)

### ADF Membership Rates:

Regular Membership \_\_\_\_\_ years @ \$25/year = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Prisoner Membership \_\_\_\_\_ years @ \$10/year = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Subscription to Oak Leaves - Members \_\_\_\_\_ years @ \$20/year = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Subscription to Oak Leaves - Non-Members \_\_\_\_\_ years @ \$25/year = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Due \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail this form with your check or money order (made payable to "ADF" in U.S. dollars only.) Please allow 4-6 weeks for processing. There are special rates for Prisoners. Please contact us if you are a prisoner or are assisting one. This form may also be found online at: <http://www.adf.org/joining/join.html>.

### Under 18 Membership Waiver

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

To whom it may concern: (enter child's name here) \_\_\_\_\_ has my permission to become a member of ADF, and I am fully aware of the Neopagan nature of this organization.

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Notary Seal: \_\_\_\_\_



## Druid Kirk's Dream

Archdruid Kirk tells us that he has a vision for ADF. He said, "someday, though probably not in my lifetime, ADF will own a moderate sized piece of land that will have a temple to the Kindreds, grounds for camping and festivals, buildings for scholarly study, an ADF office, and an indoor rite space for inclement weather. But even with such a grand dream it cannot come to pass unless we start helping now."

"We may not live to see this property become real, but our children of blood and spirit will", says Archdruid Kirk. "There is a need for a permanent office and land that we cannot be asked to leave; a place where our yearly meeting can be held, and a place where our Nemeton can stand proudly on land we own".

There are many ways to financially help ADF grow and to fulfill this vision. Every donation large or small helps us build for the future.

Won't you please consider helping? Here are some funds that you can donate to:

**Land Fund:** We have a goal of building a temple to the Kindreds and permanent office and school on a medium size piece of land.

**Memorial and Named Gifts:** Honor a family member, loved one or friend by donating in their name or in gratitude or celebration for a special event or life occurrence

**Planned Giving & Legacy Gifts:** Support ADF's goals through bequests, charitable remainder trusts and gift annuities and maximize personal objectives while minimizing after-tax costs. Put us in your will.

**Compassionate Member fund:** A fund set up to make it possible for people without adequate income to be members of ADF.

**Clergy Travel Fund:** To provide for clergy to travel to provide education and training for groves, solitaries, and pagan events.

**Workplace Automatic Donations:** Sign up at your workplace for a small amount to be held out and mailed to ADF. Some employers match your charitable donations so check with them.

We are a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization (EIN 51-0328645).

In order to qualify for an IRS deduction, you must meet these criteria: No goods or services were issued in exchange for your donation. Under Internal Revenue Service guidelines the estimated value of the benefits received is solely "intangible religious benefits": therefore the full amount of your payment is a deductible contribution.

Contact ADF at [ADF-Office@ADF.ORG](mailto:ADF-Office@ADF.ORG) or ADF PO Box 17874 Tucson, AZ 85731

## Admissions to the Revised CTP Now Open!

The Clergy Council Officers, at the CC retreat last weekend, voted to reopen the Clergy Training Program to new students beginning October 10, 2011. New students will begin under the revised program, and students applying to start their CTP work must complete both the ADF Dedicant Path documentation and a set of preliminary courses.

Any student who has completed their Dedicant Path documentation may enter the preliminary courses and begin doing the work at this time.

ADF members may find more information regarding the application process here, along with the outline of the courses:

*<<http://www.adf.org/members/org/clergy-council/ctp/outline.html>>*

Current students do not need to reapply, regardless of how far along they may be. Full information about transitioning from the older program to the revised one may be found here:

*<<http://www.adf.org/members/org/clergy-council/ctp/transition-to-2010b.html>>*

Special thanks to Rev. Robb Lewis, who was able to integrate the revised requirements into the SPTracker.

Rev. Michael J Dangler  
Clergy Council Preceptor