

**Summer Solstice Issue
Year of the Reform “LIII”
June 21, 2015 c.e.
Volume 32, Issue 4**

Editor’s Note:

Thankfully the days are long, so I had enough time to finish this issue in time for the completion of this issue. On the other side, I’m fasting in sympathy during the month of Ramadan, and when you’re fasting, things seem to go slow.

It was with great delight that new life sprung forth in Carleton with Anna, the Archdruid, entering the Third Order, and two new members of the Order of Belenos came forth. A new TV video talked about the RDNA and other lovely things were made, which I will share with you.

Be well and joyous this summer.

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NEWS OF THE GROVES



Carleton Grove: News from Minnesota

Congratulations Anna Smith on completing the ordeal of the all-night vigil, and welcome to the Third Order of the RDNA! Anna is the first Carleton Druid since 2011 to achieve the Order of Dalon Ap Landu! A truly momentous event as an old tradition takes on new breath and direction at Carleton.

I (John) didn't get any photos, but the turnout at Carleton was great! Congratulations Maddy Cosgriff on entering the Second Order! I conducted either 5 or 6 first order ordinations as well though I feel bad because I'm awful with names. One of them was John because that's an easy name for me to remember.

John took us on [a visual tour](#) of the Carleton Arboretum



Maddy making Druid art on Campus:

We've been taking this orb to various Druidic spots on campus and imbuing it with the surrounding nature (rubbing it in the ground, with moss, putting it in fires, etc)



First order ordinations

Maddy charging the orb.



Anna participating in a service.



Oh! See the **TV video** about Carleton Druidism, down below in this issue! You'll see Anna and Maddy talking more about their grove.

Poison Oak Grove: News from California

Stacey writes:

Congratulations to Sister Bonnie on becoming a Druid of the First Order this past weekend! Brother Jon, ODAL, officiating, at Wellspring in New York.

John Adds

And congratulations as well to Carrion on becoming a Druid of the First Order at the same time! Nature is GOOD!

In Memoriam.

Friend to the RDNA and leader in OBOD and the local pagan community James Bianchi has made his journey to Apple Isle. Please take a moment to offer a prayer for his safe passage.

From his page: Beloved James L. Bianchi is in the Summerlands. He made the passage at 7:15pm. surrounded by family and pagan friends, a harp played and waters of st brigids well anointed an awen upon his forehead. He was at peace. Love and light my friend. See you at Samhain.

James Bianchi was a mover and shaker in the local pagan and druid community. He founded the House of Danu, a pan-druidic and OBOD organization that hosted weekend gatherings and festivals, and had a strong presence at the yearly convention in San Jose, PantheaCon. He led one of the druidic rituals there along with the Danse Macabre parade. He was a musician drummer and could make a mean margarita. I last saw him in an elevator this past February at PantheaCon.



the

big
and

Poison Oak Grove was honored to host his OBOD grove for Bealtainne one year. Till we meet again, till we meet again.

A eulogy is at <http://wildhunt.org/2015/05/james-l-bianchi-1949-2015.html>

Raven's Grove: News from Quebec

See the two articles later in the magazine about Sebastien.

Sister Jennifer enters the first order



KOAD Grove: News from Ohio

Blessed Beltane! Eight new Druids of the 1st Order!

Read his poem in the poetry section

LOST AND FOUND DRUIDS

[John](#) is looking for Kansas City Druids to join him

hbr_sl@yahoo.com is looking for Druids in Alberta.

[John](#) is seeking Druids in the Iron Range of Minnesota

Laurie reminds us to start planning for Paganicon 2016 the theme is "Sacred Traditions"

<http://www.paganicon.org/schedule-2016/>

Druid Poems

With Sticks or Bones and Crystal Stones.
Stars of night and hidden Light
Mirrors Black and Cards of White
The Pendulum's swing and Birds on Wing
With all these things I see whats right
Tomorrow's Future and today's Fright
For I am Druid and Witch by Night
And talking with the dead is my Delight.

TDK / The Druid King

It's a long detour to a faithless friend,
though he live by the road;
But to a good friend, however distant,
there are many shortcuts.
Havamal Stanza 34
From Mike G. R.

The moon has gone and sung her song
Brought change on the wind
And light on her hair
For the day is yet young
As the new sun does rise
And all that was dead
Is made new again.
-Nicole

Muin As Prophecy

Muin as prophecy;
Straight as an arrow
Or spear,
A trunk stands tall.
One branch raised
To the sky,
To the Shining Ones, portend;
One branch lowered
To the depths,
To the Ancestors, as consul;
One trunk solid,
As a foundation,
As a bridge.
As the Sun rises,
I hold myself in this position,
Imprinted on the sky,
Standing on the land,
Shadowed on the ground:
What will this day bring?

John D.



Council ring at Carleton College

Druid Blogs & Links

The Summer issue of **Druid Magazine** (mostly American OBOD) is out about: Urban Druidry, Ritual Space, Staff workshop, Tapestry of Life, Spirit at the Office, , Druidry Online, Spring Harvest, Tinctures, , Family Health, Finding Druid groups, sacred fires, plus poems and stories.

<http://druidmagazine.com/pdf/201506%20DM%20Inaugural.pdf>

Druid Podcast 99 Peter Own interview, summer solstice myths, St. Nectan, Ceruunos,

<https://soundcloud.com/damhthebard/druidcast-a-druid-podcast-episode-99>

50th Anniversary of OBOD video (30min) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x00Imc9ZG2o>

Aontacht magazine is available with interview with Joanna VaderHoeven, Herbs, poetry, recipes and realms of the Siabhra, memory and other items. (By the Druidic Dawn) www.druidicdawn.org/aontacht

John Becket blogs about circles within circles in Druid hierarchy

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/johnbeckett/2014/06/expanding-circles.html>

Aren Newsletter for Litha is out on historic re-enactment, heathen Chinese, getting older, many interviews, and what are pow wows? <http://aren.org/newsletter/2015-litha/index.html>

George discovered there is a veil of dust around the moon <http://rt.com/news/268180-permanent-cloud-around-moon/>

Ellis recommends a book, “Speaking with Nature” by Ingerman and Roberts

Mike suggests Living the Wheel, Sustainable projects to start for the Solstice

<https://druidgarden.wordpress.com/2015/06/19/living-the-wheel-of-the-year-spiritual-and-sustainable-practices-for-the-summer-solstice/> a

George shares an article about Celtic-Vedic Connections. <http://www.sanskritimagazine.com/indian-religions/hinduism/the-celtic-vedic-connection/#>

Sebastien shares a short video by Philip Carr Gomm on Hind-Druid connection

<https://www.facebook.com/AwakenMythology/videos/900123163386216/>

Ellis share’s Philip Carr-Gomm’s article on Climate Change <http://www.philipcarr-gomm.com/aluna-and-the-black-line-initiative/>

Cerridwen shares Philip Carr Gomm’s article on saving ancient yew tree <http://www.philipcarr-gomm.com/save-ancient-yew/>

Rua writes about:

Environmentalism <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/pathsthroughtheforests/2015/05/05/earth-ltd-nature-capitalism-politics-humanity/>

Gardening in her blog <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/pathsthroughtheforests/2015/05/11/saegoah-pursuits-gardening-with-rainwater-harvesting-earthworks-a-photo-essay/>

Pagan Community Statement:

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/pathsthroughtheforests/2015/05/28/why-i-chose-to-work-on-a-pagan-community-statement-on-the-environment/>

Midsummer Festival around the world

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/pathsthroughtheforests/2015/06/15/festivities-of-natural-annual-events-solstice-the-longest-day-night-of-year-2/>

Rhiannon writes about the Marjorie Zimmer Bradley scandal and its effect on the Avalon reading community <http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/act-four/wp/2014/06/27/re-reading-feminist-author-marion-zimmer-bradley-in-the-wake-of-sexual-assault-allegations/>

Ceridwen shares 15 amazing trees: <http://expandedconsciousness.com/2015/06/01/trees-that-jaw-drop/>

Penny get incensed with us http://paganwiccan.about.com/od/incense/p/Incense_Intro.htm

Ellis shares an article on Bolivia granting rights to the Earth <http://theearthchild.co.za/bolivia-passes-law-of-mother-earth-which-gives-rights-to-our-planet-as-a-living-system/>

Shimon shares an article on women turning to priesthoods past and present

<http://humanisticpaganism.com/2015/06/13/why-are-so-many-women-embracing-vesta-contemporary-paganism-by-debra-macleod/>

Shimon shares an article about prime-time paganism on Vikings and Game of Thrones

<http://www.medievalists.net/2015/06/07/primetime-paganism-popular-culture-representations-of-europhilic-polytheism-in-game-of-thrones-and-vikings/>

Shimon found some gardening tips <http://www.motherearthliving.com/gardening/step-into-sustainable-gardening.aspx>

David R found a documentary on Gods of Middle Earth <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CI94OKIKSOI>

Ellen blogs about Nepal, bees, herbalists under fire, archaeology links,
<http://elleneverthopman.com/?m=201506>

Druid Videos



Thomas shares an insightful song about education and power. Indigo Girls – Closer to fine. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HUGwM1Ky228>



Patricia recommends Indigo Girls – Galileo <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dI1keSSwdcI>



Gary gives us El Condor Pasa, better known from the Simon and Garfunkel cover. <https://www.facebook.com/692203840829852/videos/870250539691847/>



Katya shares a video about a rock's journey over millions of years. <https://vimeo.com/126177413>



Jamie reminds us about the Bouncy Druid songs <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JLWyWj2cmq4#t=58>

Ellis' grandids teach us about frogs <https://youtu.be/-QoUjUTEHJs> and <https://youtu.be/tb3F3ffexQo>

Penny shares stories about Rooks https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1E_cd4o6QLo

Penny shares Damh the Bard's Noon of Solistice video
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5WdQiGmFxTE&feature=share>



Do bad things come in three? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BSSbKDGw5Bg>

Druid Pictures

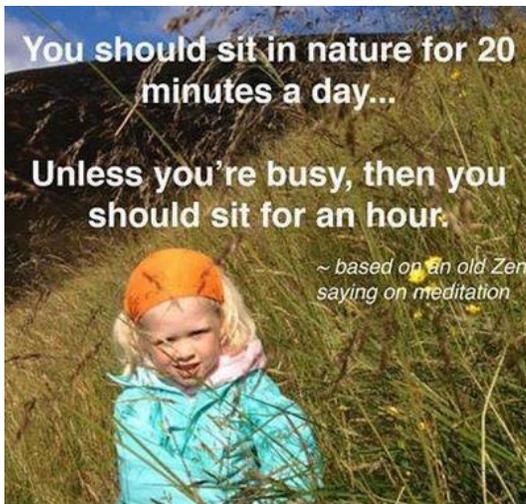


Sebastien:

have you ever wondered what the tree population and density of the United States looks like? This amazing map shows just that. Created by Josef Kelldorfer and Wayne Walker of [Woods Hole Research Center](#) in conjunction with the [U. S. Geological Survey Science Center's Earth Resources Observation and Science \(EROS\) Center](#) and the [US Forest Service](#), the map was generated based on a series of data sources including readings collected from space-based radars,

satellite sensors, computer models, and simply counting trees the old-fashioned way. The map was created for NASA to help determine how the world's forests have the potential to store more carbon in the future

Read more: [Amazing Map Shows the United States' Tree Population and Density | Inhabitat - Sustainable Design Innovation, Eco Architecture, Green Building](#)



Game of thrones

News:



KSMQ's "Off 90 Episode 607 on the RDNA at Carleton

Produced by David Klassen 15 minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OLuPJnMSSeI&feature=youtu.be&t=15m4s>

A short overview of the early RDNA and why it started, and how it continues to this day with segments from the current grove members, and people who've nurtured it from the sidelines.

Mark, who is a curious observer, was probably the closest thing to a bard on the campus, and along with Mike was instrumental in many folk clubs and other shenanigans happening.



In his hands: Sébastien Beaudoin, Potter and Druid –

By Earleen Devine

May 21, 2015 at 1:56am

Sébastien Beaudoin grew up in Otter Lake where he spent much of his time playing in the woods and fishing. He also loved to draw, and this creativity led him to Collège de l'Outaouais, Campus Félix Leclerc, in Gatineau, which specialized in printmaking and pottery. The technical nature of printmaking didn't harmonize with Seb's character, but the medium of pottery was a perfect match. Natural clay had long ceased to be the potter's clay of choice. It was used by ancient and indigenous cultures throughout the world and was looked upon as "primitive." Though its use wasn't actively encouraged, Beaudoin found he loved its look and feel, and the sense of connection he felt when he worked with it.

Beaudoin's aim was to return to the Pontiac after college. He dreamed of setting up a pottery shop, but startup grants weren't available then, so like many before him, he began a cycle of employment, offset by periods of unemployment. Finally after a few years, a measure of security was attained.

When a house came up for sale in Campbell's Bay, Beaudoin thought the small, rawboned, dirt-floor building that sat next to the house could become a pottery shop. A small bank loan provided the funds needed to renovate the building and acquire a pottery wheel and kiln. He got a good deal on timber for flooring from a friend and set about doing all the work himself.

Finally, the pottery shop became a reality. At first he used store-bought clay, but he objected to its cost, and also the huge carbon footprint that went into producing it. His resourcefulness prompted him to set about an Internet search for information about natural clay.

At the same time, on the heels of a severe burnout, Beaudoin entered a period of profound soul searching. He'd been raised Roman Catholic, which instilled good values, but he needed something else, a belief system attuned to "my own spirituality, my own identity, my ownself."

He chanced on a link about Bronze Age pottery in Europe, which introduced him to the Celts, a group of people who thrived in Europe during the Iron Age and early Medieval period. While researching this Pagan culture, Beaudoin encountered the word "Druid". The stereotype of white-robed, bearded men communing with trees and performing mysterious rites came to mind. On closer scrutiny, Beaudoin realized that Druidry was not a religion, but a path that venerates and takes inspiration from the Earth, the body and the physical world. It seemed everything in his life fell into place. While looking into natural clay, he chanced upon the spiritual philosophy that would guide his life. The process to become a Druid officiant took eleven years. Now Druidry is part of who he is, and is an integral part of his pottery shop too. They came into being at the same time, in a profound awakening.

Beaudoin searched the Pontiac for the right kind of natural clay and was determined to figure out how to use it when he found it. Many experiments ensued, but success eluded him. One Christmas, he'd almost reached the point of giving up and accepting the inevitable I-told-you-so's, but when he went to check on the piece

that he'd made for his wife, he found it had survived the firing intact. "I was finally proud of myself because I had created my own product. It was the start of what I was going to do from then on."

He finds his clay along the edges of quiet backroads, where backhoes have exposed the layers of soil. He scrapes the clay from the surface, so the area looks no different after the clay has been removed. It is grey because of the fine organic matter that is present in all clays, but after the intense heat of firing the organic matter is burned out and the clay becomes red, because of the iron oxide that is also present in the clay.

The colour is the same as Algonquin pottery, and the same technique is used to make it. Among the First Nations people, it was the women who made the pottery and handed the knowledge down to succeeding generations. They would collect their clay and process it by hand, first crushing the dry clay and taking out the impurities, then adding the temper, a fine material that turns to ash in the kiln, replacing the water molecule and bonding the pottery together.

There's no preparation with the store-bought clay, so people can't always grasp what's involved. But this is exactly what Seb *wants* to experience; he *needs* the sense of connection with his medium. For him, it's the process and the thinking that goes into creating the clay that's important. Long before he sits at the pottery wheel, he visualizes the project in its entirety, then he creates it, and he finds gratification in the process.

Beaudoin's original 40-hour workshops evolved into workshops for kids, which often took on the feel of a summer day camp. Both took considerable energy and preparation. Now he's settled into more manageable, roughly hour-long workshops that allow participants to experience the clay and try their hand at the wheel. His hands-on approach is similar to the workshops offered by the decades-popular Poterie de Port-au-Persil which takes place in Québec's Charlevoix region.

For his primary income, Beaudoin teaches French as a second language at the *Continuing Education Centre* in Shawville. For the surplus, he does what he really wants to do. His season starts June 20 and runs until August 28, when he returns to his teaching duties.

These shorter workshops also permit Beaudoin to be creative during the summer. He feels this a period of artistic creation, not production. Production yields inventory, and inventory demands that you get out and sell it, which means you're too much away from the pottery shop and your creative focus. Instead, he makes pieces when inspired, or when people commission particular personal or spiritual items like cauldrons, smudging bowls, or unique drinking mugs. He shows his work on his Facebook page and people buy via the page or at the pottery shop when they come for a session.

The Equity - 20/05/15

Earleen Devine is a writer with a degree in Art History. She lives in Shawville
earleen.devine@gmail.com

The goal is to experience life: S

By Earleen Devine

Sebastien Beaudoin is always grateful for what life has given him. "Every day people are grumbling, but I say, no, life is good. It has a lot to teach us. That's why we're here." His forebears lived off-reservation around Bouchette and Lac Sainte Marie, near Gracefield. The language and culture were lost in just two generations.

"School was not available and racism was prevalent. Even in the community, you didn't want to be seen as a savage," Beaudoin said. Still, some things were retained. From his father, Beaudoin learned hunting, fishing and resourcefulness.

Beaudoin had always wanted to reconnect with his Algonquin heritage and two Golden Lake women who sang and showed their artwork at one of his shows have helped him. With the aid of a dictionary on the Golden Lake website, Beaudoin is learning the Algonquin language, quite tricky as each local clan possesses its own dialect. It's a system of animate and inanimate words; there's no grammar like in French and English.

As he explores his Native roots, those forms of expression are being incorporated into his art. As a result, he has begun to share more of his painting. He's also experimenting with Native flutes and throat singing.

Another new creative form is the spiritual drum. It took Beaudoin two years to fashion his own council drum. He learned how to remove the bark from the tree, how to split it to the right thickness, to bend it, to scrape deer hide and stretch the skin over the drum. Now he's working on his first small hand drum. Like making his own clay from scratch, Beaudoin appreciates the spiritual aspect the connection he feels during every stage of the process.

"My head is always in another place when I'm working like that," he says. "I'm one with the project and my ancestors. There's medicine in a drum; I won't sell them."

Beaudoin's philosophy is both Druidic and nature-based. It's the

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Beaudoin's philosophy is both Druidic and nature-based. It's the root of his creativity; it's what he wants to express. In succinct terms, Druidry lies between Buddhism and Native spirituality.

"I couldn't go into Native spirituality, because I wasn't born into it," he says. But with Druidry, he's been able to reconnect with that side of nature-based spirituality and cosmology.

Beaudoin admits that he'll sometimes get a weird look when he proclaims himself a Druid.

"Differences should be accepted, not merely tolerated," he explained.

For Druids, there are no universal truths. There are only our own truths and these are built on our own experiences. Although

his spiritual blanket is Druidery, everything that has inspired him, all his beliefs, have been woven in. Although not all Druids believe in reincarnation, Beaudoin does by conscious choice. And given his mother's special relationship with animals, it wasn't a stretch for him to include animism in his belief system. "Every Druid is



Sebastien Beaudoin, druid

unique," Seb says, "but they're united in a basic core of ethics and values and morals." Also common to all Druids is the overarching belief that everything is interconnected.

Druidry is not a cult. It is spiritual. It has no dogma. Raven's Grove, Beaudoin's local druid branch, has its own Facebook page. There are evening gatherings, called gobelets, every Wednesday. Druidism has attracted people from every walk of life and every belief system. Becoming part of the grove isn't automatic. Interested people first join the Facebook page, then they take part in one of the gobelets before they can participate in an actual ceremony. Everything is transparent, and people proceed in steps, acquiring a level of comfort with the ideas and the adherents. When it comes time for a ceremony, the person appreciates the whole dynamic of the Grove, and respects it. But it's not all ceremony - by meeting once a week, a full sense of true Druidry is achieved. Members exchange books and experiences, and discuss just about anything, including family and everyday life.

Beaudoin is a member of the Reformed Druids of North America and was initiated as a Third Order priest (Arch-Druid) of that tradition. He performs the Druid ceremonies, like Beltane (a fire festival celebrating the coming of summer and the fertility of the coming year), and is branching out into weddings, memorial services and funerals. He also does smudging, which is both Native and Druidic.

"Burning herbs or offerings are symbols of smoke and prayers going up to God," he said. "It's a language in itself."

He's also writing a first-person account that conveys his experience of coping with family and community while being an artist and living the path of a Druid, to help people seeking the Druid way of life.

"I'm a Druid and I like to provoke thought. That's the teacher side of me, so putting things out on Facebook doesn't bother me," he commented.

Beaudoin enjoys transmitting the joy of his experience. This applies to French, his pottery teaching and his Druidry. He's dyslexic and struggled in school, feeling like he didn't always fit in. As a teacher he always puts himself at the student's level.

"Probably the reason why I went into the arts was that it was a nice way for me to express myself," he said.

He hopes eventually to make a full living at his art. The studio has become his bubble, a place to escape to, where he can work on his pottery and painting or just de-stress in a rocking chair with a book. When he sells a piece of artwork, he finds it hard to let it go because each is part of him.

When his continuing education classes have stopped for the summer, it's just family, garden and his studio. Pottery remains Beaudoin's main focus but now he thinks of the pottery shop as an art studio. His is a niche market. The Druid pottery is spiritual, so it's not for everybody, although some collect natural clay pottery. He makes functional pieces too, as natural clay is very heat resistant and will not crack if used over a fire, on hot coals or on top of a stove.

Beaudoin opens his doors in Campbell's Bay to anyone who wants to experience what he has to offer. Mainly people hear about him through word of mouth, yet getting known is a slow process. There is much in the Pontiac that can be sought out and publicised for tourists looking for the unique and magical and that includes Sébastien Beaudoin, Druid potter.

Earleen Devine is a writer with a degree in Art History. She lives in Shawville. earleen.devine@gmail.com



And after double maths it will be... paganism: Schools told to put witchcraft and druids on RE syllabus

By JONATHAN PETRE FOR THE MAIL ON SUNDAY

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2129821/And-double-maths--paganism-Schools-told-witchcraft-druids-RE-syllabus.html>

PUBLISHED: 21:12 GMT, 14 April 2012 | UPDATED: 22:19 GMT, 14 April 2012

Paganism has been included in an official school religious education syllabus for the first time. Cornwall Council has told its schools that pagan beliefs, which include witchcraft, druidism and the worship of ancient gods such as Thor, should be taught alongside Christianity, Islam and Judaism. The requirements are spelled out in an agreed syllabus drawn up by Cornwall's RE advisory group. Faiths: Schoolchildren in Cornwall will soon be studying pagan religions like druidism, above, and witchcraft

It says that from the age of five, children should begin learning about standing stones, such as Stonehenge. At the age of 11, pupils can begin exploring 'modern paganism and its importance for many in Cornwall'. The syllabus adds that areas of study should include 'the importance of pre-Christian sites for modern pagans'.

The last Labour government has been criticised for scrapping the rule that every pupil had to take one language at GCSE

Call for return of compulsory language GCSEs for every child to help the economy

And an accompanying guide says that pupils should 'understand the basic beliefs' of paganism and suggests children could discuss the difficulties a practising pagan pupil might face in school.

But the council's initiative has dismayed some Christian campaigners, who are alarmed that a religion once regarded as a fringe eccentricity is increasingly gaining official recognition.

Critics point out that according to the council's own estimates there are only between 600 and 750 pagans in Cornwall out of a total population of 537,400.

Mike Judge, Christian Institute spokesman, said: 'Religious education is squeezed already – there's barely enough time to cover Christianity and the other major religions.'

'Introducing paganism is just faddish and has more to do with the political correctness of teachers than the educational needs of children.'

However, Neil Burden, the council's cabinet member for children's services, said that the move would give children 'access to the broad spectrum of religious beliefs'.

The council said the teaching of Christianity still accounted for nearly two-thirds of religious education in its schools.

Paganism encompasses numerous strands, from druids, who believe themselves to be practitioners of the ancient faith of pre-Christian Britain, to wiccans – modern witches who gather in covens – and shamans, who engage with the spirit of the land.

Cornish pagans include witches Cassandra and Laetitia Latham-Jones, who dress in robes, own broomsticks and a black cat and cast spells. Their website says they offer baby blessings, psychic house cleansings and spells to suit particular situations.

Cornwall Council's initiative follows the 2010 decision by the Charity Commission to recognise druidism as a religion.

Jailed druids and pagans are also now allowed to take twigs or 'magic wands' into their cells, although they are barred from wearing a hooded robe.

According to the 2001 national census, there are about 40,000 pagans in England and Wales, though some estimate that the true figure is now far higher.



How to Make an Oak Leaf Crown

By Steven Posch

June 2015

on <http://witchesandpagans.com/pagan-culture-blogs/paganistan/how-to-make-an-oak-leaf-crown.html>

Across the North, the two preeminent sacred trees of Midsummer's are the ("male") oak and the ("female") linden.

On the linden, whose spicy flowering perfumes the longest nights of the year, more in a future post. But for

today, the oak.

The Oak is the tree of Thunder, most virile of gods,* whose thunderstorms rumble spectacularly across the prairies at this time of year—the Ojibway call July "Thunder Moon"—and, they say, "holds fire in its heart." (In his youth, the Horned hid the fire of the gods there after he had stolen it from Thunder's hearth, but that's another story.) Fire drills used to be made from oak, and their "cradles" from linden wood. Extinguishing all the fires in the village and kindling the New Fire from wood on wood is an old, old Midsummer's tradition.

Throughout the Baltics, men wear crowns of fresh oak leaves on Midsummer's Eve: even (as in this evocative still from Latvian director Alexander Hahn's 2007 film *Midsummer Madness*) when they're not wearing anything else. (Did I mention that the first skinny-dip of the year is an old Northern Midsummer's custom?) Although more frequently crowned with flowers, women sometimes wear them too, as the old Latvian *daina* attests:

Who's a mother, who's a maid?
Hard to tell, Midsummer's Eve,
when maid and mother alike
wear crowns of green oak leaves.

You can easily make your own oak crown. You'll only need three things: oak leaves, florist's wire (or cord), and lots of patience.

Place one oak leaf on top of another. Leaving yourself an extra couple of inches at the end, wrap the wire once or twice around the stems. Add another leaf, and wrap. And so on, until you have enough to reach all the way around your head. Then twist (or tie off) the ends of the wire (or cord), and voilà: a crown worthy of the Oak King.

You can use the same technique to make a Midsummer's wreath for your front door or long garlands with which to deck your house, another immemorial Midsummer's custom.

After Midsummer's, the customary way to dispose of the crowns is to float them off on the waters of a river or lake. If you throw one up into the branches of a tree and it catches on a branch, they say that you'll marry the one you love best. Obviously, such usages are best reserved for bio-disposable crowns.

Crowned or not, clothed or not, a very Merry Midsummer to you and yours!

*It's interesting that this most masculine of gods is sometimes shown in mythology wearing women's clothing. Þórr is said to have dressed as a bride to retrieve his Hammer from the etin Útgard-loki, and Changó to have escaped from enemies once, aided by Oyá, disguised as a woman. One finds this cross-dressing motif in Hellenic and Indic mythologies as well (although not, to my knowledge, specifically involving the Thunderer). Non-pagan students of Norse mythology have sometimes posited that Snorri's amusing tale is late, dating from a time when people no longer respected the old gods. Not only is this triumphalist "supersessionist" reading of the paganisms outdated—there's no evidence that the paganisms of late antiquity were especially "decadent"—but I think that such interpretations essentially misunderstand the nature of relationship between pagans and our gods. In a pagan world, humor and respect are not mutually exclusive categories.

Editor's note: next issue, how to make oak leaf pants....



Druidism/Druidry

from About.com

By Patti Wigington

<http://paganwiccan.about.com/od/pagantraditions/p/Druidism.htm>

Neopagan Druids:

When most people hear the word Druid, they think of old men with long beards, wearing robes and frolicking around Stonehenge. However, the modern Druid movement is a bit different from that. One of the biggest

Neopagan Druid groups out there is *Ár nDraíocht Féin: A Druid Fellowship* (ADF). According to their website, “Neopagan Druidry is a group of religions, philosophies and ways of life, rooted in ancient soil yet reaching for the stars.”

Although the word Druid conjures up visions of Celtic Reconstructionism to many people, ADF welcomes members of any religious path within the Indo-European spectrum. ADF says, “We're researching and interpreting sound modern scholarship (rather than romantic fantasies) about the ancient Indo-European Pagans - the Celts, Norse, Slavs, Balts, Greeks, Romans, Persians, Vedics, and others.”

ADF Groves:

ADF was founded by Isaac Bonewits, and is divided into semi-autonomous local groups known as groves. Although Bonewits retired from ADF in 1996, and passed away in 2010, his writings and ideals remain as part of the ADF tradition. Although ADF accepts membership applications from everyone, allowing them to become a Dedicant, a significant amount of work is required to advance to the title of Druid. Over sixty ADF groves exist in the United States and beyond.

The Order of Bards, Oviates and Druids:

In addition to *Ár nDraíocht Féin*, there are a number of other Druid groups in existence. The Order of Bards, Oviates and Druids (OBOD) says, “As a spiritual way or philosophy, Modern Druidism began to develop about three hundred years ago during a period known as the ‘Druid Revival’.

It was inspired by the accounts of ancient Druids, and drew on the work of historical researchers, folklorists and early literature. In this way Druidry’s heritage stretches far back into the past.” OBOD was formed in England in the 1960s by Ross Nichols, in a protest against the election of a new Druid Chief in his group.

Druidism and Wicca:

Although there has been a significant revival in interest in things Celtic among Wiccans and Pagans, it’s important to remember that Druidism is not Wicca. Although some Wiccans are also Druids – because there are some overlapping similarities between the two belief systems and therefore the groups are not mutually exclusive – most Druids are not Wiccan.

In addition to the above mentioned groups, and other Druidic traditions, there are also solitary practitioners who self-identify as Druids. Seamus mac Owain, a Druid from Columbia, SC, says, “There's not a lot of written material about the Druids, so much of what we do is based upon Celtic myth and legend, as well as

scholarly information that has been provided by anthropologists, historians, and so forth. We use this as a basis for rite, ritual, and practice."

For further, more advanced reading on the topic, our reader Kenneth recommends the following titles:

- The Druidry Handbook and The Druid Magic Handbook by John Michael Greer
- Druidcraft by Philip Carr-Gomm (the chosen chief of OBOD,)
- The Book of Druidry by Ross Nichols (the founder of OBOD as we know it)



Druidism at simple.wikipedia

Druidism <https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Druidism>
From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Druidism or Druidry (referred to as Neodruidry or Neodruidism by some followers) is a form of modern spirituality that generally promotes harmony with nature, often through the form of nature worship. It is considered to be a Neopagan faith.

Originally inspired by 17th, 18th and 19th century romantic movements, early neo-druidism was based upon largely historically incorrect depictions of the Iron Age Celtic druids, and has no direct relation to the ancient Celts or their culture.[1]

Beliefs and Practises[

Neo-druidic beliefs vary wildly, and there is no set dogma or belief system by which all adherents follow. The main belief is an idea that the Earth and nature is sacred, and is worthy of worship itself. For this reason many druids are pantheistic.

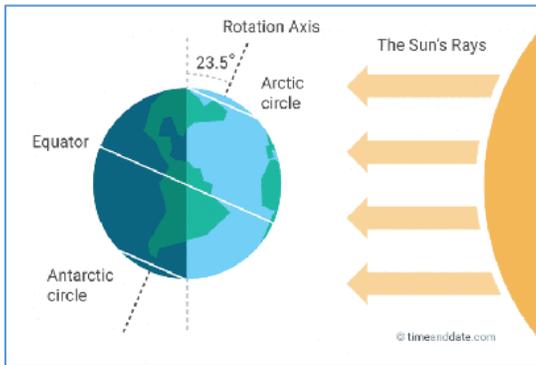
References[

"Modern Druids have no direct connection to the Druids of the Iron Age. Many of our popular ideas about the Druids are based on the misunderstandings and misconceptions of scholars 200 years ago. These ideas have been superseded by later study and discoveries." [1]

More reading[

Bonewits, Isaac (2006). Bonewits's Essential Guide to Druidism. Citadel Press. ISBN 0-8065-2710-2
Books: The Awen Alone

June Solstice: the Longest and Shortest Day of the Year



June Solstice: Longest and Shortest Day of the Year

<http://www.timeanddate.com/calendar/june-solstice.html>

Suggest by Geert for us

The June solstice is the Summer Solstice in the Northern Hemisphere and the Winter Solstice the Southern Hemisphere. The date varies between June 20 and June 22.

Illustration image

The June Solstice. (Not to scale)

June Solstice in Cairo, Egypt is on
Sunday, 21 June 2015, 18:39 EET (Change city)

June Solstice in Universal Coordinated Time is on
Sunday, 21 June 2015, 16:39 UTC

Local times for June Solstice 2015 worldwide
Sunrise, sunset and day length around June Solstice 2015
Day and Night map for June Solstice 2015
Countdown to June Solstice 2015 in Cairo, Egypt
Equinoxes and solstices from 2000–2049
Zenith Away from the Equator

A solstice happens when the sun's zenith is at its furthest point from the equator. On the June solstice it reaches its northernmost point and the Earth's North Pole tilts directly towards the sun, at about 23.5 degrees. It's also known as the northern solstice because it occurs when the sun is directly over the Tropic of Cancer in the Northern Hemisphere.

Meaning of Solstice

'Solstice' (Latin: 'solstitium') means 'sun-stopping'. The point on the horizon where the sun appears to rise and set, stops and reverses direction after this day. On the solstice, the sun does not rise precisely in the east, but rises to the north of east and sets to the north of west, meaning it's visible in the sky for a longer period of time.

Although the June solstice marks the first day of astronomical summer, it's more common to use meteorological definitions of seasons, making the solstice midsummer or midwinter.

Solstices in Culture

Over the centuries, the June solstice has inspired countless festivals, midsummer celebrations and religious holidays.

One of the world's oldest evidence of the Summer Solstice's importance in culture is Stonehenge in England, a megalithic structure which clearly marks the moment of the June Solstice.

In the Southern Hemisphere, where the June solstice is known as the shortest day of the year, it marks the first day of astronomical winter, but the middle of winter in meteorological terms.

Midnight Sun or Polar Night?

On the June solstice, the midnight sun is visible (weather permitting) throughout the night, in all areas from just south of the Arctic Circle to the North Pole.

Sunrise and Sunset times

On the other side of the planet, south of the Antarctic Circle there's Polar Night, meaning no Sunlight at all, on the June Solstice.

Solstice Dates Vary

The June solstice dates vary. For example, it's on June 21 in 2015, but on June 20 in 2016. A June 22 solstice will not occur until 2203. The last time there was a June 22 solstice was in 1971.

The varying dates of the solstice are mainly due to the calendar system – most western countries use the Gregorian calendar which has 365 days in a normal year and 366 days in a Leap Year.

A tropical year, the time it takes the Earth to orbit the Sun completely, is ca. 365.242199 days, but varies slightly from year to year because of the influence of other planets. The exact orbital and daily rotational motion of the Earth, such as the “wobble” in the Earth's axis (precession of the equinoxes), also contributes to the changing solstice dates.

After the June solstice, the sun follows a lower and lower path through the sky each day in the Northern Hemisphere until it reaches the point where the length of daylight is about 12 hours and eight to nine minutes in areas that are about 30 degrees north or south of the equator.

Areas 60 degrees north or south of the equator have daylight for about 12 hours and 16 minutes. This is the September Equinox, the Autumnal Equinox in the Northern Hemisphere.

Earth does not move at a constant speed in its elliptical orbit. Therefore the seasons are not of equal length: the times taken for the sun to move from the March Equinox to the June Solstice, to the September equinox, to the December solstice, and back to the March equinox are roughly 92.8, 93.6, 89.8 and 89.0 days respectively.

The consolation in the Northern Hemisphere is that spring and summer last longer than autumn and winter.



Top Tree Identification Guides Reviewed

By Steve Nix on Forestry.about.com

http://forestry.about.com/od/aboutforestry/tp/id_tree_guides.htm

Here are six of the best tree identification guides in print. Two actually have companion guides divided into eastern and western North American regions. I have selected these tree identification guides for clarity, usability, coverage and good reviews from users. I personally own all of these books. They are of high quality and a good resource for most tree hobbyists and outdoor enthusiasts. Just pick the one you think offers you most for the value.

1. National Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Trees: Eastern Region

By Elbert L. Little

The Eastern Edition generally covers states east of the Rocky Mountains. This photo rich guidebook describes 364 species and is organized by shape of the leaf or needle, by the fruit, by the flower or cone, and by autumn coloration. Its turtleback design makes for a light and compact book that can be easily carried on hikes. Most first time tree identifiers love this book. This is the book to own if east of the Mississippi River. (Turtleback; Knopf; ISBN: 0394507606) [More »](#)

2. National Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Trees - Western Region

By Elbert L. Little

The Western Edition covers the Rocky Mountain range and all the states to the west of it. This companion guidebook covers 300 species and is organized exactly like the Eastern Edition. If you stay west of the Mississippi River this is the book to own. (Turtleback; Knopf; ISBN: 0394507614) [More »](#)

3. The Sibley Guide to Trees

By David Allen Sibley

David Allen Sibley just entered the realm of best American nature illustrators including Sargent, Audubon and Peterson by expanding his stunning illustrative talents. Sibley shows his versatility by equaling his bird field guide with his new tree field guide. "Guide To Trees" fully illustrates 600 tree species, including introduced species. I like what I see! (Turtleback; Knopf; ISBN: 9780375415197) [More »](#)

4. Peterson Field Guide Series - A Field Guide to Eastern Trees

By George A. Petrides, Janet Wehr, Roger Tory Peterson

Peterson's has one of the best pocket-sized tree guides and many prefer this to the Audubon guide. The best part of the Peterson guide is that it has clearly and beautifully illustrated leaved summer and leafless winter keys. Without them, you might find yourself lost among the many pages of illustrations. This particular guide identifies most native trees in the Eastern North America. (Paperback; Houghton Mifflin Co; ISBN: 0395904552) [More »](#)

5. Peterson Field Guide Series - A Field Guide to Western Trees

By George A. Petrides, Janet Wehr, Roger Tory Peterson

This Peterson's Field Guide companion to the eastern trees includes all the native and naturalized trees of western North America. Nearly 400 trees are beautifully illustrated in color, along with comparison charts, range maps, keys to plants in leafless condition, and text distinctions between similar species. (Paperback; Houghton Mifflin Co; ISBN: 0395904544) More »

6. Tree Finder: A Manual for the Identification of Trees

By May T. Watts

Tree Finder is the best pocket-sized tree identification manual available for trees east of Rocky Mountains. Fifty-eight illustrated pages are crammed full of tips that help in identifying 300 of North America's most common native trees. This inexpensive key is dichotomous. You select the best of two questions until identification. Many times you can skip the key if you review the leaf illustrations and have some knowledge of individual tree species. More »

DRUID INQUIRER INFO

Publishing Information

Title: Druid Inquirer: A Scrapbook of the Reformed Druid Communities

Editor: Michael the Fool

Published: 8 times a year. No mailed copies, just free on the internet, print your own. Submissions Policy: Give it to me! If you have news about your grove, written a little essay, like to write up a book or move, have a poem, saw an interesting news article in the paper, or have a cartoon, send it in to mikerdna@hotmail.com I'll try to give credit to whoever the original author is, and they retain the copyright to their works, and we'll reprint it one day in a future binding also. Nasty works will not be published. Although my standards are not skyhigh, incomplete works will be nurtured towards a publishable form, so send those earlier for assistance. Submissions are accepted from other publications and organizations, so you need not be a formal member of the RDNA to have your items published.

Deadline for Lughnasadh is July 20, 2015