

OAK LEAVES

The Quarterly Journal of Ár nDraíocht Féin Autumn 2019 ~ Issue No. 86





"For the Raven Queen"
Art show entry by Rev. D. Rowen Grove



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OAK LEAVES

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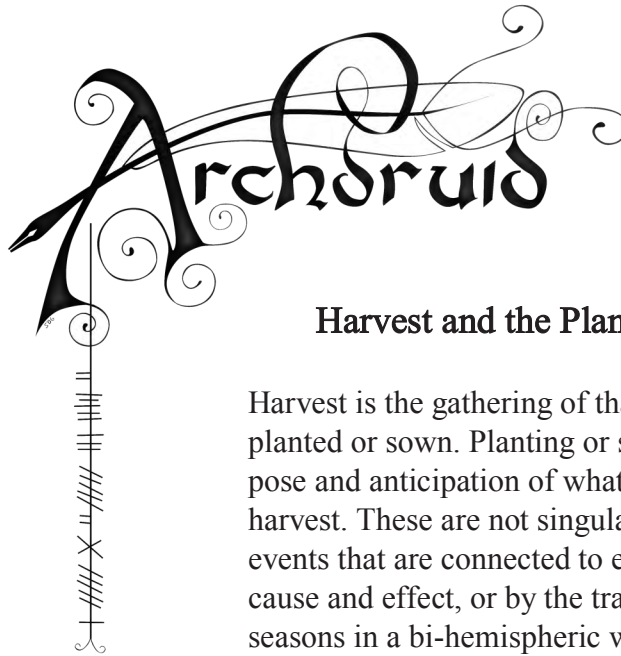
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Harvest and the Planting of Seeds

Harvest is the gathering of that which has been
planted or sown. Planting or sowing is the pur-
pose and anticipation of what we will discover at
harvest. These are not singular acts, but are
events that are connected to each other, either by
cause and effect, or by the transposition of the
seasons in a bi-hemispheric world.

In our practice, we build relationships with the
Kindreds and the Spirits. As we establish these
relationships, we make offerings to honor these
same Spirits in the hopes that blessings will come
our way as well. It is the building of relationships
that is very much like the planting of seeds.
When we plant seeds, we are never really sure
what will grow and what will remain fallow. In
gardening, when we put plants in the ground, the



Photo by Rev. Jean "Drum" Pagano

life has already begun and has started the growth process. For seeds, we must prepare the ground, plant the seeds, cover them with great care, and begin to take care of them in the weeks that follow the planting. This is very much the building of a relationship between the things that grow in our lives and the blessings and harvest that will come our way later in the year. We plant in anticipation of harvest; we never insist that the harvest will arise.

For our friends in the Southern Hemisphere, it is a time of Imbolc, of the increasing light. It is a time to think about what seeds need to be planted in anticipation of the harvest, half a year away. Just because the seasons change does not mean that we stop working on the relationships with the Kindreds and the Spirits in our lives. Establishing a daily practice helps keep the building and maintaining of relationships centered in our lives. A daily practice becomes the backdrop of our lives and the tapestry upon which the rest of our lives are painted.

Offerings are a perfect way to feed and nurture the fruits of our future harvests. Our virtues, wisdom, piety, vision, courage, integrity, perseverance, hospitality, moderation, and fertility, are good building blocks for the relationships we seek to foster. This is especially true for hospitality, the one virtue that requires more than one entity to make it happen.

For those of us in the Northern Hemisphere, Lughnasadh represents the first harvest. Once again, if and when the harvest is at hand, we should be cognizant and thankful that it has indeed arrived, and we should not gather and run. We should continue in building and maintaining the relationships that have brought us to this point. The value of a relationship is not just what it brings to ourselves, but is really about what it brings to both parties AND to the maintenance of the relationship itself.

Oak Leaves continues to be a showcase for some of the best efforts of ADF members across a

number of fronts: poetry, storytelling, prose, etc. The magazine is beautifully produced and eagerly received by members all over the world. We are currently rolling out plans to offer a digital version that we hope to be available for the next issue of *Oak Leaves*. The original print edition of *Oak Leaves* will continue, but for those who wish to receive their magazine in a digital format, it will be available very soon.

Work on the new ADF website continues and we expect to have something for people to see in the coming months. From what we have seen on the Mother Grove, the new website is a great step forward from our existing website in both presentation and functionality.

I wish the blessings of the Kindreds on all of our members in the Imbolc/Lughnasadh season. Keep up your practices and plant the seeds and harvest the blessings that come your way, every day.

Blessings,

Rev. Jean (Drum) Pagano
Archdruid, ADF



Photo by Rev. Jean "Drum" Pagano

Autumn Issue of Oak Leaves

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

First Harvest—Lughnasadh here in the north—is past. Even as we celebrate its abundance, we look toward autumn and the colder days to come.

This issue of *Oak Leaves* offers our first summer harvest. We have a timely article from Archdruid Jean “Drum” Pagano on harvest and the planting of seeds. Vice Archdruid Sean Harbaugh also

our human ancestors and our deceased four-legged friends.

Our poetry section this time includes a number of short offerings by our accomplished poet and singer Jenne Micale, two of whose music albums are also reviewed in this issue of *Oak Leaves*. We also have poetry by Rev. D. Rowen Grove, Birgit Reinartz, and Archdruid Jean “Drum” Pagano.



muses on those themes. On the other hand, I look back to May and our Annual Meeting at Well-spring; this in a way was also a first harvest of ADF’s year.

On a different note, Manny Tejada-Moreno tells us of his wanderings in Italy, and the stronger connections he forged there with the Shining Ones. Victoria Selnes discusses consent and inclusion in our rituals, pointing out ways we can strengthen the bonds between ourselves. And Rev. D. Rowen Grove offers us a means of remembering those departed ones dear to us, both

Moving on to things magical, we have a Virtues-based ritual by Judith O’Grady. Rev. D. Rowen Grove discusses apple-based lore, and offers a traditional recipe . And Rev. Ian Corrigan shares another of his columns with us, this one concerning Invocation of the Deities. Finally, I review a book on the origins of Newgrange which I found at the gift shop at Tara on my spring trip to Ireland.

All in all, a bountiful harvest which I hope you will all enjoy!

Blessings,
Rev. G. R. Grove

Words From the Vice Archdruid

By Rev. Sean Harbaugh

The coming of autumn always brings such a feeling of change here in the northern hemisphere. The hot long days are behind us, and the cooler weather is here. The leaves are turning all sorts of brilliant colors, and the Earth Mother prepares herself for the long cold winter ahead. In California, autumn marks the end of fire season, as the golden fields become greener with the arriving moisture. Along with all of this colorful imagery, two themes come to mind – the Earth

can also share of the bounty of the Earth Mother. It allows us as a community to join together and help those less fortunate.

Autumn also brings with it a sense of balance. The equinox gives us equal day and night and marks a turning point when the nights get longer leading up to solstice. But there is also a sense of bringing balance into oneself. The frantic pace of summer gives way to a need to slow down and



Mother and her bountiful harvest and the concept of balance.

The autumnal equinox is obviously deep within the harvest season. The fruits and grains of August give way to tomatoes, zucchini, squash, and melons. The Earth Mother displays her bounty and provides us nourishment that grows from her rich soil. It's a magical act to witness these objects that grow from small seeds into food bearing plants. Citrus and apples become abundant, and the oaks begin to drop their acorns. Sierra Madrone Grove devotes our autumnal equinox ritual to the Earth Mother at Sacramento Pagan Pride every year. The food that is donated at the event is presented in ritual, and we bless the food as our working. The food is then donated to the local food bank, so those in need

reflect. It's an opportunity to look inward and search for balance. Is work taking you away from family? Is recreation taking you away from responsibility? It's a time to choose what to let go of and what to bring into ourselves. It is a time to balance ourselves.

I wish everyone in ADF a bountiful and beautiful harvest and equinox. May the Earth Mother bless you, and may your fire always burn bright and warm.

Brightest Blessings,

Rev. Sean W. Harbaugh
Vice Archdruid

Wellspring Festival 2019

By Rev. G. R. Grove

Wellspring 2019 began Thursday May 23rd with a Welcome Blessing and the lighting of the Main Social Fire. It was followed that evening with an Opening Processional Ritual throughout the site, visiting in turn the Earth Mother, Hermes, Land Kin, and Ancestor Mound shrines. There was also a workshop on *Consent Culture* in the afternoon.

Friday's activities included the first (poetry) and second (song) parts of the three-part **Wellspring Bardic Chair** competition, and workshops on *The Late Neolithic / Bronze Age Horizon* (Rev. Kirk Thomas), *The Orphic Hymns and their Use in Magic* (Sara Mastros), and *An Irish Mantra and Incantation* (Chris Godwin). There was also an open Mother Grove meeting which was lightly attended, and an evening ritual invoking Hekate, which was followed by a concert by the band **Discarded Mischief**.

Saturday's activities included the ADF Warrior Games, the Artisans Guild display and competition, workshops on *Basics of Celtic Knotwork* (Steph Gooch), *The Indo-European Hearth Culture* (Ceir Serith), *Pagan Leadership* (Rev. Jan Avende), and *Indo-European Folk Magic* (Chris Godwin). The third part of the Bardic Chair Competition (storytelling) took place in the afternoon. The day ended with the traditional Potluck Feast, followed by the announcement of the winner of the Bardic Chair, the Brewers Guild competition and mead-tasting, and the Community Concert and Raffle.

Sunday's activities began with the ADF Annual Meeting, during which the Archdruid Rev. Jean "Drum" Pagano went over the Annual Report and presented a number of awards. These included:

The Archdruid's Award for Excellence in International Druidry. Birgit Reinartz for

Excellence in International Bardic Skill and Liturgy;

The Good Fire Award: Ian Corrigan for Excellence in Ritual Creation and Publication;

The Naturalist Award: Stone Creed Grove for the Beautification of Tredara;

The Founder's Award: Cedarlight Grove for Excellence in Land and Sea;

Appreciation Award: Rovena Windsor for Excellence in Service to ADF;

Appreciation Award: Desiree Cook for Excellence in Service as Members Advocate;

Appreciation Award: Flip Rutledge for Excellence in Service as Chief of the Council of Senior Druids;

Appreciation Award: Rev. Jan Avende for the Promotion of Prayer A Day;



The Earth Mother shrine

Appreciation Award: Manny Tejada for ADF Publishing;

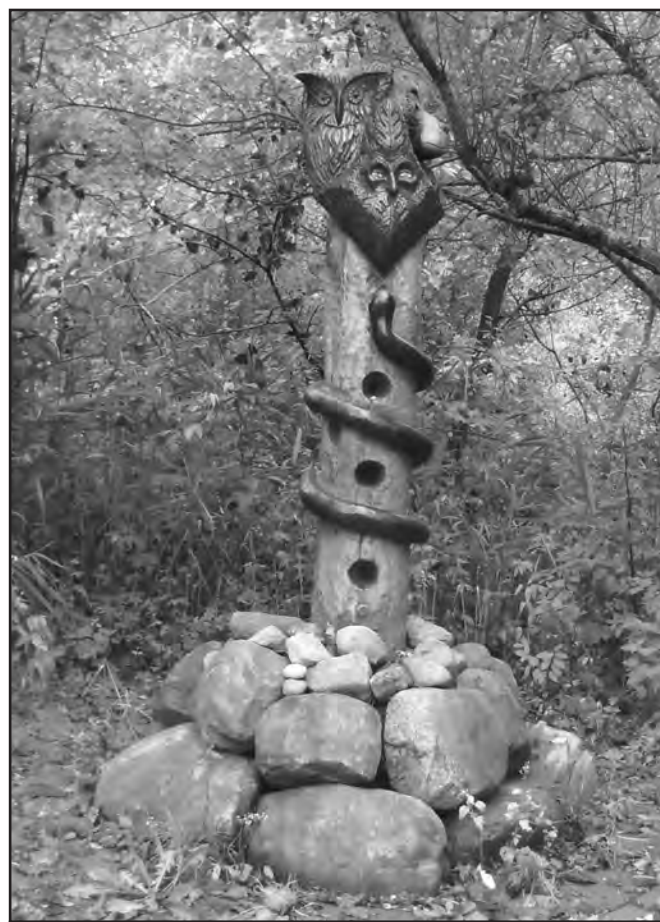
The Volunteer of the Year. Rev. Amber Doty.

Dave “Thexalon” Kleinschmidt was also announced as the newest **ADF Bard Laureate**.

This was followed by the Artisans Guild Gallery Showing, and workshops on **Paganism and Pagan Studies in Academia** (Marty Laubach), **Mysteries of the Indo-European Sacred Beverage** (Ceiri Serith), and the **Hearth Path Proposal** (roundtable). The evening concluded with the ADF Grand Symbol, including the reinstatement of Archdruid Rev Jean "Drum" Pagano, and a Hellenic Kin Symposium.

On Monday Wellspring 2019 concluded with Closing Blessings.

Congratulations go out to the new 2019 **Wellspring Warrior Champions**, Amanda Godwin of a Hearthstone Grove and George Donovan of



The Land Kin shrine

White River Grove. In 2nd place for each were **Faith Burton** of Stone Creed Grove and **Robert Welch** of Celtic Fire Protogrove.

The **Artisans** competition involved a number of creative entries, one of which (by **Oak Shaman**) provided the basis for this issue’s cover. A piece by **Rev. D. Rowen Grove** was voted best Sacred Object entry.

The **Bardic Chair** field was small this year, consisting of only three competitors (one of whom was forced to drop out after the first two categories). The winner was **Rev. G. R. “Gwernin” Grove**..

Finally, the mosquito population and the temperature were both lower than in some past years, which made for a good festival!

Rev. G. R. Grove is Editor in Chief of Oak Leaves.



The Hermes shrine

The Slowest Journey: A Wandering Druid in Italy

By Manny Tejada-Moreno

Note: all photos accompanying this article are by the author.

I don't remember my first trip abroad. It was when we came to the United States as political refugees from Cuba. But my parents reported that I would not shut up because I was so excited. I'm told I cried when it was over and didn't want to leave the plane.

I still have much of that. I do remember the first time I left the US for a trip abroad. It was in the 90s and I went to Great Britain. Everyone insisted that I take a tour. There were all these reasons why I should take a tour also: they drive on the "other" side of the road, I won't know where I'm going, what if something happens?

I took the tour. I let fear win. And I never did that again.

Honestly, it was a great trip. We covered a good chunk of real estate. The tour predictably started

in London, went through Salisbury to Stonehenge, then West to Wales and up the coast through the Brecon Beacons to the Lake District and on to Edinburgh, York, and back to London.

Fear had won and it seeped into all aspects of that first visit to the UK. I saw a lot but experienced less. The pace of travel distracted, made sense of place impossible; and there was little time for reflection, not to mention the simple pleasure of staying put to feel the world.

The sights that could have nurtured the spirit were dulled, as though seen through the thick panes of glass of ancient churches.

The trip was both exciting and superficial. It had no depth. The trip was not disappointing, just not spiritually fulfilling.

So, afterwards, I made a decision: travel will mean place first. It was an easy decision to keep. I was a student and couldn't afford it.



Image of Diana.



A statue of the Mother.



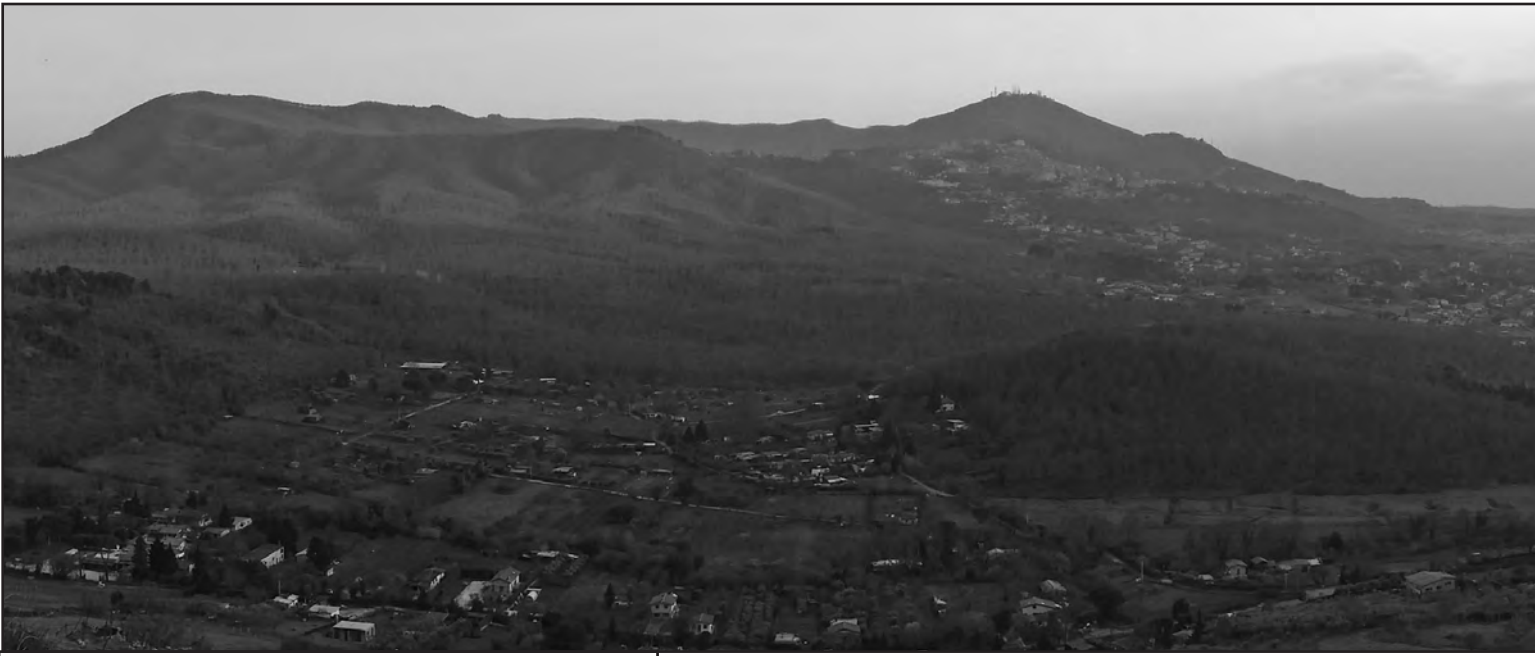
Manny at the Temple of Diana Nemorensis.

But when I started to travel again, I decided that slow and little was better than fast and much. I felt it would lead to a more authentic experience with the people, the culture and the land.

I feel I've kept to that decision on various travels: slow visits. Staying in one place until I feel I've properly revered the *genius loci*. It takes me away from the beaten path and provides for affirming encounters with magickal spaces.



Nemi—the Lake and view over the Mediterranean.



The view from Tuscolo.

I can only say that I find it more meaningful. I have done my best to dedicate myself to the experience of place.

Over time, Italy has become one of my favored destinations. I should add that I'm privileged in my ability to take things slow. I've become a citizen through marriage, and we have a home base, as it were, in Rome.

Recently, we took the opportunity of a family visit and added some travel to explore the countryside. It quickly became an opportunity to understand the land dedicated to Diana.

Outside of Rome is an area called *Il Parco dei Castelli Romani*, an ancient wooded area that hosts the sacred forests of Diana in Aricia and Nemi. These are the famed Alban Hills outside of Rome that hosted the villas and castles of the powerful, from Catholic popes to Roman Senators and Emperors. They came to escape the oppressive summer heat of the Eternal City. But despite its roots spanning time across some three millennia, the park was only recently designated as a preserve in 1984.

Our first destination was Tuscolo (or Tusculum),



The Amphitheatre of Tuscolo.



a hilltop Latin resort likely influenced by Etruscans whose history dates to the Iron Age. It sits upon the northern edge of Alban Volcano crater. Tuscolo has a sanctuary to Diana, the Colle di Corne, and from it you can see the shores of the Mediterranean Sea some 15 miles away.

Tuscolo is today a 45-minute ride from Rome, but as few as a hundred years ago, it was a destination: a one- or two-day trip to visit the hilltop. But hiking through the park, with modern equipment, packaged food and a cell phone is a far cry from the struggles of our ancestors.

And still, the slow pace to the hilltop destination through isolated woods and unwelcoming terrain brings into relief the commitment of our ancestors to approach deity.

The Roman remains are exceptionally well-preserved, and just this summer an excavation began to find even more monuments. But the power of the place is not in the buildings, it's in the moss-covered stones and flowered pathways that surround the town. It's in the liminal space between human-made structures and the wild, where there are whispers of belonging and affirmations that the path you have chosen is nurturing the spirit.



View from above Nemi to the Lake and the Sea.

The place whispers about its resilience that, despite the human abandonment, it teems with life. This ancient edge of civilization is an extravagant reminder that Diana is both elusive and present.

It also feels as though the land mourns. Even in the most distant and least traveled area of the regional park, there is still a Christian presence that subordinates the land rather than celebrates it. You see this in the naming of churches like *Santa Maria sopra Minerva*, Holy Mary upon Minerva. That *Colle di Corne* also has an altar to the Virgin Mary, over Tusculum.

From Tuscolo, there is long – almost 10 mile – hike along the volcanic rim though the Arician woods that terminates in Nemi, the town over-



The Via Sagra (Holy Path) to Tuscolo.

looking the famous lake called “The Mirror of Diana”. The woods host the remains of one of the more celebrated sanctuaries well-known to modern Pagans, the Temple of Diana Nemorensis.

The Temple was a pilgrimage site across the Italian peninsula. Reaching it is exactly why a slow approach to travel helps us see the power of spirit.

There’s another way to the Temple – a much easier route from Tusculum by car. But when you arrive at the Temple, regrettably, there’s nothing to see. The adjoining land from the road is private, the marbles have been removed, the decorations gone. The site is covered in tarps, and practically nothing remains other than some column remnants and the knowledge of its location.



The Statue of Diana Nemorensis in the Town Square



Entrance to Diana’s Woods.

But approached on foot through the forest, with an intent to honor the land and let it decide the experience, the real temple becomes clear. As the human temple became absorbed into forest, the woods became the temple again.

The Arician woods that housed the community devoted to Diana are alive and speaking. The sacred grove that stood before the temple was built is still present. And its guardians, its *loci* and its Goddess are easily found in a slow reverent pace.

The rare tulips that bloom in the park, the diversity of mushrooms, the incredible and secretive oaks, the ubiquitous chestnut trees, and the trove of medical and magical plants are all hidden when approaching by car. The hurried pace of modernity keeps everything safe, secret,



The Town of Nemi.

and balanced.

The take-away, I hope, for another traveler, is not the hike, it's the speed. Our approach to Nature, intentionally capitalized, is in many ways an acceptance of how she will reveal herself. Through study, practice and devotion, we are graced to hear those invitations, ones that can only be opened with patience.

A Druid's journey is the slowest journey, I think; and much less about how we end, than the time we take to see the path.

Manny Tejada-Moreno is ADF's publisher. He joined ADF in 2004, and has been serving in that office since 2015. When not traveling, he lives in Florida.



The Temple of Vesta in nearby Tivoli.

Emphasizing Consent and Inclusion in ADF Rituals

By Victoria Selnes

Consent allows people to know that they have the opportunity to choose how they engage with the rituals, and that will enable them to be more willing to take a chance and come to a ritual. Building a ritual with an eye to consent also allows our rituals to be more inclusive as attendees understand if they can participate.

To increase consent and inclusion, we need to review our standard scripts to find the changes that we can make to improve inclusion while still keeping to the spirit of ADF rituals. In ADF, we have a particular structure to our rituals, and the ritual celebrants can craft the ritual that they want. Since our rituals are often open to attendees who are not part of our group, care should be taken to avoid assumptions about the abilities and consent of our ritual attendees. In this article, I will outline the Core Order of Ritual that we use, and discuss how we can reinforce consent and inclusion in our rituals.

A good start to ensuring that attendees can give informed consent is to provide enough information for individuals to make decisions. This information should be provided ahead of time if possible, as well as in the pre-ritual briefing.



Pre-Ritual Information & Pre-Ritual Briefing

To ensure that we allow for informed consent in any ritual, we should begin with a short discussion about the overall ritual that includes information on the focus of the ritual. This discussion should include information on any Spirits, Gods or other Beings who we are planning on calling, the general ritual structure, and any particular actions that the attendees may be requested to perform such as movement, offerings, chanting, or sharing from a cup. The briefing should also include any accommodations that are made for people who may not choose to participate in particular actions.

Also, care must be taken to ensure that individuals understand that they are welcome to leave the ritual at any time if they do not wish to continue. In ADF, we do not set firm boundaries to our sacred space, so individuals may come and go as needed. Some common actions that occur in ADF rituals that require additional information and consent are processing, holding hands, chanting/singing, dancing, and consuming food/liquid. As we review the different sections of the ritual, I'll make suggestions of ways that we can increase the ability for the participants to choose how they interact with the ritual.

Initiating the Rite

This section of an ADF ritual is where we start the ritual and enter the ritual space. We often include a procession in this part of the ritual. Care should be taken to ensure that participants with mobility challenges feel comfortable. The celebrants should take care to check in with anyone with obvious mobility challenges before the ritual to see if they have the ability to stand and process, or if they will need a seat during this portion of the ritual. If there are participants who will need a seat, care should be taken to ensure that they are included in the ritual. In addition to addressing any obviously

motion challenged attendees, the celebrants should be sure to provide accommodation for attendees who are not obviously motion challenged. Perhaps instead of processing into the ritual space, the participants move around the ritual space – encompassing the participants who must remain seated or who may be in wheelchairs.

Purification

This portion of the ritual may be combined with the procession or may occur after the participants have entered the ritual space. This section is the section where we leave behind the cares and energies from our day-to-day lives to focus on the ritual.

The most common form of purification for ADF rituals is censuring and asperging. There are different reasons why individuals may not wish to be sprinkled with water, or whichever liquid is being used, or to be exposed to incense. The pre-ritual briefing should be sure to include what the liquid and incense are, and provide a way for individuals to either avoid the components that they don't want or have the option to step away from the ritual if they can't be exposed to the scents or liquids involved.

There are also other ways of purification that you can use if you have a number of participants who do not consent to the censuring and asperging. Sound is a good option – either with bell or drum – that does not involve any smoke or sprinkling of liquid.

Honoring the Earth Mother

In this section of the ritual, we take time to honor the Earth that supports us and where we live. It's common in the Western states for participants to kneel down to touch the ground during this stage of the ritual. Not everyone can or may choose to touch the ground. Instructions should be provided that individuals don't need to touch the ground if they choose not to. Instead, participants may turn their palms towards the ground and connect to the Earth through their palms.

Statement of Purpose

(Re)Creating the Cosmos

The celebrants usually speak these two sections of the ritual. We can use the statement of purpose to remind the participants which Beings we will be working with during the ritual and provide space to allow participants to step out if they wish. Here we review why we are doing the ritual and establish the sacred center of our ritual space.

Opening the Gate(s)

In this section, we open the gates between the Worlds and firmly establish our Sacred Center. Usually, the celebrants do most of the work, with the participants chanting or singing along. Care should have been taken during the pre-ritual briefing to let participants know that singing/chanting is not required, and to offer alternatives for participants during those parts of the ritual. For example, instead of singing, dancing, or chanting, participants could hum, or sway, or direct energy towards the Center while they follow along with the chant/song in their heads.

Inviting the Three Kindreds

Key Offerings

The first few parts of these sections usually involve the celebrants making offerings to the Kindreds and the Deity of the Occasion, and may include some seasonal-specific offerings. During the pre-ritual briefing, the participants should be told about what the offerings will be (in case of



smoke or scent issues) as well as any additional activities that they may be requested to participate in.

In many rituals, we also include a “Praise Offering” component to the Key Offering section. In this section, participants are encouraged to make offerings to any of the Kindreds. These offerings could be burned, offered to the Well, poured out, vocalized or otherwise shared. In the pre-ritual briefing, we should be certain to make sure that participants understand that these offerings are optional. It is also good to provide material for offerings if participants would like to make an offering but don’t have anything to offer with them.

Prayer of Sacrifice

Omen

The prayer of sacrifice is one big final sacrifice that the celebrants make on behalf of the participants. The Omen is taken by the Seer. Neither of these sections should require any specific, additional consent as the participants should be aware that it’s going to happen from the pre-ritual briefing.

Calling (Asking) for the Blessings

Hallowing the Blessing

Affirmation of the Blessing

These three sections of the ritual are often performed as one unit. In it, we ask for the Kindreds



to bless a vessel of liquid and share the blessings, in liquid form, between all the participants of the ritual. Although it should have been stated before, it’s good to re-state what the liquid is (as it can be anything) and if participants will be expected to drink out of the same cup or if they will be each drinking from individual cups. In either method, one cup or many, participants should be given an option of what to do with the liquid if they choose not to drink. This option could be to pour out the liquid on the ground if you’re outdoors, touching the cup to their forehead in acceptance of the blessing, or pouring some of the liquid into their cupped hand and anointing themselves with the blessings. Participants should be given at least one option that does not require direct contact with the liquid.

Workings (if any)

If there are any magical workings in the ritual, they should be covered in the pre-ritual briefing.

Thanking the Beings

Closing the Gate(s)

Thanking the Earth Mother

Closing the Rite

These sections unwind the ritual and return us to our everyday space. For both Closing the Gates and thanking the Earth Mother, we should remind the participants of the options that they had before when we were welcoming the Earth Mother and Opening the Gates. Those options still apply to these sections.

The ADF Core Order of Ritual is a very flexible ritual structure, and with a little forethought, we can craft a ritual that allows for the inclusion of as many people as possible in ways that make them comfortable and allow for informed consent.

Victoria Selnes joined ADF in 2011 and continues to build a devotional practice with the Kindreds. She is currently studying to become a member of the ADF Clergy, while serving as Secretary on the Mother Grove. She lives in California.

Letters to the Ancestors

By Rev. D. Rowen Grove

We can (and should) remember our Ancestors at any time of year, but in modern Neo-Pagan culture, Samhain-tide is traditional, and is a particularly appropriate season. As the scheduled celebrant for Chokecherry Grove's Samhain one year, I wanted to create a working in which the folk attending the ritual could send some personal, physical form of message to their own Honored Dead. I got the initial idea for this from one of the members of our Grove who has some First Nations background and spiritual training, and who often makes "prayer packets" as his personal offerings. This form of spirit message, while found in a number of Native cultures, was particularly prevalent within the Northern Cree. In my friend's practices, messages to the departed (or to other Spirits or Deities) are written on folded papers, sometimes enclosing incense or herbs, which are then tied with string, yarn, or embroidery floss, and offered into the Fire at the appropriate time of ritual. He had no objections to my borrowing and expanding on this, so I proceeded.

I decided that as part of the offerings for that Samhain rite, I would have the folk send "letters to their Ancestors". Rather than have all of the attendees writing and tying their own prayer packets, which could take up a fair bit of time prior to the rite, I supplied some pre-made packets, which had room to write on the outsides. To make them, I used plain cream colored 8.5 x 11" paper, folded three by three, i.e. in thirds horizontally, then again lengthwise, making a small enclosure. The packets were then each filled with a few teaspoons of a mixture of dried herbs: sage (stems and pruned bits from my garden) for wisdom; rosemary (from my own rosemary plants) for remembrance; and cedar shavings for purification. The packets were then tied up with green garden twine, each one knotted three times, and the knots sealed with drippings

from a locally made beeswax candle.

As each person arrived at the ritual site, one of the Grove members offered them the prayer packets, giving the folk the opportunity to write messages to their own Ancestors or other Beloved Dead, and telling them to keep the packets until they were called for, rather than offering them into the Fire individually. I had made quite a lot of packets, so folk were able to take more than one, if they wished; as it turned out, everyone present got at least one, but there were none left over. After all of the individual offerings had been made, but before the final sacrifice, I went around the ring of folk with a flat, open basket, which was lined and decorated with autumn leaves, some grain ears, and more dried herbs and grasses, and had the folk put all of their message packets into the basket together. Some kissed their packets, or murmured prayers over them. Then I called on the Ancestors and Beloved Dead of everyone present, held out the filled basket in offering, and rather than pouring out the packets, set the whole thing into the Fire. It blazed up beautifully, and with a great surge of energy.

As I'd had several requests to repeat this particular working, the following year I did it again, with a few changes and additions, adding dried rose petals (for affection or love) to the herbal mix, and using some different colors of yarn or cotton crochet thread to tie the packets. I may add other things in the future, such as incense, or other herbs. Due to a lack of time, and a greatly increased number of packets, I omitted sealing the knots with wax; I think that step could be optional, although the presence of the wax on each packet doubtless helps them catch fire quickly. I also made some separate packets for departed cats and dogs; those for the felines were filled with rosemary and dried catnip, again from



my own garden. I thought for a while about the most appropriate herbs for dogs, until a friend pointed out that most dogs like grass, and so the canine packets were filled with dried grass, together with a bit of rosemary. The cat packets and dog packets were tied with different colors of yarn, and after a little more thought, discretely labeled. These were made with half sheets of paper, as our feline and canine companions are usually smaller than human-sized, though our love for them is often no less.

For offering the packets into the fire, the first year I had simply used a flat, open basket I already had to hand; for the second time, I had selected a basket which was neither painted nor varnished, to avoid toxic smoke, and which had no wires in the frame. (Thrift stores often have a good selection of suitable baskets.) However, a Grove member offered me an old basket which had been used for many years in her garden, and which was at the end of its usefulness. After a little thought, I decided to use that one, decorating it with dried grasses, autumn leaves, sunflower heads emptied of their seeds by the birds, and

other things from the frost-killed garden. The old basket looked very well, and I found it appropriate to send it off with honor.

As mentioned above, the working followed the individual offerings, but was prior to the final one. It could also fit in well into the post-Blessing Cup magical work, but as Chokecherry traditionally has something else scheduled there at Samhain, I chose to do it as part of the offerings. Will I repeat the working again? I will certainly do so when it is requested, and have been sharing the idea with others who have expressed interest. I found it personally very satisfying to hold my packets close to me for the first part of the rite, until I sent them to the ones for whom they were intended. This working could, of course, be done at other times of the year – but as I said at the beginning of this article, Samhain-tide is a particularly appropriate season.

Rev. D. Rowen Grove is the current ADF Preceptor and Senior Druid of Chokecherry Grove in Denver, Colorado.

Offering to the Earth

By Jenne Micale

Eriu, Banba, Fotla: at the base
of the tree I sing the invocation
to the many-named land. The Earth listens

three-faced and no-faced, broad and narrow.
I am uncertain. I miss steps, offer
the oil to the fire, the bread to the tree,

the harvest to a hole in the Earth.
What is given must be returned, I know.
So I give and give, hoarse-voiced, I give.

Altars

By Jenne Micale

The candles offer up their suns, their heat.
Incense wreathes the idols with ghostly leaves.
No altars are neglected. None are lost.

Our understandings have transmogrified,
just as the clay has been shaped into form,
just as leaves were powdered into incense.

Just as wine sings of summer and the grape,
so our love of the Gods sings forth, too –
changed with the press of time, and yet sweeter.



The Voyage of Bran

By Jenne Micale

Build your home on the rock, not the sand,
a door in each wall, the head of Bran
uttering his blessings upon the land –

Save for that one door, sealed and locked tight,
silent, stern, tantalizing your sight –
a darkness in that mansion of light.

Open – and then you know Bran is dead
and home long away. Rise from your bed
to see dawn – true dawn – rising in red.

Prayer to the Storm

By Jenne Micale

The green is bucking and brightening.
We cannot know the storm's road, where she
stops
and where she passes by, dry as bones –

what she lashes and what she feeds, how hard
the rain pounds her fists against the windows.
O come, dark Goddess, with your howling
hounds,

with your dancing bells on the soaking ground!
Even the tower blackened by lightning –
I open my arms to that sudden light.

For the Harvest: A Villanelle

By Rev. D. Rowen Grove

The harvest ripens, day by day,
and summer's green is washed with gold;
so Time slips on, and will not stay.

The boughs that blossomed white in May
are heavy hung with apples bold –
the harvest ripens, day by day.

The rolling year turns on its way;
soon summer's warmth will yield to cold.
So Time slips on, and will not stay –

sharp scythes shall reap the corn and hay
and laden wagons homeward roll.
The harvest ripens, day by day

till what was gold then fades to grey
as bright leaves crumble into mold;
so Time slips on, and will not stay.

Then sing and dance while yet we may
until our tale at last is told –
the harvest ripens, day by day:
so Time slips on, and will not stay.



The Poppy Prayer

By Jenne Micale

You are crowned with poppies, O Demeter,
and bid me restful sleep as the Mother
you are. And in the scarlet of poppies,

the Holy Daughter laughs and inquires
why I do not write the prayers I recite
or simply offer them from the heart's blood.

Like poppies you rise shining from the grass
beckoning with the maze of your pistils.
To you, I offer my own heart's poppies

brilliant and short-lived, ever-returning
hidden among the golden harvest
and the summer shoots, joy in your footsteps.

A Prayer For and With the Virtues

By Birgit Reinartz

This prayer is meant for the time around the equinoxes, but it can be used at other times, too. I tried to translate it. For a version that partly rhymes you have to rely to the German text further down, though. I thought it might be nice to speak the first two lines, and then sing the third that always repeats.

I confront what lies ahead,
not careless but with responsibility:
Between dark and light: My inner world is in
balance.

I know my boundaries, my values.
But I won't let myself get boxed in and limited.
Between dark and light: My inner world is in
balance.

I am brimming with productivity, ideas
and creativity, but I can receive, too:
Between dark and light: My inner world is in
balance.

I can be a good host and good guest, too,
respect for me, respect for you:
Between dark and light: My inner world is in
balance.

I pull the yarn, I make something happen,
but not so harsh that the fabric is destroyed:
Between dark and light: My inner world is in
balance.

I do what is right,
because I love myself and I love the cosmos:
Between dark and light: My inner world is in
balance.

I strive for knowledge, full of curiosity,
without giving up everything else that moves me:
Between dark and light: My inner world is in
balance.

I have a vision of what can be,
but all the while I am anchored in reality:
Between dark and light: My inner world is in
balance.

I have discipline, my goal always in my focus,
but at the same time I welcome a bit of chaos in
my life.
Between dark and light: My inner world is in
balance.

Worries, efforts, fear and duties,
joy, hope and confidence,
serenity will come to me,
my inner world is in balance,
the world around me is in balance!



Ein Gebet um und mit den Tugenden

Ich stelle mich dem, was da kommt.
Nicht sorglos, sondern voller Verantwortungs-
gefühl:
Zwischen Dunkelheit und Licht: Welt in mir im
Gleichgewicht

Ich kenne meine Grenzen, meine Werte.
Doch ich lasse mich nicht begrenzen und
einengen:

Zwischen Dunkelheit und Licht: Welt in mir im Gleichgewicht

Ich sprudele vor Produktivität, Ideen und Schöpferkraft, doch ich kann auch annehmen:

Zwischen Dunkelheit und Licht: Welt in mir im Gleichgewicht

Ich kann gastfreundlich sein und guter Gast, Respekt für mich, Respekt für dich:
Zwischen Dunkelheit und Licht: Welt in mir im Gleichgewicht

Ich ziehe am Faden, ich bewirke etwas, doch nicht so fest, dass das Gewebe zerstört wird:
Zwischen Dunkelheit und Licht: Welt in mir im Gleichgewicht

Ich tue das, was richtig ist, aus Liebe zu mir und aus Liebe zum Kosmos:
Zwischen Dunkelheit und Licht: Welt in mir im Gleichgewicht

Ich strebe nach Wissen, voll Neugier, doch ohne alle andere dafür aufzugeben, was mich bewegt:
Zwischen Dunkelheit und Licht: Welt in mir im Gleichgewicht

Ich habe eine Vorstellung, was sein kann, doch ich bin zugleich fest verankert in der Realität:
Zwischen Dunkelheit und Licht: Welt in mir im Gleichgewicht

Ich habe Disziplin, das Ziel immer vor Augen, doch ich heiße das Chaos in meinem Leben willkommen.
Zwischen Dunkelheit und Licht: Welt in mir im Gleichgewicht

Sorgen, Mähen, Angst und Pflicht, Freude, Hoffnung, Zuversicht, Gelassenheit für mich in Sicht,
Welt in mir im Gleichgewicht
Welt um mich im Gleichgewicht!

Thanksgiving Prayer

By Jenne Micale

Let me be grateful, let me be thankful for this most broken of worlds. For our health, while we have it, for our fleeting youth

too eager to run into the arms of age. For plenty in those seasons when the rains drench the fires but do not

drown the crops. For every sweet word, every bitter conversation, every note sung even when our voices crack.



A Prayer for Kindness

By Jenne Micale

May we be kind. Not mighty or bold or even brave in the common way, but the hand that strengthens a weakened back

or mends the wing of an injured sparrow. Let us show kinship to those who are not linked to us by blood or obligation.

Let us bestow our attention on those who can do nothing for us, our friendship on the friendless, our warmth on the cold.

In My Corner (Corner Prayer)

By Rev. Jean "Drum" Pagano



In my corner of the room,
I call to my household Gods,
To give them a home,
With offerings of water,
And shelter,
And honor.



In my corner of this yard,
I call to the Earth Mother,
To give her a place to rest,
With offerings of peace,
Amidst the flowers,
Amidst the plants,



In my corner of this shrine,
I call to the Ancestors,
To give them a home,
With offerings of memory,
And recollection,
And whiskey,
For their thirst.



Amidst the life in slow-motion
In my corner of this forest,
I call to the spirits of Nature,
To be part of the flow,
With offerings of observation.
The stream babbles its name,
The leaves rustle their story,
The wind sings to the land.



In my corner of the sky,
I call to the many Gods,
Shining down upon me with their rays.
With offerings of prayers and palms to the sky,
I lift this gifts up to you,
I capture the bounty down-pouring,
I gather this moment,
In my corner of time.



The Poets

Rev. D. Rowen Grove. Rowen joined ADF in the spring of 2010, and completed her Dedicant Path work two years later. She became an ADF Initiate in 2015 and was ordained an ADF Priest in 2016. She is currently Senior Druid of Chokecherry Grove, ADF, in Denver, Colorado

Jenne Micale. Jenne is a writer, singer, priestess, and musician whose endeavors include the ethereal/wyrd folk project Kwannon and, in former times, the wyrd folk band Belladonna Bouquet. A former initiate of the Henge of Keltria, she won the 2009 DANAC Golden Oak Award for best Druidical essay, and has published articles and poetry in a variety of publications. She is currently Bard of the ADF Protogrove of the Three Gorges. Listen to her music at www.kwannon.net.

Rev. Jean “Drum” Pagano. Drum has been a member of ADF since 1984 (he was ADF’s eighth member). He is an ADF Senior Priest, an Initiate, and ADF’s current Archdruid. He enjoys working with his various altars, spending time in Nature, and studying and teaching the Ogham.

Birgit Reinartz . Birgit joined ADF in 2013. She is a Solitary member and lives in Germany.

Virtues Essay Part 3: The Activity

By Judith O'Grady

As I wrote in the previous essays, I make a correspondence between the Nine Virtues and the Kindreds, allotting three virtues to each. In the 'thanking' portion of every ritual our grove, Lake of Oaks, thanks the Kindreds for being present and also for being role models by exemplifying the virtues. Enlarging the use-magic of invoking the Kindreds and bringing the virtues into contemplation, I wrote a 'Rosary of the Nine Virtues' for meditative work.

Could I adapt the idea to another use?

Our Grove decided to attempt a children's school (our Grove is family oriented—half of our regular attendees are seven or under) and I wanted to see if I could reduce the rosary of virtues to a children's activity.

Initially I thought of having the virtues written on cards with each child gathering up an envelope of them but this is unworkable in reality, especially when many/most of our children do not yet read. I modified that to each child having a bowl and putting one of something (checkers, wrapped chocolate kisses, acorns since our grove is 'Lake of Oaks') into their bowl as each virtue is shouted out and the activity advances.

Then we decided that meeting up to attend children's school as well as meeting to ritualize was, again, unworkable in reality. We have a prior commitment to meet on the actual day (plus or minus 3) that the Holiday falls on partly to avoid weekend conflict with the established groves but mostly to show the Gods our dedication to the old ways. On weekdays we meet at 7pm so that the participants have a chance to get home from work, eat a little dinner, and motivate to the ritual; both ritualizing and schooling ran way past everyone's bedtimes. It is more important, in my opinion, to meet on the meaningful

days than to run a school so that idea was given up.

Of course, I hate archiving any poetry and visualizing the activity with objects (cherries, coins, liquor-filled chocolates) and bowls for each participant made me realize that it might be 'suitable for all ages' and fun.

The opening call and response is also the opening of our every ritual (so everybody knows the answer and it is familiar) and the ending with everyone flinging up their hands and yelling 'Woo!' is also the closing of our every ritual, as is tradition.

RECITATION OF THE VIRTUES ACTIVITY

Speaker 1: Why are we here?

All: We are here to honor the Gods!

Speaker 2: We can honor the Gods by being our best selves in mind, heart, and deed. How can we learn Right Thought? The Nature Spirits, the Ancestors, and the Shining Ones will help us.

Speaker 1: Fertility, Integrity, and Perseverance are the teachings of the Nature Spirits.



Speaker 2:
Fertility
Spread Out!

All: Spread Out!

Speaker 1:
Integrity
Honor Scout!

All: Honor Scout!

Speaker 2:
Perseverance
Banish Doubt!

All: Banish Doubt!

Speaker 1: Hospitality, Moderation, and Piety are the teachings of the Ancestors.

Speaker 2:
Hospitality
Don't Cheat!

All: Don't Cheat!

Speaker 1:
Moderation
Short and Sweet!

All: Short and Sweet!

Speaker 2:



Piety
Breathe Deep!

All: Breathe Deep!

Speaker 1: Vision, Courage, and Wisdom are the teachings of the Shining Ones.

Speaker 2:
Vision
See Clear!

All: See Clear!

Speaker 1:
Courage
Conquer Fear!

All: Conquer Fear!

Speaker 2:
Wisdom
Ideas Appear!

All: Ideas Appear!

Speaker 1: After learning and thinking we must add our heart's input to our ideas. How can we learn Right Feeling? The Nature Spirits, the Ancestors, and the Shining Ones will help us.

Speaker 2: Fertility, Integrity, and Perseverance are the teachings of the Nature Spirits.

Speaker 1:
Fertility
Grow Deep!

All: Grow Deep!

Speaker 2:
Integrity
Sow and Reap!

All: Sow and Reap!

Speaker 1:
Perseverance
Save and Keep!

All: Save and Keep!

Speaker 2: Hospitality, Moderation, and Piety are the teachings of the Ancestors.

Speaker 1:
Hospitality
Freely Share!

All: Freely Share!

Speaker 2:
Moderation
Do what's Fair!

All: Do what's Fair!

Speaker 1:
Piety
Always Care!

All: Always Care!

Speaker 2: Vision, Courage, and Wisdom are the teachings of the Shining Ones.

Speaker 1:
Vision
Dawning Light!

All: Dawning Light!

Speaker 2:
Courage
Best in Fight!

All: Best in Fight!

Speaker 1:
Wisdom
Deeper Sight!

All: Deeper Sight!

Speaker 2: After learning, thinking and then finding good feelings, we can decide what is the best thing to do.

How can we learn Right Action?
The Nature Spirits, the Ancestors, and the Shining Ones will help us.

Speaker 1: Fertility, Integrity, and Perseverance are the teachings of the Nature Spirits.

Speaker 2:
Fertility
Green light!

All: Green light!

Speaker 2:



Integrity
Do what's right!

All: Do what's right!

Speaker 1:
Perseverance
Hold on tight!

All: Hold on tight!

Speaker 1: Hospitality, Moderation, and Piety are the teachings of the Ancestors.

Speaker 2:
Hospitality
Give relief!

All: Give relief!

Speaker 1:
Moderation
Safe from Grief!

All: Safe from Grief!

Speaker 2:
Piety
The Old Beliefs!

All: The Old Beliefs!

Speaker 1: Vision, Courage, and Wisdom are the teachings of the Shining Ones.

Speaker 2:
Vision
With Planning!

All: With Planning!

Speaker 1:
Courage
All-Commanding!

All: All-Commanding!

Speaker 2:
Wisdom
Understanding!

All: Understanding!

Speaker 1:
With hearts and minds and acts together,
We can withstand any weather.
To think wise thoughts, to feel what's right,
And do what kindles Shining Light.

Bíodh sé amhlaidh!

All: *Bíodh sé amhlaidh!* ("Bee-shay ow-way")

All Yell: Woo!

Some of the explicators of the different virtues and right states-of-being or way-of-doing are a little fudged – each is not meant to be the be-all and end-all of the virtue but should instead culminate in a general understanding. In other words, the whole is more meaningful than the parts. My invitation to them (and to you if you are not satisfied with the triads) is to find better ones – but you have to find all three virtues in three-syllable rhyming form or a better three-syllable virtue descriptor that still rhymes with its two mates.

In the end, what is important is that our thoughts, feelings, and actions lead us to communication with the Gods and Kindreds and our aspirations to the virtues lead us to our better selves.

What better ending?

Woo!

Judith O'Grady is the Senior Druid of Lake of Oaks Grove, ADF in Ottawa. Both her and the Grove's hearth culture is Irish, expanding to Northern Tier folklore and folk magic in general. Ungrassing lawns, planting trees, and communicating with the Land Spirits are other undertakings.

Indo-European Food Customs: The Apples of Autumn

By Rev. D. Rowen Grove

This is the second in a series of short articles on Indo-European customs regarding foods and feasting. In some, I will be focusing on the traditions of a specific culture; in others, as here, I will touch briefly on the traditions of a variety of cultures concerning a particular sort of food. In all, I intend to include a seasonal recipe, although these will be of varying ages, and not necessarily ancient.

Apples. They are the quintessential fruit of autumn, celebrated and cultivated from Central Asia to the Western Isles, appearing in religious contexts, mythology and folklore, magical uses – and of course, have been eaten and used for brewing for literal millennia. Remains of apples (charred seeds and the like) have been found in archaeological excavations of Iron Age, Bronze Age, and Neolithic living sites, and were deposited as grave-goods across Europe and western Asia at least as far back as 7,000 BCE. Apples were cultivated in orchards in Greece by at least 350 BCE, if not sooner (Alexander the Great is said to have been fond of apples), and early writings from Egypt and Babylon discuss pruning and grafting techniques.

Apple trees are of the genus *Malus*, in the family *Rosacea*, and are therefore a distant relative of the rose. The wild apple (*Malus sieversii*) probably originated in Central Asia, near modern Kazakhstan, and spread through much of the ancient world. There are currently more than twenty-five varieties of wild apples, mostly of a crabapple type, small, and with sour fruit, and there are many more cultivated or hybrid sorts. Modern crabapples are more closely related to their distant ancestor than the larger cooking or eating apples of today. Some modern varieties of apples are self-pollinating, while others need another tree of their own or similar type nearby in order to fruit. Many older sorts are very persis-

tent; there are orchards in Europe which have some trees several hundred years old, and I have observed healthy old apple trees growing wild along some of the 19th century roadsides in the mountains and foothills here in Colorado, where they presumably sprouted from cores tossed aside by early travelers.

Apples and apple trees appear in multiple Indo-European mythologies. In Hellenic lore, a golden-fruited apple tree grew at the center of the garden of the Hesperides; those who ate of the fruit gained immortality. In Northern European belief, the Goddess Iðunn was the keeper of golden apples which kept the Deities healthy and ever-young. (Apples also appear in a number of early Anglo-Saxon medical manuscripts as aids to good health.) In some Celtic lore, apples are associated with rebirth, with a good afterlife, and with the Otherworld. One of the island homes of Manannán mac Lir was an island called *Eamhain Abhlach*, the Realm of Apples; interestingly enough, these apples are also described as golden ones. Apple trees are said to be one of the “nobles of the wood” in early Irish lore. It is interesting to speculate if this rather widespread belief that magical *golden* apples in particular were a source of immortality came from a very early common belief, or if the notion developed independently in multiple cultures. There are quite a few magical and folkloric associations with apples, from love spells to bane-work, foretelling the future to summoning the spirits of the dead; a full survey of apple magic is beyond the scope of this article.

The culinary uses of apples are as widespread and varied as the folk beliefs concerning them, for they have been used in savory dishes as well as sweet ones, baked or stewed on their own, added to egg dishes or salads, in breads, and of course in brewing a variety of ciders, wines, and beers.

The following recipe is clearly not an ancient one, as potatoes are a New World plant. However, there are apparent “ancestors” of this dish in northern and eastern Europe which use turnips or other root vegetables instead. This version is derived from German peasant cookery, and is particularly popular in the Rhineland, Westphalia, and Lower Saxony. It makes a good, solid autumn dish, both sweet and savory, and is quite suitable for an after-ritual potluck. Although many of the traditional recipes call for some amount of meat, I have made variations which are vegetarian or vegan. (See below.)

Himmel und Erde

(“Heaven/Sky and Earth” – two of the Three Realms in one dish.)

8 medium potatoes, cut into 1” cubes (peel if you prefer, otherwise leave the peels on)

4 or 5 large tart apples, cored and cut into 1” cubes

2 medium onions, sliced into 1/8” rings

½ pound or more bacon, cut across into half-inch strips

1 T. cider vinegar

1 t. sugar

black pepper to taste

salt to taste

Bring the potatoes and apples to a boil with the sugar and some salt; cover and simmer until both are tender. Drain if needed, but it is better not to have over-much water in the first place. (Note: in many recipes of this kind, the potatoes and apples are simmered together as directed here, but I have also had good results cooking them separately, and then stirring or mashing them lightly together.)

Fry the bacon until crisp; remove and drain. Cook the sliced onions in the bacon fat until they are soft and brown, or if you prefer to take the time, caramelize them over a very low flame.

Stir the pepper and vinegar into the potato and



apple mixture; serve topped with browned onions and bacon.

For a vegetarian version, omit the bacon, and brown the onions in olive oil or butter, as you prefer; for a vegan dish, or one suitable for someone with a dairy allergy, omit the bacon and cook the onions in olive oil or other good vegetable oil.

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The Work of Invocation: Seeking Audience with the Gods

By Rev. Ian Corrigan

One of the key skills of spiritual ritual is invocation. Invocation is the work of effectively calling the attention of the Gods and Spirits to our rituals and temples, and also of drawing their blessing and power into our personal and community spirits. In the respectful religious approach of our rituals we do not 'summon' the Powers, the Kindreds, except in rare cases in which we have authority. When we light a good Fire, and arrange the proper symbols, when we make fit offerings and recite fair hymns of praise, we know the Gods can hear us, and give blessings.

This mythic perspective is our starting place, the outward form that we bring to our public and personal rites. Like all Pagan work there are layers within layers of symbolism and practice within the basic public outline of the work. These layers are what might be referred to as the 'esoteric' (for the few) or 'occult' (hidden) aspects of the rites. While we hope to encourage all our members to learn the basics of these skills, it is a key part of the work that leads to initiation. In the work of Invocation, for instance, focused vision work, proper use of natural symbols, and consecrated images can add greatly to the clarity and power of our contacts with the Gods.

By using focused spiritual practices, we seek to move outward from our normal awareness toward a spiritual world that can be understood as outside of our common minds. Invocation brings the boundary closer and opens the door for that journey. Invocation is also used to bring the divine and spiritual powers into closer attunement with our individual spiritual natures. By bringing the Gods who exist in the greater cosmos near to us, we intend to awaken their reflections in the little cosmos of our Grove and our hearts.

Basics of Invocation

First, of course, you must attend to the common skills of ritual. Be sure to prepare your Nemeton



well, and approach your invocation in a proper state of trance. Approach the Fire with poise and a calm mind, and use your voice gently and firmly. In all of the solitary rites in this system, it is, perhaps, best to speak aloud in a firm voice, though some may prefer to whisper. In any case, the words should be physically spoken, the gestures physically made and the offerings materially given.

1: Natural Correspondences

Most rites require the proper sorts of natural things to be used as offerings. It is important to spend time in study of the Deity you intend to invoke. By that study you will discover symbols and reflections of the Deities. The power of a Deity, the symbolic reality of its essence, runs in veins and streams throughout the natural world. The Landspirits reflect the great light of the Shining Ones, and so do the souls of mortals. Spirits appear in form, and the forms of stone and land and herb and beast, the very shapes of the stars in the Heavens and the waters in the Earth all reflect the many Gods. So the wise ritualist learns the webs of these strands both from lore and from observation of nature. By this knowledge the Druid knows what offerings are proper to the Gods, and what natural things and signs carry a God's power.

By bringing the right symbols and objects into your Grove, you can make the place more fitting for a God's presence. The right wood for the Fire, the right silver for the Well, the right herbs for offerings all make an environment that allows a

full manifestation of the power of a Deity. Of course, the Gods appear when the wish, if they so desire. Yet it is our skill that makes the temple, and the temple is our instrument, tuned to the specific work at hand to whatever degree we wish. It can be made like a well-shaped lens that, perhaps, allows the Gods to see us more clearly.

2: Visualized Images The deliberate use of imagination to create mental environments and symbols is central to effective spiritual ritual. Just as we prepare a material temple, we can create interior spaces and visualized images that are designed for our work, and attuned to individual Deities and Spirits. These spaces become a Threshold for our mental and spiritual access to the Otherworld itself.

In our work we will not prescribe simple exercises to build your skill in visualization. If you have attempted the Inner Work of the simple rites that you have done on the Dedicant's Path, then you have begun some work with your ability to create visualized events. We will offer a few simple exercises that both build skill and develop your connection with the Cosmos and the Grove. If visualization seems difficult for you, consider using some of the exercises in the resources to build your skill.

Invocation can be greatly enhanced by the use of clear and detailed visualizations of the Deities. Surely, we know that Spirits need not have a fixed form. The Gods are beings that transcend the limitations of form, yet participate in it as they require. Whether as sun and wind or tree or flower or beast, whether as the lowly or the noble, the Gods and Spirits inhabit the forms of the natural world as they will. Yet some say that we human tribes are the descendants of the Gods. Our resemblance to the Gods, and theirs to us, may be familial, our forms shaped by theirs. Or it may be that the forms we humans have shaped for them simply please them, and they are willing to appear in shapes easily understood by us. Such shapes may not be their 'true form', but it may be that they have no single true form at all. There are surely mighty Spirits that are in no way like humans, but those Gods and Spirits who are



Apollo victorious over the Python, by François Gaspard Adam. Image from Wikimedia Commons. Author: Steffen Heilfort GNU Free Documentation License, Version 1.2

willing to deal with we mortals have often been willing to appear in our forms. We will offer some techniques for approaching the Gods without anthropomorphism, but we also employ it freely in our work.

As we approach each of the invocations in this work, we will offer suggested elements that could be included in a visualized image. These are only suggestions, and should ideally be only a supplement to your own research. It is your task to devise personal forms and visions of the Powers, based on your own understanding aided by this advice. These visions will be used to bring us the experience of the presence of the Deity in our rites and, by reflection, their presence in your own body and spirit.

This work is, in essence, the creation of an Inner Idol, an image of the sort that the ancients made for their temples. Where the ancients made images of oak and gold and silver, we can craft in vision, color, and light, in every hue and sub-



Columns of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, Greece. Image from Wikimedia Commons. Author: Patar Knight. Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported license. 2.

stance, even in flesh and motion and voice. It is simple enough to ‘make’ such an image move and speak, but less simple to use that ability wisely.

As a first step it can be useful to compose your visualization as though it were an image or portrait. Decide how you will see the figure’s body type, face and hair. Choose what style of clothes and what colors it shall have. Choose what surroundings it will have, whether natural or abstract. Finally choose what special symbols, weapons, beasts or plants or other signs will be present with it. That latter is one of the most important links to the traditional form of the God. In all this be guided by your study of lore, as you create what would be your ideal idol or portrait of the God.

A core technique of invocation is to begin with such an Inner Eidolon, and from there proceed to an image that moves and speaks. Once you have completed the ritual invitation of a Deity, you should envision the idol become aware, the eyes and face lively. You should see the Deity gesture or act. It will not be our custom to script words for the images of the Gods to speak. We may suggest initial movements or gestures that the

enlivened image might perform. From there you engage first your contemplative meditation and, perhaps, your creative impulse. In those moments, you have the chance to break through from your Threshold to glimpse the Gods themselves.

3: Material Images

From the Threshold state you will seek to know the reality of the Otherworld outside your common mind. From that same state you can also work to bring the power of the Otherworld into the mortal realms. This is done in every full rite by the Blessing, which brings the power of the Powers into the very bodies of the worshippers. During the Blessing we often take in the Divine power by drinking or eating things charged with the Spirit’s intent. This is one of the methods by which we make the God’s temple and presence imminent in our own hearts. We will discuss techniques for that work below. A second very traditional method of grounding spirit into the world is through the use of physical idols and images. This work is much more concerned with making the divine power present in the natural or external world, where it can bless and inspire a group.

In a polytheist and nature-positive spiritual path like ours, there is little room for the idea that the Divine disdains to dwell in forms made by mortal

hands. One of the things that humans share with the Gods and Spirits is the power of Shaping. It is ours to take the raw materials of the natural world and shape them into every sort of thing. History shows us that from the dawn of human material culture we have used our power of shaping to create depictions, dwellings and even bodies for the Gods and Spirits. Images, marker stones, spirit houses, anthropomorphic eidola, and fetishes all have their proper place in traditional Pagan worship and spirituality.

Most Druidic Pagans may wish to use small images, idols or tokens of the God that is worked with in any given rite. We will begin by opening awareness to the Earth Mother and the Gatekeeper. You may wish to begin by finding shrine images that speak to you for a regular place on your shrine.

The Work of Invocation

So, we find in these methods a formula for the practice of invocation. We begin with the conception of the Deity, drawn from our understanding of the lore. From that conception we create or choose both a poetic hymn of praise and calling, and a Threshold Eidolon of the Deity. The rite is prepared with the proper offerings and natural things, used to create an atmosphere attractive to the Spirit. If you have found the proper image or idol, you might complete the calling down by grounding the presence of the Spirit in the image.

There are two phases to the application of this formula. First there is planning and preparation. You must study the lore and tales of the Deity or Spirits to be invoked. Assemble the herbs, offerings and natural signs as you choose. Compose the Inner Eidolon of the Deity, and consider using a material image or token as well. All of this is brought together as you prepare your physical temple for the rite.

In the ritual performance itself you will begin, perhaps, by offering a bit of the proper incense or oil or herb onto your Fire. Deepen your trance and compose an Inner Eidolon of the Deity. See it as though it were a perfect statue or image in your Inner Grove, though you need not rise into

the Inner to do so. You can envision the image in the light of the Gate, as it were, above and within your material nemeton. Let the image be mirrored in your brow, and begin the spoken invocation and offerings. As you complete the invocation you can see the Inner Eidolon wake to life, and feel it reflected in your Fire and Water. This is the first moment of audience with the Power. You behold the God and the God beholds you. You contemplate the presence of the God as you take an omen and hallow the Blessing.

The receiving and drinking of the Blessing offers the opportunity for a special moment of union with the Deity. There are many ways to envision the power and presence of the Deity entering the Blessing. You might see the Blessing as a color, perhaps chosen by the omen. That color might flow from the Inner Image into your Vessel and from there into your body, suffusing your form. You might see the Image reflected in the waters of the Vessel, then taken within physically, to be present in the body itself.

This is the second, and greater, moment of 'audience' with the Deity. In a solitary ritual, perhaps focused on meeting and knowing a specific God, you should then take as much time as you wish to in contemplation of the Presence. When you are invoking as part of practical spell-binding you will spend a moment in contemplation, and in feeling the God's power expressed in your spirit, and then proceed to act, using that power. If you find yourself leading group High Day rituals, it becomes your task to help this communion happen for the whole group. When you recite a final blessing in such a case, the folk will truly be blessed. As you work the various invocations of the Gods required by this outline you should begin with a firm aspiration to meet and commune with each God. To that you bring the Druid's skills of Vision, of Shaping, and of Speech. With these skills we turn to attention of the Gods to our Fire, and make a channel and a temple for their power in our own spirits.

Rev. Ian Corrigan is a senior priest and Archdruid Emeritus of ADF., He blogs at <https://intothemound.blogspot.com/>.

First Light: The Origins of Newgrange

Reviewed by Rev. G. R. Grove

First Light: The Origins of Newgrange

By Robert Hensey

Oxbow Books (June 30, 2015)

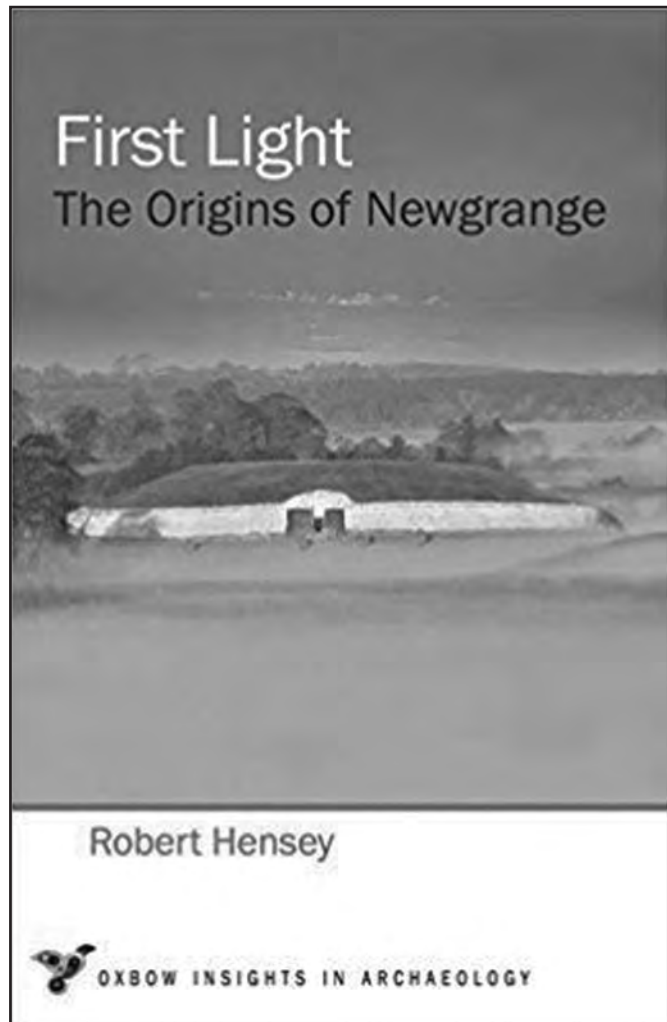
ISBN-10: 1782979514

210 pages

I picked up a copy of this book at the visitor center at Tara, towards the end of a recent two week-long visit to Ireland. Either then or on an earlier trip, I have visited many of the sites described, and I was intrigued by the book's premise that Newgrange in its current form falls at the end of a long evolutionary series of passage tombs which may reflect a social and religious evolution of the people building them.

Hensey estimates that there are approximately 260 passage tombs of various sizes in Ireland, many not yet excavated. They tend to occur in groups, although there are also a number of solitary examples. The four main complexes lie along a line stretching from near Sligo on the west coast to the Boyne Valley complex (which includes Newgrange) near the east coast. These complexes are respectively known as Carrowmore, Carrowkeel, Loughcrew, and Brú na Bóinne.

Hensey divides Irish passage tombs into three groups. The earliest ones (Type 1) were relatively small and simple things. Some of these, in the Carrowmore complex, have been dated to between 3775 and 3520 BCE in age. These passage tombs are small, most of them too small for a person to enter. They often consist of five or six stones and a capstone, forming a small pear-shaped chamber, usually without a covering mound. Objects such as bones could be inserted into them, and that seems to have been their function. They are surrounded by a circle of vertically set boulders, giving rather the impression (at least to me when I visited some of the sites) of a circle of standing stones with the



remains of a chambered tomb in its center. Any rituals involved with them would have had to take place outside.

Type 2 monuments, the most typical group of Irish passage tombs, were substantially larger. They include central chambers, often multi-lobed and large enough to contain several people, which are accessed by means of a covered passage. Most were covered with a stone cairn above the internal structures, and surrounded by a curb of horizontally laid stones. The size of the central chamber would have allowed private rituals to be held there. These tombs are also the first to contain megalithic art – abstract designs including circles, cup-marks, spirals, lozenge/triangles, U-motifs, zigzags, serpentiforms, and radial forms – such as those for which Newgrange is famous. At Type 2 monuments,

however, the carvings are usually inside the chamber, unlike Type 3 where they are outside as well. A number of these monuments occur in the Carrowkeel and Loughcrew complexes, both notable for their location on prominent and steep hilltops with incredible views (as I can testify). There are too few radiocarbon dates for these monuments to be certain, but they were probably built after 3600 or 3500 BCE, and continued to be built and used until the end of the passage tomb tradition around 2900 BCE, overlapping the construction of the Type 3 monuments.

Type 3 monuments, including Newgrange, Knowth, Dowth, and a few others, appear to have been designed for public display – outside rituals as well as private interior ones. Their features include platforms around the exterior, large external art, and exotic and elaborate ritual equipment. They are the most architecturally complex monuments – exceptionally large, some with diameters of over 50 meters, with larger stones, longer curbstones, longer passages, and straightened façades. The lightbox feature most famous at Newgrange is found in possibly earlier versions at a few other sites. An interesting feature of Newgrange is the reuse of older decorated stones, presumably taken from earlier versions of the monument.

Hensey traces the possible religious rituals involved with this series of monuments: first, small group rituals outside the Type 1 mounds, centered on the placement of small amounts of cremated human bone inside the chambers; next, private rituals in the enclosed darkness of the Type 2 mounds, where the multiple recesses could have held individuals for prolonged initiatory experiences which may have been connected with the megalithic art on the chamber walls; and finally large public rituals, possibly attended by whole tribes and involving a priestly class of religious specialists. Why did the passage tombs eventually go out of use? We do not know – on this question the stones are silent.

I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in passage tombs, or indeed prehistoric religion. Hensey’s description of possible ritual



One of the Carrowkeel tombs showing blocking stone, entrance and lightbox. Photo by Rev. G. R. Grove.

experiences in the Type 2 monuments fascinates me; I wonder what we of ADF could achieve today with a modern version? I will close this review with a quotation from the last paragraph of the book: “The light which shines into Newgrange every winter solstice is a symbol of the tremendous skill and creativity of our Irish and European ancestors, and creates a bridge between those people and us. The winter solstice light at Newgrange allows us to see a little of their world; we see something they saw... What was Newgrange for? The builders told us: it was about light; it was about the sun; it was about life. The wonder is that their message was delivered. This could only happen because of the knowledge and skills gained through hundreds of years of imagining and constructing similar monuments... Newgrange was not the first light, or the only light, but it was undoubtedly one of the brightest.”

Rev. G. R. Grove is an ADF Consecrated Priest and Editor in Chief of Oak Leaves.

Music Review: Kwannon's "Ancestor" and "Talamh"

By Kevin "Arth yn Rhedeg" Jenkyns

No music is turned away from the Bear Cave. The Bear has listened to and enjoyed music from places far away and times immemorial. This Bear has a particular fondness for the music of the Human Folk. With their use of rhythm, simple to complex. The way the two-leggers create wondrous devices to create new and unusual sounds. And, the wide range of sounds they create with their awe-inspiring voices... These are the things that make me a Happy Bear. Now, without further ado, let me share my thoughts on my latest discovery, Kwannon.

Kwannon is a project composed of two spirits, Jenne and Shoshen, who muse, compose, and produce music from their Den in upstate New York. Their style is hard to categorize but I would generically call it "World Folk". Their unique sound combines mythology, poetry, rhythm, often mysterious vocalizations, and an abundance or rare and obscure folk instruments. Shoshen is described as being able "[t]o get a complex and interesting rhythm out of damn near anything." Jenne sings Opera in her spare time and is the voice(s) of Kwannon. It seems she also will play most any instrument that she can get her hands on with a preference for the instruments made with more "folksy" styles of construction as opposed to the more modern, machined instruments. However, for you techno-musicians, they will incorporate the synthesizer when deemed appropriate.

I used the term "World Folk" earlier. and this seems accurate for now. It's a crude term at best, because the definition is sometimes as dynamic as the wind. The term "World Music" was first coined to the 1960s and the term went through decades of definition and redefining. It took nearly thirty years to be recognized as a "real" genre. However, even today, the definition is evolving, changing, and growing. It was found that with the genre there had to be additional genres as there is too much music in the world to be enfolded with-

in a single "generic" realm. One of the children of this need is "World Folk". I'm taking a great liberty here but I would define "World Folk" as music that utilizes various cultural elements (e. g. rhythms and tonalities, stories, mythology, legends, and poetry) from one or more cultural base, the aboriginal base if you will, and melds it into a musical expression that, if well executed, will create a sound that says "home" to all who hear it regardless of where they are from and where they are now. Another way to define this music is to remember being on my grandparent's farm, as a child, and finding nothing unusual about the kan-tele, the bulbul tarang and the psaltery being played alongside of the guitar and fiddle.

I had the privilege to listen to two of Kwannon's CDs. The first is titled, "Ancestor." The second is titled, "Talamh." As this Bear has only so much space, I will share some overall thoughts as well as pick out a couple of songs to call out. First to "Ancestors." Using lyrics from people like Alfred Lord Tennyson and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, this was a complete surprise and it was well executed. Reading these names alone had me intrigued. As Ffraid (Brigid) is patron of my house, "A Prayer to Brigid in Times of Violence" really caught my eye and ear. This CD has quite a mix of moods to choose from. We have the poetic, we have the stories, we have the invocations and we have the prayers. This makes this CD best for listening for variety and keeping the mind sharp while leaving it free to wander as it might. One could choose to listen to specific tracks to achieve specific results. For example, listening to "White Sow" and "Midnight Invocation" to invoke a relaxed or trance state. Listening to "Songs of Experience" and "Auguries of Innocence" might induce one to dance. One track I didn't particularly enjoy was "*Teach Duinn*". This piece has a *passacaglia* styled bass line and an ethereal sounding harmony. The difficulty here is that the 4 note *passacaglia* bass line overpowered the voices above. On

the other hand, the piece “White Sow” was a totally different trip. At first, I didn’t like this one at all. However, after listening to it a couple of more times I began to get what was going on here. The rhythms are extremely complicated and the melody is, too. The rhythm, the melody and the way the music foreshadows the melody lines to come makes this my favorite piece on this CD. There are a number of tracks here that have a truly toe-tapping beat and melodies that are fun to listen to, and, if you’re a singer, it will be hard not to want to join in.

“Talamh” opens with “Oisín On the Shore Sees the Woman”. It has a *passacaglia* styled bass, played on the harmonium I believe, similar to the one I mentioned above. Again, I think it was too strong for what was going on above. In contrast, “Secret Love” had a light hearted feel that certainly could see one dancing with your secret love. My greatest surprise in this CD was “The Morrigan’s Prophecy”. I could go into a dissertation as to the mathematics involved in what the synthesizer was doing in this piece. (Harking back to my Moog Sonic Six days.) I would never have thought that this synth and more traditional synthesis would have ever worked. However, it does and I dare say there’s a bit of genius here.

Overall, I would give these CDs as a whole, 4 out of 5 honey pots and would recommend them to the World Music phenomenon aficionado.

Check out Kwannon at www.kwannon.net. There you will find more information about this project, the store where you can purchase the CD or tracks, lyrics and more lyrics and a list, and nice paragraphs about the various instruments that Kwannon uses on their CDs. They also offer the ability to listen to some of their musical meanderings and works in progress. Truly fun for any music loving Bear.



Kevin Jenkyns (“Arth yn Rhedeg”) has been a member of ADF since 2012. He is sometimes referred to by friends as the ‘Walker Between Worlds’ due to his ability to be accepted into sacred Rituals and Ceremonies across belief systems and cultures.

Word Search Puzzle: Sophocles' Theban Plays

By Rev. G. R. Grove

D	P	E	C	O	L	O	N	U	S	L	G
T	H	E	B	E	S	L	F	T	H	A	P
A	I	D	N	D	T	Y	J	D	C	I	O
N	N	M	C	I	D	S	O	V	R	U	L
T	X	S	O	P	H	O	C	L	E	S	Y
I	B	C	N	U	A	R	A	T	O	X	N
G	T	H	E	S	E	U	S	B	N	B	E
O	V	D	S	O	D	P	T	E	S	N	I
N	N	T	M	D	L	G	R	W	Q	B	C
E	E	I	N	Y	E	S	A	A	R	X	E
A	S	W	G	E	T	E	O	C	L	E	S

SOPHOCLES
OEDIPUS
LAIUS
JOCASTRA
THEBES
CREON

COLONUS
POLYNEICES
ETEOCLES
DELPHI
THESEUS
ANTIGONE

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6 May, 2019

Rev. G R (Gwernin) Grove
Liturgists Guild Circle 3
9 May, 2019

Amy Gorniak
Dedicant Path
20 May, 2019

Daniel Parson
Dedicant Path
4 June, 2019

**Jacqueline Composanto, (Jacqueline
Composanto)**
Dedicant Path
10 June, 2019

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It's not the light you *absorb*,
but the light you *reflect*

~Rev. Jean Pagano~



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