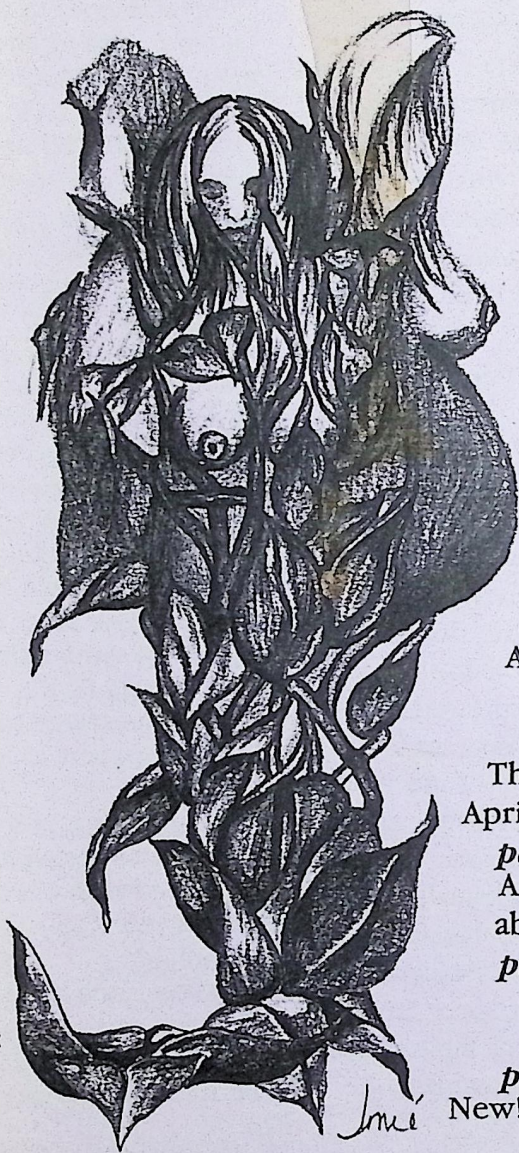
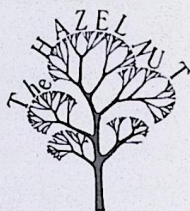


THE HAZEL NUT

A Journal of Celtic Spirituality and Sacred Trees

April/
May
1995
Issue 14

\$2.00



**This
Issue's
Feature:**

**ALDER
and
WILLOW
MOONS**

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Issue:**

The origins of
April Fool's Day
page 18

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about Atlantis
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New! Ankh-Word
Puzzle

page 43

Poetry, Letters, and Reviews

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In Celtic legend, the hazel tree drops its nuts into the well below, where they are consumed by the salmon. While cooking one of these salmon, Fionn accidentally tastes it, and instantly gains all knowledge. As such, the hazelnut has come to symbolize wisdom in a nutshell. **THE HAZEL NUT** attempts to bring you this wisdom in a small package every issue, with historical research, herbal information, viewpoints, poetry, artwork, and reader submissions. We also explore, in depth, one or more trees of the Celtic tree calendar/alphabet (Beth-Luis-Nion system) as researched and explained by Robert Graves in The White Goddess. This includes its herbal uses, folklore, esoterica, lunar energies, psychology, mythology, symbolism, and other aspects. In this we hope to make the sacred trees a real, and positive, part of your everyday life.

Alder is the fourth tree in the Celtic tree calendar. It usually occurs in March or April, and this year it runs from March 30-April 28.

Willow is the fifth tree in the Celtic tree calendar. It usually occurs in April or May, and this year it runs from April 29-May 28.

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Out On a Limb...

From the desk of the editor

Next in our list of bios is Imré, who was the original editor of The Hazel Nut when it started back in May 1993. I'll let him tell you about himself.

My name is Imré K. Rainey, and I've been involved in alternative religions since I was 12 years old. My first exposure came through stories about my great-grandmother. She was a spiritual healer, an herbalist, and a proponent of the essential truth behind all religions. Being one of the few people who owned property in her village, she decided to convert one of the rooms in her apartment complex into a shrine for Muslims, Jews, Christians, Agnostics, and Atheists alike.

For a brief time, from the ages of 15 to 18, I spent my spare time studying Christian theology. At 18, I moved to Auburn, Alabama to attend Auburn University. My searching not only encompassed my need for a spiritual path, but also a need for a career choice. After 16 different majors, I finally settled for zoology and decided that Christianity was not the path for me.

Earlier in my life, I had found Celtic spirituality to be interesting, and so decided to pursue the subject further. I read anything and everything about spirituality and religion that I could get my hands on. At 18, I established myself as a solitary practitioner of Wicca, and remained as such for the next two

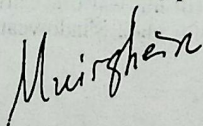
years, until I met Muirghéin uí Dhún Aonghasa, who introduced me to a tradition called the Faerie Faith. I met with various members of this tradition and soon realized that my curiosity in the Faerie Faith was more than idle. On January 9, 1993, I was adopted into the Faerie Faith by Muirghéin.

Since then, I've steadily progressed through the craft and am now equivalent to a 2nd degree initiate in Wicca. I've also explored alternative therapies and healing. In 1994, I met Cynthia Rose Young, Reiki Master and Medicine Woman. Cynthia took me under her wings, and shared her wisdom with me and taught me the healing art of Reiki. In November of 1994, I received the 3rd degree initiation of the Master in Reiki.

In March of 1995, my combined interests in healing and past lives culminated in my certification as a clinical hypnotherapist with the American Board of Hypnotherapists.

Currently I live in Auburn, Alabama with my partner Paul. I teach Reiki, practice hypnotherapy, and have recently taken on a formal student in the teaching of the Faerie Faith. And I still contribute articles to The Hazel Nut on a regular basis.

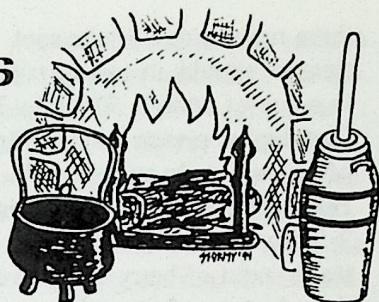
Until next time, party on, dudes!



From BRIGHID'S hearth

Poke Root

by Imre K. Rainey



(*Phytolacca americana*; *Phytolacca decandra*)

Common names: Pigeon Berry, American Nightshade, Garget, Scoke, American Spinach, Coakum, Inkberry, Pocan.

Parts used: Fresh root and berries.

Two years ago, I attended a weekend herbal workshop held at Hawkwind (Mentone, Alabama). The guest teacher was Susan Weed, founder of the Wise Woman Tradition and Center in New York. At one point during the weekend, someone asked Susan about cancer. She proceeded to tell us about a plant that she had only recently begun experimenting with. She introduced us to pokeweed, or actually, its root. Susan spoke of the anti-cancer properties of the plant, but left it to us to further acquaint ourselves with its medicinal attributes.

Since then, I have researched herbal texts and folklore and have found the following information.

Pokeweed is native to the United States and can be found

mainly in the area from Maine to Florida and westward to Minnesota and Texas¹. Its properties are as follows: emetic, cathartic, alterative, deobstruent², relaxant, resolvent, anodyne, cardiac-depressant, and detergent³, to name a few. Here, we will be mainly interested in its actions against inflammatory disorders (arthritis, and rheumatism), colds, the flu, cancer, and as an aid to the immune system and the lymphatic glands. We will either be discussing the usage of the berries or a tincture of the root (see 'Preparation,' below).

DOSAGE

Susan Weed recommended taking two to three dried berries as indicated by symptoms or no more than 5 drops of tincture diluted in a cup of water two or

three times a day. (Poke root tincture should always be taken in a cup of water). Dr. John R. Christopher prescribes 3-10 drops of tincture daily and Alma R. Hutchens, herbalist, recommends 2-5 drops of tincture, or 1 teaspoonful of berry syrup every three hours as frequently as indicated by symptoms. Personally, I use 3 drops of fresh tincture in a cup of water, three times a day and will work up to 5 drops, three times a day, if my symptoms persist.

The usage of *Phytolacca americana* or *Phytolacca decandra* is potentially dangerous if abused. The herb is very strong and should be used with care. Susan Weed even spoke of the plant's dangerous hallucinatory effects (i.e. a pretty bad trip followed by floods of diarrhea). However, I have never had a bad experience with the dosage regiment that I have followed.

INDICATIONS

I am quick to jump for my bottle of poke root tincture as soon as I sense a cold, flu, respiratory infection, or sinus infection coming on. If I catch the infection soon enough, I never experience its full attack; however, if I start treating the infection after it has set in, poke root tincture will lessen my

symptoms within hours and effectively remove my infection within a couple of days. A friend of mine used the tincture to heal skin cancer by applying a drop of the tincture directly onto the affected area and taking 3 drops of the tincture internally daily until the cancer was gone. I have also heard of cancer patients bathing in warm water that had half a cup to a cup of the tincture diluted within it. I have extracted the following from Dr. John R. Christopher, Susan Weed, Alma R. Hutchens, and personal experience.

Chronic rheumatism - Take 3 drops of tincture three times a day, or 2 dried berries three times a day, or 1 teaspoonful of berry syrup every three hours as long as symptoms persist.

Cancer - Use poultice of fresh ground poke root, bayberry powder, and poke root tincture (diluted 1 drop to 16 drops of water) in muslin directly over breast;⁴ in extreme cases of breast cancer, use fresh grounded root directly on the breast; apply fresh juice of berries in a paste-like consistency (made by allowing the juice to sit in the sun until enough water has evaporated out of the juice to thicken it) over

tumors and skin cancer twice a day until cured;⁵ take internally 3 to 5 drops three times a day.

Goiter - Use tincture as a liniment (i.e. rub into skin over the goiter) and take 3 to 10 drops daily⁶, or take 1 teaspoonful every three hours as long as symptoms persist.

Compromised immunity (swollen lymph nodes, infection of any sort, low white blood cell count, etc.)- take 3 to 5 drops of tincture three times a day (very effective when taken with 12 drops of echinacea tincture also three times a day).

PREPARATION

The alkaloid within pokeweed, phytolaccin, breaks down very quickly. It is very important to always use fresh berries and root (Susan Weed claims that drying berries with unbroken seeds preserves the phytolaccin). When preparing a tincture, the root should be harvested at the beginning of the winter when the top of the plant has died off (this assures the highest concentration of phytolaccin). Wash the root off and cut it into small pieces no bigger than one inch square (DO NOT wash the root after cutting it up!). Put as much of the root

as possible into quart jars and top with 100 proof alcohol (I use the cheapest 100 proof vodka I can find). Cover tightly and make sure that there are no air bubbles inside. If there are air bubbles inside, they will surface when the jar is slightly shaken, and should be replaced with enough alcohol to completely fill the jar. Label the jars and store in a cool place away from sunlight. After a period of six to eight weeks, collect the tincture (liquid portion of the mixture) and as much liquid out of the root pieces as possible. Store in a tightly sealed jar in a cool area away from sunlight. Fill dropper bottles as needed and try to leave the stock jar sealed as much as possible.

When drying berries (always freshly picked), use a dehydrator or lay them out on paper towels where they can air dry away from the sun (to avoid spoilage, keep in a well ventilated, dry area). The juice of the berries can also be stored in syrup form. Pour one pint of boiling water over 2½ lbs. of sugar; stir over warm stove until all the sugar has dissolved. Mix three parts syrup to one part of fresh poke berry juice and store in a cool area away from sunlight.

For further information on the usage of the pokeweed plant, refer to respectable herbal

literature (you'll find that a lot of people who are inexperienced with the proper use of pokeweed will write overly dramatized and false information about its dangers, warning people against its usage) and North American Indian folklore and medicinal literature.

¹ Hutchens, Alma R. Indian Herbology of North America. 1973. Shambhala Publications, Boston, MA, pg. 223.

² Ibid, pg. 223.

³ Christopher, Dr. John R. School of Natural Healing. 1976. Provo, UT, pg. 59.

⁴ Ibid, pg. 59.

⁵ Hutchens, pg. 224.

⁶ Ibid, pg. 61.

Notes:



Spring is the essence of life and all that becomes
Her.

The robin is Her messenger, the groundhog Her
foreteller.

We all await Her rebirth with the anticipation of
bodies covered in the cobwebs of winter corners.

With breaths hushed, She enters at night.

The fairies and devas awakening all like until it
explodes with the first rays of the sun.

We awake to find that we have been renewed.
Our winter cloak cast aside to bathe in the buds and
greenness of the turning of the wheel.

- Brighid MoonFire

RUNES

By STORMY

Often I am asked what kind of runes are best. There are purists in the field who will tell you that runes made of bone or wood are the best. Two of the most beautiful sets I have ever seen were made out of ivory and wood. The ivory set was made from deer antlers and the other set was made from the reclaimed tree roots of South American rain forest trees that were irrationally cut down for farming. These two sources may be controversial for some people and I do understand. Know that deer actually shed their antlers every year, and the recycled wood was used only after the loggers had already done the damage to the rain forests. The usual way to get rid of the stumps is by burning them!

In this day and age, I believe that God/dess wants us to recycle and conserve whenever possible. I recommend that runes be made out of just about anything you are comfortable with as long as it doesn't harm or hurt anyone! Remember to give thanks to your higher power(s) and ask permission to use whatever resource you decide to make your runes out of. The deciding factor will be availability, harm none, hurt

none, and what you are attracted to. I have seen runes made out of the following: tumbled rocks, river pebbles, glass, plastic, sea shells, twigs, metal, card board, bottle caps, ceramic, nuts, and leather. Let your imagination go when you decide to make your own runes or buy them.

Carry your runes around with you at all times, if possible, in a pouch made of a strong material you are comfortable with such as velvet, cotton, homespun, suede or leather. Let your energies merge with the runes. You imprint yourself to them when you make them your own. There is a way to dedicate each rune or make your own runes during each hour of a 24-hour day or over a period of 24 days. Use the article I wrote on runes from the last issue of THE HAZEL NUT (February/March 1995, #13, pp. 7-10) as a guide. The article is presented in FUTHARK order starting with "Feoh/Fehu" and the standard accepted order of the Anglo-Saxon and Germanic runes. The use of "Wyrð" or Odin is a 19th century addition which is still popular today. If you include the blank rune "Wyrð/Odin," it should be

dedicated and will add an extra hour or day to your dedication ritual. (See the end of this article for other sources in case you lost your last issue of THE HAZEL NUT or never purchased one. Shame on you!)

Start with a set of 24 (or 25 if including Wyrd) blank runes of your choice from any material you are comfortable with and begin to inscribe and dedicate them. If your set is already inscribed, then you can begin the dedication ritual. Remember, you can do this in a 24-hour period or over a 24 day period. Always begin with the first rune, "Feoh/Fehu." The proper hour to begin dedication is 12 noon for a 24-hour vigil. The first day of a New Moon or a Full Moon is a good time to begin if you are dedicating over a 24-hour period or a 24 day period. It's okay to inscribe or dedicate your runes during different phases of the moon.

Those with a knowledge of astrology may want to dedicate their runes on the corresponding moon they feel most empowered by. The center of this journal contains the upcoming lunar positions of the moon in The Lunar Calendar, by Nancy Passmore. I was born when sun was in Virgo with the moon in Aries. So I check The Lunar Calendar for the corresponding days when the

moon is in Virgo or Aries during the months of Alder/March 30-April 28 and Willow/April 29-May 28. In Alder, I might pick the day, Tuesday, April 11, when the sun is in Aires with moon in Virgo. In Willow, I might pick the dates of Tuesday, May 9, when sun is in Gemini with moon in Virgo, or Wednesday, May 24, when sun is in Cancer with moon in Aries.

Make sure you have the proper tools handy to inscribe your runes. You might burn, etch, engrave, gouge, paint, hammer, draw, or cut the rune into the appropriate material of your choice. It really helps to keep a journal of your experiences and impressions while dedicating the runes. Doing this will help you to remember and learn the meaning of the runes better. What you pick up intuitively through experience makes you much wiser. Whether you are dedicating store bought runes or the ones you made for yourself, follow the ritual for dedicating the runes as closely as your spiritual path will allow you to do.

1. Center and ground yourself.
2. Thank your higher power(s) and the four directions of North, East, South and West as you light your incense, candles or smudge sticks. The Norse

traditions always start with the North! Put your shield or cone of protection up.

3. Dedicate your rune with its appropriate name. Repeat the name inside your head as you inscribe your rune. Imprint yourself with its name; e.g., "This rune is 'Feoh' or 'Fehu'." Keep repeating the name until you are finished inscribing.

4. Once the rune is inscribed, or if the rune is being dedicated for the first time since it was given to you or purchased, this is the next step: Hold the rune up, look at it, and say out loud its name, "Feoh" or "Fehu." Then while still holding the rune up, repeat out loud three times the meaning of the rune while imprinting the rune shape to your memory: "This rune is Feoh/ Fehu. Feoh/Fehu refers to movable possessions, money, cattle, nourishment; business opportunities are possible."

5. Mediate on the meaning of the rune. Clear your head of undesirable junk and see if impressions of the rune come to mind in either symbolic or spiritual images. Hold them in your head and remember your impressions. Did you see cattle, money, gold, silver, caskets of jewels, or movable possessions

like stocks and bonds and paper currency? Did you see the cosmic cow, the Goddess Ur or Isis? Or any other cow as a God, like Hathor? That's the idea! The rune symbol for Feoh/Fehu looks like the horn of a cow and is associated with cattle!

6. Thank your higher powers; thank and bless the four directions for their protection; snuff out the candles and/or smudge sticks. The incense probably burned itself out if you mediated for at least 10 to 20 minutes.

7. Keep a journal and write down your impressions for each rune of the FUTHARK whether you do the 24-hour vigil or the 24 day dedication.

IF YOU ARE DOING THE 24-HOUR VIGIL, PLEASE DO NOT DRINK ANY ALCOHOL. DRINK PLENTY OF WATER AND FRUIT JUICES. EAT FOODS THAT ARE EASILY DIGESTED. EAT ABSOLUTELY NO RED MEAT AND IF YOU CAN'T DO WITHOUT MEAT THEN EAT FISH OR CHICKEN IN MODERATION.

A fast is not necessary to dedicating the runes unless you've had a lot of experience fasting and feel comfortable with

it. Some people like to experience what Woden/Odin did as a Shaman. I have done both and recommend the 24 day dedication ritual for most people. You will have more time to memorize the runes and get acquainted with them. Staying awake for 24 hours is difficult and must be planned for properly. The plus side to staying awake 24 hours is that there is a very good chance you'll be able to have a Shamanic experience as the result of sleep deprivation. Please see a medical doctor, a nutritionist or health food practitioner if you are adamant about doing a full fast during a 24 hour vigil. Don't be surprised if they try to talk you out of fasting that long, as you need to be healthy to begin with, and fluid deprivation is a definite NO!

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Fenian Riddles

A sparkling eye
An agile hand
What needs a man
To understand

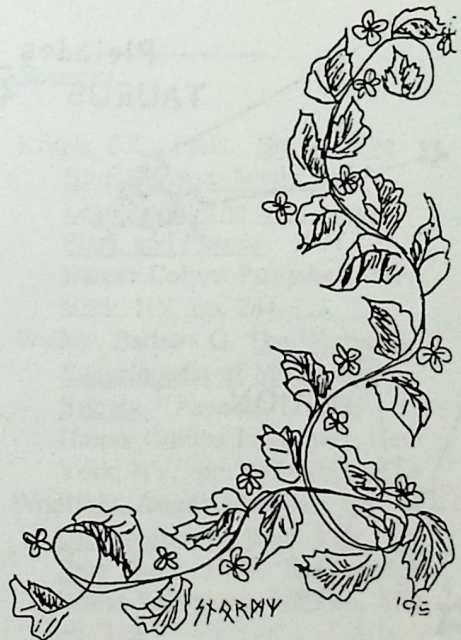
A wing
A fin
A wrap of fur
Some of the things
That never were

A sparkling eye
An agile hand
What needs a woman
To understand

A cloud
A stream
A mottled peak
Some magic words
To make dreams sweet

A sparkling eye
An agile hand
All these things we need
To understand

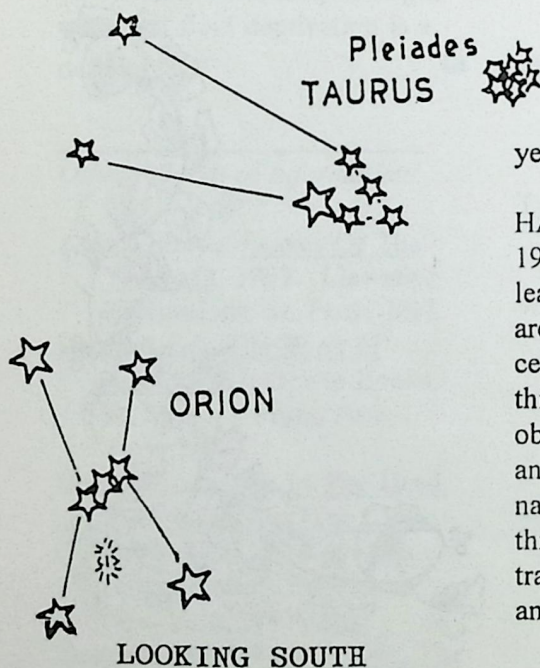
- David Sparenberg



Night Stalking: Star-Watching

by Stormy

Our modern-day astrology was invented by and credited to the Babylonians (present day Iranians). They divided the sky into 12 30° parts based on a 360° circle. Each 30° part was for one of the signs, which at that time were: Aries, Pleiades, Gemini, Praesepe, Leo, Spica, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricornus, Aquarius, and Pisces. Later the Greeks changed Pleiades to Taurus and Praesepe to Cancer. The Babylonians also started their year with Pleiades and ended it with Aries, while the Greeks began their year with Aires and ended with Pisces.



Have you ever noticed that people interested in star-watching seem to be drawn to one particular star or constellation of stars? One of the most important festivals of the year is Samhain, when Pleiades and Orion can be seen in the wee early hours of the morning in the southeastern section of the sky. The other most important festival of the year is Beltaine, when Pleiades and Orion can be seen in the early hours of the evening in the southwestern sky. I'm attracted to Orion, while I know many people are attracted to Pleiades. I think it's in our blood/DNA/genetic code memories of earlier times from when we truly followed our star and the Eight-Fold Wheel of the year.

In the last issue of THE HAZEL NUT (February/March 1995, Issue #13, p. 22) you learned that Pleiades and Orion are last seen as Beltaine is celebrated. I have this theory that this is our wake-up call to observe what the ancients did and become more aware of natural cycles that occur throughout the year. One way of tracking these cycles is observing and becoming one with the ever-

moving stars that revolve around the planet like clockwork throughout the year. We actually see the stars this way because the earth turns on its axis while revolving around the sun. Our ancestors predicted floods, feast, famine, when to plant and harvest, and they lived by the positions of the stars, the moon and the sun. If there is ever a cataclysmic planet-wide catastrophe disabling modern technology, it will be the urban eclectic pagans and the unspoiled simple cultures that will survive!

Pleiades is known by many names and is considered masculine by some cultures and feminine by others. The Iroquois of New York said the Pleiades were the 'Seven Brothers,' but only six stars can be seen with the naked eye. Their explanation is that one of the brothers fell back to earth so that only six brothers could be seen. Most traditions around the world say that the Pleiades consist of 'Seven Sisters' even though, again, only six stars can be easily seen. There are many stories about one of the sisters marrying a mortal and going into hiding or banishment because she did not marry a god like her sisters. This is a consistent story told about the Pleiades throughout the ancient world on many different continents. The stories were

probably invented to explain the disappearance or fading of one of the stars. Today with powerful telescopes, it is noted that the area of Pleiades in the constellation of Taurus does indeed consist of many more stars than just seven, and veils of dust conceal many of the fainter stars which may be newly developing stars.

You can get real technical when explaining what Pleiades is or might be, but one thing is for sure; it is a beautiful group of romantic stars. While these stars mesmerize, they also wake us up to vibrations of a different time and place in the past when the stars were consulted for everything.

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Upon a moon beam's silvery web
So very softly we go
Timidly to the Shore
Feeling the Tides ebb slow

Mother Moon up high above
Dips her cup into the sea
Pulling life from the murky depths
Setting dreams dove free

The dove that shows serenity
Rises high up to the sun
The sunbeams cascading down to earth
Its work now just begun

The moon and sun together they waltz
To a melody eight turns long
Each one leading the other at length
Through a four fold seasons song

The stag alone, standing old
The green forests' only king
To spy a long haired maiden there
His courtship so to sing

With head bowed low in gratitude
The older now shall rest
The maiden now so strong to grow
The stag's long reign now past

For four fold seasons she will lead

A song of birth and growth
Until her time again shall pass
To honour an age old oath

And once again the stag shall bellow
Leading in darkness the dance
His long haired maiden by his side
A glimmer of light to chance

The Moon fills her cup with night
The Sun sings calmly down
For eight turns round on dark and light
A circle complete is found

- Idhunnn Sága



APRIL FOOL!

by Muirghin uí Dhún Aonghasa

April Fool's Day—that wonderful time when children and adults alike can play the prankster and get away with it! April Fool's is an irreverent, happy holiday, falling at just the right time to relieve some of the tension of the moons just past, especially Ash Moon, which this year ends on March 29.

Although its origins are obscure, there is general agreement among folklorists that April Fool's Day is probably associated with the feast of the Vernal Equinox, which was New Year's Day on the old Julian calendar system. "An octave, or eight days, used to complete the festivals of our forefathers, and since New Year's Day was commonly kept on March 25, the first of April marked the close of the octave."¹

The fact that the April Fool's activities are attached to a date in spring falling close to the Vernal Equinox, and that, at least a couple of centuries ago, the festivities had to cease at a fixed hour (12:00 noon), "suggests that their roots lie deep down in something more than mere outbursts of exuberance. In spirit they are akin to those licensed buffooneries, jests, and

extravagances that were once associated with certain religious festivals, like the Saturnalia of ancient Rome, or the mediaeval Feast of Fools, or Feast of Asses. At such festivals, the utmost freedom of speech and action was tolerated, with open mockery of respected persons and institutions, and even burlesques of sacred ceremonies. These odd and often unedifying antics may have been survivals of very ancient rituals, but it was a deep-seated human instinct that made and kept them popular."²

Indeed, the medieval Feast of Fools, which occurred around New Year's (celebrated, coincidentally, at the end of March), "was like a religious chimney sweeping, brushing away the year's repressed and hidden blasphemy, in a riot of filth and irreligion."³ After the Feast of Fools was suppressed in the late Middle Ages, the European follies shifted to the eve of Lent and became Mardi Gras and Carnival⁴.

April Fooling may also have come from India, where the Hindus have had an identical festival for centuries in their Feast of Huli. On March 31, people are sent in all directions

on fool's errands. Similar customs are found in China and Japan⁵. And Ralph Whitlock suggests April Fooling may be connected with Lud, a Celtic god of humor, whose ancient festival was celebrated around this date⁶.

CUSTOMS OF FRANCE

April Fooling became popular in France after the Gregorian calendar was adopted in 1564, which made the year begin on January 1. Under the old style calendar, the year ended with March, and people traditionally exchanged new year's gifts and visits on April 1. Seeing that conservative people objected to the change in habits, *Wags* (an old word meaning a playful or mischievous person) sent these people mock gifts on April 1 and made calls of pretended ceremony⁷.

In France people were also sent on fool's errands: an unsuspecting messenger was sent to the dairy for a bottle of pigeon's milk, or a couple of boys to the saddler's with a request for some good strong strapping, which they would receive across the shoulders. Other requests were for a pennyworth of strap-oil or elbow grease, or some other non-existent commodity.

"Apprentices and juniors in factories and offices are

despatched by their straight-faced elders to buy a pot of striped paint, or a soft-pointed chisel, or a box of straight hooks,"⁸ or sent for a 'long stand'—only to be told 'you can stand there as long as you like!'

It was not until the beginning of the 18th century that April Fooling became common in England⁹. Similar tricks were played there, and "it was at one time no uncommon thing to see in the streets of London several gentlemen, each with a ticket marked 'April Fool' on his back, all laughing covertly at one another."¹⁰

It is recorded in Drake's *News-Letter* for April 2, 1698, that a number of people received invitations to see the lions washed at the Tower of London on April 1st, and duly went there for that purpose. Precisely the same trick was played by some unknown person with equal success in 1860¹¹.

Children have always been strong supporters of April Fool's day, with a large repertoire of tricks and jokes. "Most of their tricks are far from original, and many have been used so often that they have now become traditional, yet they succeed again and again, and will probably go on doing so for a long time to come."¹² One of the favorites is to tell someone

his shoe is untied, or his tie is crooked, or that something else is wrong with his clothes; when everything is actually fine. When he checks out the 'problem,' the children joyously shout 'April Fool.'

One tradition that did not seem to hold up till the present day, but was strongly adhered to in the past, was that April Fool's day started at midnight, and always ended promptly at noon. If anyone attempted a trick thereafter, the intended victim retorted:

'April Fool's gone past,
You're the biggest fool at
last!'¹³

SCOTTISH PRANKS

April Fooling was probably introduced by France into Scotland, where it is known as 'hunting the Gowk,' and children shout 'Gowk, gowk!' at their victims. April Fool's Day is there called Gowkin' Day¹⁴.

" 'What compound interest is to simple addition,' writes Chambers in his *Book of Days*, 'so is Scottish to English fooling'."¹⁵ Not being content to make someone believe a single piece of absurdity, some poor fool is sent out on a Gowk's errand. The victim is sent away with a note supposedly asking for some item, but in reality containing only the words,

'Never laugh, never smile,
Hund the gowk another
mile.'¹⁶

The recipient of this note, with a grave face, tells the victim that he doesn't have such an article, but if the victim will go to so-and-so's with the note, only another mile away, surely he will find it. Off he goes, only to be told the same thing by the next person. He goes on, hunting the gowk¹⁷ another mile, then another; till finally he realizes what is happening, or some tender-hearted person tells him. "A successful affair of this kind will keep rustic society in merriment for a week, during which honest Andrew Wilson hardly can show his face."¹⁸

In Scotland, the word 'Gowk' means both fool and cuckoo. April 1, Old Style, fell on what is now April 13, and it is usually in the second week of April that the cuckoo utters its first note. People associated the cuckoo with folly—a trait probably transferred from the cuckoo's victim, as in the word 'cuckold,' and it may be this way that the term gowk became associated with the victim of April fooling¹⁹.

At Mere, in the south-west corner of Wiltshire, England, there used to be a 'Cuckowe King,' apparently elected annually to preside at a 'Church


Ale' at this season. And in Somerset, the folklore is full of references to 'cuckoo pennings' with vague meanings²⁰.

"One theory advanced is that the 'cuckoo' in many of the old traditions is not the bird but the Britons of the Dark Ages. These Celts were derisively termed 'cuckoos,' meaning nincompoops, by the advancing Saxons, largely because they were too stupid to understand the Saxon language, as any normally bright person would do with ease! The 'cuckoo pen' legends usually refer to places of ancient origin with at least the traces of a fortified earthwork, so it can be assumed that this was where the invaders managed to get those British cuckoos penned."²¹

THE FOOL

The symbol behind this holiday, the April Fool, seems to be one of the last survivors of the ancient figure of Folly, who appears capering round the English Morris dancers and in the medieval mummer's plays. The Fool, by his very nature, is not content to simply be associated with April Fool's Day. He is the medieval court jester, skilled in juggling, tumbling, and 'playing the fool'; the 18th century Harlequin, with his distinctive garb of multicolored diamonds and triangles; and the

circus clown of the early 1800's, in his wild face paint and androgynous costume, forever the victim. But don't be 'fooled'—Shakespeare writes of 'wise fools' who challenged and advised their kings; and the Irish bards, whose counsel was respected and their satire feared by Irish chieftains, were sometimes called 'fools' in ancient Celtic tales²².

*"The Fool...is like a primitive recessive gene that keeps reasserting itself no matter how high civilization evolves. The Fool is the fly in the ointment, the monkey wrench in the Great Machine, and the only law he abides is Murphy's law. I hereby offer a health to the Fool for his earthiness and for his free spirit...Long live the Fool!"*²³ 

Sources:

- ¹ McNeill, F. Marian. The Silver Bough, Vol. 2 - A Calendar of Scottish National Festivals. 1959. William MacLellan, Glasgow, England, pg. 52.
² Hole, Christina. British Folk Customs. 1976. Hutchinson & Co., London, pg. 22.
³ Taylor, Rogan. The Death and Resurrection Show. 1985.

Anthony Blond, London, pg. 91.

⁴ Fuller, Fred. *The Fool-The Clown-The Jester*, Pp. 16-21, Gnosis Magazine, Spring 1991, pg. 20.

⁵ McNeill, pg. 52.

⁶ Whitlock, Ralph. *A Calendar of Country Customs*. 1978. B.T. Batsford, Ltd., London, pg. 52.

⁷ Douglas, George William. *The American Book of Days*. 1948. H.W. Wilson Co., New York, pg. 199.

⁸ Hole, pg. 21.

⁹ Douglas, pg. 199.

¹⁰ McNeill, pg. 52.

¹¹ Hole, pg. 21.

¹² Ibid, pg. 21.

¹³ Ibid, pg. 22.

¹⁴ McNeill, pg. 52.

¹⁵ Ibid, pg. 53, quoting from Robert Chambers' *Book of Days*.

¹⁶ Ibid, pg. 53.

¹⁷ McNeill says "Jamieson, in his Scottish Dictionary, suggests that the origin of the phrase 'hunt the gowk' is to be found in the custom of trying vainly to catch sight of the cuckoo, which flies farther off each time it is approached. In the Borders, the traditional phrase is not hunt but hund (hound) the gowk, which is a much more adequate description of the practice."

McNeill, pg. 53.

¹⁸ McNeill, pg. 53, quoting from Robert Chambers' *Book of Days*.

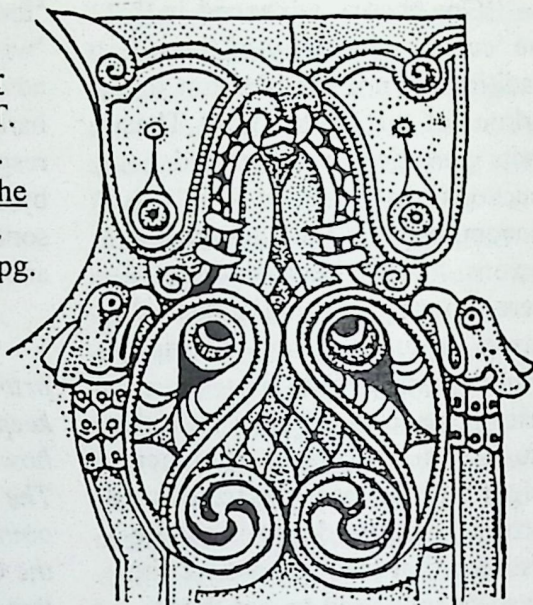
¹⁹ Ibid, pg. 53.

²⁰ Whitlock, pg. 53.

²¹ Ibid, pg. 53.

²² Fuller, pg. 20.

²³ Ibid, pg. 21.



Equinox

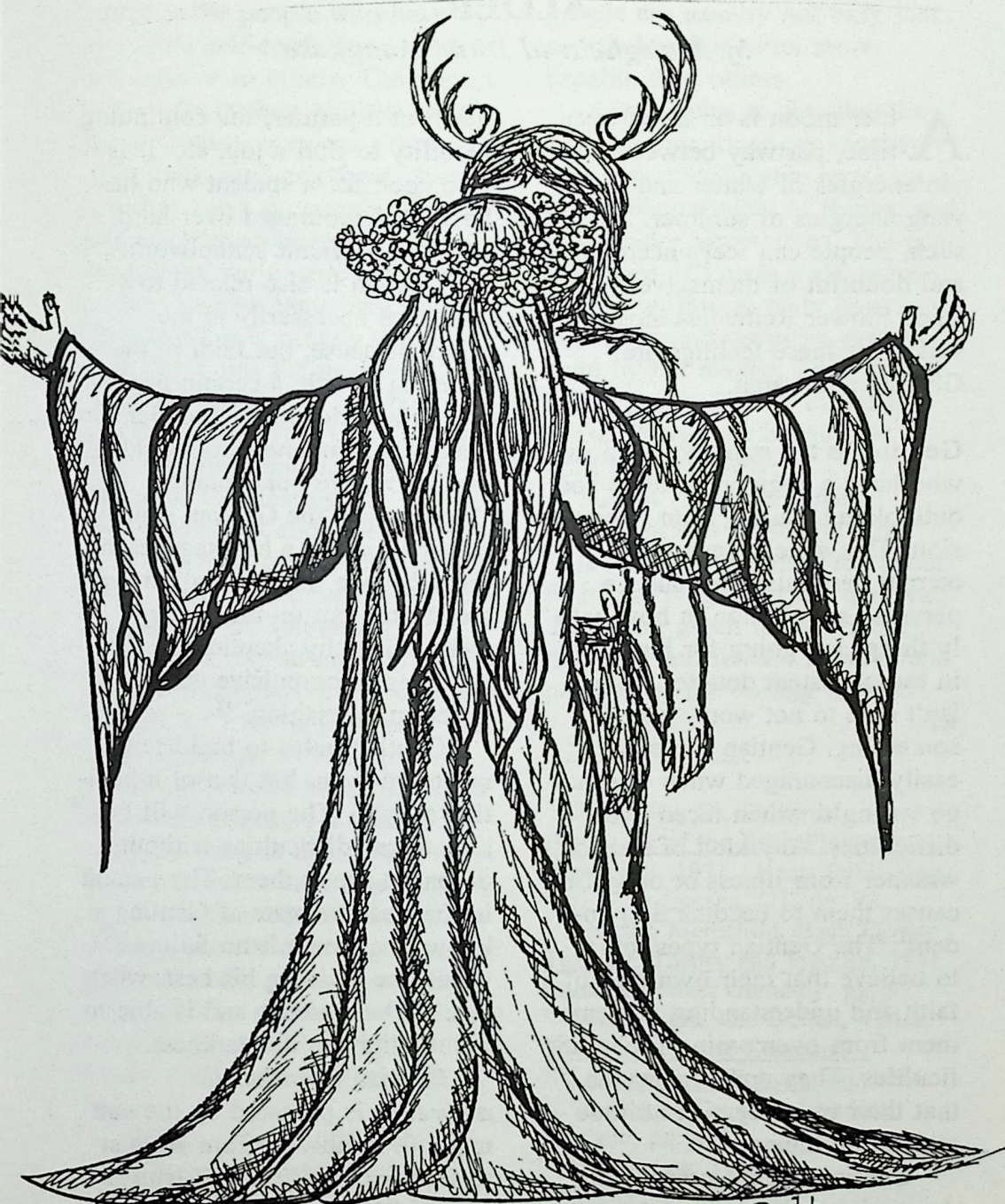
Ride the wild night
O ye witches here!
Wild blows the wind
upon our rites

Welcome the rage
of Winter as He

dies—

Laugh—as He dies
We shiver
anticipating Spring

- Miriam Carroll



STORMY '95

Beltane

Bach Flowers:

ALDER

by Muirgheín uí Dhúin Aonghasa

Alder moon is an in-between time, partway between the yin energies of winter and the yang energies of summer. As such, people can feel uncertain and doubtful of themselves. The Bach Flower Remedies most suited for these feelings are Gentian and Larch.

Gentian is the remedy for those who have a negative attitude and outlook, and suffer from depression. This state is seen in the eternal pessimist who takes a perverse satisfaction in how badly things are going for him, and in the persistent doubter, who isn't able to not worry about something. Gentian types are easily discouraged when things go wrong or when faced with difficulties. Any kind of setback, whether from illness or daily life, causes them to become despondent¹. The Gentian types refuse to believe that their own lack of faith and understanding prevents them from overcoming life's difficulties. They don't understand that their own negative attitude attracts problems.

Gentian is very useful when depression is brought on by a known circumstance; i.e., the

death of a partner, the continuing inability to find a job, etc. It is also good for a student who has become discouraged over hard tests and difficult schoolwork.

Gentian is also related to faith, not necessarily in the religious sense, but faith in the meaning of life, a certain principle, or a philosophy. The Gentian person is someone who would like to believe but cannot.

"Spiritually, the Gentian state may be seen as a blockage in the mental plane. Intellectual powers are strong, but on the wrong tack. A healthy skepticism becomes a compulsive need to question everything."²

Gentian helps to build faith; not blind faith, but that of a positive skeptic. The person will be able to see difficulties without despairing over them. The person in the positive state of Gentian knows that there is no failure when one is doing his best, whatever the end result, and is able to see the light in the darkness.

Gentian (*Gentianella amarella*) is prepared by the sun method. It flowers from August to October in dry hilly pastures. Gather the flowers just below the calyx from as many plants as

possible³.

Larch is for people who have very little self-confidence, who feel inferior to others. They don't simply doubt their abilities, but are absolutely convinced they can't do as well as others. Sure that they can't do certain things, they don't even attempt them. Whereas many people have trouble recognizing their own limits, with Larch it is exactly the opposite. From the beginning, the Larch types take for granted specific limits. This keeps them from growing and developing, and leads to a feeling of discouragement and melancholy.

The Larch person may have a very logical-sounding reason why they cannot do something; "I haven't got any strong points, like other people," or "I'd really like to, but I know even now that I can't manage."⁴ They may praise and admire others for their accomplishments, yet feel no envy or jealousy at all⁵. These feelings of genuine inferiority usually begin in early childhood or infancy, the child having been exposed to the parent's negative attitudes. The certainty of failure becomes an inbuilt automatic response, reinforced by each new failure.

People in need of Larch are often rather delicate psychologically, and do not always have the decisiveness and strength to

overcome their own negative programming. However, Larch people are usually not only just as capable, but often more capable than others.

Larch helps to dissolve the self-limiting, fixed personality concepts. One is able to take a more relaxed view of things, and to consider alternatives. The positive side of Larch is the person who is willing to truly live; to take risks and never be discouraged by the results. The positive Larch person knows that if he failed, it was not because he didn't try his best⁶.

Larch (*Larix decidua*), blooms in April and May, on hills and near woods. Pick about 6" of the twig from the tree with the young green leaf-tufts and the male and female flowers, and prepare by the boiling method⁸.



Notes:

¹ Chancellor, Dr. Philip M.

Handbook of the Bach Flower Remedies. 1971. Keats Publishing, Inc., New Canaan, CT, pg. 92.

² Scheffer, Methchild. Bach Flower Therapy: Theory and Practice. 1981. Munchen, West Germany, pg. 87.

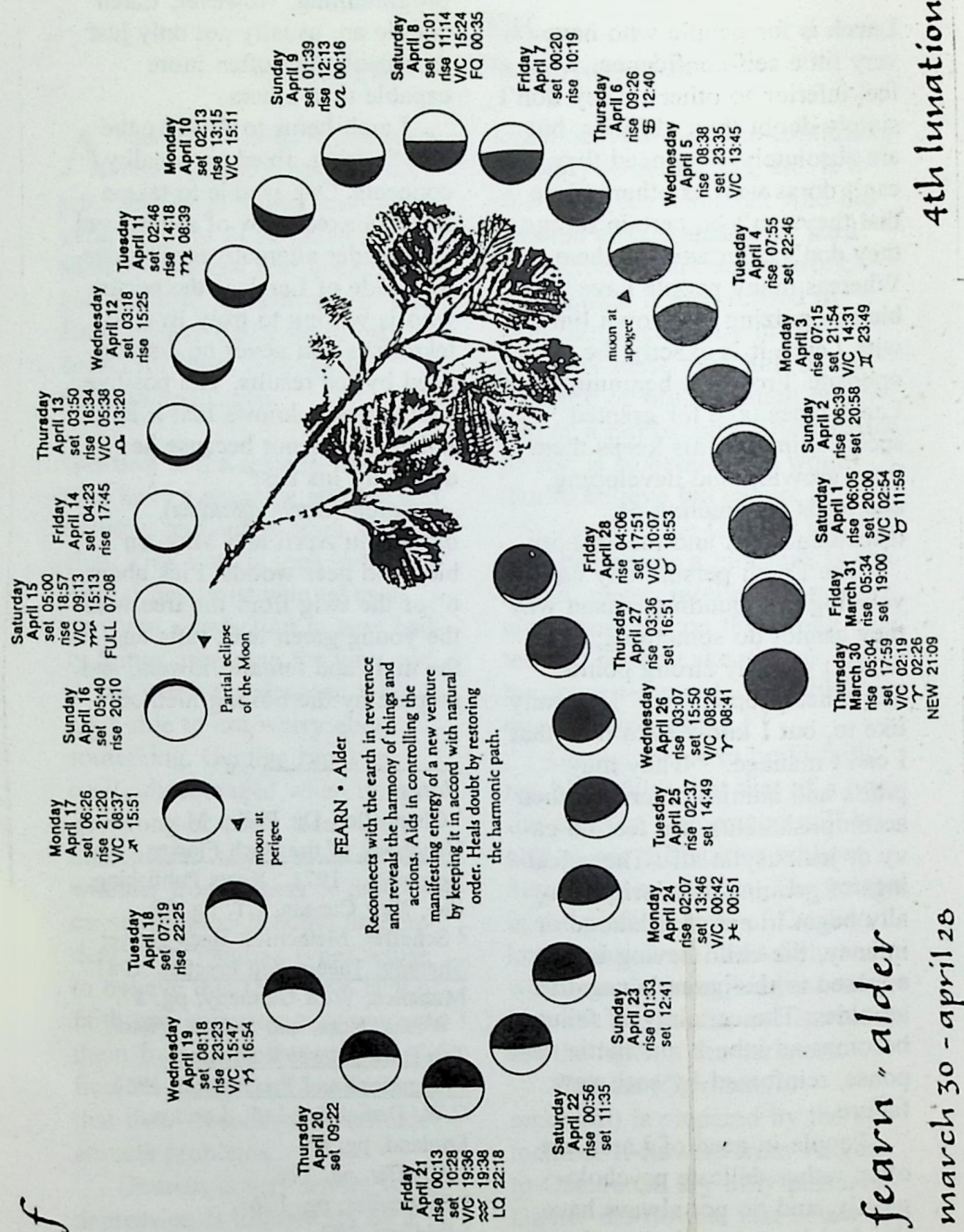
³ Weeks, Nora, and Bullen, Victor. The Bach Flower Remedies - Illustrations and Preparation. 1964. C.W. Daniel Co. Ltd., London, England, pg. 46.

⁴ Scheffer, pg. 116.

⁶ Chancellor, pg. 126.

⁷ Ibid, pg. 127.

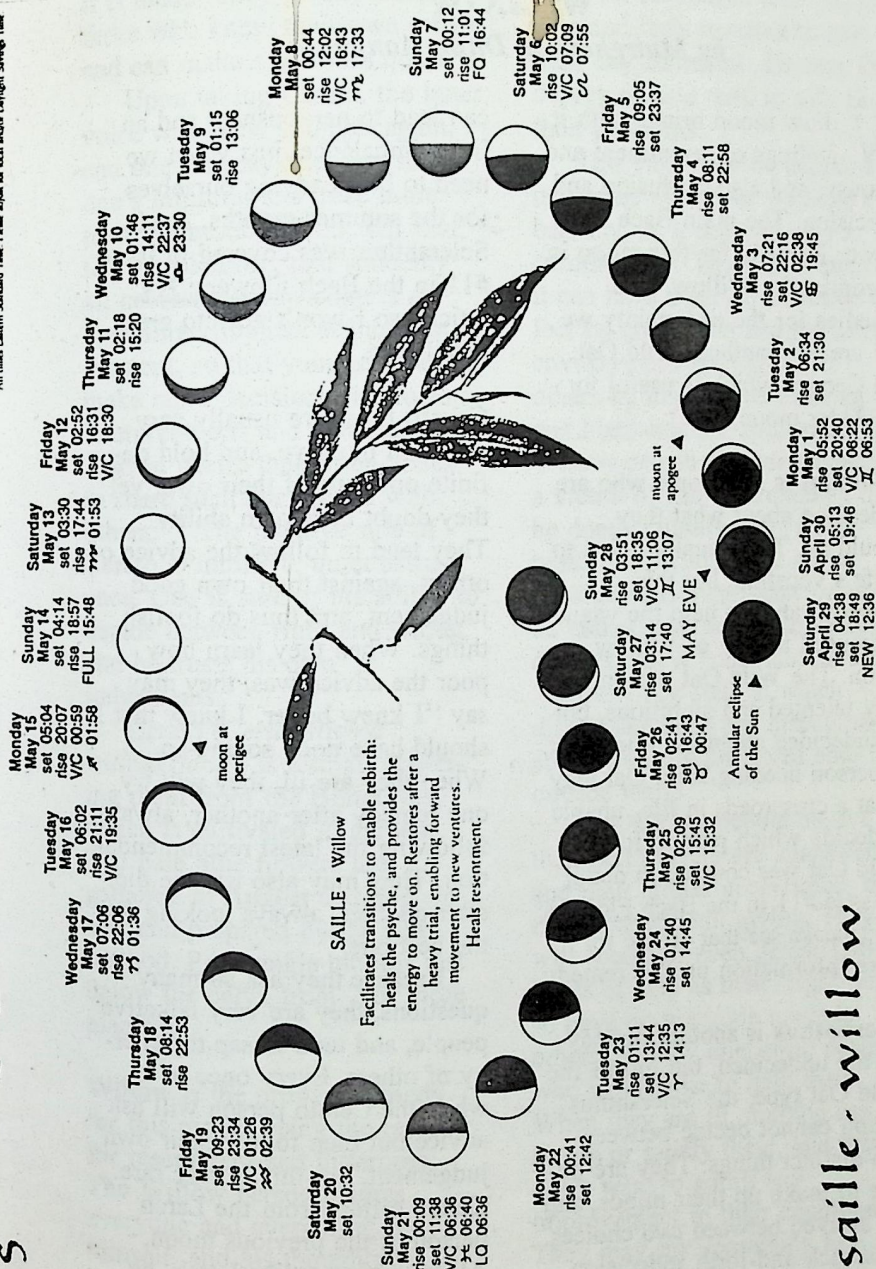
⁸ Weeks and Bullen, pg. 70.



5th Luration

saille - willow

april 29 - may 28



Bach Flowers:

WILLOW

by Muirghin uí Dhún Aonghasa

Willow moon brings with it feelings of resentment and jealousy, and also confusion and indecision. The main Bach Flower Remedy for this moon is, appropriately, Willow. The remedies for the uncertainty we feel are Scleranthus, Wild Oat, and Cerato (which is useful for the Alder moon, also).

Wild Oat is for people who are undecided about what they should do. This usually refers to a life's vocation, but this Remedy can also help the vague, unfocused feeling of Willow moon. The Wild Oat person is very talented and ambitious, but is undecided about his true work. A person needing Wild Oat may be at a crossroads in life, unable to decide which path to follow. Wild Oat was covered in detail in Issue #11 in the Bach Flowers: Ivy; please see that article for more information on this remedy.

Scleranthus is another remedy for the undecided, but unlike the Wild Oat type, the Scleranthus person cannot decide between two distinct things. They are unable to make up their minds, and are swayed between two choices. This back-and-forth indecision

can lead to nervousness and an inner imbalance, just when we need to be steadying ourselves for the summer months. Again, Scleranthus was covered in Issue #11 in the Bach Flowers: Ivy article, so I won't go into great detail here.

Cerato types are usually very wise and intuitive, and hold definite opinions of their own, yet they doubt their own ability. They tend to follow the advice of others, against their own good judgement, and thus do foolish things. When they learn how poor the advice was, they may say "I knew better. I knew that I should have done so-and-so."¹ When they are ill, they will try one remedy after another, always following the latest recommendation. They may also try one diet after another, always looking for the best one.

Because they ask so many questions, they are very talkative people, and tend to sap the energy of others. Every once in a while the Cerato person will ask advice but then follow their own judgement, but this is very rare. Cerato differs from the Larch person of the previous moon, Alder, in that unlike Larch, he

has sufficient confidence in himself to stick by his decision once it is made. They greatly admire those who know their own minds and can make a decision quickly.

Upon taking Cerato, the inner voice will grow stronger again, and one can pay attention to one's intuition and have more trust in oneself. "You will find, to your pleasure, that suddenly all necessary knowledge is at your fingertips just at the right moment, so that you are able to make rapid decision, diagnoses, interpretations and correlations. A great desire then often arises to share such knowledge with others."² The positive side of Cerato is intuitive, quiet assurance. One is sure of his ability to decide between right and wrong, and he trusts his own judgements.

Cerato (*Ceratostigma willmottiana*), is a small flowering plant from the Himalayas, which is cultivated in gardens. The pale blue flowers are gathered in August and September, and prepared by the sun method. Pick single blooms just below the calyx from 2 or more plants³.

Willow is the primary remedy for this moon, being the remedy for resentment and bitterness. The Willow person blames everyone and everything but himself, and his thoughts are negative and destructive. He

can't understand why some people can be so cheerful and care-free, but begrudges their happiness and feels tempted to ruin their day somehow. He may feel depressed, and tend to sulk about their problems.

This state may be temporary, occurring whenever we have a bad day, or it may become a chronic state. When this happens, it can have a very destructive effect on the person and his whole environment. He will affect others by his attitude of being a wet blanket and a spoilsport. The Willow person considers himself a victim of life, complaining that he doesn't deserve this unfairness. The Willow type never considers his own behavior when he makes such accusations. He doesn't feel it is his fault at all. "Willow is a state in which disappointments and resentments are powerfully projected onto the outside world."⁴

The Willow people believe that their prayers are unanswered and their efforts unrewarded, but they take without giving. They will accept or even demand all kinds of help as their 'right' and so have no gratitude towards others; thereby alienating people who would like to help them. When they are ill, nothing can please or satisfy them, and they don't want to admit any improvement in their condition. They may say something like, "I may look better, but I most

certainly don't feel better,"⁵ as if to stop any positive feelings from arising in himself.

"A person in the Willow state is a 'victim,' and that provides the perfect excuse for not accepting responsibility for his own destiny."⁶ The Willow person judges success in life not by inner experience but mostly by material criteria, and is usually not happy at what he sees or has. In addition to feeling resentful and disappointed by their troubles, the Willow person attempts to block any improvements by their inner self, putting up passive resistance and negative 'stone-walling.'

"It is easy to fall into a negative Willow state in the course of spiritual development, at a point when one has become aware of much that is negative but the personality is not yet strong enough to integrate this. Annoyance at oneself is then... projected onto the outside world, powerful prejudices develop, and there is a definite lack of cooperation."⁷

The key to overcoming a negative Willow state is to first learn to recognize and accept one's own bitterness and negativity. The attitudes towards oneself must first be changed before anything can change outwardly. Secondly, one must realize that every grumbling thought adds another brick to the wall, so that the personal 'sun' is

ever more blotted out. "Everything we experience on the outside is the outcome of our own thoughts being projected outward, and every human being lives in a world he has at some stage or other thought up and created for himself. Anyone feeling himself to be a victim will inevitably sooner or later end up a victim."⁸

The positive Willow state is seen in the person who realizes they control their own destiny. They have great optimism, faith, and calmness.

Willow (*Salix vitellina*) flowers in May, and is prepared by the boiling method. Pick the catkins of either sex with about 6" of the twig and young leaves⁹.



Notes:

¹ Chancellor, Dr. Philip M. Handbook of the Bach Flower Remedies.

1971. Keats Publishing, Inc., New Canaan, CT, pg. 56.

² Scheffer, Methchild. Bach Flower Therapy - Theory and Practice. 1981. Munchen, West Germany, pg. 56.

³ Weeks, Nora, and Bullen, Victor. The Bach Flower Remedies - Illustrations and Preparation. 1964. C.W. Daniel Co. Ltd., London, England, pg. 44.

⁴ Scheffer, pg. 197.

⁵ Chancellor, pg. 229.

⁶ Scheffer, pg. 199.

⁷ Ibid, pg. 200.

⁸ Ibid, pg. 199.

⁹ Weeks and Bullen, pg 80.

Faerie Faith 101

What is the Celtic Tree Calendar?

by Muirgheín uí Dhún Aonghasa

The Celtic tree calendar is based on a lunar year as opposed to a solar one, and begins after the Winter Solstice. There are roughly 13 lunar months, which begin and end with the new moon; each month is represented by a tree. In order, these are: Birch, Rowan, Ash, Alder, Willow, Hawthorn, Oak, Holly, Hazel, Vine, Ivy, Reed, and Elder.

In the Druidic alphabet, each tree also represents a letter. The first letter of the Gaelic names of the trees is a consonant. In order again, they are: Beth, Luis, Nion, Fearn, Saille, Huath, Duir, Tinne, Coll, Muir, Gort, Ngetal, and Ruis, to give us B, L, N, F, S, H, D, T, C, M, G, N, and R.

There are also five vowels, as in any proper alphabet: Ailim, Ohn, Ur, Eadha, and Ioho (A, O, U, E, and I). These five vowels are represented by the 'solar' trees, which are, respectively, Silver Fir, Gorse, Heather, Aspen, and Yew. The five solar trees are like 'umbrella' trees; they cover a larger portion of the year than the lunar trees do;

usually about 2-3 months each. If you'll refer back to the December issue of *The Hazel Nut*, #12, at the article [A Quick Look at the Lunar Year](#), you'll see a chart that shows what periods the solar trees cover, and when the lunars are.

This alphabet, when written, is put down in marks called 'ogham.' This is an ancient system of writing, and there are almost as many ogham alphabets as there are rune systems. Again, look in issue #12 at that same article to see the oghams for each lunar and solar tree.

This entire system; the lunar months, the solar seasons, the trees in both their English and Gaelic names, and the ogham, is the Celtic Tree Calendar. There seem to be two major Celtic Tree systems; the one that we, the Faerie Faith, use, is called the Beth-Luis-Nion system. Its calendar begins on the Winter Solstice, the months run from new moon to new moon, and the trees are Birch, Rowan, Ash, etc., as listed above. The other system is called the Beth-Luis-Fearn. Its

calendar begins at Samhain, November 1, the months go from full moon to full moon, and the order of its trees is slightly different: Birch, Rowan, **Alder**, Willow, **Ash**, Hawthorn, Oak, etc. There is no one correct system; people just use the one that they feel the most comfortable with. We use the Beth-Luis-Nion because that's what works for us.

Okay, that was the easy part; now let's go into the calendar in a little more depth. Each of the 13 lunations has its own mythology and folklore, but most importantly, each has its own special 'energies' that affect our moods and physical beings. When we understand the energies that are acting upon us, we can deal with them better, and actually learn from them. For instance, ever notice how crabby people get around the 'Dog Days' of summer, July and August? True, you could put it down to the intense heat, but sometimes June is incredibly hot, and people just don't act quite the same then as they do in the latter months of summer. In the Beth-Luis-Nion system, Holly falls around July and August, and brings with it intense energies of hatred, jealousy, suspicion, and general bitchiness. The remedy for this is the holly tree itself; a branch of holly hung in the

house can help us feel calmer, more accepting, even loving. We've tried it—it works. Another system that lends credence to our belief is the Bach Flower Remedies: the Holly remedy, made from the holly tree, is the remedy for hatred, jealousy, suspicion, and envy. Coincidence? Maybe. But when something keeps occurring over a period of time, it stops becoming mere coincidence, and becomes almost...magical. That's the point we're at now.

To fully understand the tree calendar, and make it relevant to your life, you should consider yourself a student of the calendar. Study it, research it, learn about it. Most of all, make it an active part of your life. You won't understand the trees by just reading this article, or the article in issue #12, A Quick Look at the Lunar Year, or by any one thing. Look into the mysteries and myths attached to each tree. Read Robert Graves' The White Goddess and Celtic myths and fairy tales. Read all the Lunar Energies and Esoterica, Bach Flowers, and Folklore and Practical Uses, columns in The Hazel Nut. Look at the rituals in Pattalee's Year of Moons, Season of Trees, (see review in back of this issue) and write and perform a lunar ritual for yourself based on her rituals and what you've

learned from Robert Graves.
Make contact with a tree; meet it,
talk to it, and especially, listen to
it.

Each lunation, each tree,
when taken separately, can teach
us about ourselves, and help us
get more in tune with nature's
cycles. Taken as a whole, a study
of the tree system can help us

integrate our personalities,
broaden our intellectual horizons,
and open ourselves spiritually to
the cosmos, going beyond the
physical world. That is, after all,
the point of being on the path in
the first place, isn't it?

Blessed be, and happy
searching!



Beltane by Moonlight

Hoof shod
Hungry eyes
Seeking maidens
Pleased signs

Horned head
Lifted high
Dancing beneath
A Moonshod sky

Faster fly
the feet of Pan
His music swirling
From the pipes in his had

Calling, calling
to His Love
Come be with me
Come down from above

And by and by
of silver sheen
The Goddess of His heart
is seen

Then through the forest
and fields as well
They dance the dance
of Life Love's spell

- Shadowcat

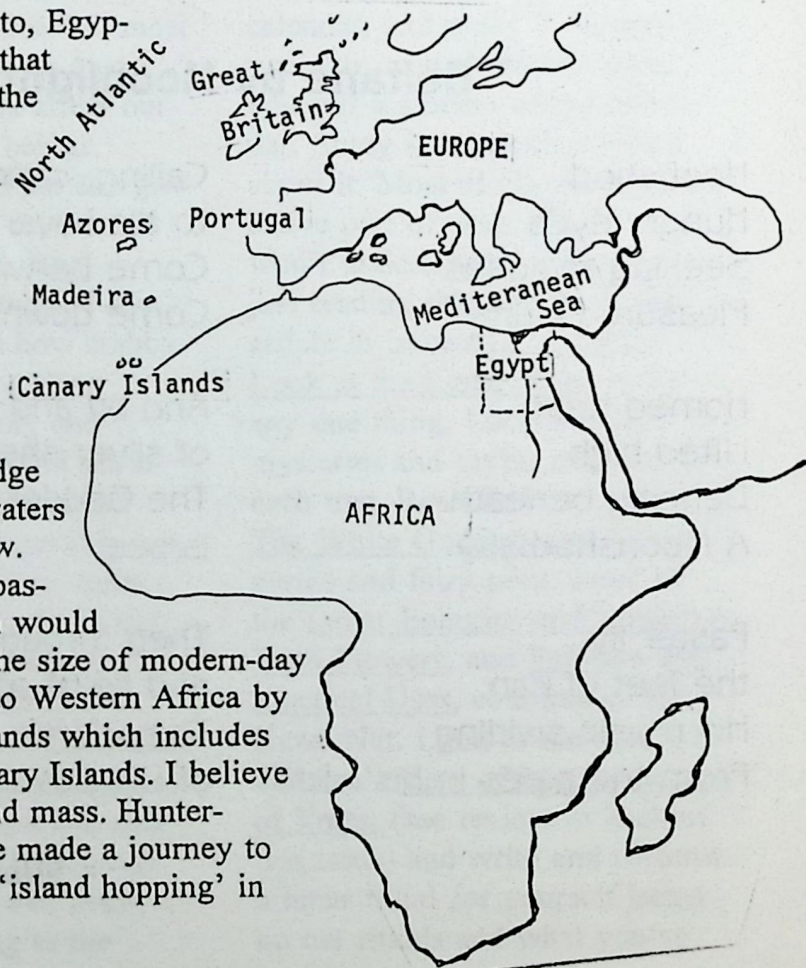
The Land Bridges and Atlantis

by Chrisailes

At this point, I dare say everyone has heard of the land bridges that are believed to have once connected modern day Alaska to Asia, Indonesia to Australia, and England to France. During the last Ice Age, large glaciers formed which dropped the level of the Earth's oceans to a significant degree; hence the shore lines were extended and land bridges exposed. What does this have to do with Atlantis?

According to Plato, Egyptian priests believed that Atlantis lay west of the Straits of Heracles, now called the Straits of Gibraltar. As it happens, there is a small island chain directly beyond those straits, called the Azores. These islands lie on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge where the ocean's waters are relatively shallow. A land mass encompassing the island chain would have been close to the size of modern-day Ireland, and linked to Western Africa by another chain of islands which includes the present-day Canary Islands. I believe Atlantis was this land mass. Hunter-gatherers could have made a journey to this large island by 'island hopping' in small canoes.

Time frames are always important for anyone with an air of pseudo-scientific skepticism, so I offer the following. As early as 20,000 BCE humans were in the Americas via the Alaskan Land Bridge and possibly along the Polynesian Island chain. Atlantis could have been inhabited at roughly the same time. According to Plato, again, Atlantis has a very old and advanced culture.



Before the oceans began to rise, wo/mankind was building cities. Jericho, the oldest known city, was built around 10,000 BCE. Metal working was being developed as far back as 10,000 BCE also, in Anatolia. It would thus appear that Atlantis could have been more than just a group of Stone Age hunters (though the Stone Age hunters were more ingenious than often supposed).

The flood waters that would reduce Atlantis to the Azora Islands did not begin to rise until 6,000 BCE. It took another thousand years before the shore lines reached the level they roughly have today. Atlantis did not sink overnight, if my theory is correct. It was a gradual process. Unfortunately, trouble often really does come in threes.

The Mid-Atlantic Ridge is a fault line. Hence it, and the islands around it, are prone to earthquakes. Also, the Azores are peaks of long-dead volcanoes. Do you remember what happened to Pompeii, from history class? Between 6,000 and 5,000 BCE, I believe it quite likely Atlantis was destroyed by earthquake and volcanic eruptions, even as the oceans were rising. Those who survived fled, possibly to Egypt.

Egypt was not all desert then, and is known to have been populated well before 5,000 BCE. It is even possible, given

the early Egyptians' love of trade, that Atlantis had been settled by Egyptian sailors. At the beginning of the Bronze Age, Egypt was trading as far away from home as the English Islands, for such things as tin and precious ore, and Atlantis was much, much closer.

In time, the earthquakes, volcanoes, and the flooding was remembered as a single incident. 'There was earthquakes, eruptions, and the island sank,' the storyteller said, and while that is what happened, it took place over a long time. Oral tradition is always good at condensing time into manageable units.

I, myself, find nothing so far-fetched about my theory of Atlantis. It may have been one of the first cities of its day, but others like Jericho had either already been built or were being built. Certainly human beings were active when the Azores were a single land mass of considerable size. And certainly the Azores was this land mass, this Atlantis, as surely as ocean levels dropped.

Perhaps this is what is important. Science ponders its theories, not always looking at the impact that they have on seemingly unrelated topics. Only the most skeptical scientist would dare presume that melting ice could submerge major land

bridges across the globe, yet not sink the poet's Atlantis. If science is left to formulate its theories, it will remain the province of the Pagan who understands that all of Nature is interwoven and interconnected to

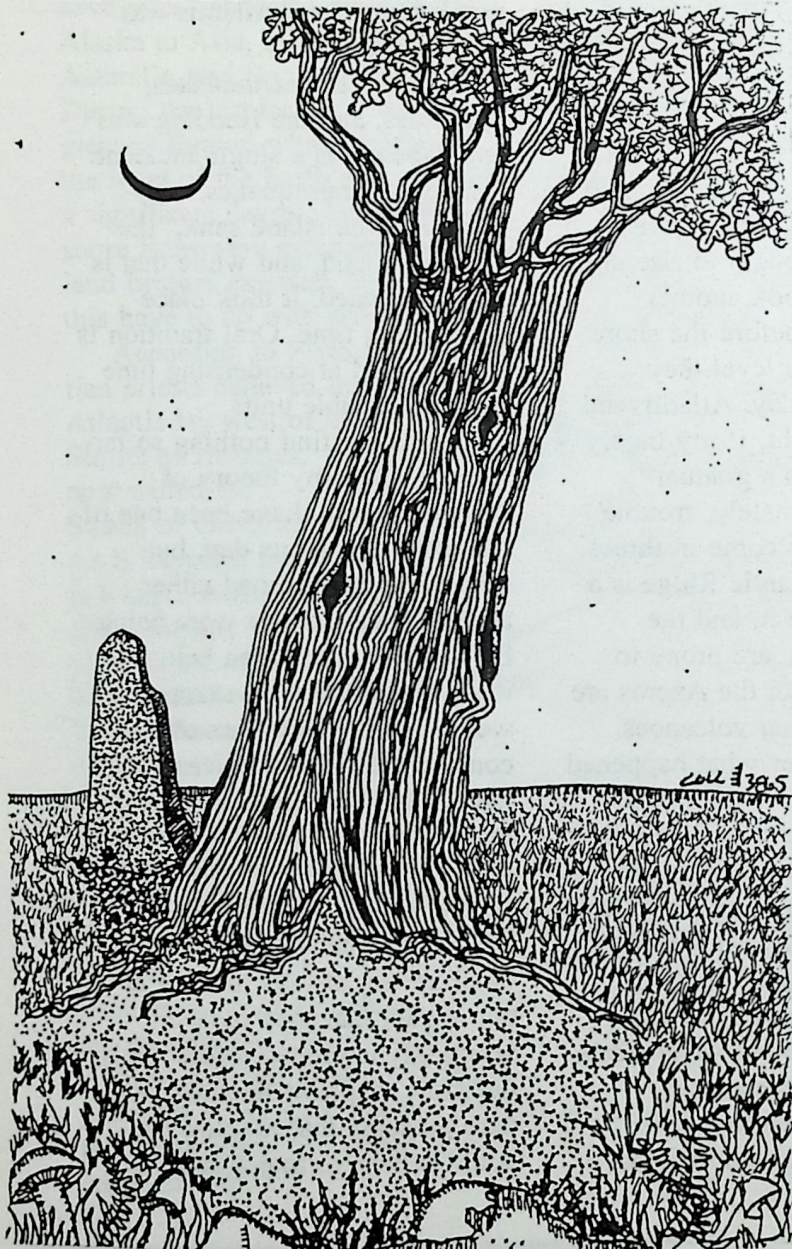
ponder the impact of those theories.

Source:

The New Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia, Software

ToolWorks, Inc., 1993.

Chrisailes is a solitary, eclectic Witch living in the enchanted backwoods of Alabama.



From Other Traditions

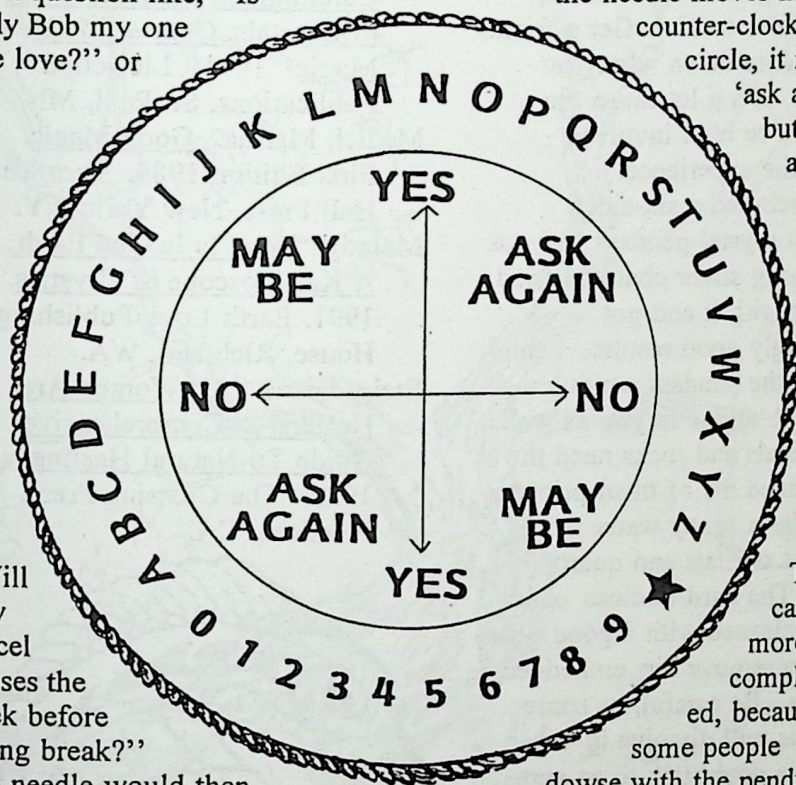
Basic Pendulum Dowsing

by Stormy

To divine answers to simple questions, women used to hold up their sewing needles by the end of the thread and let the needle swung free. Then when the needle was still, they would ask a question like, "Is Billy Bob my one true love?" or

back at you. A 'no answer' is indicated by the needle swinging left to right in front of you. A 'do not know the answer at this time' is indicated by the needle moving in a clockwise circle. If

the needle moves in a counter-clockwise circle, it means 'ask again but on another day.'



"Will they cancel classes the week before spring break?"

The needle would then swing in the appropriate direction.

In order to understand the answer, there are a few rules to observe. A 'yes answer' is indicated by the needle swinging directly away from you and then

This can get more complicated, because some people dowsing with the pendulum using a special round paper or board with letters, numbers, and the words Yes and No printed on it; similar to a Ouija Board. You can make one yourself or use the one from this article. The pendulum is usually a good size

crystal on a rope, cord or chain. The crystal is sometimes worn as a pendant as well.

To dowse, hold the pendulum steady over the board or paper, relax, think of a question and let it move on its own. I wouldn't advise doing this on your own unless you're real good at writing down what you see while the pendulum goes to each letter, number, Yes or No! Get a friend to help write down what you both see. It's a lot more fun when you're both involved sharing the experience!

I purchased a six-sided amethyst crystal pendant and put it on a long silver chain. I tried dowsing with it and got surprisingly good results. I think wearing the pendant pendulum helps it to attune to you as well.

Crystals and rocks need the dirt cleaned off of them prior to use. Warm soapy water works for most crystals and quartz rocks. The hard-to-clean ones can be cleaned with a good scrub brush to remove dirt embedded in them. Be careful, as some minerals will dissolve in water. When in doubt talk to an expert in geology or gemology. Most rocks and minerals do well to be handled, played with, meditated with, and charged in sunlight and moonlight! Some people like to dedicate their

crystals in a circle to the four directions and to all the elements as well.

There are many excellent books easily available on dowsing, rocks and minerals, and on meditating and healing with them. Some reading sources are:

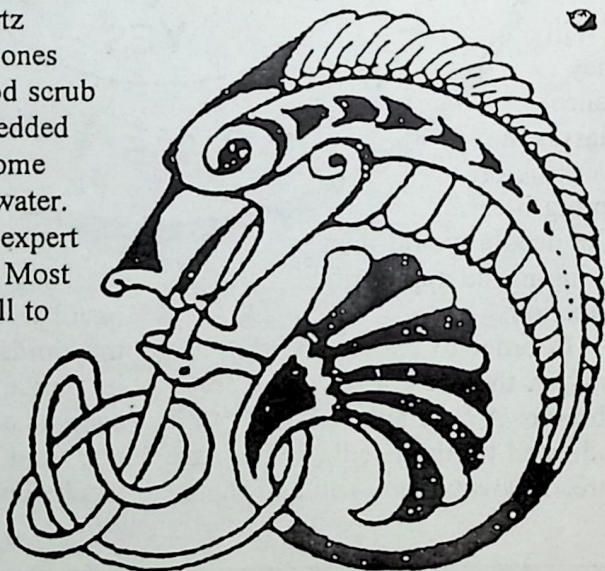
Cunningham, Scott.

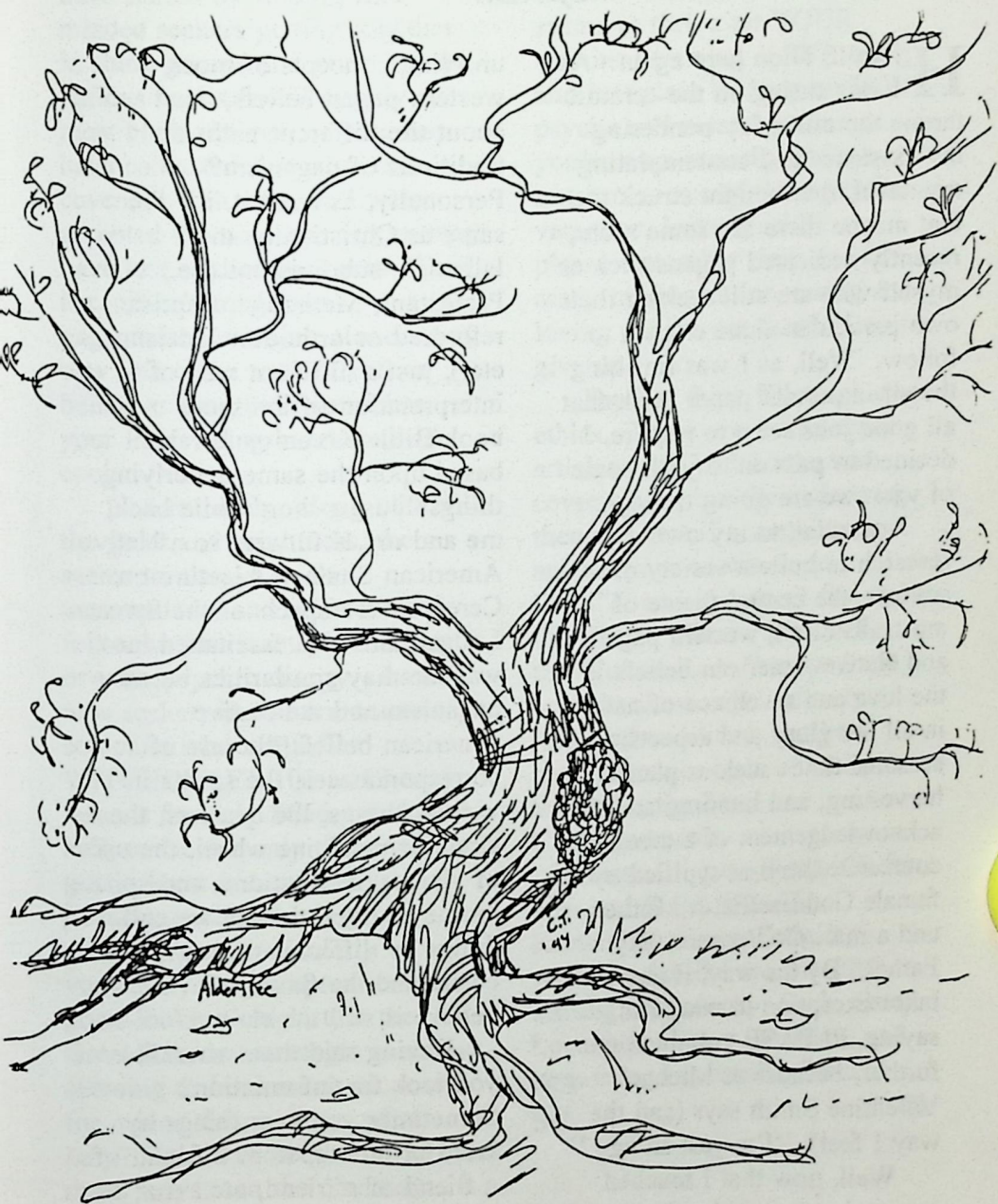
Cunningham's Encyclopedia of Crystals, Gem & Metal Magic. 1991. Llewellyn Publications, St. Paul, MN.

Medici, Marina. Good Magic. First Edition 1989. Prentice Hall Press, New York, NY.

Melody. Love Is In The Earth, A Kaleidoscope of Crystals. 1991. Earth Love Publishing House, Richland, WA.

Stein, Diane. All Women Are Healers, A Comprehensive Guide To Natural Healing. 1990. The Crossing Press, Freedom, CA.





REFLECTIONS ON A LIFE'S JOURNEY SO NOW THAT I AM A PAGAN

by Nion

Hi ya'll, Nion here again. As I was sitting on the ceramic throne the other day pondering my existence and contemplating my naval, the thought struck me that maybe there are some more, recently dedicated pagans such as myself who are still seeking their own particular niche or path to follow. Well, as I was finishing the all-important paper work that all good jobs seem to require, I decided to pass on to ya'll some of what we are going through.

According to my own research in quite a variety of sources, the central theme of most, if not all, western pagan and Native American beliefs is the love and reverence of nature in all her glory and aspects; the seasonal times such as planting, harvesting, and hunting; and the acknowledgement of a creator source/Godhead as typified by a female Goddess/Earth Mother, and a male God/consort/Sky Father. By the way, if anyone takes exception to what I'm saying, PLEASE enlighten me further, because as Michael Valentine Smith says (and the way I feel), "I'm just an egg."

Well, now that I touched upon what I consider the central

unifying concepts of most western pagan beliefs, what about the different paths and traditions of paganism?

Personally, as I see it, it's the same as Christianity and Islamic's subdivisions (i.e., Protestant, Methodist, Baptist, reformed or orthodox Judaism, etc.), just a different way of interpretation of the same book/Bible/Koran or Torah, based upon the same underlying things. Just a short while back, me and my H.P. went to a Native American Shaman's lecture on Ceremonial Aspects of the Sweat Lodge, and what fascinated me was the many similarities between paganism and the Native American beliefs, the use of correspondences, the spirits in various things, the quarters, the circle or medicine wheel, the use of visions, meditations, and spirit journeys. Even though we call things by different names, the basics and the flavor of what we believe is still there.

Having said that, where do you look for information? Sometimes you hear things by word of mouth; from a friend of a friend of a friend, etc., etc.; on a bulletin board in a New Age

shop or a bookstore; or in this day and age, on a computer bulletin board service. You may have started by finding like-minded seekers getting together in study groups and pursuing the various books found openly on most book shelves; or you may have contacted a local circle, coven, church, etc., and were accepted for training; or you may have just studied by yourself and became a homegrown pagan/witch working alone. Any way you came to the Craft or belief, as long as it nourishes your inner being/heart/soul, is cool.

Unfortunately, along with all the good and brightness, there seems to always be the unscrupulous and self-centered folk who just want your money or your psychic energy. As a new seeker, if you run across someone who will offer WITCHCRAFT 101 in 13 easy lessons for only \$666, run like hell, cause the only thing you're gonna learn is how fast your pockets or checkbook gets empty. And, particularly if you're a young, impressionable, good-looking chick, that the Great Rite or sex magic is always seeming to be done or proposed for minor things, guess what, lady? You have been screwed (in more ways than the obvious). But to me, one of the worst of

all folks who give honest, caring pagans a gad name is that egotistical, self-centered, Knower of ALL Things who always seems to thrive on YOUR stamina, draining YOUR energy, and just plain fucking-up YOUR psyche and mental processes. If you're ever unlucky enough to run across one of these psychic vampires, leave quickly, and please remember there are far many more genuine, caring and loving pagans out there. Don't give up.

The last thing I'll touch on is ethics. There are many, many articles and Craft books that cover ethics, but the underlying theme is that if something goes against your nature to do, DON'T, and if it don't feel right, IT AIN'T. To me personally, the Wiccan Rede "An ye harm non, do as ye will," if truly followed and lived, can be a much stronger code of ethics than even the Ten Commandments.

Guess I'll get off my box for now and finish this off. Remember all you fledgling pagans, who like me, are just starting our journey; Seek, Care, Love, and always Question, and keep true to yourself. Blessed Be!

WHY "BORED" IS A FOUR-LETTER WORD


by *Brigid MoonFire*

Anyone who has been around The Garden Club (the umbrella group/coven in Alabama and Georgia) for any length of time has learned the hard lesson that you never, ever, say you're bored. Why? You might ask. Well, we have discovered that saying you're bored is like turning on a neon sign in the Cosmos for them all to pick on you. One minute you're bored, the next you're taking someone to the emergency room, your dinner's on fire, your child or your pet is sick, your car breaks down, your phone rings off the hook with salespeople and bill collectors, etc., etc., ad nauseam.

Don't believe us? Then you're on your own with the Cosmos. But what is it that makes all this happen? Is it that we are like small children or like goofing-off employees? You screw up and say you have nothing to do and the next thing you know they've given you every chore that they can think of.

Or is it that we project the desires for something to do, without any selection process, and these desires draw in all sorts of things? In the Celestine Prophecy, it tells us that we can manipulate the energy around us, as in what

we think of that we want, we will get. Is our lower self starving for attention and crises?

No one knows for sure, but I think that I'm through with being bored. There is enough stuff out there for me to do; I don't need any more. 



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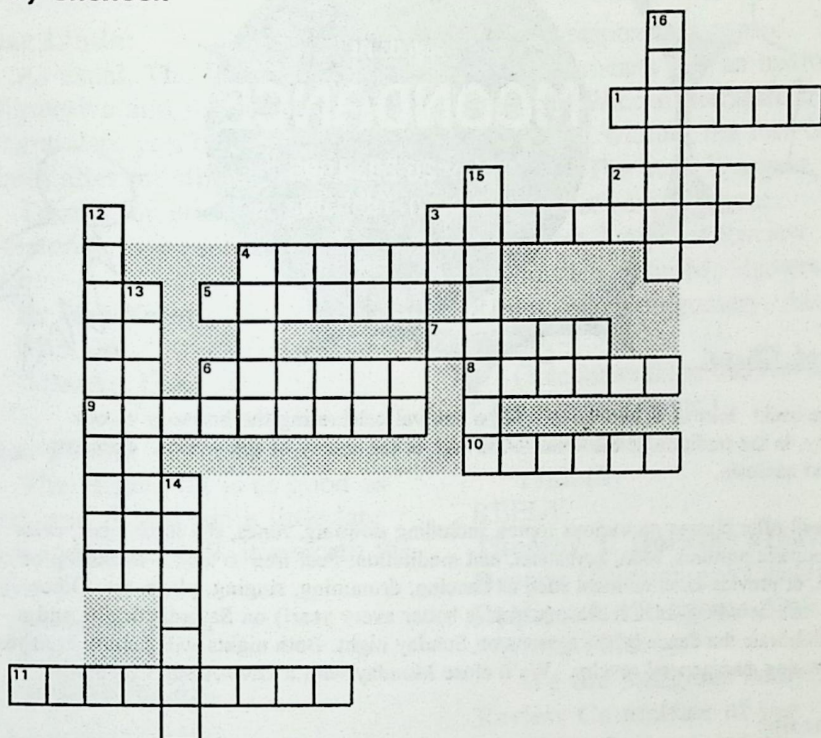
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Ankh (Cross)-Word Puzzle

by Sherlock



ACROSS

- 1 The same as the queen of heaven
- 2 Yin and _____
- 3 This type is a daydreamer who can't concentrate
- 4 Raised on Mayday
- 5 Mother of Mars; Goddess of Passion
- 6 Indicates travel, a wheel, cycle of life, job or career changes
- 7 A resource in trouble
- 8 On the cover
- 9 Feast of purification
- 10 The brightest star
- 11 Looks at shadows

DOWN

- 4 According to traditional Chinese medicine, Summer is to fire as Fall is to -----
- 12 Featured orgiastic rites; named for a she-wolf
- 13 In this ritual, red, black, and white are the symbolic colors of the goddess: This ritual is not for men
- 14 On the Wheel of the Year, this is opposite the Holly King
- 15 The Seven Sisters
- 16 Tension and over effort

The answers to this crossword puzzle can be found in the February/March 1995 (Issue #13) of the Hazelnut. Yes, that was our last issue, but it's not gonna be that easy! I took the questions from last issue's articles, so you'll have to read them to answer this crossword. If you want the answers in an easier form, you'll just have to wait 'till the next issue (#14). Oh, and don't throw away this issue; its articles contain the answers to the next puzzle. Have fun!!!



Organized Chaos!

We're back! Join us at Moondance 95; a festival celebrating the harmony of our community, in the tradition of the civilized savage at the mercy of the woods. Bullshit, bullshit, ad nauseam.

We will offer classes on various topics, including dowsing, runes, the lunar trees, color therapy, ecstatic postures, reiki, herbalism, and meditation. Feel free to lead a workshop of your own, or provide entertainment such as dancing, drumming, singing, plays, etc. Other activities include a POT-LUCK feast (which is better every year!) on Saturday night, and a ritual to celebrate the dance of the seasons on Sunday night. Both nights will feature bonfires, music, dancing, and general revelry. We'll close Monday with a Give-Away Ceremony.

About the site:

The festival will be at "Roxanna," near Auburn, Alabama. It is a primitive camping site. This means no cabins, no kitchen, no indoor plumbing, and no electricity. It is a piece of land with clearings, woods, a pond, and magnificent expanses of exposed bedrock. It's also very private: alcohol allowed, clothing optional. We have privies and solar showers. There are also reasonably priced hotels within 20 miles. Pets are welcome, as long as they're well-mannered around people and other animals.

The site will open Friday night, May 26, at 5:00 Central Standard Time, and close Monday, May 29, at 5:00 CST.

The cost: cheap!! \$15 till April 15; \$20 till May 15; \$35.00 thereafter (per person). Children under 14 are ½ price; babes in arms are free. Pre-payment is REQUIRED; deadline is May 20, 1995. Refunds will be given in full until May 8, at a 50% rate until the weekend of the festival, and none afterwards. If you send someone else in your place, please let us know beforehand. **NO UNREGISTERED GUESTS WILL BE ALLOWED IN THE GATE!!** This is to protect your privacy; please help with your cooperation.

Send reservations and direct questions to:

Muirghin (Linda Kerr), c/o THE HAZEL NUT
P.O. Box 186 334-821-4683 (nights)
Auburn, AL 36831-0186 334-844-1010 (days)
or call Sherlock, 334-826-9808

Make checks out to: Linda Kerr

A map and more details will follow upon receipt of payment

Letters to the Editor:

Dear Linda:

As usual, The Hazel Nut was informative and fun to read. I congratulate you on the quality, month after month.

Thanks for printing my poetry and stories, hope others enjoy them.

**In Her Name,
Miriam
Atlanta, GA**

Dear Linda:

The Hazel Nut is as good as ever, and if you run a little late now and then, well, it's worth the wait.

**Maiden Bless,
Chrisailes
Lafayette, AL**

Dear Linda:

Please enter my subscription to The Hazel Nut. I'm wondering if anyone is working with a set of corresponding American trees. Perhaps you've already addressed this—I'll find out!

**Thanks,
Liz C.
Evanston, IL**

Dear Friend:

I am an inmate at Draper Correctional Center [Alabama]. I received some Wiccan literature by mail and was forced to send it home. I applied for recognition,

and the response is copied. This response means that an institution may ban Wiccan literature from anywhere, without the fear of penalty. The need is urgent. You may direct comments to: Religious Activities Review Committee, John M. Shavers, 50 Ripley St., Montgomery, AL, 36130.

(Response from the Review Committee follows.)

**Blessed be,
Timothy**

REPLY

**Timothy T. Hornsby #166781
Draper Correctional Center
Request for Religious Assistance
- Wicca Faith**

**We the Religious Activity
Review Committee of the
Alabama Department of
Corrections do hereby deny the
request of inmate Timothy
Hornsby AIS#166781 to receive
literature regarding the
WICCAN (Witches) faith for
the following security reasons:**

**While there has been an
attempt by Wiccan adherents to
project the faith in a positive
light, inmates continue to view
it with suspicion and overt
hostility. In 1992 at Draper, an
incident occurred where some
members of the Wiccan faith
were trying to establish their
religion under the name of Neo-**

Paganism. They were viewed as devil worshippers by the other inmates which resulted in a disturbance, and caused a general lock-down for a two week period. The Wiccan activity created a serious threat to institutional security and disrupted the orderly operation of the institution. A chief tenet of the Wiccan religion is to engage in sexual frolics while under the influence of drugs. Sexual promiscuity in prison already poses a serious health threat to the inmate population, and this particular way of life could multiply that threat to a very dangerous level. Drug use in prison poses major security problems to include turf wars and acts of extreme violence. The Wiccan religion does not have a standard set of beliefs and practices, but varies from group to group and from time to time to promote the philosophical notion to "do as you will and choose your own path." There appears to be no boundaries or limits. Black magic is a central theme where such practices as these are of utmost importance: wine and drugs, ritual sex, casting of spells, and so on. We believe these practices can create serious security problems. The Wiccan faith is hereby disapproved as an accepted practice in the Alabama

Department of Corrections.

People, this is some serious shit here! There are many blantant falsehoods in the reply, which any first-year student would recognize. I urge you to write to the aforementioned gentleman to protest his decision, and also to the political representatives of Alabama. I plan on sending a copy of the book Witchcraft, Satanism and Ritual Crime, published by Green Egg, to these folks, and I'll also send a copy of the letter and reply to Green Egg and Circle Network News. Let your feelings be known!

Linda Kerr, editor

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Classified Ads:

Classifieds are 10¢/word per issue; P.O. box and number count as one word; city, state and zip as two words. 10% discount for 6 issues paid in advance. Deadline for next issue: April 7. Enclose payment with ad; make checks payable to The Hazel Nut.

Male Fairie Faith/Shamanic/Wiccan, 35, seeking Norse group for study within easy driving distance of East Alabama. Ivar, 1831 Opelika Rd., Auburn, AL 36830.

Announcements:

Announcements are published as a community service; there is no charge for this listing. Publish your classes, workshops, handfastings, initiations, etc.

Metaphysical Discussion Group: Meet with an eclectic group of people to discuss various metaphysical topics and beliefs. Group meets every Thursday, 7:00-9:00 p.m., at 500 E. Thach. St., Auburn, AL. Call Etc., 205-821-0080 for info.

Meditation and Yoga Posture: Classes are every Monday. Although there are mats, please bring something to sit on. Advanced Yoga Meditation Group meets from 6:30-7:45 p.m.; Main Exercise Class and Beginners' Class meets from 7:45-8:45 p.m.. Classes are FREE.

Frank Brown Recreation Center, Rooms C and D, 235 Opelika Rd., Auburn, AL. For more info, call 205-821-4731.

Complete your knowledge of the Celtic Sacred Trees! Back Issues of **THE HAZEL NUT** are now available in limited quantities, each covering one or more of the lunar trees.

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CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS and GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The next issue of **THE HAZEL NUT** will focus on the Hawthorn and Oak trees, and Summer Solstice. Please submit relevant articles, rituals, artwork, fiction, or poetry. We also welcome your general-interest contributions and letters to the editor. Deadline for all submissions is **April 7**. Please provide your name and address for our records, and a brief bio to be printed with your article or ritual; this can include your legal or magickal name and/or address, if you wish. Be sure to specify your by-line name. Text should be typed, black ink on white paper; provide a DOS ASCII disk if possible. Artwork should be black ink on plain white paper; no pencil drawings! Originals will be returned with a SASE. We reserve the right to edit for length, and to refuse publication of any submission or letter. Mail all submissions to: Linda Kerr, **THE HAZEL NUT**, P.O. Box 186, Auburn, AL 36831-0186.

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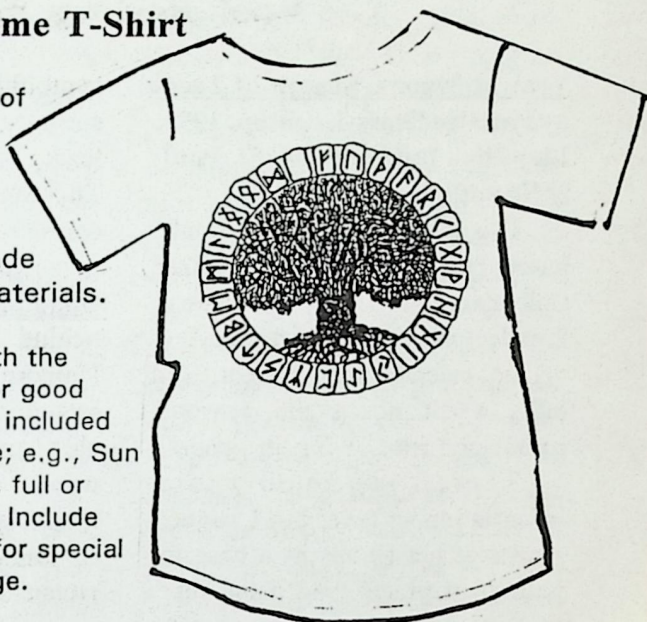
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Look for Stormy at MOONDANCE 95

AT ROXANNA, ALABAMA, MAY 26-29TH, 1995. Blessed be!

Name:		Birth date:	
Address:			
City:		State: Zip:	
MAIL ORDER FORM TO WITH CHECK OR OR MONEY ORDER MADE OUT TO CAROL THOMPSON TO: Runes by Stormy, c/o THE HAZEL NUT, P.O. Box 186, Auburn, AL 36831-0186			
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Bubbles From the Cauldron

Book Reviews, Etc.

Year of Moons, Season of Trees
by Pattalee Glass-Koentop. 1991.
Llewellyn Publications, St. Paul,
MN. Softcover, \$14.95.

This is a book of lunar rituals, based upon the Celtic Tree Calendar, Beth-Luis-Nion system. Pattalee provides a good overview of the calendar/tree system, and talks a bit about the seasonal rituals and ritual work in general.

There is some good information in here, but I suggest you treat her rituals as a base for your own rather than using them as they are written. Her rituals, while pretty, don't really have any substance to them. There is no meaning behind the words. For instance, I was thinking of using the Hazel ritual, in which two of the symbols are the Pegasus and the Unicorn. The first is mentioned in the sentence "When the Pegasus is in flight and wings beyond our vision, and the salmon hide the fruit of the Hazel..." The second is found in the sentence "...I give the purity of the Unicorn, Friday and Venus..." What does this mean? How are the Pegasus and the Unicorn relevant to the Hazel moon? Nothing is explained, nothing is understood. This is empty

symbolism. True ritual should speak to your unconscious, should lead you to a greater realization. This one didn't. It just left me confused. Now after some digging into Robert Graves' The White Goddess, I found the meanings behind the Pegasus and the Unicorn, and discovered how they related to Hazel moon. I was then able to write a full, in-depth ritual using these formerly empty symbols.

Lesson: by using Pattalee's rituals as a guideline and doing some additional research on your own, you can come up with something that will actually speak to you and to your unconscious.

Reviewed by Muirghein

Tree Medicine, Tree Magic by Ellen Evert Hopman. 1991. Phoenix Publishing, Inc., Custer, WA. Softcover, \$10.95.

This book has a chapter on each of several trees, not just the 13 of the Calendar, but also pine, maple, elm, chestnut, etc. Hopman provides different information about the trees, including physical descriptions, where they grow, practical uses, herbal uses, and folklore or 'magical uses.' If you've read the "Folklore and

Practical Uses" columns in the past issues of **THE HAZEL NUT**, my articles and her chapters are very similar. I like the book, but don't look to it for any deeper insights into the Celtic Tree Calendar, or symbolism for rituals. Read it strictly for the physical, useful information contained on the trees.

Reviewed by Muirghein

The Celtic Lunar Zodiac by Helena Paterson. 1992. Charles E. Tuttle Co., Inc., Boston, MS. Softcover, \$19.95.

This is a beautifully illustrated book, which treats the Celtic Tree Calendar as a zodiac. Each tree in the Beth-Luis-Nion system is considered a sign that one may be born under.

For each tree, there is a full-page illustration which is broken down and explained. She then talks about the symbolism and myths of the tree, and the character of people who are born under that tree.

This is a unique book; I don't think the Tree Calendar has had this sort of treatment before. Buy it for the illustrations and the mythology, but don't expect to gain a deeper understanding of the trees through it.

Reviewed by Muirghein

The Phoenix Cards, Reading and Interpreting Past-Life Influences With The Phoenix Deck, by Susan Sheppard, Illustrated by Toni Taylor. Softcover, 261 pp. \$25.95.

The Phoenix Deck is a divining and a past-life influence tool. The deck consists of 28 beautiful cards. The first time you use them, place all the cards down face up in four rows of seven cards each in a row. Next, pick seven cards recording them one through seven in order of picked. Card number one is the Sun position Card, followed by the Moon as two, Mercury as three, Venus as four, Saturn as five, Uranus as six, and Pluto as seven. The book has corresponding chapters so you can look up the question and answer to each card picked. This is a fascinating way to see the symbolism you are attracted to in each card and the answer you get which may explain past-life influences in your present life. This is just one of the many ways to read the Phoenix deck. Individuals interested in and studying reincarnation, may open up some new doors by using these cards to reveal information that they would not otherwise have obtained.

Reviewed by Stormy

Linda Kerr
THE HAZEL NUT
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Linda C. Kerr