

OAK LEAVES

The Quarterly Journal of Ár nDraíocht Féin Summer 2017 ~ Issue No. 77



PINK



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OAK LEAVES

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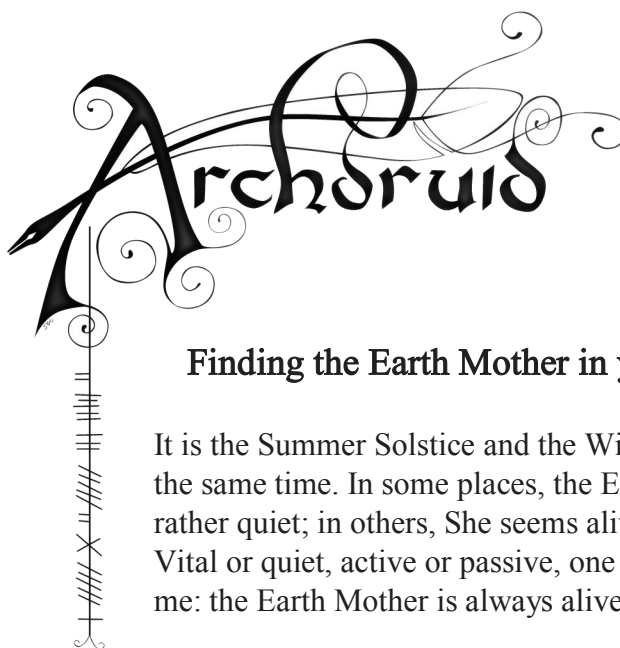
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Front Cover
by Helen "Pink" Pitcher

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Finding the Earth Mother in your Back Yard

It is the Summer Solstice and the Winter Solstice, all at the same time. In some places, the Earth Mother seems rather quiet; in others, She seems alive and very vital. Vital or quiet, active or passive, one thing seems clear to me: the Earth Mother is always alive.

We use the term "Earth Mother", but I am convinced that there are countless Earth Mothers that vary from locale to locale, from people to people, from culture to culture. We never speak in great detail about the Earth Mother and I feel that She is different to all of us.

Yet, I also believe that She is not just some mental construct that we create because She is nice to have in our cosmology. For me, the Earth Mother holds so many things together and the Earth Mother is everywhere we are and everywhere that She is.



I like to sing the Earth Mother song that begins “O Earth Mother”, and is an old RDNA standard and also an ADF one as well. The RDNA version has five trees through which the wind whispers: elm, maple, pine, birch, and oak. The ADF variety has just three. I like to believe that five trees make a forest, so I stick with the longer song. It goes like this:

Oh Earth Mother
We praise Thee
For the seed that springeth
For the flower that openeth
For the grass that waveth
We praise Thee
For the wind that whispereth
Through the graceful elm
Through the shapely maple
Through the lively pine
Through the shining birch
Through the mighty oak
We praise Thee
O Earth Mother
Who giveth life!

Oh, and for our Portuguese speaking members:

Ó Terra Mãe!
Nós louvamos a vós que faz brotar a semente,
Que desabrocha a flor,
Que agita a grama.
Nós louvamos a vós pelo vento que sussurra,
Através do gracioso olmo,
Através do formoso bordo,
Através do vívido pinheiro,
Através da brilhante bétula,
Através do poderoso carvalho.
Nós louvamos a vós por todas as coisas
Ó Terra Mãe,
Aquela que dá a vida.
(Translation by Marina Holderbaum Wroblewski)

Often, during ritual, we touch the ground when we call out to the Earth Mother. I think this is an excellent exercise that we can do in our own backyard. The Earth Mother extends in all directions, yet She changes like the scenery does. The Earth Mother in Death Valley is the same Earth Mother as in Curitiba is the same Earth Mother as

in Nova Scotia and the same as in your backyard. They are different ways of experiencing the Earth Mother.

Let’s try this at home: find a small, quiet place in your yard or in a natural setting nearby. Reach down, if you can, and feel the Earth Mother. Feel what the ground is like, its texture. Is it wet or dry? Clay, mud, or sand? How does it smell? How does it make you feel?

As you learn about your Earth Mother, do something for Her: make an offering. A good offering for the Earth Mother is water. Water is nourishing, water is natural, and water is the life blood of the Earth Mother.

Try to do this exercise every day. Say a little prayer, maybe something as simple as “Earth Mother, accept my offering”, or “I honor and I thank you, Earth Mother”, or one of the songs above, even as a spoken word prayer. In doing so, you are performing a daily devotional, a daily way of reaching out and establishing a relationship with an important part of ADF and your own life: the Earth Mother.

Over time, you will get a feel for the Earth Mother, your Earth Mother, your very local Earth Mother in your back yard. As the seasons change, you will get to see how She changes in that small spot in your garden, your yard, your locale. As time passes, you will age slowly and your appreciation of the Earth Mother will change and grow and blossom and fall and start again. Your relationship with the Earth Mother will be enhanced by observation, participation, and offerings. You will see her in new ways. And, I believe, She will see you as well.

“Earth Mother, accept our offerings.”

*Rev. Jean “Drum” Pagano
Archdruid, ADF*

From Roots to Branches: The Earth Mother

By ADF Vice Archdruid Rev. Carrion Mann

*Ancient One of Ever Changing Beauty
Primal Mother of the Land
And Great Goddess of Sovereignty
We are renewed in your waters
Cradled within your mantle of green
And sustained by your abundance.
Earth Mother we honor you!*

The majority of Neopagans have some familiarity and comfort with the concept of an Earth Mother. She is, first and foremost, the primary deity of the Neopagan movement, the embodiment of nature, fertility, the moon, the cycles of life, and the ecosystem of our planet Earth (Greer 198). She is commonly known among Neopagans in general as the Goddess, Mother Earth, the Earth Mother, or the Goddess of Sovereignty, and for some of us these titles can be applied to more than one female being. Earth Mothers are Mother Goddesses who represent or are personifications of nature, motherhood, fertility, creation, destruction, and/or those that embody the bounty of the Earth. Some are even associated with the birth of the cosmos itself and everything in it.

The Neopagan revival is directly responsible for the Earth Mother in her many guises becoming a central figure in the worship of many Neopagans today for several of reasons, perhaps the most notable reason being that the Neopagan revival offered a gentle alternative to the concept of “angry Sky God” in a variety of Earth based, Earth Mother driven spiritual paths. Secondly, the Neopagan religions also offered a liberating alternative to many women feeling oppressed by the patriarchy of the Abrahamic religions (Adler 22). The Earth Mother, however, is a being and concept much older than the Neopagan revival. So, from where did she and this concept originate?

The first historic evidence for what would become the concept of the Neopagan Goddess and the Earth Mother, or Mother Earth as we have come to know her, derives from around the beginning of the Common Era with Platonism. During this time, “nature came to be seen as a

goddess, and gradually absorbed the characters and names of a variety of classical goddesses”, for example, Hecate (Greer 199). Some Platonist philosophy would survive the fall of Rome thanks to the Christian church, and the concept of nature being feminine would remain alive in Christian writings throughout the Middle Ages.

Following the footsteps of the Earth Mother a bit further through recorded history, we find that Goddess imagery played a large role in Renaissance magic; however, the Reformation and Counter Reformation would not be so kind, and the idea of a living earth and a complex spiritual world would be discarded for a time. During the late 18th and early 19th centuries, Romanticism would rebel against the Reformation, “valuing emotion over reason, nature above culture, woman over man and frequently magic over science” (Greer 199), and would revive the magical image of nature and its transformation into the modern Goddess. Additionally, the Romantics explored Renaissance magical sources leading back to classical Pagan traditions and Celtic and



Germanic lore. By 1800 the Earth Mother was beginning to emerge as a lunar deity of nature and fertility. With this resurgence, however, also begins the critically flawed arguments for a peaceful, prehistoric European, women-centered, nature-Goddess-worshipping civilization; and the accusations that this peaceful civilization had been destroyed by none other than the warlike patriarchal invaders, our ancestors, the Indo-Europeans. But if this prehistoric civilization did not meet its end as depicted, where in ancient times was the Earth Mother as the Indo-Europeans migrated across the globe? Where does this leave us as ADF Druids who draw upon what is known of the ancient Indo-European cultures to color our practice; a practice which also seeks to honor the Earth Mother?

Looking at this potential conflict of interest, Earth Mothers are by their nature connected to the natural world, and look and function very differently depending on where in the world you reside. The Earth Mother is also ever-changing. If you reside in the same area of the world your entire life, the changes may be minimal and largely seasonal. However, if you have moved significantly or traveled you may have realized that the Earth Mother feels different; she looks different, and she may even behave differently from what



you have previously experienced. It appears this was not unlike the experiences of our Indo-European ancestors.

The evidence is clear that Indo-European cultures of ancient times worshipped Earth Mother goddesses, and many are their names. These Goddesses were perhaps more localized in nature than some of us now see them, but if we consider for a moment the world at the time of the Indo-Europeans, it was quite small in comparison to our modern world. These localized goddesses could not so easily move with the migrating Indo-Europeans. This holds true for some of us today as well. When we travel or move the land/earth/goddess of the place is at times unfamiliar and new. We seek to build a relationship with this goddess or develop new insights for our honor and worship of the Goddess of the Earth. For our Indo-Europeans ancestors, this experience may have been quite similar, for they were a pastoral people who migrated with their Sky Father Beings overhead to new lands, where their Sky Fathers would be wed to the Goddesses of Sovereignty or Earth Mothers of a specific area. When the Indo-European pastoral people met agrarian peoples, the Sky Father and Earth Mother became inseparably fused.

As our ancestors once did, so too do we today honor the Earth Mother and her ever-changing beauty. May she aid us to remember that she is the Mother of us all and that through her we remain sustained, connected and strong from our roots to our branches!

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Rev. Kelley "Carrion Mann" Kingston joined ADF in 2001. She became an ADF Priest in 2008, and a Senior Priest in 2014. She is currently the Vice Archdruid and Preceptor of ADF, and is Leader of the Order of the Dead.

The June Solstice Down Under

By Dean Hallett

The June Solstice is the Winter Solstice in the Southern Hemisphere. South of the Equator the seasons are the reverse of those in the Northern Hemisphere. For ADF members in Australia, then, the short answer is to simply flip the Wheel of the Year so that we celebrate the High Days in accordance with the seasons here.

Australia is a country, an island, and a continent. It ranges from tropical rainforests near the Equator to vast wetlands and deserts, spinifex plains, saltbush scrub, mallee, dry open eucalypt woodlands, mountain ranges, cool ferny forested gullies and mountain ash forest – the largest flowering trees on Earth – all the way to the icy sub-Antarctic islands. Most parts of Australia have anywhere from two to ten seasons reflected in Aboriginal knowledge and modern ecological understandings of the cycles at work within various ecosystems.

So what's an ADF member to do for their personal or Grove High Day observances? We have to think about what the High Days mean to us as individuals and Groves. We have to think about the ADF Core Order of Ritual and the traditions of our Indo-European Hearth Cultures, and balance that with what is going on in the local environment in which we live, work, and come together for ritual. The Solstices and Equinoxes are astrological fixed points that do affect the amount of daylight, heat, and behaviours of flora and fauna, and the Cross-quarter days still hold traditional significance even if they have little agricultural basis in Australia. A sense of tradition, personal and/or ancestral connection to Indo-European Hearth Cultures, is often a substantial factor in what draws people to Neo-Paganism and to ADF in particular here. Attunement with what is happening in nature, through ADF practices and simply spending time regularly in the local environment, provides ample opportunities for obser-

vation of what is happening at different times near you, whether it is the oak shedding its leaves or the blue gum shedding its bark, or the flowering of daffodils or banksia trees.

Silver Birch Grove is my local Grove in Melbourne. It is Celtic in Hearth Culture, while my own Hearth Culture is Norse. Yule (in June) is my ritual New Year, and my favourite High Day! When I lead a ritual for our Grove's Yule celebration I try to incorporate traditions from the Norse into our High Day. There's no snow, but morning frosts, and the chance of cold rain... which always seems to stay clear while we hold our rituals. The creek is flowing higher with rain water, the damp earth of the nemeton has sprouted winter grass, while the eucalyptus and wattle surrounding our grove are lush and green. It is



Photo by Dean Hallett



Photo by Dean Hallett

actually safe for us to have a ritual fire in our portable fire pit (fire is banned over most of summer) for our Yule log. People bring holly, sprigs of pine, and pinecones as well as native foliage from their gardens to add to the altar. The local blue-tongued lizards have gone into torpor. The calls of Australian magpies, little ravens, and cockatoos as well as winter visitors from the hills like currawongs and yellow robins rise through the air.

Last year at Yule, we had Thor as our Deity of the Occasion. We usually tell a story of the Deity of the Occasion and last year I told the story of Thor and his goats visiting a family at Yule. The poor family had no food to offer their guest hospitality so Thor revealed himself and killed his goats to feed them and provide a feast with ample leftovers for the coldest nights. In the morning, he resurrected the goats from their bones with his hammer Mjolnir and continued on his way. We had a special imported beer with a goat on it as a perfect offering in addition to our usual offerings. When it came to the waters of life, I work in a sumbel, for Yule is traditionally a good time for one. As I bring my drinking horn filled with more mead than usual, participants are invited to make a boast, a toast, or an oath, Yule being an especially auspicious time for oaths. We do three rounds for people to reflect on the past year, the present and the future. The ritual went well, Thor seemed pleased and the folk seemed jolly as we

finished the ritual and had our own picnic feast.

For those of us in Australia the challenge is to find relevant meanings in our High Day celebrations that bring together aspects of traditional Hearth Cultures within very different environments. It's still something that is unfolding and perhaps with more ADF members in time we will see a diversity of new expressions of old Hearth Cultures honouring the Kindreds Down Under.

Dean has been practicing Ásatrú for 14 years and has been attending Silver Birch Grove for 5 years. He is currently writing an archaeology PhD thesis on chariots in the ancient Near East. When he's not in a university library, he can most likely be found haunting the forests and waterways of the Dandenongs, southeast of Melbourne, Australia.



Photo by Dean Hallett

June Solstice in Alaska

By Antonyus S. Kaleal

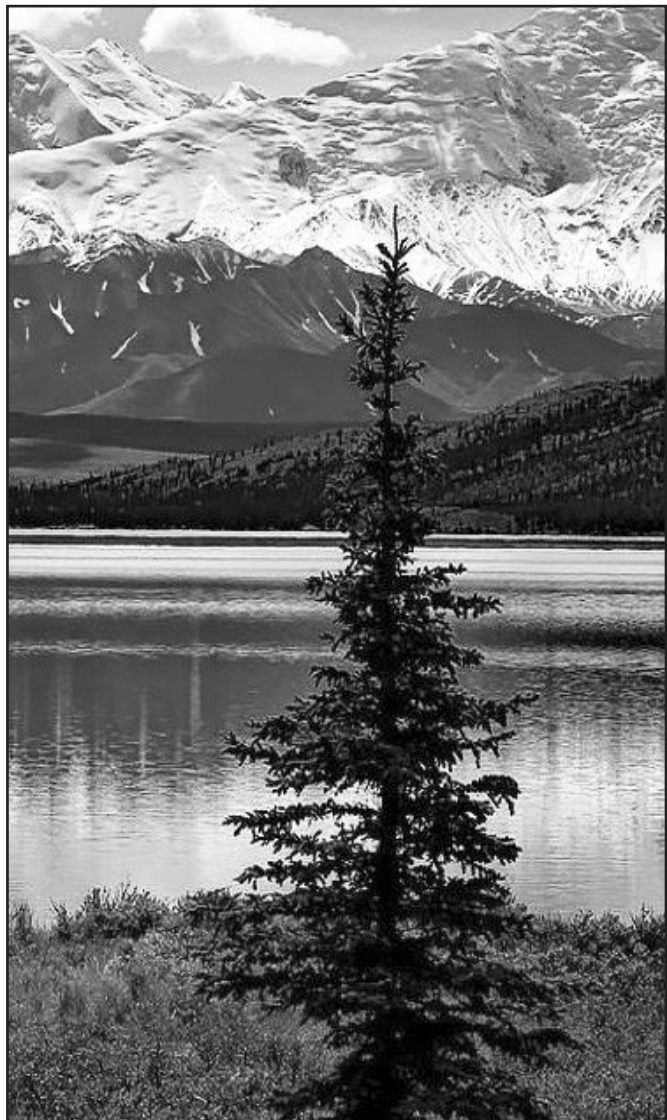
Have you ever dreamed of spending summer solstice at the top of the world? If so, then consider yourself invited to come north to the great State of Alaska. There is an incredibly magnificent and undefinably beautiful and unique world of scenery to explore that you must experience firsthand. The vast rugged openness of the land defies mere words and could not be given justice by a written description. Come, visit, and run with the kin of the middle realm. Here, there is a vibrant and active Pagan community. Here, you are welcomed amongst the mother stones...

In Alaska, Earth's tilt causes the area north of 66 degrees latitude (known as the Arctic Circle) to receive 24 hours of daylight at midsummer. Around Anchorage, the largest city, you can expect 20 hours of daylight on Solstice Day, though the darkest hours resemble twilight more than night. Purple mountains tower overhead, perhaps still sporting crowns of snow that remain intact from winter. Over the course of the summer the mountains will turn emerald green, and their slopes will become rich with native berry plants treasured by both indigenous peoples and relative newcomers.

Wildlife in many forms abounds and can be viewed in several ways – chance encounters are common and must be prepared for. Hikers are advised to make lots of noise on trails to avoid spooking both bears and moose. In fact, there can be no better destination for lovers of the outdoors – park and trail systems are extensive.

Summer is an active time up here, with a plethora of public events for almost any interest – concerts, gatherings, and opportunities to meet like-minded people are always ongoing. There are several active pagan groups, including a busy Pagan Meetup Group based in Anchorage, Druid

and Wiccan groups, an OTO encampment, and an OBOD seed grove. There is also a nature sanctuary community retreat center being developed in Willow, Alaska. This center was well under development when the Sockeye Wildfire in 2015 devastated it and over 7000 acres of the surrounding area. Recovery and improvement efforts are underway, including a reforestation tree farm project. At this time, the center hosts bi-weekly volunteer work parties in the summer, as well as a small-scale Summer Solstice celebration. There is a well-crafted stone circle and several small shrines on the property. The Summer Solstice event features music, workshops, and culminates





in a Solstice ritual fire. Tent campers are encouraged to bring cots or air mattresses to sleep on – there is permafrost not far below the surface of the land there.

It is easy to connect with nature and the land in Alaska. The sheer vastness and beauty of the sky as it meets the land reflecting back over mountains or deep within the clear blue waters of the many streams and rivers is awe-inspiring. Seemingly endless forests of birch and spruce can make a wanderer feel completely isolated from the turmoil present in the rest of the modern world. Under the summer sun, the day can go on forever as you explore and learn about this wonderful place and the ancient spirits that share it, until, of course, you finally realize that despite the fact that the sun is shining brightly overhead, it is what you would normally consider to be the middle of the night.

Solstice in the Great North is a cherished time for that reason, time given to connect, to explore, to surround yourself with the light of the Shining Ones – because in the weeks after Solstice, the sunlight begins to fade away at a rate of approximately five minutes per day, until we are once again plunged into the darkness of the frozen winter.

Antonyus S. Kaleal aka Rev. Anthony Bailey has been an ADF member since 1998. He was previously Senior Druid and Dedicant Priest of Triskele Rivers Grove, ADF (now defunct). Currently he is an ADF Solitary, although a new Alaska Protogrove is in the planning stages. He is Senior Director of the Alaska Pagan Community Center, a practicing Heathen and Vedic Druid, Hearth Master of Fire Tribe Alaska, and Priest of Ice Moon Grove (an OBOD seed).

Summer in the Sacred Garden

By Gwen Edwards

Ah, the sweet summer, that season where life in the Northern Hemisphere reaches its glorious culmination, before life slowly fades and dies only to begin again, the circle never ending.

My garden is located in the land of the Squaxin Island people, “The People of the Water”, and it is one of the more productive ecosystems on the planet. It is a place of rolling hills on a backdrop of snow covered mountain peaks of the Olympic Peninsula, of deep green forests, and shallow salt-water bays and inlets where salmon return every fall as they have done since the time of lost memories. It is truly a place where you can still see, hear, taste, and touch the beauty of nature and the abundance of the earth.

The Summer solstice ritual officially heralds the summer’s arrival, and as a follower of a druidic path one pays close attention to the shifting of the seasons. In some parts of the country these shifts can be quite dramatic, but here in the Puget Sound spring imperceptibly slips into summer. Cloudy cool mornings persist, making one think it’s April, but soon enough the clouds will give way to long sunny days. The brilliant blooms of the rhododendrons begin to lose their splendor, only to be replaced with a palette of color that the wildflowers provide.

These warm sunny days are much appreciated here in the garden. While the garden provides sustenance year around, it is in the summer when its most delectable treats are to be enjoyed. The strawberries are first on the menu followed by raspberries, blackberries, and finally grapes. Tomatoes, squash and herbs of all varieties round out the summer’s gifts.

In designing the garden my inspiration has been nature. By following her lead, I have created a place that allows the dance of life’s energy to flow. Utilizing this flow, I design by listening to

the landscape, observing existing vegetation patterns to give me insight into what should go where, blending food production with sacred space. The shady areas with an abundance of ferns clue me that this is an area suited to lettuce, chard and the like, while the open sunny areas with wildflowers and grasses call me to plant squash and tomatoes. I mainly use containers and other movable gardening systems so I can easily (well theoretically) move them into a more appropriate location if and when my understanding perhaps is flawed.

I also have incorporated an aquaponic greenhouse as part of the design. This not only extends the growing season and grows heat loving plants like peppers and tomatoes, but via a simple irrigation system with a pump and timer I also use it to provide a nutrient rich water source for watering plants outside the confines of the greenhouse. I love the efficiency and abundance this system provides, but what I love most is that it almost eliminates the tedious tasks of gardening such as weeding and watering and gives me more time to play!

Well, I call it play anyway, others may call it work. Last year I was able to get the majority of the stones in the circle set, and for the solstice ritual this year plan setting the final stone to close the circle, and then the magic will really begin! The circle is the centerpiece to a garden that when complete will incorporate the elemental forces of earth, fire, water, and air into its design.

This summer I will finish the water feature that has three waterfalls. It is found on the western edge outside of the circle, honoring the water elementals, and there is a fire pit found at the center of the circle, of course honoring the fire elementals. The stones honor the earth elementals and the ancestors, and of course the sky above honors the air and its sacred beings. This sacred design welcomes nature and is a place of beauty and



abundance, where one can feel the essence of creation. I call this place “The Fertile Circle Garden” and so far it has been true to its name, not only in an abundance of food and beauty, but also in “Awen”. It is a place where I am inspired to feel oneness with creation, where I am the quill in the hand of the creator.

Anyway back to my projects for the summer. In addition to my constant tinkering with the garden’s growing systems, my main project this summer is building a “*teach an alias*” in Gaelic, better known as a sweat lodge. It is located just outside the garden underneath a giant Douglas Fir. A stone called to me one day as I walked through the woods and guided me to this place and it should be one of a kind when I am finished. I have already started it but it will require many hours of hard work to complete, and with luck and some help it should be done by the fall. Once done it will finish the majority of the spiritual aspects of the garden.

My time in the summer, with permission mind you, is also spent foraging in the Creator's garden. I search the woods for the wonderful variety of berries found here. I walk along the shoreline hunting for crabs, clams, and oysters, and when I get a chance I love wandering up the mountain streams that flow through old growth forests, casting flies to rising trout. Ah, sweet summer, you pass so fast!

I feel blessed to be the steward of this place, and

I feel a deep responsibility to the land and its inhabitants. I strive to honor the Native People’s tradition to think of the seventh generation to come in my actions here. My long term goal is to create a center of learning, one based on the principles of permaculture that can help people develop a different understanding of their place in this world – a place where they can observe the functions of nature, a place where we can learn to use technology in a way that is beneficial to life, a place where one can listen to the voice of the earth. This garden is the center of my world, a place where I too am always learning. It is a place that not only provides nourishment for my body, but also for the soul. I am from it and it is from me.

Oh, the sweet summer! You never seem to last long enough, but I know this is the earth's way. I look forward to next summer, but will enjoy the coming fall and winter and their wonders as well. So on that note, don’t waste much time more time with my words, get out there enjoy these beautiful days, and may they bring you happiness and abundance.

Gwen Edwards is in the words of "Frank MacEowen" an Exile, a Wanderer and a Seeker. A water resources specialist, she has been active in the protection of watersheds and their communities for over 30 years. Gwen lives outside Olympia, Washington and is a parent and grandparent who loves to create and explore the inner and outer worlds.

Given to the Earth: Part 2: Offerings to Rivers and Lakes

By Rev. G. R. Grove

As I discussed in Part 1 of this series of articles, the practice of making offerings to holy springs and wells continues to this day, and gives us insight into the beliefs which may have lain behind such offerings. Offerings to rivers and lakes, however, have been more episodic; the former practice, indeed, seems to have died out in the late Iron Age. Some of the better known examples of both practices are from sites in Northern and Western Europe and Britain.

Rivers.

In Britain, river dredging has produced large numbers of artifacts dating from the Neolithic, through the late Bronze Age, to the Roman period. Hutton notes that more Neolithic flint tools have been found in British rivers than can be easily accounted for by accidental loss (182), and the same argument applies to later deposits, especially of weapons. Most of these items are from some (but not all) of the rivers which flow eastward into the North Sea, especially the Thames and the Witham, but also the Trent, Wellard, and Tay. The Witham and the Thames in particular have produced large numbers of bronze weapons, including swords, shields, and spearheads, and body ornaments such as lunulae (crescent-shaped gold ornaments). Other eastward flowing rivers, and also those draining into the English Channel and the Irish Sea, have produced very few such artifacts. Even within the rivers in question, these items are not evenly distributed, but are instead concentrated at particular points, “as if they consecrated sites of intense human activity” (Hutton 183). In the Thames these points include the areas around Syon Reach and Richmond. Most of the deposits from these areas have been dated to a period between 1200 and 400 BCE (Ross 50, Bord and Bord 14-15, Pearson 117, Hutton 182-188; Macdonald 179).

In the River Witham, timber structures along the north bank at Fiskerton in Lincolnshire which have been dated to 456-321 BCE are accompanied by ornate military equipment decorated with La Tène designs, as well as tools, ornaments, and ceramics. In Ireland, dredging in the River Bann (Co. Antrim) near Coleraine and Toome yielded ornate scabbards, spear ferrules, bridle bits, and bowls. Similar La Tène metalwork was also found in parts of the Shannon and Blackwater rivers. In continental Europe, a site at Port Nidau near La Tène, Switzerland, similar to that at Fiskerton and dated to the late continental Iron Age, consisted of a wooden bridge or platform over the old bed of the River Zihl which was accompanied by one hundred spearheads and swords, mostly bent. Another structure at Cornaux nearby was also accompanied by comparable deposits (Green 182-183, Ray 35, Macdonald 175-180).

Why were these things put into the rivers? There are several possible explanations. An earlier theory before the recognition of votive deposit features such as “ritually killed” (bent or broken) items was that they were lost accidentally in the course of river crossings, or washed into their find sites by floods, but this approach has largely been discarded. Most of the early Iron Age





swords found in Britain are from rivers, and in the Thames especially they tend to be associated with skulls and other human bones, suggesting that they may have been deposited as part of a funerary ritual. On the other hand, Tacitus describes the sacrifice of beaten enemies with all their horses and equipment by a Germanic tribe, the Hermundari. Gold and silver, horses and their harness were reportedly all given to a river, while the men were hanged (Hutton 185-186, Davidson 62).

Several writers have noted that many river names in Britain, Ireland, and Gaul appear to be derived from the names of goddesses – the Marne from Matrona, the Seine from Sequana, the Boyne from Boand, and so forth. In this case, at least some of the deposits might have been given to the eponymous Goddess of the river (Ross 47, Bord and Bord 14-15). Finally, it has been suggested that at least some of the items may have been cast away in ritual acts of destruction (as in the German example above). The truth is that we can never know.

Lakes.

Unlike the deposits in rivers, there is little room to doubt that deposits in lakes were offerings of

some sort. One of the most interesting examples to me because of its possible connections to Druidical practices is Llyn Cerrig Bach, a small lake on Anglesey Island in northwest Wales. Peat dredged from the former lake area during a World War II extension of the adjacent Valley Air Force Base runways contained 170 iron and copper alloy objects, dating from the 4th or 3rd century BCE to the 1st or possibly 2nd century CE. The objects included military equipment (swords, spears, daggers, scabbards and shields), iron tires and other vehicle fittings, horse harness, iron tools, fragments of at least three cauldrons, a curved-horn or “trumpet”, and two iron gang chains (slave chains), as well as a large number of animal bones. Several of the metal items had been deliberately damaged before deposition, and others showed signs of extensive use; the iron chains, however, were in excellent condition. It was their employment by the workmen to tow vehicles which had become stuck in mud that first drew attention to the presence of the other artifacts. Most of the bones were not collected, but two have been carbon dated to the 4th through 2nd centuries BCE. The objects appeared to have been thrown into the lake, either from a rock



ridge or “platform”, or possibly from a timber causeway between the shore and a small island, in multiple acts of deposition over a period of as much as 500 years. Most of the deposition seems to have occurred before the Roman invasions of Anglesey in 60/61 and 77/78 CE, but a few items of a non-martial nature whose metallurgical composition is compatible with Roman smelting practices may have been deposited later, probably in the late 1st or early 2nd century CE (Bord and Bord 13-14, Ross 48-50, Hutton 183, Macdonald 169-174).

Another Welsh lake site is Llyn Fawr in the Black Mountains of Glamorgan. Dredging here produced two large beaten bronze cauldrons dating from the 7th or 8th century BCE which may have been as much as one hundred years old when they were deposited, as well as axes, sickles, horse harness, and cart or chariot fittings, an assemblage very similar on the whole to that of the later deposits at Llyn Cerrig Bach (Hutton 188, Green 166, Macdonald 97).

Scottish lake deposits include those at Blackburn Mill, where a hoard was found contained in two cauldrons in an old lake bed; Carlington Loch, which yielded a similar cauldron-contained hoard; and Eckford, where deposits were found in a dried up loch. These three sites are dated to the

1st or 2nd century CE, after the Roman invasion of Britain, and differ from earlier deposits in containing no weapons. In a modern example of lake offerings, Dowloch at Penport (Dumfries), Scotland, was reported to receive food offerings as late as the 19th century (Ross 48-50, Bord and Bord 13, Macdonald 177).

Another British site of interest is Flag Fen, on the outskirts of Peterborough in the East Midlands of England. Here over three hundred pieces of metalwork, including bronze ornaments, swords, spears, and tools, plus shale bracelets, pottery, and animal bones, had been thrown from a wooden trackway or platform into a shallow lake. The trackway itself consisted of a line of 2,000 large oak posts between the shore and an island which have been dated to 1365-967 BCE. Most of the weapons had been bent or broken before deposition. Use of the area may have continued after the trackway was no longer maintained until about 200 BCE (Pearson 113-116, Hutton 184-85, Macdonald 180).

The most archeologically important lake deposit site in Europe, which gave its name to the later continental Iron Age, is that at La Tène, Switzerland, on the northern edge of Lake Neuchâtel. Here, on the ancient course of a tributary of the River Thiellein, several thousand iron weapons, including almost 170 votive swords and 270 lance heads; shields; chariot parts; tools; 385 brooches; currency bars; and coins were cast into the water from a wooden jetty or platform. The platform has been dated to the mid-3rd century BCE. Many of the weapons were folded or broken before deposition, and the coins had been hacked on both sides. The deposits were accompanied by human and animal bones. Although at one time it was sug-





gested that the La Tène material may have been swept into the lake by a flood, this theory has been largely abandoned. As Brunaux points out (43), it would have been a very selective flood which could move this quantity of mostly metallic artifacts while leaving behind domestic material which would have been expected in the buildings in question (Ross 48-50, Ray 34-36, Brunaux 42-43, Macdonald 175).

The most famous sacred lake site, described by many ancient writers, is that near Toulouse, France. Here the Volcae Tectosages devoted a cult to Belenus, and cast gold and silver treasure into the lake, according to Posidonius “by way of invoking and propitiating their god”. After the Roman conquest much of this was removed; the consul L. Servilius Caepio is reported to have taken 110,000 lbs. of silver and 100,000 lbs. of gold from the lake in 106 BCE, including hammered silver millstones (Ross 48-50, Ray 35, Davidson 131, Hutton 186-7, Brunaux 42).

In addition to items clearly deposited in rivers or lakes, a number of comparable depositions of military items have been found in bogs or lakes in southern Scandinavia. These begin in the Neolithic and continue through the Bronze Age and Iron Age until the mid first millennium CE. Sometimes accompanied by the remains of boats, at least some of them may have been “booty sacrifices” analogous to the actions of the Hermundari tribe mentioned above. These marshy sites are outside the limits of this article, but I will probably discuss them in future installments.

Conclusions.

Many of the possible explanations for river deposits mentioned above also apply to lake deposits. Except for Posidonius’ comment regarding the Volcae Tectosages’ Belenus cult and Tacitus’ mention of the Hermundari, we have no way of knowing the reasons these deposits were made or who made them. But the waters of the Earth continue to act as a liminal gateway between our world and the world or worlds below. In my next article, “Bogs and Bodies”, I will pursue this theme farther.

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Finding Nemetona

By Adara

Some Druids refer to their sacred place as their Nemeton. It is where they pray, give offerings, and have rituals. It is a place that is designated as a sanctuary, and it was where the ancient tribes of Britain, Gaul, and Galatia would hold their ritual gatherings. Nemeton means Sacred Grove or Sacred Space. And the goddess of these spaces? Her name is Nemetona. She is the Goddess of the Sacred Grove. But who is she? Turning to books and the internet, we find precious little information about her history.

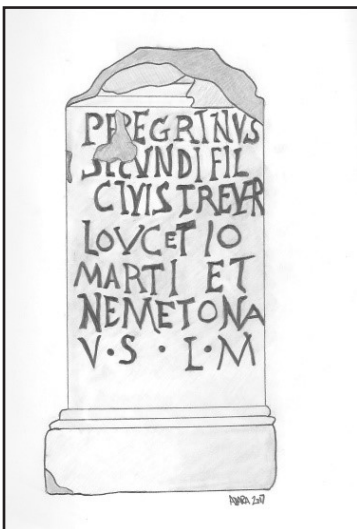
In Miranda Green's *The Gods of the Celts*, it says that Nemetona "is recorded at Altripp near Spier, and the name of the tribe in whose territory she was worshipped was the Nemetes." Green also says that the Romans used to pair Nemetona with their God Mars Loucetius. The Nemetes were a German-Celtic tribe whose territory was on the west bank of the Rhine River. Green again writes of Nemetona being paired with Mars Loucetius in her book *The Celtic World*. In Robin Herne's *Old Gods New Druids*, he says she is the "guardian of sacred places" and that "a statue to her was found in Bath. Her worship was also prevalent in Germany." I would think Nemetona could also be paired with Mars Rigonemetis (Mars, King of the Sacred Grove), but I did not

find any evidence of such a pairing.

In *Celtic Tree Magic: Ogham Lore and Druid Mysteries* by Danu Forest, she suggests that the name Nemetona might have been a title, and that her real name was kept as a secret. That, we do not know. Danu also

mentions the shrine in Bath which reads: PEREGRINVS SECVNDI FIL CIVIS TREVER LOVCETIO MARTI ET NEMETONA VSLM. This translates as: "Peregrinus, son of Secundus, citizen of the Treveri, for Loucetius Mars and Nemetona, willingly and deservedly fulfilled his vow." Peregrinus was not always used as a person's name, but was a term used during early Roman times to describe a free inhabitant of the Roman Empire. Peregrinus is Latin for "foreigner" or "from abroad", and the name Secundus means "second" in Latin. The Treveri were a tribe living in the Roman occupied territory that is now Belgium. VSLM is short for the Latin phrase Votum Solvit Libens Merito, which is the part about willingly and deservedly fulfilling a vow. So the person appears to be a wandering Gaul and a free Roman citizen who lived for a time in Bath, England. In *The Story of Roman Bath*, by Patricia Southern, there is also mention of this shrine. The shrine is carved from oolite, a sedimentary rock. It was found in the 1700's in Bath, England and is now housed at the Roman Baths Museum.

Danu Forest and Miranda J Green also mention ancient place names attributed to Nemetona, such as Drunemeton (Galatia, now Turkey), Nemetostatio (in Devon), Vernemeton (in Nottinghamshire), Nemetobriga (in Spain), and Medionemeton (in Britain). In Eisenberg, Germany, part of an inscribed bronze plaque was found, giving honor to Mars Loucetius and Victoria Nemetona. It is a *tabula ansata*, which is Latin for "tablet with handles". It was found in the 1930's on the grounds of a company called Schiffer and Kircher. What remains is around 4 inches by 6.5 inches. It reads: MARTI LOV VICTORIAE NEME M A SENILLVS SEVE EGATI VRNAM CVM VS ET PHIALA EX TO POSVIT L L M O ET SELEVCO COS X KAL MAIAS. The inscription is not all there, and what remains appears to be written in shorthand. What is left reads: Marti Lou(cetio et) Victoriae Neme(tonae) M(arcus) A(urelius) Senillus Seve(rus) (l)egati



urnam cum (sortib)us et phiala(m) ex (vo)to po-
suis l(ibens) l(aetus) m(erito) (Grat)o et Seleuco
co(n)s(ulibus) X Kal(endas) Maias. This has been
translated as: “In honor of the divine house, to
Mars Loucetius and Victoria Nemetona, Marcus
Aurelius Senillus Severus, a protégé of the gen-
eral, set up an bowl with lots and offering dish in
free, happy, and well-deserved fulfilment of his
vow, in the consulship of Gratus and Seleucus on
the tenth day before the Kalends of May”. The
names Gratus and Seleucus date the tablet to the
year 221 CE.

Why did he mention the Kalends of May? It
could be he was just recording the date of his ac-
tions. It could be because all debts were to be
paid on the Kalends (the first day of the month).
Perhaps he made a vow to these deities that he
would honor them if they helped him with some-
thing. I do not know why this inscription com-
bines the Goddess Victoria and the Goddess
Nemetona into one.

In *Celtic Culture: A Historical Encyclopedia*.
Vol. 1-, Volume 5, edited by John T. Koch, he
also mentions the tribe of the Nemetes. Of
Nemetona he writes: “Almost certainly the epon-
ymous deity of the Nemetes, a Germano-Celtic
tribe, Nemetona is attested throughout their terri-
tory”. Koch also says that Nemetona and Mars
are portrayed in terracotta both at Altripp and
Trier, and that the only known inscription to her
individually, without the God Mars, or Mars
Loucetius, was found in Klein-Winternheim, Ger-
many. It was written in the first century by a Ro-
man politician named Aulus Didius Gallus Fab-
ricius Veiento. It was found in 1884. It is in-
scribed on a metal tablet, also a *tabula ansata*,
which is about 7 inches by 4 inches. The inscrip-
tion reads: A. DIDIVS GALLVS [FA]BRICIVS
VEIENTO COS III XVVIR SACRIS FACIEND
SODALIS AVGVSTAL SOD FLAVIAL SOD
TITIALIS ET ATTICA EIVS NEMETON V S L
M. This translates as: “A(ulus) Didius Gallus (Fa)
bricius Veiento, three times a consul, Member of
the Board of Fifteen for Conducting the Sacred
Rites, Member of the College of Augustales,
Member of the College of Flaviales, Member of
the College of Titiales, and his Attica willingly

satisfied their vow to Nemetona, who deserved
it.” His name is the largest text on the tablet, and
most of the text is listing his accomplishments. I
did say he was a politician. But he had apparently
built a temple to Nemetona near his home, so
maybe she only raised an eyebrow at his ego. The
inscription is now housed at the Landesmuseum
Mainz (Mainz State Museum, in Mainz Germa-
ny).

Why did the ancient Romans pair Nemetona with
Mars and Mars Loucetius on their inscriptions?
Nemetona is a Celtic Goddess of sacred spaces.
Mars is Roman God of war, with whom Louceti-
us is often equated. The name Loucetius and its
variant Leucetius appear on inscriptions thirteen
times, spread out over modern day Britain,
France, and Germany. Loucetius means “bright”
or “light” or “lightening”. So, Mars Loucetius
could mean “Mars of Lightning” or “Bright
Shining Mars”. John T. Koch mentions that the
name combination may be a link between a light-
ning storm and the battle of war, or the bright au-
ra of a brave hero. Perhaps praying to Mars, or
Mars Loucetius, with Nemetona, was a way to
ask for the strength to come into the light, out of a
dark place (whether mental or physical), and find
healing.

Speaking of war, in *Dictionary of Celtic Mythol-
ogy* by Peter Berresford Ellis, I was a bit dis-
mayed to find him saying that Nemetona is
“regarded as a Gaulish war god” even though
“the name contains the word nemeton
(sanctuary).” He tried to find a connection be-
tween the names Nemetona, Nemhain (a war god-
dess), and Nemed (the leader of the third group of
people to settle in Ireland). To me, this etymolog-
ical connection wasn’t really a connection. The
three are not the same. I did read a related pas-
sage in *The Encyclopedia of Celtic Mythology
and Folklore* by Patricia Monaghan. Monaghan
writes of Nemetona, “she has also been connected
etymologically to the Irish war-goddess Nemain
suggesting that part of the role of the warrior was
to protect sacred sites.” But to me, Nemetona is
her own being.

The ancient Druids were not known for writing down their teachings or rituals or beliefs, which was why I was only able to find a few Roman inscriptions to her. She must have been important enough to have place names attributed to her, and for the Romans to pair her with one of their Gods, and to etch in metal and carve in stone their dedication to her. Yet I could find no legends or myth about her: no hanging upside down from the World Tree, or having 19 Flame-keepers, or being master of all skills for the Tuatha Dé Danann, or being tricked into eating pomegranate seeds and having to spend part of the year in the Underworld. She is simply the Goddess of Sacred Spaces.

The Roman carvings and inscriptions, although wonderful discoveries, simply state that Nemetona was being honored (usually along with Mars Loucetius), but they do not tell exactly why the person was honoring her. Knowing there was a Germano-Celtic tribe called the Nemetes, which may have had a connection to Nemetona, is also good piece of information. But there just is not a wealth of historical findings on her. So how are modern Pagans to find Nemetona? For me, the answer is simple. Create a nemeton, both within, and without. Ask her to protect your sacred space, while also creating new sacred spaces. Outside, plant a garden, or a tree. Inside, make your home a sanctuary, one that you love to come home to, because she is there. Leave offerings to her. I have felt connected to her by offering her the sweet smell of incense, or sharing a cup of tea with her, or scattering ground herbs in a woodland clearing, or even picking up trash. To me, she is a deity of the local land. She is also an intimate deity that can touch your soul and make you feel whole.

I am enchanted by this elusive goddess. Nemeton is the perfect stillness within the sacred grove. Yet she is also the roaring wind that whips through the trees and makes me feel alive and connected to that space. She strengthens me, fills me with love, and makes me feel protected. Sometimes I even think of her as a Nature Spirit.



If I feel scattered, I just take a deep breath. I call to her, and she is there. And then I don't feel alone. She grounds me and makes me feel protected and centered. I found her by creating a sacred space within, and in my environment.

Thank you Nemetona for touching my soul, for being my friend, my Goddess, my guide. Blessings.

Prayer to Nemetona

I bow my head in respect
To Nemetona who nurtures my soul,
To Nemetona who loves me,
To Nemetona who protects this space,
In friendship and affection.

(Light incense)

Through your gift of stillness, Nemetona,
Bestow upon me peace and contentedness.
Thank you for your love,
your laughter,
your wisdom,
your hospitality,
and your protection.

(Pour water around the grove)

To walk in the world,
As I walk in the Nemeton;
Each shade and light,
Each day and night,
Each moment in kindness,
Grant me your blessings.

(Place offering at base of tree)

Based off *Rune Before Prayer, Carmina Gadelica*

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In honor of Nemetona, Adara, ADF member since 2011, member of Chokecherry Grove, ADF, willingly and deservedly fulfilled her vow by writing this article.

Applying Scientific Methods to the Laws of Magic

By Pigeon

It all started when I settled down in a fit of highly-caffeinated madness to read Isaac Bonewits's *Real Magic* (1990). His qualitative map of the laws of magic caught my eye, particularly at the points where Laws of knowledge overlapped (xxii). You know it is a good book when your mind catches on fire while still reading the Roman numeral pages. The book left me pondering two questions: first, is Bonewits's conceptual map an accurate model of magic, and second, do overlapping laws complement or work against each other?

I loaded another French press and set out to answer both through a mixed-method approach: a brief qualitative case study and a quantitative mathematical model. The case study allows me to establish narrative meaning and make inductive assumptions based on Bonewits's simplified Laws of Magic model, depicted in Figure 1. However, a single case study is not sufficient by itself to make generalized truths, and studying alternate Law intersections may uncover cases in which my assumptions are false (Geddes). Moreover, conceptual maps are simplifications of reality, so scale, volume, proportion, and other measurements are not exact. Thus, I apply a mathematical model in order to logically clarify my argument.

A short personal disclosure is in order to explain why I concocted this mad scheme. On the one hand, I am a political scientist trained to define and measure social objects to draw generalized conclusions using qualitative and quantitative scientific methods (it is worth noting that I still count with my fingers). On the other hand, social science informs my spiritual practice. I find solace in collecting knowledge and plumbing my mental depths, and knowledge-aspect Kindred and nature spirits flit regularly at the edge of my perception, notably Danu, Cerridwen, Arianrhod, and a rather heavy Barn Owl that landed on my

arm during a guided meditation. He packed quite a grip, too.

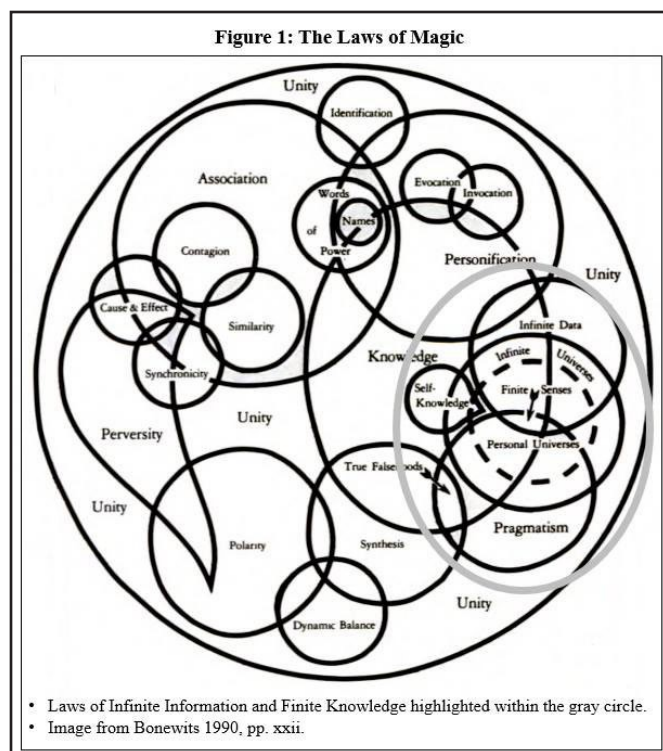
My more secular-minded science friends might question my attempt at applying scientific methods to measure the unmeasurable. Indeed, the anthropologist de Martino notes that, "care must be taken in using science to measure paranormal phenomena (57)," since the paranormal exists in the realm of the unquantifiable. In contrast, Barrett suggests that magic can be measured mathematically and thus exists in the normal rather than paranormal realm (99-101). Siding with Barrett's approach, I assess that thinking about magic scientifically helps in clarifying magical goals, tightens theological-philosophical arguments, and strengthens mental discipline.

First, I applied the case study method to assess if Bonewits's conceptual map is an accurate model of magic. I chose the *crucial case* format, or a case most or least likely to exhibit the expected outcome and therefore useful in testing hypotheses (Gerring 647). I chose six overlapping Laws for this case, with one set of three representing infinite information and another set of three representing finite knowledge. I highlighted the area of interest in Figure 1. Moreover, I specifically picked knowledge-related Laws since they represent my strongest magical interests. Unless otherwise noted, all definitions are verbatim or lightly edited from Bonewits:

Laws of Infinite Information

Infinite Data: we will never run out of things to learn (11).

Infinite Universes: the total number of universes into which all possible combinations of existing phenomena could be organized is infinite (209). This is similar to Eliade's absolute reality, in which all times and universes are circular, reversible, and multi-layered (Eliade 70, 76, 149).



Pragmatism: we cannot see everything; or, if it works, it is true (11, 14).

Laws of Finite Knowledge

Self-knowledge: the most important kind of knowledge is knowledge of oneself (3).

Finite Senses: all our senses are...limited, both as to type and range of scanning for data (11).

Personal Universes: every sentient being lives in and quite possibly creates a unique universe which can never be 100% identical to that lived in by another (209).

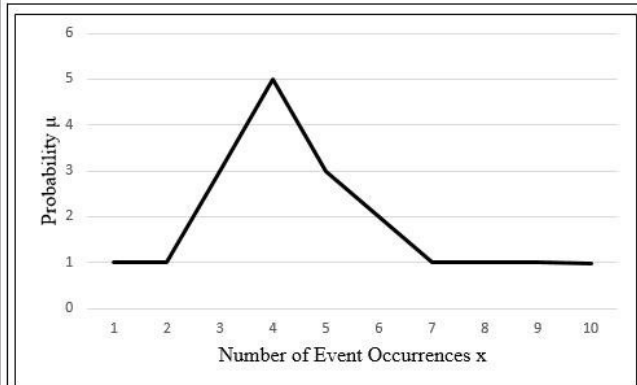
I then considered Bonewits's narrative meaning in the context of his map. First, Laws of Infinite Information suggest that no matter how much sacred and secular knowledge I collect, I will never know everything. Data exists multi-dimensionally around me and runs like so much sand through my fingers. Simply trying to envision knowledge magic on infinite planes is enough to make me go hide in my coffee pot, which is not an effective strategy for embedding knowledge magic in my daily practice. However, the Finite Knowledge I *do* know I can harness, crafting snapshots of the infinite into whatever shape or form necessary to conduct my personal Work. I have anecdotally read that our minds have space for 300 years of

high-definition video, or roughly 38,551,708,800 books. I have also seen enough zoning-code-defying ADF member libraries to conclude some readers just accepted the challenge. Regardless of calculation, we can always learn more. We cannot learn everything, but we can niche in areas of knowledge that inform and enlighten our personal practices. This suggests, then, that my greatest knowledge magic potential exists at the intersection of the infinite with the finite, manifesting my knowledge into will and then focusing my knowledge into action. From this, I conclude Bonewits's conceptual map is qualitatively accurate.

I then applied a mathematical model to assess if overlapping Laws complement or work against each other. Barrett's *The Magus* immediately came to mind in linking mathematical logic to the sacred, specifically his argument that, "thinking about magic mathematically or scientifically helps the caster envision number, weight, measure, harmony, motion, and light (99)." If this is so, then how does one go about simultaneously measuring infinite and finite knowledge? If the case study suggests the power of knowledge is greatest where infinite and finite meet, then the mathematical model should measure that intersection. Therefore, I considered the Poisson distribution from statistics a good choice. The Poisson distribution was developed by French mathematician Siméon-Denis Poisson (1781-1840) to measure the rate of occurrence of a specific event in a given region. Mundane uses include measuring how much traffic crosses over a bridge during a certain hour or likelihood of your mail arriving at the same time every day. For my purposes, I will use *finite knowledge* as the region (University of Massachusetts). The model is depicted logically and graphically in Figure 2.

Applied in magical context and supported by the case study, the Poisson distribution suggests that I will be less successful if I approach the work as an infinite data problem. By bounding my work to my own finite knowledge, I can maximize the likelihood of successful Work. From this, I con-

Figure 2: Poisson Distribution



$$P(x; \mu) = \frac{e^{-\mu} (\mu^x)}{x!}$$

Where μ is the average number of events in a given region, x is the number of times the event actually occurs, and e is a constant.

- The average number of successes (μ) that occurs in a specified region is known.
- The probability that a success will occur is proportional to the region.
- The probability that an event will occur in an extremely small region is virtually zero (Statrek.com 2017)

clude that, at least in this case selection, intersecting Laws complement one another. One disadvantage, however, is that this model only illustrates knowledge on a single plane, requiring assumption that knowledge is bounded multi-dimensionally across different types of personal knowledge, senses, and universes.

Looking at the results of both methods in sum, I conclude that Bonewits's conceptual map is an accurate model of magic and that overlapping laws complement one another. Moreover, applying scientific methods to knowledge-based magical questions was in and of itself an act of ritual given my interests. However, questions of magic and science are not always answered so easily: indeed, case studies alone often come in book-length treatments, not a handful of paragraphs. Another mage – magician, scientist, and synergy of both – may apply different methods to my same case and uncover different results, or find other cases in which the above methods are false; or, at the very least not useful or applicable. There also remains the question on whether or not scientific methods are philosophically useful in articulating the magical realm. Finally, mages should open their work for debate, and I certainly am open to disagreements with my methods and

findings. After all, that is how we expand knowledge, which is a fitting coda to this article. That, and another cup of coffee!

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- James "Pigeon" Fielder is an Air Force officer and Assistant Professor of Political Science at the U.S. Air Force Academy. He is a member of Chokecherry Grove, is making his way in fits and starts along the Dedicant Path, and prepares the lovely Adara her tea every morning.*

We Are All Solitary

By Rev. D. Rowen Grove

Approximately half of the members of ADF are considered “solitaries”, or persons who are not affiliated with any formal group. They may live in reasonable proximity to one or more Groves or Protogroves, and participate with them occasionally, although they choose not to affiliate, or they may be geographically entirely isolated from any established group. Some of ADF’s solitary members practice alone; some, with their partner or a friend or two. Many of these folk would prefer to have an organized group with which to observe the High Days, while others are content to stay as they are. But although some must work alone, whereas others have an established group with which they may practice their druidry, in some ways, all ADF members – all of us – are “solitaries.”

Let me expound on this, from my own viewpoint. I live in an area in which there are three functioning Groves within reasonable driving distance, and am a founding member and Priest of one of those Groves. Yet in my daily practices, my morning and evening observations, whether they are full Core Order rites, or no more than an offered stick of incense and a brief prayer, or the morning tea poured for my ancestors, I work alone. On High Days, I attend our Grove rites; for

some of them, I am the celebrant. In the Grove’s private sixth-night rituals, I celebrate with the other members, yet when I return home from any of these, I still have my own work to do. To me, this is no less important, not in a possessive sense, because it is “mine” personally, but because it is at those times when I feel the strongest connections to the Kindreds. To feel my connections to my own ancestors, my kindred by blood or by love, and to the ancestors of those who lived in this place, decades or centuries ago. To listen to the Folk of this land, whether in my own small shrines, or the great Beings of mountain and prairie, river and forest and snowfield, as well as to those Folk of others lands with which I have connections. And, to more clearly reach out to the Gods with Whom I have an established relationship, and sometimes, receive Their messages.

I certainly do not deny the importance of group celebrations, whether at established Grove High Days, or in small study groups, or in attendance at large festivals; the energy that is sometimes raised in a group ritual, the sense of community which may be enjoyed, can be of great value. There can be a sense of bonding or “family” within a Grove which is very reassuring, and for some things, a cohesive group can do more work than an equal number of individuals. But when we make our own offerings, they come from us alone. When we address our own ancestors, we speak to them as their descendant. When we seek to establish relationships with the Land Kins, they will observe our own actions, and not necessarily always those of our associates. And when we come before the Gods, we must come to them as individuals, whether or not we are physically surrounded by others.

Before the Kindreds, we are all solitaries.

Rev. D. Rowen Grove joined ADF in the spring of 2010, and completed her Dedicant Path work two years later. She is an Initiate of ADF, chief of the Seers' Guild and preceptor of the Scholars' Guild, and was ordained an ADF Priest in 2016. Rowen is also a co-founder of Chokecherry Grove.



Ian's Little Room – A Vision of the Mother of All

By Rev. Ian Corrigan

Come to your Shrine, open as usual and enter a basic trance. If you wish to open the Gate, do so, then envision the Earth Mother in the Gate:

See the Mother of All, the Mountain Woman, before you. She is huge as a hill, seated with her back against the World Tree, naked, sitting with her knees drawn up, displaying her cunny and her round belly. Her breasts are great and round, hips and thighs mighty. She holds one hand raised, palm turned toward you, and the other she extends, palm up, as if in offering or receiving. Her face is beautiful, eyes kind and wise, and she smiles lovingly.

Around her head shines a nimbus of light, gold and silver like sun and moon. Vines and trees are her gown, flowers and fruits her ornaments. Her womb shines and flickers with a light like moonlight on moving water. Every beast and bird, serpent and crawling thing are her court as the green of the world grows all around her. To gaze upon her is to feel the unconditional offer of her bounty, and also her challenge to the strong and to the weak.

Make simple offerings of grain or oil, or as you can, nine times as you recite this hymn three times:

**Mighty Mother of All
Womb of Life; Source of Plenty; Soul of the
Land**

I make due offering to you

(offering given)

**Because you uphold the World
Because you freely give your Bounty
Because you grant every Blessing
I make due offering to you**



(offering given)

**Queen of Sovereignty, I worship your Power
Mother of the Earth, I worship your Bounty
Giver of Every Life, I worship your Spirit
Earth Mother, uphold my work as you do the
world**

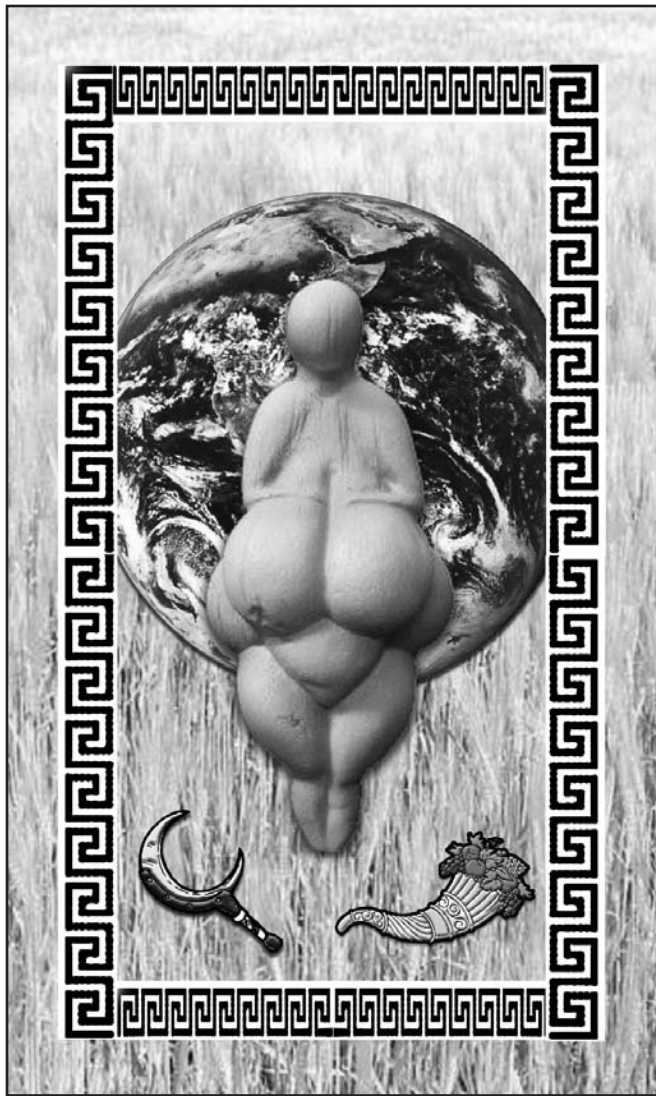
Earth Mother, accept my sacrifice!

(offering given)

Renew your vision of the Mother, and abide for a while in that vision. Then proceed, thus:

Contemplate the wonderful being of the Earth Mother for a time. When her presence feels real to you, envision your own body, seated where you are, as lying within Her Womb. Become aware of your own body, naked beneath your garments. Feel the Mother appear around you, vast, your form an egg among countless eggs, kept safe and warm, filled with potential. Abide for a while in contemplation of this vision.

When you are ready, allow the whole vision, both the Mother and your own form, to shrink down and be enthroned in your own heart. Let the love and power and all-flowing generosity, the safety and strength and warmth be concentrated in you. Feel the presence of the Mother shining in you, within the boundaries of your seated form. Abide for a while in contemplation of this vision.



Finally, allow the image to grow again, until the seed-self is reunited with your material presence. Allow the form of the Mother to grow larger and larger, attenuating to become one with the land around you.

Renew your center, balancing all once again within you, and recite a simple ending charm, such as:

**The blessings of the Holy Ones be on me and mine
 My thanks unto all beings, with peace on thee and thine
 The Fire, the Well, the Sacred Tree
 Flow and Flame and Grow in me
 Thus do I remember the work of the Wise.**

Rev. Ian Corrigan is a Senior Priest of ADF, Archdruid Emeritus, and ADF Bard Laureate Emeritus.

Gaia Chant

By Rev. G. R. Grove

Mother Earth
 who gave birth
 to the Sky
 hear our cry!
 In your strife
 you gave life
 Titans great,
 but their fate
 brought them down.
 'Neath your ground
 they lie hid,
 yet they did
 birth the Gods.

From your sod
 all good comes;
 now we some
 here return –
 not to burn,
 but in depths,
 deep dug clefts.
 Thus we give,
 for we live
 here above
 by your love
 who gave birth,
 Mother Earth!



Summer Issue of *Oak Leaves*

By Oak Leaves Editor-in-Chief Rev. G. R. Grove

I want first to thank Manny Tejada-Moreno, ADF's Chronicler, for his hard work this past year, doubling the job of Chronicler with that of Editor-in-Chief of *Oak Leaves*. I learned a lot working under him as Design Editor (and sometimes other jobs), and will still be benefiting from his feedback as I take over the Editor-in-Chief job from him. I also want to thank the many other people, both staff and contributors, who make this magazine possible. *Oak Leaves* is the product of all your work.

This Summer Issue of *Oak Leaves* covers the months of May, June, and July, and is centered on the June solstice – Midsummer in the Northern Hemisphere, but Midwinter in the South. In requesting submissions for this issue, I have kept

that fact in mind. *Oak Leaves* should be a magazine for all of us, wherever we live, and however we practice our Druidry. Our next issue will emphasize Harvest, and I hope to showcase contributions from more of our Solitary members in it.

Finally, a brief introduction for those who don't know me. I joined ADF in December 2009. Since then, I've completed a number of the study programs; I became a Master Bard in 2013, an ADF Initiate in 2015, and an Ordained Priest in 2016. I'm also co-founder and Senior Druid of Chokecherry Grove in Denver, Colorado. I retired in 2010 after thirty five years with the U. S. Forest Service, where I worked first as a geologist and later as a database administrator. I am currently owned and managed by two cats.



Midsummer Tanka

By Rev. D. Rowen Grove

Hush before birdsong –
earliest dawn comes softly;
then grey clouds catch fire,
to herald summer's morning
as shortest night slips away.

An Offering is a Key

By Rev. Jean "Drum" Pagano

An Offering is a key;
A hallow is a door;
A blessing is a gift;
The Return Flow
Is the steam
That runs between them



“More the Hurry, More the Obstacles”

By Kevin Jenkyns (“Arth yn Rhedeg”)

(In his role as Pennaeth (Chieftain) of Tylwyth Y Ddraig Goch (Clan of the Red Dragon), ADF’s Welsh Kin, Kevin has been posting a Welsh proverb every week to the Kin’s email list. Even though we are now in the summer quarter of our year, I thought his Equinox reflections were worth sharing. – Editor.)

“Mwyaf y brys, mwyaf y rhwystr.”

Translation: “More the hurry, more the obstacles.”

Reflection: I hope you all had a wonderful Spring Equinox.

At Chokecherry Grove, in Denver Colorado, we celebrated the High Day by the Platte River. In fact, we actively honored the Platte with an offering and a blessing. After all, we are located on the edge of what has often been referred to as the “Great America Desert” and Mother Platte has provided life-sustaining waters to the area from time immemorial.

I chose this week’s Proverb because it reminded me that throughout our lives, to best approach and

understand the events of our lives, we must take time to slow down and simply be. Have you ever misplaced something and found it the third time you looked in the very place you found it? I know I have. In my case, it has always been the result of me, frantically scurrying about, thinking that the faster I go the faster I will find what I’m looking for. In reality, the “hurry” placed obstacles in my way and it actually slowed me down.

In the hurry we can set up obstacles for ourselves and in the slowing down, if it does not eliminate the obstacles, at the very least, it will slow us down so we can avoid them.

Twice a year, in the man-made concept of time, there is a moment, where the night and day are in balance. In that moment of balance, we can experience an eternity provided we are willing to slow down and immerse ourselves within it.

Kevin Jenkyns (“Arth yn Rhedeg”) joined ADF in 2012. He is the Tanist (Vice-Senior Druid) and a founding member of Chokecherry Grove in Denver, Colorado.

Two Prayers to Mother Earth for the High Days

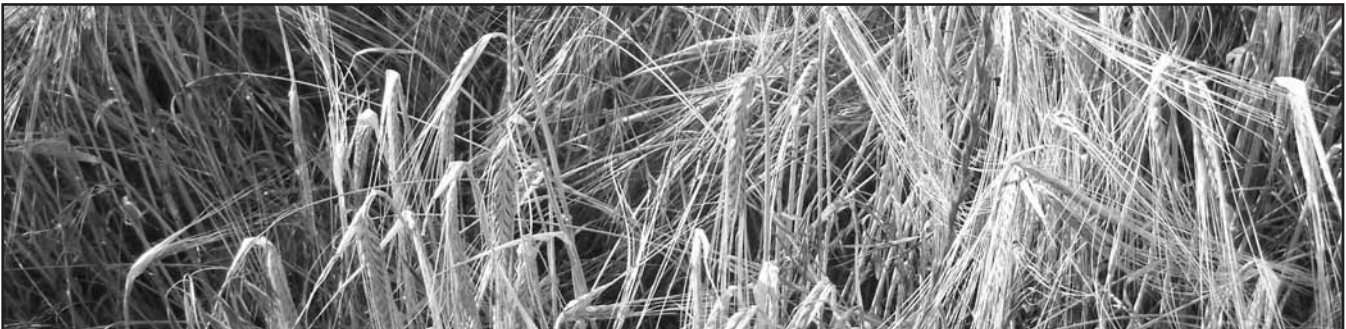
By Birgit Reinartz

Beltane:

Mutter Erde,
du lässt dich von warmen Sonnenstrahlen
 einhüllen,
du badest in den Regenschauern, die über das
 Land fegen,
bis dein Leib schwer ist von Feuchtigkeit
und so Nahrung und Halt bietet
für die Samen und Keimlinge,
die in dieser Zeit so unbändig ans Licht drängen.
Ich bitte dich:
Halte mich in diesem Ritual,
wie du auch den Pflanzen Halt gibst.
Lass mir bewusst sein,
dass in dir ich verwurzelt bin, wie sie und durch
 dich mit allem verbunden bin was lebt.
Amen!

Beltane:

Mother Earth,
You wrap yourself in warm sunshine,
You bathe in the heavy rains, that blow across the
 land,
Until your body is heavy with moisture,
Giving nourishment and a foundation
For the seeds and saplings,
That are pushing, at this time, so wildly towards
 the light.
I ask you:
Hold me in this ritual like you hold all those
 plants.
Let me be aware,
That I am rooted in you, just like them, and that I
 am connected through you with all living
 things.
Amen!



Mittsommer:

Auf dem Feld vor meinem Haus wiegen sich die
 Ähren im leichten Wind,
so als ob du dein goldbraunes Haar für mich
 schüttelst.
In dieser Zeit, wo die Kraft der Sonne am stärk-
 sten ist, bietest du uns Halt,
Mutter Erde,
einen Moment des Atemholens zwischen Säen
 und Ernten.
Schenke mir auch in diesem Ritual die
 Gewissheit,
festen Boden unter meinen Füßen zu haben,
so wie du es immer tust.
Amen!

Midsummer:

On the field, in front of my house, the grain is
 swaying slightly in the wind,
Like you were shaking your golden brown hair
 for me.
In this time, when the sun's power reaches its
 peak, you offer us a pause,
Mother Earth,
A moment to catch our breath between sowing
 and harvesting.
In this ritual please offer me the certainty
to find my footing,
As you always do.
Amen!

Beside a Little Stream

By Elizabeth Parks

Oh, little stream
What could I say that would matter to you?
All your life is change
Everything moving
Following that which passed before
Alternately serene and gleeful
Cheerfully bounding over rock and wood
Slowly mulling over deep grooves

We are drawn to you
Nourished by you
Your song is peace
Your touch is comfort
You have no need for me on your bank
Or the happy birds preening in your shallow
pools

Your hair is lush and soft and green
Your eyes are sparkling white
Ever moving, ever laughing
Your hands are roots dipping into your waters
Your dress of fine sediment
Gold and brown and red
Decorated with frothing lace

Deep longing draws me to you
I kiss your face
I stroke your skin
We are lovers briefly
I am submerged, wholly taken by you
You fill me up and over
Yet I emerge lighter than before

Rush on, little stream
And spread your love of life
Wander on, little stream
Enjoy the sights of the Earth
Rest on, little stream
Seep into profound places
Carry on, dear stream
Bring parts of me with you



The Rain

By Elizabeth Parks

Thunder rumbles through the West
As winds begin their cold conquest
The grey sky casts an even light
While in the forest birds take flight

The droplets fall sporadically
But soon pick up dramatically
The splatters soak my hair and clothes
And all the needles there in rows

I turn my face up to the sky
To watch the lightning flash on by
Through all chaotic sights and sounds
My heart enjoys the peace it's found

Prayer to Brighid

By Autumn Blackwood

Oh great Brighid of the green hills,
of the green, rolling hills.
I pray to you today for your guidance,
for your strength
for your answers.
May your light wash over me and fill me.
May your waves cleanse me.
May I serve you today for the greatest good.
Mar a bha mar a tha mar a bhitheas.



Gathering Herbs - Thanks to the Mother (Slavic)

By Rev. Francesca Hedrick

Moist Mother Earth,
From you all life springs forth.
As I gather these herbs,
I ask for your blessing.

Moist Mother Earth,
From you all life springs forth.
Bless these plants of your essence,
Enhance them with your blessing.

Moist Mother Earth
From you all life springs forth.
May these herbs heal us
With the magic of your blessing.

The Way of Water

By Gwen Edwards

It is the very elixir of life itself, for without it life
as we know it does not exist.

It shapes the world around us
It allows for all the beauty the surrounds us, but
in a moment can wash it all away

If you humbly listen, the water will share its deep
secret, the secret of transformation.

Constantly changing from one form to another,
As an ethereal vapor it floats above us in the
clouds and then as if by magic, it gathers it-
self together becoming liquid that falls from
the sky to quench the planets thirst and bring-
ing life to the land

There it gathers once again in streams, lakes, and
rivers, until it reaches the oceans,
The circulatory system of our world

As a solid it falls as snowflakes on a cold winter's
day, that history shows over time can grow
into the great glaciers that can turn the soar-
ing ramparts of the mountains into grains of
sand along the shore of the sea

Nothing can stand against it

But it is a benevolent master if one understand its
ways

It allows us to wash the dusty delusions from our
eyes so that we can see

It quenches the thirst of our souls
Our bodies are one with it

Can we listen and learn its ways?

Can we transcend the limited perception of who
and what we are?

So that we may transform and heal
Ourselves, and our world

It's up to us

Namaste ^

The Voice of the Trees

By Rev. Amber D. Ferree

Leaves absorb fire from the sun
Give voice to the air
One lone tree starts
Another tree suddenly echoes
Voices are added until the whole grove is quivering, delighted, free, ecstatic...

Ecstasy quiets
Pauses only to start again
A different tree begins
The dance returns
Cycles upon cycles
Revelry on a summer afternoon

Stand tall and firm but dance in the breeze
Rustle like the ocean
Sway to and fro exposing the vulnerable underside not seen

Rustle like water spraying
Entwining with neighboring leaves, twigs and branches

Not the same, but still living
Surviving on the same nutrient rich soil
Cleaning the same air
Absorbing the energy of the same sun
Home to the same creatures

Make yourself vulnerable to these others
Open up to interaction
Learn who should and shouldn't be there
Those that help and those that harm
Know and accept but don't fall victim

Stand firm but be flexible
Enjoy the moment
Dance in the breeze when you can



Calling Us Home

By Rev. Jean "Drum" Pagano

The Earth Mother is calling us home:
From the forests,
From the cities,
From the fields,
From far and farther,
Across the many years,
Calling us home.

Come home,
To the Mother we know,
Come home,
To the feast of friends,
Come home,
To one heart made from the many.

The oaks,
To themselves,
Whisper "Be'al";
I can hear it
Although it is unspoken;
They whisper it again,
And He is there;
They whisper it again,
And He is not.

Red ribbons,
White ribbons,
Calling us home;
The wind arises,
The oaks already know
A rustle is heard in the forest;
The oaks,
To themselves
Whisper "Be'al",
Calling us home,
Again



A Canopy of Ashes

By Rev. Jean "Drum" Pagano

Weary the journey,
I look upon the field and sky
And see that it stretches forever
Clouds sing their ever-song
Laughingly
Knowing that although they may change
They will endure
If not in some other form

And here I pause,
By the Gods,
To see where I have been
Trace the long journey-lasting
Many a day
Many a year
Perhaps only today

For I have been running
Breathless,
Formless,
Tirelessly racing
Spanning the lands
Overlooking the world from heights
Almost beyond imagination
And comprehension
Pumping my arms and legs
Striving, stretching
To free me from my shadow
Always so very close
Running to my destiny

Still,
Barely out of reach

Until today:
Today, I drop the battle
Today, I sheath the sword
For at the end of each skirmish
I find so much less of me
So today:
Here I stand
Hands outstretched
Face uplifted
Rays from the Bright God
Layer upon my face

I hold my sword aloft,
An offer of supplication
To He Who Lights the Day,
And with a release
And a heart outpouring
The flames of the Fiery One
Alight upon my upheld gift
Irradiating,
Illuminating,
Making my sword unto the Sun
And with a brief glance towards my Past,
I send my missile soaring behind me
To all the places I have been
To all the battles engaged,
To all the pains and wounds endured
And I give them all the gift of flame,

Flame and surrender

From an offering of Fire,
By the Gods,
Comes a rejoinder of air to fuel the flame
Comes a laughter of smoke,
By the power of the flame
So is all the water sent away
Not a tear,
Not a drop to dull the fire's roar
Consume, O Divine Lion!
Take my past as an offering
To end the madness
Take it all,
And give me Today

All around the horizon
The fires rule the day
Eradicate the past
Confiscate the memories
Once etched upon my soul
Burn them all.
Burn them all away

And this is where I will build my home
He in the present
Unencumbered by the Past
Unenlightened by the Future

Just the Pure Moment
Served with sword and fire

I find me here in this canopy of ashes
No more to sing the Song of War
No longer a servant of the shield and arrow
With every step the grayness stirs
The ashes dance in the air
Where once leaves pirouetted on the wind
Their ghosts are now gray and ashen

And as I step forward
Into today
I know now,
By the Gods,
Now I understand!
That in the wake of the passing
A new world is being born
I must look towards the horizon
For the promise that is Today
Let me no longer a soldier be
Let me be a farmer
And cultivate the Present
Each and every day of my life
And honor the sacrifice and offering
Of Fire and Ash

Bright Lady, Give Me A Spark!
(A Chanted Prayer for Brigid)

By Nathan Large

Give me a spark... a flame I will kindle.
Give me a spark... I'll raise you a blaze...
Give me a spark... a bonfire I'll build you.
Bright Lady, give me a spark!

Give me a spark... I'll stoke it with bellows.
Give me a spark... a crucible fills...
Give me a spark... I'll hammer and sharpen.
Forge-Mistress, give me a spark!

Give me a spark... I'll rise with the dawning.
Give me a spark... I'll draw from the well...
Give me a spark... to raise crops and cattle.
Well Mother, give me a spark!

Give me a spark... I'll heat up an oven.
Give me a spark... for grain and for loaves...
Give me a spark... I'll spread you a table.

Hearth Keeper, give me a spark!

Give me a spark... a tongue that will flicker.
Give me a spark... I'll tell you a tale...
Give me a spark... I'll sing you a love song.
Bard's Blessing, give me a spark!

Give me a spark... for fortune's pale candle.
Give me a spark... a light in the dark...
Give me a spark... to show the way forward.
Far Seer, give me a spark!

Give me a spark... a flame I will kindle.
Give me a spark... I'll raise you a blaze...
Give me a spark... a bonfire I'll build you.
Bright Lady, give me a spark!

Gobnait's Bees

By Rev. D. Rowen Grove

A thousand years ago in Ireland, and half as much again, there lived a woman called Gobnait. In after-times, some called her a saint, while others whispered that she might have been of the druid-kind. But however that was, it was known to all that Gobnait was a woman of power. She was *bean-usail* as well, a woman of worth. She had a fine farm and many cows, but above all, Gobnait was a beekeeper. She loved her bees. She spoke to them, and she sang to them, and the bees loved her too, or so 'twas said, for never was she stung, and fine summers or cold, they made more honey than any other bees in Ireland.

Now these were restless time, and often raiders would come, bearing off cattle and other goods, and one day a lad came running Gobnait's farm to give warning that a raiding party was on its way. The men-folk wanted to arm and fight, but Gobnait would not have it. "Let the old folk and children stay inside," she said, "and you men keep watch, lest they come from behind; I will deal with this lot myself."

So it was that when the raiders came up over the hill, they saw in their path one small grey-haired woman, and in her hands she held a round straw bee-skep. Their leader stepped forward to speak, but as he did, a single bee flew out and around his face. Startled, he batted it to the ground and crushed it with his heel, then looked at Gobnait. "Stand aside, old woman, and you shall come to no harm."

Gobnait looked at the dead bee, and her face was sorrowful. "No harm, is it? Ill done it is to slay a messenger. But I warn you now: turn, and go your way, lest ruin come to you."

The raiders laughed. "What, are the men here so feeble they must be guarded by one old woman and a few bees? Get out of our way!"

Gobnait shook her head. "Once I have warned you; twice now I warn you: turn and go, or abide the consequences, for I shall *not* give warning again."

Their leader would have thrust Gobnait roughly aside, but she stepped back, a single pace only, and she sang, a strange, high note like the warning cry of a wild bird.

There was a deep humming from within the hive, and the air around Gobnait thickened into a swirling golden mist – and from that mist there stepped a war-band. Strong young women in shimmering light armor, each with a slim, sharp blade; sturdy fellows in tunics striped brown and gold, each with a drawn bow; and at their head a tall queen with a golden spear. One moment only they stood, while the raiders gaped. The queen's eyes met those of Gobnait; she nodded, and the war-band sprang.

No arrow flew that did not strike; no blade struck that did not bite; and in the midst of all, the tall queen wielded her spear to terrible effect. So it was not long before the raiders fled for their lives, with the golden war-band at their heels.

As the raiders passed out of Gobnait's valley, the golden ones paused, and looked fiercely about, but Gobnait sang again, a slow, drowsy song like



a summer's day in a blossoming orchard, and she held out the bee-skep. "Come, my sisters, it is time to be homeward; come, my kinsmen, it is time for rest; come, O Lady: your children have need of you." Again there formed above the road the cloud of whirling gold, and every bee, swift as thought, followed their queen into the hive. Gobnait settled the skep into its place in the orchard once more, and as she turned away, she smiled,

for she heard her bees within humming, a song of triumph, and content.

Rev. D. Rowen Grove joined ADF in the spring of 2010, and completed her Dedicant Path work two years later. She is an Initiate of ADF, Chief of the Seers' Guild and Preceptor of the Scholars' Guild, and was ordained an ADF Priest in 2016. Rowen is also a co-founder of Chokecherry Grove.

The Magic Shirt - A True Story

By Clara Ruth

Once Upon A Time, an old woman and her comely daughter packed up their belongings and fled southward, running away from an evil Monster that had tormented them for nearly a decade. After many a weary mile, they came to a fair, sunny land of endless summer. Unable to find lodging, the mother and daughter pitched tents in a swamp teeming with large reptiles, venomous snakes, and numerous frogs. The maiden took to wearing leather garments to protect herself from these vile creatures.

As Fate would have it, these two refugees found shelter in the home of a kind soldier and his fine family. As maidens do, the daughter began to daydream of having a golden puppy and a fancy bedroom with gossamer bed curtains. She shared her heart's desires with her mother, hoping to one day move into their own little home together.

By the light of the winter sun, the old woman looked long and keenly at her comely daughter, who was also shapely and coy as any vixen. The old woman was wise enough to know what the future would hold for such a splendid maiden. So the old woman shook her head sadly, chiding her daughter for such a notion. "Well may you have these fine things one day, my dear daughter, but not with me. You will not remain even one year with me. Mark my words: a fine young man will win your heart and whisk you away from your old mother. Such is the way of young people, you will see."

Then came a fateful day when the comely maiden donned her leather armor, and she took up her bow and quiver. She ran like a deer in the wild places where dreamers lived out their dreams. She was the very image of Artemis, battle-ready with the vigor of youth.

The maiden caught the attention of three soldiers, brothers in arms, and they all three began to court her, vying with each other for her favor. Together the carefree maiden and her three suitors would ride in her mother's horseless carriage across the countryside on pleasant outings, seeking entertainment in local taverns and at spring festivals. The three soldiers were too close to let the maiden come between them, but not one of them could resist her charms.

The old woman warned her daughter about such unseemly behavior, but the headstrong maiden said the soldiers were nothing more than friends. Her mother knew better and worried about the outcome.

At first, it was the eldest of the three that caught the maiden's interest. In truth, he was far too old for her, but even to her own surprise, her heart did not hearken to reason. She asked her mother to hand-sew for this eldest soldier a simple peasant shirt. Her mother bade the maiden to get the soldier's measurements, but the maiden was not skilled in this task.

Using the measurements her daughter gave her, the old woman cut the pieces of the shirt. However, the shirt did not get sewn for many months. The old woman had it in mind to teach her daughter how to sew, but the maiden never seemed to find the time.

Soon the maiden's interest turned away from the eldest soldier. He had a family of his own and did not have enough time for her. So, next her fancy settled on the youngest soldier. As for the third soldier, she deemed him to be a knave because of his sharp, witty remarks. Yet she noted that he was a generous fellow, and he often paid for the outings that he, his comrades, and the maiden took together.

Meanwhile, the maiden carelessly turned her charms loose upon the youngest soldier. To his demise, he fell deeply under her spell, but the maiden quickly grew weary of him. His youth was his undoing.

Then, to the maiden's sorrow, all three soldiers were called away to various assignments of military duty, leaving the poor maiden all alone, bereft of the male attention to which she had become accustomed.

And still the shirt pieces remained unsewn. The old woman, an experienced seamstress, had meanwhile chanced to meet her daughter's three suitors once when they came over to mend the maiden's favorite swing. The old woman had seen at a glance that the shirt would not fit the eldest soldier. His shoulders were a bit too broad. She wondered if the shirt might fit one of the other soldiers instead.

Finally, the three soldiers returned a month or more later, and to everyone's surprise, the maiden began to spend all her time with the third soldier, the one she had at first judged to be a knave. Lo and Behold! She now found him to be patient and witty, generous to a fault, and attentive to her every whim. He had even gone to great lengths to change his ways to please her, giving up his



tobacco-smoking habit just for her.

With a marvelous stroke of Luck, the maiden's new favorite soldier had already arranged to end his military service at exactly the time when he and the maiden suddenly became enamored of each other. Shortly thereafter, he took the comely maiden to meet his mother in a Northern Land, far, far away. As the old woman had foretold, her daughter had been whisked away not long after Midsummer, and with only two days' notice. The mother was not surprised, of course, since she had seen it coming.

In time, the daughter sent word for her mother to finish sewing the peasant shirt. It seemed likely that the shirt would fit the maiden's Beloved, and so in the due course of time it would be given to him, if it would fit him.

So the old woman sewed the pieces of the shirt together. It was Hunting Season when she journeyed far to visit her daughter and the young man who had won the maiden's heart. To everyone's delight, the shirt did indeed fit him perfectly. And so it was that this simple peasant shirt was believed to possess magic: because ever since it was first cut into existence, it had held within it the power of foretelling the maiden's True Love.

Clara Ruth (Kallista Skye) joined ADF in 2014. She lives in the Southeast Region and practices as a Solitary.

A Midsummer Sacrifice to Apollo

By Rev. G. R. Grove

*The Gates have been opened, and the Three Kindreds invited to join us. Now the Sacrifice to Apollo begins. The **Celebrant** approaches the Sacrificial Altar. The **Sacrificer** removes the cloth which covers it, disclosing the Loaf of Bread. The **Celebrant** stretches hands over the Bread and speaks.*

Celebrant. By my magic, given by the Gods,
Creature of Grain, I name you Animal.
By my magic, given by the Gods,
Animal, I name you Goat.
Goat, you stand here today
as our offering to Lord Apollo!
Let the Sacrifice begin!

*The **Water Bearer** takes up the bowl or pitcher and carries it around the circle, allowing each in turn to dip their hands in the bowl or have water poured over their hands, coming last to the **Celebrant** and the **Sacrificer**. Water is sprinkled on the **Sacrifice**.*

*The **Basket Bearer** takes the Grain Basket and carries it around the circle, allowing each in turn to take a handful of grain, coming last to the **Celebrant** and the **Sacrificer**. The **Celebrant** (or **Sacrificer**) raises arms to the sky and prays.*

Celebrant (or Sacrificer):
Apollo, O hear us today!
O Long-Sight, Great Archer, we call.



At dawn your uprising await
for poetry's light to arrive
and brighten our slumbering minds—
Apollo, we offer you praise!

Apollo, O hear us today!
Great Lord of the far-shooting bow,
the power to heal or destroy
was equally given to you.
We ask your protection today—
Apollo, we offer you praise!

Apollo, O hear us today!
Defend us from foes and from fear!
As music and magic most fair
flow out from your sweet-singing lyre,
accept now the offerings we bring—
Apollo, we offer you praise!

Celebrant. All of you now who have come to
offer to Apollo, show this by throwing your grain
at the Altar and at the **Sacrifice**!

*(People throw grain as directed.) The **Sacrificer** takes the **Knife** from the **Basket** and approaches the **Sacrifice**. He or she cuts a sliver from one end of the loaf (the head end, if this has been so decorated) and offers it to the **Fire**, then strikes the **Sacrifice** a killing blow, at which all present cry out loudly. The **Sacrifice** is cut up, and the best piece offered to the **Fire**.*

Celebrant (or Sacrificer): Bright-shining Apollo,
we offer to you today!
Apollo, accept our offering!

People. Apollo, accept our offering!

*The remainder of the **Sacrifice** is now shared among the participants, with anything not eaten being offered to the **Fire**. Nothing should be taken away.*

The Sun Sings the Season

Dave "Thexalon" Kleinschmidt

Voice

Sun - mer sun _____ sings the sea - son of growth Gi - ving
Land is green _____ grants the boun - ty of earth, En - gage

Vo.

all _____ be - ings new be - gin - ings. Bless - ings flow _____ from the
all _____ spi - rits sur - roun - ding us. Un - der ground _____ grow - ing

Vo.

wa - ters where we can cul - ti - vate chang - ing land - scapes.
tow - ards sky shi - ning the land - vae - ttir lis - ten clos - ely.

Vo.

Clear your mind and lis - ten.
Hear their words, the wise ones.
Sum - mer sun sings growth _____

Vo.

Love _____ and _____ joy flows from fall - en kin - folk,
Op - en _____ out to the Aes - sir's know - ledge,
Giv - ing all _____ be - ings new be - gin - ings _____

Vo.

cre - a - tive pre - sence pro - mo - ting heal - ing, help
now is the time to try for ex - pand - ing, end
Bless - ings flow from the wa - ters in - spir - ing, in -

Vo.

plan - ning, play in feast - ing halls.
di - the - ring, drink in cou - rage strong.
tun - ing, tough strength of the sun.

The Poets

Autumn Blackwood: *Prayer to Brigid.* Autumn joined ADF in January 2017. She is a Solitary member and lives in ADF's Northeast Region.

Gwen Edwards: *The Way of Water.* Gwen Edwards is a water resources specialist, she has been active in the protection of watersheds and their communities for over 30 years. Gwen lives outside Olympia, Washington and is a parent and grandparent who loves to create and explore the inner and outer worlds.

Rev. Amber Frerreebe: *The Voice of the Trees.* Amber joined ADF in 2013 and was ordained in 2016. She is the Grove Organizer of Willow at the Crossroads Protogrove, ADF, and lives in Elkhart, Indiana.

Rev. D. Rowen Grove: *Midsummer Tanka.* Rowen joined ADF in the spring of 2010, and completed her Dedicant Path work two years later. She is an Initiate of ADF, Chief of the Seers' Guild and Preceptor of the Scholars' Guild, and was ordained an ADF Priest in 2016. Rowen is also a co-founder of Chokecherry Grove.

Rev. G. R "Gwernin" Grove: *Gaia Chant.* G R joined ADF in 2009. She is an ADF Initiate, Chief of the Scholars Guild, and one of the Bardic Guild's four Master Bards. She was ordained in 2016, and is Senior Druid of Chokecherry Grove, ADF, in Denver, Colorado. She has published four collections of poetry and four historical novels (with a little magic) set in 1st and 6th century Britain and Ireland.

Dave "Thexalon" Kleinschmidt: *The Sun Sings the Season.* Dave joined ADF in 2009. He is currently the Secretary of the Bardic Guild, Secretary of the Hellenic Kin, and Scribe of Stone Creed Grove. He was the 2014 Wellspring Bardic Chair. He maintains a pagan-focused blog "The Joy of Thex" (<http://www.thexalon.net/>).

Rev. Francesca Hendrick: *Gathering Herbs.* Francesca joined ADF in 1999 and was ordained

in 2003. She is a member of Cedarlight Grove, ADF, in Maryland.

Nathan Large: *Bright Lady.* Nathan joined ADF in 2016. He is a writer and storyteller, primarily in speculative fiction (science fiction, fantasy, and weird horror), with frequent mythological themes. His experience includes a doctorate in cognitive psychology, more than twenty years of storytelling in multiple role-playing formats, and a lifelong fascination with folk tales and myths. He lives in Erie, Pennsylvania, and is a Solitary.

Rev. Jean "Drum" Pagano: *An Offering is a Key, Calling Us Home, A Canopy of Ashes.* Drum has been a member of ADF since 1984 (he was ADF's eighth member). He is an ADF Senior Priest, an Initiate, and our current Archdruid. He enjoys working with his various altars, spending time in Nature, and studying and teaching the Ogham.

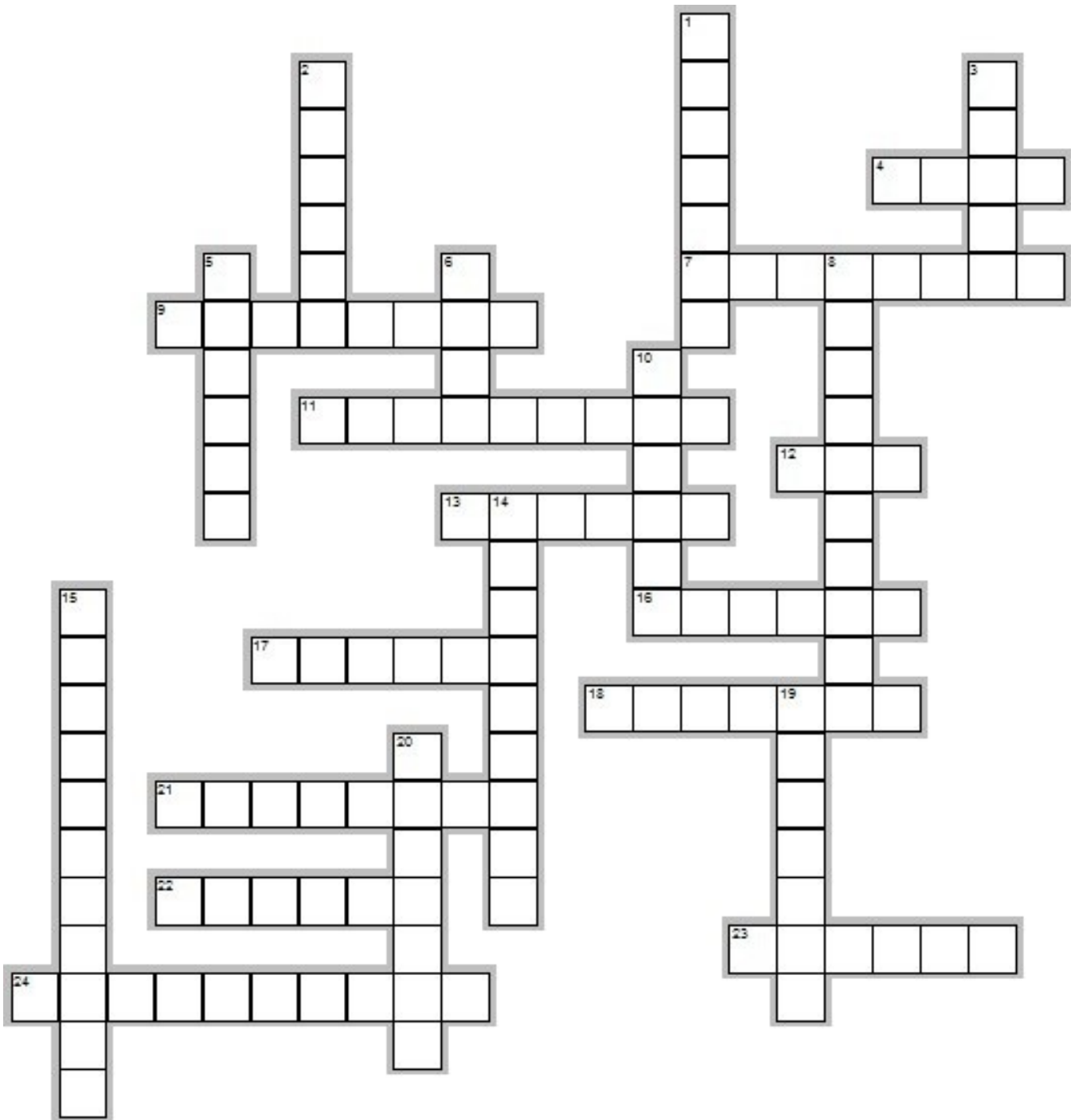
Elizabeth Parks: *Beside a Little Stream, The Rain.* Elizabeth joined ADF in 2016. She lives in California and is a member of the Protogrove of the Valley Oak.

Birgit Reinartz: *Two Prayers to Mother Earth for the High Days.* Birgit joined ADF in 2013. She is a Solitary member and lives in Germany.



Mixed Bag

By: Chris:)



Crossword Clues

Across

4. He burned Rome
7. Mystical revelation
9. C-Her ugly son was Afagddu
11. N-The Prose Edda author-last
12. G-Half man & Half goat
13. A Sacred River in India
16. The 6th planet
17. Brightest star in Earth's sky
18. Norse Rainbow Bridge
21. Classical Indian Language
22. Roman Poet 70 bc-19bc
23. Bird Divination aka
24. G-She ate the pomegranate

Down

1. Beowulf's enemy
2. Located on Mt. Parnassus Greece
3. Slavic God of thunder
5. Hesiod's 4th age
6. Ursidae aka
8. Author of The Golden Verses
10. Greek word for the North Wind
14. Greek Philosopher 384 - 322 BCE
15. G-Gnothi seauton (3 wds)
19. G-This famous mount reaches 9840 feet
20. Dublin's country

News and Announcements

Program & Path Completions

Ruth A. Smith

Completed: Dedicant Path

Date Completed: October 14, 2016

Victoria Selnes (Leona Oigheag)

Completed: C1 Clergy Training Program

Date Completed: Jan 26, 2017

Protogrove & Grove Approvals

Clan of the Triple horses ProtoGrove

Medford, OR

Date Re-founded: Dec 21 2016

Thistle Grove

Shreveport, LA

Date of Charter: Feb 12, 2017

Prairie Sky ProtoGrove

Urbana, IL

Date Founded: Mar 6, 2017

~Congratulations to all~

Upcoming Events

Trillium

April 13-16, 2017

Cross Junction, VA

Wellspring

May 25-29, 2017

Madison, OH

Three Rivers Festival

June 8-11, 2017

Eganville, ON Canada

Eight Winds

July 13-16, 2017

Trout Lake Abbey, OR

www.adf.org/events

For more festival info

For ADF volunteer opportunities check out the
Volunteer page

[https://www.adf.org/members/org/
volunteers.html](https://www.adf.org/members/org/volunteers.html)

eight winds FESTIVAL 2017



July 13-16, 2017 - Trout Lake Abbey

Join us for a weekend of community, learning, creativity and connecting with the outdoors.

This event is open to all Druid, Heathan, Pagan and other open-minded guests.

Register & more information at <http://northwest.adf.org/eight-winds-2017/>



Planning ahead for the festival season? Mark your calendar now for Chokecherry Grove's Rocky Mountain Retreat in October. For the latest information see our web page at chokecherryadf.org, or follow us on Facebook .

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ADF Directory



The Mother Grove

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Committees

Clergy Council	Chair: Rev. Jean ‘Drum’ Pagano	adf-archdruid@adf.org
Council of Lore	Chair Rev. Kelly ‘Carrion Mann’ Kingston	adf-preceptor@adf.org
Grove Coordinating Committee	Chair: Rev. Caryn Laney-MacLuan	adf-gcc-chair@adf.org
Grove Organizing Committee	Chair: Rev. Nancy McAndrew	adf-goc-chair@adf.org
Prisoner Relations Committee	Chair: Rev. Kirk Thomas	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>



Ár nDraiocht Féin: A Druid Fellowship

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Submission Guidelines for Oak Leaves:

Oak Leaves welcomes submissions of articles, poetry, artwork, and anything else that might be of interest to our Druid readers. Submissions 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, but preference will be given to submissions from ADF members. Since excellent scholarship is one of ADF's goals, please document sources of ideas and materials that you used for your writings. 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. We reserve the right to reject submissions which do not meet our standards. When planning lengthy submissions, please inquire first at oak-leaves@adf.org.

Electronic submissions are preferred, sent as email attachments to the Oak Leaves submissions address: oak-leaves@adf.org. Written submissions should be sent in one of the following formats: MS Word (.doc/.docx), Rich Text Format (.rtf), or Text Format (.txt). Please include a brief ADF-related bio for all articles and essays. For more information on submissions, please see our web page at <https://www.adf.org/publications/periodicals/oak-leaves/submissions.html> or contact us at oak-leaves@adf.org.

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Autumn Issue : June 1st;
Winter Issue : September 1st

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