



Yule Issue, Y.R. XLVIII
December 31, 2011 c.e.
Volume 27, Issue 8

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Well 2011 was an interesting year from international perspective in the Middle East, and I hope that folks there will find greater means to settle on religious tolerance.

As for me, it's a new year, new apartment, new work assignment, and new Druid projects. I hope you all turn the darkest time of the year into the brightest time for reflection and inspiration while home-bound inside.

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Sacred Groves

Near river and pond=Sirona. Near seaport=Llyr.
Next to electrical plant and weather station = Taranis. Near national cemetery= Danu.

The apartments hallway has Druid sigil hall lights and walk by buildings with Celtic cross motifs and has connections with royalty - Duke and King street. And of course has oak, ash and yew trees nearby.

Seems like more than coincidence that I am on third floor.

NEWS OF THE GROVES

Monument Grove: News from D.C.

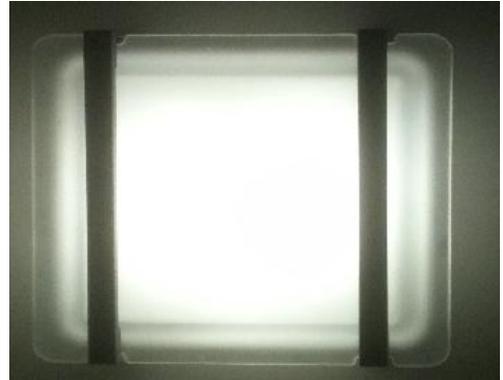
I noticed that the new apartment I am moving into this weekend has numerous Druidical aspects.

Near forest=Dalon Ap Landu

Near hospital and fountain= Grannos.

Near bar=Braciaca.

Near Hill with heat view of sunrise and sunset = Belenos



Three Stone Protogrove: News from Nevada

In November:

We've had a lot of growth here in the 'waters of sleep' time, the Three Stones protogrove ventured our way to Sedona recently, to visit some older members who moved and we are extending ourselves there, as a branch for better undertakings.

We went along and picked up many bags of trash from the vortices, we also worked with Nature in Her many aspects, led an Earth healing rite there, left offerings to the petroglyphs and rites of protection and purifications. We taught some locals there to 'cleanse daily' with sage, meditate and remember the Earth always!

In December:

We are leading public rites of meditations at a local park, and teaching the lore of the tree's to some new members here in S. Nevada, we are encouraging others to renew themselves in the principle of the Earth Mother, and a deep study of the two tenets, and how it applies to our lives today.

We seek to reclaim the real meaning behind the phrase "In the service of the Mother" and prove this in Nature by our actions and deeds!

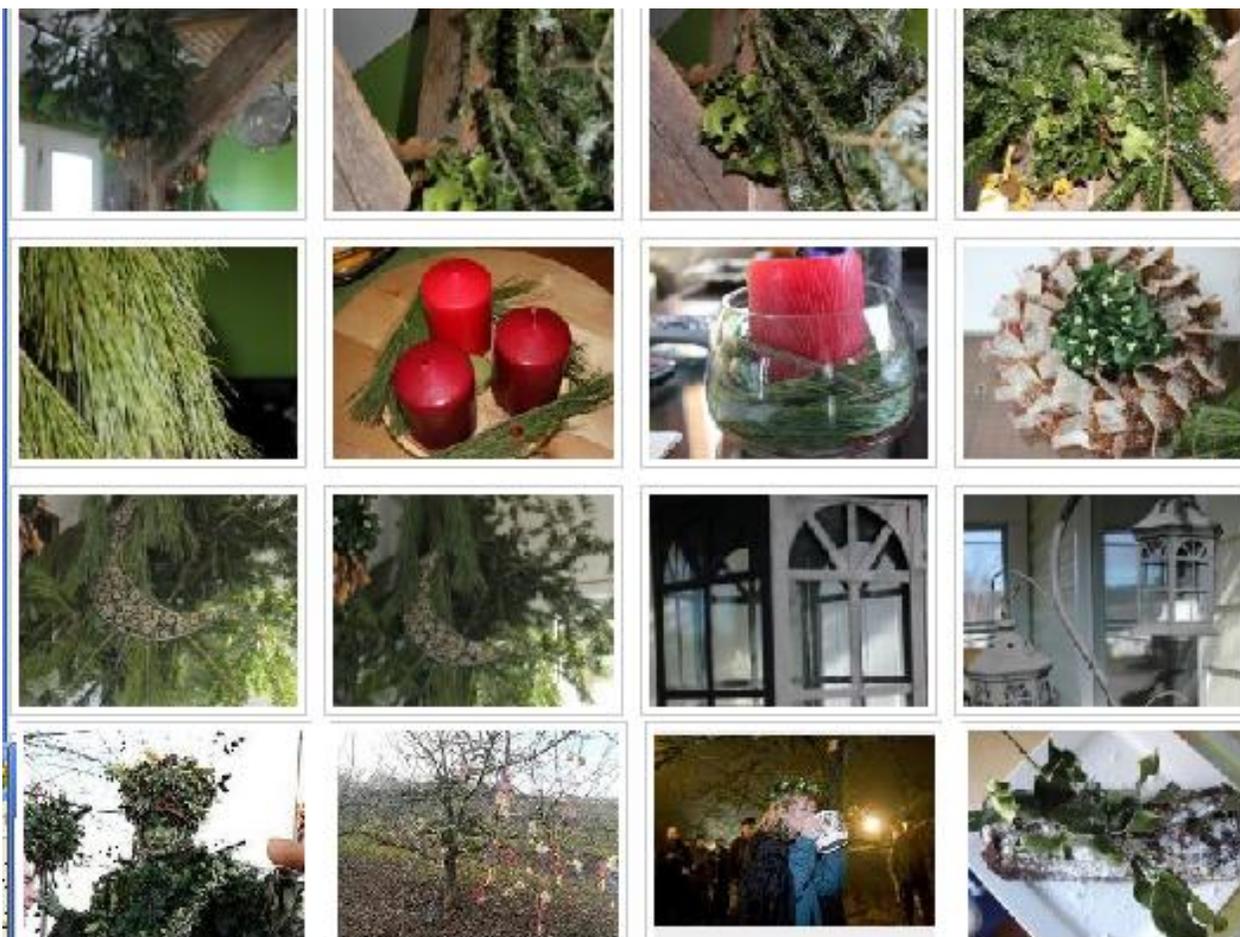
May this season find you well!

Brid the acting ArchDruid

Three Stones Protogrove

Claire du Corbeau Grove, Quebec

Pictures from Penny's Winter Solstice



Tidal

Emotions are like water, ever changing. The babbling brook that rises and rises, the intricacies, patterns and fluctuations in the bubbles. It swells, accumulates, depth rhythm and tempo. Busy babbling, chattering, bubbling away. Speed and volume always active, welling up, trickle or torrent, fierce or calm. The energy ever changing subtle or aggressive, surging or creeping. The current moves you, raging or tranquil. The crescendo the cacophony the hop, skip and the jump. The momentum, flowing over rock, just for a nanosecond it lingers in the jump, and you see the beauty in that movement and energy. Like our emotions, we pause to reflect. The babbling brook takes a breath, and then another, the tempo slows to a new rhythm giving more time for reflection and inner thought. Might even stagnate a while. Still waters calming, healing, in it's clarity, soothing as a tonic, as we drink and consume in it's entirety. The stimulus has changed to nothingness, do we listen, and dwell, lapping it up ? Strengthening, recharging and empowering. The ever changing brook begins to babble, with renewed energy. Our emotions are a ride, we go with the momentum and let it happen, our thoughts might reach uncharted waters, new depths. The ebb the flow, the turning of the tides. Water tells us a lot about ourselves.

Do we listen ?

Do we understand ?

Do we want to understand ?

By

Penelope Leyson Young

Yule

The shortest day, the longest night, rebirth of oak king and sun king, so bright. Robin,
wren, oak and holly, darkest night fades away to light.

Solstice night, solstice night tomorrow the sun will shine so bright.

Bonfires lit, trees are wassailed, awake, awake, we toast to your health, and fertile
wealth, spiced cider to our apple tree, may you provide bushels for me. My offering
now from the wassail bowl, we drink to you, and health i bestow.

Solstice night, solstice night, tomorrow the sun will shine so bright.

Apples, oranges spiked with cloves, nuts and spices, smell my nose. Laughter round the
yuletide fire, merriment to which we all doth aspire.

Solstice night, solstice night, tomorrow the sun will shine so bright.

Mistletoe, mistletoe, the druid herb, white the berries, green the leaf, we hold you most
sacred in our belief. Golden sickles, harvests from the oak, fertility and healing, so
joyously appealing.

Solstice night, solstice night, tomorrow the sun will shine so bright.

The Yule log now has been set ablaze, it flickers away in the dark days. Evergreen
boughs to thy i endow, giver of life return to me, eternal now the evergreen tree.
Molled wine and jolliness toasts the night, as we wait the returning of the light.

Solstice night, solstice night, tomorrow the sun will shine so bright.

By
Penelopoe Leyson Young



DRUID PRODUCTIONS

Desperate Druids: Part 9 – The Spooky Woods

<http://youtu.be/Cz4hcXE1Dzk>

After an encounter with a strange proselytizer, the prepares to travel to the Lughnasadh festival over at miles away. Peter wanders off deeper into the Spooky the bizarre witch, Kikki, and learns a few secrets forest. Ishaan returns home and tells his wife, Andrea,



exchange student Wanda Ypsalantu University, 40 Woods and encounters about the ghosts and the the big news.



A friend of mine posted his thoughts on the Two Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism and where it leads his Druiry. Not a zippy fast video, but good to go with a cup of coffee. <http://youtu.be/InY-gABCvV8>

Reformed Druidry Tenets

www.youtube.com

A commentary about the tenets of Reformed Druidry. Tenets: The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may ...



PEACE! PEACE! PEACE!

"Peace! Peace! Peace!" At the end of every ritual, Druids pronounce the benediction of Peace. This is more than just a wishing for Peace among the participants. This is a proclamation -- a spell cast upon the world really -- that Peace shall prevail.

Druids are Pacifists. Well, I should qualify that. REAL Druids are Pacifists. Druids are first of all, environmentalists. The protection of the Earth Mother is our first and foremost concern. It's not often thought about, but War, and the preparations for War - the training of troops, the testing of weapons systems -- is a major polluter. This is true more in our modern times than it was in the distant past. The weapons of war destroy eco-systems, pollute the environment (and in the case of Nuclear, Biological and chemical weaponry -- this pollution can last for generations). These facts alone, regardless of the other heinous aspects of modern warfare, should have Druids pledging to be lifelong pacifists.

But didn't the Druids of old participate in warfare? Probably. But on the other hand, Caesar writes that they were exempt from the military, that they were noncombatants. This is really a non-issue though. Modern warcraft is a far different animal than that practiced by the ancients. In ancient times, going to war meant one on one combat. It meant swords and spears and it meant that one of the combatants was not going to survive. There was honor in warcraft back then. And much glory. Civilian casualties were normally kept at a minimum, although there are records of particularly brutal and heinous practices such as the Roman penchant for salting fields, rendering incapable of growing anything for years after. But for the most part, the only pollution left behind was blood, and the Earth Mother is quite capable of recovering from that.

There is less honor in war today. When a kid can sit in a bunker in Nevada and control a killer drone deployed in the middle east somewhere, killing soldiers and civilians alike without any contact between himself and his victims, there is no honor. The fact is there is a huge difference between an infantry soldier, who is actually in harms way, fighting on the ground in some desert hellhole, and a pimply faced kid in a protected bunker, basically playing a video game. For one thing the soldier on the ground will take out one enemy at a time, and is at equal risk of being taken out himself. That's a hero. There's some honor in that.

Having said that, there is a lot of pollution that is perpetrated by ground troops as well. Just the firing of lead is a major pollutant. When you get into explosives, you're getting into some serious pollution.

On top of all this, there hasn't been a single war fought by the United States since WW2 that has been for freedom and democracy. Honestly, I even have my doubts about WW2. All of our wars have been undertaken for profit. We have this huge military-industrial complex that demands human sacrifice. Our Senators and Congressmen are beholden to these war mongers, who fund their election campaigns to the tune of billions, and they need war to continue making profit.

I tell you this: even Afghanistan has nothing to do with freedom or democracy. It has nothing to do with the events of 9/11. But it has everything to do with profit.

There are plenty of reasons stated above for Druids to embrace pacifism. I'm sure anyone reading this will find one that fits.

I am not alone:

Voices of Pagan Pacifism: <http://paganpacifism.com/>

Environmentalism & Practical Pacifism: <http://druidjournal.net/2009/06/05/pagan-values-ecology-environmentalism-practical-pacifism/>

Druid Priests and Pacifist Views: <http://druidry.org/obod/wtc/911/pacifistviews.html>

Militant Pacifism: Ask Dr Druid: <http://www.wendyfleet.com/category/militant-pacifism/>

Pacifism In OBOD: <http://www.druidry.org/obod/wtc/warriors.html>

Druids and Peace: <http://setantii.wordpress.com/2011/05/12/druids-and-peace/>

Celtic Spirituality: <http://www.druidry.org/obod/druid-path/unitarian.html>

Order of Peace Poets, Bards & Druids: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/ORDER-OF-PEACE-POETS-BARDS-AND-DRUIDS-OPPBD/243507750873>

Alison Leigh Lilly: <http://alisonleighlilly.com/blog/2011/ancient-warriors-celtic-peace/>



Objectification, Worship and Power-- Ennobling 'Things'

By Helgalina Healingline

I have been working upon manuscript which deals with the liberation of ghosts from bondage even beyond the grave, wrought by the will of another. The happy ending is finally achieved when the spirits realize they are free to remember another identity outside the bondage state.

Part of the binding of the victims' spirits involved reducing them to household appliances and furniture. Another part required stripping them completely of their previous identity as humans through loss of name, which in magical tradition is a puissant means of creation, or in this case, destruction. All of this was rendered evil because it was achieved through force.

It occurred to me as I lay with my beloved, and he called me 'his throne', how different the outcome of the villain's impulse to subjugate could have been. I am happy to be my beloved's throne. It in no way diminishes my many other identities, as mother, editor, artist, and ArchDruid. The victims in the story were denied all other identities except for furniture, and there's the rub.

In mystical tradition, inanimate objects also contain spirit, each as worthy as our own incarnate human version, but invisible to us as we go about our daily lives. We can ennoble our pets and our other life companions by treating them with love and respect, honoring the divinity in them as much as the divinity in our fellow sentients.

In other parts of the world, household and business machines, such as taxicabs and assembly lines, are given ceremonial blessings and these blessings are renewed seasonally.

'Thou shalt have no other gods before me', and similar monotheistic pronouncements, can exist in harmony with such practices when one remembers that the Universal Life Force, or whatever other name you prefer, is everywhere, including these objects.



Ceremonial worship is essentially the bestowing of love and attention of a positive nature upon objects. When the Wiccan heroine of the book I was editing blessed an athame, consecrated a thermos of herbal tea, or filled an area with incense or salt, she was performing actions of love. She was invoking the harmonic aid of the world around her to lessen suffering. Whether it is in a High Mass, a Buddhist temple, or a kinky bedroom, worship is a healing, and the healing is received when the worship is gladly accepted.

It is hard to tell, in our incarnate limited bodies with their attenuated senses, whether inanimate objects such as an idol, or a taxicab for that matter, is gladly accepting our worshipful attention. WE can only judge by the feeling of satisfaction we may have after the service, or after we gaze down at a well-scrubbed kitchen floor.

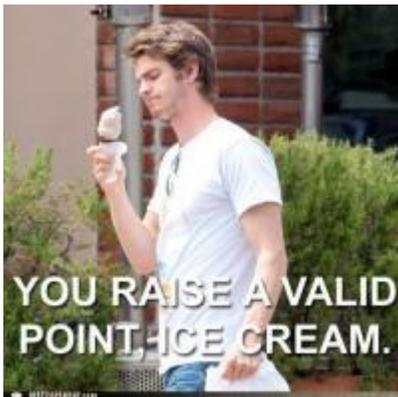
When it comes to being my beloved's 'throne' I can be much more expressive of my acceptance, and this ennobles us both. When it came to the villain in the book I'm editing, he got pleasure only out of the victims' sorrow and discomfort. This degraded him as well as them, and rendered them 'stuck' in the wrong plane and going the 'wrong' direction, once they were disembodied by death.



Once I am disembodied, I don't think it will matter to me so much whether I reincarnate as an angel or as a chair. There are shiny 'thrones' both ways! the victims of the madman on the other hand had to remain as ghosts. They made the living humans uncomfortable and the physical spaces they were 'stuck' in unusable. They were very glad to be angels instead, as soon as they realized that they could.

Being 'stuck' had cut them off from love. With the oriental greeting 'Namaste', or a bowing motion, one offers love and worship even to a stranger one has just met, because they too are a part of the universe. When there is involuntary bondage, exploitation, or degradation, that is a desecrating of a part of the universe, a cutting it off from love.

How different the villain's character would have been if instead of forcing human beings to be objects, he had treated objects as nicely as human beings! It's quite common, after all, to value things in our cultures. We want money and many things, and to display them to others for their admiration and our own. This impulse does not have to be bad for us because it springs from love.



A lonely person like the TV character Pee-Wee Herman begins to imagine that his household furnishings, the food in the refrigerator too, is alive and willing to be his friend. And though we might label this crazy behavior, it is not in a mystical sense false. And so he takes good care of his things, because he wants his inanimate friends to be as happy as he is when he is well cared for.

Humans can be fooled into involuntary bondage for a while, but eventually they usually will get up the nerve to realize it must stop before they die of it. That is called revolution, and it only frightens those who have been getting reward or pleasure from degradation of fellow beings in some way. When they stop this, or are stopped, their fear of change will ebb away from them.

We also see a large number of humans acting out of sympathy for beings with less ability to be understood, such as animals and plants and geographical locations. All these so called 'lesser' entities would benefit from worshipful treatment instead, just as much as our fellow humans would. Every material object has the potential to be a sacred ritual object, because they are all portions of the same Universe.



Recently I read an amusing Twitter post from a young man-- 'None of the gals I know are into golden showers so I tape pics of boobs on the toilet and it's all good.' In my view, the next step should be for him to give thanks to his toilet for accepting his piss. Maybe he'll give it a nickname. It should aid him in his quest for the happy fulfillment of his fantasy, until that ideal shower partner comes along.

By the way, Helga is not THAT sort of 'throne'. I believe too strongly in compost.

Helgaleena



DRUID PRANK

Keith Henson an early 1960s Druid in Parallel Evolution to RDNA?

Druid prank

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Keith_Henson#Druid_prank

Henson was known at the University of Arizona as one of the founders of the **Druid** Student Center, where a campus humor newspaper, *The Frumious Bandersnatch* was published in the late 1960s. He later cited an incident that occurred in his student days as a good example of **memetic replication**. When asked to fill in a form that required him to disclose his religious affiliations he wrote *Druid*. His prank was soon noticed by other students and before long almost 20% of the student body had registered themselves as Reform Druids, Orthodox Druids, Members of the Church of the *n*th Druid, Zen Druids, Latter-Day Druids and so on. The university was forced to remove the religious affiliation question, breaking the chain of replication and variation.^[4]



Who Won The War On Christmas? At My School, It Was The Druids

Posted: 12/10/07 10:37 AM ET Huffington Post

by Tony Sachs (Not a Druid)

Submitted by Daniel Lessin (who is a druid)

In the '70s and '80s, I went to one of the snootiest prep schools on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. At one point it had been an all-girls enclave of WASPishness, but by the time I attended it was a coed bastion of laid-back, well-to-do Jewish liberals, the sons and daughters of movers and shakers, not to mention plain old rich people. We got a top-of-the-line education, but we had very little contact with anyone other than people from our social and financial strata. Our regular trips to country houses in the Hamptons, our ten-block cab rides to school, and our ridiculously lavish bar mitzvahs and Sweet 16 parties gave us very little face time with Gentiles, or as our grandparents called them, "the goyim."

This was all well and good every day of the year except one. The day winter vacation (not "Christmas break" -- couldn't mention Jesus in a school full of Jews, could you?) began, we'd have a half day of school. Most of the morning was spent in an assembly, during which the whole school, from kindergarten to 12th grade, crammed into the auditorium with the headmaster (we were way too posh for a mere principal) presiding over the festivities.

The only question was, which holiday to celebrate? Christmas, with all its pageantry and tradition? Hanukkah, which seemed more appropriate but didn't have more than about two songs that anyone was familiar with? Either way, it was going to be awkward. And that's without mentioning the many agnostics and atheists whose beliefs, or lack thereof, would not be represented or given full respect. Not to mention Muslims or Buddhists or members of any other religion. Of course, nobody like that attended my school so far as any of us knew, so it didn't really matter.

I have no idea who came up with the solution to such a thorny problem -- it was already an age-old tradition by the time I attended my first winter assembly in the mid '70s -- but in hindsight, it's absolutely brilliant. For one glorious morning, we all became pagans.

The ceremony started with the headmaster, who in my day was a bespectacled fellow with a demeanor not unlike that of a younger Ronald Reagan, striding onstage holding a long lit candle. Behind him, the stage was filled with more candles, most of them unlit, mounted on weird geometrically-shaped stands that made the whole thing feel even more like a particularly elegant Satanic mass. "In the season of the sun's rebirth," he would solemnly intone, "on the eve of the winter solstice, [I consecrate this house ... with LIGHT](#)." Then he'd walk over to one of the unlit candles and light that baby up. The only thing missing was a hooded robe and an altar on which to sacrifice one of the pre-K kids.

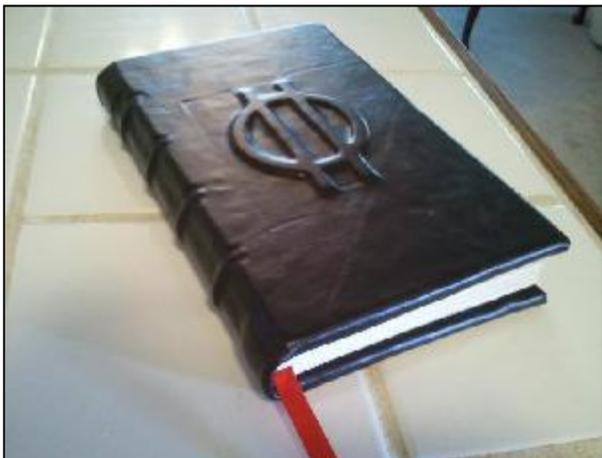
If that wasn't enough, one lucky "pagan" from every grade would march on up, candle in hand, for his or her own little bit of consecration. Starting with the sixth grader, each student would read a line from a poem which was either written by a student decades earlier or by some guy named Ffyglygthl in the 6th century, I'm not sure. "Build your house upon the hill of truth," it began, and went on to include such doozies as "May the Roof of your Dwelling be Love; the wing of the Archangel; the Great Fire."

When all the grades had lit a candle and the auditorium had miraculously failed to burst into flames for another year, the headmaster came back to proclaim "I have consecrated this house with light." At which point, to add to the total incomprehensibility of the morning, Mrs. Smith, our 137-year-old piano teacher, would launch into "Deck The Halls" and we'd all start singing Christmas carols, with "O Hanukkah" and "The Dreidel Song" thrown in for good measure.

I'm still amazed that, to the best of my knowledge, none of our parents ever complained that the school was trying to turn their children into godless, fire-worshiping heathens. These are people who would threaten lawsuits if their kids were given an A-minus on their chemistry midterms instead of an A. I suppose bowing down to the gods of flame one day a year didn't adversely affect a Harvard application.

I can sort of understand, however, why none of us thought twice about what was called "Candlelighting Day" but was really "Freaky Quasi-Druidic Festival." We were just kids, for cryin' out loud. Give us a half day of school with an assembly instead of classes and we'd do anything. Celebrate the holidays with a mass wedding presided over by Sun Myung Moon? No problem, as long as it gets me out of algebra. Bite the heads off some Christmas doves with Ozzy Osbourne? Like, sure, whatever. Is it noon yet?

I'm happy to report that in recent years, my alma mater has crafted an admissions policy that makes for a much more diverse student body than what we had in my day. It warms my heart to think that children of all races and religions get to experience the joy of converting to Druidism, or paganism, or whatever it is, at least for one day a year. Now go consecrate that house with light, you crazy kids.

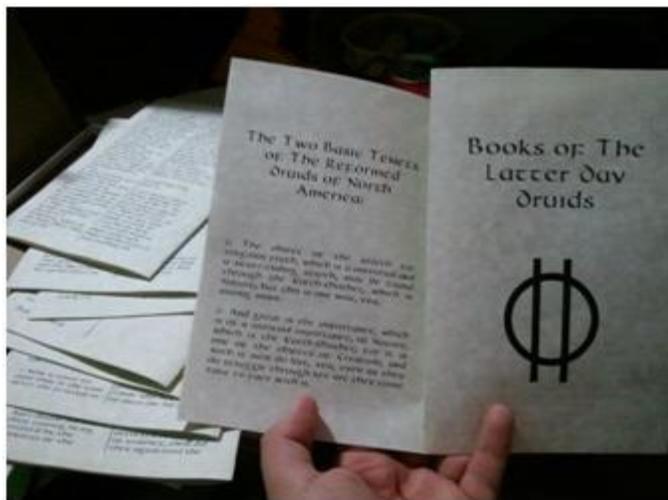


Bookbinding Project: ARDA – Condensed and Adapted

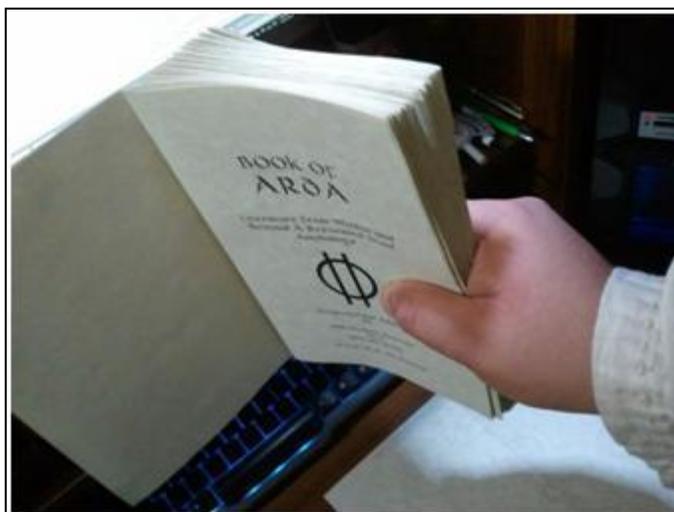
By John Martens

When I was reading A Reformed Druid Anthology, or ARDA in pdf form, I started wishing that there were some copies in print that I could buy, rather than printing off hundreds, if not thousands of pages. I also know that I read faster if I'm looking at words on paper.

One of my hobbies is traditional bookbinding in the medieval style. I started thinking to myself that if I gathered some selected works of ARDA, such as histories, customs, parables, meditations, mythos, and incantations, I could assemble them into a more portable version – the Core of what the RDNA is through my own perception. Granted, I understand that everyone would have their own perceptions of what the Core writings are. I wanted a physical copy that I could someday use to conduct services if I ever form a protogrove or grove, so I made one. I was weary to call it ARDA, even more weary to call it a “bible,” and didn't want to call it a grimoire. Since this was for my personal use, I settled for “Book of ARDA – Condensed and Adapted.”



1 Above is a photo of the loose content to be bound, folded into 13 "quartos." A quarto is a stack of 4 sheets of paper folded in half, totaling 16 pages of the book. A quarto is also called a quire: my preferred term that I use. This throws off the page numbering, because page 1 and page 16 are on the same sheet of paper, and the back side has pages 2 and 15. Pictured above is the section of the book that seems to be the druidic equivalent of “the New Testament,” at least in my perception.



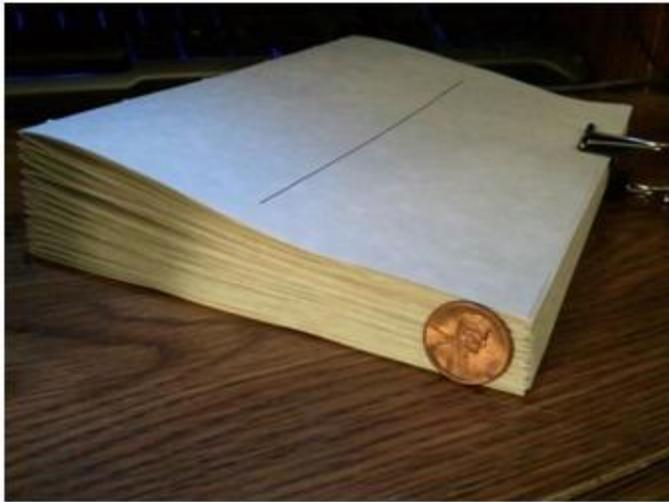
2 I was constantly checking and rechecking that the pages and quires are all in the correct order.



4 Each quire was punctured with a students awl, using a stencil pattern I made from card stock. In the photo above, I added a penny for scale.



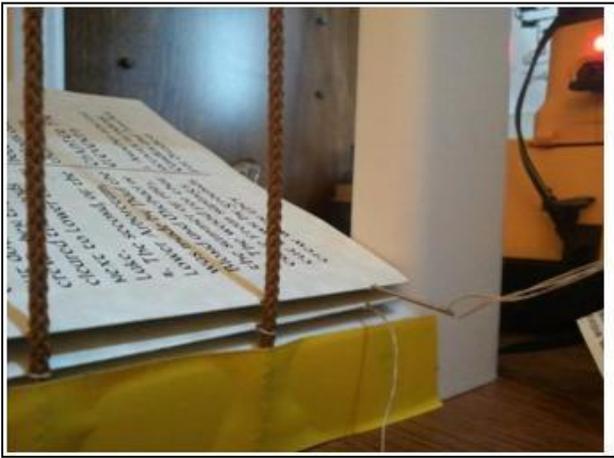
5 This was around the time in the project that I bought more leather. Enough leather was acquired to bind up to four books of the same size. It is probably deer skin, but I can't remember. Leather is reasonably priced per square foot, but they only sell it by whole pieces.



3 With the outer edge of the pages compressed, the book block is about as thick as a penny. A book block refers to the stacks of quires before they are bound to the cover.



6 Stitching the quires to raised bands. I selected a synthetic shoelace cord for its durability over natural cord. I'm using a Sterilite brand plastic drawer unit since I do not have an actual bookbinding jig to stretch the cord over. Highly improvised, but functions the same.



7 The holes in the ends of the quires are for the kettle stitch, a mistranslation of the German "Kette" meaning "chain." I'm using double strands of waxed silk thread.



10 Detail of how the kettle stitches are made.



8 The cords will hold the quires to the spine of the book, and when bound in leather, they will be visible as raised bands, which add to the aesthetic appeal.



11 Looping back through the previous stitch tightens the quires together, in the fashion of "two steps forward, one step back."



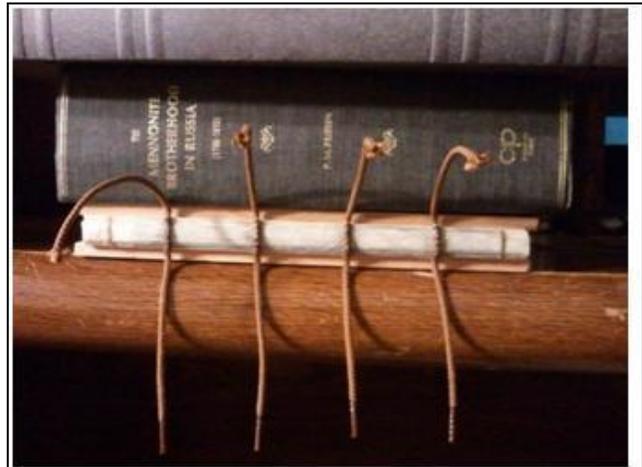
9 The kettle stitches hold the quires to each other.



12 Detail of sewing onto the raised cords. The thread loops around and back through the same hole in the quire.



13 Detail of completed kettle stitches. Also visible is my pencil marking to remind me which way is the top of the book block.



16 The folded quires and the thickness of the thread make the spine thicker than the rest of the book block. To even it out, I formed the curve of the spine, then compressed the book block, and glued along the spine.



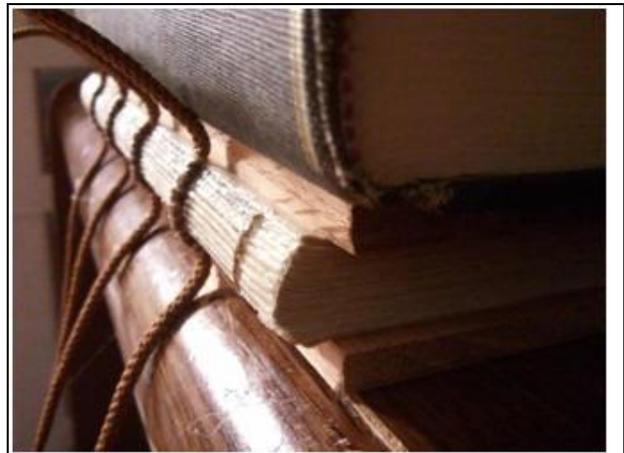
14 The completed book block, once taken off of my makeshift "jig."



17 Gluing along the spine will help retain the curve over time. Also by soaking the stitches with a glue that is flexible when dry, the book should hold together longer.



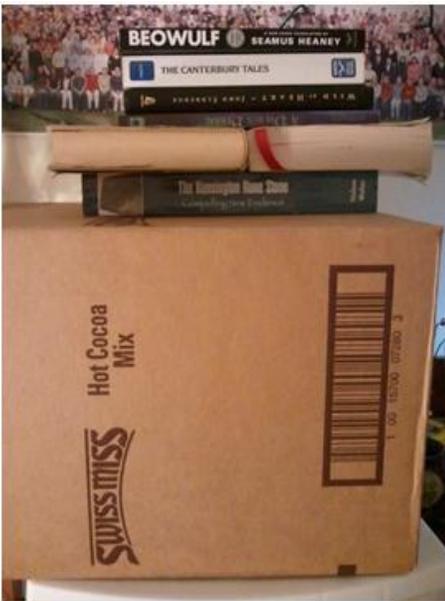
15 To my relief, the pages are in order!



18 For some reason, this curve is beneficial for hardcover books. It requires a lot of compression while the glue dries, so compress I did.



19 I do not have a book press, so weights will have to do. Books, photo albums, AND my stack of Sterilite drawers, chock-full of stuff...



20 On top of the Sterilite drawers I stacked a full case of Swiss Miss hot chocolate mix, weighing about 60 lbs, and yet another stack of books upon that!



21 The next day I can sculpt, drill, and sand the oak book boards which will become the cover. The boards in the picture above are perpendicular to the camera for showing the thickness, and the divots for the holes that the cords are drawn through so the wood doesn't pinch the cord (pinched cords in a book won't last long).



22 Holes are drilled for the raised cords through the boards at a 45 degree angle to be more ergonomic for the book itself, and increase the overall longevity of the future relic. Divots are sanded so the cords can keep a low profile.



23 A strip of linen is glued to the spine. I do not know why this is done, but linen is strong. A synthetic satin ribbon is glued to the head of the spine, and will serve as a bookmark when the book is complete.



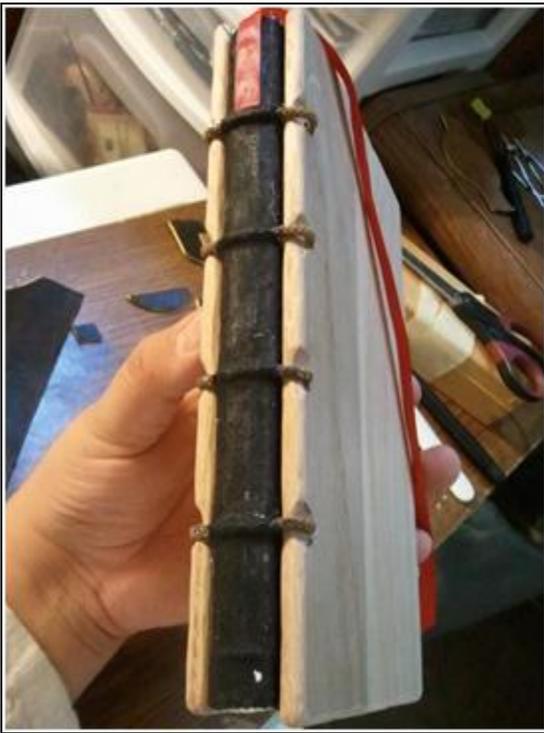
24 Cords are threaded through the book boards.



25 With all edges rounded, it reduces the amount of gradual wear & tear over the centuries.



26 Behold, the cords pass through at about a 45 degree angle.



27 Here, it resembles a bookbinding style known as Coptic binding.

29 The cords are unraveled. An awl helps get between the fibers to tease them out.



30 An old toothbrush helps comb out the last twists.



28 The tips of the cords are snipped. Initially, I melted the ends so they would thread easily.



31 Baking paper or wax paper will protect the pages from the glue.



32 Glue is put into the sanded divots.



33 The cord is glued down, fanned out, and more glue is poured on top.



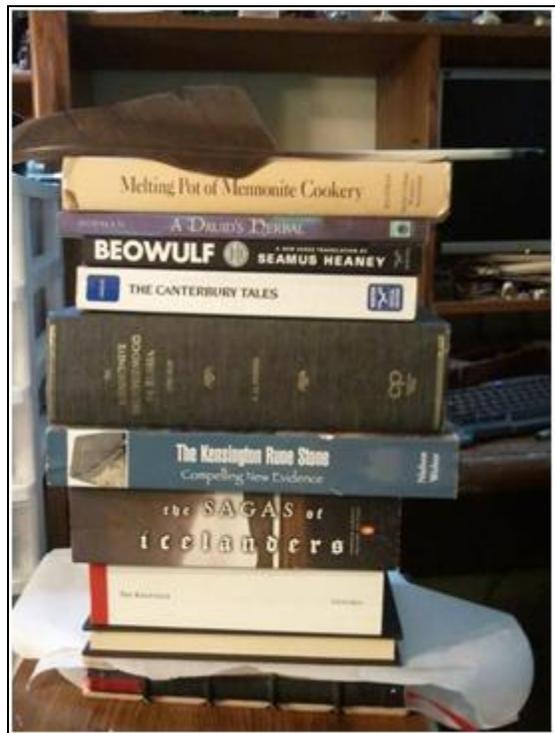
36 This leather sigil is glued to the book boards, and is part of an experiment that I haven't tried before.



34. The pages are protected with the wax or bakers paper.



35. Likewise with the other side. The same toothbrush helps fan out the cords and spreads the glue throughout the fibers.



37 Compress again, to ensure that the fanned out cords lay flat, and form a strong bond with the wood. The feather is placed on top of the stack for good luck and other logical reasons.



38 The glue is dry and protective papers are removed. It's as solid as the wood around it.



39 The leather is ready to be cut for the binding.



40 Measure eight times, cut once.



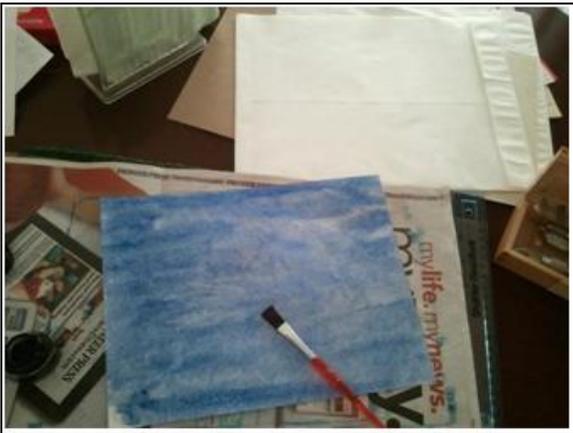
41 Glue is applied to most of the spine (except for an inch at the top and bottom), the boards are glued, and the book is placed squarely on top of the leather. Edges are folded and trimmed at the corners.



42 The top and bottom inches of the spine are not glued so that the leather can be folded underneath. The leather is glued only right before it is folded under.



43 Likewise on the bottom. This is not easy as the book is quite tight to get leather folded around the boards and spine.



44 I paint the endpapers with diluted ink.



45 I like to use Tyvek for the endpapers, because Tyvek is a very strong paper-like material that does not tear. This makes it perfect for endpapers, since normal endpapers are usually the first part of books to deteriorate.



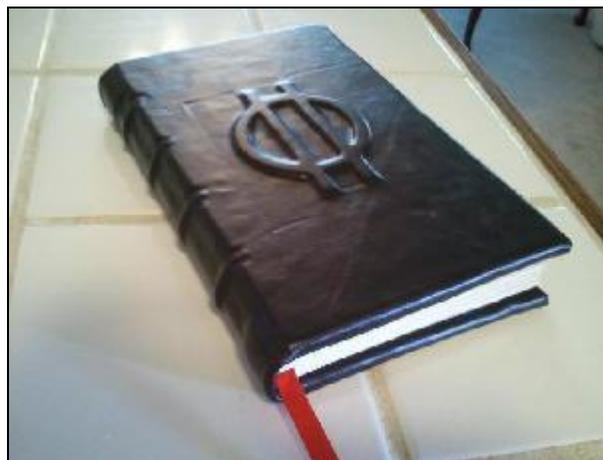
46 Endpapers are glued to the inside of the covers, and first & last pages. The fibers in the Tyvek give the appearance of marble.



48 Compress again until the glue has likely dried.



49 The completed book. Chalice was placed to reflect the light against the raised bands so you can see them in the picture.



50 It was extremely difficult and stressful to

get the leather to cooperate with the sigil layer underneath, but it worked. I think it was worth it, and it is fun to touch. The rectangular lines around the raised sigil seem to be permanent, and are there because of the leather “negative” that I placed around the sigil to define the edges before the book was compressed. Next time I will be sure to use a negative that is larger than the cover, and pressing the book won't put lines in it like that. So, with

proper care, and using a bit of leather lotion once a year, the leather at the hinges of the cover should last about 200 years before needing to be rebound (well, the less it is used, the longer it will last, of course). Perhaps when I die, it will go to the Carleton College Archives, where it might inspire druids and bookbinders alike.

-John Martens AKA John the Scribe

My paypal account is back in business! In that case, I would have to say that PayPal is my preferred method of transaction for those interested in a handbound version of my condensed and adapted ARDA. A reminder that the cost is for physical materials only as the knowledge within ARDA is free. Furthermore, I will not charge for any profit. If you feel moved to force me to have more money beyond materials cost, it will most likely be sent to Mike TheFool so that he can continue to provide so much to the world for free. (And if he refuses that, I'm sure there are plenty of Druids at Carleton who could use some Waters funding)

If you wish to purchase a handbound book (that happens to contain a condensed & adapted ARDA) you will need a PayPal account, in which you can send \$71 USD (plus shipping, see below) to user "martens3737@gmail.com"

For shipping within the lower 48 States the library rate will be \$3.07 for a grand total of \$74.07 since the book weighs 2-3 lbs.

Shipping to Canada costs \$11.95 USD for a grand total of 82.95.

Creating one could take about two weeks, and perhaps longer, and shipping could take up to 10 business days beyond that. I was able to create my copy so quickly because I was on vacation.

If you have any special requests pertaining to specific materials, we could discuss options via direct messages or email, like if you prefer linen, polyester, or silk thread for the binding, or vinyl instead of leather, ash instead of oak. Or if you just want a blank "journal," the book would actually be eligible for a cost deduction since the toner my printer uses is so incredibly expensive.

This also happens to be just a budding hobby of mine, and I'm basically an apprentice without a master, so the books will definitely have the human touch. That is to say, minor imperfections may be here & there.

DRUID PICTURES ON FACEBOOK

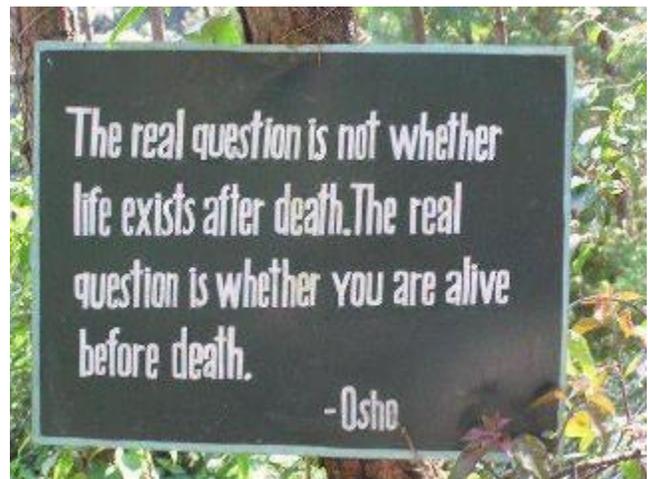
I found some interesting stuff since Samhain

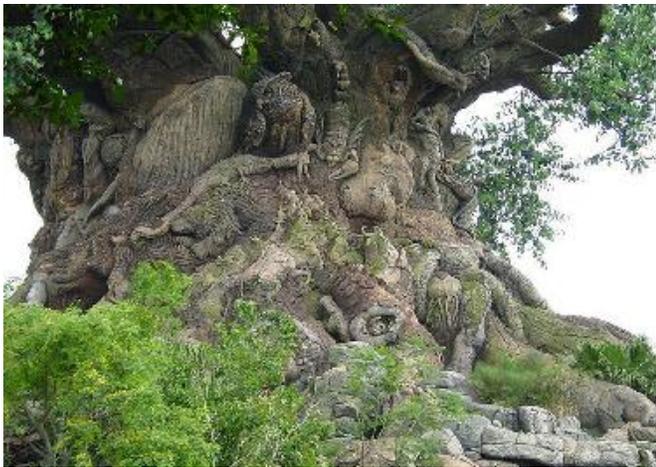


From Oriana's friend's farm of Persimmons.

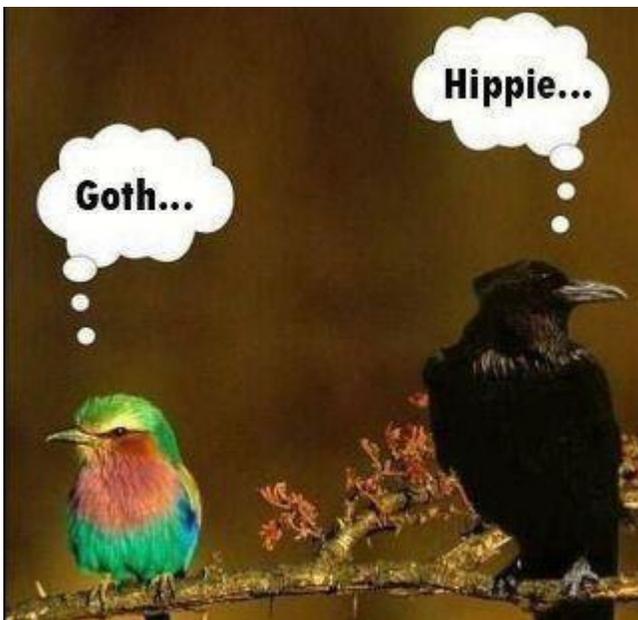
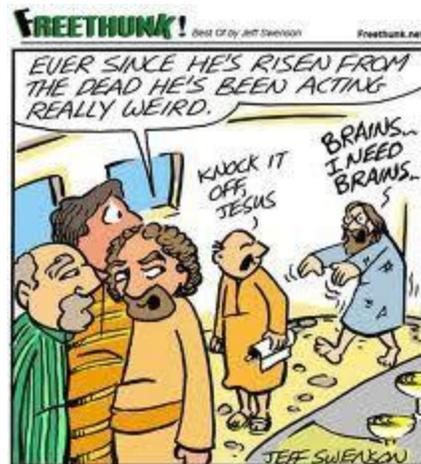


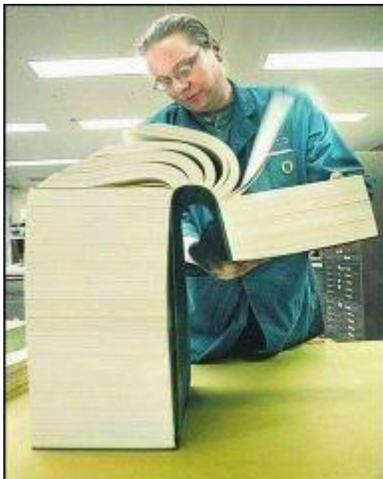
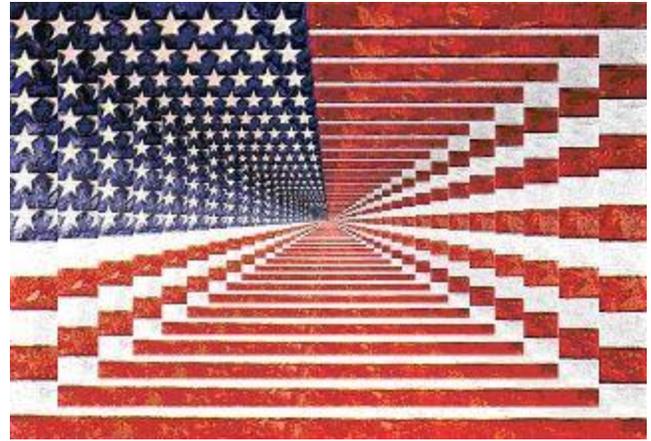
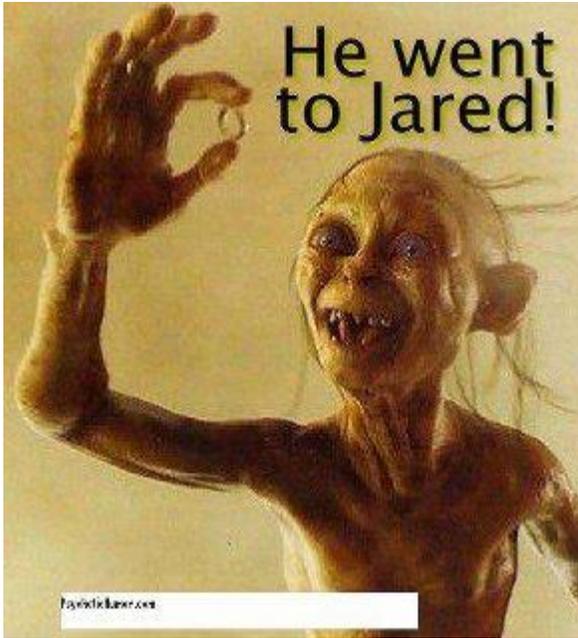
Harvest Moon





Redneck Gingerbread House

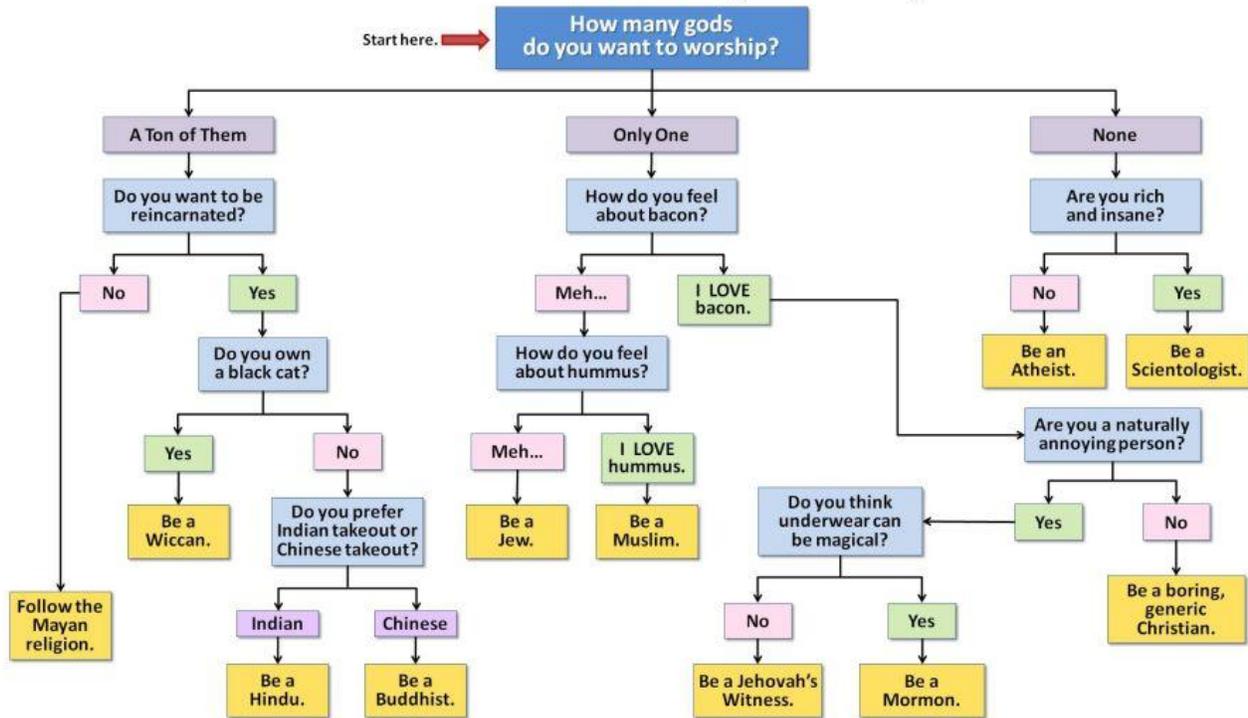




The book
"Understanding
Women" has
finally arrived in
book stores.

Druid for Awareness (of AIDS).
Wearing a red ribbon today (even though it is the
time of sleep)

A Flowchart for Choosing Your Religion



“Darkness and Light” (?)

Don't get me wrong
 There is Darkness
 full of despair
 There is Light
 Lofty heights
 But there is
 Beautiful Darkness too -
 Soft, yielding, passionate
 Revealing, protective, warm
 I respect both Light and Darkness
 and the manifold
 of States in between -

We are not always bi-polar
 We are Everything
 and Nothing
 We are Everyone
 and Noone
 But know
 that all the States are in fact Divine
 And lead Us to where we need to go.....

Jade Storm 6.12.11 by: Stacey Austin



“Adam and Eve” ?

In the Garden of Eden,
as everyone knows,
Lives Adam and Eve,
without any clothes.

In this garden,
were two little leaves,
one covered Adam's,
one covered Eve's.

As the story goes on,
Never the less to say,
the wind came along,
and blew the leaves away.

At the sight,
Adam did stare,
There was Eve's treasure,
All covered with hair.

And wonder came,
Under Eve's eyes,
As Adam's thing,
started to rise.

They found a spot,
that suited them best,
a nice big tree,
where they began to rest.

Her legs spread wider,

and wider apart,
While thrill after thrill,
Came into her heart.

The head of Adam's thing,
Peeked into the hole,
and filled her with passion,
Beyond her control.

Backward and forward,
His thing did slide,
And Eve's treasure,
was all wet inside.

The joy was good,
She wouldn't let loose,
Until Adam's thing,
Was all out of juice.

Then down through the years,
People did screw,
and now it is time,
for me and you.

So pull down your pants,
and lay in the grass,
because I'm in the mood,
for a piece of that ASS!

by: [Gypsy Wolf](#)

VIDEO & MUSIC ON FACEBOOK



<http://karinaskye.com/PaganYuleCarols.html>

Let it Snow
& Walking in a Wiccan
Wonderland



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9SBeb3A5I&feature=colike>

I replaced Dickens' Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future with a mischievous Jack Skellington as Sandy Claws who finally gets his Christmas mission right, (after a fashion), and instead of the more usual three visits through time in the life of Ebenezer Scrooge, my character 'Scourge' is given 3 visions instead, to the Three Realms of Celtic mythology.



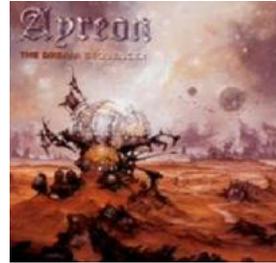
[Britain Before the Ice -
Landscape Mysteries](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9SBeb3A5I&feature=colike)
www.youtube.com

The mystery takes place in the Gower Peninsula in South Wales. It is here in

1823 that a skeleton of a young man who later was confirmed to have died 29,000 ...

What some bones in a Welsh cave (then 70 miles from the receded ocean) tell about homosapiens in Britain, before the glaciers of the ice-age removed

all mankind from the islands from 29,000 to 20,000 years ago



And the Druids turned to Stone
by Ayreon

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Puc_-mAc6d0&feature=related

"It is 2800 B.C. I quietly witness the astounding secret behind the creation of a mysterious monument in Wiltshire, England."

The moon sheds no light on Salisbury plain
The day turns to night and the bonfires cease burning

The druids gather round and the chants fill the air
Their echoes resound and the living world stops turning

The magic words are spoken
As we leave the plain in silence
Now the circle stands alone
And the druids turn to stone

The dawn shines its light on Salisbury plain
The day floods the night with gilded rays of sunshine

The magic words were spoken
As we left the plain in silence
Then the circle stood alone
And the druids turned to stone

The rising sun is dancing on the edges of the stones
Casting shadows, creeping down the Avenue
Into the heart of the sarsen trilithons

I marvel at this mystery, beholder of the stars
A holy temple, a sacred burial ground
Guarding well its secrets from us all

DEBATE: REAL VS FAKE TREES



HAIR-PULL TIME!: Alright--y folks, people-made vs. nature-made Christmas Trees (hanukkah bushes, lebanon cedars, yule-trees, etc.). Which is more environmentally friendly? Which is more Druid-friendly?

Does it matter, if one goes to the street corner and buys it, or if one climbs a lonely distant mountain, and ceremonially cuts it down after numerous questions and offerings, and brings it back with music and cavorting, and promise to plant 3 more?

Does the tree's sacrifice in our home bless us for the year, or does an unwilling tree's death curse us for another year?

Is anything that gets people around a tree to celebrate, a step in the right direction?

Your thoughts. Remember, we're not all going to agree in the end, but let's raise some interesting points (and no un-seasonal jabbing). :)

John Personally, I'd like a potted pine tree, so it can continue to live. The logistics of getting it home would be another story since we have only small vehicles.

Jeffrey I prefer a solution I came across at work. We sell Rosemary plants that are cut to a christmasy shape. It's potted and it smells amazing! Nothing has to die, and since it's winter here I leave it outside. It's quite happy in the cold weather and when I'm ready I'll move it inside to be warmed by my hearth. Plus the Fae love a good Rosemary bush ;D

Mike TheFool I got one of those rosemary trees too for our small apartment, but it died and dried, so I ate it. Hard to eat a fir tree.

I guess part of the debate is that we don't /won't have enough time to decorate with handmade items, one because we lack tools and time to teach, and the gewgaws on sale are so shiny and available. Much less devote a day or two for finding and consecrating a tree properly when we live in a city far from wild trees. (did i say "wild"?)

Sayer No tree here. The need for one went away decades ago. Fresh cut Juniper, rosemary, and other aromatic sprigs from local plants I gather during my walks add a wonderful aroma and bring the outside in. Tried the potted plants, even had big spruce and such. They are not handled correctly at the nursery and are considered like dyed chicks at easter to be consumable. Simply put I refuse to go through the hysteria that surrounds this time. Relax, take it easy. Enjoy the simple things that come my way. Everyone gets so stressed, I refuse to.

Rua This year I'm not doing anything tree related as we live in a small apartment and are traveling to visit family for the holidays.

I'm always a fan of bringing in sprigs and clippings the day before or day of. As well as the potted tree thing, which I'd grow it myself from seed and decorate it as it grows. Another thing is a Nox Tree, where instead of bringing a tree in, you go outside and decorate a tree with food stuffs for our very distant relations on Nox Eve (Winter Solstice or Yule Eve).

James get a living potted tree for about 45\$ and decorate it. it will continue to grow each year and you will always have a tree. thats the druid way.

Aisling Beith Ferch Arianrhod I have fake trees, at least I can use them over and over, cut trees are SO expensive these days. I don't find an issue with using a cut tree as the ones you buy on lots are all grown on Farms and they *Will* be replaced since that is how they make their money. I think the BEST option is a Live Tree if you can swing it. Even if you can't plant it on your own property, you *could* always take it to the woods and plant it. AMOF I think that would make a wonderful New Year's tradition to take the Tree out on New Year's Day and plant it in the woods... new beginnings. :)

I suppose dep on where you live that would be true... sorry I live in So Oregon where Winters are fairly mild and before that So Cali where there is NO real winter to speak of. Either place would be OK for planting a tree in winter. I tend to forget the more northern states might not be such a good idea lol.

Jefrey That's the beauty of Rosemary bushes though Mike!!! they're so useful! As a pretty plant (it actually has flowers when spring comes, didn't know that till I bought the plant haha) it's leaves are edible and great for soup, and I plan on making a ceremony out of it when Beltane comes round. Planting it out front:) Surprisingly, mine is still alive. I'm actually trying to keep it that way though lol

Aisling Beith Ferch Arianrhod Rosemary is a very hardy bush, as long as you don't neglect it completely it should live fine indoors until you get it planted. Just be sure you pick the perfect spot for it because once they are established they can get pretty big and difficult to relocate lol.

12 December at 17:43 · Like

Luna When my daughter was growing up (she's 18 now) we had a unique tradition that my husband and I carry on. Every year, she made a tree to go over the presents. Typically she drew or colored it and we taped it to the wall. For decorating...we hung popcorn and/or cranberry chains on a tree or two outside for the local birds to have food in the winter.

One piece of paper versus a whole tree or the factory to make one. That's what our family does. Next year, when our god-daughter will be 3...we'll have her make the trees for our house and take her out to decorate the trees for the birds. Keeping the tradition going with a new generation. (Although, what her parents do at home is, of course, up to them.)

12 December at 17:48 · Unlike · 3

Stacey J I purchase a cut tree. However after Yule I, like any good hunter/gatherer, use the entire tree and none of it goes to waste. Our heat source is a wood stove and we use the branches for kindling. This is especially good since in Winter it rains a lot and the branches I would gather would be wet and make it harder to start the fire.

Morgan We've tried both over the years. We found that we are highly allergic to real indoor Christmas trees (or whatever is growing on them). So we tend to have fake trees...

Sayer I think Rosemary is one of the most useful plants to have around. It is one of the first blossom forage plants for bees. Seems to be in bloom anytime the bees are able to fly. I love it. Can't have enough rosemary around.

Helgaleena Healingline We have a Grove indoors for xmas, but they are all fake due to the different allergies of the inhabitants. However two of them can sing, thanks to clever battery operated gizmos.

Helgaleena Healingline My sister in VT can still indulge in the traditional hunt for a live balsam fir. Those are the caviar of trees for scent. And yes, they have a wood stove, like Stacey J. Weinberger

Sam No tree at all for me. Yule isn't really a Celtic holiday, nor a Buddhist one. Despite the popular neo-Pagan idea that the Christmas tree is an ancient Germanic custom, the earliest records of them go back to Renaissance Latvia. Apparently they were an urban fad in 18th century Europe. I do like to offer lots of candles or lamps this time of year, which is both a genuinely ancient custom in the dark of winter and a practical one. These days I like to supplement them with a HappyLite and a few vitamin D capsules ;)

Penny Lol well with everything burning last year, i get to do a whole new Yule this year ;-) however, between work :-(my grove role :-) and OBOD gwersu i haven't had the time to do what i wanted, which was, a real tree, with homemade adornments like dried apples and oranges etc so i have opted out of the indoor tree (just for this year) and will be decorating the smoke tree in the garden. I was looking at regions here to see where mistletoe grows, it's common place in the U.K. to be able to and harvest it or indeed by it :-)



DEBATE: IT'S ALL GOOD

James

RDNA, ADF AODA, RDG... etc I believe that they are all correct in their own right and sphere of influence and learning, and it is all druidry, from different perspectives, and therefore a meta druid may utilize any ceremony, ritual or philosophy from any of them as it suits their needs, as well one may use witchcraft or other forms of magic, as they all stem from druidry somewhere in the past.

John Another thing I come across often is the question of "What is druidry?" or "what is a druid?" which seems to be the most elusive concept. There are so many that can't quite agree on what exactly it is without being vague; ultimately many conclude that it means something slightly different to everyone, and that seems to work best. It all ranks up there with the elusive meaning of life, as a great mystery to be explored. :)
29 November at 21:59 · Like · 1

John Actually I just spotted it after I typed my response above the link says the content is currently unavailable

James odd, click on my pick the go to notes

Jeffery I'd imagine you don't have to be associated with any organization to live Celtic spirituality, although it's nice to have access to some of the resources available through them.

James True enough, there are many solitary druids out there, and I try to give a broad spectrum of info in the vortex, allowing for many people to talk chat learn and have fun.

John I really like being able to have a like-minded community to share and expand knowledge with here. I only know one other druid in person, and I haven't seen him in 3 years, but he has a great podcast! So in a way, I too am a solitary. I'd love to join or start an active grove in my area, but it's hard to "seek" when informing others on the Reform tastes so much like the proselytization taboo.

Jeffrey I'm a very solitary druid. And I too take many concepts that I find helpful from other groups and utilize it into my druidry, such as I have "The Druid Animal Oracle Guide" from the OBOD. As a side note/question, can anyone explain the difference between RDNA and ADF to me? There is an ADF grove about twenty minutes drive from my home and I would deffinatly join if they led a lifestyle that I find acceptable. Also, can one be a member of both ADF and RDNA?

Tully Jefrey, any Druid Group that tells you that you CAN'T be part of another Druid Group while you're a member of that one should be avoided like the plague. I'm RDNA and AODA, and looking considerably into joining White Oak. Follow the Path as you see fit.

John I know that RDNA allows you to be ADF, but I'm not certain of the other way around... I want to say yes. Somewhere here I made a huge comparison chart because one of my friends was like "Can't you choose some OTHER druid path besides RDNA?" He did mock the Reform, so I compared a whole bunch.

Dang, I can't find my comparison chart. But I know it is not free to be a member of ADF; I think there is a \$25 annual fee to be an official member, but that includes a training program

Jeffrey ach see that's what I keep hearing. So you HAVE to pay to get in? One of the few things that I feel should be absolutly free is faith, and I don't like any of the Pay-to-Pray religions for the most part :(I'm never going to find a grove u_u

Jeffrey I mean, I like my one man protogrove, and I LOVE my online grove (points to all of you dramatically) But having actual people that are like minded would be such a relief for once.

Tully John, although I'm not ADF, to the best of my knowledge, the don't restrict membership with other Organizations. I know AODA members that are ADF. Some members are part of so many Orgs that when they list them it looks like spilled alphabet soup!

Tully Jefrey, I know what you mean. I wish I had others (besides my dear wife and family to gather with at times. Many of us are solitaires.

John Though I know there's an active grove about 45 minute drive south of me. Good ol' Carleton Grove! Though I think they prefer students as members. So I've been studying the ARDA and books on druidry from my local library so that one day, I could theoretically start a protogrove in the Oakdale Nature Preserve near my house. Hmm... OAKdale Protogrove - I like the sound of that!

James then join the vortex where all druids are welcome, mny great areas and video chatrooms as well.

Mike TheFool Carleton students are maniacally studying and have the attention span and planning capability of a moose. If you can find and corner them, they are friendly and accomodating enough!

Fred ADF has no rules about what other organizations members can join and in fact encourages exploration. You also don't need to be a member of ADF to join in most grove activities.

Penny Fred i was just wondering, after stumbleing on this on the ADF website, why is there a need for page describing the diffrences between ADF and OBOD, i'm fairly new to druidry, and dont understand, the reason for this page, although, i found the page to be most imformative :-)

Fred Hi Penny, I can't speak for the organization and why it's on the site but I think it's just informational, there are differences in approach.

Penny thx Fred, yep there sure are quite a bit of differences :-)

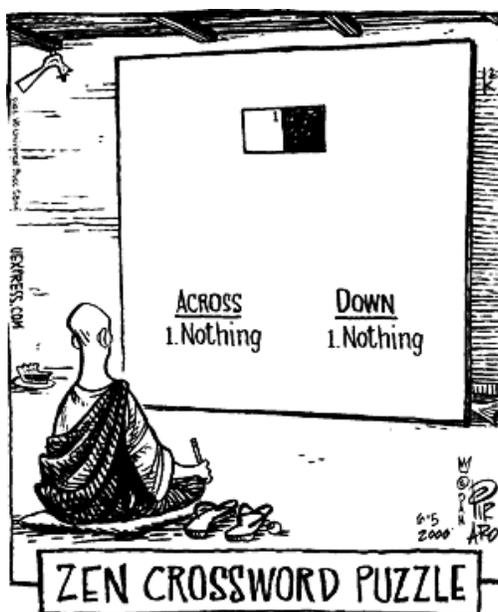
Jess How can someone be a Fundamentalist Druid? We don't technically know anything about the original religion (except what was written down by fairly biased scholars of the time). Can someone explain how one can be a Fundie Druid? It just . . . I don't . . . my head hurts.

John Maybe he climbs oaks in his robe on the solstice to cut mistletoe with his solid gold sickle. And sacrifices hares to perform divination by scrying into the creature's entrails. Maybe he is a solitary because he already sacrificed his "grove" members to Crom Cruach.

2 December at 11:05 via Mobile · Like · 3

Jess Har!

Finneagas Dravyn MacColl And a Hardy har har!





Russian* Mennonite Zwieback: a Pankratz-Wedel-Gossen-Martens Generational Recipe

By John Martens

Ingredients:

2 cups milk
1 cup shortening (or lard or butter of the same quantity)
2 tsp salt

4 tbsp sugar (PLUS 2 tsp sugar & 1 cup lukewarm water for the yeast)

2 eggs beaten

8-10 cups flour

Yeast - 1 yeast cake + 2 tsp sugar + 1 cup lukewarm water

OR 3 envelopes quick rise yeast (6 3/4 tsp quick rise yeast) + 2 tsp sugar + 1 cup lukewarm water

Preparation:

Scald the milk, add the shortening, salt and 4tbsp sugar.

If you are using a yeast cake- crumble yeast in another bowl, add 2 tsp sugar, add water put in a warm place until spongy.

If you are using quick rise yeast add the yeast, 2 tsp sugar and 1 cup warm water to milk mix.



Mix well

Gradually stir flour into mix

Knead dough until soft, smooth and elastic

Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled.

Take a small piece of dough the size of a large walnut and place on a greased cookie sheet.

Pinch off slightly smaller balls and place them on top of the larger ones.

Push down so they

are secure, the easiest way to do this is to push down on the top dough ball with one finger and push it down and through the bottom ball until you hit the cookie sheet. This creates a dimple on the top.

Cover and let rise until doubled.

Bake at 375 F for about 10 minutes or until light brown.

Best served warm with butter & jam.



A Living Legacy:

The furthest I can trace this Russian Mennonite recipe back to is my Great Great Great Grandmother Eliesia



"Liese" Wedel (nee Pankratz) (1830-1881) who passed the unwritten recipe to her daughter Margareta who passed the knowledge down to her son George Gossen who passed it to his wife Dessie Agnes Brown who loved making Zwieback all the time. Her daughter - my grandmother Deryle Jean "Jeanie" Martens was the first in four or more generations to write down the recipe in 1970. To do this she had to stop my great grandmother at every step, because Dessie Agnes handled all the ingredients without measuring them. She just knew how much of everything was needed, so my grandmother measured everything out for the very first time to write down the recipe. Now you can understand why

the Russian Mennonite Zwieback recipes are all slightly different. Traditionally, my ancestors would make Zwieback every Saturday, and eat them during Faspa - a distinctively Mennonite light (or sometimes not so light) meal in the afternoon between lunch and dinner on Sundays. Due to the hustle & bustle of the late 20th and early 21st Centuries, Zwieback is now almost exclusively made for Christmas feasts in my family.

In my grandmother's last days, I told her I wanted to carry the tradition. It meant so much to her that I openly volunteered for the task, especially since nobody else knew how to make it. I've been making it more often to get the hang of it, baking some on Lughnasadh and Thanksgiving, as well as Christmas. I am freely sharing this recipe because it is too precious to go unshared. It is too mouthwatering to be kept a trade secret of a fading dynasty. It is a legacy imbued with magic that spreads peace and joy in every morsel.



-John Martens, AKA John the Scribe

*Russian pertains to the geographic extent of the word, as my Mennonite ancestors were solely of Germanic descent, but living in the part of Imperial Russia which is today called Ukraine.

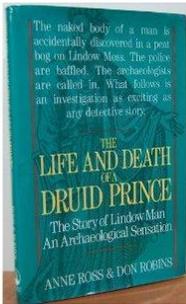


BOOKS IN REVIEW

[Helgaleena Healingline](#)

<http://www.paperbackswap.com/Life-Death-Druid-Prince-Story/book/0671695363/>

This was my most fun present. It's highly speculative but still a nice source of known scholarship on Druids before the Reform.



[The Life and Death of a Druid Prince: The Story of Lindow Man an Archaeological Sensation](#)

www.paperbackswap.com

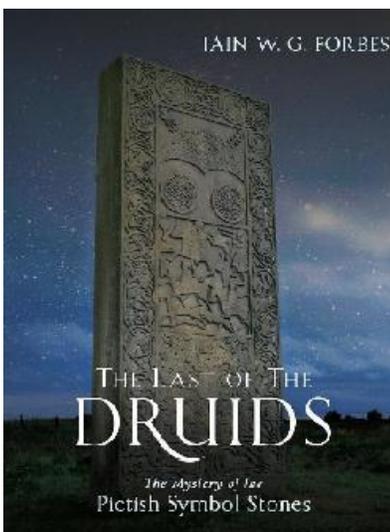
The Life and Death of a Druid Prince: The Story of Lindow Man an Archaeological Sensation by Anne Ross, Don Robins. (Hardcover 9780671695361)



[O.D.C.L. Christian Druidry | Druidic Dawn](#)

www.druidicdawn.org

A thirty six part, online, personally tutored and certificated course in Christian Druidry through the grades of Bard, Ovate and Druid.



<http://lastofthedruids.com/>

A book mostly about Pictish stones and what their symbols mean.



The Earth Mother of all Neolithic Discoveries

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/the-earth-mother-of-all-neolithic-discoveries-6275062.html>

The Independent, Dec 10, 2011

John Lichfield

French archaeologists have discovered an extremely rare example of a neolithic "earth mother" figurine on the banks of the river Somme.

The 6,000-year-old statuette is 8in high, with imposing buttocks and hips but stubby arms and a cone-like head. Similar figures have been found before in Europe but rarely so far north and seldom in such a complete and well-preserved condition.

The "lady of Villers-Carbonnel", as she has been named, can make two claims to be an "earth mother". She was fired from local earth or clay and closely resembles figurines with similar, stylised female bodies found around the Mediterranean.

Although neolithic experts are revising their opinions, the figures have long been connected with the existence of a cult which worshipped a goddess of the hearth or of fertility.

The Somme "earth mother" appears to have broken into five or six parts while she was being fired between 4300 and 3600 BC. She was found in the ruins of a neolithic kiln at a French government "preventive" archaeological dig near Villers-Carbonnel on the banks of the river Somme in the département of the same name.

The figurine may be just the beginning of a vast archaeological harvest in Northern France in the next few years, stretching from palaeolithic times to the First World War. The French government's "preventive archaeology" agency, Inrap, has been given permission and the funds to explore 77 sites along the 60-mile course of the new 50m-wide Seine-Nord Europe canal for ocean-going barges linking the river Seine to Belgium and the Rhine.

The archaeologist in charge of the Villers-Carbonnel dig, Françoise Bostyn, told The Independent: "The statuette is very beautiful and remarkably preserved. We sometimes find fragments of such statuettes but rarely the whole figure."

The "earth mother of the Somme" may owe her survival, paradoxically, to the fact that she was broken while being made. Her various pieces were discovered in a collapsed kiln or oven.

Ms Bostyn said that the stylised figure, with inflated buttocks and thighs and rudimentary head and arms, closely resembled similar figures from the period found as far away as the Middle East.

Could the "lady of Villers-Carbonnel" represent the neolithic ideal of female beauty, long before the coming of fashion magazines, airbrushes and Photoshop?



I've Never Prayed Before In My Life, But I'm Absolutely Desperate

BY GOD

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Uh...hello? Anybody there? *Man*, this is so awkward. But I honestly don't know what else to do. I'm really and truly at the end of my rope. I've never prayed before in my life—never really even considered myself the least bit spiritual—but I just feel so profoundly *lost*, and I have to give this a shot because...because I'm desperate, okay? I'm absolutely desperate.

How do I even do this? Do I just kneel down right here on a cloud and start talking? Is that how this whole praying thing works? You just talk and hope for the best, right? Well, here goes nothing: If someone is out there listening to me right now—oh, man, this feels so stupid. I sound like a fucking mental patient! Okay, okay...sorry. Let me start over: If someone—or *something*—is out there listening to me right now and can help me, I could definitely use it.

Christ. I have no idea what I'm doing. But this is all I have left.

I guess I should start by saying I've never been much of a believer. Always too damn proud, I guess. I suppose I'm just one of those totally self-involved supreme deities who never gives a second thought to the concept of, you know, an "ultimate presence" until they completely hit rock bottom. I've lived by my own rules and done everything my own bullheaded way since before time and space existed, and maybe it's hypocritical for me to crawl back to some half-assed notion of faith right when I need a miracle. But I'm not even asking for a miracle. All I want to know is that there's something bigger than myself, a point to it all. I just feel so aimless all the time, like I'm in a trance or like I'm some sort of windup toy that just keeps walking into walls, you know? But if there were actually something more, then everything would make *sense*, and I'd feel like I was put into the heavens for a reason. I'd still have to figure out what my specific purpose here is, but if I got some sort of guarantee from a higher power that there was in fact meaning and order to the cosmos, then at least I'd know I have one.

Just a sign. That's all I need. Doesn't have to be anything big. Just *something*.

Who am I, really? I mean, I know I'm God, but who *am* I? What is my nature, my *essence*? If you stripped away everything, my divine light, my robes, my omnipotence—all of it, until there was nothing left but the essential *me*—what would I look like? Hell, maybe I wouldn't understand the truth even if it were revealed to me but...I just feel so powerless. How can I feel any other way when I'm not sure if I exist or what it even means to exist?

Someone has the answers, don't they? I'm not just some infinitesimal speck floating pointlessly through a cold, empty universe, am I? Someone out there knows. Someone just *has* to.

Look, I've made some mistakes. A lot, actually. I've hurt people, and I feel terrible about it. If there's some sort of divine reckoning in store for me, so be it. But, on the other hand, how am I supposed to know what's right and wrong if there's no supreme authority out there to tell me? I do my best, but that feels so arbitrary and reckless. If I can't truly know what's right and what's wrong, is there anything else really worth knowing?

I'm sorry, I'm rambling here. I just get so frustrated. Whenever I look around infinity, I have a hard time believing there's some guiding force watching me, or one that truly cares, in any case. But maybe I'm wrong. Maybe that something out there realizes how truly fucked up I am and doesn't care. Maybe he, she, it, whatever knows exactly how many times I've messed up and forgives me and loves me anyway. Or maybe I was right in the first place and there's just nothing but endless blackness, and what I'm doing right now is just totally meaningless.

But...if you are out there, please help me. Please.



Scientists Discover Source of Rocks used in Stonehenge's first circle

Discovery reignites debate over transportation of smaller standing stones

David Keys in the Independent Newspaper
Sunday, 18 December 2011

Scientists have succeeded in locating the exact source of some of the rock believed to have been used 5000 years ago to create Stonehenge's first stone circle.

By comparing fragments of stone found at and around Stonehenge with rocks in south-west Wales, they have been able to identify the original rock outcrop that some of the Stonehenge material came from.

The work - carried out by geologists Robert Ixer of the University of Leicester and Richard Bevins of the National Museum of Wales - has pinpointed the source as a 70 metre long rock outcrop called Craig Rhos-y-Felin, near Pont Saeson in north Pembrokeshire. It's the first time that an exact source has been found for any of the stones thought to have been used to build Stonehenge.

The discovery has re-invigorated one of academia's longest running debates - whether the smaller standing stones of Stonehenge were quarried and brought all the way there from Pembrokeshire by prehistoric humans or whether they had already been plucked out of ancient rock outcrops and carried all or part of the way to Wiltshire by glaciers hundreds of thousands of years earlier.

Archaeologists tend to subscribe to the 'human transport' theory, while some geomorphologists favour the glacial one. The debate is solely about Stonehenge's early/smaller standing stones (often known collectively as 'bluestones') - not about the larger ones (most of the so-called 'sarsens') which were incorporated into the monument several centuries later.

The Leicester University and National Museum of Wales scientists' discovery - reported in the journal, *Archaeology in Wales* - does not solve the mystery of how Stonehenge's Welsh-originating stones ended up in England, but it does potentially open up the possibility of finding archaeological evidence of quarrying activity that could indicate a human rather than a glacial explanation (indeed that archaeological search has already been launched by archaeologists from Sheffield and other universities). Conversely, any lack of

such evidence would help those scholars arguing in the opposite direction. As the geological research continues, it's likely that numerous other rock outcrops in various parts of Pembrokeshire will be positively identified as sources of other stones used to build early versions of Stonehenge. Over past decades, the approximate area they came from has been identified - and the ongoing research will almost certainly succeed in pinpointing additional exact sources.

But although the stone fragments from Stonehenge will allow the scientists to track down where the material originally came from, those same fragments represent an altogether different mystery.

Literally thousands of fragments of rock - almost certainly from monoliths used at or around Stonehenge - have, over the years, been found in or near the world famous monument.

These fragments (mostly less than 50 grams each) appear to have been deliberately chipped off ancient monoliths at some stage in antiquity - many of them probably in the Neolithic.

However, most of the fragments examined so far are from particular types of rock which were used for less than 10% of the early (i.e. Welsh originating) Stonehenge monoliths. The fragments - found not just at Stonehenge itself but also elsewhere in the Stonehenge landscape - tend to be of a different geological character to the vast majority of early Stonehenge standing stones (which are mostly made of a different type of Pembrokeshire-originating rock). Indeed the rock type from Craig Rhos-y-Felin (just pinpointed by the new scientific research) was probably used for just one of the Stonehenge monoliths (a now buried stone, last seen in the 1950s).

This suggests that there may have been other stone circles or other 'standing stone' monuments in the landscape which have now vanished, but could in the future be found by other scientists (from Birmingham and other universities) who are carrying out an ongoing program of geophysical survey work throughout that landscape.

A further unsolved mystery is why prehistoric people were chipping fragments off probable monoliths. It's possible that they were chipped off in order to give monoliths a better shape. Alternatively, some monoliths or other rock material may have been broken up and re-cycled as stone axes - potentially imbued with particularly high status or conceivably perceived as having magical powers.

The detective work, that the University of Leicester and the National Museum of Wales scientists had to carry out to pinpoint the precise Pembrokeshire source of many of these fragments, was extremely complex. First of all the geologists needed to sort through thousands of tiny fragments of Pembrokeshire-originating rock found by archaeologists at and around Stonehenge over the past 70 years.

Then the two scientists began to look particularly closely at around 700 of them which were made of a specific type of volcanically-originating rock (geologically, dating back some 460 million years) known as 'foliated rhyolite'.

They then succeeded in tentatively locating the approximate area of north Pembrokeshire which those 700 fragments originated from.

This was subsequently confirmed by comparing the chemical signature of tiny crystals (each one-five-hundredths of a millimetre in diameter) in the Stonehenge fragments with similar rocks in north Pembrokeshire.

Finally, by examining the detailed inter-relationships between minerals in samples from Stonehenge and north Pembrokeshire, they succeeded in pinpointing the precise rock outcrop.

If the stones were brought to Stonehenge from Pembrokeshire by human effort, the location of the newly discovered source (Craig Rhos-y-Felin) has interesting cultural implications.

For the newly discovered source is around five miles away from a wider area already known to have been the source for some of Stonehenge's other monoliths.

If humans were responsible for quarrying and transporting the stones from Pembrokeshire, then it would suggest that Stonehenge's Neolithic designers were extremely choosy and very specific as to where they got their stones from.

Research over recent years by Tim Darvill of Bournemouth University and Geoffrey Wainwright, a former chief archaeologist at English Heritage, suggests that the Pembrokeshire stones may have had a particular ideological or magical significance.

The outcrops where some of the stones come from are thought to have been associated with sacred springs and local Welsh stone circles.

It's argued that, by importing those particular rocks the 160 miles from Pembrokeshire to Wiltshire, the builders of Stonehenge thought they were taking possession of more than just plain rock. They may have regarded them as extremely important - and could even have seen them as possessing supernatural powers. The newly discovered source is also significant because of its location. It lies on low ground to the north of the Preseli Mountains. This would have made transport to Wiltshire much more difficult than it would have been for other Pembrokeshire rocks used in Stonehenge and, known to have come from the High Preseli several miles to the south.

Transporting the north Pembrokeshire stones by sea would have required sailing round St. David's Head, a particularly difficult and dangerous route for a Neolithic boat. Alternatively the prehistoric quarrymen and their colleagues would have had to haul the stones over the top of the nearby Preseli Mountains. However, if humans took the stones to Stonehenge, it is also possible that the stones had already been used to construct circles in Pembrokeshire - and were therefore moved from those locations to Stonehenge, rather than from the original sources themselves.



Tree Hugging Proven To Improve Health Issues

(By [NaturalNews](#)) Tree hugging, that much maligned hippy generation idea, has now been shown to have validity after all. Contrary to popular belief, touching a tree does make you healthier. In fact you don't even have to touch the tree to get better, just being within its vicinity has the same effect.

In a recently published book, [Blinded By Science](#), the author Matthew Silverstone, proves that trees improve many health issues such as; mental illnesses, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), concentration levels, reaction times, depression and the ability to alleviate headaches.

Countless studies have shown that children show significant psychological and physiological effects in terms of their health and well being when they interact with plants. They demonstrate that children function better cognitively and emotionally in green environments and have more creative play in green areas.

A large public health report that investigated the association between green spaces and mental health concluded that "access to nature can significantly contribute to our mental capital and wellbeing".

So what is it about nature that can have these significant effects? Up until now it has been thought to be the open green spaces that cause this effect. However, Matthew Silverstone, shows that it is nothing to do with this by proving that it is the vibrational properties of trees and plants that give us the health benefits and not the open green spaces.

Blinded By Science answers how plants and trees affect us physiologically and it turns out to be very simple. It is all to do with the fact that everything vibrates, and different vibrations affect biological behaviours. It has been proven that if you drink a glass of water that has been treated with a 10Hz vibration your blood coagulation rates will change immediately on ingesting the treated water. It is the same with trees, when touching a tree its different vibrational pattern will affect various biological behaviours within your body.

This vibrational idea is backed up throughout the book by hundreds of scientific studies to provide overwhelming proof that tree hugging after all is not such a crazy idea. Not only is it good for our health but it can also save the Government a lot of money by offering an alternative form of treatment that is free. One report concluded with the following: “safe, green spaces may be as effective as prescription drugs in treating some forms of mental illnesses”.

Wouldn't it be nice to hear from now on that doctors treat some forms of illnesses by suggesting a walk in the park rather than taking a packet full of pills.



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