

O A R S E A D E S

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Summer 2012 ~ Issue No. 57





The Wellspring Gathering

Thurs, May 24 - Monday, May 28
Brushwood Folklore Center
Sherman, NY

A.D.F. Annual Meeting

Activities will include:

- Classes and Workshops:
plans include Norse, Celtic, Vedic and Afro-Caribbean Traditions, Drum teaching
- Bardic Ritual with new music by ADF's Bardic Guild
- Live performance by Rogue's Cross
- Guild & Kin meetings
- Warrior Games
- Brewer Competition
- Artisan Competition/Showing
- 4th Annual Wellspring Bardic Chair Competition

Cost for the event:

Payable directly to Brushwood: \$10/night camping fee

Payable to Stone Creed Grove: \$35 for ADF members, \$45 non-members*

**Please make sure your membership is current during Wellspring;
we will honor memberships paid for at the event.*



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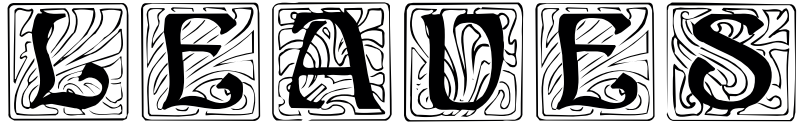


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Archdruid



Summer is finally here, and festival season is already in full swing! As folks arrive at festival campgrounds, faces are filled with anticipation, joy, and even glee. Tents are set up, the beer is rolled out, and festival clothes thrown on. Old friends meet, new friends are made, and for many, sex is in the air.

We Pagans are a lusty lot, and why not? We know that our bodies are not separate from our souls, that life is made for living, and pleasure is indeed a joy of the spirit. The ADF virtue of Fertility almost ended up being called the virtue of Sensuality, and we rightly celebrate our bodies.

But all this freedom does not mean that anything goes. Freedom does not automatically mean permission. For something to be sacred it must be 'cut off' from the ordinary, profane world. And for something to be 'cut off', it must be bounded.

Boundaries are the price of freedom – my freedom ends where yours begins. Boundaries may only be moved, or removed, by mutual consent, and only when both parties are legally permitted to do so (i.e., when they're old enough). There are other issues involved here, of course, but this is the bottom line. No only means no.

ADF has recently enacted policies church-wide that address these issues. One is specifically about Child Abuse, and the other is about Sexual Misconduct. These new policies have been distributed throughout all of ADF's leadership (and thereby to our groves), and may also be seen on our website on the public side, under 'About', and then under 'ADF Organizational Structure and Documents'.

May everyone have a fabulous, fun, and safe festival season!

Rev. Kirk S. Thomas
Archdruid, ADF

OAK LEAVES

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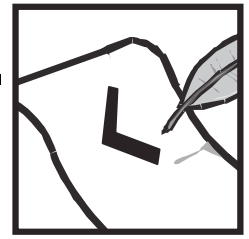
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Series

The Descent of Orpheus: The Evolution of the Orpheus Myth in Literature Part II

by Wayne Keysor



[Editor's Note: this is a continuation of an article printed in the Spring 2012 issue of OakLeaves]

Orpheus in the Renaissance

John Warden characterizes the development of the Orpheus myth in the Italian Renaissance in three general directions: the direct continuation of euhemeristic and allegorical interpretations derived from the textual tradition of the Middle Ages, a brief restoration of the myth's ancient glory brought about by the development of classical scholarship, and the gradual degeneration of the importance of the myth as it became material to be used as mere ornamental or superficial decoration (Warden 85).

D.P. Walker emphasizes that the Renaissance Platonists active in Italy used the myth of Orpheus and writings attributed to a historical Orpheus to affirm the compatibility between Christianity and Platonism. They were firmly grounded in the euhemeristic medieval tradition that argued that Orpheus was an ancient theologian that transferred true teachings of the church, albeit in a concealed or degraded form. These basic assumptions allowed them to not only rehabilitate pagan philosophy and myth, making it intelligible within a Christian framework, but also opened up to them the possibility of a very open and liberal sort of Christianity of a far different sort than the earlier, medieval model (Walker 119-120)

Kenneth Gros Louis, writing about the English Renaissance, argues that the sixteenth century represented the zenith of the Orphic theme in England. Of particular note was the decade of the 1590s, which produced at least thirty works using Orpheus from passing allusions to full narratives, covering all poetic and prose genres (DeNeef 21). During this Orphic blaze, the myth was used in two different ways. The first was to express pastoral themes where Orpheus was portrayed as the perfect lover-poet. The second was to cast Orpheus as the civilizer of mankind, making the

argument that poetry was the best teacher. These two approaches to the myth changed dramatically in the seventeenth century when the vitality of the myth declined in the face of attacks by Puritans and because of growing attempts by philosophers and commentators to rationalize classical myth (Gros Louis 63-69).

These myths came to be viewed with both contempt and amusement as mere fables, rather than as a source of truth, no matter how allegorized. Writers no longer innovated on the Orpheus character, but were content to use it in stylized and formalized ways based on their predecessors. These cultural changes, accelerated by the growing division between poetry and natural philosophy, also meant that the argument that poetry was the best teacher became less and less convincing (Segal 170-171). Instead of Orpheus' story making the argument that poetry was the best teacher, it became the argument "to prove that poetry, rejected by society as a means toward learning, has immortal power within itself" (Gros Louis 73).

Francis Bacon writing in the transition period is something of a threshold figure in this regard. In his 1609 work, *De Sapientia Veterum* (The Wisdom of the Ancients), he repeats the older argument that Orpheus is an acceptable model of universal philosophy, "representing the harmonious order of the physical world." But at the same time, he describes Orpheus' death as the "triumph of unreason [and] the inability of mankind to rise above its brutishness" (Segal 170-171). Bacon's pessimism prefigures the decline of the power of the Orpheus symbol to represent the potential or promise of natural philosophy, which was rapidly diverging from the earlier, poetic tradition.

Both Warden and Louis have identified a trend towards the decline in the importance of classical myth as a vehicle to express cultural innovation as the Renaissance transitioned into the modern period. Classical myths became merely literary

devices, rather than living metaphors. This process was hastened by the fracturing of the unity of the medieval Christian worldview as secularization slowly began to spread through Europe. Thus, we begin to see an accompanying fracturing of interpretation of the Orpheus myth in the Renaissance. It is gradually pulled from its earlier religious context, yet it does not comfortably fit into the new, evolving language of science or natural philosophy. Thus, it was relegated to the rapidly expanding sphere of secular literature.

Orpheus in the Modern Period

The scope and scale of literary production dramatically expanded in the West during the modern period because of increasing material prosperity and the new availability of cheap printing technology. At the same time, the pace of cultural change and innovation also radically increased. Secularization rapidly advanced, and the intellectual climate of European culture became highly fragmented in its responses to modernity. For these reasons, it becomes increasingly difficult to characterize overall themes and intellectual trends surrounding the use of the Orpheus myth. However, given the fruitfulness of the myth, the fact that it continued to be relevant to and used by artists of the modern period should not be a surprise.

For example, it is impossible not to at least mention the importance of the Orpheus myth to the genre of opera. The very first opera was on the subject of Orpheus, and seventeenth-century opera was veritably the age of Orpheus with twenty different operas taking up the myth. The combination of the themes of love and death and loss was nearly irresistible to the developers of the genre. The fact that Orpheus was a poet and a musician par excellence gave it an added depth and resonance (Sternfeld 173-177; Kerman 251-252). Beyond opera, Orpheus was an important literary theme for multiple French, German, and British poets working throughout the nineteenth century (Strauss and Schneider 29-44). In the twentieth century, Orpheus was again taken up by important artists like the poet Denise Levertov, playwrights Tennessee Williams and Jean Anouilh, and the filmmaker Jean Cocteau (Lee 307-313; Kallet 305-323).

We could catalogue in detail the various poets and writers who employed the Orpheus theme in their work through the twentieth century. However, I think this approach is less than useful. The historian of religion, Mircea Eliade, makes an excellent observation when he notes:

The life of modern man proliferates with half-forgotten myths, with lapsed hierophanies, with symbols fallen into disuse. The uninterrupted desacralization of modern man has altered the content of his spiritual life, yet it has not shattered the matrix of his imagination: a heap of mythological waste products survives in the poorly controlled zones of his being (Eliade 20)

Upon this desacralized heap of mythological refuse lies the Orpheus story ready to be taken up again by numerous modern artists and writers who are looking for ways to metaphorically unravel the highly individual themes and problems of their lives. This self-consciously literary use of the myth is the logical culmination of trends beginning in the Renaissance.

What makes this enterprise different in kind from what we explored in the Classical, Medieval, and Renaissance periods is the distinctly individual nature of the responses in the modern period. The sheer number of possible approaches, given the relative creative and artistic freedom of modern writers and the lack of a unified approach to the problems of modernity, make it very difficult to categorize and explain thematic trends across large sweeps of time. This is not to say that writers did not ride the currents of intellectual fashion in using the Orpheus myth, but that those currents were so numerous and clashing that analytically it is difficult to bring any order out of the chaos.

Therefore, I will not attempt to survey the entire scope of the progression of the Orpheus myth throughout the modern period. I will instead focus on two important poets of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to demonstrate how modern writers used the myth. The two I have chosen are Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926) and Hilda Doolittle (1886-1961).

Rainer Maria Rilke, one of the greatest poets of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, took up the myth of Orpheus on two separate occasions. In 1904, Rilke composed "Orpheus.

Eurydice. Hermes,” where he retells the Vergilian myth in a single, sustained narrative. Segal interprets this poem as an exploration of the intense subjectivity of the interior life. Instead of the concreteness of the classical poet in describing the journey to the underworld, Rilke uses an unstable point of view, shifting light, and ambiguous images to express the uncertain relationship between language and reality. Thematically, the poem focuses on the essential otherness of death; the total privacy of Eurydice once she is in the underworld, where she is no longer subject to human sexuality and male sexual possessiveness (Segal 120-125). Segal comments that Eurydice as the self, “has found peace in the mystery and privacy of union with its hidden other side in death” (Segal 123).

Rilke’s second work using the Orpheus theme, “Sonnets to Orpheus,” is considered one of the most important works of European high modernism. It was published in 1923 and written in an astonishing burst of creativity. Rilke wrote the first twenty five sonnets in only three days and then following a ten-day interval, completed the remaining twenty-nine sonnets in just eight days. These sonnets are to Orpheus, not about him. Only twelve sonnets refer explicitly to the mythical poet, only one deals with his descent into Hades. Their writing was partly inspired by the death of a family friend from Leukemia and partly by Rilke’s exposure to the Orpheus myth through painting, the plastic arts, and academic lectures (Ziolkowski 55-60).

Ziolkowski interprets these sonnets as engaging with many of the same themes that Rilke had wrestled with for years: the pain of love, the ambiguities of being a poet, the mystery of death, the threat of modern civilization to the human soul, the relationship between time and impermanence, and most emphatically, the theme of metamorphosis and change (Ziolkowski 63). Rilke writes in his final sonnet, “Go in and out of transformation. What is your most painful experience? If you find drinking bitter, turn into wine” (Ziolkowski 65). He seems to be posing the modern poet as the direct heir to Orpheus, who has the power to transform the world around him and his own experiences through the power of poetry.

Hilda Doolittle (H.D.), the second modern example, was poetically active at a time when women were engaged in a protracted and often bitter struggle to claim equal social and political rights. Her poetry reflects that struggle, specifically her poem, “Eurydice.” H.D. wrote the poem in 1916 when she was in the midst of the painful dissolution of her marriage to Richard Aldington. Helen Sword notes that the poem can be read on the most obvious biographical level as her personal response to an unfaithful husband (Sword 413). Her rage and despair is evident in the first section of the poem:

So you have swept me back,
I who could have walked with the live souls
above the earth,
I who could have slept among the live flowers
at last;

so for your arrogance
and your ruthlessness
I am swept back
where dead lichens drip
dead cinders upon moss of ash;

so for your arrogance
I am broken at last,
I who had lived unconscious,
who was almost forgot;

if you had let me wait
I had grown from listlessness
into peace,
if you had let me rest with the dead,
I had forgot you
and the past (Sword 414).

The rhetoric of arrogance and ruthlessness permeates these lines, as well as an obvious yearning for release from an extremely painful emotional situation. However, Sword also notes, on another level, that the poem also rejects the patriarchal convention of Orpheus as a faithful lover who seeks to bring a substantial benefit to Eurydice, but instead portrays him as selfish and domineering. Furthermore, H.D. gives voice to Eurydice in the poem, something Rilke failed to do in his treatment of the Orpheus myth and which does not seem to ever have been part of the ancient patriarchal tradition of the myth (Sword 414). H.D.’s Eurydice is defiant and angry, no longer the silent, passive object of a male heroic quest.



Both H.D. and Rilke's use of the Orpheus myth reflect their unique emotional and artistic response to both personal struggles and the larger problems of their societies. The modern writer uses the Orpheus theme because it is a literary trope that is readily available to her, and because its formal elements seem to speak to the problems she wants to address. The myth is a literary inheritance that can be used freely to explore a variety of issues because it is at once familiar to her readers, but at the same time, in a desecralized and fragmented intellectual culture, infinitely malleable in its possible meanings.

Conclusion

The myth of Orpheus has undergone many transformations and permutations in its long and varied career, but has always remained, at its heart, familiar. It is a simple story, like all good myths, that explores the tensions between love, death, and the power of culture. One might ponder that it is somewhat amazing that a classical myth can still have some relevance to us some twenty five hundred years later, when the culture that spawned

it is only a distant memory. However, it is worth reflecting that we are the inheritors of that culture through many, distant bloodlines, and that to some degree, we still are connected imaginatively to the cultural metaphors and themes from which we draw our roots. It is also clear that some of the problems of the Orpheus myth are universal in their application to the human condition, but the power of a myth is that it embodies those problems in language so that they can be wrestled with and confronted. If we did not retain that essential connection to our cultural roots, then the language of the myth would not appeal in spite of the universal themes which it explored.



Wayne Keysor is a member of CedarLight Grove and finished his Dedicant's Program in 2010. He is a ranked member of the Bardic Guild and is currently the Preceptor of the Scholars Guild. He holds a B.A. in Philosophy and a M.A. in Liberal Studies with a concentration in Philosophy and Religion.

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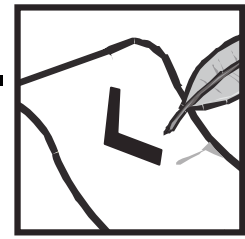
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Article

Polytheistic 12-Stepping

by Lesley Domnu-Hooper



In most addiction recovery programs, you will find the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous being followed:

The Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

(Alcoholics Anonymous Big Book, p.59)

Many come into a 12-Step Program and have a difficult time with the 'God' concept and how that applies to them, especially when their beliefs are polytheistic and not the majority religion found in a

typical meeting. Isaac Bonewits wrote an article about recovery in 1990 that said:

“Perhaps the major one for a NeoPagan is the fact that, despite an officially ‘nondenominational’ position, most interpretations of the program use mainstream monotheistic language when talking about the divine. The overwhelming majority of Twelve Steppers talk about an omnipotent, transcendent male deity as their ‘Higher Power’ (and for them it works). The underlying theology is guilt-based and emphasizes the powerlessness of the individual in the face of addiction and/or obsession. These problems have been used by some NeoPagans to avoid getting the help they need.” (Bonewits)

Although AA may come across as a monotheistic program, it is one that can fit any religion as it is more of a spiritual program than one of following a Dogma of a specific religion or group of religions. Many of the founding members of AA were proclaimed agnostics and atheists. Therefore, another set of steps was formed and used. Division grew amongst people wanting programs that fit their personal beliefs better and splinter groups formed, such as The Recovery Spiral. Many Pagans use this “other” group of steps (or have adapted their own):

Pagan 12 Steps

1. We admitted that we were harming ourselves and that our lives had become overwhelming.
2. Came to believe that a power within ourselves and our world could restore us to balance.
3. Made a decision to move our wills and our lives toward that Divine Presence.
4. Made a searching and fearless ethical inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to ourselves, to the Divine Presence, and to others the exact nature of our harm.
6. Were entirely ready to have our harmful

- patterns replaced by ethical coping skills.
7. Asked the Divine to transform us, giving us rebirth in our lives.
 8. Made a list of all beings we had harmed, beginning with ourselves and including our world, and became willing to make amends to them all.
 9. Made direct amends to all whenever possible, except when to do so would violate the Rede.
 10. Continued to take personal ethical inventory, and when we were wrong promptly admitted it and corrected it.
 11. Sought through action and meditation to improve our conscience knowledge and contact with the Divine Presence, seeking only to choose harmony with the greatest good.
 12. Having had a spiritual awakening as results of these steps, we offered this opportunity to others and practiced these principles in our lives.

(Collins, p.3)

Having realized the problem with the monotheistic thought process, members of the community have felt left out or different from others and not able to communicate the way they feel their Higher Power is a polytheistic view point. Yet, when you use that term “Higher Power” and allow it to mean the Kindreds or Gods and Goddesses, it is easy to share. In a recovery program, when people allow themselves to share in a general manner using similar terms, the help needed can be sought and achieved. Personally, when sharing, I talk about relationships in general and not my lesbian relationship rather than making myself different from the group. This allows a person to feel comfortable with me and allows the recovery program I am in to work in unity. It also allows a person to stay connected to a greater mass of people in recovery and not have a relapse when things move out of place.

Anonymity is often brought up. It is the basis of the spiritual foundation in these programs, bringing humility and self-sacrifice. When you take this concept and apply it to the details of your life, keeping them out of the general meetings and only sharing in general, it can bring great peace. Then with a sponsor on a one-on-one basis, you can share in more detail exactly as you believe. If the sponsor is true to the concepts and principles, it

will not make a difference as they have a common belief that there is a power that will help you stay on track. Let us look how these compare:

Step 1: *We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.* We are surrendering to the fact that we were gluttons in our use of the substance and let it control us. Listing the ways we let the addiction control us and move us to fulfill the need is a wonderful way to learn how we took power out of the “self” and those whom we follow and gave it to a substance. We can also see when we let our selfish ways rule the day to get that drink or drug, we were unmanageable and not working for the betterment of the whole. Many of us do not want to admit we have a problem until it is too late and we can no longer do anything about it alone. In the Pagan version of the step, we talk about harming ourselves and being overwhelmed. Though these are both true aspects of the sufferer of the disease, not all can relate to this as a reason to change. One can work through being overwhelmed and come through still doing many of the same things that they used to do. For one with a disease such as addiction or alcoholism, it is more than an overwhelming part of life, it means we do not have personal control over that area and need outside help. When overwhelmed, we can usually cope and move on, and many can do this alone. With addiction or alcoholism, we have tried on our own and failed, therefore realizing we need help as we no longer want our life spinning out of control.

Step 2: *Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.* First off, no one says that this has to be one God and just like everyone else’ in a program of recovery. It just simply means that there is something more than me that can help me as my efforts alone could not do it. In the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions book, we see that AA does not demand we believe anything (26). All are suggestions. The Pagan step two says “*Came to believe that a power within ourselves and our world could restore us to balance.*” Though this is a nice thought, many of us have lost the belief in self to make the next right decision and need this power to come from somewhere outside of us. In a 12-Step program, it is common to find people using the group that they belong to as the power greater than themselves. This works in time till a person can figure out what that is and how to reach out or

harness it. If you have a hearth culture practice in ADF, you may wish to explore the following deities (there may be others) who may decide to help you along your path:

Step 4: *Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.* This is where we take a look at what we are holding on to that is hurting us. We don't look at any one's part but our own actions. We examine

Hearth Culture	Deities Who May Help with Recovery
Irish/Celtic	Brigh, Brigid, Dian Cecht, Airmed, Lugh, Nuada,
Welsh	Anu, Llud Llaw Ereint, Lugh
Norse	Tyr, Eir
Gaulish	Alaunus, Atepomarus, Glanis, Grannus, Vindonnus, Lenius, Sirona
Roman	Angerona, Angitia, Bona Dea, Cardea, Carne, Endovelicus, Febris, Pilumnus, Vejovis, Meditrina,
Greek	Aceso, Aegle, Artemis, Apollo, Asclepius, Chiron, Hygieia, Iaso, Panacea
Slavic	Pereplut, Zywie
Vedic	The Ashvins
Other possibilities	The Crane Garanus, Nature Spirits, Merlin, or alcoholic and addiction recovering Ancestors

Step 3: *Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.* Too often people read that and stop with the word God, they do not read on to see as we understand Him. So if a person sees “God” as more than a one-male-over-all God, that is fine! “He” can become multiple Deities, Ancestors, and Nature Spirits to the polytheist. Some suggest choosing a light-bulb until you find something else—or choose your sponsor. For this step, my sponsor had me write out what my understanding was regarding my religion. She learned about me and in reality we were not that different. The Pagan Third Step just says the same thing in a more general manner. The key to this step is deciding, making a commitment. It is the first step to saying that we will take on Piety in a way that will improve our life and not just in a dogmatic manner. This step is also one that shows Wisdom, that we do not know it all and need help. It is an action step on our part, an oath you might say that we will let our life have help and not be selfish in the control or power of things. The price if we don't keep it? The “yet” of the disease: jail, institution, or death. This step is not actually where we keep our commitment, though. We just decide that we will. Both ways say to make a decision to turn our will over or towards a Divine presence.

where we have been resentful, selfish, dishonest, or afraid and write it down on paper. We learn to see how our actions were the cause of our problems and pain. In the Pagan Step Four, it says to take an ethical inventory. “Moral” means pertaining to, or concerned with the *principles* or rules of right conduct or the distinction between right and wrong; whereas “Ethical” means being in accordance with the rules or standards for right conduct or practice, especially the standards of a profession. These two words come down to the similar meaning and are generally synonyms of each other. Therefore, this is where two different ways of a step say the same thing. Either is doable for a polytheistic person.

Step 5: *Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.* Still God is a general term here. The important part is that you admit to yourself out loud the exact nature of your wrongs, and doing it with someone else helps you keep honest. The differences of the Pagan 4th Step and this one is that it says Divine Presence and others. Yet it is the same thing. One does not have to tell many people, just one person who is trusted. It does not have to be a group of people.

Step 6: *Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.* If you take the word God out and replace it with those to whom you pray, then there

is no problem. This can also be done by asking those who are close to help make you aware of when those defects arise. Once a list is made, you can also meditate on how to make the opposite of that defect active in your life. In the Pagan 6th Step, it says ready to have our harmful patterns replaced by ethical coping skills, which sounds like asking character defects to be removed.

Step 7: *Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.* When you have a relationship of “a gift for a gift” with the Ones whom you follow, you can give something good to Them in order for Them to take away something or instill the good of the opposite side. “Him” does not have to mean the Christian God; “Him” could mean Dagdha or another male Deity—or better yet: a Goddess! The 7th Pagan Step is to ask the Divine to transform us, giving us rebirth of our lives. Again, this is just another way of saying the same thing. All we are doing is praying to whom we follow to take the negative actions we do habitually out of our life and replace them with positive habits.

Step 8: *Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.* This list includes the people to whom we owe amends and sometimes that is very hard to do. It is not saying that we are going to go out right now and do it, it just says make the list and become willing. In the readings of AA, we learn these are personal relationships. This can be Deity, Ancestor, Nature Spirit, living person, ourselves, institution(s), or any other thing that we could harm. It is not limited to just living people, as some people believe when they first see this step. It is only through the help of our sponsor and the books of AA that we learn how this is so much more. The Pagan 8th Step teaches this to be all beings and including our world. I can see why they would get detailed about this, but when you take time to study the steps and work with someone, you soon learn that there is more to a step than what it first says.

Step 9: *Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.* Here we go to those we harm and make amends, saying “I was wrong, how did I hurt you and how can I correct it?” not assuming we know how we hurt them exactly or what it will take to correct it. We also remember that we cannot cause more harm in asking amends to anyone involved,

including ourselves. The Pagan 9th Step says to obey the Rede, which refers the Wiccan Rede: “And it harm none, do as you will.”(Collins). First thought when I got to this step is that not all Pagans follow this Rede, and they have limited this to Wiccans, or only one type of Pagan, which is what they were supposed to avoid doing! Therefore, in my mind, saying not to cause harm is the simplest, most inclusive way to include all religions into the program.

Step 10: *Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.* This is where we make sure we stay on track, and it is a continuous step until the day we die. The difference in the Pagan 10th Step is that it says to correct it. AA literature says it is not just simply saying “oops, sorry,” but rather, it is seeing what we did and working hard not to repeat it (Big Book, 86-88). In our lives, we will find defects that we did not even know about in the preceding steps. Think of it as peeling back layers of an onion and that we will always be learning good and bad about our self.

Step 11: *Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.* First off, we all pray! We just do it differently. Through time at the altar and in ritual, we build a relationship with whom we follow. Again there is that phrase, “as we understood Him” not this way only. Praying only for their will, meaning: we are getting out of the “self” and looking for ways that can better serve others. When we give our life to service, we are given so much more in return than when we let the “self” run riot. The Pagan 11th Step says to “choose harmony with the greatest good.” It is still seeking things other than our selfish motives.

Step 12: *Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.* To get this step, we must have done all the ones before it. This step says we wake up to that spiritual side of our self, give what was given to us to others, and practice this not just in AA but in all areas of our life. This three-part step brings it all home. The Pagan 12th step says the same thing just a tad different. When something is good, why change it?

Having had this up-close look at the steps, it is easy to see how one can use the traditional 12 Steps in their route to recovery. When we are not being selfish and saying “that does not fit me,” but instead generalizing, following the traditions, holding true to unity and the singleness of purpose, and looking for the commonality of the people in the program, we find our program can strengthen and grow. It is just as my sponsor says, “What is more important, being dead right or working for the betterment of all? And on a scale of 1-10 how important is it to your sobriety?” Let us work with the traditional steps and see a world full of those in recovery who are there and can help us along the way.



Lesley Domnu-Hooper has been a member of ADF since 2006, completed her Dedicant Program in 2009, and is currently working on her GSP (this article is based on one of those essays). She has served ADF as Chieftain of the Welsh Kin and leader of the Solitaries SIG. She is actively involved in the ADF Members in Recovery yahoo group

(http://groups.yahoo.com/group/recovery_ADF) and bids anyone wishing to join the group a hearty welcome.

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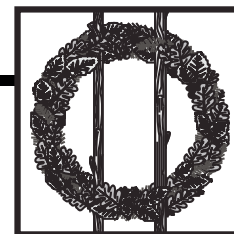
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Poetry

The Lady Is

by Dara NicDhàna



In the midst of the woods
The Lady is
Gathering

Twigs and branches
Collecting each with strong
Able hands

Returning to tend the embers
With hammer and anvil waiting
Brigid of the Forge
Creating

In the midst of the woods
The Lady is
Collecting

Herbs and thistles
She mends
With strong
Able hands

To the suffering
She gives healing
Brigid of the Well
Creating

In the midst of the woods
The Lady is
Glowing

From fire and water
She gives vision
Those who dare to see

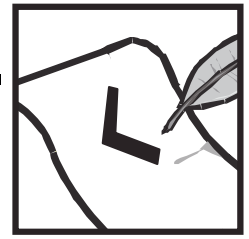
Beneath Her Veil
The mantle of stars is shining
Brigid of the Flames
Creating



Article

Defending Your Daily Practice: Aristotle, Different Knowledges and the Druid Path

by Samantha Noll



I am a philosopher by trade. My world is predominantly a world of reason (so “they” say) and my job is to build arguments and to pull apart the threads of others arguments’ in order to expose the unjustified values at their hearts. I teach logic and critical thinking and have been taught to question every knowledge claim, as if I were an inquisitor of ideas. And yet I am equally devoted to druidry, a path that sometimes leads to knowledge that does not lend itself to a philosopher’s critique. As an academic, I often find it difficult to explain my dedication to the druid path to others. How can I properly elucidate the reasons why I value druidry in a way that my spouse (who is a physicist) or my philosopher colleagues will understand? More specifically, how can I justify and defend knowledge claims that may come out of following this path? This is the topic of my essay today. I plan to use my philosopher toolbox in order to get to the heart of it. I hope it will be useful to others who are also struggling with this problem.

First, there are many ways that one could go about arguing that the druid path is valuable. For example, one could argue that following this path makes a person more deeply aware of changes in the environment and thus provides a better foundation for a more respectful relationship with nature or from which to build an engaged environmental ethic. Second, one could focus on the role of ritual and argue that participating in druid rites helps a person to navigate between personal and group experience or that it helps form stronger ties to human, non-human, and ancestor communities. Third, one could argue that the druid grove provides a nexus from which deep communal or spiritual ties can form and where members gain support that help them live fruitful lives. Finally, one could argue that following the druid path provides valuable knowledge that largely lies outside the realm of traditional science, knowledge that would otherwise be missed. The final argument will largely be the focus of the following essay.

The Druid Path, Science, and Many Epistemologies

Before going on to explore how druid knowledge may lie outside traditional science, it is important to understand the context that we live in. One major feature of modernity is the fact that the natural sciences are highly respected. They increasingly inform our actions and permeate our lives on a daily basis. Science informs policy; produces studies that are used for decision-making; and is used to develop new technologies, such as iPods and coffee pots. However, what some people may not realize is that science is a particular epistemology. By “epistemology,” I mean that science is one of the ways that we come to gain knowledge. Another way that we gain knowledge is through testimony or direct experience. However, arguably, science holds the key epistemological position in modernity. Now what does this have to do with explaining why knowledge gained through druidry is valuable?

If science is a highly regarded epistemology that most people (including many modern druids) accept, then it follows that the assumptions implicit within science must also be widely accepted, albeit indirectly. A few of these basic assumptions include the following. First, knowledge must be repeatable. If you cannot repeat your results, then you cannot verify your findings. Second, knowledge must be of things that are measurable. If you cannot measure something, then you cannot study it. Thus, knowledge must be of the physical world, which includes energy and small particles of matter, because the physical world is that which is measurable. Third, knowledge cannot contradict itself. For example, something cannot both be and not be the color green. This is commonly known as the law of non-contradiction.¹ If science is the predominant epistemology of the modern world and these assumptions are implicit within science, then one can see how it might be difficult to explain knowledge gained from outside this framework.

For example, twilight is commonly viewed as the time when the veil between this world and the next is thin. Here twilight both is and is not this world. It both is and is not day and night. It lies outside science because the law of non-contradiction excludes that which both is and is not something. However, this does not mean that you cannot gain knowledge from studying or approaching twilight with this conception of it. There are other epistemologies, as discussed above, and thus other ways of attaining knowledge. Other examples of druid knowledge that lie outside traditional science are the knowledge obtained by rune casting and knowledge gained through ritual. The products of these inquiries are not repeatable or measurable and, thus, fall outside of traditional science. So, the question then becomes how can we explain the value of the above knowledge if it cannot be verified by the dominant epistemology of the modern age and thus not be taken seriously by those who accept the implicit assumptions of science? Here I argue that the answer lies in Aristotle.

Aristotle's *Metaphysics*

When Aristotle attempted a systematic account of the nature of reality, he began with a detailed account of the natural world, or the *Physics*, and then moved on to develop the subject of “first philosophy” or the subject of “wisdom” or “theology” in the *Metaphysics*. “Metaphysics” literally translates from the Greek as “after physics” and likely indicated the order that the topics should be studied in (Cohen 2009). Thus, as a reasoning individual, you first begin with the systematic study of the natural world and then move on to larger questions such as the nature of substance and of reality. The *Physics* and *Metaphysics* are two separate treatises within a larger system. However, as argued above, the primary epistemology of the modern age is science. While this current conceptualization of science has a long history and is markedly different from the epistemologies practiced by Aristotle, one can argue that modern science largely, if not solely, focuses on understanding the natural world. Thus it primarily deals with the *Physics*.

In addition, for Aristotle, there are many different types of “science.” There are specialized or departmental forms of science that study only one aspect of being; “being” here specifically means “of that which exists” (Cohen 2009). For example,

botany is the study of plants and zoology the study of animals. In contrast, metaphysics or what is commonly called “first philosophy” is the science that studies being *qua* being, the fundamental structure of reality or what the nature of and why it is that substances, such as humans, exist.² It is the study of the one type of substance that is absolutely prior and upon which the existence of everything else depends (Gerson 2005). Here it would be relatively easy to place the natural sciences under the category of specialized forms of science. This leads to the question of how this can be used to defend the claim that knowledge gained through druidic practices is valuable.

First, it illustrates the fact that there are many sciences or epistemologies, not just one science. Each science may share similar assumptions but they have different methodologies and employ different methods when generating knowledge claims. For example, anthropology uses different methods than say, physics, to generate and test theories. Thus you could argue that druids practice a different form of “science” that employs markedly different methods when generating knowledge claims, methods that do not share the same basic assumptions.³ In addition, you could also argue that you need not choose one science and reject all others. It is reasonable to choose the science that best fits with the type of inquiry that you want to do. Thus you would use methods of agronomy or horticulture if you were interested in increasing crop yield and not astronomy, for example.

Second, in the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle clearly argues that specialized sciences cannot be first philosophy because they are the study of “movables *qua* movables” or the study of “movables *qua* the immovable” and first philosophy is the science of being *qua* being or of the “immovable *qua* immovable;” the study of the one type of substance that is absolutely prior and upon which the existence of everything else depends (Gerson 2005).⁴ Thus questions of the nature of reality cannot be directly addressed through the lesser sciences; only first philosophy or metaphysics can address these larger questions. Aristotle scholars such as Gerson (2005) support this reading because Aristotle held that the existence of the immovable, or immovable substance, is a necessary truth. If you deny its existence, then only

impossibilities follow.⁵ Now you may be asking the question, what is this immovable substance and how does it connect to druidry?

The Unmoved Mover

According to Charles Kahn (1985), the prime, or unmoved, mover causes motion both directly and indirectly. It causes motion directly, in that it is the final cause or the object of desire, and indirectly, in that qualitative changes and mechanical motions are a result of its actions directly on the heavens. Thus it is something that causes but is not caused. Aristotle is basically arguing for the existence of something (or somethings) that lies outside of our sensible world but that causes things to happen within it. For example, the unmoved mover causes the stars to move in the heavens and, in a broader view, for the plants to grow in our gardens (Zeta 1075a10-25). If it lies outside of our sensible world, then knowledge of this unmoved mover cannot be addressed through modern science because it lies outside the physical world. Thus there is something beyond the scope of the specialized sciences, something that exists and causes things to happen.

It is important to note here that Aristotle was a pagan and, thus, believed in many gods/goddesses and not in just one god. He argued that at least one unmoved mover is necessary but does not cut off the possibility that there could be many unmoved movers. In fact, you could argue that he assumed that there are many deities as his writings (including the *Metaphysics*) are filled with references to the gods and goddesses. This aspect is often ignored by current Aristotle scholars, and for this reason, the singular treatment of “unmoved mover” is rarely questioned. However, the unquestioned assumption that god is singular needs to be addressed. Aristotle was not a monotheist. For this reason, my treatment of the unmoved mover assumes that there are many deities and not just one. I feel that this assumption is more in line with what Aristotle originally intended.

After his treatment of the unmoved mover, Aristotle then reasons that only first philosophy or metaphysics could address questions concerning this unmoved mover (Aristotle, Book Zeta). However, one could argue that if there are things that lie outside the scope of modern science, then attempts at understanding this more fundamental level of reality are not superfluous. In addition, one

could also argue that possible knowledge gained of this deeper level could not be adequately tested by the natural sciences because it lies outside of their scope. For example, knowledge gained through trance experiences or ritual experiences would lie outside the scope of science but could still be considered valuable forms of knowledge because they are attempts at gaining access to these greater truths. The scientific method would not be applicable, or desirable, in this context because druids study forces beyond what science could access. Thus one could use this fact to defend knowledge claims that may come out of following the druid path against scientific critique or against those who hold assumptions inherent within modern science.

In addition, one could use the works of Aristotle to justify the claim that an investigation of immovable substance or being *qua* being should be theological in nature. This is actually what the Neo-Platonists have argued in past. Thus it could follow from this that such questions should be taken up through the rational study of religion and because the druid path is arguably a spiritual or religious path⁶, then it is well within its rights to address these issues. In addition, one could make the case that druid or other knowledge obtained through religious practice and study should be privileged over other types of knowledge in this instance.

What this Means in Everyday Life

What the above exploration of Aristotle means in the real world is that my (and your) druid practice is valuable in and of itself. The practices of rune casting, trance work, ritual, ancestor worship, and other druid activities give us, at least potentially, access to knowledge of the larger structure of reality, of the unmoved mover or movers, and how these structures/deities cause or influence the material world. This knowledge does not lend itself to a scientist's critique but is a different type of knowledge. In addition, druid practice could be considered a more privileged path that is needed to gain access to this more foundational level of truth. For, after all, “first philosophy” is often called “first theology.” As such, the study of what lies beyond the material world is inextricably tied up with deeper questions concerning the deity(ies) and quests for meaning; questions that lie outside the scope of science. I can use these aspects of the

druid path to justify and defend my devotion to my academic friends.

In this paper I summarized several ways to argue that the druid path is valuable. In addition, I outlined possible ways that druidic knowledge claims can be justified and defended. This included a critique of modern science as a particular epistemology and drew upon the work of Aristotle. I am a philosopher by trade. I teach logic and critical thinking and yet I am equally devoted to druidry, a path that sometimes leads to knowledge that does not lend itself to a philosopher's critique. I hope this defense of druidry will be as useful to others who are also struggling with how to justify their devotion to the path as it was to me.

¹The law of non-contradiction originated in Greek thought. References to it can be found in the work of Heraclitus, Protagoras, Parmenides, Plato, and Aristotle.

²"Qua" here should roughly be read as "concerning" or "understood as." Thus "being qua being" is the study of being understood as being. This is the study of the foundation of "what is." Aristotle considered being *qua* being first philosophy because it is the study of the nature of reality or of substance. For a detailed account of being *qua* being see Books *Zeta*, *Eta*, and *Theta* in the *Metaphysics*.

³Kuhn and others could argue in response that druid sciences are not science but "pseudo-science". However, Kuhn accepts the assumptions outlined above. Thus, I will not directly reply to this counter argument, as it is not directly applicable to my argument.

⁴For Aristotle, mathematics, and increasingly physics, would be considered the study of movables *qua* the immovable (i.e. the study of movables in abstraction). Similarly, social sciences or science that use qualitative as opposed to quantitative methods could be considered the study of movables *qua* movables (i.e. the study of things that change using methods that also change). Modern ecology and systems science could also be understood as sciences dealing with movables *qua* movables. In contrast, the study of first substance is the study of the "immovable *qua* immovable" or the study that which does not change using abstraction. While Aristotle did not specifically make this claim, it could also be considered the study of the "immovable *qua* the moveable" or the study of the unchanging primary subject through a detailed investigation of changing substance or of nature.

⁵Terence Irwin also supports the above reading. He takes the passage in Aristotle to mean that in the absence of immovable substance, then not only would natural science be first science, it would also be a different kind of science because it would include the study of "being *qua* being." This conclusion leads Irwin to dismiss the claim that physics could be first philosophy because it seems to be unclear where such a science of "being *qua* being" would be found.

⁶I will not get into the differences between "religion" and "spiritual path" here.



Hailing from Cedarsong Grove, ADF, Samantha Noll is a new member of ADF who is active in the ADF Scholars Guild. She currently studies and teaches philosophy at Michigan State University.

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CedarLight Grove, ADF would like to congratulate the newly elected Witan of 2012



Senior Druid: Wayne Keyzor

**Vice Senior Druid:
Ashley Bryner**

Pursewarden: Crystal Groves

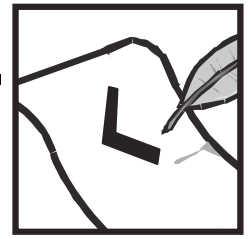
Scribe: Taryn Lyon

2012 Motto: Be Excellent to Each Other



Personal Story

Discovering Your Connection to a Hearth Culture



by Filip 'Airis' Kubín

My hearth culture has always led in two directions.

Since I started going home at night when I was about twelve, I knew that Luna was important for me in some way. She was also one of the key witnesses of my oath to the Mother Earth and to Paganism (when I was thirteen). A year later I accepted Her as my patroness. It is interesting because from the beginning of my life I understood Luna as one of the goddesses of our land and therefore from Slavic pantheon. I think it was thanks to the Czech National Revival in 19th century which created a large amount of Czech poetry and prose and also due to all the modern songs where Luna is often mentioned (as meaning 'Moon'). She simply has been accepted into our land and because of that I have understood her as one of my connections to the world of our Pagan history and to the world of night. I have had a lot of divine, mystical experiences with her and I hope that the future will bring me many more such beautiful moments. It was many years later that I found out (through studying the subject) that the name of Luna originally comes from the Roman goddess.

My native tongue is Czech. I'm learning English because I'm interested in it and because it's important to know the language which connects all the people in the world together but my first language will always be the one in which I express myself best. It's the symbol of my home, my ancestors and our tradition. Therefore I really appreciate it and I will never give it up. Czech language is varied like the oldest willow and colorful like the spring meadow. That is the most beautiful thing about it and just as I love our language, I also love my homeland and its traditions. There are many Beauties in these deep forests and distant meadows. I remember what my ex-girlfriend used to say: "Did you notice that our country's borders are mostly protected by mountains? Isn't that wonderful?" I began to laugh from my heart. Of course the borders of our state are created by mountains. We are a small nation and



mountains were often the only reason why we are still here. That's why I appreciate them in the same way as the deep forests that were holy to the Celts. When we look at it more closely, our traditions were full of Slavic spirit and many of them, such as the traditional local meaning of Easter have survived a thousand years and even the commercialization of the last century. I like to call the fairies "víly", water nymphs, "vodněnky"; or in the morning I hail Jitřenka (the Morning Star) and Večernice (the Evening Star) both daughters of (Bělobůh) in the evening. I like to use local, pagan swearwords, such as "U Peruna" (by Perun) "u Velésových rohů" (by Velese's horns). And "víly" (fairies) were the first girls whom I dreamed about in the grass. To put it very simply, the Slavic traditions and pantheon have been in me since birth and they are my primary connection with the spirits of the land and to the Middle World. I say very simply, because the spirit of Bohemia - Slavic tradition, has a different taste than Moravia or other Slavic-regions traditions (like Celtic Irish, Gaelic, or for example Welsh Celtic traditions). People and their traditions are shaped by the land they live in...

But such as Slavs were (or still are) in our land, so were Celts. Bohemia and Moravia were one of the primordial Celtic regions from where they started to colonize the whole of Europe...and to where they came back later in the form of Boii tribes. In Bohemia and Moravia one can see many Celtic monuments (standing stones, sacrificial places, etc.) on every corner. Also, many of the castles and medieval forts have Celtic and even pre-Celtic history. Therefore, they are a part of my roots, too. Besides, it was the Celtic culture, wisdom and the spiritual connection with forests that always inspired me and guided me on my way. Thanks to them, I am Pagan.

The first rituals that I made were to honor Cernunnos and many local nameless gods (many things were forgotten). It was him whom I was

meeting on my way across the forests and the Celtic spirituality was the first I felt in the breath of the forest. Cernunnos is my second patron and I must admit that though I have a connection with him from my early Pagan beginning, I only ritually accepted him last year. Through this I have discovered the Celtic-Gaelic-Boii are my primary hearth cultures and my path is headed wherever they will take me.



Hailing from Czech Republic, Filip 'Airis' Kubín has been a member of ADF for the past three years and is currently enrolled in the Dedicant Program. He is a member of the Gael Kin, Slavic Kin, Proto IE Kin and Seers Guild. In future he would like to be a member of the Magicians Guild and enroll in the Clergy Training Program.



Poetry

Firefly

by Colleen Sorbera



How do you do it, firefly,
 As you float serenely by?
 Stars rage in fiery tumult,
 And the moon merely reflects.
 But easily do you
 To signal the fairer sex.
 Luminescence is your lovesong,
 A silent wonder of the night,
 And I am left to ponder
 How do you make your light?
 What goddess made this little bug?
 What god gave him his glow?
 What magick made this miracle?
 Only the firefly knows.
 Would you shine again, firefly,
 As you float serenely by?

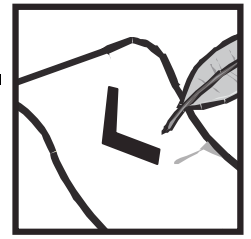




Series

A Welsh Wheel of the Year: Part 3

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 incorporated some Welsh folk customs. There are many possible tales that could be chosen for this sort of project. I have decided to stick with the Four Branches of the Mabinogi (with one exception) for this interpretation, and when I could not decide which tales would be most desirable for what High Day, I turned 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.

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 have already covered *Alban Gaeaf*, *Calan Gwanwin*, *Alban Eilir* and *Calan Haf*. Now we continue starting with the High Day for the Summer Solstice.

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

ALBAN HEFIN (AL-ban HEV-in) – *'Summer Solstice'*

Alban Hefin is the third of the three Spirit Nights, or *Y Tair Ysbridnos*, when the spirits of the dead were thought to walk the earth. This is the time of the sun's brightest point, when the days are the longest and the nights the shortest. And it is the time when the sun begins its decline towards the Winter Solstice. Bonfires were also built for Alban Hefin like they were for Calan Haf.

Customs

There are four customs we can mention here for this High Day:

1. Ffatio (FAH-ti-oh) – This is a divination performed by a maiden where a piece of clothing would be washed in a well at midnight, beaten with a flat instrument called a Bat Staff, all while she is chanting, "He who would my partner be, let him come and wash with me." Should someone show up at the well, that person would be the future partner (Owen 111).
2. St. John's Wort (or Mug-wort) sprigs would be placed over doors for protection from evil spirits (Owen 111).
3. Summer Birch – In North Wales, the Summer Birch was placed in the ground and decorated with flower wreaths, with the prettiest one being at the top. Then people would dance around the pole (see Maypole under Calan Haf).
4. Midsummer Pudding. People would go around the village and gather milk from the neighbors, which would be used to make the pudding. Modern solitaries or groves could make a milk pudding (or even gather milk from the members to make it) (Owen 112).

Lore

As this is the last Spirit Night, perhaps it would be good to think of the Otherworlds at this time. Therefore I have chosen the tale of the 'Assembly of the Noble Head' from the *Second Branch of the Mabinogi*.

Synopsis: At the final battle between the men of Matholwch and Bendigeidfran, almost everyone was killed. Bran himself received a mortal wound in his heel from a poisoned spear. The seven who escaped were Pryderi (pruh-DAIR-ee), Manawydan (man-uh-WUH-dan), Glifew Eil Taran (GLEE-fee-oo ALE TAR-an – "Thunder"), Taliesin (tal-ee-ES-in), Ynawg (UH-nowg), Gruddyeu (GREETH-ee-aye) son of Muriel, and Heilyn (HAY-luhn – 'cup bearer') son of Gwyn Hen (GWIN HEN – 'old white or holy one').

Bran orders his men to cut his head off, telling them that they must take his head to Gwynfryn (GWUN-vrin – ‘White Mount’, the site of the Tower of London) and bury it there, facing eastwards. But on the way, they would feast in Harlech (HAR-lech) for seven years, with the birds of Rhiannon (hree-AN-on) singing to them, and then spend 80 more years at Gwales (goo-AH-les) island near Pembroke until the door facing Cornwall is opened and they have to go to London to bury the head.

So they went to Harlech and began to feast, and three birds came and sang to them the most beautiful music they had ever heard, and they feasted for seven years.

Then, they proceeded to Gwales where they found a palace and a fine hall that had three doors – two of them open and one closed. “There,” said Manawydan, “is the door we are not to open” (Ford, 71). They spent eighty years there in the company of the head, and it was as great a comfort to them as when Bran was alive. They lacked for nothing, and none could tell how much time had passed.

Then one day, Heilyn son of Gwyn Hen opened the door. At that moment, they felt all the grief and loss that they had suffered, and their magical sojourn came to an end. They could not rest until they had taken the head to London and buried it at Gwynfryn. As long as the head stayed interred, facing France, no oppression would ever come to Britain from across the sea (Ford, 70-2).

(PS – of course, Arthur eventually dug it up, thus allowing foreign invasion) (Davies 237 n. 34).

August 1 (February 1 in the Southern Hemisphere)

CALAN ELFED (KAL-an EL-ved) – *Beginning of Autumn*

Another possible name could be *Calan Hydref* (KAL-an HUH-drev), which also means ‘Beginning of Autumn’.

Customs

There are three main things that show up for this day (Owen 113-4):

1. *Cymbortha* (cum-HORTH-a) – These are work groups that are formed to take in the harvest.

For Groves or solitaires, this could be a good time to clean up the ritual area or even harvest each other’s gardens.

2. *Whipod* (HWIP-od) – this is a special supper dish made from rice, white bread, raisins, currents, treacle, etc. (and sounds to me like the dessert ‘Spotted Dick’).
 1. After this is eaten, there would be the *Dai Siôn Goch* (DIE SHONE GOCH), a dance with two men and a broom. I couldn’t discover exactly how this dance was done – that would be up the grove or solitary to invent or discover, which could be fascinating, depending on who the men are.
 2. *Rhibo* (HREE-bo) – This is where six men face each other in two rows (perhaps this means 6 men per row?) with each man holding the hands of the man across from him. A man and a woman lay side by side on the arms of the men and the couple are tossed into the air several times. This is obviously a fertility rite, and modern groves could do a blanket toss here for the same effect (and less arm bruising).

Lore

In Ireland, this day is sacred to Lugh, so perhaps this feast could also be sacred to His namesake, Llew Llaw Gyffes. The tale I have picked for this High Day is ‘How Llew Gained His Name, Took Arms, and Found a Wife’ from the *Fourth Branch of the Mabinogi*.

Synopsis: Math ap Mathonwy (MATH ap math-ON-wee), king of Gwynedd (GWIN-eth), must always sit with his feet in the lap of a maiden unless he is at war, but at this time he is in need of a new maiden. His nephew Gwydion (GWID-i-on) suggests his sister, Aranrhod (uh-RAN-hrod) for the job. As a test, Math has her step over his magic staff, and a blond baby boy drops out from under her dress. In shame, she flees the room, but not before some other small thing falls out, which is retrieved by Gwydion. He places the bundle in the chest at the foot of his bed.

The blond boy, named Dylan Eil Ton (DUH-lan EYEL TAHN – ‘ocean under the wave’) runs to the sea and disappears into it.

One night Gwydion hears crying coming from the chest and finds a baby boy inside. Given to a nursemaid to raise, the boy grows very fast – at 4

years old he can go to the court on his own and he is as sturdy as an 8 year old.

Gwydion takes the boy to his mother's home, Caer Aranrhod (CAYER uh-RAN-hrod – 'Castle Aranrhod'), but as soon as she realizes who the boy is, she curses him to never have a name unless she gives it to him.

(NOTE: A married woman could not have her own establishment, nor, indeed, any freedom at all. By admitting that she had a child, she could lose her special place in society) (Winward 100-3).

Gwydion, a great magician, takes the boy to the seashore and there magically creates a boat out of seaweed, changes their appearances, and creates leather from the weed as well. They sail to Caer Aranrhod and begin making shoes. Aranrhod sends servants with her measurements for new shoes, but the shoes come back the wrong size. She goes down herself to the boat, and while Gwydion is making another pair, she sees the boy cast a stone and hit a wren in the leg. She remarks, "It is with a skillful hand (*llaw gyffes*) and the fair-haired one (*lleu*) has hit it!" And so she has accidentally given the boy a name, Llew Llaw Gyffes (KLAY KLOW GUH-fes).

Gwydion lets the magic disappear, and realizing that she has been tricked, Aranrhod, in anger, curses Llew that he shall never take up arms unless she arms him herself.

Gwydion took Llew back to his home at Dinas Dinlle (DEE-nas DIN-klay – 'City of Llew') and the boy grew up to be a fine horseman. Gwydion then took him back to Caer Aranrhod, and disguised as Bards, they gain admittance to the house. That night, Gwydion conjured up the sounds of a great army outside the castle, and Aranrhod, in alarm, comes to their room to ask for their help. They agree, and Gwydion is armed by the maid while Llew is armed by his mother. When this is done, Gwydion drops the magic and Aranrhod realizes that she has been duped again. This time her curse is really terrible. She tells them that Llew would never get a wife from any race that was on the earth on that day.

Gwydion and Math, however, make a wife for Llew out of the flowers of Oak, Broom, and Meadowsweet, and they name her Blodeuedd

(blo-DAY-eth – 'flowers'). Thus Llew has gained his name, taken arms, and found a wife (Ford, 98-103).

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



Rev. Kirk Thomas has been a member of ADF since 2001, and has a Masters Degree in Celtic Studies. He has completed the Dedicant Path, all three circles of the Clergy Training Program, the first circle of the Liturgists Guild Study Program, and was the first to complete the Initiate Program. He is active in the Welsh Kin and in the Scholars Guild. He currently serves ADF as the Archdruid.

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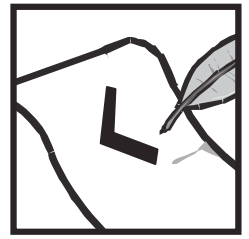
email: sddruids@yahoo.com



Personal Story

Finding My Personal Deity

by Desiree Cook



Credit: Melissa Hill
Menulis

I have been a practicing Pagan for over thirteen years, and until recently never had any Deity to call my own. I started out as a Wiccan, but for the past four to five years, I have been an ADF druid. I have participated in rituals, opened the Gates, invoked and sacrificed the Kindreds but I've always felt somewhat disconnected from the actual practice of paganism.

I have often felt something was wrong with me for not having a Patron or Matron. Many (if not all) of my fellow grove members have Someone to call their own. Some of them even have many. A couple of the members have not been practicing for as long as I have, but already they have created a relationship with a personal deity.

I have never been able to figure out what I have been doing wrong. After all, I have attended ritual, opened the Gates, invoked and sacrificed to the Kindreds. I have taken the advice of others to meditate. I have done general "shout outs" to Deity and I have attempted to create a relationship with a couple of Deities who looked interesting to me. Nothing worked. I have cried in frustration at times. I have been embarrassed at times when non-grove members have asked questions about

my relationship with the Shining Ones. I have refused to call to the Shining Ones during public ritual because I didn't feel that connection to them. I have doubted my path and even doubted there were Gods at all.

Recently, everything has changed. I do not know if it was because I was finally ready to accept a Deity into my life and heart. I do not know if it was because I finally had a name, but whatever it was, I am thankful.

Several weeks ago, I attended a workshop by Melissa Hill on Moon Gods. It was a precursor to the one she will be giving at ConVocation. I went to show support but also because I have felt an affinity to the moon. She talked about the different Deities she had been researching such as Menulis, Mani, Mona, Menuo, and Myestas. I liked the idea of a Moon God over a Moon Goddess, but nothing really clicked during the talk. I am not certain that if it was the format of the workshop, the non-grove attendees, a non-ritual space or my mind/heart was not paying attention but when she spoke of Baltic Moon God, Menulis, his name did not inspire the devotion it did later.

Last week, we held a druid moon ritual to contact Menulis with the purpose of finding out what offerings he would like to receive during the ADF ritual at ConVocation. With that in mind, all nine of us meditated with the hopes of finding an answer. I received a message. It was so clear I kept trying to pull my mind away from it with the belief I was directing the thoughts. The message stayed strong and when the meditation time was up, I delivered what Menulis considered a proper sacrifice. During the meditation, I saw the grove dancing in the moonlight. We were frolicking, laughing, and completely filled with joy. The message I was to deliver was: "Dancing under the moonlight is what I want; this is the sacrifice I want. I will attend your ritual at ConVocation but only with the oath that dancing in my moonlight is what I will receive." Many other people came back with visions of dancing as well, and their messages were similar.

Before we ended the rite, we decided we needed to go outside. Sadly, when we traipsed outdoors, the moon had already fallen below the horizon but the night sky was still bright with its illumination. We started singing as we are prone to do. My chest felt like it was going to burst and I felt overwhelmed with joy. I had to fight back tears of happiness because I was afraid they would freeze on my face. I felt energized; I felt powerful but most importantly I felt I had finally found the connection I had been seeking. I felt what I had heard so many talking about and had longed for and wished to experience.

Since that night, I have given an offering at a public high day ritual even though I felt a bit nervous because the relationship feels too new and fragile for public consumption already. I have looked to the full moon and felt his presence. Best of all, I feel like I belong and I am on the right path.

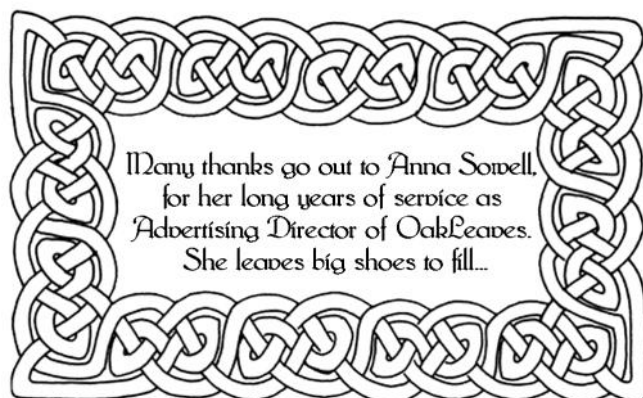
The message of the piece is to not give up. Keep meditating; if I had not persevered, I may not have received the message I did as clearly or felt so freely his call. Keep contacting or attempting to contact the different Deities you are interested in. If that does not work, select an aspect (such as healing, like I did) and start giving offerings to those Deities. Do not limit yourself to one hearth culture. Grow as a person both spiritually and emotionally, be someone a Deity would want a relationship with. Truly understand **ghosti*.

Remember that everything you try that does not work is not a failure but another step along a path.

Menulis, I thank you.



Desiree Cook has been a member of ADF since 2007. She is a founding member of CedarSong Grove, has served as their Herald in the past, and is currently serving as their Senior Druid. She is also the Advertising Director of OakLeaves and hopes to expand her international role in ADF in the future.

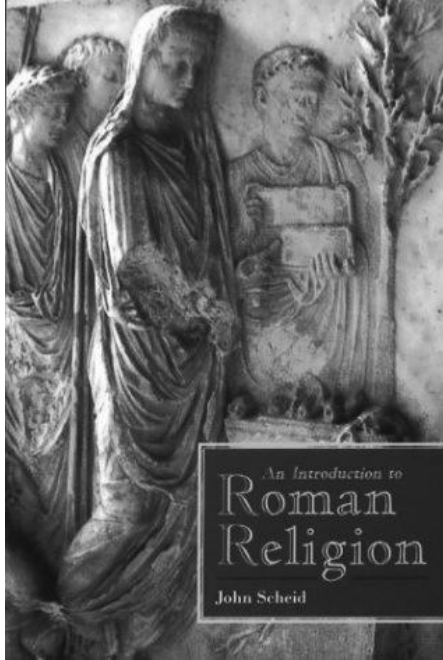
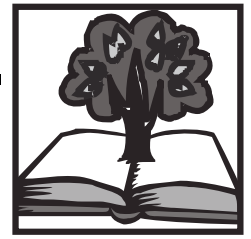




Book Review

Book Review: Introduction to Roman Religion

by Wayne Keysor



Introduction to Roman Religion

John Scheid
Indiana University Press, 2003
ISBN 0-203-21660-5

John Scheid's, *An Introduction to Roman Religion*, is an excellent place to begin the study of Roman religion for any

page that is concerned with historically informed practice. Scheid, the director of studies in ancient history at the Ecole Pratiques Des Hautes Etudes in Paris, is a specialist in Roman religion, and this is evident in his treatment of evidence and his presentation of the major themes of the subject. What makes this volume particularly useful for modern polytheists, who are most likely to be non-specialists in this area, is its introductory nature. This is truly an introductory text, and it has all the strengths of a well-written member of this genre. It does not assume any prior knowledge of Roman religion; therefore, it builds a strong foundation from which to understand the major issues and themes of the subject.

Of particular benefit in this regard is Part 1 of the book, which addresses questions of methodology. Methodology discussions can sometimes seem like dry, unnecessary preludes standing obstinately between the reader and the revelations he seeks; however, Scheid's should not be treated in this way. He reviews three lenses through which previous generations of scholars have interpreted Roman religion. His enumeration is invaluable for those who intend to read further on the subject

because it allows them to understand the biases that inform particular historians in particular eras. As Scheid points out, these biases continue to have a presence in the discipline.

This is not to say that earlier work is not valuable or that these scholars lacked standards of rigor and professionalism; rather, it is recognition that all scholars, no matter how dedicated they are to objective analysis, are products of their own time and place. This inescapable reality results in inevitable biases, a sober and necessary warning for our own time. In this section, he also reviews the sources for Roman religion and their strengths and weaknesses. Understanding sources and their limitations is critical for anyone who wants to move beyond a superficial appreciation of the topic, and Scheid provides a concise, informative introduction in this regard.

Parts 2 and 3 provide detailed accounts of the Roman sacred calendar and religious rituals. The fact that Scheid is able to pull from primary sources and in many cases quote exact ritual phrases provides a rare window into one form of ancient paganism for the modern practitioner. He also has a very fine discussion of the Roman concept of sacrifice in Part 3, the reading of which would benefit any modern polytheist. It is in these two sections that Scheid makes his central argument about the Romans' relationship with their gods during the Republican period; namely, that Romans saw liberty as the key principle that animated their understanding of the proper relationship between gods and men.

He argues that relations were based on reason rather than fear, in the same way that reason governed the relationships between individual citizens or between clients and patrons in Roman society. Such a view is in stark contrast to a divine-human relationship ruled by fear, which has its analogy in the master-slave relationship. Thus, treaties were struck between gods and men in which there were expectations on both sides, the

violation of which resulted in consequences for both parties depending on who was at fault.

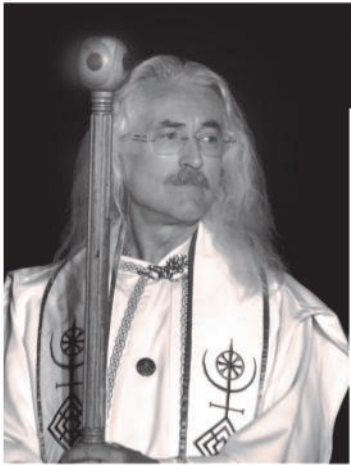
Parts 4, 5, and 6 review the role of priests, the Roman understanding of the gods, and ancient interpretations of Roman religion, respectively. The book concludes with a useful timeline, a list of principle people, and a glossary. The discussion of what the Romans thought about their own religion in Part 6 is particularly fascinating and shows that there were various interpretations coexisting with each other, that while contradictory, did not seem to generate any conflict.

One important caveat concerning the overall volume is that this is an introductory text on Roman religion, not Roman history, civilization, and culture; therefore, some of the context and value is lost if one has no grasp of the latter. However, this being said, one does not need to be a specialist in Roman history to appreciate this book. It is an excellent book, which is well worth the investment for those who have an interest in historically informed practice, even if one does not follow a Roman path.



In Gratitude

Jennifer Lawrence



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, a building 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.**

There are many ways to financially help ADF grow and to fulfill this vision.
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We have a goal of building
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Song

The Summer Comes

by Dave 'Thexalon' Kleinschmidt



Dave "Thexalon" Kleinschmidt

Upbeat

The sum-mer comes as ev'-ry year it has for sea-sons past. The
The wat-er comes from down be-low to rain up-on the dirt. The
And here bet-ween the worlds where the sky and earth do meet, The
To guide us on the path we have the pow-ers di-vine. They
an-cient ones re-mem-bered to ac-cept the bles-sing cast. The sun, the
nou-rish-ment of Nob-le Ones who sat-is-fy their thirst. The land, the
mix-ing of the el-e-ments cre-ates the pre-cious treat. Our lives, our
point the way to bet-ter lives and send us their sign. The gods, the
sun, shines bigh-est on the pi-ous ones, that light, that light, shines
land, stays green-est for the pi-ous ones, The soil, the soil, will
lives, are bles-sed by the pi-ous ones, The warmth, the warmth, will
gods, give bles-sing to the pi-ous ones, That aid, that aid, will
down on us right now. And as the fi-re warms our hearts we all to-ge-ther
nou-rish us right now. And as the wat-er strength-ens us we all to-ge-ther
be with us right now. And as the world en-li-ven us we all to-ge-ther
help us a-long right now. And as their power in-spi-res us we all to-ge-ther
sing... Let's meet the folk of an-cient times by fi-re, well, and tree!
sing... Let's meet the fair folk of the land by fi-re, well, and tree!
sing... Let's do the dance of liv-ing beings by fi-re, well, and tree!
sing... Let's meet the wise and Shin-ing Ones by fi-re, well, and tree!

In this time of year, my only musical response can be one of simple celebration. I'm rather "solar-powered", and nothing makes me happier than the growth of living creatures all around me. Contemplating the time which was to come, I suddenly found myself singing this fairly simple but catchy tune with appropriate honor to all the Kindreds and people that have made this joyous time possible.

Musically, this can be played with a marching feel, emphasis on the first and third beats of every measure. The one little surprise is towards the end, on the word "sing..." - just hold that for a while to enjoy the tension of the out-of-key chord for a moment, and then continue on. I'd recommend holding it out longer each time, to enhance the melodrama. For guitarists, the "G/B" chord indication is just your standard G chord, but muting the low E string.

As always, I accept any efforts to rework my music as a great compliment. Just please send any changes my way so I can learn from your work.



Dave 'Thexalon' Kleinschmidt has been a member of ADF since 2008, a Dedicant since 2011, and is currently pursuing 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 Koukouwayies, the Hellenic subgroup of ADF), and the Bardic Guild.



Poetry

The Camphor Tree

by Laurie 'Lankelly' Brothers



My arrival at the spot under the beautiful
camphor tree
Disturbs a small white moth, which flutters away,
Upset over being awakened.
A mourning dove, pecking seeds on the ground
by the feeder,
Flies away quickly, frightened.

A titmouse sits in a nearby tree,
Shush-shush-shush scolding.
Tall pillars of white clouds rise majestically into
the sky,
Thunderheads, I believe, with the promise of rain.
Wind chimes peal softly as a breeze nudges them.

The whistle of a cardinal, hidden in the viburnum,
joins
A symphony of insects – the click, click, click
rhythm
Of an unknown beetle, followed by
The unswerving buzz of locusts.

The upper leaves of a poplar tree dance in the
breeze
As Spanish moss sways seductively from the
curving branches
Of an old live oak.
A blue jay calls stridently, chee-chee-chee, from
the top
Of a gnarled pine tree.

The leaves of the camphor tree under which I sit
Seem destined to move endlessly, spurred on by
the breeze.
A tickle on my foot invites me
To watch two brown ants battling,
One strong and in control,
One weak and desperate, the weak one
Trying not to be overwhelmed
By whatever force wants to defeat it.

The soft, grey velvet cooing of a dove
Beckons the darkening skies
With their promise of cooling, life-giving showers.
A shiny wasp, flying low and lazy just above green
grass blades,
Is intent on nothing.

Beautiful rose-pink crape myrtle heads
Bob in time to an unheard song
As double-winged dragonflies
Dance together and apart, then land
On the top of a silvery Sylvester palm.

Palmettos and queen palms and date palms
Wave friendly greetings
While the gentle nodding of a patch of tall zinnias
Entices butterflies to its orange and pink and red
faces.

A curious dove eyes me from the safety of a
branch,
Wondering why I'm intruding on his feeder and
when I'll leave.
Yellow and black and orange butterflies
Flit above a profusion of tall purple Mexican
petunias.

The brown sadness of a dying azalea bush in the
midst of all this living
Brings an awareness that life and death spiral
unendingly,
As green acorns fall with a pop on the shed roof,
Far from the safety of their mother's branches.

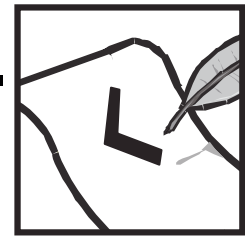
An overwhelming sense of peace and awe
Reminds me that I love this beautiful planet
On which I am privileged to live.
Thank you, Gaia.



Personal Story

Reflections on Connecting to the Land

by Tamara McKenna



I've known for a very long time that the religion I was brought up to believe wasn't the one I would practice; but, I didn't know what I believed. I tried many variations of a Christian theme and none really worked, so when I found a nature based faith it was an *ab ha* (more of oh duh) moment. The affiliation I have with nature is bizarre. It is my soul. My life has always been small town pace, not girl plopped inside a huge noisy city with nothing but buildings starring at me.

At the time I was born in Marysville Ohio, the population was about fifty thousand people (if you included all the little 'burbs stuck up against it). When you walked outside on the sidewalk you could smell farm animals from nearby, chemicals being mixed at Scotts (the lawn company) or coffee beans being burnt for Nestle. My city exposure was one where I could walk to the corner store, the bank, the post office and back home without breaking a sweat. A car ride involved going to see what the farmers were putting in/taking out of the fields and wishing I had remembered my nose pinchers. So when my parents decided to move to Columbus when I was nine, I rebelled. I think all nine year olds rebel for one reason or another.

City life was terrifying to someone who had only ever visited (that I could remember) the city for Sears and Roebucks which was an outing of the best Sunday caliber. But, living in the place where there were people next to you was stupid. They could see in my windows. I learned to adjust only until I could escape; the day after high school graduation I returned to Marysville. This was not to last long, as I married a guy who was from the city (stupid me) and the east side of Columbus to boot. Your neighbors were so close they could hear the whispered conversations you had inside your house. So I ended up back in the city but not for long.

When the land that my current house sits upon came up for sale we purchased it. It is a lot 250' wide (ever want to know the distance between

telephone poles?) by 5 ½ acres deep (nearest neighbor ain't looking at or hearing in my house). Not really planning to build straight away it was an investment and the land was literally fifteen minutes from the city of Dublin, OH. After owning the land about two years lots of things plopped into place and we decided to build a house. It's not the dream house I would build and if given the opportunity I would redo a great portion of it. It's the land you see; it's not on a nexus of power, no prime meridians or cross quarters; it's just nature knows that it's respected here and it gives what I need most, love. By pulling me to hear the voices mumbling, it calms me and my soul while sucking me into the folds of its comfort and warmth. There is no need to go anywhere else.

Perhaps one of the best places to experience the nature within my land is from my gazebo. Doves often will make nests in the rafters with hummingbirds nesting in the burning bushes surrounding the gazebo. What is amazing to witness is when the lawn is being mowed; clouds of barn swallows and kites hover over the back yard and swoop in after each pass with the mower, along with the quail and pheasants from a nearby farm. The back half of the land is wild and critters are abundant. I choose to visit only when absolutely necessary so as not to disturb; so when I created my nemeton the land welcomed my change with very little grievance. When I have rituals it settles in for it knows that it will be thanked. Surprisingly if you don't wander far, the snakes and other animals stay put and don't run away.

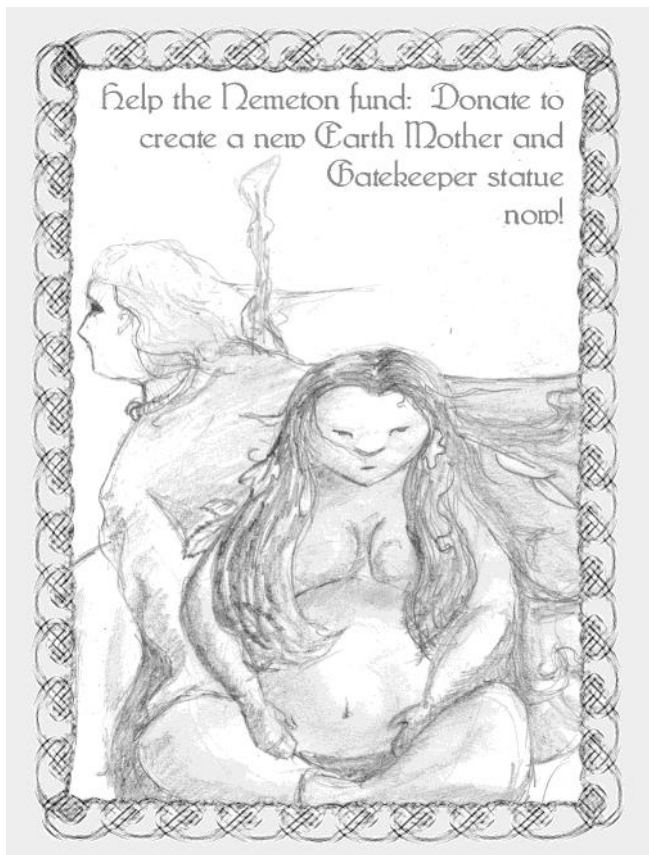
Before I even knew I was Pagan or of a Norse family lineage, my driveway was lined with ten ash trees and Pin Oak trees dotting the corners of the property. Every year for about the first six or so years it was a common outing to walk to friends' houses back in the woods and collect the acorns and nuts/seeds from trees I hoped to propagate on my land. One Pin Oak in the back has gotten to the point of distracting me from my kitchen duties

(I watch it instead of doing the dishes) due to the several species (ravens, Red Tailed Hawks and falcons) of birds that perch there to make their nests. Maple trees line the west side of my property and house the many robins and Blue Jays with a few cardinals nesting in the pines on the east side of the property thrown in for effect.


Much of a Nature's path is watching the stars and wondering what is happening. My land is always watched by the North Star and Orion's Belt and I never feel alone. I own a large telescope to view the cosmos when the weather permits and often wonder "what's it really all about?" Many times I've watched meteor showers from my back yard and when ravens, falcons, hawks, deer, coyotes and the North Star come calling I pay attention. It is beautiful to see and experience this place. When people visit my land they all say the same thing, "it's so calming out here" or "I don't want to go home". I open my home to others who respect what this land is about and they usually all want to return. The specialness of this land is Nature's best kept secret and I, along with those who visit will never tell. Those from the outside will never understand.



Hailing from Three Cranes Grove, ADF, Tamara McKenna has been a member of ADF since 2009. She is halfway done with her DP, is a member of the Norse Kin, and is curious about Celtic and Welsh hearth cultures as well.



Harvest Nights Gathering November 9 - 11, 2012
 Camp Bonnie Brae
 Otis, MA



Presented by Charter Oak Grove, ADF
 visit <http://www.charteroakadf.org/harvestnights> for more information

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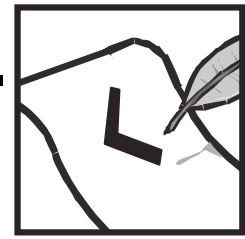




Opinion

Isaac's Dream for ADF

by Rev. Jessie Olson



One of the first things that attracted me to ADF was Isaac's vision for the organization. Scholarship, excellence, openness, inclusivity, non-corrupt leadership, and the intent to move ADF (and all of Paganism really) toward becoming a mainstream religion, were all things I had dreamt of for Neopaganism for a very long time.

Isaac imagined that ADF, and Neopaganism in general, would provide trained leaders to provide "publically accessible worship, teaching, counseling, and healing." He expected to see "temples and/or sacred groves throughout North America and Europe, staffed by full-time paid professional clergy." He hoped to see our High Days "globally televised" and attended by thousands of Pagans in every major city of the world.

He prayed that one day our children would be free to celebrate their faith, rather than hide it, at school by "wearing pentacles, Druid Sigils, and Thor Hammers to school as easily as others now wear crosses, Stars of David, or Hands of Fatima." He imagined ADF being involved in "actions to save endangered species, stop polluters, and preserve wilderness." He hoped to see "our healers saving thousands of lives and our bards inspiring millions through music and video concerts and dramas."

All these things and more he wished for ADF and the Neopagan community. These were good dreams, beautiful dreams, and I believed, and still do, wholeheartedly in each and every one of them. Isaac's vision was substantial, beautiful and uncompromising, much like the man himself, and I often think of his vision when I think of him. This leads to questioning.

Are we doing it justice? Is ADF heading in the direction of Isaac's vision? Have we lost our way? If so, how do we get back on track? More importantly, what can I do personally to help advance his vision?

Have you ever asked yourself that last question? What can I do personally to help advance Isaac's vision for ADF? I know, that's a big question but sit with it for a while.

A good vision is one that states what your organization wants to become and resonates with as many members of the organization as possible. It should make the members feel proud and motivated to be part of something bigger than themselves. It should stretch the organization's abilities and shape the direction of the organization's future. It should be concise and easy to internalize. Finally, it should inspire members to take action to make it come true. With the exception of being concise (which we all know Isaac wasn't very good at) Isaac's vision does all these things for me. Yet, we have still not made a great deal of progress towards making a lot of these things happen.

Granted, our children are more able to wear pentacles and other religious emblems to school than they once were. They are no longer exposed to as much Christian rhetoric and propaganda at school as they once were now that mandatory prayer and religious celebrations have been banned in public schools. Yet, they are still teased in some areas and many schools do not understand the importance of our children's belief, failing to allow time off for High Days and spiritual practices. Some have even been suspended for wearing their religious emblems.

Granted, our military are now allowed to hold circles on base and many even provide the space to do so and veterans may now have the pentacle as an emblem of belief on their headstone. Yet, many of our service men and women still feel uncomfortable coming out about their beliefs because they may get harassed by their cohorts and veterans cannot indicate Wiccan, Druid or even Pagan as their religion on their VA medical records.

Granted, we have publicly broadcasted ADF rituals on venues such as YouTube and Neopagan religion is getting increasing positive attention in the media and the arts. We also increasingly see Witches, Druids and Wiccans positively portrayed in television and movies. However, there is still quite a bit of negative portrayals of magic and witches in the media, without much research into the actual beliefs of those who practice it, particularly among conservative news sources.

Good things are happening and the world is changing. However, we are still lacking in a few key areas, namely, full-time paid professional clergy who provide teaching, counseling, and healing and permanent temples and/or sacred groves to provide these services. While our clergy provide public ritual and do provide some teaching and healing services (in the form of magical workings or alternative healing practices) they do not currently provide counseling and the education they provide is unaccredited and rather informal. While some Groves have permanent spiritual space, only a handful of these spaces are owned by the Grove itself and not an individual who allows the Grove to use the space.

So, I ask again, what can we do to make Isaac's vision a reality? ... to make ADF more mainstream? ...to educate the public about ADF and Neopaganism in general? ...to provide more professional training for our Clergy? ...to create more public ritual space for our community?

One thing we can do is ensure that every action we take as an organization advances the mission and vision of ADF. Thinking about creating a new Guild or Order? How does it advance the vision? Considering a new article for Oak Leaves? How does it increase exposure to Isaac's dream? Thinking about starting a new community service project? How will it advance ADF's presence in the community and achieve Isaac's vision of a healthier environment?

We have the destination; Isaac gave us that. Now we need to create the itinerary to get us there. What steps do we want to take to get us where we are going?

Here's what I envision:

One day ADF will have temples and sacred space worldwide, staffed by paid professional clergy who provide a full range of needed services to the Neopagan community including spiritual services like worship, teaching, counseling, and healing.

This means making moves toward more professional training for our Clergy, something akin to a college level Master's degree in divinity. It also means fundraising locally and internationally for land funds so our Groves can purchase land for permanent ritual space, providing professional leadership training for our Grove leadership, and advising our Grove leadership on administrative issues.

ADF will televise High Day rituals and live ceremonies will be attended by thousands in every major city of the world. ADF's leadership will take part as equals in international religious conferences with clergy from other faiths.

Using venues like YouTube to show recordings of our rituals will increase exposure to ADF. Advertising more widely in more mainstream publications and venues will get the word out of our existence to a more broad audience and may increase participation and awareness as well. Finally, our Archdruid can attend international religious conferences, while our local leadership can attend local interfaith councils and religious fairs.

ADF will be recognized as a leader in Neopagan diversity training for law enforcement, educators and public officials, increasing tolerance toward Neopaganism and providing a safer environment for our children to express their faith as openly as any child from any of the world's current major religions.

This can be accomplished by developing educational videos for diversity training and offering it to the public. Accompanying books and reading materials can also be produced.

Our talented and well trained leadership will lead thousands of people in effective actions to save endangered species, stop polluters, and preserve our wilderness. ADF will be a recognized world religion, changing social, political, and environmental attitudes around the world.

We can create an endowment that we use to support the efforts of other like-minded organizations and we can also create our own sub-groups that work toward these goals.

Our healers will save thousands of lives and our bards will inspire millions through live and recorded performances.

We can support our healers, bards, and spiritual leaders by providing scholarships for Druidic students who are pursuing a course of study relevant to ADF. Our bards can further inspire by professionally recording their music and creating music videos that touch the world.

In short, I visualize ADF as a recognized world religion, providing the full range of spiritual

services and protections currently afforded majority faiths, equality for our members internationally and strong, honorable spiritual leadership supporting these efforts.

We can do this Druids! Let's make it happen.

□

☪

Rev. Olson has been active in ADF since 2003 and was elevated to serve as an ADF Senior Priest (3rd Circle priesthood) at the ADF Annual Meeting in 2011. She has served as a Senior Druid of Feather River Grove, ADF. Currently, she serves as Deputy Northwest Regional Druid, Preceptor of Aus Dhwer (Eastern Gate Kin), Director of the Military Outreach SIG and Non-Officer Director of ADF's Mother Grove.



Poetry

Weeds Are Never Lonely

by Colleen Sorbera



Give me weeds with wild abandon,
Violets dancing on the lawn.
Dandelions make good company
For clovers dewy with the dawn.

Let forsythia grow shameless,
Leave the clippers in the shed.
Take the brambles with the roses,
Go where Mother Earth has led.

For weeds are never lonely,
If you'll only let them be,
Wildflowers come a-calling,
When you let the green grow free.



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-Rev. Michael J Dangler

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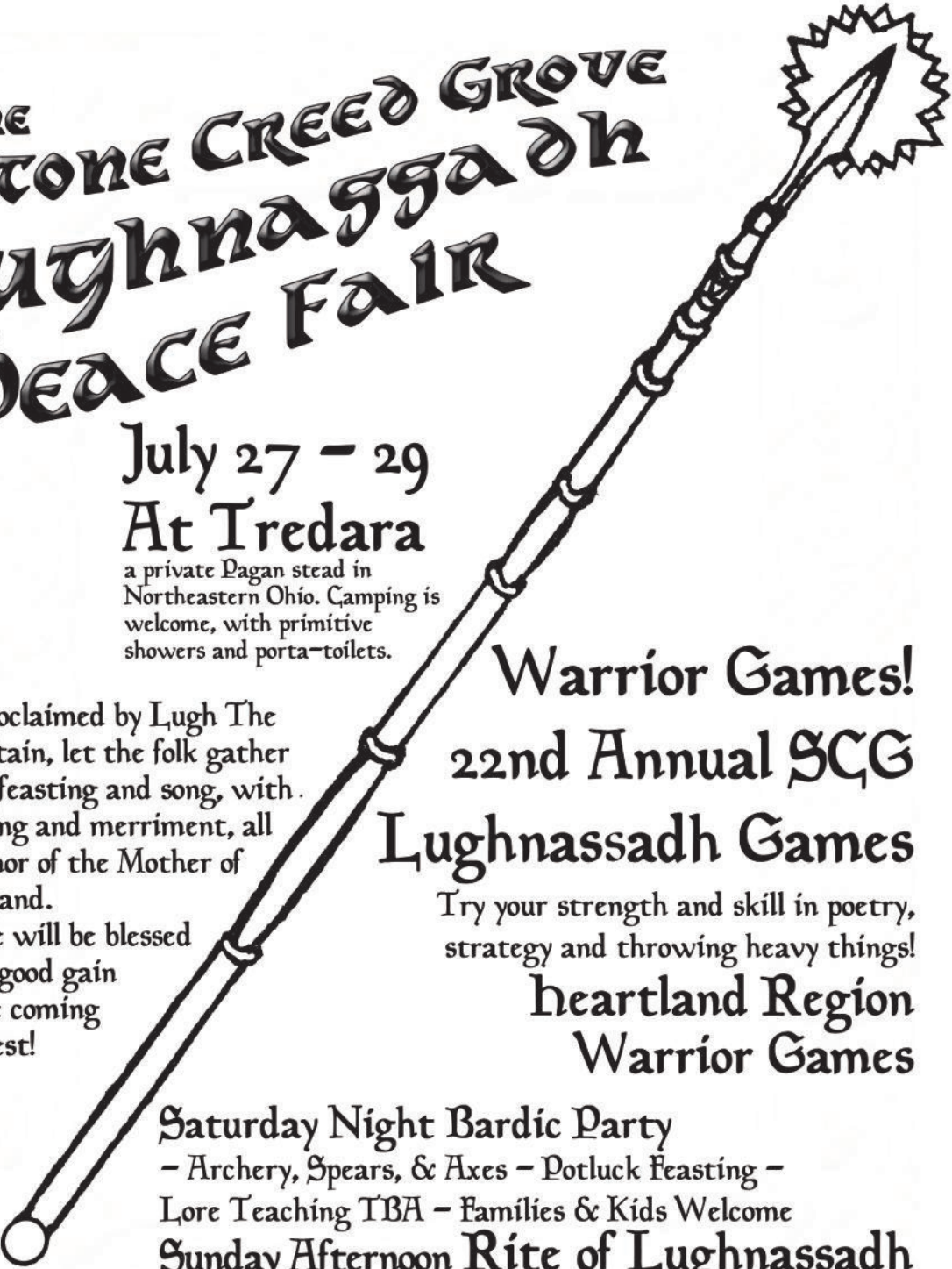
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a private Pagan stead in
Northeastern Ohio. Camping is
welcome, with primitive
showers and porta-toilets.

As proclaimed by Lugh The
Chieftain, let the folk gather
with feasting and song, with
striving and merriment, all
in honor of the Mother of
the Land.

So we will be blessed
with good gain
in the coming
harvest!



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22nd Annual SCG
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Warrior Games

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- Archery, Spears, & Axes - Potluck Feasting -
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Summerland

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*August 16-19, 2012
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*For more information
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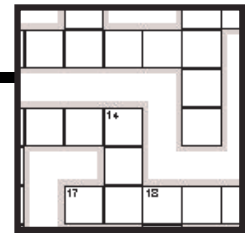
*Hosted by The 6th Night Grove, ADF
and Whispering Lake Grove, ADF*



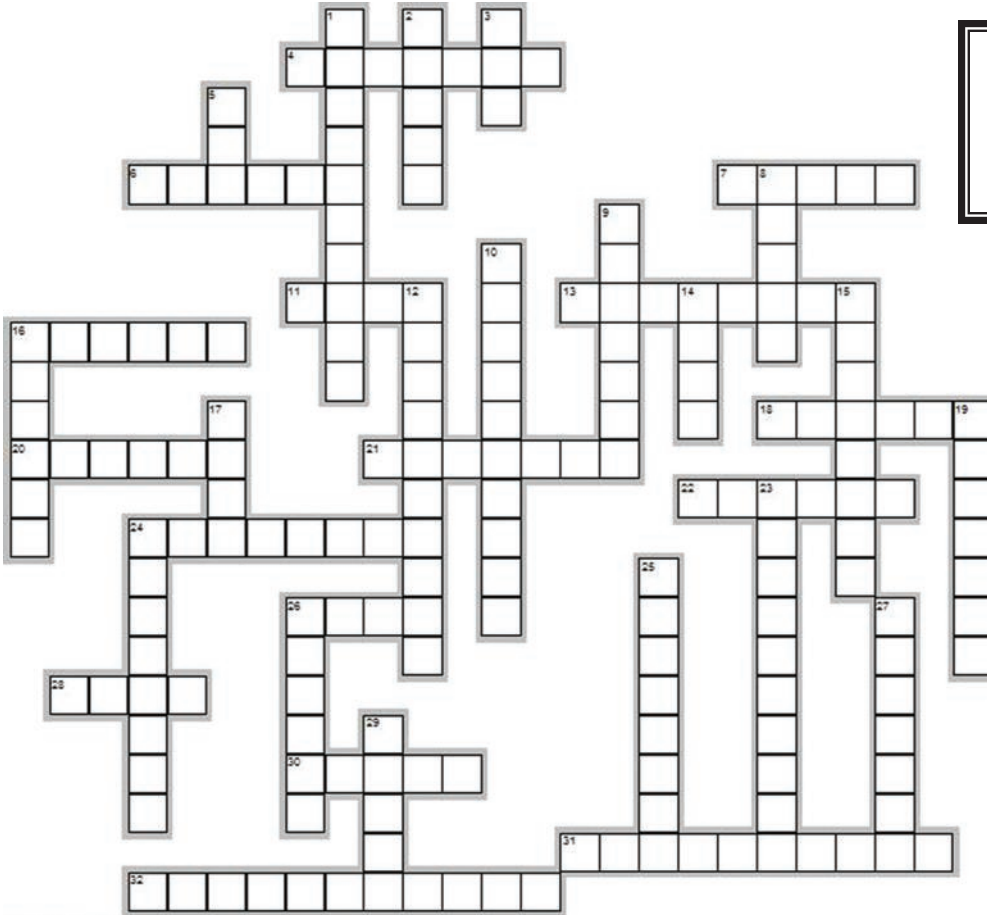
Crossword Puzzle

Pagan People

by Chris :)



Note: Answers will be predominantly last names.



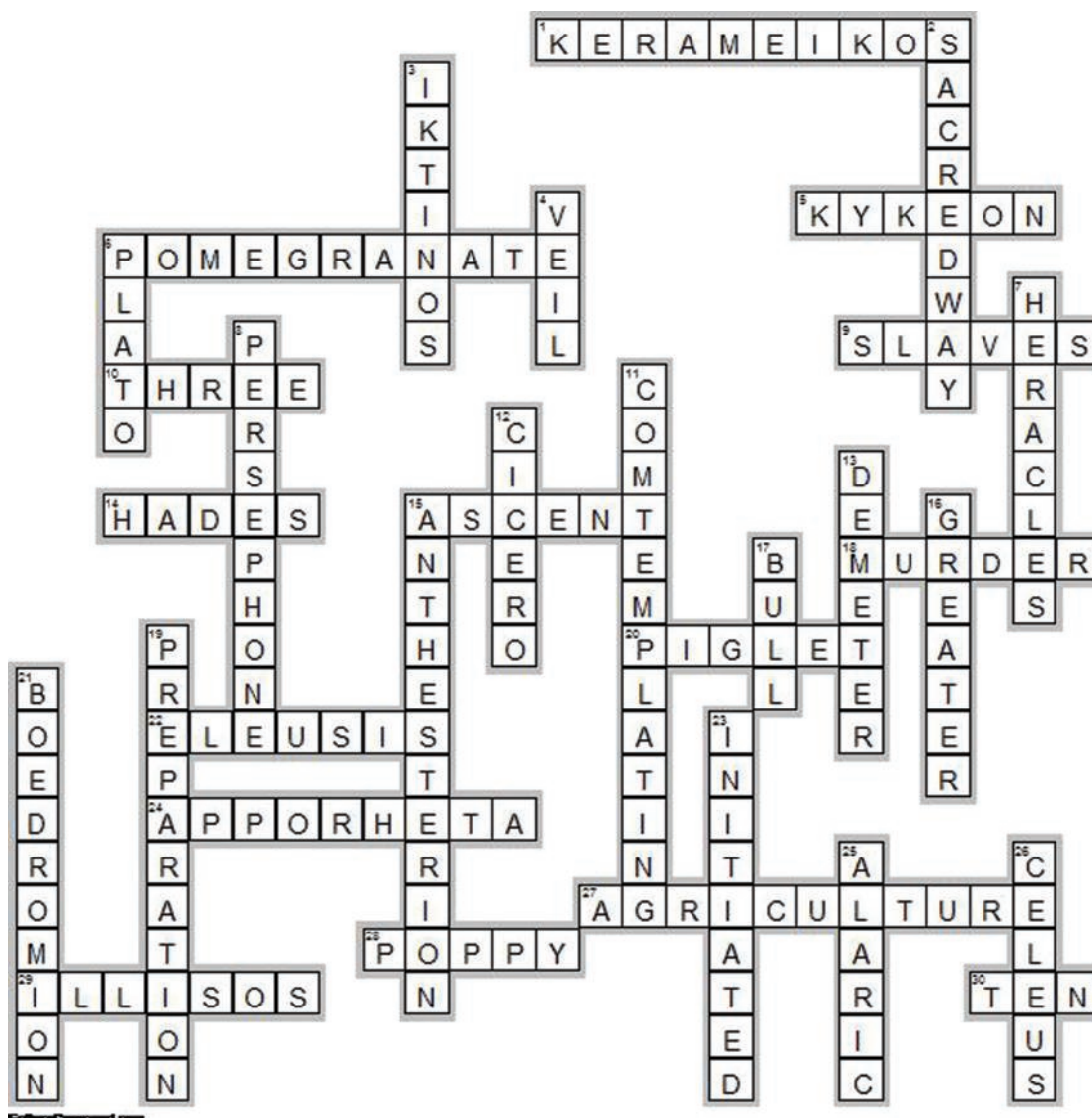
Down

1. Creator of *Green Egg* magazine
2. Journalist for NPR
3. The Druid Networks creator
5. Founder of the Circle Craft tradition
8. *Alive, The Raven, Jabberwocky, Elven Lover* etc
9. Famous occultist
10. Scottish drumming band
12. Author of The Apple Branch
14. This *Godsmack* band member was recently initiated in the Cabot tradition.
15. Miriam Simos, AKA _____
16. Author of Spiritual Mentoring
17. Canadian trio band The _____ Sisters
19. Founder of OBOD
23. *We Won't Wait Any Longer* singer...
24. Founder of Seax-Wica
25. Founder of Asatru Folk Assembly
26. Coronation Street's Druid
27. The band *Emerald Rose* is from this state
29. Author World full of Gods

Across

4. Founder of the Alexandrian tradition
6. Westria, Wodans Children, The Hallowed Isle etc
7. Rockin In The Free World, Old Man, Cinnamon Girl etc
11. Nancy of the Craft
13. Author of The Pagan Man: Priests, Warriors, Hunters, and Drummers
16. Author of The Rise and Fall of Merry England
18. He brought the RDNA to Berkley
20. Lead singer of Inkubus Sukkubus
21. Mists of Avalon author
22. Author of A Druid Herbal
24. Original composer of the song We All Come From The Goddess
26. Popular Australian singer
28. Her Album is called Circle Round
30. Australian author of Life's a Witch
31. Author Wicca: A Guide for the Solitary Practitioner
32. Initiated Gerald Gardner

Last Issue's Puzzle Key





News and Announcements



Dedicant Path Completions

Amanda Thomas

Ad Astra Protogrove

Date completed Jan 2012

G R Grove (Gwernin)

Silver Branch Golden Horn Grove

Date completed Jan 2012

Erin Fortner

Three Cranes Grove

Date completed Feb 2012

Derek Wrigley

Cottonwood River Protogrove, ADF

Date completed Mar 2012

Sara Blackwelder

Solitary

Date completed Mar 2012

Elizabeth Schibli-Lazzaro

Solitary

Date completed Mar 2012

W Jay Foulds

Solitary

Date completed Mar 2012

Initiates Completions

Rev. Jean Pagano (Nightdrum)

Shining Lakes Grove

Date completed Feb 2012

Clergy completions

Rev. Ayliah 'Amber' Cannon

Clergy Training First Circle

Completed Dec 2011

New Protogroves & Grove Approvals

HearthStone Protogrove

Austin TX

Date founded: December 17, 2011

Guardians of the Oak Protogrove

Oakland Park, FL

Date founded: January 13, 2012

Protogrove of the Valley Oak

San Jose, CA

Date founded: February 29, 2012

~ Congratulations to all ~

Upcoming Festivals

Wellspring Gathering - May 24-28, 2012; Sherman, NY

Spirit of the West Druid Gathering – June 8-10, 2012; Pigeon Lake, Alberta

Eight Winds Festival- June 28 - July 1, 2012; Tahoe National Forest, CA

Starwood Festival - July 10-16, 2012; Pomeroy, OH

Camp Idunna - July 20-22, 2012; Cross Junction, VA

Summerland Gathering - Aug 16-19, 2012; Yellow Springs, OH

See www.adf.org/events for further information

Contributors List

Art

Jennifer Lawrence

Photo: *In Gratitude*

Articles

Wayne Keysor

Series: *The Descent of Orpheus:*

The Evolution of the Orpheus Myth in Literature Part II

Lesley Domnu-Hooper

Article: *Polytheistic 12-Stepping*

Samantha Noll

Article: *Defending Your Daily Practice: Aristotle, Different Knowledges and the Druid Path*

Rev. Kirk Thomas

Series: *A Welsh Wheel of the Year: Part 3*

Columns

Filip 'Airis' Kubín

Personal Story: *Discovering Your Connection to a Hearth Culture*

Desiree Cook

Personal Story: *Finding My Personal Deity*

Wayne Keysor

Book Review: *Introduction to Roman Religion*

Tamara McKenna

Personal Story: *Reflections on Connecting to the Land*

Rev. Jessie Olson

Opinion: *Isaac's Dream for ADF*

Crossword

Chris :)

Bardic

Dara NicDhàna

Poetry: *The Lady Is*

Dave 'TheXalon' Kleinschmidt

Song: *The Summer Comes*

Laurie 'Lankelly' Brothers

Poetry: *The Camphor Tree*

Colleen Sorbera

Poetry: *Weeds Are Never Lonley*

Poetry: *Firefly*

ADF Directory

The Mother Grove

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Chief of the Council of Senior Druids	Flip Rutledge	adf-cosd-chief@adf.org
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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	tredara@ncweb.com
Archdruid Emeritus	Rev. John 'Fox' Adelman	john.adelman@trw.com
Archdruid Emeritus	Rev. Robert 'Skip' Ellison	skip@dragonskeep.us
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Preceptor	Crystal Groves	adf-preceptor@adf.org
Store Manager	Rev. Robert 'Skip' Ellison	adf-store@adf.org
Webmaster	Rev. Robb 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

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

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 . 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





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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
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 Country: _____ Phone Number: _____ Birth Date: __/__/__ (mm/dd/yy)
 Email Address: _____ P _ S _ C

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

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

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

ADF Membership Rates:

Regular Membership _____ years @ \$25/year = \$ _____
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 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: _____



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Awen - Ian Corrigan & Liafal
Rev. AJ Gooch
Journeyman Bard Missy Burchfield
David 'Klaus' Eisenstein

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Telesma
Elemental Groove Theory
Brian Henke
Mayan Ruins
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July 10th - 16th

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The **Starwood Festival** is a 7-day camping event with fire dancing & spinning, jam sessions & drum circles, unique merchants, all-night drumming and more than 20 performances of music, dance and theatre on four stages! We offer over 150 classes, workshops & ceremonies given by teachers from many fields, disciplines, traditions and cultures at a clothing-optional campground with hiking, a swimming pond, hot showers, free wi-fi, youth programs & co-op child care in our Kid Village, a Kid's Costume Parade with giant puppets, multimedia parties in The Pufferdome (our air-supported hemispherical nightspot), and an unforgettable Saturday night bonfire.

Imagine a Brigadoon-like UniverCity, a celebration of diversity, that springs up in the middle of a beautiful natural place, then disappears 'til next Summer.

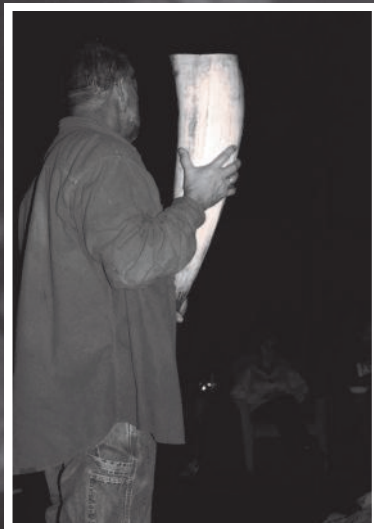
THAT'S THE ONE TRUE STARWOOD FESTIVAL. ACCEPT NO SUBSTITUTES!

Midnight Flame Festival

Come join us for ADF's only festival in the region!

Lectures and workshops, rituals, vendors, a drum circle, brewers contest (You be the judge!), Bardic Circle, along with plenty of fellowship and fun!

Tent, RV, or cabin camping available, with opportunities for hiking, swimming in a heated pool, horseshoes, and volleyball.



Chain O'Lakes Campground,
7231 S. M-88, Bellaire, MI

**September
6-9, 2012
Bellaire, Michigan**

**Hosted by
Grove of the
Midnight Sun, ADF**



Thursday Night:
Opening Ritual
"Kindling of the Flame"

Friday Night:
Main ADF Ritual

Saturday Night: Norse Sumble,
a ritual to toast, boast,
and honor our kindred!

All meals are communal.
Vending space available.
Call for more information.

**For more information and reservations call 231-533-8432
or visit our website at <http://www.groovemidnightsun.org/midnightflame.html>**