
Henge Happenings

The Henge of Keltria, PO Box 4305, Clarksburg, WV 26302-4305

Issue #59

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Lughnasadh 2003

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Lughnasadh is an interesting time, a time of great blessings tinged with a distant sadness. Traditionally, this is a time of feasting and merriment, and yet, this feast was originally implemented as funerary games in remembrance of Tailtiu, Lugh's foster-mother. In our own lives, with all of the abundance, joy and warmth of the first harvest comes the nagging reminder that all things must eventually wither and die to make way for the new. Behind the lazy days of summer, there is urgency in the air as the sun begins its waning course, and we prepare to reap what we have sown over the course of the year. May your own harvest provide you, both physically and spiritually, with the things you need for the coming dark time.

Most of you may know by now that, at the Annual Members Meeting in Minnesota at Midsummer, I was elected the new President of the Henge. I humbly thank you all for demonstrating your confidence in my ability to serve you in this capacity. In my way of thinking, the office of President is not about a title or status. It is a position of service, a position that requires a great deal of hard work and decision-making intended to best benefit *you*, the members of the Henge of Keltria. Having served for six years as your Secretary and knowing well the intimate workings of the Order, I have a vision for the Henge that I and other Board members will be guiding us toward for the next two years. It is a road that we have been slowly traveling together for some time now, but I hope to see it come to fruition in the very near future.

As an Irish-American Druid, I believe in the original vision that the founders of the Henge of Keltria set out for us and I will continue to guide us in ways that best reflect our dedication to bringing the old knowledge into practical use for our modern times. Things are moving quickly now. The Correspondence Course has been a long time coming, but it has proven to be well worth the wait, and we have been accepting students for some time. Chartered Groves continue to grow and teach, study groups are applying for Chartered Grove status, and more study groups are forming. We have honed our focus toward the Druid ways from the Gaelic-speaking cultures, and we are hard at work implementing a course for the legal ordination of Keltrian Clergy, as well as 501c3 status for our Order. I plan to continue what our former President Wren set into motion, as well as make adjustments to things that have not been accepted by the membership as well as we might have thought. Change is a constant, and that is a good thing, for it helps us to improve and grow.

I want to thank Wren for all of her hard work and sacrifice as our former President, and I welcome her with delight to the office of the Vice-President, where her varied skills will be put to good use. I also want to thank our former Vice-President, Rain, for her extraordinary efforts over the last few years,

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and it is my sincere hope that she will continue to advise and contribute to our ongoing ventures. And last but not never least, I welcome Tony to the office of Secretary, and rest assured that all of our important documents are in the best of hands.

Upon my election as your President, the Minnesota Druids charged me with the care of certain "sacred cows." Although presented to me as a gift (of actual cow figures), I view this charge as a great responsibility. In ancient Celtic societies, the number and quality of its cattle demonstrated the prosperity of a tribe. Within the Henge of Keltria, we avail ourselves of our prosperity in many forms: in our spirituality and dedication to our Ancestors, the Nature Spirits, and the Gods of Our People, in our fellowship and support of each other as we travel the often-difficult path of Druidism, and in our constant quest for the knowledge that brings wisdom. These are the "cattle" I have been entrusted with, to keep safely so that all of our tribe may benefit.

*Blessed Lughnasadh,
TopazOwl*

FROM THE TREASURER

PROFIT AND LOSS

**Available in the
Member's Edition**

E-MAIL?

If you have electronic mail, please make sure the Henge Office has your E-Mail address. Send your E-Mail address, membership name and membership number to Henge-Office@keltria.org.

Also join the Keltria-L Mail List. To subscribe send an E-Mail to: Keltria-L-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. Please include your membership number in the subject of the message.

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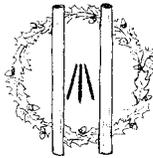
HENGE OF KELTRIA ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

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<http://www.keltria.org/>

Frequently asked questions, reading list, mailing list, membership information and more!

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Advertise in Henge Happenings

Henge Happenings now accepts advertising. For a copy of our advertising guidelines, please send a SASE to The Henge of Keltria. Attn.: Advertising Guidelines, P.O. Box 4305, Clarksburg, WV 26302 or visit us on the web at:

<http://www.keltria.org/hengehap/HH-adver.htm>

FOCUS ON GROVES

GARRÁN AN EICH ÓRBHUI



Available in the
Member's Edition

Available in the
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PUBLICATION ANNOUNCEMENT

Coming this fall (2003) from Citadel Press:
The Pagan's Muse: Poems of Ritual and Inspiration edited by Jane Raeburn, and including a poem by our very own Madam President, TopazOwl (writing as C. Leigh McGinley)

THE DRUID'S PATH

THE LIFE OF A SOLITARY DRUID

BY NI BHRIÓ



Sometimes I wonder if there was a beginning for me. I feel like I was always druid so the concept of a beginning seems very vague. Many twists and turns lead me to the decision that a solitary path was the right path for me. Being in the Ring of the Yew, initially at least, I entertained a vision of starting a grove in northern Maryland. But for reasons that fate can only explain fully, every time I tried

to seek out like minded souls, it invariably lead to a dead end. Perhaps my vision was an ideal, but the thought of what others might bring to a fuller expression of druid embodiment seemed worth pursuing. I never did meet other Keltrians but I did run into many pagans that seemed more caught up into the social bonding of calling themselves Pagan than any religious calling. And one by one, all interaction led me deeper into a quiet path instead.

I was very glad that Keltria offered a correspondence course since it provides an option for those of us who are alone most of the time. I think the emphasis on required Druid and Celtic reading makes Keltria stand apart. Sometimes I think of the Henge of Keltria as producing a literary type of druid, which made me think that we were one step closer to our learned counterparts so long ago. I think of them all the time. Being one with the forest is something all druids feel a kinship with. But the night beckons me as well. There is something intensely magickal about a starry night. I like to lay in the grass with the entire sparkling night before me. Stars are remnants of things that have long been gone. I think of all our ancient brothers and sisters who saw the same sky. Oh, if the night had eyes, what a song it would sing. Recording

everything that ever was. I think of them and I close my eyes and try to envision their very thoughts. It makes me think of the reflection in a mirror that reflects a mirror, with a repetition of images getting smaller and smaller. The vastness of the night feels like a connection. I feel safe there.

Alone and minus a grove, it probably takes longer for the actual verbiage of the ritual to sink in. Since you are responsible for the entire ritual, at first I felt hyper aware of getting everything "right". It actually detracted from the ritual itself but was necessary. Its actually very easy to tap into a collective vibe on major holidays. Feeling the energy of my brothers and sisters at that same time is tangible. But being by myself, I take it a step further. On Beltaine, part of my tree meditation invariably includes envisioning the past in 3-D. It brings to mind an image of a clear night, and rolling hills speckled with the fires of Beltaine for as far as the eyes can see. And the echoes of singing, of voices trailing off in reverie. It is a very personal, spiritual place.

I feel closer to some gods and goddess than others. They are personified to me and through perception, some seem to be a better fit for my personality. Being born right after Samhain, I must confess a special kinship with the Mórrígan. Surely her name alone evokes a shudder to some, her whole affinity as the Battle Goddess.... the goddess who reigns over chaos and death/regeneration, seems to remind me of a Scorpio. I cannot help but think of her literally as a Scorpio chick. There is something living and breathing about ritual life. Oh, have they seen me through troubled times. Times when it seems impossible to find comfort. They are always there though. There more I gave myself over to my ritual life, the closer I got to centeredness. For some reason, some rituals end up being more profound. When you get past the words alone and truly become one with the moment,

it's almost a high. I feel a sense of elation that makes me unable to stop smiling, I feel physically light and airy. Its like the ritual moves through me.

Ritual magick became an area I feel the strongest about because I was forced to learn about ethics. It saddens me when I see advertisements for what I call "willing the inappropriate". Money, love, prestige – they have no place in that arena. I think ritual magick is best suited for knowledge, understanding, empowerment so that one may "give" instead of "get". Following the rules of karma, maybe you're not meant to have it all. More importantly, focus on *whatever* you're given, as a gift. I learned about ethics the hard way. Out of sheer inexperience and not knowing how profound the results can be, I once very foolishly asked for all the wrong things. At the time I was at a very low point in my life. For all of you who ever fell in love with the wrong person, you may have some sympathy here. I desperately wanted to feel something intangible that was not within my grasp. At the time I worked with a fellow that I barely knew but had great

admiration for. He was married and was really a family man. I intensely respected him from afar. Then... right after my selfish requests in magick-mode-for *moi* alone, within 1 week he was hovering around me like a bee. I was horrified! It was contradictory to everything that held him special to me. "That's not what I meant", I remember saying to myself. The closer he maneuvered, the worse I felt. I felt unbelievably awful. Then came the equally selfish "I didn't really mean it!!!" ritual to reverse things. And I could almost hear them smirk at my lesson learned. I felt I had lowered myself and I made a commitment to fully understand and above all, respect that venue forevermore.

I had a dream earlier this year. Two men are sitting in the middle of a swiftly moving stream, silently reminiscing about their lives. One of the men notices a woman on the shore just as she has fallen into the water. He doesn't really understand that she is drowning until the last of her hair is lost under the surface of the water. Diving in, he finds her body. At that moment a shaft of light pierces the water and illuminates her face. Her moment of death is fated for him. He is lost in the rapturous moment of capturing her essence when he looks into her face. Floating, silent, ethereal beauty. I am able to hear his thoughts and he is thinking: It is like looking into the Face of Eternity. I abruptly woke from the dream and grabbed my little recorder and recited as much as I could of the dream, as the exactness of the words seemed terribly important. Imagery of love and hope aside, the point of illumination is what stirred me months later. Something reminded me of the choices made for a religious life. Illumination... through the death of everything false around me. The winding path that many more worthy than myself, have walked before me. The druid flame. The face of eternity...

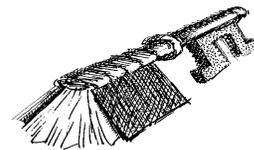
THE BARD'S PATH

WALKING PRAYER

Spirits of my path,
as I walk, walk with me.
Show me the beauties
of the places that I pass.

Spirits of my path,
as I walk, walk with me
Reveal the secrets
of the places that I pass.

Spirits of my path,
as I walk, walk with me.
Teach me the lessons
of the places that I pass.



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HERMETIC EVENT

THE GREEN MAN WITHIN AND WITHOUT

REVIEW BY OWEN O'RAG-FERENCZEL

Last May, Gina Ruthe's Holistic Center For Massage Therapy (710 North Church Street, Rockford, IL) hosted a one-day Hermetic Journey entitled: **The Green Man Within & Without: Exploring A Masculine Archetype**. The event included presentations by John Matthews and Jim Bertolacini. The following is a review and comments from one member of the Henge who attended the event.



The Greenman: Within and Without, Exploring A Masculine Archetype was marvelous. About 15 men from Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana and even Ohio came to Rockford for this inaugural event of "Hermetic Journeys".

The day was divided into several segments of lecture, discussion, shamanic journeying and mask making. All of this together involved the participants far more than merely sitting listening to talks all day. We began the day, after a social "meet and greet", by opening the Circle and placing on the altar something we had brought with us that was personal.

John Matthews was introduced and began to give us a bit of the history of Greenman, showing that he had no actual point of coming into existence that has been recorded. He just seemed to have always been there in several cultures, making his appearance at various times of the year from pre-history right up to the present day. John offered some visual images he had taken over the years of Greenman. These were not only the well known iconographic forms carved into cathedral ceilings, but also images of modern festivals from around the world where a Greenman was prominent.

We were introduced to the idea of Greenman being a symbol of "wildness". This would include the

wildness of more primitive humankind and that wildness of nature which connects with a natural wildness, a raw energy of men. We spoke of this in terms of our modern world recalling the "back to nature" themes of the 60's and the rise of environmental concerns around the world. However we were more concerned with the concept of wildness, or naturalness, in the masculine ethos of our world today. Seeing the archetypes in history, literature and culture would help us, as men in our society, to direct our "wild" creative natures.

John gave us a view of Greenman throughout the cycle of the year as well as related to the Quarters.

In the North we find the Winter King which is exemplified in the Tale of the Green Knight who visits King Arthur's court at Christmas. He plays a beheading game with Sir Gawain, which is symbolic of losing the intellectualism we have and becoming more "natural". It had to do with change and losing old patterns of behaviour.

In the East we met the Greenlord of the Wood, Robin of the Wood or Robin Hood who teaches us focus and one pointedness by the image of archery. Here we also learn to let go of distractions and stay on track.

In the South we find the Lord of Summer, and continue the Green Knight story with particular regard to King Arthur and the challenge given him by a giant knight. The challenge is that Arthur has a year and a day to discover what it is that women want most. If he returns without an answer the giant will behead him. Arthur spends a year asking every woman he meets and enlists Sir Gawain to help him. Toward the end of the year he meets a frightful looking woman who tells him that she knows the answer but will only give it if he promises to marry her to Sir Gawain. Arthur agrees and Gawain obeys and Arthur's life is spared. At the wedding all of the Court is sorrowful for Gawain now married to a horrible hag. As they prepare for the wedding night the woman becomes absolutely the most beautiful woman Gawain has ever seen. She tells

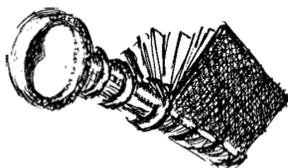
him that she is under a curse and now that he married her she can appear to him, when alone, in this present state and when with others as the hag; but that he could choose the other way if he wished. He chose that she be beautiful with him and that he would show great love for her at all times even when she was ugly. She told him he has chosen wisely and that that had completely broken the curse and she would be beautiful always. This lesson is given to show that men need to be seen beyond appearance.

In the West we are told the story of Green Jack, or John Barleycorn, who is killed and buried in the ground only to rise up out of the earth in the next season. He is a symbol of rebirth.

Along with these talks, John Matthews led us through several Shamanic Journeys. These were to first discover what our mask would look like, and then to see the face of the Greenman, to ask what attribute we as individuals would carry in this circle and how we would know to release the intellect and become natural.

Interspersed with these we spent time with Jim Bertolicini making our own Greenman masks. Jim had collected boxes and boxes of various types of Oak leaves for this and had glycerined each leaf to keep them supple. He gave us simple instruction and turned us loose with mask base, glue and leaves to create our own mask. At times we felt as though we were in kindergarten at play time, and from that grew a camaraderie that worked into everything thing we did the rest of that day. In the end we Blessed and donned our masks in the Closing Circle, speaking or acting out what attribute we received in our meditations. We closed and left with a greater feeling Brotherhood.

Silver Drake who put this day together has since begun a Yahoo Group for the Hermetic Journeys we have all become part of. I will be travelling to Scotland and England in the next two weeks and will be meeting with John and Caitland Matthews when I visit Oxford. So to quote a couple of old hippies (like me!)..."and the beat goes on. La-de-da-de-dee."



FROM THE INTERNET

By TONG



An item to add to my itinerary for my next trip to Europe is a stop at The Iceni Brewery. They offer tours of the brewery, but like a little advance warning of your arrival so they can "herd the local ducks out of the road". Contact them at:

The Iceni Brewery
Foulden Road
Ickburgh, Norfolk, IP26 5BJ
Tel: 01842 878922
Email: ICENIBREWE@aol.com

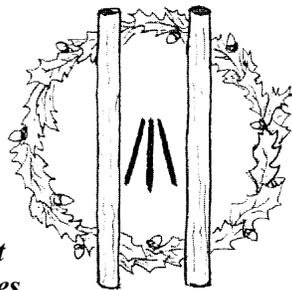
They make some 10-12 different beers including "Boadicea," "Celtic Queen," "Cu Chulainn," and "Iceni Gold." Wish we could get Iceni Beer here....

Submission Information

All submissions to Henge Happenings become property of The Henge of Keltria, Inc., a nonprofit religious corporation. Categories for submissions are based upon who they are from: Officers, Elders, Coordinators, Groves, Members and the Henge Office. Members submissions are further divided based upon subject matter, Bardic, Seer, Druid, or Solitary Special Interest Groups.

BELIEFS OF THE HENCE OF KELTRIA

1. We believe in **Divinity** as it is **manifest** in the Pantheon. There are several valid theistic perceptions of this Pantheon.



2. We believe that **nature is the embodiment of the Gods and Goddesses.**

3. We believe that **Natural Law reflects the will of the Gods and Goddesses.**

4. We believe that **all life is sacred** and should neither be harmed nor taken without deliberation or regard.

5. We believe in **the immortality of the spirit.**

6. We believe that **our purpose is to gain wisdom** through experience.

7. We believe that **learning is an ongoing process** and should be fostered at all ages.

8. We believe that **morality should be a matter of personal conviction** based upon self respect and respect for others.

9. We believe that **evil is not a matter of inheritance but of intent**, therefore actions are not in themselves evil. Rather, it is through the **intent behind actions** that evil can manifest.

10. We believe in the **relative nature of all things, that nothing is absolute, and that all things, even the Gods and Goddesses, have their dark sides.**

11. We believe that **individuals have the right to pursue knowledge and wisdom** through his or her chosen path.

12. We believe in a **living religion** able to adapt to a changing environment. We recognize that our beliefs may undergo change as our tradition grows.