

THE HAZEL NUT

A Journal of Celtic Spirituality and Sacred Trees

Lammas

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Issue 24



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HAZEL
VINE and
IVY
MOONS

the celtic warrior

i. my body lies cold and numb within the whispering walls of long kesh; where low voices muffled by oppression and pain struggle to be heard, to speak out their just cause of freedom to the world.

ii. within my dreams, i tour the ancient battlefields; the catacombs of dead saints and the graves of slain martyrs long perished from the green motherland but not forgotten.

iii. forceful winds blow and my soul is chilled and my hunger lies within, me or my companion in solidarity to my cry! but no raging tempest nor gale can obscure the visions granted my by the merciful gods that guide me in my final hours of life!

iv. no rivers, rains, walls or chains can bind, blind or wash away the blood shed upon the sacred sod of erin.

v. between the intermittent flashing thunder, i see in the flickering light of heaven's rage, the soldiers' ghosts upon the heavy stones that imprison me, and their shadows consume my thoughts.

vi. their presence comforts me as their spirits dance upon my heart, as i strain my eyes into the karness upon the walls and chant my death song... my prayer for more than strength to endure; and that i should somehow be delivered from two hells.

vii. my heart speaks within of a past life, and in the distance i can hear the faint skirl of the pipes calling me to reckon with my unfinished karma.

viii. and all the brave soldiers chant and sing their battle hymns and street ballads for the liberation of ireland! oh! how their voices melt together into one sweet harmony... and nourish my spirit.

ix. and in my final hour, when the grim reaper and angels above struggle for my wounded soul, i'll ask the gods' intervention to resurrect my soul, so that i may once again regain my fiery passions as a... celtic warrior!

By RICHARD WINSLOW

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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.

Hazel is the ninth tree in the Celtic tree calendar. It usually occurs in August or September, and this year it runs from August 3-August 31.

Vine is the tenth tree in the Celtic tree calendar. It usually occurs in September or October, and this year it runs from September 1-September 30.

Ivy is the eleventh tree in the Celtic tree calendar. It usually occurs in October or November, and this year it runs from October 1-October 30.

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Winslow. Cover art by Hazel, back cover art by Stormy.

Out On a Limb...

From the desk of the editor

Well, I have been trying to pare down on some of the activities in my personal life, so I will actually have a life again, and I succeeded in losing one thing. Sandy Pouncey will now be the editor of The Hazel Nut. I will continue as publisher, handling all the business and administration, and she will do the computer and creative work. So after this issue, starting immediately, you can send all your submissions to Sandy—her address and email are on the inside front cover.

Rowan is now a year old—I can hardly believe it! I've gone back to full-time work, while she stays in an in-home daycare. One of the goals of the new Church (see below) is to begin a coop homeschool/daycare program, so our pagan kids can stay at home in familiar territory rather than being carted off to a stranger's house. Rowan's babysitter is great, but she's not Mommy or Granny Carol! It's hard to leave her everyday, especially when she cries, but right now, it's just something I have to do.

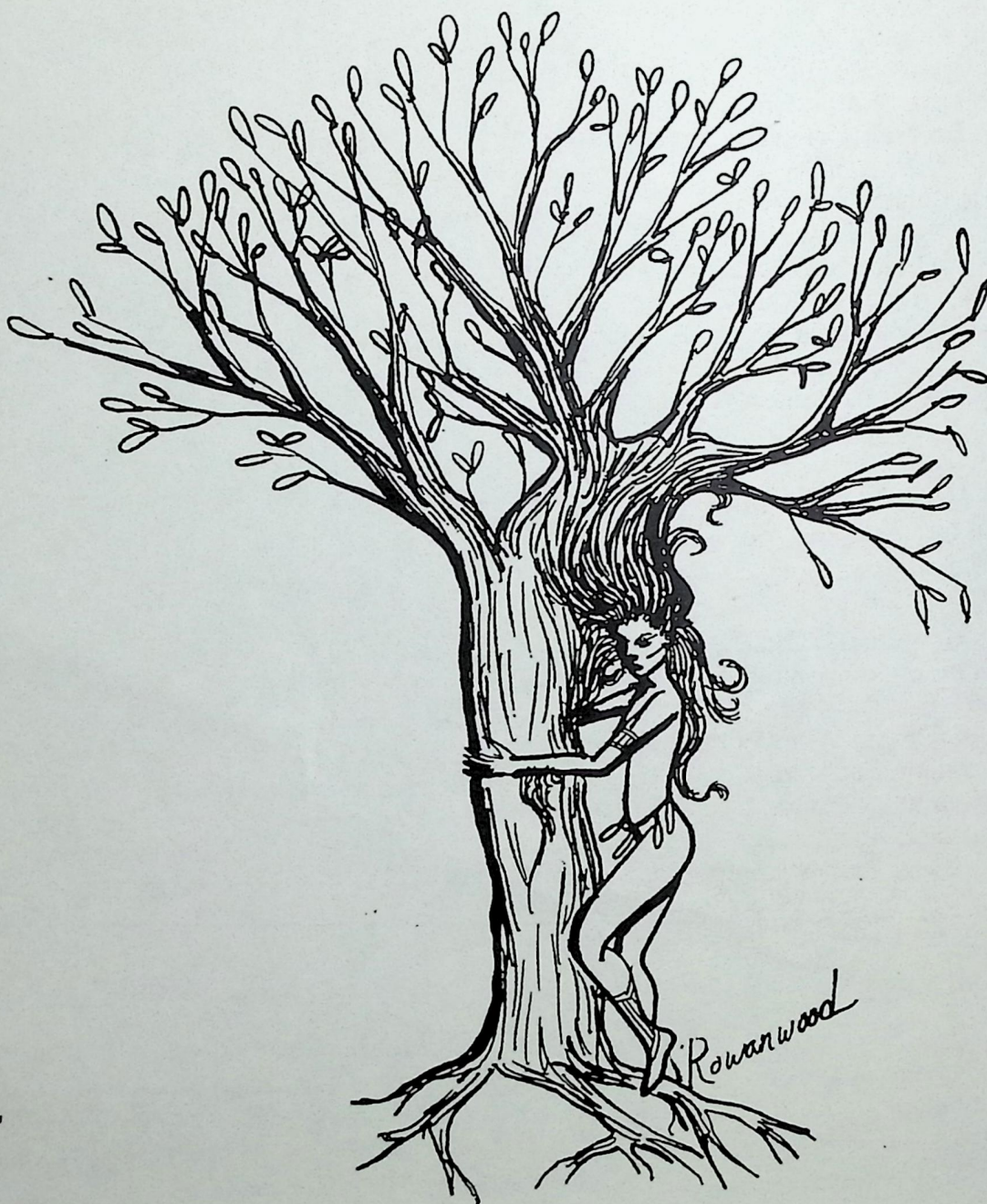
As far as the Church I mentioned, we have founded a new Faerie Faith church, called the Church of the Spiral Tree. You can read about it on page 24. I'm not really sure where it's going to go as of yet; like all things, we just have to wait and see, and give it guidance until it takes on a life of its own. Most of its identity will depend upon the involvement of its leaders and members, so if you have any ideas for it, go ahead and join up and volunteer!

Well, I don't really have much else to say, except "Bye," as Editor. Yay! I'll be checking in, writing the

occasional editorial, and of course writing articles. In the meantime, you can keep up with little Rowan on The Hazel Nut's webpage: <<http://www.arrowweb.com/hazelnut>>.

Until next time, party on, dudes!

Murgen



the three worlds of the oíde

a view through the eyes of a celtic shaman

part x

by Adrian Loaghrian

An Séan-Dhéithe n'Gael The Ancient Gods of the Gaels

(Ed. Note: This continues an alphabetical listing and in-depth explanation of the Celtic gods and goddesses, which will continue throughout the next several issues.)

Dechtiré: {dayk-chi-ray} She of two lands at once; the bigamous wife. Dechtiré NiChathbad {dayk-chi-ray nee-ka-bak} Guardian Goddess and guide of shamanic women through the Alltar (Otherworld). Once the mortal Otherworld wife/lover of Lúgh while also the earthly wife of Sualtiam. During her wedding feast to Sualtiam, Dechtiré and her fifty handmaidens were transformed into a great flock of birds, under an enchantment by the god Lúgh. While in the Otherworld, Dechtiré was taught to travel freely between twain worlds. She obviously became skilled at navigating the passages between the realms. She was or is still lover to Ceathruméit and mother to MacCoill during one portion of the year. During another portion of the year she is also wife to Lúgh. From her union with Lúgh she became mother to Sétanta, who would become known as Cúchulainn. Sualtiam served as foster-father to Sétanta during his lifetime.

Donnfhaoladh: {don-ail-ah} The golden or brown She-Wolf is a little-known Goddess of the Sídh. She is a Guardian Goddess over those touched or gifted by the Daoine Maithe {jin-ah-my}. This includes the Special Children, the Stolen Children (as in Yeats), and all those who live in a world apart from the norm, or move to the beat of a different drum. Appearing as a creature that would be fearful to most, she comes as a majickal guide to those who can see between the worlds. Another trait of the Donnfhaoladh is as a keen indicator of the true natures of persons newly met. Just as the wolves will not attack a human unless under dire starvation or when ravaged by the effects of an illness such as rabies, so too the She-wolf Goddess must be hard-driven to act in the form of an avenger or attacker. Generally she is the gentlest and most playful of guides among the minions of Beathuile.

Daireann Ni Bhaobh Dearg: {dari-an nee biv-jearg} Daireann or Duirerighin {Door-een} the Oak Queen Guardian-Goddess of Widowed Mothers. A mistress wise

in the arts of poisons but prone to intense levels of revenge. A great protector of battered women and unrequited lovers. She offered herself to Fionn MacCumhail as his wife for only a year and a day and thereafter, for only the season Samhraich (summer). Fionn refused the offer. She fed him a poison that drove him mad and caused the Fianna to shun him. Only the interloping of Cailte saved the Fianna from being disbanded. After a long journey to the Otherworld Fionn was cured by an encounter with Sadb. It Sadb in the form of a roe deer who bore Oisín MacFhionn.

Dana: {donna} also Danu and Anu. The Great Mother of the Tuatha DéDannan. Though some scholars and traditions deny that Anu and Danu are cognate, the similarities are immutable. Dana is considered to be a facet of Anu. Though Irish traditions allow her no husband, Brythonic traditions have her as the wife of Bilé, the God of Life and Death. In majickal rituals among the Uidh-Dhéithe she is revered as the Great Mother and is paralleled with The Dagda Mór. In some traditions of the Gaels it is Dana in her summer aspect and not Brighide (the winter aspect) that is the mother of Brian Iuchar and Iucharba, the sons of Tuireann.

Daelbáeth macAengus: {dayl-ba mak angus} The son of Aengus Og and Ethlinn. He is pictured as "The Fertile Father," the father of the three Fruitful Maidens of the Gaels. Husband to Éireann and father of Éire, Banba, and Fótlá. Daelbáeth is invoked to aid in the acquisition of fertility in fathers.

Delbhchaem: {daylv-kaym} The maiden Goddess of Fair and Comely Appearance. She of the "Fair Shape." Delbhchaem ni Morgan is daughter to Morgan, high king of the Land of Wonder, and Coinchend, the Warrior Woman (terrible warrior woman). She was imprisoned like Rapunzel by her parents. She was rescued by Conn, son of BéCuma, who slew her father and mother and brought her

and her blessed gifts back to Ireland. Her blessing of Beauty and Gracefulness are called upon for unborn children.

Dian Cécht: {dane kekt} The Great Healer. Dian Cecht is the father of medicine and the arts of the apothecary. Dian is the father of Airmid, Cian, Cethe and Miach. All four children are provenders of medicine and healing arts. Dian Cecht built Nuada a silver prosthetic hand to replace the one lost at the battle of Magh Tured. This caused Nuada to acquire the name AirgetLómh (the silver handed). By Gaelic law a king could not rule if he had a physical defect. Hence Nuada AirgetLómh was deposed as king. Later Miach would replace the silver hand with a real hand by majickal means and Nuada would be restored. As the stories go, Dian became jealous of his son's feat and slew him in a rage of envy. Dian is associated with the element of Ether, Airmid is attributed to water, Miach is said to involve the element of Fire, Cian is associated with the element of Air, and Cethe is affiliated with the element Earth. These associations are very important when working in the healing arts.

Domhnu: {dom-noo} Fomoríi goddess of the dark aspects of the seas. She is the mother of all leviathan-like beings that stir from the seas. She is mother of Indech Rí, great king and leader of the Fomoríi. In comparison to Hebrew lore she would be equal to Lilith, the mother of all daemons. Likewise, she is the antithesis of Dana, who is mother of the DéDannan and hence source of the goodness in the world. However, in the aspect of the uidh-Déithe, Domnu is the guardian guide of the "Well of Nothingness," one of the Gates to the Otherworld. "Domnu guide me through this darkness, steal my fears, still my doubts. Lead me toward that ancient light that few may see amid this sea of night."

Donn: {don} The Irish God of the Dead. His house is called Teach Dhuinn, wherein the dead dwell and are feasted before moving on to their respective places in the Otherworld. Some bards and filis have constructed poems of his association with collecting the souls of those lost at sea or turned ill from being caught in storms along the coast. "Should she, the ever longing sea, decide to touch the fates of me and my good mates, in hopes I pray it is the ancient hand of Donn that lifts my soul from down beyond, and welcomes me to that sunny southern Isle, and bids us there to rest for just a little while." It is said that Donn was among the Milesians and ignored the Goddess Éire, hence she set a Geis upon him to lead him to his doom at sea; yet never should he know death, yet ever shall he be surrounded by it. He spends all his nights and days rescuing and giving comfort to the lost and dying.

Dulachan: The aspect of Donn associated with death due

to illness. He is without a head and the horse he rides is headless as well. The pair chose to be headless so as to offer no quarter nor fall victim to pity upon the souls caused to ride in his coach. Neither could he see if a person were to escape. Some say that if one should ever see the horseman his eyes shall be cut out with a lightning fast whip.

Ecne: {ak nee} A déDannan God of Poetry. A son of the Goddess Dana called upon to summon the essence of poetry into the invoker. A teacher of the secrets of the power of poetry to stir the souls of those who read or hear the verses as they fall. "Ecne Ecne hear my heart and speak to me. Guide my hands that strains to write my soulful waves of dark and light. Grant me rhythm grant me rhyme grant me words that move in time. Ecne Ecne hear my heart."

Éire - Ériu: {ire} {eree-uu} She is the daughter of Éarinn and the DéDannan goddess of agriculture and fertility. It is she for whom the Emerald Isle is named. She is the mother inspirator of Irish hospitality. Her sisters are Banbh {bana} (the fallow field), and Fóthla {fóchla} (the cultivated field). Together they form a triad equal to Maiden, Mother, and Crone. Éire is the Fertile Field. She is married to MacGréine {mak gear-i-na}, the God of Summer's warmth. Éire, Fóthla and Banbh greeted the Milesians when they arrived from Ibero-gaul. T'was Éire that hailed the strangers upon the shore and told them of the beauties and fruitfulness of the island. However, Donn the Milesian Chieftan treated her as a Go-bye. Insulted, Éire placed a curse upon him that he should never find rest upon the blessed island's shores. A war ensued between the gods of the DéDannan and the Milesians. Donn was lost at sea and has never yet set foot upon sweet Éire's shores. He was buried on a small island to the southwest of Cork. 'Tis said that there is a mystic house upon that island where he offers refuge to souls of the dead. Following the great battle the great Bard Amairgen of the Milesians bespoke that Éire would forever be the primary name of the island and her children for all time to come. While the names of all the triad are used in poetic verse it is to this day "Éirn's green isle," that her poets still acclaim.

Ethraide: {ay-raid-e-ah} A Sídh Goddess of Wisdom and Majicke. She was a member of the Gealeasídhe {gale-a-she}, the gods of the nocturnal realms. Similar to Etain Echraidhe, she wished to join earthly folk and share the secrets of mystic realms. She took on a human manifestation and experienced love and pleasures of the flesh. She was renowned as a healer and apothecary and acquired a circle of hand-maidens and men-servants to whom she taught nine arts known only to the Sídh. She died after a long and fruitful life and returned to the realms of the Sídh.

Eolas: {ay-o-les} This name means "The Knowledge." Born the son of three fathers and three mothers among the followers of Partholón who brought knowledge, agricultural arts, and iron plows to Ireland. His parents were both of the Druídic Caste. He is invoked to call forth knowledges of this earth, the heavens and the twain worlds. "I reach into the air, the knowledge is there, once it is mine, it is mine for all time."

Étain niCecht: {ay-den} The Goddess of Bright Spirits and Great Hope. She is the wife of Ogma Gríaneach. Attending to the oppressed and down-laden, Étain comes like a golden light in the hours of darkness and sings songs of hope and courage to inspire endurance and forbearance through the long dark nights of the soul. Her canto: "Étain, Étain, Étain niCecht, bright night, bring the light, lift these darkened spirits into thy golden heights. Étain, Étain, Étain, loving lady ever bright."

Ethlinn niBhalór: {ay-lyn} She is the daughter of Balór Súil-mhillte. She is the guardian matriarch of brave warriors and bards. She is the natural mother of Lúgh Lámhfhada, the Irish Sun God who was sired by Cían MacCecht. It is Ethlinn niBhalór who is called upon by expectant mothers to protect their unborn children from illness and harm. As these petitions are raised, so too are boons invoked for the child to be blessed with a brave heart and pleasant countenance. Her vigil invocation: "Before the moon that waxes 'round I stand between the sky and ground. Ethlinn, daughter of Balór, hear my simple call, walk along with me this night. Embrace me by this fair moon's light. Bide with me and my babbie. Grant the gifts that are your own. Join me as we see this babbie safely home. Ethlinn come, be one with me, make safe my Oíge's first journey"

Ethné niRoc: {ay-nee nee rok} The Goddess of True Virtue and Womanly Strength. She is the daughter of Roc the Steward of Aengus Og. Her half brother is n'Taibhse Chollach n Connacht (the ghost boar of Connacht), who was slain as a human child by Diarmuid when Diarmuid found that the child was of Roc's siring. Roc struck the babbie's corpse thrice with an enchanted wand and the child was re-encarnated as a great boar and Roc set the boar with a Geis to wander the hills and Sídhés of Connacht, awaiting the coming of Diarmuid to seek revenge for his own murder. Legend has it that this and her near rape at the hands of a DéDannan Chieftan at Bruigh na Boinne, inspired her to live a chaste and virtuous life. Ethné was assigned as guardian and handmaiden to one of the daughters of Mammán mac Lír in the court of Aengus Og. Aengus observed that she neither ate nor drank according to mortal needs. Rather she existed of the purest of spirit in form and nature. Learning of this Manannán

brought her two enchanted bovines whose lactation never ran dry. After this she would only drink this enchanted milk.

One day Ethné was bathing with her ward in the River Boinne and became separated from her ward and lost her Clóak of Invisibility which is worn by all members of the DéDannan. She was lost to the DéDannans and lived a mortal life. Some say she was converted to Christendom by Niamh Padraig (St. Patrick) and served the Church as a nun, and died still blessed by great virtue. St. Patrick gave her the last rites and buried her at the site of Cille Ethné (Killane).

Ethné is perceived as Christian angels are oft perceived. She is invoked by the victims of rape, and the endangered women among the Gaels. The women of Éire have been known to be speaking to Ethné in their vigils to the Blessed St. Anne. She will appear as a lady clad in either a white or golden glow sitting on the bedside of women in times of need.

F Fearn: The alder tree.

Fand: {faynd} She is called the "Pearl of Beauty." She is the wife of Manannán macLír, the mystic God of the Seas. She is the queen of Tír Tairnigri (the Land of Promise in the Alltar) and the mother of the Maidean Mhuire, the Maidens of the Sea who work the majicks of the watery western realms. Her realms are those of reasoning, wisdom, beauty, and majicke. She is notably an inspirator in lustful and hedonistic pleasures as well.

In the Ossianic Tales she had a great argument with Manannán and he was compelled to leave Tír Tarinirgiri. During his absence the Land of Promise was laid siege by three Rígh of the Fomoríi. Fand, facing defeat, sent a messenger for CúChulainn, Ireland's greatest hero. CúChulainn was hesitant to make the journey and sent his steward Laeg in his stead. When Laeg returned and described both the beauty of this land and the onslaught of Fomoríi upon such an incredible haven, CúChulainn was compelled to go; whether out of obedience to his vows as a member of the Fionna or of curiosity we may never know. For whichever reason, upon the "dark night of the moon," CúChulainn journeyed the Geata Cruachan and the Mystic Tír. When the Fomoríi were defeated, the promises Fand had made CúChulainn, of both love and gratitude for him, were honored. CúChulainn became Fand's lover for the passage of one moon. When the moon again had fallen dark CúChulainn left her side and returned to his wife Emer at their home in Ulster. But before leaving Fand, CúChulainn had made a pact to rendezvous with her at Cladach n'hIdad (the Strand of the Yew), one of the Geata into the Alltar. Emer learned of the plan, and went to that enchanted strand before CúChulainn had arrived. Emer confronted Fand and the two argued at length and created

a great stir upon both land and sea in this world and the other. Finally Emer realized Fand's love for CúChulainn was true. Emer surrendered the fray and in so doing showed her love for CúChulainn as well wishing only for his happiness.

At Cladach n'hÍdad, Manannán and CúChulainn arrived at nearly the same moment. While CúChulainn was stunned, Manannán chided Fand to choose between he and CúChulainn. Fand thought for a bit and finally rendered her choice. "It is true I have known great love for both of you. I do not judge that not one of you is greater in any way than the other. Yet men such as you do need a strong and loving mate. CúChulainn has Emer who loves him dearly, while you, Manannán, have none save me. I will be one with you forever."

Manannán lifted his enchanted cloak and passed it between Fand and CúChulainn, bespeaking that neither should ever behold the other again. In time the Druí of both worlds were caused to build an enchantment that CúChulainn and Fand would never remember any of the things that had passed between them. This enchantment is still so great that often when others should enter the Otherworld they are made to forget the events of their journeys upon their return to the Outerworld. From this and other tellings of this tale we may reason that Fand is a great goddess over the domains of reasoning and choices.

Fear Coille agus n' Bean Coille: {fayr coyl-ya ban coyl-ya} The Man and Woman of the Forests. Much like King Gob of Seaxon lore, this pair were large, loathesome and dark in appearance. In the story of DaDerga Hostel, he is satirized as having but one eye, one hand and one foot while sporting a pig upon his back, though in the ways of the Oidi this would describe the King and Queen of the Forest Sídh. In a theme similar to the tales of Circe in the Odyssey, among the Bretons and Gauls it is the "Pig Keepers" who are the true keepers of the earthen majick. In essence they are seen as the true earth witches. So the Fear and Bean Coille are the watchers in the wood and dear friends to have. "Behold the hideous ones; the scorned and shunned among us, they that seem appalling to the eye. Yet I say to you, they are possessed of a wealth and beauty few of the fair folk shall ever know. For theirs is a truthful soul and an earnest heart. To befriend one among them is to gain a friendship long, faithful, and true. Learn to see beyond the shades of fear. Learn to look beneath the outer skin. Look into the windows of the souls and judge from the visions you find there. Therein lies the true worth of wisdom's way" -hAdrioan Linaos.

Fátha d'Canann: {faw-ha-de-kanan} Sometimes anglicized as Fathad Canaan, his name is in fact "the Mystic Cantor." The first barrabhard or power chanter. He is said to have gained dominion over all other animals and spirits

in the Outerworld by capturing the spirits of birds of the air, the singing streams and by learning the languages of all the creatures of the world. He created the first utterances of majickal verse by creating set of Tones and Keys that touched the spirits of all of nature at once and enjoining them into one harmonic chord. Just as Beathuile had created the Allfather and Allmother with a sigh, and they in turn created the universe with their laughter, so too does Fátha d'Canann stir the first Riomball into being to aid his fellow Gaels.

Feá n'Gráinaúil: {fay-aw-ne-grawn-a wall} Fea the Hateful. She is known as the wife of Nuada and another aspect of the War Goddess. Her name means Forest of Hatefuls (forest of monsters). Whether Mother Goddess or War Goddess she is without question a matron of the Coillteachta (Forest Dwelling Gaels). When building a riomball within the forest it is always wise to ask her permission and aide in the beginning of the rite. "Feá n'Gráinaúil hear well thy children's call! Be one with us this night as we set this riomball into flight!"

Faoi-Fhiadha and Ceo-Dróiechta: {fay-hee ah} and {kow-droi-aka} The cloak of the Fianna and the Fog of Druids. The mystic fog of concealment known only to the DéDannans. A fog serving as a shield of invisibility. The Faoi-fhiadha is conjured by a long cana elongating each syllable into a fading breathless low unearthly tone. The builders must envision the fog as a anger growing into a weapon the instills fear in the foe.

Fionnbarr agus Uná: {fin-bar} and {OO-naw} The King and Queen of Sídh Meadha {shee may-ha}, now Knockma, five miles to the west of Tuam. They entered the Sídh mound when the Milesians had come to full power over Ireland and the DéDannans elected to retreat to the Faerie mounds and the Alltar. Today they are known as Fionbarr Rí agus BanRí Uná. They are the King and Queen of all Fae and Sí of Éarinn. It is said that a Beallmas (ghost meal) left to and dedicated for this pair at the end of a rite is a sure means of keeping the place of the rite from harm by the prankful ones amid the humans and the Sí. By the same token the pair may be invoked to summon forth the workers among the DéDannan to carry on deeds worthy of true must needs. All of this is well to know and better to heed.

Fír Bolg: {fear-bowlg} The fourth invaders to inhabit Ireland. Translations of their name is varied. Some scholars say they were the "Bag People." This name could imply anything from puffy sleeves and trousers to a corpulent appearance. However, others have called them "the Fat Bellied People." According to Berresford-Ellis they were a society built in three cycles of immigrants to

Ireland having come from Thrace. These tribes were called the Fir Bolg, the Fir Domhnán (People of the "Little World"), and the Fir Gallion {gall ear or gall eún}: Strangers from the eastern regions, i.e., Britainic, Nordic, Gaullic, etc., or in the latter, the keepers of the majickes from the regions of Gallia.

However, in Connemara, legend has it that the Fir Bolg took their name from "Builg," a "fat-bellied god," which is concordant with Masonic legends that followers of Gautama Buddha, when shunned by Ayryan Caste in India, were to travel to a land "across the mysts." This land was called Brytainni. According to the texts of the Masonic Scottish Rite that land was Ireland. The Fir Bolg were defeated by the Tuatha déDannan at the first battle of Magh Tuiredh in the present-day County of Sligo. The vanquished Fir Bolg fled to the hills of Connemara and to the isle of Inis Mór in the Aran Islands, where they built the ring fort of Dún Aonghusa.

In truth their majicke was strong, and judging by the words of our language that follow their faction, the Gall Eún may well have been the first of the erectors of the ring forts and dolmens whose countenance is seen from Éire to India. Though the DéDannan defeated them they did respect them enough to allow them to reside in the West Connacht. Doubtless the Gall Eún were cursed to marry among the twa,' so do not discount their presence among our ranks today.

Fódhla: {foe-lah} Also Fothla and Phála. The Goddess of Atholl in Scotland. She is one of the three aspects of agricultural goddesses of Ireland; the second of the daughters of Éarinn. Her name means the "Cultivated Land."

"In Breosaid's tides at winter's end, I sought fair Banbha, for she was sweet and she was soft and she was clad in deepest green. At Bealltaine I was captured, all by my heart and by my hand, by Fódhla's soft and constant gate upon the freshly turned soil and all along the strand. Midsummer came and I was enchanted by Éire's harp of golden hue which seemed to blend with her long hair and shine all from the glow of her eyes of sky-white blue. Lúnasadh came, I watched them dance, these sisters graceful three, and I harvested their honey as each did dance with me. At Samhainn Éarinn came and called her daughters home. I spent the nights of winter with my memories and myself alone. In Breosaid's tides at winter's end, I sought fair Banbha for she was sweet and she was soft and she was clad in deepest green." -Adrian Lóaghrian

Fómoríi nó Fomhórach: {foe-more-ee} Also spelt **Fo-Morire** and **Fo-Mhuire**. Though many sources translate the name Fo-mhuie as the Daemons from under the sea, the prefix fo- as "under," yet the same prefix also implies subjugate to or dependent upon. From this view they

might well have been sea-borne pirate raiders. In any event the present day word for things that are submarinal are called "fomhuireán." The definition of the Fomhórach is simply "pirates, the Fomorians." The other meaning is that of a giant. Indeed, these raiders of the land who used the sea as their domain were often described as a giant folk.

Among their leaders were Baylór Súil-mhillte, Conan, Morc, and Cical. They are seen as daemon-like enchanted warriors who often appeared as having only one eye, arm or leg. They were masters of many arts including agriculture, warfare and healing, as well as the passage between the twain worlds. They seem to have learned the aboriginal art of confusing their foes by standing in their foeman's blind spot, thus disappearing just before striking.

Scholars have concluded that the fomhrhórach had been coming to Ireland even before the Partholonians and DéDannans had come to Érin. The Nemidians were the first take dominance over this Emerald Isle; the followers Partholon are considered the second, while the DéDannans are considered to be the third.

Another credit must be given to the Fomhórach, for they were the first to till the soil and plant vegetables and barleycorn in the south of Ireland. This art came to DéDannan under the leadership of Brés {breesh}, a son of the Fomoríi who was appointed High King when Nuada the rightful hArdRígh was deposed for having lost his hand in battle. Brés set aside the Fheilbhann Fómhar {elvan foe-ar} (an Chéad lá d'Fhómhar) as the first Harvest at the tide that would be called Lúghnasadh in times to come. This is the name of the tide of First Harvest, while Mean-Fhómhar (September 21) is Mid-Harvest, and Shamhainn is the Final Harvest.

The Fómhorian Chieftan was a God King called Balór Súil-mhillte, or Balór the Evil Eye, who was slain at the second Battle of Magh Tuiredh in a scene similar to that of David and Goliath. In this tale it is the young Lúgh Lámhfhada who casts a stone from a sling directly into Balór's only eye, striking it so hard as to both turn it around and drive the sinister eye through his head to the back of Balór's skull, thus casting its mortifying enchantment upon the very Fómoríi who were standing behind Balór, who led them in the fray. Oddly the Philistines were so called by the Hebrew scribes, because they too were a people of the sea and raided the Hebrew camps in pirate-like fashion.

In this Battle a great number of the DéDannan were slain, but the Dagda Mór summoned the opening of an enchanted well to appear and the dead children of Danu were cast into the well. As each one reached the bottom they were seen to reappear at the mouth of the well alive and free of injury. While the Fómor gods and goddesses remain in the Goidhealucht pantheon, the Fómoríi never

Continued on page 15

RUNES BY STORMY

August 1-15 - Thurisaz (G)/Thorn (AS)

▷ This will be a month to solve problems that otherwise would be too difficult. So those tiny little thorns that prick you from day to day should be a breeze to throw off. If you have to make an important decision during this time, do not hesitate to consult a specialist in the area of your needs. Also, the problems and fears to be encountered can be a creative challenge.

Key words: Thor's Hammer, gateway, protection, decision, a thorn.

August 16-31 - Ansuz (G)/Os (AS)

▷ If you are studying, this will be a time to acquire knowledge easier. Communications should also improve immensely during this time. You may acquire Odin's silver tongue for speech and ask for a raise, a favor needed or ask that someone special out on a dinner date. This also could be a time to take on an apprenticeship in your area of interest that could lead to an advancement of your position.

Key words: Signals, messenger rune, the rune of the Trickster, tests, mouth, spoken word.

September 1-15 - Raidho (G)/Rad (AS)

▷ The first half of September could be a really good time for a reunion, perhaps a family reunion or a reunion with your soul mate or someone you thought lost. Raidho also represents the Sun Wheel, that Solar Disk that comes up in the East and sets in the West. A possible journey may be in the making during these two weeks. Be open to possibilities and enjoy perhaps a trip to the mountains or the beach when the days will still be warm and the nights will be cooler.

Key words: Wheels, wagons, journey on horseback, spiritual reunion.

September 16-30 - Kenaz (G)/Ken (AS)

◁ The second half of September will seem like a movie being reran because you already know it, done it, saw it and already have that T-Shirt! If you are open, be ready to have more psychic experiences than are a coincidence. Go with your gut intuition and pay close attention. Don't miss the boat because you got a ridiculous idea that just couldn't be true and it turned out it was true. You do know!

Key words: Opening, light, torch, fire, artistic creativity.

October 1-15 - Gebo (G)/Gyfu (AS)

✕ This could be the month to finalize legal matters. Get documents in order, make sure wills are up to date, and ownership paperwork is correct. Could be a month to pop the question concerning marriage or partnership in business. Plan a wedding in June, July or October of next year. This could be the month you have completely paid up a debt. Check to make sure so you don't make another payment next month.

Key words: Partnership, gifts.

October 15-31 - Wunjo (G)/Wynn (AS)

▷ This could be the month that your luck may change. Remember that Wynn represents Joy. In order to appreciate joy you must endure sorrow. There should be a change for the better. After all, Samhain is upon us and is a very good reason to gather together to celebrate the festival!

Key words: Joy, happiness, light, laughter.

Note: (G) = Germanic; (AS) = Anglo-Saxon

REFLECTIONS ON A LIFE'S JOURNEY

Do We Really Walk the Walk?

by Nion

Howdy ya'll, Nion here. Just got back from Roxanna and Moondance, and talk about needing the time away from mundane reality. No telephones, radios, or distractions from the outside world (well, there WAS that pesky circling by the State Trooper helicopter buzzing around like a curious dragonfly—I wonder if I can get a copy of their video—Nekked Nion on tape!).

The purpose of Moondance, EarthDance, FallFling, and the many other festivals that abound is not only to enjoy being away from the outside world for a little while, but to webwork with others and meet new friends and see old friends, and to share and exchange viewpoints and philosophy (and of course, to dance nekked 'round the bonfire to the drums—what else is there?). It's also about celebrating the seasons and the turning of the wheel, honoring the Lord and Lady in whatever their guise, and sharing our commonality in beliefs despite our sometimes varying paths.

For all my enjoyment of the festival, I was somewhat disappointed in some of my observations of some of my brothers and sisters and how they treated the land and the campsites. Yes, we are there to enjoy ourselves, but not at the expense of our environment and to disrespect the earth and land. Why do you see those who unconcernedly throw or just drop their trash, cigarette butts, beer or coke cans, wrappers, etc., around? Or if you see something, why aren't we picking it up? It certainly doesn't hurt us to stoop and clean up someone else's mess that shouldn't have even been there in the first place. I know it sounds somewhat bitchy to harp on such trivial matters, and I in all honesty have been just as guilty of 'not thinking' about it.

We as a group are always quick to help others when help is needed and to accomplish whatever is needed, and that makes me very proud, and at times, very humble to be associated with the bunch of Pagans that I know. But before, during and at the end of these festivals, where is that same quickness to clean up and to undo the damage we have done just by our presence at these sites? We all spout our reverence for Mother Earth and the environment, but do we really practice what we preach, or are we just paying lip service because it's PC? If we as a group spent even as much as a tenth of the time we do "partying" in cleaning up after ourselves or others, or what was already there, our sites and land would be pristine for the enjoyment of all. More importantly, this would show that we truly do respect our environment.

But even then, that is NOT enough. I was very fortunate in sitting in and listening to some very profound

(to me at any rate) discussions on our relationships with our environment and the land. And a very highly respected elder brought up the point that even doing the polite thing of merely picking up after ourselves and cleaning up our own messes is not enough. We ARE NOT doing anything to pay back the land and environment that allows us to enjoy the simple fact of existing. Us higher (?) life forms at the top of the food chain have raped, clawed, looted, burnt, and pillaged our way up the literal present day dung heap of our environment, without respect and reverence to that which sustains us. And if we don't start looking out, we are going to be shaken off as the insignificant fleas that we really are. I don't know about you folks, but that scares the hell out of me.


What we should be doing is paying back the land for allowing us to exist on it. We should be doing whatever it takes to repay the Earth by nurturing her every chance we get. When we go to these festivals, or at home on that empty corner lot, that unused field, we should spend the time to fertilize, lay manure, plant wild flowers, pick up man's trash, or whatever.

I truly think that we as humans, with our faults, aren't truly malicious, we are just not "thinking," and are not aware of our symbiotic relationship with the land and Nature. We need to open our eyes, our minds and our hearts, and to LISTEN, not with our ears, but with our inner being, to what the Earth and Nature is telling us, or even more profoundly, what it has ceased to tell us.

Well, until next time, may the Lord of Light and the Lady of Life brighten and nourish your path. Blessed Be.



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Silly Spells

by Odessa

Silly Spells is back after taking a hiatus in which I went around the world facing untold hardships and dangers collecting silly spells just for ya'll. This trip I gathered: Oyntments to see spirits. Take the gall of a bull, ants eggs and ye fat of a white hen all mixed together and anoynt your eyes to see spirits. Why bother with all that, personally I can see spirits after a bottle of tequila. Here's an alternative: Anoynt your face with ye fat of a lap-wing (a crested plover), or ye blood of a lap-wing, and of a bat or a goat and make an ointment. It doesn't say how long to leave it on and there's no information on how to get this gunk off your face.

Here's one to make hair grow. Anoint your head with peach stones ground and mixed with vinegar. Boil maiden hair (doesn't say where one might FIND a true maiden!) in white wine, and add smallage seed to it. Apply to scalp to

prevent loss of hair and to make hair grow thick. Hey, it's cheaper than Rogaine!

When a man has lost his manhood, infatuated and bewitched by a woman, so that he is unable to love another, then take the blood of a buck and grease his head therewith, and he will soon be all right again. Our laboratories here at the Pagan Palace say that this spell will also grow hair.

To give your enemy warts do the following spell. Rub your warts with a dead fly (you gotta already have a wart someplace). Concentrating on your enemy stick a needle through the fly then hide the impaled creature someplace close to your enemy and sure enough he or she will have nice fat juicy warts all over their body in a day or two!!!

'Til next time, Practice safe hex!!! Blessed Be,
Odessa.

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# Stinging Nettle

by Paul Beyerl

Nettle, Greater. *Urtica dioica* (Linn.). Family *Urticaceae*.

## Production

*"One would think that a high-technology society capable of splitting the atom and sending a man to the moon would long ago have learned everything there is to know about the stinging nettle. Not so. Even the agent responsible for the skin irritation produced by contact with the leaves of this common plant remains nearly as much a mystery to the twentieth century scientists as it did to the first cave man who stumbled against it. Botanists now designate it Urtica dioica L. and place it in the family Urticaceae. (After accidental contact with it, people usually refer to the nettle by various uncomplimentary titles.)" (Tyler, 223)*

Considered an immigrant from Europe by Millsbaugh, the nettle is a single-stalked, non-branching perennial which sends out underground roots to create 'new' plants. Not only does it readily reproduce by seed, its roots can be highly invasive.

Nettle grows in clusters and therefore appears bushy. In good growing conditions it can grow to 5 feet in height. Small 'hairs' cover the stem and underside of the leaves, containing irritating chemicals.

In addition to the commonly used stinging nettle, the lesser nettle, *Urtica urens*, may also be used as a remedial herb, having the same properties.

Nettle flowers are tiny and greenish, blooming from late June through September. The flowers are sexed: they are either male or female, growing in clusters, loose racemes, or in panicles. Wind pollinated, they lead to an ovoid nut, containing one seed.

Opposite, heart-shaped, finely-toothed leaves, dark green above, paler beneath, are the parts to avoid. Stinging nettle grows in weedy places, often near water. Although it prefers a rich, moist soil and full sun to partial shade, it grows easily from seed or division and can be found in a variety of growing conditions.

## Harvesting

The root of the nettle is harvested for its value as a natural yellow dye. When boiled with alum it also has medicinal value, although only limited information is available on

this.

Most of what we obtain commercially are the young stems, harvested and dried for medicinal brewing and cooking. Older stems are more fibrous, rendering them difficult to use medicinally, but they are often harvested for use like flax or hemp, and are of equal value for making thread and using in weaving. Nettle has a long history of use as a cloth fiber since the Bronze Age, reaching into modern times, when used through WWI when the Germans used nettle fibers to stretch their supply of cotton.

The leaves may be harvested by themselves, used for green dye, spring tonic or tea with which to treat asthma. Nettle seeds and flowers may be harvested for use in a tonic to combat fevers and chills. The seeds may be used to treat poisoning. Oil may be processed from nettle seeds. Grieve writes that it is used in lamps in Egypt. (Grieve, 579)

## Constituents

"Numerous analyses of nettle have revealed the presence of more than 20 different chemical constituents." (Tyler, 223) Among them is formic acid:  $H_2CO_2$ . "This volatile acid is found in a free state in the stings of this species; it is also found in the poisonbags of the red ant..." (Millsbaugh, 612)

Among its more complex constituents are assorted mineral salts (phosphates, a trace of iron), ammonia, carbonic acid, acetylcholine and indoles such as histamine, hydroxytryptamine and serotonin.

Nettle also contains mucilage and is a rich source of chlorophyll and is high in vitamin C. Nettles contain carotene (provitamin A); in fact, they contain as much as spinach or other greens.

## Usage

Alterative, anti-asthmatic, antipyretic, antiscorbutic, antiseptic (re: to Santillo), astringent, diuretic, expectorant (re: to Santillo), hemostat, hypotensive, nutrient/nutritive, rubefacient, stimulant, tonic.

Nettle has few equals as a tonic. It provides nutrition and strength to the entire system.



It is an excellent herb with which to detoxify the body. Due to this property, it has been used to treat a variety of conditions such as scurvy, dropsy, gout, jaundice, and similar ailments. Nettle has been used to treat the urinary system. In addition to its diuretic property, it has a reputation indicating it may be used when treating calculus.

When treating many types of fever, using nettle in combination in the remedy can be most beneficial. It may also be used as a simple. Nettle is recommended for night sweats.

The tea is also used for other bronchial afflictions. "The entire plant, collected just before flowering, has had a lengthy reputation in folk medicine as a specific for asthma." (Tyler, 223) Santillo recommends using nettle "with comfrey, mullein, horehound and lobelia for lung problems." (Santillo, 152)

The astringent property of the nettle has been explored throughout history as nettle has been used to treat nose-bleed. Nettle has also been considered a remedy for various types of internal hemorrhage, including within the urinary system.

"Nettle has few equals and an infusion of the dried herb, or alcoholic tincture made from the fresh plant, or fresh juice itself in doses of 1 to 2 tablespoonful is much power inwardly for bleeding from the nose, lungs or stomach." (Grieve 577)

Nettle was used to treat many types of hemorrhage, including post-partum and menorrhagic.

The seeds of the nettle are used to deal with problems of obesity. (Beyerl, 45)

Herbal remedies have long been used in veterinary medicine. One of the more curious practices was when nettle was used as a sexual stimulant (urtication). The irritant property of the plant was brought into play with the rubbing of nettles around the genital area to create an itch which intercourse would 'scratch.'

"Extracted root has been used to treat prostatic hypertrophy (enlargement of the prostate gland not due to cancer). Some clinical evidence attests to its effectiveness, and German health authorities now allow it to be used for this condition." (Tyler, 224)

Considered useful for the entire digestive system and all related organs, nettle is recommended in cases of diarrhea, dysentery, problems with the digestive systems which lead to excess mucous in the bowel movement. In pediatric herbalism it is considered most useful in treating diarrhea in children.

The seeds were given for an enlarged goitre and other glandular enlargements. Nettle has a wide history of uses. "Gerard...recommended it as an antidote to the poisonous herb henbane, among other things...The seeds were used to treat all sorts of poisons, from bat bites to heavy metal toxicity." (Rodale's, 472)

Useful when taken internally, nettle was considered of great value as a remedy to treat both arthritis and rheumatism.

"The most ancient use of the Nettle is flagellation or urtication, a practice of whipping paralyzed limbs, to bring the muscles into action. This practice extended also to a stimulation of impotent organs, and to bring into action dormant energies. It was also resorted to in apoplexy, general cerebral and portal congestion, to bring the blood to the surface and thus relieve the more vital organs; in exanthematous fevers, to bring out the eruption; and for various affections where a powerful rubefacient was considered necessary." (Millspaugh, 611)

Nettle is considered an excellent herb to use when treating children, being safe and useful in a large number of conditions. "They are a specific in cases of childhood eczema and beneficial in all the varieties of this condition, especially in nervous eczema." (Hoffman, 4-80) To this end nettle may be taken internally as well as applied externally, and is considered best when treating eczema of the face, neck and ears. Eczema of the hands and fingers may require other herbs in addition to nettle. Hoffman recommends using nettle in combination with figwort and burdock when treating eczema.

Externally, the dried leaves are made into an unguent. A remedy of nettle is recommended in the treatment of hemorrhoids.

Direct applications to parts of the body affected by rheumatism are said to bring relief.

Claims have been made that by making a tonic of nettle (particularly of the fresh, expressed juice) and applying it to the hair and scalp one can induce hair to grow.

## Nettle, *Urtica Dioica*, Mars Herbe of Consecration - Magickal Herbe - Religious Herbe

### Lore

In times past, it was believed that nettle was of such healing power that "a fever could be dispelled by plucking a nettle up by the roots, reciting thereby the names of the sick man and also the names of his parents." (Grieve, 578)

In no less a magickal story than that of "The Princess and the Eleven Swans," by Hans Christian Anderson, we find nettles were the herbs chosen to have their fibers woven into little coats.

Albertus Magnus writes that: "he that holdeth this herb in his hand with an herb called...Yarrow...is sure from all fear and fantasy, or vision. And if it be put with the juice of Houseleek, and the bearer's hand be anointed with it,



and the residue be put in water; if he enter in the water where fishes be, they will gather together to his hands." (Best & Brightman, 6)

## Usage

One of the traditional rites of consecration for an athame calls for nettle to be added to the herbal wash into which the heated blade is plunged.

Nettle has been used to provide green dye. Nettle is sometimes associated with the coming of Spring, both in folk practices and in some Christian cultures. In some parts of Russia, it is the custom to use nettle as one of the dyes to stain eggs on Maundy Thursday in preparation for Easter morning.

Nettle is an often neglected Magickal Herbe, associated with the ability to dispel darkness. Taken as a magickal tea, they are not only good for the body but good for the spirit as well. The old lore regarding combining nettle with yarrow to help one take heart against the darkness which comes from deep fears out of one's imagination makes this mixture an excellent magickal remedy. Nettle may work its magick when fishing.

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## Ancient Gods of the Gaels, cont. from pg. 9

again troubled Ireland's green soil, though some have said that the coming of the Vikings was a revenge of the Fómorii.

**Fraoch no Freódh:** {frayk} The God of Wrath and Fury. Rightly **Fraovh macIdath**. He is the son of Idath {e-da} of Connacht, and Bé Find, a Goddess among the Sídh. He is the brother of Bo Fhindh. This ancient god is the source of all anger and the rages that plague the races. Fraoch is the most handsome warrior in all Ireland. He is the hero of the saga of Táin Bó Fraoch which some scholars believe to be the origins of the Cymbric tale of Beowulf.

In the saga of Táin Bó Fhraoch, Fraoch fell deeply in love with Findbhair niAilil, a mortal woman with a beauty equal to his own. Her parents Ailil and Medhbh were compelled to forbid his marriage to their daughter for fear of reprisals from her other royal suitors. Findbair's parents plotted to lead Fraoch to his death. In a set of quests Fraoch was asked to cross a monster-infested loch. When he was nearly lost in combat with the behemoth, Findbhair fetched his sword and swam to his aid. The gods of all realms flew to his rescue and Dian Cecht tended his wounds. Upon his return he was allowed to marry Findbhair.

Later in the saga, raiders from Gall Mór stole Findbhair, their three children, and a bovine herd including 12 enchanted cows. Fraoch was joined by Conall Cearnach (half brother to CúChullain) and the two were engaged upon a quest which led them to the Alpine kingdoms of Gaul.

Fraoch's godlike traits are those of "Constancy in love, directness of purpose, an unwillingness to quit." Like Buille Suibhne, his is a perfect rage and fury when engaged in fray, and perfect tenderness when offered tranquility and love.

**Fuarán Eolas:** {foor-awn e-o-las} The Fountain of Know-ledge. According to Cormac mac Ait, during his journey to Tír Tairnigiri (the land of promise) he beheld the Dún Eolas (Fortress of Knowledge). Within the ring fortress there stands a Fuarán (fountain) of the five knowledges. From this fountain flow five streams. The din of these streams strikes such a melodious aire that no mortal music may sound its equal. At the head of all the streams is a wonderous pool. This pool is a harbor for five salmon, who are the source of the five knowledges (of the Earth, the Cosmos, Elements, the ways of the Otherworld, and the ways of the Hidden Realms). Encircling the pool are nine Hazel trees, each the color of the nine hidden realms, save the last, which may not be seen by the opened eyes. From each tree falls the Cnó coill hEolas (the Nuts of Knowledge). The salmon each consume the nuts, and all answer to the name of Fintan. Yet a traveler must be cautious, for with one drink of this fountain, no other water save this of the fountain shall ever quell that traveler's thirst.

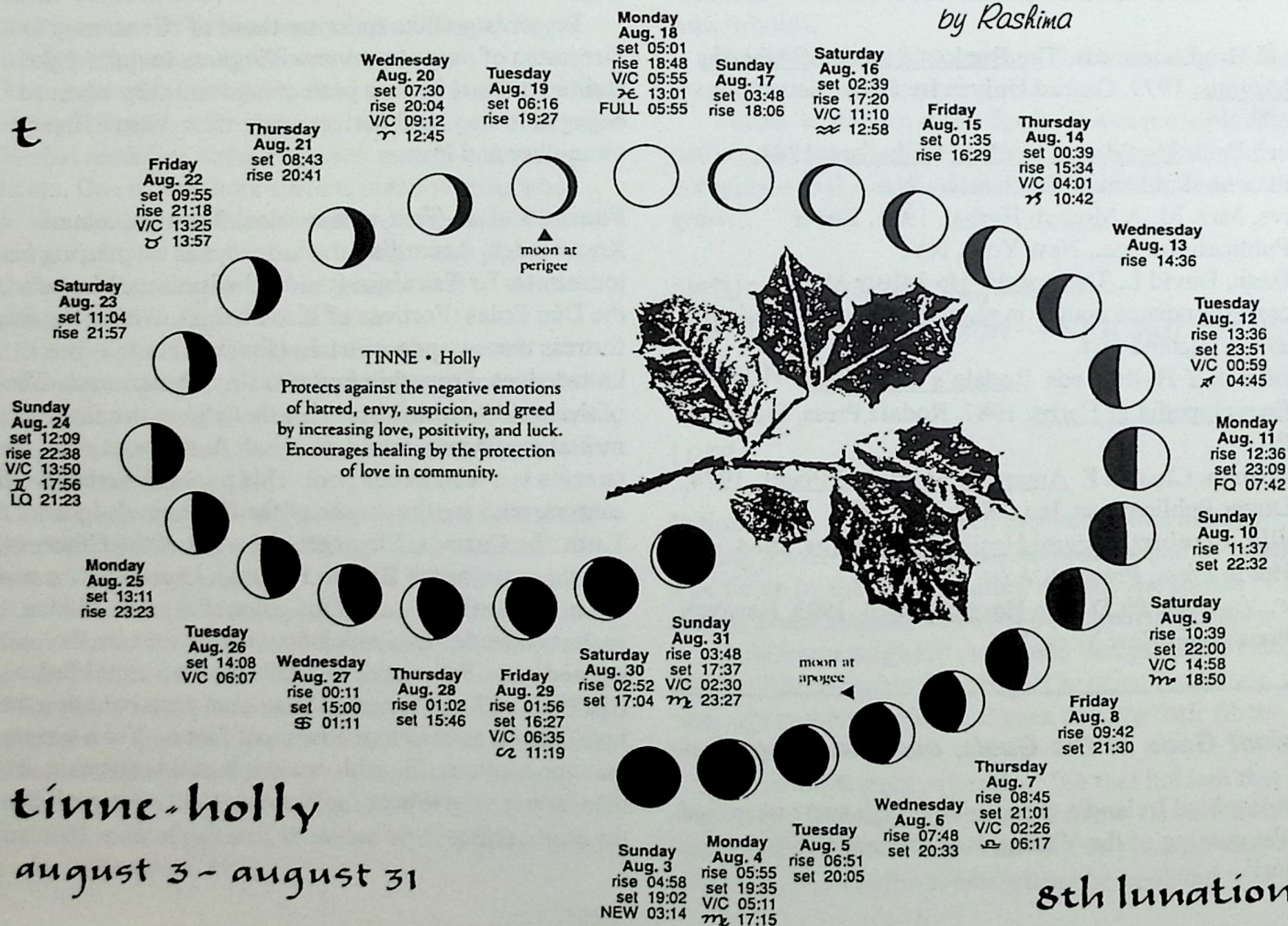


# Creation

Nothingness  
A Void of Silence  
Oneness  
in perfect Harmony  
spiraling through Infinity  
only to focus naturally  
to form a flowing Energy  
whose high vibration creates all levels  
all dimensions of Reality  
of every frequency  
through power of the Sound  
O&M  
transmitted from The Mind  
off-on, off-on, off-on,  
so Light may become Water  
A Sea of Living Love

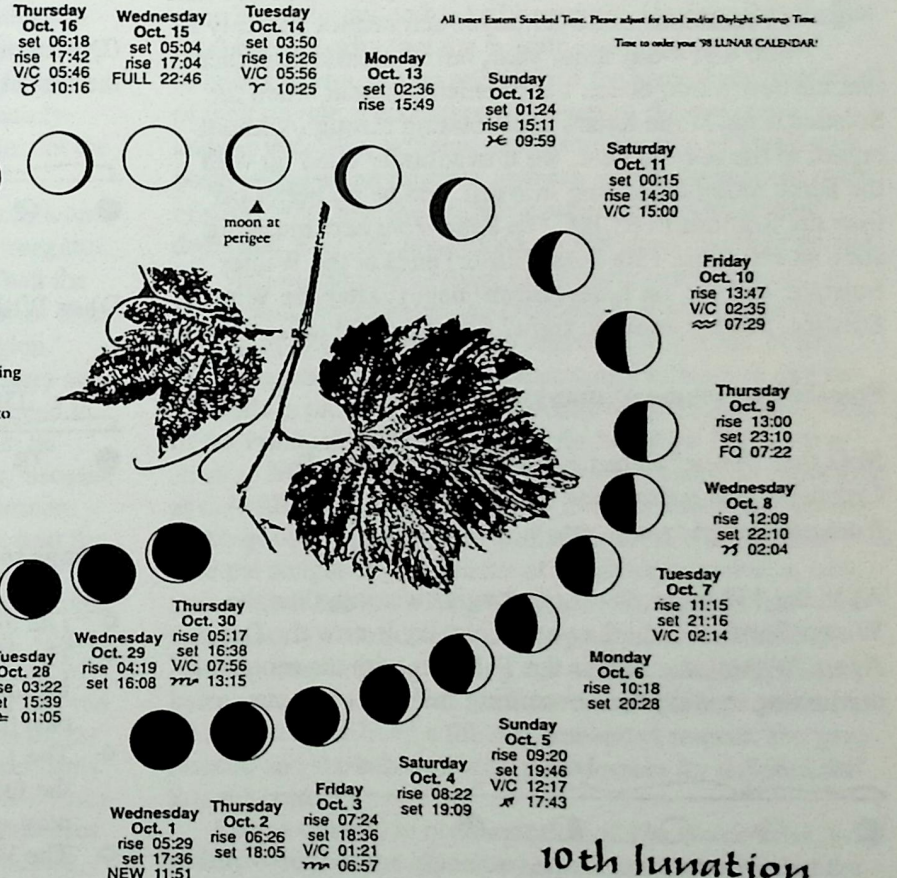
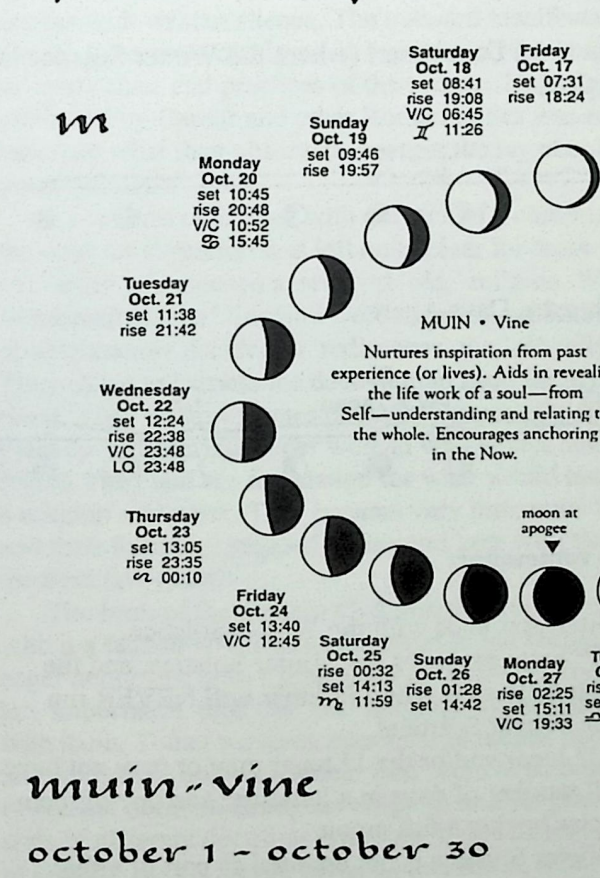
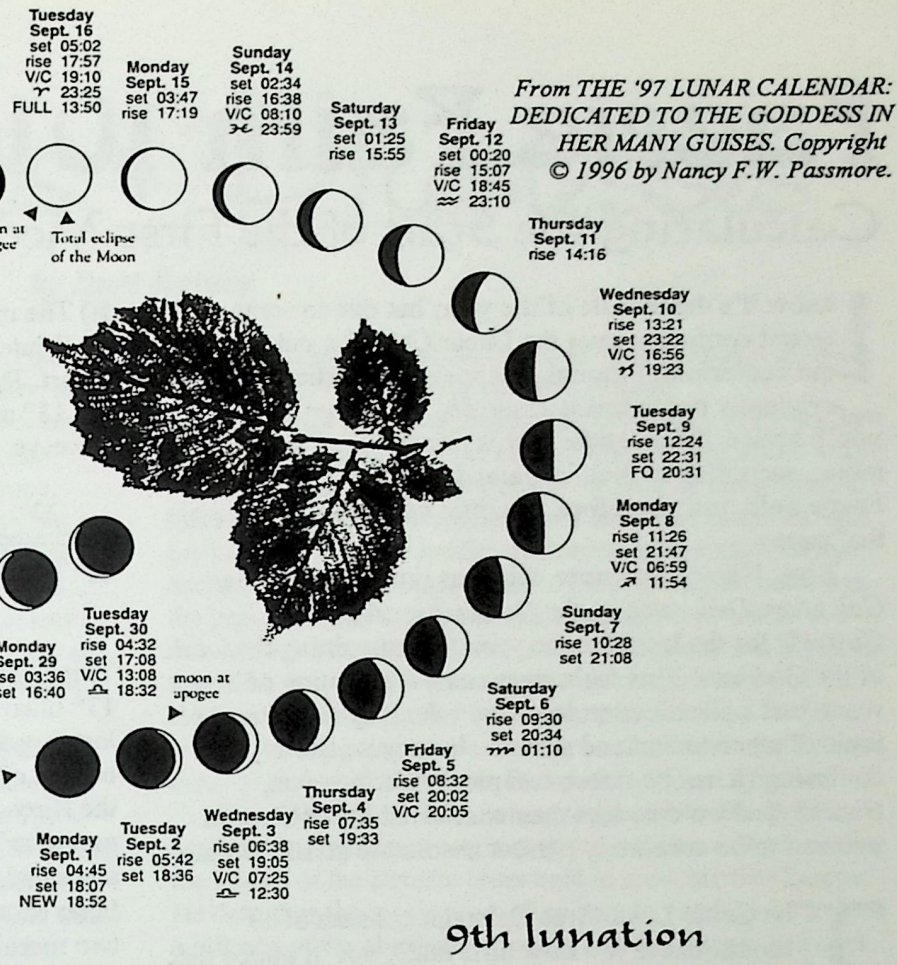
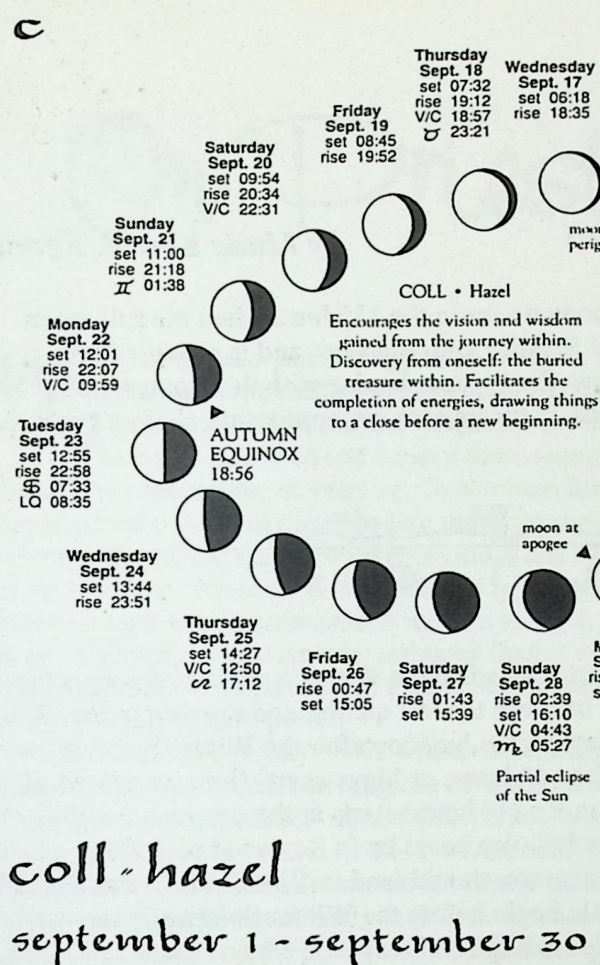
birthing a planet  
a living being  
a cosmic entity:  
Our Mother Earth  
who breathes a female Energy,  
to sacrifice Her Womb  
for all Humanity  
creating blueprints for a Truer World  
where humans truly Human  
remember Her to be  
a living starseed  
belonging to a Cosmic family  
on her way home  
to the Starlight of All-That-Is  
The Beauty of Eternity....

by Raskima





From THE '97 LUNAR CALENDAR:  
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Ed. Note: In the Beth-Luis-Nion calendar system as it is utilized in the southern (Garden Club) Faerie Faith, these moons, listed as Holly, Hazel, and Vine, are actually considered Hazel, Vine, and Ivy, respectively.



# Faerie Faith 101

## Calculating the Start of the First Moon

by Linda Kerr & Epona

I know it's the middle of the year, but due to some recent confusion over the Lunar Calendar published in our centerfold, I thought I'd revise this article, originally published in Issue #6, December 1993. If you'll notice, the calendar that is printed is off by one moon, according to the tree calendar system that we in the Faerie Faith use; therefore, the little note at the bottom of that page.

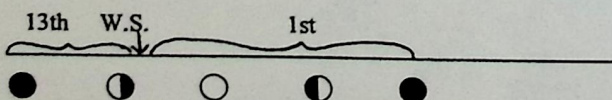
Note: Nancy Passmore, who has put out the *Lunar Calendar: Dedicated to the Goddess in Her Many Guises*© for the last 20 or so years, is truly doing the work of the Goddess! This isn't meant as a denigration of her work, just a clarification for those who may find the whole topic of when to end and start the lunar year terribly confusing (it can be rather complex). We love you, Nancy! And we'd be less than comforted if you showed yourself to be absolutely perfect absolutely all of the time.

The Celtic Lunar Tree Calendar consists of 13 lunars, but if you do a little math, you'll notice that 13 lunations of 28-29 days each cannot possibly fit into a 364-day solar year, not to mention the fact that the new moon doesn't conveniently occur when the Solstice does. If the lunars kept rotating through without regard to the normal year, we'd eventually wind up with the Birch moon beginning in April, and be no better off than the Romans in 63 B.C. To keep from accumulating such an error, the 13th lunar (Elder) ends at the Winter Solstice, and the 1st lunar (Birch) begins after the Winter Solstice. Simple enough, right? Sort of. Read on...

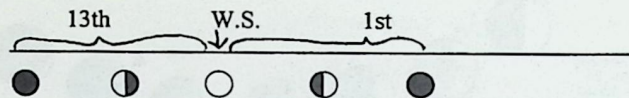
### Possibilities (some of many):

Note that "lunar" means a month in the Celtic Tree Calendar, and a "lunation" is the physical lunar cycle, from new moon to new moon.

A) In the 13th lunar, the moon begins waxing, then the Winter Solstice ends the year. This day is now the Day Apart. What starts next is the 1st lunar, with the moon continuing to wax, then becoming full, then waning.

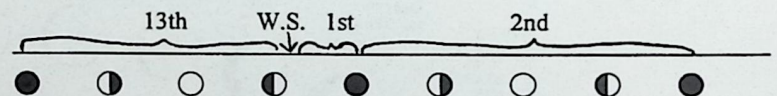


B) The moon waxes in the 13th lunar, then the full moon on Winter Solstice ends the year, and is also the Day Apart. Then the 1st lunar begins with the moon waning. So the 13th and 1st lunars each get approximately 1/2 a cycle, or 2 weeks.

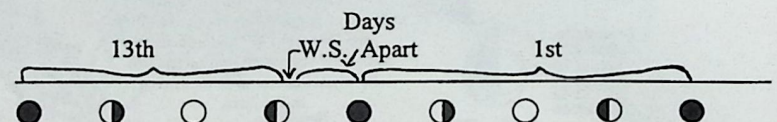


Things get tricky when the Winter Solstice intercepts the 13th lunar between the last quarter and the new moon. The last few days of the lunation after the Winter Solstice may be part of the 1st lunar, or 'days apart' (left over days). If the Birch moon (1st lunar) starts at the proper time, the new year's Imbolc should be in Rowan (Luis), the autumnal equinox should land in Vine (Muin), and the 13th lunar should begin before the Winter Solstice. So now, two more possibilities:

C) Without extra Days Apart (where the Winter Solstice is the Day Apart):



D) or With extra Days Apart:



### Things to remember:

- ✧ The lunar year ends with the Winter Solstice.
- ✧ The 13th lunar precedes the Winter Solstice, and the 1st lunar follows it. The 13th lunar will NEVER run past the Winter Solstice!
- ✧ The 13th lunar and/or the 1st lunar may or may not have the full number of days in a lunation, and one of them may miss having a full moon.
- ✧ The Winter Solstice is not counted as part of either moon, but is a day by itself, and sometimes the Day

*Continued on page 23*



# On Priests & Priestesses

by Imré Rainey

Many of the neo-pagan religious movements of today, including Witchcraft, Wicca, and Neo-Druidry, are an attempt at reviving the religious traditions and doctrines practiced and handed down many hundreds, if not thousands, of years ago in Northern Europe. Amongst the parents of these modern urges for mysticism, mystery, and magic are the venerable Druids and Priestesses of the Goddess. Those of us who follow a mystical tradition based on their many achievements attempt to walk, at least, in the shadows of these eminent religious figures of the past. If nothing else, we hope to catch a glimpse of their wisdom, of their honor, of their power.

There have been many books written describing what little we know of the ancient religions of northern Europe. The majority of our 'direct' information comes to us via invading cultures and critics of these 'barbarians.' The reason for this lack of detailed information is because the traditions of northern Europe were mainly oral. The common folk could not read or write, and the priest(ess)hood guarded their secrets with written silence. The outward manifestations of the religions were displayed in legends, myths, holidays, and the daily lives and practices of the people. The information published by Caesar and other Roman critics was mainly based on what they observed amongst the lay people, not the priestly class.

It becomes clear that, with the lack of a complete picture, the road for invention was left quite clear for those imaginative many who needed a new, yet 'old,' religion. When the Witchcraft laws of England were repealed, a number of enterprising authors decided to 'rediscover' the 'old religion.' They chose to harness the deep human need for mystery and ritual. They wrote volumes of books supposedly dictated to them by a mysterious older woman who would never be found. They laid the foundation for what would later become a religion *a la carte*. They became very influential leaders and their followers stepped in line and kept with the beat for the next few years.

The birth of the modern civil liberties movement brought with it a faction with renewed interest in old religion. These eager neophytes with a great need for individuality, and, often, importance, took the 'old' religions by the collar and ran with them. Today we have, possibly, thousands upon thousands of groups and individuals who claim to be descendants of ancient northern European religions and yet practice thousands of different doctrines infiltrated by traditional practices of Greece, Rome, Egypt, India, China, Japan, Siberia, and North and South America, just to name a few. The only threads of commonality that they share are the bastardized

basic teachings of those early to mid 1900's authors reviving the 'ancient' Witchcraft of northern Europe.

Amidst all of this confusion and invention, a few brilliant writers have delved into the myths, legends, and actual modern descendants of ancient Europe. What they have found is that much of the surviving religious beliefs of centuries ago, are hidden within the confines of family/clan traditions and ancient stories. Although much of the secrets now belong to the pages of time, some, enough, have survived within the old families of northern Europe and the legends and myths of that land, that we can see a somewhat clearer picture of the religions that many today have attempted to adopt. In this article, we are going to concentrate on the Priests and Priestesses of the ancient northern European religious systems.

Peter Berresford Ellis, in his work entitled *The Druids*, spends many a chapter explaining the position and power that the Priests of the Druidic order held in pre-Christian Europe. He describes the many years of preparation and gives us just a glimpse of the absolute influence that these sages had over even kings, to say nothing of laypeople. He describes the far-reaching authority that the priestly class had on not just religious affairs, but on politics and the basic daily lives of all of their people. This authority, however, did not come undeserved. Ellis explains that before the title of Druid was bestowed upon an aspirant, as many as twenty years or more of study went into the student's preparation. The student dedicated their life, their blood, to their land and their people.

Marion Zimmer Bradley spent many years researching the ancient sisterhood of the Goddess as it was portrayed in Britain of old. She delved into historical resources, poetry, myths, legends, and, even the mechanics of modern day sisterhoods in order to accurately depict the lives and education of the Priestesses of the Goddess for her work *The Mists of Avalon*. Anyone who has read her book is surely in sheer awe at the dedication, trials, and years of study that went into the makings of a Priestess. The title of Priestess was one that held the weight of generations of progress, experience, wisdom, and divine knowledge. A student of the Goddess' was scrupulously chosen. A Priestess spent the rest of her life learning, teaching and serving her whole community. She belonged to an order with ancient roots in the land and time. At all times, she lived a life that demanded respect, she gave respect, and she behaved with great respect for the position that she held.

Robert Graves, in his translation of *The Golden Ass*, very plainly describes the immense respect and authority that the Priestesses of the Goddess held. The ancient story describes

*Continued on page 23*





# Exiled From the Garden

by Sherlock

I was not always a Wiccan. When I was born I was baptized a Methodist, then, when my mom discovered "The Holy Spirit," the entire family was converted to Pentecostal. I was about 12 then. When I was 16, mom changed her mind again. This time we became Southern Baptist. All of these denominations had a lot of differences and a lot of similarities. One thing that they all had in common was a bad habit of translating many of the stories of the bible too literally. There are a lot of excellent stories in the Old Testament, that when taken as fables or parables, reveal much about pre-Christian human culture. Take for instance the story of Adam and Eve. I'm sure that all of you are familiar with the basics of the story, so I won't waste time and space trying to explain it. For those of you who aren't, you can read it in the first couple of pages of the Old Testament.

My interpretation of this story is just a little bit different than the traditional one. When mankind first appeared on the earth (through evolution of course, but the people who told this story originally had no idea about that, so they explained it the best way they could. Remarkably, the order in which they said things were created is about the same order in which things evolved), they lived in a garden called Eden in which everything was provided for them. I like to think of this garden as a beautiful bountiful place which we now call Earth. In this garden, the first humans had all that they needed. They worshiped that which had given them all of this (remember, this story is pre-Christian), and for lack of a better word, and for the sake of making it easy to relate my interpretation to the story which is in the bible, I am going to call this entity god. When I say god, I mean any god(s) or goddess(es), since there is no way of knowing what word or words or pantheon the earliest humans used. The earliest artifacts that have ever been found are the fertility goddess statues, and that's what I mainly think of. This god which people worshiped was the god who caused all of the bounty and the fertility of the land around them.

I like to think of early humans as walking hand in hand with the old gods, as a part of their natural environment, to which they caused no harm. It's hard to imagine the human race that way, but we were there, only something happened. And that something is the point that I think the tellers of this story were trying to convey. Humans were different than the rest of the animals that

resided in the garden; they had been "created" in the image of the gods. This is not so much a physical image as the way that people think about things.

Other animals don't completely change their environment to suit their needs. They simply take what they need to survive. They do manipulate their environment, but in such small amounts that their environment can adapt to these changes. This is because if animals were to cause too many radical changes to their environment, it would cease to be a suitable one for them to live in.

Humans also have the ability to come up with all kinds of new things to make our own lives a little easier. Humans can also perceive such things as guilt, shame, and many other strange things. In a nutshell, humans have a concept of knowledge. This knowledge was not the result of eating some forbidden fruit. Instead it was the fruit of this knowledge that caused the exile of man from the Garden of Eden. Mankind started living off the fruit of this knowledge, instead of the fruit of the Earth. This was the forbidden fruit, and it was the partaking of this fruit that caused humankind to separate from their Mother, the Earth. It was the ability to invent a concept of good and evil that caused humankind to feel shame over their nakedness, jealousy over others' possessions (possessions which were also fruits of the knowledge of good and evil).

In the time that has passed since humans have exiled themselves from the sanctuary of the garden, our knowledge and the fruits thereof have almost completely taken over the entire planet. We are now so separate from the garden, that it seems farfetched that humans could survive in the garden without agriculture, domesticated animals,





asphalt roads, shiny cars, blenders, computers, blue jeans, store bought apple cider which proudly pro-claims "made from real dried apples." In fact, when we get so stressed out from dealing with all the fruits of our knowledge we decide to "get away from it all," and go back to the garden (go camping). We arm ourselves with an arsenal of the fruits of our knowledge without it even dawning on us that everything we need to survive is still out there in the garden just sitting there. Ironically, few of us have the *knowledge* to utilize any of it. Truly, we are a pitiful lot if you think about it. Only a handful of people would survive if all the fruits of our knowledge were to disappear suddenly. Most would die of shock in the first ten minutes. All that would be left would be the few scattered "primitive" cultures, who wouldn't even notice; some outdoorsy types, who after a year of hard lessons would get the hang of it; and probably a few stubborn people who would try to start over with the whole knowledge problem again.

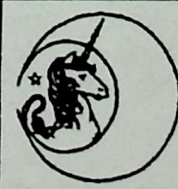
There is another story being told in the fable of Adam and Eve that has very little to do with all that I've already said: the story of the perception of women. It is clear that this story was first written down long after women had become inferior in the perception of men. This fact in itself is an important part of the story. Eve's entire role in the story of Adam and Eve is confusing and backwards. Let's face it, it just doesn't make sense.

In Genesis, god creates the heavens and the earth. Then he creates the creatures of the sea, then of the air and of the land, blah blah blah. After he finishes with all of this he commands all of these creatures to multiply and populate the earth. Clearly he must have created both males and females of all these creatures, with the exception of amoebas and many other things that reproduce asexually. He looks at all of this and then he decides to create one man. Just one. Then he tells this man that he shall live in the Garden of Eden and have dominion over the whole Earth and all the creatures on it. Basically, he's saying "Here you go, Adam, you've got everything you need here and you are the King of the World!" (This all sounds very far-fetched, doesn't it? But remember, this is a fable and we aren't taking it literally, we are trying to learn something from it. We are reading behind the lines to try and gain an insight into the lives of the people who came up with this story so long ago—back in pre-Christian times). Next god decides that Adam must be terribly lonely, so he puts him to sleep and takes out a rib bone and from it he shapes a woman. When Adam wakes up he introduces Eve as his new companion and helper. At this point Adam and Eve are still naked, and don't even know what naked means. They are completely innocent. Adam and Eve have only one rule that they must follow. Don't eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Enter stage left, Satan, in the form of a snake. Satan

convinces poor innocent Eve that god is only keeping the fruit from them to keep them from becoming gods themselves. Poor Eve never had a chance, seeing as she had no knowledge of evil in the first place, so she eats the fruit. Suddenly her innocence is lost, she feels shame, she feels naked, so she tells Adam that he too must eat the fruit. Poor innocent Adam didn't stand a chance; how could he—he didn't know what evil was, til he broke the rules. Innocence now lost, he too felt naked and ashamed. God then kicked them both out of the Garden of Eden forever. As a punishment, they were made to plant fields and tend animals in order to survive, Eve was punished with the "pain" of childbirth, and as an extra measure, since she was the one who tempted Adam in the first place, Adam was given dominion over her. Of course snakes were robbed of their legs (maybe that's what happened to the dragons), and doomed to an eternity of being stepped on by people and biting them in return.

I have a tendency to think that this entire sequence was added to the original parable which probably had all of mankind created just like everything else was created, then becoming separate from god and earth through the fruits of this knowledge. Why was it added? Every myth is created to explain something. This part of the myth was probably created for the sole purpose of explaining the place of women in a society which was becoming more and more patriarchal. It clearly sets women up as the cause of all men's sorrow. I noticed that Adam was not given dominion over Eve until after she tempted him, and that it was part of her punishment—and part of his! What this did was give men a good reason why they should be dominant over women; after all, society had once been matriarchal, and there were bound to be women around who knew it. If you'll notice, work, in the form of planting fields, and tending flocks; you know, basic providing for yourself, was also part of man's punishment. This was woman's fault too. My theory is that the new patriarchal order of things was borrowing old myths and changing them to suit its own view of the world, much as the Roman Catholic Church did when it began converting much of the world.

The myth of Adam and Eve also had a solution for what must have been one of the burning questions of the day: Why don't snakes have legs?



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# Into the Light

by Marilyn Windle

## Dream Work

**T**he articles in this series are intended to expose you to a variety of new age techniques and topics. As in prior articles, meditative exercises help you to slow your brain frequency to a level where your right brain (or practical side) relinquishes control, and your left brain (the more intuitive side) takes over. Using this lower brain frequency, or alpha frequency, you can learn to feel the energy fields that exist around all matter.

In a past article in this series, you learned to "read" the energy field or aura around a person, plant or animal. You also practiced sending healing energy when an imbalance in their aura was felt.

Just as you can use your intuitive ability to help someone else, you can also use it to direct your mind to solve a problem for yourself. One of the easiest ways to do this is with dream work.

All of us dream. All of us dream every night. You might not remember your dreams, but you still dream. Generally, a sleep period consists of several 90-minute cycles, during which the electrical energy in your brain changes frequency. As your brain frequency moves through the 7-14 cycles per second range known as the alpha frequency, you experience rapid eye movements and dream.

One of the most powerful tools for solving problems in your life is readily available to you every night as you dream. The trick is to understand what your more creative and intuitive side is trying to tell you.

A lot of research has been done on what the purpose of dreaming is, and what symbols in dreams mean. If you do remember your dreams, they are frequently full of bizarre situations, things and people, and make no sense at all when examining them in the morning. If you are dealing with real life problems while dreaming, as is believed, wouldn't it be much more useful if you understood what you were trying to tell yourself?

You won't need a book of dream symbols to decipher the message from your sub-conscious mind if you have set the stage to understand your dreams before you have them. All that is required is that you tell yourself you'll remember your dreams, and you'll understand them.

When you prepare to sleep, slow your brain frequency down through a meditation exercise such as the one below. The instructions need to be given to your mind while you are in the alpha state.

### Exercise

The hardest part of this process is staying awake long enough to give yourself the instructions! If you are very tired

when you lie down, you may doze off. After all, you've trained yourself every night of your life that a prone position plus slowing your brain frequency down equals sleep. I recommend that you sit in a comfortable position and close your eyes. Then, when you have finished 'programming' your subconscious, you can lie down with your eyes remaining closed.

Take a deep breath and blow it out slowly. Picture yourself sitting on a log in the forest. Though the tall trees block out most of the sky high above you, the sun's energy seems to be flowing down through a break in the canopy, illuminating your spot. You can feel your body soaking up the energy as you release all your worries and thoughts. Although your eyes are closed, you can feel the lush greens and browns and other colors around you. Take a deep breath and visualize yourself as part of the colors that make up the forest.

Several types of birds are singing. Take a deep breath and listen while the sounds of the birds join with the sounds of the trees moving in the wind up above. Continue to listen as the sound of your breath, soft as it is, merges and becomes part of the other sounds that are the forest.

You can smell the dampness of the forest floor, the new green life unfurling around you, and the mature plants. Take a deep breath and let it out slowly, as the smells and colors and sounds merge to become the forest today. Remain on your log while you feel yourself as just another part of the picture, part of all the life around you.

When you are completely relaxed, you are ready to instruct yourself in remembering your dreams. Simply tell yourself that you will wake up after a dream, you will be able to remember your dream, and you will understand it. Then lie down (if you are not already doing so) and go to sleep.

When I first tried this technique, I woke up the next morning and remembered waking up several times throughout the night after my dreams. In the morning, though, I couldn't remember what I had dreamed or my understanding of it. Now I add the instruction that I will write down my dream and what it means before going back to sleep.

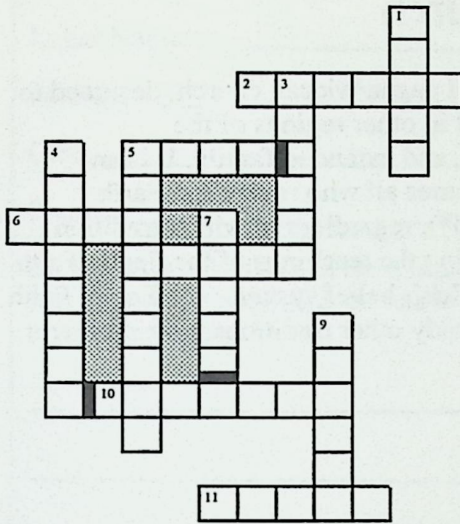
This technique gets much easier with practice. In the beginning, you might only wake up once or twice during the night with a vivid recollection of a dream. Keep a dream journal and pen next to the bed (with a flashlight if you don't want to disturb a sleeping partner). Over a period of a few weeks, you'll find you are recording several dreams a night.

Once you can remember and understand your dreams, you'll find it an easy step to use your dreams to get insight into a problem or situation.



# Ankh (Cross)-Word Puzzle

by Sherlock



## ACROSS

- 2 Which issue did not get published?
- 4 Goddess of Beauty.
- 5 Oak.
- 6 He will be missed by all of us.
- 8 Margaret Lumely \_\_\_\_\_.
- 10 Puts out violet bell-shaped flowers in August and September.
- 11 Goddess of horses.

## DOWN

- 1 Ian was charged to defeat \_\_\_\_ in battle.
- 3 The Isle of Man.
- 5 Art was in love with \_\_\_\_\_.
- 7 To become a High Priestess or Priest you must complete your fifth \_\_\_\_\_.
- 9 Her sons looted and burned villages throughout the whole of Eire.

The solutions to this crossword puzzle can be found in the Beltane 1997 (Issue #23) of The Hazel Nut. I took the questions from last issue's articles, so you'll have to read them to answer this crossword. Oh, and don't throw away this issue; its articles contain the answers to the next puzzle. Have fun!!!

## Answers to last issue's Ankh-Word Puzzle

Across: 1 Bealcu, 5 Dragonfest, 7 October, 9 Hunting, 10 Candle  
Down: 2 Elder, 3 Mother, 4 Innocence, 6 Aimend, 8 Ojibwa, 11 Elhaz

## The Start of the Lunar Year, cont. from pg. 18

- ☆ The variables which determine the start of the new lunar year (first lunar) depend on how many days are 'left over' from the thirteenth lunar after the Winter Solstice intercepts it.
- ☆ If one of the moons (either the 13<sup>th</sup> or the 1<sup>st</sup>) doesn't have a full moon in it, you may celebrate the lunar on the day closest to the Winter Solstice.
- ☆ If all else fails, remember that Imbolc, February 2, always falls in the Rowan moon (the 2<sup>nd</sup> moon). You can look backwards from that date to see exactly when the Birch moon should have started, or at least which moon you're in this time.

By the way, this year we have Possibility (D): Elder has a full moon on December 13, then the lunation is ended by the Winter Solstice, on December 21, when the moon is in its 3rd quarter, and then we have 7 Days Apart. The first moon of next year, Birch, begins on December 29, the next new moon, and goes through a full cycle. Therefore, we have a full moon for both Elder and Birch this time, plus several Days Apart.

## On Priests & Priestesses, cont. from pg. 19

the adventures and misfortunes of Lucius Apuleius, who defiles the sanctity of the Goddess by offending one of Her Priestesses and is punished by being transformed into an ass. Very plainly, the position of the Priestesses of the Goddess is characterized.

*Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* defines a Priest or a Priestess as "one authorized to perform the sacred rites of a religion," with "a woman regarded as a leader," mentioned specifically for one who dons the title 'Priestess.' Further, the definitions for High Priest and High Priestess read "the head of a movement or chief exponent of a doctrine or an art," as well as, "a chief priestess."

It becomes quite clear that the ancestry of neo-paganism did not take the roles of Priest and Priestess very lightly. Only minimal research will present the postulant with the reality behind what it took to produce a Priestess or Priest, to say nothing for the making of a High Priestess or High Priest. It becomes impossible to ignore the years of arduous work, the dedication, the wisdom, the experience, and the guidance required for one to claim these titles. With this in mind, the

*Continued on page 27*



# Announcing the formation of The Church of the Spiral Tree

## An Ecumenical, Faerie Faith Church

The Church of the Spiral Tree (CST) is a non-profit, volunteer-staffed, ecumenical pagan/wiccan church, designed to foster and celebrate a sense of community and family among pagans, both locally and in other regions of the country/world. CST also celebrates the unique pagan family: parents, children, elders, and extended family. It is an ecumenical church in that it encompasses all traditions, and is non-exclusive. It welcomes all who revere the Earth Mother and adhere to the tenets of the Wiccan Rede ("An it harm none, do as you will"), regardless of which tradition one is affiliated with. CST is also a Faerie Faith church, in that it has a goal of spreading the teachings of the Faerie Faith to all who are interested, and giving people better access to this ancient and beautiful Irish belief system. The Faerie Faith itself is a non-exclusive faith; one who is studying the Faerie Faith is always free to study other traditions or join other organizations.

**CST is currently seeking members!**

**Membership benefits include:**

- ★ Newsletter for members only
- ★ Networking with other members
- ★ Regular meetings and rituals
- ★ Discount on subscription to The Hazel Nut, the quarterly magazine of Celtic Spirituality and Sacred Trees
- ★ Referrals to teachers, groups, and healers, as available
- ★ Referrals to both licensed (legal) and lay pagan clergy and counselors

**Some of our planned and upcoming projects and goals include  
(but are not limited to):**

- ★ Purchase property for church use, rituals, festivals, camping, etc.
- ★ Faerie Faith correspondence course (in the works now!)
- ★ Provide education/information on paganism for both the general public and for other pagans
- ★ Protect the civil rights of pagans by educating law enforcement officials
- ★ Creating a library for members
- ★ Meeting needs of wiccan/pagan prisoners
- ★ Create cooperative daycare/homeschooling groups for pagan children

If you would like to help with any of the above, have any further ideas for the church, or have any resources which would be of benefit, please contact us. CST is also seeking volunteers to apply to help with various parts of the church, such as:

- ★ writers and artists for the CST newsletter
- ★ editing and publishing the CST newsletter
- ★ handling networking contacts, including publishing lists in newsletter
- ★ other business and administration associated with the newsletter
- ★ handling advertising for The Hazel Nut
- ★ helping with distribution of The Hazel Nut
- ★ handling other business associated with The Hazel Nut

NOTE: We feel the church will have a better chance of successfully meeting members' needs if it is easily and locally accessible to them; therefore, we are encouraging members to begin their own chapter of CST. More information about forming chapters will be in future issues of the CST newsletter.



# The Church of the Spiral Tree

## Membership Application

Legal Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you wish to be listed in the **Contacts** section of the newsletter? If so, please use the space below to write your listing exactly the way you want it published. Be sure to include a way for people to contact you. **WRITE LEGIBLY!** We are not responsible to errors due to "chicken scratch."

We have several different types of memberships available to suit your needs. All include full membership benefits, and run for one year, with a renewal notice sent to remind you next year.

|       |                         |          |                                                                                                           |
|-------|-------------------------|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| _____ | Individual              | \$20.00  |                                                                                                           |
| _____ | Student/Poor Person:    | \$15.00  | (please attach a short note demonstrating financial need)                                                 |
| _____ | Family (includes kids): | \$35.00  | (must be in immediate family only, same address)                                                          |
| _____ | Sustaining Member:      | \$50.00  | (receives all benefits plus our undying thanks)                                                           |
| _____ | Contributing Member:    | \$100.00 | (receives all benefits, our eternal thanks, and a listing in the newsletter once a year)                  |
| _____ | Patron(ess) Member:     | \$200.00 | (receives all benefits, our everlasting gratitude, a yearly listing in the newsletter, and a certificate) |

### OTHER:

|       |                                               |            |                                                                                                                |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| _____ | Subscription to <u>The Hazel Nut</u> (1 year) | \$10-19.00 | (price scale reflects discount for members: you choose what you pay!)                                          |
| _____ | Donation to CST                               | \$5 & up   | (all donations are tax deductible; you will be sent a receipt for your records, as well as our undying thanks) |

Make checks out to: The Church of the Spiral Tree, Inc., and mail to:

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# Upcoming Festivals:

**EarthDance 97, September 5-7, 1997**

**FDR State Park, Pine Mountain, Georgia**

Classes, music, drumming, pot-luck feast, swimming, group ritual, and other pagan activities. \$20 till July 31, \$35 thereafter. Deadline for registration is August 31, 1997. Stormy and Sandy, Earthdance, P.O. Box 3651, Auburn, AL 36831-3651. Stormy, 334-821-5945, <stormycloud@mindspring.com>; Sandy, 334-887-7658, <redarrow@mindspring.com>.

**FallFling 97, October 17-19, 1997**

**Roxanna, Alabama (near Auburn)**

Bardic circle, games, divinations, classes and workshops, pot-luck feast, group ritual, costume contest, Giveaway. \$15 till September 1; \$20 till October 1, and

\$35 thereafter. Children under 16 are 1/2 price; children under 5 are free. Deadline is October 10, 1997. Jay Lynch, c/o The Hazel Nut, P.O. Box 186, Auburn, AL 36831-0186, 334-502-4601, or email <csmartt@mindspring.com>.

**Moondance 98, May 21-25, 1998**

**Roxanna, Alabama (near Auburn)**

Classes, swimming, pot-luck feast, group ritual, Giveaway. Primitive camping. (Per person) \$15 til March 1; \$20 til April 1, \$25 til May 1, and \$40 thereafter. Children under 16 are 1/2 price; children under 5 are free. Deadline is May 16. Linda Kerr, c/o The Hazel Nut, P.O. Box 186, Auburn, AL, 36831-0186, 334-821-4683, or email to <murgen@mindspring.com>.

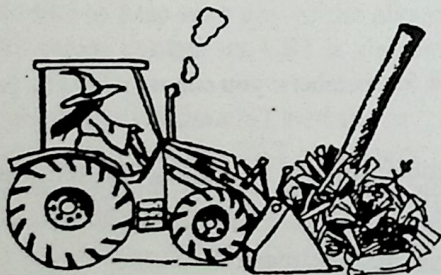
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# Letters to the Editor:

## Dear Editor:

To all of my brothers and sisters, I never knew that there was so much love for me at one place and in one time. This particular Moon Dance blessed me with so much love and acceptance that I can not explain nor tell in words. Yet with all the chaos and life changes these past years I have endured, no one has forgotten me. So, I want

to say, 'I love you back a 100 times,' and I hope to be at Moondance next year and next season.

Love and Blessings

Fion

Atlanta, GA

P.S.: Gil, you created a wonderful circle.

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**Greenleaf:** A British Pagan newsletter with a political activist thrust, published quarterly by Robins Greenwood Gang. U.K.: 96 Church Rd., Redfield, Bristol 5; #3.50/year, #5.00 Europe & Eire. U.S.: 1127 E. Toni Ave. #18, Las Vegas, NV 89119; \$11/year, \$3 sample copy.

**Female-Solitary/Eclectic Witch**, 39, bi-sexual, single parent of 1 spunky 18 year old girl. Would like to correspond with female/male pagans, exchange views/recipes (smile). I collect crystals, stone people, books on the craft/metaphysics, interested in astral projecting, channeling, hands on/crystal healing, deep meditation, and aromatherapy. Seeking pen-pals/new friends. Morgaine, P.O. Box 16536, Panama City, FL, 32406.

**Male** follower of Isis, 24, would like to correspond with female pagans, age 18-24. Chris Brinegar, 1912 S. Neimer Rd., Bloomington, IN, 47401.

## On Priests & Priestesses, cont. from pg. 23

next point has to be the questioning of the validity of those, today, who claim to be Priests, Priestesses, High Priests, or High Priestesses.

History obviously describes the roles and education of those who become Priests or Priestesses. The definitions of the words themselves use such terms as 'authorized,' 'leader,' 'head,' and 'chief.' These are not words used to describe a neophyte. Self-proclamation does not connote 'authorized' or 'chief.' Solitude is hardly a position that conveys 'leader' or 'head.'

The 'sacred rites' of a religious system, by definition, lie within the mysteries of a tradition. These mysteries are not laying around on street corners or within the egomaniacal fantasies of self-aggrandizing debutantes proclaiming themselves to be High Priestesses or High Priests. If these mysteries were so easily attained, why would neophytes have studied for 20 years or more only to become Druids when all they had to do

was proclaim themselves as such 20 years earlier? Why did women sacrifice in return for decades of endless and, often, painful studying in order to become Priestesses of the Goddess when all they had to do was proclaim themselves as such?

A person who practices a religious system singularly is a solitary practitioner, not a Priest or a Priestess. Untrained people who come together to worship are worshipers, not Priests and/or Priestesses. Inheritance may bring land, gold, and mundane treasures, but it will not give a person the status of Priest or Priestess. A person without a tradition, training, and guidance does not become a Priest or a Priestess. Further, and without question, a person who has not trained as a Priest or a Priestess cannot possibly be a High Priest or a High Priestess. It takes years of arduous work, the collection of knowledge, the understanding of timeless mysteries, a lifelong dedication, absolute devotion, and on, and on, and on as a

*Continued on page 30*



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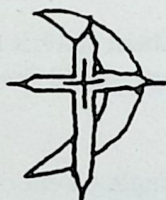
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For a complete listing of back issues and a table of contents for each one, please see The Hazel Nut's web page, or call Linda Kerr at 334-821-4683. We just have too many to list here anymore.



# About Our Staff & Contributors...

**Linda Kerr** (Editor, Layout, Manager, Publisher, Web Page) is a High Priestess of the Faerie Faith and an ordained minister through the Universal Life Church, and also a new mother of a baby girl. In addition to putting out The Hazel Nut and holding down a full-time job, she also organizes and runs a festival every May called Moondance; this is its 7th year. Other things competing for her time are Buckskinning (pre-1840's historical reenactment), teaching and competing in Scottish Highland Dance, and river canoeing. Write to her c/o The Hazel Nut, or email to: <murgen@mindspring.com>.

**Odessa** (Poetry Editor) has been a solitary pagan for many years. She spent a decadent youth on the road as a rock-and-roll singer, and is still a professional photographer and musician. She is pursuing a Master's degree in Archival Sciences, and enjoys Civil War reenacting with her daughter Annie. Write to her c/o The Hazel Nut, or email to: <odessa@mindspring.com>.

**Imré K. Rainey** (Staff Writer and Web Consultant) was the original editor of The Hazel Nut when it started back in May 1993. He's been a pagan for eight years, and is now an initiate of the Faerie Faith with a group of his own. He is also an ordained minister, a 3rd degree Reiki Master, and a certified Clinical Hypnotherapist, and is studying chiropractic medicine at Life Chiropractic College in Marietta, GA. Write to him c/o The Hazel Nut, or email to: <neloe@mindspring.com>.

**Stormy** (Staff Writer and Artist) is a solitary practitioner who studies Norse mythology and Runes, and co-organizes a festival called EarthDance, held in Georgia. She's also interested in astrology, astronomy, UFOs, and anything on psychic studies and the paranormal. Write to her c/o The Hazel Nut, or email to: <stormycloud@mindspring.com>.

**Paul Beyerl** is the author of The Master Book of Herbalism and A Compendium of Herbal Magick. Write to him at Hermit's Grove, 9724 132<sup>nd</sup> Ave. NE, Kirkland, WA 98033.

**Adrian Loaghrian**, now 44 yrs of age, was initiated into a hereditary Rosicrucian tradition at age 13. He's into studying other religions of the world, including Christianity, Judaism, etc., and has 12 years service in a public Wiccan coven. He previously studied ceremonial magic and finally formed this particular tradition in 1990, based on ancient and modern Irish folklore and Irish-Scottish folklore and literature. Write to him c/o The Hazel Nut, or email to: <OssianG@aol.com>.

**Nion** (Don Mikovitz) is 47, has been married 23 years to a devout Christian, and has 2 kids, 18 and 21. He works as a Registered Pulmonary Function Technician at the local community hospital. Nion was brought up as Catholic, but has always been pagan at heart. He's been a 1st degree

Gardnarian witch since May 1995. Write to him c/o The Hazel Nut.

**Rashima's** spiritual awakening has enabled her to become in touch with her self, female energy, and in turn with Mother Earth. Her poetry expresses and conveys her intuition and visions, and she plans to publish a spiritual poetry book with her soul mate. Rashima's nickname is Hazel, and you can write to her c/o The Hazel Nut, or email her at <leo.brincat@magnet.mt>.

**Sherlock**, otherwise known as Sherry Holmes, lives and works in Auburn, Alabama, where she also studies Wildlife Biology. She is a beginner student of the Faerie Faith, and ran a Samhain festival called FallFling for three years. Write to her c/o The Hazel Nut, or email to: <holmesr@mail.auburn.edu>.

**Marilyn Windle** is a freelance writer living in Atlanta. Her book, The Atlanta Dog Lover's Companion, rates the parks in the ten-county metropolitan area from a dog's perspective, and includes fun activities you can share with your pet. She started studying the occult when she was 13 years old, beginning with Edgar Cayce, and has been a practicing psychic for 23 years. Write to her c/o The Hazel Nut.

**Richard Winslow** is Irish and has recently begun studying the runes and Asatru religion, in addition to Celtic spirituality. He is currently incarcerated, and would love to hear from other like-minded pagans. Write to him at: Box 3400 #96160, Arizona State Prison SMU II, Florence, AZ 85232.

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## *On Priests & Priestesses, cont. from pg. 27*

Priest or a Priestess of a particular tradition in order to reach the level of High Priest or High Priestess. There is no shame in being a solitary practitioner, or a member of a group of neophytes worshiping; however, these positions are not interchangeable with Priestess, Priest, High Priestess or High Priest. These are titles born of dedication and hard work. These are titles of honor, power, and reverence. These are titles that come to those who have shown that they are worthy of their innate qualities. These are not titles that fit the untrained. The assumption of positions that are undeserved is certain to harness retribution and is highly disrespectful of the traditions that the pagans of today are attempting to revive. The titles of Priest, Priestess, High Priest, and High Priestess are much esteemed and must be treated as such. Further, as *The Golden Ass* teaches us, those who defile the face of the Goddess by offending the sanctity of Her teachings, Her mystery, and Her Priestesses and Priests will certainly have much retribution to look forward to.



# Bubbles From the Cauldron

Book Reviews, Etc.

**Moondance 97, Roxanna, Alabama. Organized by Linda Kerr. Total attendance: 146**

Due to popular demand, Moondance was held at Roxanna again, after being at FDR last year. It was a crazy weekend. The weather the year was cool, overcast, and drizzly—not at all like last year's, or indeed, like most years past. Saturday the sun came out long enough for some folks to get hot and sweaty and hop in the pond. The sun lasted most of the day, till just about feast time.

As we were all standing in line for pot-luck Saturday evening, some of us having already fixed our plates, a storm was brewing off to the south, and moving our way rapidly. I abandoned my plate and ran off to grab some clear plastic sheeting out of Craig's truck, which we then laid down over the food. The skies were darkening rapidly, the wind was blowing, and we were covering and stacking food containers, and jamming other food and breads under the plastic and trying to weight it all down. Just as we got most everything covered, the bottom dropped out! A group of us ran for the tarp over the class area and huddled there, till one corner of it gave way. At that point I think everyone scattered in different directions trying to find somewhere dry. Trees were whipping around in the wind, and afterwards several swore there were mini-tornadoes, but really it was just severe wind gusts. In the midst of it, one side of Starcraft's tarp gave way, getting rain all over several books, but Kat helped them tie it back down. Charlotte was our super-woman, going back out into the rain to re-cover the food from which the plastic was trying to depart (by the way, the food was fine for the most part, and we were able to eat afterwards).

The storm probably lasted a grand total of 20 minutes, then became a light rain, and soon even that stopped, and the stars came out. Crazy, like I said. We went around to everybody to see if all had survived the deluge. A tree fell, narrowly missing somebody's tent and a car; the May Pole fell, just missing a car, and several folks had wet bedding and clothes. For the most part, though, everyone came through just fine, and another drumming circle started at the top of the hill. The keg had been tapped earlier, so folks sat at the fire, drank beer, and had left-over feast. I managed to recover my plate, which was miraculously dry, and finish my dinner. I don't know what I ate, but it was really good, even cold!

Other weirdness: On Friday we were buzzed by a State

Trooper's helicopter. They flew over us, around us, and around us again. Then they left, but very soon they came back and circled us a couple more times, and then buzzed us at a *very* low altitude. Well, we could understand the first pass, but the second pass was uncalled for, and the low buzzing was just pure harassment, so we called the State Trooper's office with the number of the copter to complain.

Yet more weirdness: Friday night Craig and I got a call to come down to the gate and speak with a member of the local constabulary. Hint to gate keepers: Don't wear your flashlight in your back pocket—this really makes the cops nervous when you pull it out! Well, Officer Jones just wanted to know what we were doing. Apparently they had gotten some "vague complaints" about us holding people against their will (this shortly after we had turned away someone who wasn't registered). We set his mind at ease, and even explained a little bit about who we were and what our religion was. He was very nice and understanding, and went away satisfied; we didn't have any more trouble from them the rest of the weekend.

In spite of all the strange happenings and crazy weather, everyone agreed it was the best Moondance yet. The storm Saturday night seemed to clean out the energies a lot; the drumming was fantastic; our food vendors were absolutely wonderful, even feeding poor, cold, wet campers Saturday night for free; and the closing ritual, written by Gil, was beautifully done, with a very impressive fire cauldron at the end.

*Reviewed by Linda Kerr*

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