

# HENGE HAPPENINGS

ISSUE 75

LUGHNASADH 2007

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

*"Three glories of a gathering: a comely [mate], a good horse, a swift hound." – Triads of Ireland*

It will soon be time to begin the harvest. Already, some tiny potatoes are ready to harvest for my favorite summertime snack, boiled new baby potatoes with butter. But in about a week, the harvest begins in earnest, and we will be busy here on the farm until almost Samhain. So the Wheel of the Year turns.

Lughnasadh, the First Harvest, has always been associated with the great horse fairs in Ireland. I try to always do something special with my horses at this time, and I ask the Gods to bestow a special blessing on them, for I am blessed every day just being around them. Unfortunately, this year, the equine love of my life, Alf, is having some lameness problems that no one seems to be able to figure out, so I have been really busy soaking him daily in a whirlpool bath that we made for him to keep the circulation moving in his hind legs. He is an amazing animal, putting up with a great deal of strange stuff that I'm sure would cause any other horse to balk or freak out. Not Alf. He's as steady as the day is long, and that's why I love him and will do anything to make him comfortable and happy. Next Wednesday he has an appointment with a lameness specialist that I will have to trailer him to see, as this veterinarian doesn't make house calls.

So, Alf is partly the reason that I do not have a lot of time to write for my column this Lughnasadh. My schedule is so overbooked that I have not one minute to spare. I simply wanted to touch base with all of you and let you know that I am still here, still in service to all of you, but just a little stressed right now by life in general. When Alf feels better, I'll be more accessible, and back to writing things that I hope are inspirational, or at the very least, interesting.

On another note: many thanks again to Red River Study Group for hosting the annual meeting in Shreveport, LA. A good time was had by all!

My Keltrian friends: may your Lughnasadh be fruitful.

— *The Topaz Owl*

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

FROM THE OFFICERS	1-4
FROM THE GROVES	5
THE SEER'S PATH	6
THE DRUID'S PATH	7
THE BARD'S PATH	8
MAIL, REVIEWS, & MORE	9-10



PRESIDENT TOPAZ OWL

## FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENT

### THE JOY OF HOSTING OUR ANNUAL MEETING

Those of us who have hosted in the past know how much work it can be. One host literally moved the earth to create a hillock and a peaceful spot in the woods where attendees would not see traffic on the nearby road. It was also an excellent place to scramble up and greet the first light of morning. Last year (2006), the annual meeting was simply that - an annual meeting. This year was different.



VICE-PRESIDENT WREN

The first order of business is to thank the Red River Study Group for hosting this year's Henge of Keltria's annual meeting in Shreveport, LA. These lovely people showed us true southern hospitality. The food was great, and the conversations lively. Four of us spent twelve hours traveling in a crowded truck to get there, and it was well worth the drive.

Since before the Henge's incorporation, the annual meeting has been held in various locations ranging from Kansas to Syracuse, NY, and Minneapolis to Georgia. Our by-laws state that once a year the board of trustees will hold a meeting, which is open to the membership. Nothing in the by-laws says that we have to throw a weekend long party; however, with members and trustees traveling so far, it makes sense to linger a day or two. So how is it that these annual meetings move around so much? The answer is found in the Correspondence Course.

When a student successfully completes the course of study, and the Council of Elders grants the go ahead for an Initiation, the question arises, "Your place or mine?" Either the candidate must go to the Keltrian performing the ritual or vice versa. Such was the case in 1998, when I was living in Los Angeles, and a correspondent of mine was ready to elevate to Yew. Dedications, initiations and elevations are even more meaningful if the candidate has friends and family present to welcome and congratulate them after the ritual. Traveling to the candidate is a good thing to do if at all possible. In this particular instance, the ritual was taking place at the same time of year as the annual meeting, so we combined them.

It also occurred to us that folks who don't have the resources to travel to the annual meeting could attend if the meeting was held closer to their home. This also gives the trustees an opportunity to meet members in person. We currently have board members residing in California, New York, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Georgia and Ontario, Canada. With an annual meeting that moves around, trustees have longer or shorter trips to attend, which evens out the travel obligations.

Any member can host an annual meeting. You do not have to be a part of a Grove or Study Group. In fact, non-members are not excluded from attending the meeting. The only difference is that they cannot vote. In the past, we have had people sign up on the day of the meeting. It's understandable that folks would want to meet the trustees before committing membership fees.

All a proposal to host involves is who, what, where and when (which is coordinated with the Henge secretary). In the past we have gathered at a sanctuary, members' homes, a working farm, a state park and the rehearsal room of a bagpipe band. Members who

**ANY MEMBER  
CAN HOST AN  
ANNUAL  
MEETING**

*(Continued on page 10)*

FROM THE SECRETARY

# 2007 Election Results

By TONY TAYLOR

*[Note from the Secretary: The official 2007 Annual Meeting minutes will be published after their approval at the 2008 Annual Meeting.]*

Congratulations to

President TopazOwl on her reelection.

Vice-President Wren on her reelection.

Secretary Tony on his reelection.

Trustee Rain on her election to the Board of Trustees.

Trustee Caroline on her election to the Board of Trustees.



SECRETARY TONY

CONGRAT'S  
TO RAIN AND  
CAROLINE ON  
THEIR BEING  
ELECTED TO THE  
BOARD OF  
TRUSTEES

**The Henge of Keltria—Druidism for the 21st Century Tote Bag**



Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle with this Tote Bag . These 100% cotton canvas tote bags have plenty of room to carry your Druid stuff when you are on the go or your weekly groceries. They include a bottom gusset and extra long handles for easy carrying.

- \* 10 oz heavyweight natural canvas fabric
- \* Full side and bottom gusset
- \* 22" reinforced self-fabric handles
- \* Machine washable
- \* Measures 15" x 18" x 6"

[HTTP://WWW.CAFEPRESS.COM/KELTRIA.144090781](http://www.cafepress.com/keltria.144090781)

**Best Dressed *Ban-draoithe* wear the Henge of Keltria Tank Top**



Sporty and cool, wear our Hane’s Silver women’s tank top to beat the summer heat or workout in cool comfort. Our Hanes Silver for Her tank top, is made of 100% combed ring spun cotton, and cut for a close, fashionable fit. Neck and armhole are carefully shaped to conceal a bra.

[HTTP://WWW.CAFEPRESS.COM/KELTRIA.54086576](http://www.cafepress.com/keltria.54086576)

**BLESSED  
LUGHNASADH**

## THE SEER'S PATH

# Essiac Tea

By NIONE

While visiting with Topaz Owl the other day we were discussing the benefits of Essiac Tea as a treatment for cancer. She suggested to me that I write this months article on Essiac Tea, I thought what a great idea. I hope that this article will be of use to you and help those in need.



NIONE

Essiac Tea was first introduced to the public by a Canadian Cancer Nurse Rene Caisse in the mid 1920s. While caring for an elderly woman she noticed a very bad scar on one of her breasts and inquired where she had gotten it . The elderly woman responded that about 20 years earlier while her husband was working in the wilds of Canada in a logging camp she was diagnosed with breast cancer. Her doctor advised that the breast be removed. The woman was very concerned; a friend had died from breast cancer surgery. They also had no money to pay for the surgery. In the camp was a very old Ojibway medicine man who told her he knew of herbs that would help her. She decided that she had nothing to lose and would try his cure. He took her out into the woods and showed her the herbs, how to prepare them as a tea, to drink the tea every day. She told Miss Caisse that was over 20 years ago; there had been no reoccurrence of the cancer after following the medicine man's instructions. .

Miss Caisse wrote down the herbs and their preparation and decided that if she developed cancer she would try them. About a year later while visiting a retired Doctor that she knew well, they walked in his garden and he lifted a weed with his cane and told her that if "people would use this weed there would be very little cancer in the world." Miss Caisse recognized it as one of the herbs that the old woman mentioned. A few months later she received word that her Mother's only sister had been operated on for cancer of the stomach with liver involvement; they gave her 6 months to live. Miss Caisse hastened to her side and spoke to her Doctor about the herbs. He told her that there was nothing more he could do for her aunt so trying the tea was fine. Miss Caisse obtained the necessary herbs and prepared the tea for her aunt. She instructed her in their use and the aunt followed her advice. She lived for another 21 years.



NURSE RENE CAISSE

Several doctors had heard of Miss Caisse's success and had asked her to treat an elderly gentleman whose cancer ravaged face was bleeding so badly that they deemed he had less than 10 days to live. They told her, "We do not expect a miracle, but if your treatment can help this man in this stage of cancer, we will know that you have discovered something the whole world needs." She not only stopped the bleeding within 24 hours but the gentleman lived another 6 months with very little discomfort.

Even though she had the support of at least eight doctors , the department of Health and Welfare of Canada arrested Miss Caisse for practicing medicine without a license. In her own words, "This was the beginning of nearly 50 years of persecution by those in authority, from the government to the medical profession, that I endured in trying to help those with cancer. However, when they found that I was working with nine of the

*(Continued on page 11)*

# THE DRUIDS PATH

## DRUIDS ACROSS EUROPE, THE ISLES AND THE BEGINNING TIMES

By SEARLES O'DUBHAIN

### PART 1 OF 3 PARTS

The name for Druids or their cognates first appears in the classical histories of the Greeks and Romans dating back about 2400 years ago. The earliest possible written record of Druids among the Celts is found in the comments of the late fourth-century BCE Greek playwright Sopater who was said by Athenaeus to have made a punning reference to the Druids when he had one of his characters say:

"Among them is the custom, whenever they are victorious in battle, to sacrifice their prisoners to the gods. So I, like the Celts, have vowed to the divine powers to burn those three false dialecticians as an offering."

Certainly, if a Greek playwright can make an oblique reference to the Druids in a play to his audience, there must have been quite a familiarity with them by reputation and innuendo if nothing else.

The first contact of the Greeks with the Gauls is at Massalia (near modern day Marseille) in the sixth century BCE. The attacks of the Celts on Rome occurred in the fourth century BCE. The attack on Delphi occurred in around 279 BCE. These and other stories by the Greeks and Romans regarding those times seem to reference Druids for me. I especially like the story of the Celtic warriors who were on the Capitol Hill of Rome in the process of vanquishing the Romans who came upon some splendidly dressed older men who were sitting in council. The Celtic warriors stopped in their tracks, awed by the assembly and stayed their hands from slaying. When one of the men spoke to them in Latin and struck at them with a staff, the warriors responded by killing them all. To me this passage echoes the Celtic respect for the safety of a Druid's personage. They were safe from any battle and the warriors in this tale most probably thought they'd accidentally entered into an assembly of Druids. To harm any Druid would have been a violation of personal honor and a breaking of the strongest taboo for a Celtic warrior. When they discovered that these fellows were not Druids by their speech and actions, they happily dispatched them. This was reported by the Roman historian Livy in the late first century BCE but it was dated to 390 BCE in his history by drawing on earlier sources.

The first specific (by name) mention of Druids among the Celts by classical historians is contained in the work of Aristotle (circa 4th century BCE) and Sotion of Alexandria in the early 2nd century BCE as mentioned by Diogenes Laertius in a written work of the 3rd century CE. There are also mentions in the 1st century BCE writer Posidonius of first hand observations of Druids. I mention that these references as say that the Celts conducted no sacrifices without a Druid being present (see above mention of sacrifices by Sopater). This is confirmed in the writings of Herodotus,



SEARLES O'DUBHAIN

**THERE WERE  
DRUIDS AMONG  
THE FIRST PEOPLE  
TO APPEAR IN  
IRELAND**

*(Continued on page 14)*

# THE BARD'S PATH

## Druid Settlement in North America Nicknamed "Chicken Henge"

REPORTED BY DANE DEFOREST

*Distributed by Rooter News Network: for those who can't see the farce for the trees –  
"We root out the news at the edge of reality."*



DANE DEFOREST

Evidence of a Druid settlement in North America has been found, according to confidential sources. The exact location remains undisclosed but the mention of giant mosquito carcasses suggests that it may be in MN.

The structure - as seen in the accompanying photo - resembles the standing stones of Stonehenge. Investigators have noted the presence of chicken feathers and fowl fecal matter, bee hives, mugwort and stinging nettles as significant indicators of specific human activity. It was the chicken feathers that first led to the nickname "Chicken Henge."

It appears that chickens were an essential feature of this settlement. Since there is little evidence of chickens consumed on site, experts conclude that "the chicken was a kind of fetish animal, admired for its eggs as symbols of creation, and the frequent copulation of roosters for vitality," says expert Randy Peters. "The main functions of the rooster," Peters goes on, "were protection and procreation and so is an excellent symbol for a warrior."

A miniscule amount of human blood was found, but not enough to suggest a sacrificial cult. Any possible human sacrifice at this site was, at most, recreational or accidental. The two plants – mugwort and stinging nettles – "point to a protective and cleansing function of the latter, and mind alteration by the former," says plant expert Herb Sagely. The presence of nearby bee hives, says entomologist Melissa von Hun, points to "not only an awareness of the sweetness of life, but also of the intoxicating properties of mead."

Archeologist Woody Johnson (using a compass) indicated that the site is oriented to the four directions, with an emphasis on the North-South axis as shown by the dimensions of the standing wood (using actual measurements). There is an opening on the South side, probably to honor and receive the warmth of the sun (which would have been a significant issue if the site is, indeed, located in MN as suspected).

A diagonal pole, seen in the photo, points to the North Star. This becomes significant when coupled (so to speak) with the upright center pole: one pole pointing to the pole star around which the heavens revolve, and the other pole around which the henge and this society would (figuratively-speaking) revolve. Cambridge pole expert M.G. Elder judges that it was a common thing for such settlements to have a central pole honored as a tree (often surrounded by chickens) as the Pole-Tree, from which comes our modern word poultry.

*(Continued on page 19)*



"CHICKEN HENGE"  
STRUCTURE

## FROM THE INTERNET

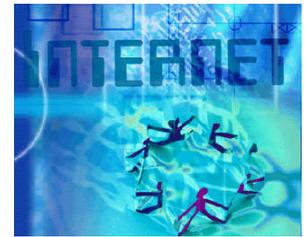
### INSPIRATIONAL DRUID BOOKS

The Denver Post reported that the local District Attorney wants spiritually comforting materials available to victims waiting to testify.

The article, which mentions "Druid writings," made me think, what "Druid writings" do we have that would be considered as "comforting" or "inspirational"? Members of the Keltria List discussed the topic and came up with the following list of materials.

- Kindling the Celtic Spirit - By Mara Freeman
- Walden - by  Henry David Thoreau
- Celtic Devotional, Daily prayers & Blessings - by Caitlin Matthews
- A Celtic Book of Days - by Sarah Costley and Charles Knightly
- Earth Prayers From Around The World; edited by Elizabeth Roberts and Elias Amidon.

Also discussed were *The Roscs of Mogh Ruith* which are available online and *The Desiderata* by Max Ehrmann.



### TIM SEBASTION PASSING

The Wild Hunt reported that "Tim Sebastian, Chosen Chief of the Secular Order of Druids in the UK, passed away after a long illness [on February 1st, 2007]."

Tim was a long time friend of the Henge of Keltria and will be missed. Tim was interviewed in the [Lughnasadh '96](#) issue of Keltria Journal.

**BLESSED  
LUGHNASADH**

#### **Best Dressed Druids wear the Henge of Keltria Hooded Sweatshirt**



Stay warm with our Hanes Ultimate Cotton Pullover Hood. Constructed with a heavyweight 90/10 cotton/polyester blend. Thick (but not bulky), comfortable, durable and guaranteed.

- 10.1 oz. patented PrintPro® fabric in a 90/10 cotton/polyester blend
- Standard fit
- Spandex trim in cuffs and waistband

## REVIEWS

### EIST LE MO SCEAL (LISTEN TO MY STORY) BY CAERA

REVIEW BY AILICÓ



ÉIST LE MO SCÉAL  
(LISTEN TO MY STORY)

Music has long been used as a cathartic tool for healing. In most cases it has been on the part of the artist. Caera's new release *Listen to my Story* is a deep release of those inner emotional nuggets that can haunt us throughout our lives. Caera's story is one that has been faced by many, and unfortunately will be faced by others unless we can shift the collective mindset. As much as the work is a representation of her healing process, hopefully it inspire those who might listen to begin or further their own emotional healing.

*Listen to my Story* features the familiar harp-based melodies and haunting vocals that Caera is known for. On this recording she has chosen to sing her lyrics predominantly in English as opposed to Gaelic, perhaps to reach a broader audience. The themes woven into this work are not on the lighter side. They represent those themes in life which dwell deep and require conscious work to move through.

The first track "If Lancelot Could Have Loved Elaine" speaks to the pain felt by not receiving love in return. It speaks deeply to the shame, guilt and distress we feel when we love someone, but they cannot return that love because of the constraints society places against loving more than one person. Subsequent tracks speak to the coping mechanisms we develop to survive physical abuse, neglect, and the anguish caused by divorce and substance abuse. What I appreciate most about Caera's work, and particularly so on this recording, is her ability through lyrics to bring you right into the moment and to be a part of her story.

I realize this review has been less about the flow and movement of individual songs and more about the depth from which her story originates. As someone who is confronting issues from my past, I am inspired by Caera's ability to put light onto her shadow and work compassionately to let go of her past in order to move forward.

For more information about Caera's music, classes and more see her website at <http://www.caera.info>.

SEE CAERA'S  
WORK AT  
[WWW.CAERA.INFO](http://WWW.CAERA.INFO)



#### Best Dressed Druids wear Henge of Keltria caps.

Our adjustable, 100% cotton Cap is the ideal way to beat the heat. Wear it anytime you want to keep the hot solstice sun off. It features a sturdy low profile brim, sweatband, and adjustable closure. Available in Khaki or White.

Black with a white logo patch also available.

<http://www.cafepress.com/keltria>



## FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT CONTINUED

*(Continued from page 2)*

live in an urban area are encouraged to make arrangements to gather at a hotel. I still think a beach house would be fun. The sky is the limit. Hosting the annual meeting does call for the labor of making choices and local arrangements such as how food will be handled; one year we simply ordered pizza. Where people will stay is another consideration. A list of local hotels solves this, or how many tents will fit in your backyard or location of choice. The possibilities of performing rituals should be taken into account. The proposal can be simple or extravagant.

Scheduled activities can include rituals and/or workshops, or nothing except the annual meeting. In Shreveport, although we had workshops scheduled, we took an organic approach with board members speaking on subjects needing clarification. For example, we rehearsed the ritual songs prior to performing a rite. Another topic covered was using small, but pertinent tokens rather than food for the Remembrances of the God and Goddess honored at a Feast. By taking this approach, we had an opportunity to field questions that may not have come up in the course of the usual workshops. We thought this worked well.

Personally, I do like to see the annual meeting move hither and thither. This takes us to new places and adventures. More importantly, it gives the board of trustees the opportunity to meet and greet members and potential members in person.

---

## THE SEER'S PATH CONTINUED

(Continued from page 5)

most eminent physicians in Toronto, and was giving my treatment only at their request, and under their observation, they did not arrest me.”

Much testing was done on these herbs by the medical community during the years that followed. They even tried to give this herbal combination with injections, only to discover that the oral administration was more effective. It was also discovered that the herbs had to be given in combination as opposed to individually. I believe that the herbs work symbiotically with each other, as do most things in nature. I could go on and on about the benefits of essiac tea and its history, but there is not enough room in this publication. What follows is the herbs and the recipe for the Essiac Tea. I have also included its use. To be effective the recipe and its use should be followed exactly.

-----

### Indian Rhubarb Root (*Rheum Officinale*)

In small amounts, this herb acts as a gentle laxative and purges the body, especially the liver, of toxic buildup and waste. It helps counteract acids due to indigestion. Its malic acid also carries oxygen to all parts of the body, aiding in healing. Rhein present in the root, inhibits disease causing bacteria and *candida albicans* in the intestines. It helps reduce fever and inflammation. Studies show that rhubarb root has antibiotic and anti-tumor properties.

This can be found growing just about anywhere in the United States in moist rich soil in full sun. It is the roots which are used. They may be dug in the fall from well established plants and dried for later use. I have a little hint for you from experience. Clean and cut the root into small pieces and then dry. Trying to cut up and grind a large root that has first been dried is very difficult to say the least. Do not use the leaves as these are poisonous.

-----

### Sheep Sorrel (*Rumex Acetosella*)

Sheep Sorrel relieves internal ulcers and applied topically helps clear skin problems such as eczema and psoriasis. Rich in vitamins, and trace mineral elements, it nourishes the glandular system. Sheep sorrel contains silicon, a necessary element for nerves and the myelin sheath that protects them. Sheep Sorrel cleanses blood and improves liver, intestinal and bowel function.

Sheep Sorrel is a member of the buckwheat family and can be found growing from a somewhat woody creeping root stock in meadows and fields. It is green at first and becomes ruddy in color as it ages. The leaves are eared at the base, mostly clustered at the root becoming sparser on the stem. It is a fairly low growing herb with a sour taste.

-----

### Slippery Elm inner bark (*Ulmus Fulva*)

Principal component is mucilage which helps the body cleanse itself of toxic



SHEEP'S SORREL

(Continued on page 12)

## THE SEER'S PATH CONTINUED

(Continued from page 11)

waste. It helps nourish and restore plasma in the blood and lymph in the lymphatic system. It improves intestinal flora and soothes asthma. It also helps relieve acids from indigestion and eczema.

Slippery Elm is a deciduous tree which can be found in Central and Northern America. There are about twenty species of Elm across the United States. The bark and leaves are characteristically rough and deeply furrowed. The under layers are ruddy brown protecting the whitish aromatic fibers beneath. I guess the smell could be likened to the old cooked cereal Maypo. The leaves are extremely rough on top, deep yellowish olive green, lighter and sometimes rusty beneath. This tree flowers in March and April before the leaves appear. When harvesting the inner bark strip the rough outer bark from top to bottom in approximately 6" in width and 8" in length. The tree will heal this wound, never strip the bark from any tree completely around the trunk as this will kill the tree. The bark not only protects the tree from disease and bugs, but acts a circulatory system for the tree.

### **Burdock Root** (*Arctium lappa*)

Burdock cleanses the blood and lymphatic system. It contains Inulin, which strengthens the vital organs such as the liver, pancreas and spleen. It also reduces mucus and prevents formation of gall and kidney stones. Its vitamin A and selenium help eliminate free radicals and its chromium content helps regulate blood sugar levels.

The part of the burdock which is used is the root, and as mentioned before prepare it before drying. Burdock can be found growing in fields and woodland edges where soil is moist and rich. I am sure we have all had a run in with the burs of the burdock at least once or twice in our lifetimes. This is a plant which is well known to most people and cursed by some.



**BURDOCK**

## ESSIAC TEA

Burdock Root 6 ½ cups or 24 oz.

Cut into the size of a pea

Sheep Sorrel 16 oz. Powdered

Slippery Elm inner bark 4 oz. Powered

Indian Rhubarb root 1 oz. Powdered

Mix the herbs together very thoroughly! Use 1 cup of the mix to 2 gallons of distilled water. The reason for the distilled water is that distilled contains no minerals

(Continued on page 13)

## The Seer's Path CONTINUED

*(Continued from page 12)*

or nutrients thus it will pull more of the needed properties from the herbs.

Boil 2 gallons of water in a stainless steel or enamel with the lid on pot, **NOT** aluminum. Make sure the water has reached a rolling boil. Add the herbs and replace the lid, continue to boil at a reduced heat for 10 minutes. Turn off the stove and scrape down any herb on the sides of the pot, recover and let sit for 10-12 hours or even overnight.

Reheat once again to steaming , **DO NOT** let it boil. Turn off the heat and let settle a few minutes. Pour this through a strainer to catch the sediment into sterilized bottles and cap once the liquid is cool. These may be stored in a cool dark place or in the refrigerator.

You will have fine sediment in the bottles this is perfectly ok, you need only strain out the large pieces of the herbs.

To Use the Essiac .....Place 1 Oz. Of the tea in a cup with 2 oz. Of hot water . This should be sipped every night before bed on an empty stomach.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me through the Henge office. I hope that this herbal preparation helps many as it has helped many in the past.

## THE DRUID'S PATH CONTINUED

*(Continued from page 6)*

Diodorus, Posidonius, Caesar, and Strabo. The reference in Aristotle above may have been altered in the 2nd century BCE by a Greek scribe. A link between Pythagoras (very early 5th century BCE) and the Druids is sometimes said to exist through the connection (in a work by Strabo, 1st century BCE Greek historian and philosopher) of Abaris the Hyperborean's study with Pythagoras in Athens in the early 4th century BCE. Hecatus of Miletus (circa 500 BCE) is the source that supposedly connects the Hyperboreans with the British Isles and hence suggests that the plaid wearing (and magical acting) Abaris was a Druid.

I don't think that saying there were Druids among the Celts 2400 years ago is any great stretch as there were certainly reports of them being present 200 years ago and there are very strong suggestions that Druids existed among the Celts from their very earliest beginnings. That would push the presence of Druids among Celts back to about 3200 years ago or earlier. It's difficult to localize origins like this in an oral culture using only the rare references that were made in the literate cultures of the time. However, that's what the earliest recorded or attested classical histories have to say about the Druids. The insular traditions of course place the presence of Druids at a much earlier date in Ireland. That date is as early as 3800 years BP. This comes from an oral tradition and awaits archaeological findings to verify such an early date. All one can say is that Druids are reported throughout the insular literature and tales from the earliest of times.

In Irish traditions, Druids are said to have existed among their deities in the beginnings of the world. Some medieval Poets attempted to place this in the time period of about the early 2nd millennium BCE. That placement would be a mytho-traditional placement and have little in the archaeological record to certify it though (as can be seen) my discussion on Stonehenge and Newgrange ranges far beyond that point.

Jean Louis Bruneaux wrote a decent treatise on Druids and Druidism in his work, *\_The Celtic Gauls\_*. There is also a book by Francoise Le Roux and Christian-J, Guyonvarc'h, in French, entitled *\_Les Druides\_* that should answer many questions about Druids and Druidism on the continent.

As a case in point, the ritual center at Gournay certainly demonstrates that this was the case with nine votive pits. A trench or ditch around the ritual area also was filled with the bones and remains of the sacrifices. Sites in the British Isles have been excavated showing this practice of using pits and trenches was widespread for Druids in Celtic culture.

One such site is on Hayling Island in Hampshire. Its organization and components give us a pretty good idea of Celtic sanctuary and sacred space in Britain of the Iron Age:

(The site URL is: <http://www.barnarch.u-net.com/Hayling.htm>)

"The architecture of the temple is clearly designed to enhance the differentiation of the sacred site from the surrounding area (Webster 1995), and as such the outer enclosure formed the most significant element of the complex and may have formed the nemeton in Celtic parlance (Piggott 1978). The inner enclosure appears to have served primarily as an additional form of differentiation within the enclosure, cutting off what was probably the main ritual area from the rest of the temple. The pit seems to have been the focus. Deposition, on the other hand, was carried out in specific zones of the site, notably on the south side, i.e. the left-hand side for worshippers approaching the temple and its focus from the entrance on the east side. This zonation may perhaps be linked with allusions by Poseidonius (quoted in Athenaeus IV, 152D) to Celts paying respect to the gods by turning to the right (Webster 1995:460), apparently indicating a spatially significant element to ritual practice, that perhaps also had its counterparts in everyday life (Fitzpatrick 1994). If Poseidonius is taken literally, it could be that sacrificial actions took place on the right-hand (northerly) side of the enclosure, whilst the deposition of the votive remains

*(Continued on page 15)*

## THE DRUID'S PATH CONTINUED

*(Continued from page 14)*

took place on the left-hand side. Clearly the act of deposition was important during the making of votive offerings, and for Hayling Island (but not all Iron Age temples, e.g. Gournay) the locus of these actions was mainly in a particular south-easterly zone within the enclosure."

The south-easterly zone is particularly significant as this is where the House of Donn is to be found in relation to the land of Ireland. Perhaps this is a case of a country, sanctuaries and homes all taking their structure from the sacred cosmology? If that's true for Iron Age Celts, it would place them squarely in agreement with temple and sacred space/sanctuary organization for other Indo-European people.

Regarding offerings and sacrifices made at these sacred sites and enclosures, it is said that pigs, cows, bulls, dogs, people and boars were offered as sacrifices in Druid ritual at sites on the Continent, in Britain and Ireland.

Some of these deities were chthonic. There is Donn, the Lord of the Dead in Irish traditions and his cognate Gwynn ap Nudd in Welsh mythology. Metrical Dindshenchas has a tale about Crom who was said to be a god that demanded human sacrifice and was symbolized in a stone circle which was decorated with gold and silver adornments for the stones. St. Patrick is said to have taken a sledgehammer to these stones in one of the legends associated with him.

The tales of Irish history, myth and traditions are filled with mention of Druids. This is true for the earliest of their histories as it is down to the time that Christianity became the established religion of the Irish. It is certainly true that much of the Irish oral history was synchronized by the scribes and monks to give them a connection to ancient Jewish history and hence a large role in the Judeo-Christian tradition into which they were injecting themselves. Part of this alteration of the histories attempted to show how Noah was related to some of the first people who were said to have come to Ireland. Another alteration of the traditions occurred to show how the Irish aided the Hebrews at the time of Moses. A story was told to show how an Irish linguist was present at the event on the Plain of Shinar of the Tower of Babel. The role of the pre-Christian Irish deities was reduced to being ancestors and heroes instead of gods. Some of these gods were reduced to the status of saints or angels, while a very few of them were characterized as being eternal-non-dying beings who were usually apart from normal reality. These factors are important to keep in mind when reading the written Irish histories. Another thing to understand is that the traditions and histories were not completely obliterated or lost. Much survived from the earliest of times. Part of that survival was due to the role of the Filidh before during and after the time of the Christian synchronization of Irish history. The Filidh were an independent historical and educational system from that of the Church. They are recognized as being the inheritors in that role of the roles of the Druids for Irish Celtic culture. Much in the Irish Annals and surviving histories accurately reflects what happened in the eyes of the people who first recorded the events and as maintained, interpreted and altered by those who followed them. Much the same thing happened in the recording of Jewish history.

History is an important tool in archaeology. It helps one to understand the provenance and influences that appear to be recorded in the archaeological record. Even myths can lead one to important discoveries.

The Irish traditions, myths and histories tell us that there were Druids among the first people to appear in Ireland. They also tell us that even the deities of the ancient Irish had Druids. Beyond that, they also report that the latest wave of culture to sweep across Ireland before the coming of Christianity, the Milesians also had Druids among them. To me, this says explicitly that the Irish believed that Druids and their ways were a part of the history of their people from its beginnings. This idea was not altered or synchronized with Christianity when the great synchronism of Irish history occurred at the hands of the early church. If that was true of Irish culture before Celtic culture or Christian culture influenced it, then what of British or Gaulish cultures where Druids were

*(Continued on page 16)*

## THE DRUID'S PATH CONTINUED

*(Continued from page 15)*

reported to have originated and encountered by the Roman armies and their historians? I'd think that Druids would have been said to be a part of their culture/people from the beginnings of remembered history. We know that the classical historians mention Druids in the 2nd century BCE. We hear about magical and religious practices among the Celts as far back as 2400 years BP. The idea of a cohesive Celtic culture is advanced by some modern academics to have started some 3000+ years BP (if not 4000+BP). Were Druids present in these cultures from the earliest of times? It's certainly my position that Druids were there. I say this because Druids were the cohesive, educational, maintaining, socio-religious, legalistic, artistic and linguistic function of Celtic society. I didn't invent this idea. It's reported by Celtic historians and traditions from the earliest of times.

In the case of Ireland, it's known as the Irish Celtic Druid Tradition and it spans a time from the present day back about 3800 years. For the first 2000 years, the traditions were maintained by the Druids using oral mnemonic techniques. After the development of Old Irish, this tradition was recorded by scribes in books, many of which survive today. That's what history and the tradition itself tells us about itself. Starting in the 5th century and continuing through the 14th century CE, Irish monks, Poets and scribes recorded the traditions in writing.

The relationship of one Celtic Druidic tradition to another is of course not exact. However, there are a considerable number of similarities between all of them based on what is known. The Irish and British traditions have more written histories and a better preservation of their traditions, especially the mythology and cultural practices. The practices of the Druids of Gaul that have survived were mainly preserved by the classical Greek and Roman historians. Some tales do survive and of course there are the written records, mainly invocations, curses and the odd manuscript, and additionally the Coligny Calendar. Here again, the Gaulish practices that we know from this sparse record for Druids is very similar to what we know about Irish and British Druids. Matches have also been accomplished for the major deity types in Gaul, Britain and Ireland.

When Christianity was introduced among the Irish Celts, many Druids and Filidh (Vision Poets) became monks and priests and many did not. The legal arm of the Druids (known as Brehons in Ireland) continued in practice for another 1200 years. The Poets or Filidh also continued as an independent power group among the Irish during that time. They are considered to have inherited and fulfilled many of the roles that the Druids held before Christianity. Even after Christianity, one of the most noted Irish saints (St. Columba, known in Irish as Columcille) said that Christ was his Druid.

On the continent of Europe, there are ritual enclosures, votive pits and road ways, as well as ceremonial weaponry and ritual tools. However, it is difficult to find items that correlate between the cultures. In fact, it is difficult just to find any items of themselves, let alone those that might be common between cultures. I think that as more and more ritual centers are discovered and investigated, through archaeology, a better picture will emerge for all of the Druid traditions.

Druidism was a philosophy and a spirituality that addressed the Celtic concern with the imminence of the Otherworld and the effect of its denizens on worldly matters. The primary areas of concern were in terms of productivity and prosperity as well as success in battle and raiding. There were major festivals and feast throughout the Celtic world that the Druids were said to officiate. Some of the practices of the Druids, the vision poets and the seers included psycho-human conscious alteration in a manner similar to shamanism. The Druids themselves were scholar-philosopher-priests. They served their people and the kings as advisors, priests and magical workers, in addition to being the closest thing to scientists of the day.

The term Celtic, is referencing cultures that had a Celtic language, produced Celtic art and music and who were governed by Celtic law codes and a kind of traditional "common knowledge." This knowledge among the

*(Continued on page 17)*

## The DRUID'S PATH CONTINUED

*(Continued from page 16)*

Irish was known as coimgne. I mainly study Irish Druidism (which is known as Draíocht), but I also attempt to keep up to date on Welsh materials and any discoveries about Druids or Celtic religious practices that are uncovered on the Continent.

Celtic religion changed after being influenced by Christianity in many of the same ways that Jewish religion changed after Christianity also influenced it. The new religions are not the same as the old religions. The customs are different. The priesthood is different. The languages are different. Even the art is different. When the Jewish religion had prophets it was different from a Jewish religion without prophets. When Celtic religion had Druids, it was different from when it didn't have Druids. We know about Jewish religions because the oral traditions were set down when writing was introduced and the prophets and patriarchs stories were recorded. We know about Celtic religions and Druids because their oral traditions were recorded and set down when writing was introduced to Celtic culture. In the writings that recorded Celtic culture we learn that Druids were a part of that culture for some 2000 years before the histories, laws, tales, myths and traditions were written by the scribes and monks. In Jewish culture we learn about the histories of the Jews, their laws, tales, myths and traditions by much the same methods of recoding an oral history in writing.

The recording of history has a lot of influences on it. That was true in the past as it is today. Religion, politics, personal and national bias, wars and natural disasters all serve to change the ways and accuracies of recorded histories. None the less, we do have them and they can be evaluated in spite of their being influenced, changed or colored. The same sorts of influences affect how archaeologists interpret the archaeological record in part but not as greatly because the artifacts often survive through many periods of interpretation. I'm hoping that as more artifacts from ancient Celtic religions survive, we'll have a better and less biased understanding of the Druids.

The tales of Irish history, myth and traditions are filled with mention of Druids. This is true for the earliest of their histories as it is down to the time that Christianity became the established religion of the Irish. It is certainly true that much of the Irish oral history was synchronized by the scribes and monks to give them a connection to ancient Jewish history and hence a large role in the Judeo-Christian tradition into which they were injecting themselves. Part of this alteration of the histories attempted to show how Noah was related to some of the first people who were said to have come to Ireland. Another alteration of the traditions occurred to show how the Irish aided the Hebrews at the time of Moses. A story was told to show how an Irish linguist was present at the event on the Plain of Shinar of the Tower of Babel.

The role of the pre-Christian Irish deities was reduced to being ancestors and heroes instead of gods. Some of these gods were reduced to the status of saints or angels, while a very few of them were characterized as being eternal-non-dying beings who were usually apart from normal reality. These factors are important to keep in mind when reading the written Irish histories. Another thing to understand is that the traditions and histories were not completely obliterated or lost. Much survived from the earliest of times. Part of that survival was due to the role of the Filidh before during and after the time of the Christian synchronization of Irish history. The Filidh were an independent historical and educational system from that of the Church. They are recognized as being the inheritors in that role of the roles of the Druids for Irish Celtic culture. Much in the Irish Annals and surviving histories accurately reflects what happened in the eyes of the people who first recorded the events and as maintained, interpreted and altered by those who followed them. Much the same thing happened in the recording of Jewish history.

History is an important tool in archaeology. It helps one to understand the provenance and influences that appear to be recorded in the archaeological record. Even myths can lead one to important discoveries. The Irish traditions, myths and histories tell us that there were Druids among the first people to appear in Ireland. They also

*(Continued on page 18)*

## The DRUID'S PATH CONTINUED

*(Continued from page 17)*

tell us that even the deities of the ancient Irish had Druids. Beyond that, they also report that the latest wave of culture to sweep across Ireland before the coming of Christianity, the Milesians also had Druids among them. To me, this says explicitly that the Irish believed that Druids and their ways were a part of the history of their people from its beginnings. This idea was not altered or synchronized with Christianity when the great synchronism of Irish history occurred at the hands of the Christians. If that was true of Irish culture before Celtic culture or Christian culture influenced it, then what of British or Gaulish cultures where Druids were reported to have originated and encountered by the Roman armies and their historians.

CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE

## The Bard's Path CONTINUED

(Continued from page 7)

Doubts that this might not be a Druid site were dashed at the discovery of the adjoining trilithon, which was accompanied by a circle of flat stones discretely embedded in the earth, directly to the west of the henge, as well as the beehives. See the second photo.

A local Druid elder calls the find “intriguing” but he has been excluded from the investigations because he might actually know something about the subject. He told this reporter about ancient references to feathered cloaks, spirit flight, unusual chants (crowing?) and, of course, the fabled “Druid’s Egg,” not to mention the cultivation of bees and brewing of sacred mead. He mentioned the travels of Bran the Navigator as a possible means of intercourse between the continents. There are also, I might note, local rumors about another Druid settlement at one time having been centered around something called the “Swift Coon” – possibly related to a local town called “Coon Rapids.”

The location has been kept secret in order to prevent masses of visitors that would threaten the fragility of the site, especially while investigations continue throughout the year to determine if there is a relationship between the placement of the uprights and the rising and setting of the sun and/or moon. My sources tell me that the site has now been disguised as an ordinary chicken coup and yard in order to maintain its secrecy and to prevent aerial discovery. This has become even more important since a small local (and aberrant) religious group has expressed an interest in finding and destroying the site because it threatens their view of the way things should be. They have to date been unsuccessful.

The experts expect to have their report ready in about a year, which will be called “Chicken Coup for the Soul.”

**HUMAN BLOOD  
WAS FOUND**

---



---

**Keltian Remembrance Cord Starter Kit**

New and improved with Stone & Fossil Beads  
\$14.95 each plus \$5.00 P&H per order

Send check or money order to:  
**Wren Rocks**  
3455 Shawnee Trl SE  
Smyrna, GA 30080

## THE HENGE OF KELTRIA

2350 Spring Rd, PMB-140  
Smyrna, GA 30080-2630

Tony Taylor, Editor  
E-Mail: <http://www.keltria.org/E-Mail.htm>

© Copyright 2007

All material published in Henge Happenings is  
© Copyright by The Henge of Keltria, Inc.  
All rights are reserved.

This publication is also:  
Protected by the Berne Convention.

---

ON THE WEB AT  
[WWW.KELTRIA.ORG](http://WWW.KELTRIA.ORG)

---

DRUIDISM FOR THE  
21ST CENTURY™

Keltrian Druidism is a spiritual path dedicated to revering the Nature Spirits, honoring the Ancestors, and worshipping the Deities of the ancient Irish. The Henge of Keltria is a nonprofit church (501(c)(3)) dedicated to providing information, training, and networking to those who practice or who are interested in Keltrian Druidism, Druidism in general, and the evolution of mind, body, and spirit through an Irish context.

### Keltrian Druid Beliefs

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

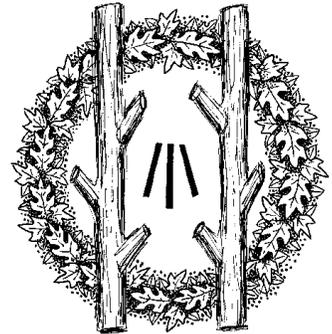
We believe that **morality should be a matter of personal conviction** based upon self respect and respect for others.

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.

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.**

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

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.



KELTRIAN DRUID SIGIL