



[Return to Missal-Any News Desk](#) or [Return to RDNA homepage](#)



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Samhain, Year 44 (Nov 5, 2006)

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CONTENTS OF THIS ISSUE:

Samhain Essay: End of Summer
News of the Groves
Sixth Annual Wintertime Bardic Contest
2006-2007 ARDA 2 Study Conference
Second Epistle of Robert: Three Druids
Mission-ary Impossible: File 1
Inner Sight: Remembering September
Introduction to Modern Druid Groups; pt 7
News: Judge Saves Trees
News: Plan for Bardic Founder Memorial
Events: Live Like a Celt Day!
Events: Singing at the Well of Remembering
Events: Cruinneachadh nan Gaidheal
Calendar



amhain, Celtic New Year, the day between the Worlds. The Druid year starts with Samhain, in the fall of the year, just as the Druid reckoning of days begins each day at night fall. This marks the end of the harvest season. Any fruit not gathered in by Samhain Eve must be left in the fields to feed the birds and wild animals, or the Sidhe, as one would have it. According to Fran?ise Le Roux, whose article, "Studies on the Celtic Feast Days" has been translated out of the French by one of our subscribers, Jeanne Elizabeth, Samhain may be derived from Sam

Fuin, Weakening or End of Summer. Other competing derivations from Sam Rad or Samhna are by no means disproven. Samh-rad, summer or Samhrach, quiet.

Like New Year's Celebrations everywhere, Samhain festivities fall into two sequential phases; one that signifies a return to Chaos, e.g. disposal of old goods, expelling of evil, reversal of usual habits of behavior, parties, suspension of taboos, and the return of the dead, all on Samhain night; and a second which signifies re-birth of the Cosmos and creation anew, e.g. lighting of new fires, beginning of a new season, inauguration of new ceremonies, reaffirmation of the existing order and installation of new leaders. This will be enacted at the Dawn Service Samhain morning, in the Reformed Druid tradition. The newly elected Arch Druid, Preceptor, and Server enact the first service of the new year; the Third Order Druids change their ceremonial ribbons to new, white ones, and winter begins.

By Emmon Bodfish, reprinted from A Druid Missal-Any, Samhain 1984



News of the Groves



For the [Full Grove Directory](#)



Carleton Grove: News from Minnesota

Things at the Carleton Grove have been quiet as usual. We're planning to host a bonfire and maybe a sweat lodge to celebrate the final days before the Earth-Mother lays down to sleep. Samhain here is a very quiet and reflective time; we ponder over the ended season.

We like to see the Earth-Mother away with a thought, experience, or a moment of personal growth that occurred over the past year in hopes that they'll help her through her journey before her return at Beltane.

Samhain isn't a time for reckless celebration, but a time to realize that we have to rely on each other as humans, Druids, and as Brothers and Sisters. The season of sleep, to me, is a time for mortals realizing that life is ephemeral (but cyclic), and a time for self-reflection- getting to know what you want and desire, and to evaluate your chosen path as a Druid. It's important to stay true to yourself, and to the Mother.

Yours in the Earth-Mother,
Ian



Hemlock Splinters Grove: News from New York

Hemlock Splinters has become a research grove. We have had more hard work than celebrations, but have made some interesting discoveries. For example: Apple, beech, and aspen trees vegetatively propagate through their roots as they grow cloning themselves in fact. This means that what appears to us as a grove of aspen is in fact one individual made of many trees, some of which are young, mature, or dying at any given time, all of which are connected by their roots. Meditations on the nature of the individual aside, this means that while any given tree will die, the grove is potentially immortal. Another

revelation was which of all our ecological systems contributes the most to the recycling of nutrients in life's endless war against entropy. The rain-forest devours itself as it grows, while the hungry ocean segregates light, oxygen, and nutrients: the ingredients of life. But on the boundary between land and sea, the humble salt marsh quietly out produces every biome on earth.

Happy pondering.
Irony



Digitalis Grove: News from D.C.

Happy Celtic New Year, folks! Don't forget to overdose on sugar and chocolate!

Digitalis Grove will officially close shop on Feb 1 2007, as I make preparations to go overseas, but I suspect that my grove's offshoot, Terrapin Grove, at the University of Maryland will continue to serve the metropolitan region of Washington D.C. You can read more about my actions in La*s in my new column called "Missionary Impossible" in the Druid Missal-Any, since I won't actually be running an official grove or mission in Asia.

As you will also see in this issue, I'll be keeping busy with running the ARDA 2 Study Conference and also the Bardic contest during the Time of Sleep over Winter 2006-2007. I hope many of you will participate in this and keep busy to ward off Cabin Fever.



Dogwood Proto-Grove: News from Virginia

Dogwood Proto-grove announces that its military member deployed to Iraq will be returning to the States just before Yule.

We will be working on Animal totems and medicines for the dark half of the year. We will be covering several bodies of knowledge including Native American teachings, Celtic teachings and teachings from other traditions. We will also be discussing what animals and animal totems participants work with including individual interpretations and meanings of animal behavior.

To join, just send an email to dogwoodgrove-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

Athbhliain faoi mhaise duit!



Rockspray Proto-grove: News from Indiana

For Samhain we are having a large get together with all of our friends. We also have a little more private ordeal for those who are in the group. We will celebrate by having a feast for all with thanks for the fall season and preparing for the coming of winter.

Moose Breechcloth Proto-Grove: News From Minnesota



Seasonal salutations siblings!

What to write....wow...is it that time already? Didn't I just submit a "Grove News?"

Things are steady as she goes here. Just picked up a commission to make a Native American choker for the S.O. of a gal pal of mine. He's...uh...well, he's mixed. Lots of that going around. He's mixed white, Creek, and...South Pacific Islander something or other. How did THAT happen?! "White man give us...boat." I thought he was going to deck me when I cracked that joke. He was ticked off for all of about two seconds before he started laughing.

The child prodigy I spoke of in the last installment was tickled pink with the pipestone I picked up for him. He's promised to carve some beads for me with it. Said beads will NOT be used in the choker I'll be making. No no no. Those I'm saving for myself.

Speaking of beads, jewelry, and whatnot, I took Lou's mom to a Native American art fair recently. She really enjoyed herself, and was full of questions.

"What's that? What does this do? What does this represent? Hey, is that a rattle?"

"NO! Don't shake the rattle! I'd hate to see you accidentally conjure the Windigo!"

It didn't come down to me tackling an elderly lady to get the rattle out of her hands. But I had to explain to her that the rattle is a gift from the gods to be used to conjure spirits. In the hands of an amateur, who knows what you might get. The Windigo...lunch with the spirit of Crazy Horse...the winning lottery numbers...a poke in the eye...a permanent wedgie...who knows.

Word to the wise...don't shake the rattle.

Speaking of conjuring....

This coming weekend I'll be conjuring with poultry. Yeah...camping. Oooh, there's a surprise. A gal pal of ours has agreed to go camping with us. We're supposed to get some snow...I hope they're right. My snowshoes have been barking at me lately. A condition of her camping with us was that I smoke a turkey over the campfire. She doesn't think it can be done. Oh ye of such little faith. Hence...conjuring with poultry. Of course, Lou is looking forward to humping my 40-pound cast iron smoker to our campsite with great joy. He loves lugging that beast around.

Think she'll notice when I slip a 12-pound frozen turkey into her pack?

Autumn has come to Minnesota in all it's colorful glory. Of course, my neighbors' trees have been pooping all their leaves into my yard.

Hunting season should be starting fairly soon here. Hopefully my co-worker will have some hides for me to tan this year. Last year wasn't so hot.

Well siblings, I think that's pretty much it. Not much has happened...of course, not much time has gone by since the last installment.

Hope all of you have a great autumn. And we'll chat soon!

Gigawabamin nagutch,
and yours in the Mother,

Julie Ann and Lou?



Canine Grove: News from Oregon

The pacific northwest is going more and more from sunny, warm and gorgeous to wet, cold and dreary; not to mention that being at the 45th parallel, less and less sun in a very noticeable way. We, that is the cat and I, will be working in what is left in the garden, prepping it for the coming winter, and to do a small ritual for Samhain. The weekend before Samhain one of us will be participating in a psychic faire.

Bindii



Clan of the Triplehorses: News from Oregon

The Clan of the Triple Horses, based in Southern Oregon, will welcome in the Season of Sleep at a gathering to be held at a private residence on Tuesday evening, October 31.

For a copy of our ritual script and/or for details, please contact triplehorses@gmail.com

For more information about our grove, please see <http://home.earthlink.net/~triplehorses/>



Sierra Madrone grove: News from California

Greetings Everyone,

We at the Sierra Madrone Grove have been busy as usual. Last month, we performed a marriage ritual for the daughter of one of our members. The new couple had a beautiful pagan wedding! We had a booth at this year's Sacramento Pagan Harvest Festival, and the Sierra Madrone Grove performed the opening Ritual. Our booth raised a little money as well through some books that were donated to us. We have Samhuinn approaching, and we have a fabulous ritual planned. We are going to have our ancestor shrine, a huge potluck, a ritual on the Sacramento River, and our powerful sumble.

Peace,
Sean mac Dhomhnuill
Sierra Madrone Grove



Duir De Danu Grove: News from California

As Samhain approaches, here is another opportunity to join our groups.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AbbottsInnSchoolofMagick>

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/DruidWicca_Coven

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/GreatWildBeastFurthermentSociety>

For Hazelnut MotherGrove you need an invitation. Either contact me at Yahoo IM **pyewacket156** or email me tezra.reitan@gmail.com for an invitation. I will need your email addy, since that is what I use to invite people. As soon as I know you aren't a spammer, I will invite you. You can also talk to Stephen Abbott about an invite to join Hazelnut MotherGrove. His Yahoo IM id is **abbotts_inn** and his email addy is abbottsinn@gmail.com

Tegwedd ShadowDancer



Sunset Proto-Grove: News from California

After spending so much time in a tropical local, it is more than refreshing to be home, where the seasons are true to themselves. The air is spiked with different scents, and a sweater keeps the chill off.

Here are photographic samples of our weekend, picking pumpkins.



To mix things up a bit, I got a white pumpkin this year. The kids called it a druid pumpkin.



Poison Oak Grove: News from California

Publisher of "A Druid Missal-Any"

On September 15th the Grove's Arch Druid (first one on the left) participated in A Day of Caring, co-sponsored by her company, at Crissy Field in the Presidio, part of the Golden Gate National Parks. Crissy Field was at one time an air strip

but is now being restored to its natural habitat of sand dunes, grasslands, and wetlands. The group spent the afternoon in the service of the Earth Mother removing split-leaf plantain an invasive plant.



As an alternate Grove activity to celebrate the New Moon and the harvest two members went to Perry's Pumpkin Patch and Corn MAiZE in Fremont next to Ardenwood Historical Farm on Oct. 22. This was not a simple maze for the faint of heart! Our intrepid members followed a map of the maze and seriously doubt if they did not have this map, they would have never returned.



2006-2007 Wintertime Bardic Contest



Rules of the 2006-2007 Contest

Just because the Time of Sleep is approaching after Halloween, means that your creative urges have to go dormant! Last year's Fifth Annual contest was a bit weaker than the Fourth, and we hope for a lot more inspiration from you and your friends this year. Start a rivalry with a fellow poet!

The RDNA will have our 6th Annual Wintry Bardic Contest from Nov 1st 2006 to May 1st 2007, on this conference. Anytime during that period, submit to me your poems, songs, SHORT epic sagas, free-verse, or even SHORT stories to me at mikerdna@hotmail.com and I will host them this year as the judge on the webpage <http://www.rdna.info/bard6.html>

0. The words have to be your own, but you may parody or "filk" an existing work, as long as you credit the original author.
1. Topic is something you feel is "Druidic."
2. Anyone can enter who would like to follow the rules.
3. Length can be anything from 10 words to 3 pages.
4. Poems, songs and very-short-stories are acceptable.
5. Try to be reasonably decent in contents.
6. Limit 40 entries per person.
7. Collaborations of multiple individuals is acceptable.
8. Entries from previous contests will not be accepted.
9. All contents should be clearly labeled copyright or public domain. General date of composition is requested.
10. All entries may be republished in a future edition of ARDA.
11. There is no compensation.
12. A handful of entries will be released piecemeal every two or three weeks on this web-page and will be announced on RDNAtalk and by a general mailing. An entry might be delayed in release to pair it with a similar themed entry at a later date.
13. Winner will be announced around May 1st, 2007 and will bear the honor of "Big Bard" from May 2007 to May 2008.
14. A complicated mixture of voting rules will be used. Previous bardic winners get 5 votes each round, Mike gets seven as a judge, everyone else gets three votes per round on RDNAtalk conference. Unused votes are lost after each round and do not "rollover". Votes may be split across multiple entries. Each round will winnow out the number of entries. It will take about five or six rounds (about two weeks) to conclude. (Is

that confusing enough?)

To see previous bardic contest entries go to:

<http://www.rdna.info/bard.html> 2001-2002 Winter

<http://www.rdna.info/bard2.html> 2002-2003 Winter

<http://www.rdna.info/bard4.html> 2004-2005 Winter

<http://www.rdna.info/bard5.html> 2005-2006 Winter



[2006-2007 ARDA 2 Study Conference](#)

There are many ways, yea, many, to learn about Reformed Druidism; and one route is through literature (hanging out with trees and interaction with people being at least two of the other main ways). More so than any other Druid group, the RDNA folk like to write down their thoughts and keep records of what they did. (Although we probably could do a better job.) So even though we can't be together in person, we can learn from each other by written communications across the chasm of time and space.

With that intro, I'd like to again invite you to join the Reformed Druidic Texts conference that will begin officially Nov 1st probably around post #800 on the conference, although we are doing "warm-up" introductions and discussion before the first "step" of the 12 step program from post #701 to about #783. (If our rigorous reading schedule isn't enough for you, then you can back read that stuff if you like, or even read the old 2004-5 conference from post #1 up to post #695.)

This program is really designed to start from scratch, although I suspect a few old-timers will join in to provide opinions and investigate some of their new thoughts on old things. The Study Program is a slow, steady meandering for five or six months during the Time of Sleep, where we learn the different types and styles of resources, who wrote them, what they imply, how they reflected the group's history and try to draw insights into current events. By April, you'll have a sure foundation to do your own research at your leisure.

Yes that sounds suspiciously like a Bible class, doesn't it? Never fear! We don't assign divine-inspiration to these writings, you are ENCOURAGED to have your own opinion, and if you disagree, then you should add your own exquisitely crafted essay to the collection.

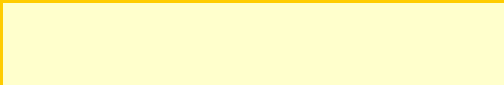
So go to http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Reformed_Druid_Texts/ and join in with the two dozen or so other "hard-core" students. We expect about 40 dense pages of reading a week, and hope that folks will post weekly a few paragraphs of reflections and answer a few of the suggested questions.

It might even be a little fun.

Yours in the Mother,
Mike the FOol

Subscribe to Reformed_Druid_Texts





Second Epistle of Robert: Three Druids

By Robert Larson

With the ending of Summer, the Season of Passing On and Remembering the Dead coming nigh, we bring you a mini-story by Robert Larson, one of the founders of the RDNA and who brought Reformed Druidism to California in 1968, about the Three Druids.

* * * * *

Chapter the Sixth

1. Finally, in answer to Brother Morrison, I will now relate this incredibly ancient Druid fable which I have just written.
2. Ahem.
3. Once in the long ago there were three Druids, and very fine Druids they were, too. It came to pass that each of them inherited a piece of land with a large rock on it.
4. Now the First of these Druids went to his land and looked at his rock and immediately fell in love with it.
5. To make his rock even more beautiful he fell to rubbing and buffing it until it bore a bright polish.
6. Every day he would rub and buff it till it almost outshone the sun, so bright it was.
7. The people who lived nearby would often come to see the rock and say what a wonderful, bright rock it was being.
8. Now eventually the Druid died and went to the Sidhe hills as all good Druids do. But the wind and rain did not die.
9. Slowly it was that the rock lost its polish, but lose it it did. No longer did the people come to see the rock, now neither wonderful nor bright, for of what interest is a mere rock, except to geologists?
10. The second of the Druids went to his land and looked at his rock and thought what a wonderful statue his rock would make.
11. So he took a hammer and chisel and carved a statue of his god out of it. Paint he put on his statue, and gold and jewels also, until it looked exactly like his idea of his god. And the people who lived both near and far came to marvel at the statue and worship at it, saying such things as "You could swear that it's alive, that it's being."
12. To which the Druid would reply, "It is."
13. Eventually the second Druid too died and went to the Sidhe hills where all good Druids go. But the wind and rain did not die, nor did human nature change.
14. Thieves came and stripped the statue of its gold and its jewels. Wind and rain completed the destruction, until the statue once again resembled nothing so much as a rock.
15. And the people stopped coming to marvel and to worship, for, after all, who wants to worship a rock after he's had the most wonderful statue in the world?
16. The Third Druid went to his land and looked at his rock. Then he climbed upon it and looked about him, liking what he saw.
17. He planted flowers, trees and bushes about the rock and lichen on it. Every day he would herd his cows and sheep on the land about the rock, sitting on or resting against it.
18. As time went by, the flowers, the bushes and trees grew and the lichen covered the rock, giving the Druid

an even more beautiful view and a softer seat to watch his herds from.

19. So beautiful did the Druid's land become, that people came from far and near to sit with him and watch the deer and fox play and the flowers bloom, for it was said to be the most beautiful and peaceful place in the world.

20. The time came when the third Druid died and went to the Sidhe hills where all good Druids go. But the flowers did not stop growing, nor did the bushes and trees and lichen.

21. Still did the deer and fox play in the Druid woods, and still were cows and sheep herded about the rock.

22. The Druid's name was forgotten, but some people still came to sit on his rock and look at his woods, for it was yet the most beautiful and peaceful place in the world.

23. And so it remains to this day.

24. Beannachtai na Mathar libh. Siochain

Robert, ArchDruid, Berkeley Grove

28 Mean Samhraidh, 14 y.r.

(July 2nd, 1976 c.e.)



Mission-ary Impossible

File One: The Beginning

By Mike the FoOl

....."Your mission, should you choose to accept it, Mike, is to spend two years in La*s without becoming Persona Non Grata.... This message will self-destruct in three seconds.....3...2...1...."

Yes, this is the first article in what may become a very long series that will explore the difficulties of Druidic life overseas, the ethical challenges, and the unexpected sweet joys. I hope you will follow along my adventures and send

me feedback.

Most of you are aware from my article on *"the Missionary (Im)- Position "*

(<http://www.rdna.info/newmissal23.html> Lughnasadh 2003) that I am rather unfriendly to proseyltization and predatory conversion; so what am I doing as a missionary?

I guess, when a Druid like me moves to a new place, the first thing they do is go out and meet the trees, the flowers, the happy squirrels, the pretty birdies, etc. etc. After that the Druid tends to want a little human communication, and thus they seek out druidically-minded folk with whom they can ramble about trees, flowers, ecumenicalism, happy squirrels, first amendment, etc. Sometimes those unfortunate folk actually sit still and listen to my rantings, instead of wisely running away. Sometimes they seek me out instead. This is usually how missionary groves eventually get started in the RDNA. They either just happen. or they don't. C'est la vie druidique.

So, anyway, I'm going overseas next March for two years to serve in the remote land of La*s for the U.S., and this poses some problems and opportunities for the continuation of Reformed Druidism in my private life. La*s will actually be the fourth country in which I will be a practicing Druid, but it will have three key differences from the U.S.A. (1990-now), Scotland (1991), or Japan (1996-2000). In a nutshell, it is especially challenging because:

1. It is rather tropical, so it doesn't have the temperate seasons I've come to celebrate.
2. It is an authoritarian country, it does not have the same level of human rights (such as the right to organize a religious group).
3. It is possibly the least developed country in Asia with the average salary is less than \$1000 a year. Which oddly might be the most difficult barrier to overcome in some ways.

On the positive side:

1. Most folks are still farmers with a close tie to the land, and it is the least-populated part on Asia (besides Tibet & Mongolia), so lots of trees per person.
2. People there have layers of religion: Animism on the bottom, Hinduism in the middle and Buddhism on the top; and they don't mind mixing them together sometimes.
3. It is very cheap to travel and enjoy festivals and purchase religious knick-knacks.

I guess the first step for "Mission-ary Mike" is to make a Mission Statement, a lay-down of the basic boundaries that I will not cross, beyond the traditional standard inhibitions on the actions of a Third Order Druid operating just in North America. Being a Druid, I came up with about three points.

1. Conversation not Conversion: My goal is not to "make" more Druids, for I naturally believe Druids develop on their own and exist in all religions already. Rather, I prefer to find those folk already practicing Druidical ways and enter into mutually beneficial dialogue with them. I will also make a point to talk with folks of all persuasions in La*s; Buddhism, Animist, Hindu, Christian, Secularist and even the odd Muslim.



2. Groove not Grove: Since actually organizing a grove might get me in trouble, I'll just hang out with folks and chat with them.

3. Observe not Obstruct: In other words, not being a native of that country, I'll avoid acting like an idiot on matters which I don't understand yet.

It's likely that I'll be assigned the freedom of religion report, so I'll save my venom for that little unread paper.

While I'm there I should still be able to access e-mail and monitor the conferences. If you happen to be in South-east Asia, come and stop by and visit me.

So, stick around, I'll report on my preparations until March, and then I'll give you regular updates from La*s itself, and all the odd things that will likely happen there.

Yours in the Mother,
Mike the FoOl

Inner Sight



By Celdwyn

A Druid Missal-Any welcomes a brand new author and column. Celdwyn is a spiritual coach who lives in Northern California. She lived in San Francisco at the Zen Center for ten years, studied under Pascal Capleau in the 70s (at John F. Kennedy University), then under three different Zen roshis, and later did interfaith work at Grace Cathedral. She came to druidry after travels in England and was sponsored by a member of OBOD there who is a psychotherapist.

From email correspondence with Philip Car-Gomm, Celdwyn came to write for the OBOD magazine TouchStone just before she completed her dissertation at the Institute for Transpersonal Psychology, a graduate school in psychology in Palo Alto. Celdwyn has a very eclectic background and spirituality, especially Celtic Spirituality as it is ;°definitely my breath of life, as it were.;± Celdwyn currently has a work in progress that is a time-travel story taking place at the cross-rivers of New Grange in Ireland

* * * * *

I have always been interested in Blind Seers and shamans, men and women who have walked the inner path without the distraction of worldly sight. I myself would not like to enter that difficult path again this life, but I do understand where it finds its power and where it finds its peace. We are all sightless in some way, but we all learn to see with our inner eyes, especially those who follow the Druid's path.

Remembering September

Not long ago, I had the opportunity to once again experience the true meaning of Fall in a very ancient way, a way that came from deep within and had nothing at all to do with external perception. On September 29, Michaelmas, I turned the wheel of my existence one more time. I celebrated this annual birth-renewal by a semi-annual journey to Muir Woods, which is nestled within the deep valley regions of Mount Tamalpais in Northern California. Muir Woods is an old Growth forest; probably the oldest redwood forest left in the world. The lingering seasonal fog of this deep mountain valley as well as its remote location has kept these trees safe from explorers, fire, developers and natural erosion for thousands of years. Journeying there is like returning to the past, the deep past of our far distant ancestors.

Although Muir Woods is named after John Muir, probably the single most acclaimed on-foot natural explorer of our time, it was actually founded by Congressman William Kent and his wife, who sold its 295 Acres to the USGS in 1905. The redwoods, named for their reddish-brown bark, caused by the large amounts of tannin in the tree, is known as *Sequoia semper-virens*, which means "ever-living". And certainly, it is true, walking among them you can feel their lifeness, their love and the deep meaning of tree-wisdom.

But on Michaelmas this year, my experience was very special! That day the magic of autumn gently whispered to the great Trees, as they stood tall and majestic in their sacred groves, sentinels of ancient power, witnesses to thousands of years of the turning of sun and moon. The sparkling freshness of the air in that high, hidden valley, the satiny touch of the Redwood's insulating bark, rough as well as silky, and the mountain stream reflecting open patches of sky were, in themselves, exquisite and energizing all at once. The mighty redwoods stood one, two or four hundred feet above my head, and suddenly I had merged within a sense of oneness, a merging with nature and something beyond. I inextricably felt that this was the season of deep change, the time of coming inward, the time of gathering into one's self the fruitfulness of life.

The creek holds the whisper of the on-coming Winter; the trees the fragrance of Fall. Sunlight slices through the late afternoon as its rays angle through the dappled shade; then, its star-like radiance is softly reflected on the water, like a tiny white dwarf star, promising you the kiss of the Otherworld. Here the majesty of September, the very turning of the year, is glimpsed amidst the voiceless echoes of the cathedral trees, the

poised stance of the row-buck behind a bush, rustling dried leaves as he stirs, waiting for the chance to run unseen, to hide higher up the mountain in the deeper tree-shadows.



An Introduction to Modern Druid Groups

By Susan Reed

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Section Eight: Ethics

When my study group explored ethics in neo-Pagan religions, we found that there were several types of ethic principles. Some of these included virtues-based ethical principles, in which people are encouraged to develop good habits of character, duties-based ethical principles in which people are obligated by the Divine or by societal custom to behave in a certain way, and consequentialist ethical principles in which people are motivated by the consequences of their actions. Most ethical systems combine two or more of these types, with one type predominating. Most Druid groups that have either stated or implied ethical statements or ethical concerns seems to have predominately virtues-based sets of ethical principles, with some duties-based sets of principles.

OBOD

In the document, "Ethics and Values in Druidism," The Order says:



Druidry asks us, above all, to open ourselves to the inspiration and beauty of Nature and Art, through its love of creativity. By nourishing ourselves with contact with the natural world and with art of every kind, and by holding to the core beliefs of Druidism, the following qualities emerge naturally as values that can form the basis of ethical decisions and behaviour:

1. Taking responsibility and feeling empowered We are encouraged to take responsibility for our own thoughts and actions first within our own lives and then with others for our communities and the community of all life. Being an integral part of the "circle of all beings" engaging oneself with the world at large and valuing community.
2. The power of trust trusting that life is "fundamentally good" and "that there is meaning and purpose to existence."
3. Integrity Druids strive for inner wholeness and completion and to act authentically and honestly from that inner integrity.
4. The value of the opposite appreciating the contrasts and polarities in life.
5. Being of value to others and the world being a force for good and healing to the world. **(1)**

Each of the revised Bardic Grade lessons also includes triad that often describes desirable traits for a Druid to cultivate. While these examples of triads are not found in the Bardic grade lessons, they are quite similar to those given in the lessons: **(2)**

1. Three things are becoming a person: knowledge, good deeds, and gentleness.
2. Three things without which there can be nothing good: truth, valor, and generosity.
3. The three manifestations of the true human are: civility, generosity, and compassion.

OBOD has also embraced Erynn Laurie's collection of Celtic virtues as well: the virtues of truth, honor, justice, loyalty, courage, community, hospitality, strength, and gentleness. (3)

BDO

I could find no discussion of ethics per se in the materials by the British Druid Order. Former Joint Chief Emma Restall Orr does have some essays on ethics in Druidry posted on the Druid Network web site <http://www.druidnetwork.org/articles/index.html>



AODA

The curricula for the First and Second Degree emphasize service to the Earth and to nature and service to each other, development and sharing of knowledge. (4)



RDNA

RDNA does not advocate any particular ethical or moral stance outside of "Nature is good." Each person is free to develop his or her own ethical stances through thought, meditation, introspection, and/or from other faith paths. (5)



ADF

The statement of "What do Neo-pagan Druids Believe":

We believe that ethics and morality should be based upon joy, love, self-esteem, mutual respect, the avoidance of actual harm to ourselves and others, and the increase of public benefit. (6)



Nine pagan virtues are discussed in the Dedicant's program : wisdom, piety, vision, courage, integrity, perseverance, hospitality, moderation and fertility. (7) ADF's statement on what neo-Pagan Druids believe also contain ethical concepts concerning equality of the sexes, communitarian duties, duties to maintain the environment, protecting the rights of themselves and others, ecological activism and awareness as sacred duties, and living lives consistent with stated beliefs.

Henge of Keltria

The Henge of Keltria By-Laws details its organizational ethics:

As an organization, the Henge of Keltria does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, national origin, sex or sexual preference. The Henge of Keltria prohibits blood sacrifice and the "torture, mutilation, enslavement or abuse" of any sentient creature. Henge members should keep confidential the names, addresses, and other personal information of other members except when permission is given or the person is deemed a public threat. Ordained and lay clergy are to follow



codes of professional ethics for similar secular and religious professionals. Sexual coercion or manipulation is prohibited. Firearms or explosives are prohibited at Keltrian ritual. The use of illegal psychoactive substances in ritual is prohibited. Bigotry, slander, perjury or other forms of harassment leveled against members or other member of the Neo-pagan community is not to be tolerated. Keltrians must abide by their initiatory oaths and not reveal oathbound materials to non-initiates. (8)

The statement of beliefs also add that "we believe that all life is sacred and should neither be harmed nor taken without deliberation or regard" and "we believe that morality is a matter of personal conviction based upon self-respect and respect for others." Other possible ethical guidelines or concerns that may be discussed as part of their oathbound materials are not discussed on the Keltrian web site or in publicly available materials.

Nonetheless, Keltrians Searles O'Dubhain and Topaz Owl have discussed Triadic lore as ethical statements and O'Dubhain has included a "[Druid's Code](#)" as well. (9)

Conclusions

So, as you can see, there is a great variety of modern Druid groups with differing aims and practices. I hope I have helped you become aware of some of the similarities and differences between groups. Each group has its own unique outlook and unique strengths and contributions to share.

One could almost say that there is a Druid group for every seeker, provided that the seeker wishes to experience his or her spirituality through intimate interaction with nature. If you are interesting in exploring a Druid path, there are resources listed below you can explore. I also urge you to visit the web sites for the organizations I have talked about today; for they will give you far more information than I could include.

If you have more information or have comments about what is on these pages, please contact me through the feedback form <http://www.nachtanz.org/feedback.html>.

Notes to Ethics

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2. [John F. Wright](#). "A Compilation of Triads." Published 1995. Accessed July 27, 2004. <<http://www.illusions.com/rowanhold/3things.htm>>.
3. [Erynn Rowan Laurie](#). "The Truth Against the World: Ethics and Modern Celtic Paganism." n.d. Accessed July 27, 2004. <<http://www.seanet.com/~inisglas/ethics.html>>.
4. [The Ancient Order of Druids in America](#). "Frequently Asked Questions." n.d. Accessed July 16, 2004. <<http://www.aoda.org/FAQ.htm>>; "AODA First Degree Curriculum." n.d. Accessed July 16, 2004. <<http://www.aoda.org/about/curric1.htm>>; "AODA Second Degree Curriculum." n.d. Accessed July 16, 2004. <<http://www.aoda.org/about/curric2.htm>>; and "AODA Third Degree draft curriculum." n.d. Accessed July 16, 2004. <<http://www.aoda.org/about/curric3.htm>>.
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6. [Isaac Bonewits](#). "What Do Neo-pagan Druids Believe?" Published 2003. Accessed July 27, 2004. <<http://www.adf.org/about/beliefs.html>>.
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8. [Henge of Keltria](#). *The Henge of Keltria By-Laws*. 2003–2004 Edition. Published 2003. [Available](#)

[online in PDF format \[212K\]](#). Ethical concerns are also summarized in "The Henge: An Introduction to Keltrian Druidism." (second edition, 1998) 3–4.

9. Searles O'Dubhain and Topaz Owl. "A Collection of Druidic Triads." Published 1999. Accessed July 27, 2004. <<http://216.67.248.139/crossroads/library/triads.htm>>. Searles O'Dubhain. "A Druid's Code." n.d. Accessed July 27, 2004. <http://216.67.248.139/crossroads/library/a_druids_code.htm>.

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Myers, Brendan "Cathbad." "A Guide to Druids and Celtic Spirituality." <http://wildideas.net/cathbad/druid.html>. May 2001. Accessed March 23, 2005. Web site about historical and modern Druids.

Modern Druid Groups

Ancient Order of Druids in America

Web site: <http://www.aoda.org/>

Ar nDraiocht Fein

Web site: <http://www.adf.org/>

Isaac Bonewits's Homepage: <http://www.neopagan.net/>

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http://www.witchvox.com/trads/trad_adf.html

British Druid Order

Web site: <http://www.britishdruidorder.org.uk/>

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[Back to the top](#)

Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids

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Reformed Druids of North America

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[Back to the top](#)

Some Other Modern Druid Groups (just a small sampling)

The Order of the Whiteoak — <http://www.whiteoakdruids.org/>

Adder Oaks Druid Community — <http://adderoaks.com/aodcmain.htm>

Tuatha de Brighid — <http://www.tuathadebrighid.org/>

Druid Order of the Yew — <http://www.druidnetwork.org/yew/index.html>

Corcu Nemedhiann — <http://groups.msn.com/CromansGrove/whatsnew.msnw?pgmarket=en-us>

The Loyal Arthurian Warband — <http://www.warband.org/>

The Druid Clan of Dana — <http://www.fellowshipofisis.com/druidclanofdana.html>

Ord Draiochta na Uisnech (Druid Order of Uisnech) — <http://www.irishdruidry.org//index.php?p=14&msgcat=0>

Revision History

- Class notes compiled and used at Sacred Space Conference on July 10, 2004.
- Expanded class notes posted July 27, 2004.
- Resources section revised on October 6, 2004.
- The Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids updated its web site in early 2005 with revised and additional information. Several parts of this article were revised in March 2005 to reflect those changes. Also, the Resources section was revised at the same time.
- Section on ethics and resources section updated with additional information from the Henge of Keltria on June 6, 2005.
- Information on ADF training updated in February 6, 2006. Revised capsule history of the BDO.
- Added link to The Order of the Whiteoak to the resources section.



Judge Saves Trees

For Immediate Release
September 20 , 2006
Contact: Annie E. Strickler (415) 977-5619

Judge Reinstates Original Roadless Rule Marking Huge Victory for Americans, Wild Forests

Statement of Carl Pope, Sierra Club Executive Director

"Today marks a huge victory for America's last remaining wild forests and the millions of Americans who have spoken out in support of protecting these special places for future generations. These are increasingly scarce unspoiled places that provide some of the highest quality fish and wildlife habitat, backcountry recreation and clean water supplies in the country.

"Today's ruling underscores the strong framework of the Roadless Rule, the basis of which was overwhelming scientific and economic evidence and public opinion in favor of protecting America's last wild forests.

"The Bush administration replaced the original rule with a policy that left wild forests across the country vulnerable to destructive oil and gas development, commercial logging and road building. The administration has already moved forward with timber sales in roadless areas in Alaska, New Hampshire, and Oregon.

"From policies that prioritize logging over community fire protection to proposals that sell-off National Forests, the Bush administration has worked to weaken or eliminate the core protections for America's wild forests. They have put the interests of the timber industry ahead of the clean water, recreational opportunities, economic benefits and wildlife habitat that these forests provide the country."

Background on Roadless Area Conservation Rule, Today's Decision:

The Roadless Rule, designed to protect 58 million acres of roadless wild forests in 39 states, was the result of the most extensive public comment process in history, spanning three years and 600 public meetings. During the rulemaking, the Clinton administration received a record-breaking one million public comments in support of protecting wild forests. To date, the Forest Service has received more than 4 million comments from the American people.

Blocking the Roadless Rule was one of the new administration's first decisions upon taking office, followed shortly by refusal to defend the rule in court. In the spring of 2005 the administration officially repealed the original rule and replaced it with a process whereby Governors must petition the federal government for forest protections in their states. Governors had until November of this year to announce their petitions. In the public comment period for the Bush administration policy, the majority of the 1.8 million comments were opposed to the change.

Today's decision reinstates the original Roadless Rule and finds that the Bush administration violated the law

when it adopted their petition process. The ruling enjoins the Forest Service from taking any action contrary to the Roadless Rule.

*The Sierra Club was one of the many environmental groups represented by Earthjustice in this lawsuit. For a copy of the judge's ruling, please call (415) 977-5619 or email annie.strickler@sierraclub.org

<http://www.sierraclub.org/forests/roadless/>.



Plan for Bardic Founder Memorial

From the BBC News, Octo. 12, 2006

Plans have been unveiled for a monument to Iolo Morganwg, the scholar who created the Welsh order of the bards.

Morganwg, born Edward Williams, will have a monument erected on London's Primrose Hill where he held the first bardic gathering, or Gorsedd, in 1792.

He aimed to revive what he believed was the Celtic bardic tradition and the ceremony remains part of the modern-day National Eisteddfod.

Plans for the memorial were unveiled at the House of Commons on Wednesday.

Plaid Cymru MP Elfyn Llwyd, who has helped plan the memorial, said: "I am delighted that the Royal Parks have granted permission for the go ahead of this project.

"Iolo Morganwg was part of the radical romantic movement, he knew Coleridge and Blake, and of course the event has formed a key part of Welsh heritage as we know it today."

Sculptor John Meirion Morris will design the monument, which will be made out of Welsh slate with an embossed face of Morganwg.

He said: "It is a privilege to be asked to design such a monument, and to bring a piece of Wales to the very spot that Iolo gathered the first meeting of the Welsh druids.

"Iolo was a genius and it is only right that he is to be honoured in one of the most beautiful spots in London."

Morganwg saw the Gorsedd of the bards as the ancient guardian of the language and culture of Wales.

The supposedly ancient druidic order was re-established by Morganwg in a ceremony at Primrose Hill held on the summer solstice of 1792.

Much of Morganwg's scholarship was later found to be forged.

But the ceremony he created endured and in 1819 the Gorsedd was formally linked with the eisteddfod, an act which ultimately led to the modern-day National Eisteddfod.

The Gorsedd is now an association whose members consist of poets, writers, musicians, artists and individuals who have made a contribution to Welsh language and culture.

Figures honoured as druids include Ioan Gruffudd, Bryn Terfel, England cricketer Robert Croft, ex-Welsh rugby stars Gareth Edwards and Ray Gravell and, this year, North Wales Police chief constable Richard Brunstrom.



Live Like a Celt Day!

The Meriden Ancient Order of Hibernians is proud to sponsor the Celtic Learning Project's **Live Like a Celt Day!**

This is a fun-filled program for children and an accompanying adult. Participants start by dressing like Celts of the Iron Age, painting faces in pre-historic style and even making their own jewelry. Then they are off to grind grain, cook oatcakes and weave wool. Participants can also learn about the way Celts used the land for food and materials on the short nature walk, and view a blacksmithing demonstration. Celtic stories and a dramatic "cattle raid" round out the day!

When: Saturday November 4, 2006 10:00 am to 1:00 pm

Where: AOH 71 Melville Ave, South Meriden, CT

Cost: \$ 5.00 per child accompanied by an adult plus a non-perishable food item.

Please dress warmly as this is an outdoor event.

For further information or directions please contact Stuart McEnerney at (203) 235-6269, or email spmcenerney@hotmail.com.



Singing at the Well of Remembering: The Wisdom of the Celtic Spiritual Tradition

Please join us for a very special event, at the Kripalu Center in the beautiful Berkshire mountains...

This spiritual intensive will take place on the weekend of December 1st to 3rd, 2006. To reserve a place at the event, please contact Kripalu at 1-800-741-7353, or at www.kripalu.org.

Join us for this transformative and experiential weekend as we explore the powerful spiritual traditions of the Celtic wisdomkeepers. Using songs and stories, ritual and meditation, chanting and prayer, we will awaken and deepen our connection with the Sacred Realms, which are the source of wisdom, healing, power, skill and transformation.

Through ancient portals of sacred space and time, we embark on the inner quest to learn from elders and ancestral teachers, honour the Earth and connect with our own ancestral spiritual heritage. In this way we may begin to 'weave the web of knowledge' and tap into the power of ancient priestesses, goddesses, poets, seers and shamans. Prayers and invocations in Old Irish, an ancient language related to Sanskrit which can be used as a devotional language, take us back to a place we once knew.

Experience the luminous magic of the spiral of time, as we visit the Celtic soul shrine, quest for the vessel of enlightenment, and quicken the inner flame of illumination. In reconnecting with this spiritual lineage, we have access to the divine wisdom, power and peace of the Otherworld, known to the Celts as Tir na nOg, Annwn and Avalon.

Sharynne MacLeod NicMhacha is a Canadian writer, teacher and bard of Scottish, Irish and Welsh ancestry. She is a Celtic priestess, druidic-shamanic practitioner, and a direct descendant of Clan MacLeod, long recorded in ancient tradition to have connections with (and blood of) the Sidhe or Fairy Folk.

Sharynne has studied Celtic languages and mythology through Harvard University and has presented work at the Harvard Celtic Colloquium, the University of Edinburgh in Scotland, University College Cork in Ireland, Smith College and the Harvard Study Group on Ancient Magic and Religion.

She sings and play a number of instruments with Devandaurae (and previously with The Moors), specializing in Celtic, medieval and shamanic music. She is a Faculty Member of the Celtic Institute of North America, and recently published her first book *Queen of the Night: Rediscovering the Celtic Moon Goddess* (to be followed by a new work on the Divine Feminine in the autumn of 2007).



Cruinneachadh nan Gaidheal (The Gathering of the Gaels)

July 11-14, 2007

The Gaelic Council of Nova Scotia (Comhairle na G?dhlig) is sponsoring a major event in 2007 at the Millennium Centre, St. FX University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia. The focus of this special occasion will be the Gaelic language and its culture. Together with Cape Breton Island, Pictou County, and Northern Guysborough County, the town and county of Antigonish were strongly Gaelic areas after the influx of immigrants from the Highlands and Islands of Scotland largely in the 19th century. Today, a new spirit is invigorating their descendants. Not only has the government of Nova Scotia come forward with new initiatives for the preservation of the language, including a Minister for Gaelic, but more young people are learning their own hereditary language and young and old Gaels are engaged in speaking it and activating on its (and their own) behalf.

Cruinneachadh nan Gaidheal will be an opportunity to celebrate who we are and to show the wider community, within and outside Canada, that we are alive, well and thriving! Plans are currently being made; but the 3-day event (Thursday 12th July -Saturday 14th, plus Wednesday evening 11th) will include the

following :

Clasaichean Cloinne (morning Gaelic classes and activities for children)

Tional na h-?gridh (Youth Rally)

Clasaichean ann a'P?baireachd/F?hlearachd/Dannsa-ceumaidh/G?dhlig/?ain Gh?dhlig (Classes in Piping/Fiddling/Stepdancing/Gaelic/ Gaelic Song/ all centred in Gaelic tradition)

"Gabh do Naidheachd"(informal Gaelic storytelling session)

Luadh M? (a great Milling Frolic)

C?Labhairt le ?aidean uile's a'Gh?dhlig (Mini conference with papers delivered in Gaelic; English translation available)

Na Comhlain Chi?! (a challenge will be going out to musical groups-stay tuned!)

Cuirm-chi?! Mh? (Grand Concert)

Tha Comhairle na G?dhlig a'gairm air Gaidheil na h-Albann ?re-agus air Gaidheil anns gach cearnaidh-- a thighinn a-mach dhan a'Chruinneachadh airson ur brosnachadh fh?n agus airson ur c?Ghaidheil a bhrosnachadh. Seo an t?-thigibh uile!

(The Gaelic Council of Nova Scotia is calling on all Gaels in the province-and beyond-to come out to the Gathering not only to encourage yourselves but to encourage your fellow Gaels as well. This is the time-come one and all!)



Samhain will occur this year on Nov. 7, 2006 at 5:36 a.m. as 15 degrees of Scorpio, or as 16 degrees 18 minutes decl the same day at 2:35 a.m. Pacific Standard Time. Grove services will take place an hour before sunset on Sunday, Nov. 5th. Grove members are encouraged to bring photos of their deceased family members to remember the dead during this time when the veil between the worlds is the thinnest.

A Druid Missal-Any is published eight times a year. Post mail subscriptions are \$8.00 and email subscriptions are free. Or write an article or send us a cartoon and receive a year's post mail subscription free. Write to:

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This is the end of the Samhain issue



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