

"Un-official Welcome Pamphlet" (UWP) for Prospective Reformed Druids ⊕ and ⊕ Proto-Grove Planners

Rough Draft: Version 4.21 (11/14/2005)

(You don't need to read or use this pamphlet.)
(And no we're really not as well-organized as this pamphlet may make us appear.)

Providing a taste-sampler of our thoughts,
writings, and rudimentary structuring.

A combination of three or four previously separate publications,
but do not infer that it is necessary for all to start or join a Grove.



Formatted for **double-sided** printing and binding.

From the Propaganda and Proselytizing
Public Relations Department of the
D.C. Grove, one Grove of the RDNA
**Speaking only on its own behalf,
and not on behalf of the whole Reform.**

2006 Edition
The Drynemetum Press



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The Editor of this work was primarily:
Mike Scharding of the D.C. Grove mikerdna@hotmail.com who may be difficult to reach starting in 2006 due to overseas deployment. Please do not expect a quick reply.

Note: Most references to "Druids" in this book are meant to refer to "Reformed Druids", unless otherwise implied. We do get sloppy sometimes or it becomes rhetorically difficult to continually use "Reformed Druid" instead of the abbreviated "Druid". Members from strict reconstructive organizations that try to re-create older forms of Celtic spirituality, may object to groups like RDNA, ADF and Keltria using the term "Druid" for non-clergy membership. Our tradition is 40 years old and we do not intend to change, nor do we mean to limit other groups from employing more stringent terminology within their own groups.

Dedication

This pamphlet is dedicated to Azeem whose budding ministry inspired my own to ripen in unexpected ways. I wish him the best of luck.

Watermark

To turn off the printed watermark, "An Un-Official Document" in MS Word go to Format menu, Background, Printed Watermark, and select "No watermark".



Make notes. This is a work in progress. I'm quite interested in additional input or suggestions to improve this work, then please contact me at mikerdna@hotmail.com and I'll try to reply back within a week or two.

Section One: Introductory Materials

Dear Prospective Druid

Welcome.

Due to the frequency of a large number of people asking to join the Reformed Druids over the years, I have consolidated a few essays to ease the burden of correspondence on my ever more limited time.

It is quite un-official, and you do not need to read it. Really, you can chuck it and wing it on your own, and it would probably be fine.

Somehow, you finally ran across the RDNA and are interested in them. I see the RDNA as a simple rag-tag band of philosophers, anarchists, dreamers and lovers of wisdom seeking Awareness through the study of the Earth-Mother, which is Nature. It's not the best fit for all folk, probably, but I kind of like it.

We began in 1963 at Carleton College in Minnesota, as a humorous protest against mandatory attendance of religious services, and have expanded since then to question and pursue many other ideas. We have since spread new Groves in many parts of North America and also to Asia & Europe in recent years. There are 40 or so Groves and ProtoGroves with maybe 500 Grove members, and a scattering of about 3500 solitaries, most of them a bit hermetical.

My name is Mike, I'm a young member of the Reform, and I joined in 1989 at Carleton. My hobby is collecting the history of the RDNA, but I am not the official gatekeeper, nor the leader of all Reformed Druids. I'm just an archivist, and I've been an Arch Druid of a few local Groves, and trained quite a few people. So my words may also be of some assistance to you. However, I speak only for myself, and even then I often disagree with myself.

I hope this publication will give you a greater sense of some general trends that I personally believe our group does and doesn't do, just to get you started. This is a very confusing and bizarre group for many newcomers. After that, you can freely decide for yourself, based on your own observations. If you contact other members, and I recommend you seek their advice also, they may give you quite different opinions on our group. My other enormous collections were more general grab-bags to explore at leisure later in one's Druidism rather than to begin with, so I endeavored here (in UWP) to keep this booklet focused on practical points, rather than delving into some more mystical or philosophical tangents and debates that some members have contributed to our dialogues.

Many people from many traditions participate in Reformed Druidism, not just Neo-Pagans. Finding a comfortable path is not

All essays and nearly all RDNA documents in the UWP are un-official and represent purely the opinions of their authors.

easy or quick. Many members will change paths several times before settling in with a main tradition. We recognize that for many in the Reform, the RDNA has often been like a temporary religious way-station (a spiritual Howard Johnsons, if you will) where people of many traditions, bound by a reverence for nature, desire for simplicity, and a wry sense of humor, congregate and interact to a varying degree and for varying amounts of time.

Some Reformed Druids, like myself, have found it a convenient permanent base from which to sally forth, confront and investigate the world, but it's not my only religious outlet. For some, the RDNA is oddly sufficient, in and of itself, for all their needs. And, yes, for others, it is a mistaken choice, soon abandoned or forgotten as they proceed to greener pastures.

Our tradition appears to be relatively unfocused, because we have no group-wide agreement on what "religion", "gods" and other terms mean. It is an endless dialogue in progress. Our group facilitates the spread of questions, rather than the accumulation of answers. What do we do in the Reform, besides pondering everything? The answer is usually; "Whatever you need to do, in your own Grove or by yourself."

You are more than welcome to be a member of the RDNA and another Druid group, or any known religion or philosophy, at the same time. There are indeed traditional ordination ceremonies (i.e. 1st, 2nd, 3rd Orders) for those who wish to undertake greater responsibilities, but there are many valued members who choose to be casual acquaintances; who contribute and exchange their thoughts and deeds, but do not attend services or undergo ordinations.

Please go where thou wilt, be it in our direction or elsewhere. Take your time in choosing which route you may wish to do. Whatever happens, try to keep a sense of humor and wit, and enjoy this journey you are on.

Yours sincerely

Mike the Fool

Arch Druid of D.C. Grove

Day 1 of Geamreadh, Year XVIII

(Nov 1, 2005 c.e.)



**Michael, Perverse Perpetrator of
Purveying Pernicious Propaganda.**



Quick Resource List

Although we are a highly dis-organized group in theory and practice, a number of useful optional resources have accreted and are currently available for you to utilize at your convenience. You can probably learn most of life's important lessons from participation in Nature and society, if you keep your eyes and ears open. So let's take a quick tour here

Nature

Let's face it, Druids are crazy about Nature, and it is our primary source of inspiration and it is as cheap and accessible as just going out your backdoor or looking out the window. There is a tendency for Druids to get bogged down in bookish pursuits and debates, but try not to forget our oldest and greatest teacher, Mother Nature.

Universities, night schools and parks have classes or clubs (bird watchers, clean-up crews, arbor day planters, etc) organized in studying or exploring the local natural resources.

My Personal Homepage

Not to be egotistical, but I feel ~~tha'stha'stha's~~ a very useful place to find all these resources listed on this page. Other Groves and individuals have homepages too, but mine is ridiculously big.

<http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna>

Reformed Druid Groves

It's rather difficult to keep track of Groves and Proto-Groves, because they don't report regularly to any central authority. So they tend to disappear and form without warning. Some Groves have their own websites too. I keep a list of those I am aware of at

<http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/whereGrove.html>

Reformed Druid Magazines

We have rather successfully eschewed written dogma and the often numbing effect it has on personal exploration, but we have published some of our past thoughts for future reflection.

We've been publishing different newsletters for about 27 years. There is currently a free on-line 30 pg. magazine called "A Druid Missal-Any which is published eight times per year since 2000 at <http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/news.html> whose editor, Stacey, is poppinjay@earthlink.net.

ProtoGroves often send in short news updates every 6 weeks there to let people know they exist, and invite people to join in on their projects. It is a useful way to note progress and trends in other Groves on a seasonal basis, and pick up useful tips.

Reformed Druid Conferences

If you'd like to talk with folk in Groves and Proto-Groves and interested solitaries about issues of setting up a group, general Druidical topics and just gossip, then you might join an unofficial conference on yahoo groups.com called RDNAtalk at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/RDNAtalk/> with 350+ members.

But you're welcome to figure it out on your own, as we all must in some areas. Don't worry, it sounds organized, but it is just loosely managed chaos, really. :)

There are about 8 or 9 other small Reformed Druid conferences on side topics or by local Groves to better organize themselves. I list them on the list of Druid Groves mentioned above.

Links to Other Druid Groups

The RDNA encourages you to study with and belong to multiple groups, as you'll learn much from all of them. Besides, we're not cool enough to deserve all your attention. For a more comprehensive list of other groups visit <http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/drulinks.html>

For deep serious study of the myriad modern Druid movements see <http://www.geocities.com/druidarchives>

If you are determined to be strictly Celtically aligned, you may do that in the RDNA, which allows a great diversity of Grove-themes, but do not expect the rest of us to be so inclined. If such an orientation is important to you (beyond just your own local Grove, on an organizational level) then one of our spin-off Druid groups such as "Ar nDraiocht Fein (ADF)" at www.adf.org or "The Henge of Keltria" at www.keltria.org may be more to your liking.

Historical Materials (a whole lot of them)

Reformed Druids do not have "scriptures" but we love to write our personal thoughts and share the stuff we make. I have collected three very large volumes (800 pages each) of all this marginally useful paraphernalia from our 43 years of creativity. I have called this collection, "A Reformed Druid Anthology", most people simply say ARDA 1 (1996) and ARDA 2 (2005).

<http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/arda.html>

In there you'll find a hundred essays on perennial topics of "what does Reformed Druidry mean?", a hundred sample liturgies by different Groves, dictionaries of arcane and obscure terms, more elaborate calendar systems, various interviews with prominent folk, lengthy collections of great stories, wise proverbs, funny jokes and moving songs, and of course, 27 years of past newsletters and magazines. You could literally spend years sifting through this flea-market for ideas, suggestions and tips. You could also add to the collection with your ideas, or you can happily ignore it.

Academic Links for Study

To get more guidance on the study of ancient Celts, modern Neopagan movements, modern Druidry, and such, then check out <http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/acalinks1.html> It was assembled in 2001, and a bit out of date. Volume 10 of the Green Books in ARDA2 is also useful. It's useful to establish a foundation of the basic facts before launching into fantasy. A number of booklists of reputable sources may help clear the cobwebs.

Simple Druid Mailing List

Two or three times a month, I send out a short letter to announce various new RDNA publications or news; feel free to join by asking me to mail you(mikerdna@hotmail.com). You do not have to read them, many don't and do just fine.

Your friends, family, neighbors and teachers

Although they aren't self-labeled Druids, it doesn't mean they don't have a lot to teach you about life and society. Don't be shy or reclusive. Talk and LISTEN to the people around you, involve yourself in community affairs, and be a good involved citizen.

The more resources you have access to, the easier it will be to overcome problems, cope with difficulties and deepen in wisdom and Awareness as a Reformed Druid.

The following is an old, but useful, summary.

What is Reformed Druidism?

Reformed Druids of North America
By David Frangquist in a Flyer for Fall 1965 at Carleton

Origins

Reformed Druidism has its beginning at Carleton College in the spring of 1963 as a protest to the college's requirement that all students attend a certain number of religious services or meetings. One of the ways of fulfilling the requirement was by attending services of one's own religion. The Reformed Druids of North America proposed to test the degree of freedom permitted under this clause.

Druidism was ideal for this attack. It had a perfect combination of exotic ritual plus some relevance to the so-called Judeo-Christian tradition. If religious credit were granted, the religious requirement could be exposed as totally ineffective. If, on the other hand, credit were denied, the college could be charged with bigotry. The initial attitude of the college was, "If we ignore them, they'll go away." But the RDNA not only refused to go away, it grew, acquiring an advisor, and becoming a registered college organization.

In June, 1964, the religious requirement was repealed. Even though the Druids rejoiced at this triumph, they recognized that their job was not over. For many members the movement had come to represent a valuable part of their spiritual lives. So there was the importance of continuing the RDNA as a protest against all coerced religion.

Principles

Druidism boasts its lack of institutionalized dogma. Each Druid is required only to adopt these Basic Tenets:

- (1) One of the many ways in which the object of Man's search for religious truth can be found is through Nature: the Earth-Mother.
- (2) Nature, being one of the primary concerns in Man's life and struggle, and being one of the objects of creation, is important to Man's spiritual quests.

(The phrase "objects of creation" does not necessarily imply a single Creator, but it does imply an important link between the spiritual and the material realms)

In Reformed Druidism, the material realm, Nature, is personified as the Earth-Mother. The abstract essence of the universe, in opposition to the material world, is referred to as Be'al, from a word which the ancient Celts applied to an abstract supreme being. The "object of Man's search" is called "awareness," and it is defined as "unity with Be'al".

Ritual

In accord with the Basic Tenets, all Reformed Druid worship must be directed toward Nature. For this reason, many customs and rituals of the Ancient Druids, who were essentially Nature-worshippers, are retained.

Druid worship must, in so far as possible, be held in the out-of-doors; an oak Grove, or a hill or other prominence, is ideal. According to ancient Druid custom, the officiating Druids, and others who so wish, ought to be clad in long white robes; the robe of the Arch Druid having a distinctive decoration or color. The waters-of-life are usually passed to all present as a symbol of the link man has with Nature. Incantation and other ancient Celtic ritual is also used; but in "Reformed" Druidism, human sacrifice is out.

In order to focus attention on Nature, various aspects of it retain the names of their corresponding Celtic gods and goddesses.

Dalon Ap Landu - the Grove
Grannos - healing springs
Braciaca - malt
Belenos - the sun
Sirona (goddess) - rivers
Taranis - thunder & lightning
Llyr- the sea
Danu (goddess) - fertility

Festivals

Druid festivals correspond to the important dates of the old Druid year. Celebration always begins at sundown the previous evening, and includes bonfires and revelry appropriate to the season.

Samhain - Nov. 1; "Halloween" begins the period of Geimredh.
Midwinter - the winter solstice; day of the "Yule log"
Oimele - Feb. 1; begins the period of Earrach.
Beltane - May 1; "May Day," begins period of Samradh.
Midsummer - the summer solstice
Lugnasadh (Brón Troghain) - Aug. 1; day for gatherings and feasts, begins the period of Foghamhar.

The phases of the moon also ought to be followed closely. A new venture should be begun only when the moon is waxing, an old one consummated only when it is waning. The night of the full moon is a time of rejoicing; while the night of the new moon is a solemn occasion, calling for vigils and meditation.

Organization

Each organization (known as a Grove) has three officers: an Arch Druid, who must be a third order priest or higher, to direct worship; a Preceptor, who must be at least a second order Druid, to handle business matters; and a Server, to assist the Arch Druid.

To become a first order Druid, a person must partake of the waters-of-life, and affirm his acceptance of the Basic Tenets (listed under Principles above).

To become a second order Druid, one must pledge himself to the service of Druidism, as well as have an understanding of basic Druidism.

To become a third order priest, one must dedicate himself to a life of Druidic inquiry, the beginning of which is an all-night, outdoor vigil.

Higher orders of the priesthood (up to the tenth) are reserved for outstanding insight and dedication over a period of time. They are similar to academic degrees in that they represent personal achievement, but carry no special authority. Each order of the priesthood is dedicated to one of the eight aspects of Nature mentioned under Ritual.

Purpose

On a superficial level, it might now seem that the purpose of Reformed Druidism is merely to delve into the strange customs and rituals of the ancient Celts, and to have some fun doing it, and also to serve as a new and different type of protest movement.

But, on deeper examination of the RDNA, it might be said to have two important purposes: (1) It offers a reasonable alternative for the person who cannot stomach organized religion, or who feels that it is somehow deficient; and it hopes that its exotic forms of worship will appeal to the rebel. (2) In communing with Nature, it seeks to promote a spirit of meditation and introspection, aimed ultimately at awareness of religious truth.

The Two Basic Tenets

A lot of ink has been spilt over what Reformed Druidism is about, and what qualities are most admirable in a Reformed Druid, but there is a general agreement on the minimal standards of what makes a Reformed Druid: the belief in the Basic Tenets.

The founders of Reformed Druidism believed that all religions began from the observation of Nature, including Ancient Druidism, therefore our first teacher has always been Nature. Therefore, the Reform has only required two Basic Tenets of its members for the last 40 years.

In the original Carleton College Grove constitution in 1963, the basic tenets were simply indicated as:

1. North American Reformed Druids believe that one of the many ways in which the object of man's search for religious truth can be found is through Nature, the Earth-Mother.

2. North American Reformed Druids believe that Nature, being one of the primary concerns in man's life and struggle, and being one of the Objects of Creation, is important to man's spiritual quests.

But this apparently wasn't very inspiring. So, a year later, in the flowery prose of the "Druid Chronicles" publication in 1964, they are mostly vividly described and elaborated by Franguist as:

1. The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a neverending search, may be found through the Earth Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.

2. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it we do live, yea, even as we do struggle through life are we come face to face with it.

However, most Druids can't even remember this, much less recite them clearly, so we nowadays sometimes use a shorthand:

1. Nature is good.
2. Likewise, Nature is good.

Myself, personally, I like summarize it as 'Nature is Nature'. Which is less debatable for me, but I most like the version in the Chronicles as the most expressive.

So, I feel that belief in the two Basic Tenets means you are a generic Reformed Druid. Some folks believe that just the affirmation of the Basic Tenets also makes you a First Order Reformed Druid, but others also require the partaking of the Waters of Life at a Grove service. Being a Reformed Druid doesn't necessarily mean that others have to like you or that you're particularly amazing.

See Chapter 1 of Customs in the Druid Chronicles at the back of this booklet for a more confusing explanation.

For isolated Druids, who don't have access to a Grove, I've invented recently the optional Zero Order, a.k.a. the Order of the Acorn, for those who believe in the Basic Tenets, but lack access to Waters. You are welcome to use that or ignore that in this packet.

Symbols of the Reform

The most common symbol of the Reform is the "Druid Sigil" seen below. Just a circle with two lines going through it. It was apparently created in 1963 by David Fisher, possibly from a dim memory of a similar Free-mason symbol, or that may be just a coincidence. There is no official meaning to the symbol, and it has been adopted by several off-shoots of Reformed Druidism, such as ADF, Keltria and White Oak.

In ancient days, Druids were reported to wear white robes (see Pliny), but in recent days, several racist organizations have paraded in white robes, so many Druids prefer to use other colored robes to avoid confusion. I prefer plaid. Many Druids do not wear robes or ceremonial clothing, due to the bother, or finding it silly.

Since many Reformed Druids are quite infatuated with Celtic culture, a number of symbols from Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Brittany and elsewhere have been adopted and employed. It would be too difficult to list them all, but the tri-line of Awen or the three legged spinning triskele are sometimes employed. Like the better-known, but now defamed and banned four-armed swastika, it was originally a widely-used symbol of the sun in ancient times in Europe and India and beyond. The Three Rayed Awen tri-line symbolizes the three drops of wisdom from Cerridwen's cauldron that fell on the tongue of the bard Taliesin. Three is an important mythological number for Druids.



Druids are also quite the aficionados of oak trees, so the oak leaf and acorn are quite common in Druidic pictures or paraphernalia.

Sometimes a Druid will show off and write in the Ogham alphabetic script, looking like a line with many scratches on it. Celtic knot drawings are also quite common.

The Waters of Life are shared at Reformed Druidic services during the summer half of the year, and the Waters of Sleep in the winter half. So, chalices and whiskey and water appear quite a bit.

Various Orders have ribbons or badges for it's members. Third Order Druids wear red ribbons in summer and white ones in winter.



Ancient Druids waited in caves for the first light of the year to shine through the entrance. Sometimes they got a bit bored.

Section Two:

Proto-Grove Primer

What's a ProtoGrove?

When a group of people get together to enjoy Druidic pursuits, you have a Proto-Grove. Some are very simple, others are complicated matters.

One of the first hurdles in establishing a Proto-Grove is that there are not many clear rules or procedures. There are a lot of alternate ways that Druids align themselves and interact with few explanations anywhere. Therefore, let me give you my recommendations.

How is Reformed Druidism organized?

That is a more complex question. The simple answer is "not very well". The more I study the ways Reformed Druids have interacted, there seems to be a method to their madness. It is not an easy talk to build or explain a structure that was designed to be the antithesis of liturgy.

How can I start a Proto-Grove or get Ordained?

There are many opinions on these topics too, and I'll give you some of my insights into the diversity of ways these two goals can be approached and some advice on why you might not want to do them also.

As always, the advice is just my recommendations, and it is up to you whether you want to use it or not or interpret things differently, based on your observations and research.



Structure and the Lack of It in Reformed Druidism

Historical Types of Reformed Druidic Organization Styles

Rough Draft 9/12/05

A little lesson in different historical types of organization in The Reform (a new term I coined to include all the branches of Reformed Druidism, present, past & future). While some may disagree on the details, this should provide a starting point for future debates and people learning about The Reform for the first time. These are, of course, my own thoughts.



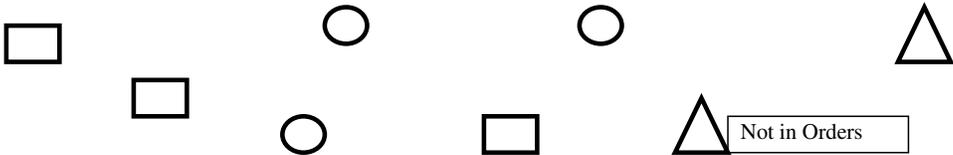
KEY TO CHARTS

STAR=Arch Druid (3rd Order), SQUARE=Another 3rd Order Druid (optional),
CIRCLE=1st or 2nd Order Druids or Druids of no Orders. TRIANGLE=Druid with no
order and wandering about. The number of objects in diagrams is not relevant.

Although there are some Groves which have eschewed the use of Orders, a Grove generally has at least three members. At least one member (often two or three) are members of the Third Order, who generally lead services and do Ordinations for members entering 1st, 2nd & 3rd Orders. A Grove usually holds an election once a year to elect the Arch-Druid (from the pool of Third Order Druids), a Preceptor (from the pool of people of 2nd or 3rd Order) and a Server (from the pool of people 1st Order and up). In most Branches of "The Reform", you can belong to any religion, philosophy or creed and also be a member of their Grove at the same time; although some other religions will not reciprocate this permissiveness. Usually, the Arch-Druid is the figure head of the group, and the one most busy with leading services and ordinations and holding meetings. The Preceptor usually assists in services and keeps track of records. The Server also assists in services and helps out where possible. A Grove usually has a constitution, which is submitted to the Carleton Arch Druid (AD) for record keeping. Most Groves have quite a bit of autonomy and vary greatly from other Groves.

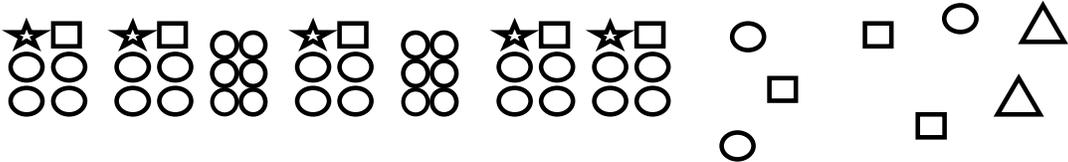


Originally, new Groves were formed by a Third Order Druid on vacation or moving to a new location and establishing a new group. Nowadays, people hear about the RDNA long before a Reformed Druid arrives in a region. A few of those people there band together to form a group, and usually eventually one of their members seeks the ordination to the Third Order, by either traveling far, or inviting a Third Order priest to visit them. During this period of waiting, they are known as a "Proto-Grove", which can last for several years, theoretically, with an odd mixture of 0th, 1st and 2nd Order Druids. In general, they use a modified version of the liturgy so as to not need a Third Order Druid, and may experiment widely in this phase, including devising an alternative service to meet their needs. Other Proto-Groves may instead choose to establish a new Druidic organization on their own.



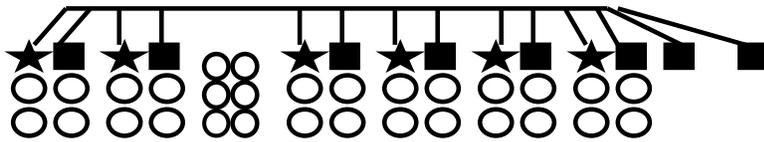
Independent Druids (see above graphic)

Groves break up often, and people leave Groves for various reasons, so floating around within Reformed Druidism are various Druids who are not members of a Grove or ProtoGrove. Some prefer to stay this way, and they are still respected members of the overall Reform. In fact, 7 out of 8 Reformed Druids are probably independent now, although in varying degrees of interaction. Generally, we believe that a Druid is a Druid, and they can join other groups and religions, and still remain a Druid to the day they die (and perhaps beyond that). Many independents are "semi-retired", but occasionally provide mentorship or advice to Groves, newsletters and visit fledgling ProtoGroves to help out. If a Grove fires you from office or expels you from its membership, you retain your Ordinations, but lose your elected titles.



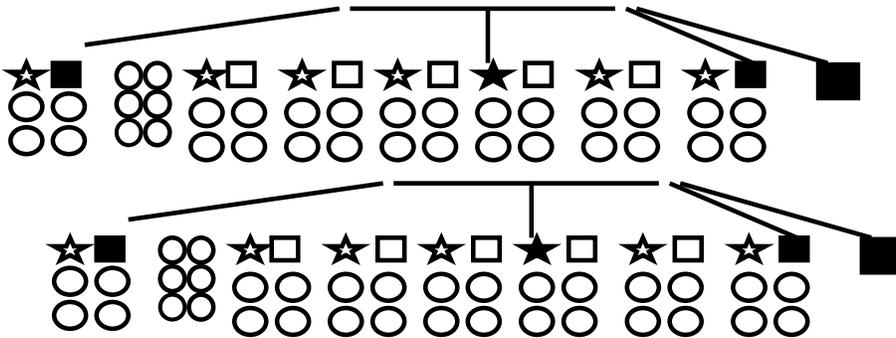
Druidism Today in 2005 (see above graphic)

Reformed Druidism is a mixture of Groves, ProtoGroves and an odd assortment of independent Druids. There are also numerous past and present branches, councils and types of Orders to connect Druids on an inter-Grove and inter-individual basis. This might make it seem complicated, because it is very confusing! I'll try to explain these inter-Grove organizations below.



Council of Dalon Ap Landu (Council of the Third Order) a.k.a. CODAL (See above graphic)

So far, there are no councils for members in the First and Second Orders. There is a Council of Dalon ap Landu (an obscure Welsh patron deity found only in The Reform) for the Third Order members of all Groves, and those who are not in Groves. It has operated much like a legislature, and is chaired by the current Arch Druid from Carleton Grove (who amusingly usually happens to be the youngest member of the Council). From 1964 to about 1977, there were several items voted on by the Council, which by tradition has settled things by unanimous votes. The last vote to pass in such a way was 1971, to unequivocally give equal status to female and male Druids in the Third Order and Higher Orders. A contentious split vote during the Isaac Affair of 1974-1977, led to several schisms, new Councils, and the end of the practical use of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, due to the rising number of priests (50+ at that time), the difficult logistics of voting, lack of easy voting topics, and the stringent tradition of unanimity. The Council of DAL remains in existence, but seems to be in permanent abeyance, acting both as a rhetorical muse to address in letters, and acting as a strong break on the priests to organize the Reform any further than it is already on a national level.



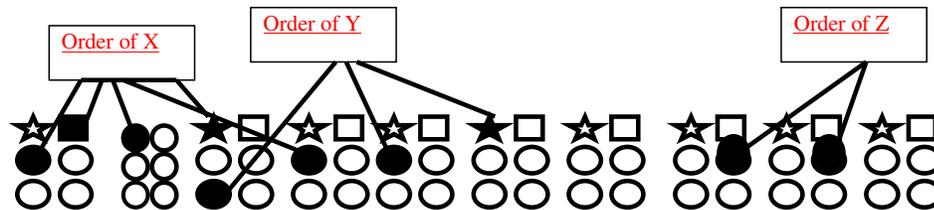
Higher Orders (4th - 10th) (See above graphic)

This is an often misunderstood organizational concept. Occasionally, a Third Order member will be called to join a Higher Order, which operates much like honor societies for certain fields of inquiry. 4th (Grannos) is for the Healing Springs, 5th (Bracicea) is for Malted Beverages, 6th (Belenos) is for the Sun, 7th (Sirona) is for Rivers, 8th (Taranis) is for Weather, 9th (Llyr) is for the Ocean, and the 10th (Danu) the Earth Mother.

Each Higher Order has a Council, and the first member to enter the Higher Order is the chair and is called either a Patriarch or a Matriarch. Originally, the Council of the 4th Order elected the Patriarch of the 5th Order. The Patriarch of the 5th Order invited several people, and the Council of the 5th Order elected the Patriarch of the 6th Order and so on. Recently a Patriarch was elected to the 9th Order by the Council of the 8th Order. The New Patriarch hasn't done anything regarding a 10th Order, so at the present, there is no 10th Order.

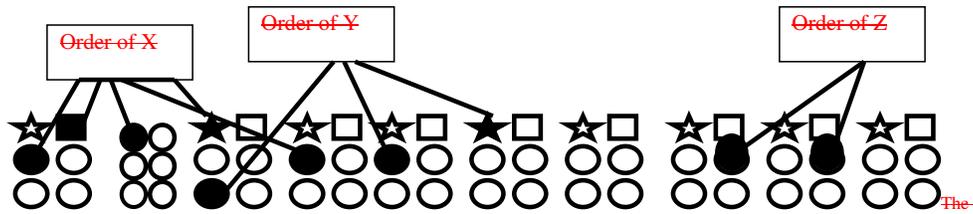
Of the 130+ current members of the Third Order, only about 15-20 have been invited to a Higher Order. The Patriarch/Matriarch of each Higher Order decides who can be invited, devises an initiation liturgy and can set other rules (sometimes allowing their associated Council to help in deciding these matters). Except for numbering and choosing Patriarchs/Matriarchs, no Higher Order is "above" each other; nor is one Order necessary before entering the next Order. In other words, you need not be a member of the 4th Order to enter the 5th Order, or in 5th Order to enter 6th Order, etc.

Councils of the Higher Orders can not "over rule" the Council of Dalon Ap Landu (3rd Order), and in practice, very rarely hold



meetings; leaving new members to pursue research and correspond individually amongst themselves out of sight.

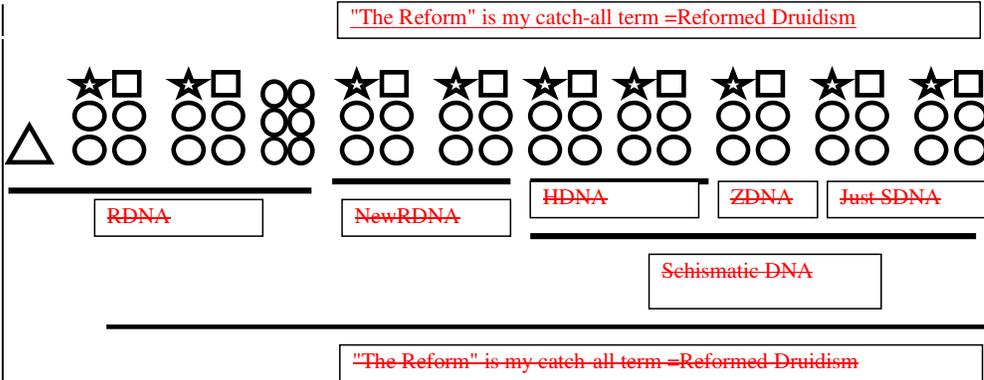
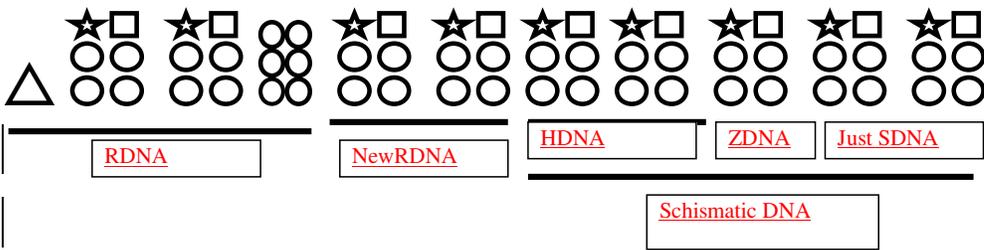
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Side Orders, Back Order and Short Orders (See above graphic)

Due to the rarity of entering a Higher Order, and the fun of working on similar special interests by members of different Groves, a proliferation of "Side Orders", "Back Orders" and "Short Orders" have popped up. Most are open to members of all Orders, although they may not be well advertised and are usually haphazardly run. In practice, anyone can start such lesser Orders, they can decide what rules, hobbies, or services they will do, and can even make a council, if they like, but their decisions only affect themselves, of course. Most are very simple and usually occupy less of their member's time than their regular Grove activities, unless you happen to be the Order's activity organizer! Some have their own councils, newsletters, reunions and projects.

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Branches of the Reform in the 1970s & 1980s (See above graphic)

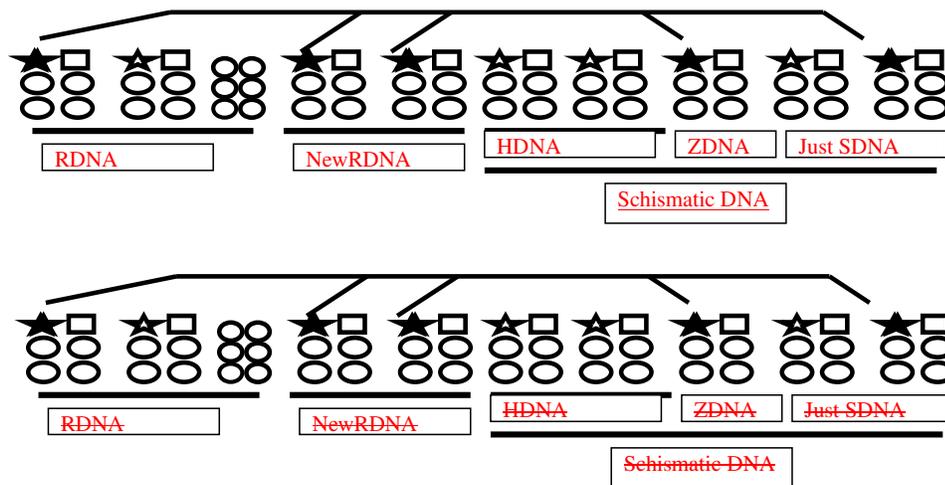
In the mid-70s, due to dissatisfaction with the difficulty of making rules by the Council of Dalon Ap Landu (3rd Order), several Groves schismed off to form "Branches" on the "tree" of Reformed Druidism. First there was only the RDNA (and everyone was in it and the term was synonymous with Reformed Druidism), then in 1976, we had the emergence of NewRDNA (NRDNA), which would had several Groves planning to undertake new directions. Some NRDNA Groves wanted to make adaptations, restrict membership only to Neo-Pagans, and do intensive ritual experimentation and changes in the structure of their Groves; and they became the Schismatic Druids of North America (later branching into Hassidic DNA, Zen DNA and SDNA). Some Groves in the NRDNA didn't want to make those many changes and stayed just NRDNA. Those who didn't make any proposed changes or schisms were, by default, considered in the RDNA. The definition of "Reformed Druidism" stretched to include these variants, and was no longer meaning just the RDNA, but also to include the NRDNA, SDNA, etcDNA and independent folks who just believed in the Basic Tenets.

Each of these branches generally followed the same ordination formula for 1st through 3rd Orders; members of each branch would enter Higher Orders too. And Third Order members of each Branch was still a member of the original Council of Dalon Ap Landu; but this Council of DAL had already stopped functioning at a practical level. Other means of interaction were quickly devised, but they also faded away (see below).

Many members of the SDNA Groves left in the 1980s to form a brand new fully Neo-Pagan religion, known as Ar nDraiocht Fein (A Druid Fellowship) in 1983, taking a few lessons from Reformed Druidism with them. Currently, in most RDNA & NRDNA Groves,

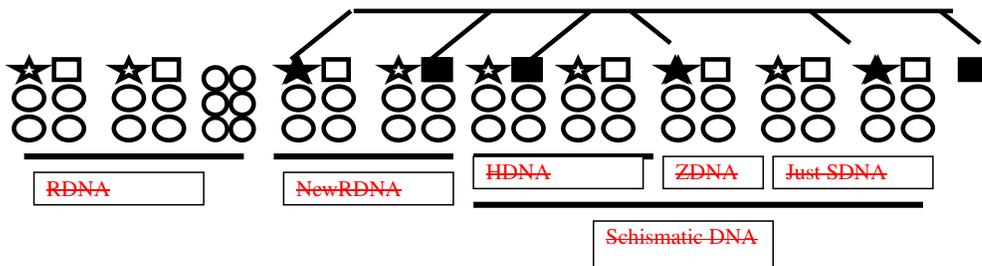
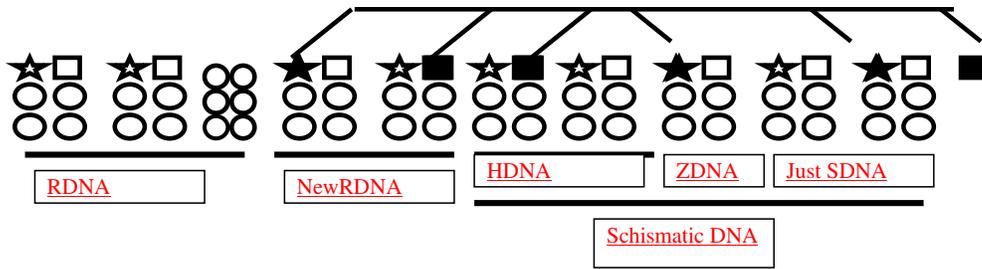
10 All essays and nearly all RDNA documents in the UWP are un-official and represent purely the opinions of their authors.

members can belong to any or no religion; and do to the emphasis on Grove autonomy, and resulting Grove diversity, it is hard to describe a difference between RDNA & NRDNA Groves; except that NRDNA Groves TEND to be more older, have more Neo-Pagan members, are descended from the Berkeley Grove, they are more traditional, and are often located in California.



Provisional Council of Arch Druids (PCAD) (See above graphic)

In the Mid-70s for a few years, there was an attempt to provide better communication between Groves, due to the inability of routing all the correspondence through the Carleton Arch Druids (Chair of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu), due to their busy College student schedules. Arch Druids of various Groves could voluntarily join the Provisional Council (PCAD), and every year a different Grove would be charged with handling the central records of PCAD. They would vote on issues, and members of PCAD would follow those decisions in their Groves. After a few years, this fell apart due to lack of interest, agreement, and the rise of NRDNA newsletter publications that did their job of distributing news and information on voting. No decisions were apparently reached.



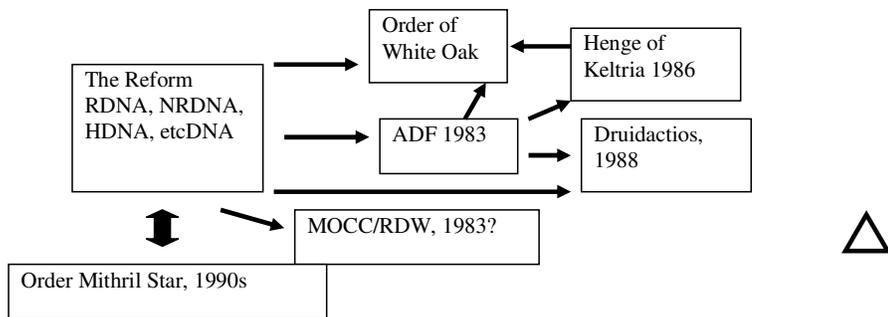
Coalition Council of Dalon Ap Landu (CoCODAL) (See above graphic)

Another attempt at organization beyond the Grove level, was the CoCODAL. It was open to all members of the 3rd Order, not just Arch-Druids, and its decisions only affected those members [It's unclear how it would affect 1st and 2nd Order Druids of their Groves]. Between 1978-1982, it passed several rules by majority vote, before everything kind of fizzled out due to lack of direction and leadership. It is not certain, if members are still bound by their voting or not, and the CoCODAL seems more moribund than the CODAL, in theory.

Diversity of Druidisms (See graphic below)

Now until 1983, except for a few fraternal Druid organizations with branches in the USA, Reformed Druidism was really the only publicly known type of Druidism. ADF provided a training program for Neo-Pagan Druids interested in Proto-Indo-European religious concepts, a legally recognized strong central church structure, a powerful liturgical formula, and a great number of council and rules. Over the years, many aspiring Druids joined ADF, borrowed some ideas and produced dozens of new groups of their own. Henge of Kelria was the largest off-shoot, when this group split off for reasons of protest over training programs, charges of ineptitude, and a preference for only Celtic sources of inspiration.

Druidactios' founder borrowed material from ADF, RDNA, fraternal groups in France and ideas of his own devising. Similarly, the Order of White Oak borrowed material from ADF, RDNA & Keltra, but produced primarily a core of material based on their own research. The Order of the Mithril Star is currently in an ambiguous position, they came to the RDNA after a long stay with the Church of All Worlds, and are a blend of CAW, RDNA and their own invention. It is rather uncertain whether they are in the widest boundaries of "The Reform" as a separate Branch or just a fancy side Order; or if they are a separate entity or a new type of relationship.



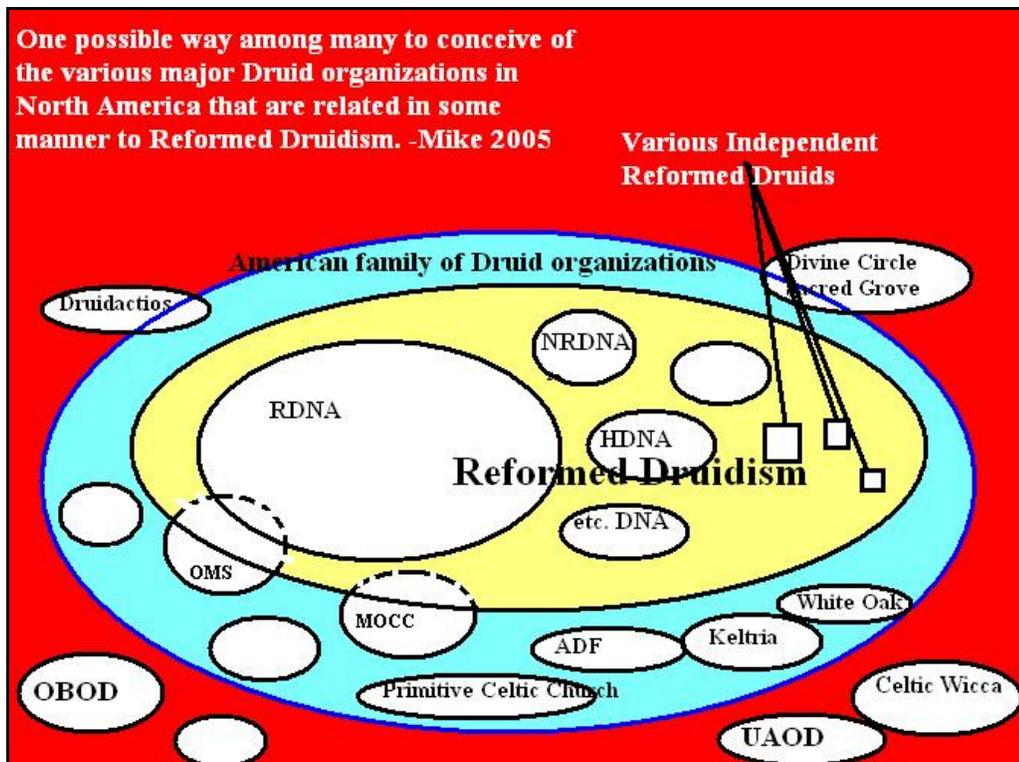
12 All essays and nearly all RDNA documents in the UWP are un-official and represent purely the opinions of their authors.

Conclusion:

So, if you put together all these Groves, councils, orders, various sub-organizations, off-shoots, schisms, wandering independents, and loosely-affiliated religions, then you have a better idea of the complexity and possibilities of Reformed Druidism.

Miscellaneous graphics to build your own charts.

Another way to view Reformed Druidism
and
Its Relation to the American family of Druidical organizations.



Note: some individuals may object to the insertion of OMS or MOCC, or them being shown as overlapping with Reformed Druidism. Each of these white circles may have Groves Proto-Groves and/or individuals.



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Different Types of Druidic Organizations (a very rough draft)

Here are 4 of the larger groups in U.S. Others might be added for comparison in later editions (e.g. OMS, MOCC, Whiteoak, UAOD)

Category	RDNA	ADF	Keltria	OBOD
Founded	1963	1983 off-shoot of RDNA	1986 off-shoot of ADF	1962 off-shoot of A.D.O.
Current Size	450 in Groves, 4000 overall 25-40 Groves & Proto-Groves	600+ 60+ Groves & Proto-Groves	300+ 5 Groves & study groups	2500+ 60-85 Groves & seedgroups
Geographic Distribution	Midwest, North East, Far West, Japan, Canada, France	Evenly distributed across U.S., with UK & Canada	Midwest, Northeast & CA	British Isles, Canada, US, Australia and Europe
Largest Website	www.geocities.com/mikerdna	www.adf.org	www.keltria.org	www.druidry.org
On-line Conferences	RDNAtalk on www.yahoogroups.com		Keltria-L on www.yahoogroups.com	Message board on www.druidry.org
Orientation	Eclectic overall Some Groves have a more limited mixture of inspirational sources.	Indo-European overall Groves tend to pick one or two sub-ethnic groups	Celtic overall Groves tend to pick one sub-ethnic (Irish or Welsh)	Eclectic overall Groves tend to have a few ethnic orientations or more "New Agey"
Overall Organization	Defunct national legislature, with largely-autonomous Groves and numerous feisty independents. Like the U.S. Articles of Confederation in mid 18th century. Clubby with tendencies to a church.	Similar to Federal system of balance between National centralized power and local Groves, as in the U.S. Constitution since the 18th century. A church.	Similar to Federal system of balance between National centralized power and local Groves, as in the U.S. Constitution since the 18th century. A tribe.	Semi-functional core body with semi-autonomous Groves scattered about. More of an initiatory fraternity than a church.
Judiciary Mechanism	No formal method of expulsion nationally. Groves may do so.	Formal expulsion and defrocking is possible.	Formal expulsion and defrocking is possible.	Uncertain
Official Statements	Very rare. None recently	Frequent	Infrequently	Infrequently
Detailed By-Laws	None	Yes	Yes	Uncertain
Elections	National has a council of 3rd Orders, who are appointed, but it is mostly inactive. Grove offices usually by elections	National and Grove offices by election	National and Grove offices by election	National offices appointed Grove offices by election
Leadership	Not prominent, less than esteemed in many cases Council of 3rd Order priests is mostly ceremonial. Central office is inactive Groves have Arch Druids 3rd Order Priests select folk to become priests.	Prominent & esteemed Central office. Arch Druid of entire ADF Groves have Senior Druids Seminarian graduates may be given 3rd circle priesthood	Esteemed Central office Groves have Senior Druids Seminarians graduates raised to 3rd Circle priesthood.	Prominent & Esteemed Central office Groves have Senior Druids
Fees	None overall. Groves might.	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.
Membership Rules	Just the 2 Basic Tenets. Groves have local rules.	Yes.	Yes.	A few perhaps
Written Records	Extensive collected archives and compendiums produced.	Numerous liturgies and some essays collected and a few small manuals	A few small manuals, more oral based.	A few small manuals Several books by prominent members.
Digitized Records	Mostly digitized	Partially	Partially	A small amount
Magazine	Druid Chronicler 1977-82 Druid Missal-Any 8/ year 1983-1991, 2000-now	Druid's Progress 1984-1995 Oaken Leaves 4/year 1997-now	Keltria 1989-1999 Henge Happenings 4/year 1999-now	None
Seminary Program	Nothing formal.	Formal program	Formal Program.	Nothing formal
Study Program	Nothing formal	Formal Program	Formal Program	Formal Program
Tax-Exempt Status	No Groves currently have this status.	Most Groves	Most Groves	Some Groves
Grove Set-Up	Simple	Complicated	Moderate	Moderate
Humor	Prominent	Moderate	Moderate	Less Prominent

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Record of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu

[While the words and instructions of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu (which is the collective body of the Third Order Druids), are not graven in stone, they are generally accepted statements about how the Reform, as a whole, is organized. An astute reader can find all kinds of loopholes, and that is okay, since many of the passages were made with the intention of allowing a liberal interpretation. Most of the decisions don't directly affect the average layperson, but rather mostly shape the duties and privileges of the Third Order. Bracketed words for gender inclusivity have been added by myself in 1994 and are warranted by the intentions of later legislation. -Scharding]

7 May 1964. Voted:

Patriarch

To elevate David H. Fisher to the office and order of the Patriarch of the Order of Grannos (the 4th healing springs).

Liturgy

To adopt the Order of Worship of the Carleton Grove (as formulated by David H. Fisher) as the basic order of worship of the Reformed Druids of North America.

26 May, 1964. Interpreted:

Higher Orders

- (a) that the purpose of the higher orders is to stimulate priests of the 3rd Order to continued spiritual inquiry, and are intended to honor achievement rather than tenure.
- (b) That the higher orders are equal in the sense that no shall be considered a prerequisite for any other (except with regard to the formula for the election of Patriarchs *[or Matriarchs]*).
- (c) That direct confirmation of the selection of each priest for a higher order must be made by the Patriarch *[or Matriarch]* concerned.
- (d) That the ceremony of induction may be performed by any member of the order.

27 January, 1965. Voted:

Council

- (a) To declare in perpetuity that the Arch Druid of Carleton shall be the Chairman Ex-officio of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.
- (b) To reserve to all the priests, collectively in the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, the highest authority of the Reformed Druids of North America.

Priestesses

- (a) To delegate to the priest the right to individually consecrate priestesses to any order which they (the priests) may hold.
- (b) To allow priestesses to hold the office of Arch Druid, provided that they have first vigiled and been granted the right to perform the ceremony by the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.

Interpreted:

Missions

- (a) That any priest has the right to conduct worship and receive members into the First and Second Orders.
- (b) That no one has the right to consecrate priests of the Third Order except the duly elected Arch Druid of a legally constituted Grove, i.e., a Grove which has adopted a constitution and filled by election the offices of Arch Druid, Preceptor, and Server.

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- (c) That the ceremony for the consecration of a Third Order priest as adopted at Carleton may not be altered without the permission of the Council.
- (d) That the local Groves retain the right to organize themselves in any way which will best serve their needs.

Liturgy

- (a) That the waters-of-sleep shall be used during the winter half (Geimredh & Earrach) and the waters-of-life shall be reserved for the summer half (Samradh and Foghamhar), except when they are needed for healing or for the consecration of a priest. The priest shall wear the red ribbon when consecrating the waters-of-life, and he *[or she]* shall wear the white ribbon when consecrating the waters-of-sleep, both as the mark of the 3rd Order.
- (b) That the white robe is the mark of the Druid, and it may be worn by any member; except that a Patriarch *[or Matriarch]* may wear a black robe (in honor of the first Patriarch), but may not at the same time wear the mark of any high order of which he *[or she]* is not Patriarch *[or Matriarch]*.
- (c) That the first Patriarch *[or Matriarch]* of each higher order shall establish the ceremony and identifying mark of his *[or her]* order.
- (d) That the individual Groves retain the right to establish any such identifying marks for its officers as it sees fit, provided that they do not conflict with any other marks already adopted.

29 March, 1966. Voted: (by mail)

Priestesses

- (a) To grant automatically to all priestesses who have conducted a vigil the right to perform the ceremonies of Reformed Druidism.
- (b) To allow a priestess, while holding the office of Arch Druid, to consecrate priests of the Third Order and priestesses unto the Order which she herself holds.

20 April, 1966. Voted: (by mail)

Council

- (a) To require the Arch Druid of Carleton, upon their retirement from office, to prepare a report on the state of Reformed Druidism at Carleton, including such information on Reformed Druid activities elsewhere as they may have received, and including a list of Council members and Council resolutions; this report to be submitted to all members of the Council, the expense of the printing and distribution of said report to be fixed by him and charged to those who receive it.
- (b) To require each Arch Druid to promptly forward to the Arch Druid of Carleton notice of the formation of any Grove and the name and address of any priest consecrated to the Third Order in that Grove.

1 May, 1971 Voted: (by mail)

Priestesses

- (a) To subordinate all previous resolutions of the Council concerning priestesses to this one.
- (b) To allow a priestess who has conducted a vigil and who has been consecrated to the Third Order all prerogatives of the order, consecrate priests and priestesses to the Third Order. In token of this she is known as a priestess of the Third Order.
- (c) To allow a priestess of the Third Order who has been consecrated to a high order and whose consecration has been confirmed by the Patriarch of the given order all prerogatives of that order. Again, she is known as a priestess of the given order.

(d) To abolish all restrictions other than those applying equally to priests on the number of high orders to which a priestess of the Third Order may be consecrated.

A Summary of How the Council of Dalon Ap Landu Kind of Worked

1996

1. All Third-Orders maintain a current address with the Carleton Arch Druid.
2. All new Groves are announced to the Carleton Arch Druid.
3. The Carleton Arch Druid prepares a report when they retire.
4. Vote proposals are forwarded to the Carleton Arch Druid.
5. The Carleton Arch Druid then writes to all the Third-Orders and starts a debate.
6. If a quorum of the Third Orders vote (say at least 1/8 or 1/3 or 1/2, this is uncertain), and all agree, it passed.

It is unlikely that the Council will ever return, because the principle of Grove independence is too strongly established and at least half of the Third Orders are without current addresses on record. It also seems that it is unlikely that any vote could gain unanimity of responses.

Grove Voting

Groves can decide their own rules for in-Grove legislation. Most are democratic. Some Groves have different rules on determining active membership based on attendance, payment of nominal membership fees, or other means. You can have votes open or secret or mail by pre-arrangement. You can hold annual elections or have seasonal or life-time appointments. You can restrict candidates to those of certain Orders or be open to all and ordain those elected as needed. You can create new offices. You can restrict one office to a person, or allow multiple offices. You may require a quorum of membership at one or multiple election meetings to pass. Some categories of referendums may require 51%, 2/3, or unanimity among voters. You can have speeches, debates, correspondence of other types of discussion.

It's all really up to your Grove what is the most practical and fair system. Choose wisely

Less is More

a.k.a. "The 15 Lousy Lessons of Merlin the Schlep"
Notes by Mike on general traits in Reformed Druidism
A personal opinion.

Reformed Druidism is a gentle protest against organized religion. We're not really anarchists, just simplists.

We've noticed that good Arch Druids spend a great deal of their time explaining what Druidism is **not**. In a Taoist sense, what is not there can make something usefull (like a doorway in a wall).

You may notice that in each individual Grove, you might find one or more exceptions to these rules of thumb.

No Celtic-Focused. Any inspirational source is okay, 25% or more member seem to choose Celtic.

No a Religion Ok, we're rather split on this one. Some say it's a religion. Some say it's a philosophy or outlook. Some say some rather silly things. Others ignore the question as unimportant and not tending towards edification.

No Neo-Pagan Well, actually, about 40% of us are Neo-Pagans, and we do resemble Neopaganism very closely (which came after our founding), but most of us don't define ourselves or the entire Reform as such. We generally do include Neo-paganism among our many possible sources of inspiration. The NewRDNA, however, is more firmly in the Neo-Pagan camp. As a rule, Druids are mischievously difficult to pin down.

No Established Dogma We don't take anybody too seriously, especially ourselves. We really like Nature, think alot, and sometimes share our [thoughts in writing](#). We do have [Two Basic Tenets](#) and some think that's too much.

No Established Ritual Attendance is, of course, unnecessary, in general, and perhaps undesirable. Members of some Groves occasionally meet on the 8 festivals and the moons, but we are split on whether ritual is more distracting to Druidism or if Druidism is more distracting to ritual... Regardless, we recognize that a lack of ritual can become a ritual, in and of itself! There are other ways to get together than liturgies.

No Strong Priesthood Sure we've got priests (they grow like weeds) but no established common seminary program (including this pamphlet), just a period of observation and loose mentoring. Non-priests can lead services of their own devising, of course. The RDNA has generally hobbled its own priests, for their own good.

No Membership Requirements We're not exclusive, any background can join, if they respect the other members. There is no official excommunication or defrocking; Nature knows Her own. Inanimate objects are equally able to join, some even doing a better job than the mobile Druids. I can think of several Groves entirely composed of trees, imagine that. Groves and Branches have the right to determine who can join their local groups.

No Cross-Membership Restrictions You can simultaneously belong to other groups or dimensions. Even if other groups don't like you be part of us, we have no disagreement with you belonging to other groups.

No National Organization We used to have one, but it wasn't useful, so it's thankfully defunct, except in the sense that its continued existence prevents the establishment of a replacement.

No Buildings When nature is so wonderful, why hide inside a building? Some folk may own property that they share, but few Groves have had a corporate ownership of facilities or funds.

No Money or Fees It's sad, but we're always in the red, relying on generosity to pay for the sacramental whiskey and such. Most fees that I have seen are quite nominal and are for feast costs, mailings or site usage.

No Regular Publications No official monthly journals and such, you're on your own. There is [A Reformed Druid Anthology](#) of past attempts, but since there's no money in it, few publish much. Stacey is currently publishing the free newsletter [A Druid Missal-any](#) eight times a year. But that's it.

No Proselytization We're not secretive, but how do you effectively advertise a lack of something? People generally [find us](#), stay for awhile, and move on when they're ready. That's cool.

No Uniforms Occasionally somebody dresses up in SCA clothes, but casual clothes are cool. Homemade is impressive, though. Dress appropriately for the weather.

No Bad Stuff Well, we've succeeded, so far, at least. Like the vast majority of Neo-Pagans; we don't do blood/animal/human sacrifice (although we occasionally offer a carrot or zucchini) because we are "Reformed" and we think that's yucky. We are however divided on whether fungi should be ritualistically categorized as animal or plant because they do possess biological characteristics of both. Likewise, we don't do such un-cool things like brainwashing (who wants a clean mind?), orgies (which is obviously a fast way to get STDs), take money/property, or abuse our members (who'd want to be in such a group?). We treat our members with respect, and they freely come and go.

Sounds Like There Isn't Much to Define the RDNA

Yep. It does seem that way. Yet, we're still here, without all those things after 40 years. Guess some things aren't so necessary for everyone? How do you know a Reformed Druid then? I guess I know most of them when I see them, read their works, or if they say they are one.

Feel free to read more by our various members, and we'd like to hear about your journey too if it's like ours. Write to me, mikerdna@hotmail.com

Have a lovely time.
Mike the Fool

Simple Rules for Founding an RDNA Grove or ProtoGrove

Somewhat-Necessary stuff

1. Collect 3 or more members, sentient or otherwise.
2. Choose roles, length of office, agree to [basic tenets](#) or whatever else is also important, delegate responsibilities (if any). Here's one version of the Basic Tenets.

A. The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a neverending search, may be found through the Earth Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.
B. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth Mother; for is is one of the objects of Creation, and with it we do live, yea, even as we do struggle through life are we come face to face with it.

3. Hold elections.
4. If it is a written agreement it's called a "constitution", if it's orally agreed upon it's call an "oral-thingy". Send Constitutions to Carleton Arch Druid, Carleton College, Northfield, MN 55057 I'd like a copy too.
5. Go and do your thing.
6. Keep it simple stupid (KISS).
7. When the Grove is not needed, break up and tell us.

Not-so-necessary stuff

If you do one of the following, it all appears more legitimate, but you know how much we love legitimacy.

1. Contact other Groves and share the good news. It could be the start of a beautiful friendship.
2. If you want to be listed on my site or initiated, contact mikerdna@hotmail.com and I'll tell you if someone is in the area to help out. Tell me your Grove's name, general location (city), rough membership estimate, contact address (internet is best), any homepages you've built; and a few paragraphs to describe your Grove. Send a short blurb every few months to poppinjay@earthlink.net for the Druid Missal-Any newsletter's "News of the Groves".
3. Download a copy of A Reformed Druid Anthology, but don't read it too much, because it's awful dull in many parts. It's OK to disagree with just about all of it.
4. Find someone to go through the vigil process. Perhaps one of your members would like to do the vigil for the Third Order (or again, perhaps no one wants to yet, but you can still be a Proto-Grove.) Contact the closest Third Order Druid to personally assist you or talk to Mike about his high-tech alternatives to overcome distance initiation problems. Afterwards, tell Mike, and he'll record it his unofficial copy of the Record of the Council of Dalon ap Landu.
5. Occasionally tune in to the news, dull as it is, at [A Druid Missal-any](#) news desk and just tell us how you're doing.

The rest seems entirely optional and your Grove may develop in odd and marvelous ways.

P.S. Your Grove can be cross-registered with other Druid/Pagan/whatever groups; like being an [ADF](#) Grove and RDNA at the same time. It doesn't bother us.

Solitary Druidism

by Mike the Fool, DC Grove 2005

I would like to reiterate that it is not necessary to found a Proto-Grove, participate in a conference, or join an existing Grove to be a Reformed Druid. You can go the solitary route.

The reason that I discuss Groves so much, is that they are more complicated things for new-comers to organize satisfactorily for themselves. Most folk have had little experience running a religious group

There are also many benefits to being solitary. In fact, even if you are in a Grove, you probably spend more than 95% of your time away from other Druids anyway. Many Druids devise their own solitary rites or customs to fit their extra needs.

More than 90% of current Reformed Druids are not in a Grove of any type. Some call them hermits, independents, inactive or retired, but they are still Reformed Druids; many with rich personal spiritual lives full of discovery and deepening awareness.

Most people choose a varying degree of "Groveness" and solitary activity. Some like to attend regular services, others only big festivals, some just like to contribute to conferences, and some like to teach certain skills to members. Others just want to have the nominal affiliation with Reformed Druids, but desire little to do with other Reformed Druids on any regular basis.

Sometimes Reformed Druids, like cicadas or mushrooms, go through periods of frantic Grove participation and then withdraw into their private sphere for a long stretch of time before emerging again when conditions line up.

I have felt that while others may assist or speed up certain discoveries by interaction; they are not necessary for me. Like the traveler who keeps walking, even the furthest journey will be completed on one's own with enough time, patience and diligence.

Druids don't tend to have a firm final destination, but have a good idea which direction they need to go and this may be at odds with the interests of the nearby Groves. Some stages must be done on one's own.

Sometimes a group's interaction will unearth buried ideas, but other times their voices may drown out quieter sources of creativity that need to be tapped and explored carefully. Some divine relationships are just too personal to be adequately shared. Most mainstream religions recognize the need of sabbaticals and retreats for its clergy members to recuperate.

Think of the reclusive artist, sometimes they go to a class to pick up skills, other times they withdraw to perfect their talents and build up a repertoire on their own. Occasionally they later share the fruits of their study or teach their skills.

Most Groves do not yet have detailed personal journey-type initiation traditions to lead you on all parts of your journey. When you can't get that from others, you must look to yourself and hope that other sources will avail themselves to guide you then.

Sometimes, the denied object is more tempting to the seeker than the freely given object of greater worth. If you don't have time to teach many people, making yourself difficult to find is one method of selecting new students, by winnowing out the less determined folk. Is it a coincidence that the object of a quest is always found in a distant swampy castle or on a mountain?

Of course, some Druids are solitary because they just aren't people-friendly. They prefer the company of animals, plants, books or their own thoughts. It's a good deal for all, being solitary makes them happier, and the rest of us don't have irritating crochety codgers to deal with (just kidding).

So consider the option of being a solitary Druid during some periods of your Druidical journey. Breaks are good.

Finally, one is never really alone in Nature.

Musings On Grove Formation

By Mike the Fool, DC Grove, 2004

I apologize in advance for my long winded observations, I hope they will clarify some general traditions about Grove formation, by dealing with it as a single subject.

There comes a time in many a Druid's lives when they wish to begin holding services or hold meetings in a semi-organized framework, and the idea of Grove formation arises. The first problem that arises is that no one knows how to found a Grove, and second, there are often no Third Order Druids present in the group to run the traditional services and do the usual ordinations. What's an enthusiastic go-getter Druid to do?

Well, first off, I have to cautiously say that I'm not the final *de-jure* authority on the issue, merely one well-informed voice among many. That being said, I have unofficially ended up as the *de-facto* networker, facilitator and advisor of Groves at my website (see end of article) where I give some simple guidelines and list the various Groves and contact information for people who want to reach a pre-existing Grove. So I thought it would be appropriate to share a summary of the thoughts on the various pros and cons of Groves.

Benefits of Grove Formation

The major benefit of Grove formation is probably a stronger sense of identity that often comes by slapping a label onto something. You are longer "Joe's friends who meet in Joe's backyard" but you are suddenly "The Apple Grove that meets in Joe's backyard." Names have a power in themselves to some. As always, a title is an abstract concept, but titles are important to us, providing legitimacy and *gravitas* to a venture or person; a shorthand indicating certain powers or authority are inherent in them. Perhaps it's only the "magic feather" effect of Dumbo?

Like a corporation, a Grove is an entity that includes the members, but it also exists in a sense as a separate entity in both legal and metaphysical terms. In a Grove, there are elections for Arch Druid, Preceptor and Server; (or President, Secretary, Treasurer if you want secularly titled folks for dealing separately with financial/secular Grove business) and matters can be voted upon, you advertise for recruiting, design logos and stationary, send representatives to inter-faith council, have members admitted in various formal ways, apply for charity status, print letterhead stationary, buy group land in a forest, produce team T-shirts, and a dozen other nifty non-liturgical ways to build brand-loyalty. Mascots, secret hand-shakes and matching belt-buckles are, of course, all optional.

Traditionally (I'll use that word a lot in this essay), only the Arch Druid (being a Third Order Druid) of an active Grove would perform ordinations of 1st, 2nd or 3rd Order, so the founding a Grove was seen as a necessary pre-step for missionary expansion & liturgical activities in a region. Some Groves were even ephemerally founded simply for ordaining one or two folks in question, and then promptly disbanded after their purpose was finished. Most Groves in practice act rather independently, with nearly complete sovereignty, rarely interacting with their neighbors, following the RDNA traditions, customs and services as their Grove members interpret and elaborate upon them. Some Groves work closely together, holding occasional joint services, with large cross-over memberships.

Other Groves may disapprove if a particular Grove goes boisterously off-course from the standard patterns (such as restricting membership to those of certain faiths, sacrificing mushrooms or Twinkies, becoming too serious, requiring

ridiculous fees, or censoring the modes of expression) but there is little they can do except criticize or distance themselves from that offensive Grove; which they might actually do. Running a Grove can be a fun and exhilarating project, full of memorable events, conversations and interactions, but that is not always the case.

Costs of Grove Formation

On the flip side of the equation, as with any contentious group of anarchistic leaning spiritual wanderers, you also introduce the specter of small-group politics, group-think, power plays, and the misappropriation of funds. Many Groves don't outlive the departure of their founding Arch Druid, the owner of the meeting property, or another mainstay of the group, leading to what I call "Grove collapse." Many leaders or supporters may be in danger of eventually suffering from "Grove burn-out" due to the inherent tendency of one or two heroic people doing all the logistic, financing or other gruntwork; without adequate compensation or praise from some less motivated members. It happens over and over again, and seems to be a fact of Druidism, Wicca and Neo-Paganism; although a few Groves manage the transition and will last long longer than a decade.

When a Grove collapses, like other works of love and devotion, it can be a depressing series of wrenching events that can depress involved members for years to come. As with marriage, reproduction or other long-term commitments, you should also maturely consider the pros and cons of investing a lot of time and effort into producing a new religious group entity.

The very action of defining a group carries implied inclusive and exclusive components. By defining who is in your group, you are often in a subtle way also defining who is not in your group; which bothers some members who feel that some things are better left unclarified or defined (what I call strategic ambiguity) and part of "keeping it simple, stupid."(KISS)

Three Alternative Paths

The way I personally see it, there have been three standard ways to form a Grove, of which each aspiring wannabee Arch Druid should be aware. You might come up with some new models, but these are the ones that I've seen most frequently among the 85 past entities so far in the Reform. First there is a missionary Grove. Second there is a ProtoGrove start. And third, there is a hiving Grove. Let's look at them in some depth.

Missionary Groves were the first model during the early 1960s when various Third Order Druids from the Carleton Grove left after four years and went to graduate school or to start a job in another part of the country. (Obviously, the majority of Druids after graduation pursued non-Grove activities or solitary paths.) Back then, the missionary Third Order would arrive in a new area, which would naturally have no pre-existing Druid groups, and decide that they would like to have services and pursue Druidical pursuits with new friends. They'd gather three or more people together and vote on a local constitution, often similar to the Carleton Constitution. Then the Third Order would ordain a First and Second Order Druid at the first service to take the usual elected constitutional and/or liturgical offices. Then a copy of the constitution was sent to the most current Carleton Arch Druid (as the Chairman of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu; the overseeing body of Third Order activities), who has apparently always approved it, although the busy student didn't always remember to write back. A permanent fixed site and altar might be consecrated, or the Grove may select the most convenient site for each season. Annual elections would naturally follow and updates were sent to Carleton, where they are promptly misplaced or put in the Archives. That's actually a very simple system, although there were some procedural debates of the chicken/egg sort of whether a Third Order Druid can consecrate Waters for ordination of 1st &

2nd Order Druids without already having a pre-existing Server (of 1st Order) and Preceptor (of 2nd Order) at the service. The general consensus is that the Third Order can do so, when necessary, in such initial situations as Grove formation and emergencies. (See early Apocrypha for the debate.) We have existing approved guidelines for this model, but rarely are we such sticklers, and many a naughty unregistered Grove has happily poked around for decades in communion with other Groves. (Please note a stern wagging finger is implied here.)

So how about the ProtoGroves? Well, the missionary model worked fine for 10 years, then in the 1970s with the rise of Neo-pagan and Celtic Reconstructionists, the RDNA faced the novel problem of many people popping out of the woodwork in distant locations wanting to start RDNA-style Groves with no Third Order Druid present. It was a perplexing dilemma to many Third Orders, since how can we tell them they can't be Druids, when we started our own tradition from scratch without any acknowledged lineage? Possibly this was because we were the only accessible model at that time (especially with Isaac's fame) in an age before the wonders of the Internet. Can a maestro, in love with the music, object to another maestro performing and the same concerto, even one she wrote herself? Imitation has been called the most sincere form of flattery. They naturally encouraged the budding groups to start new strains of Druidism, but they were persistent about joining us, so Brother Isaac Bonewits devised and promoted the ProtoGrove model.

Now, in the ProtoGrove system, you'd make a temporary constitution (perhaps the model of the President, Secretary, Treasurer) and would hold diminutive versions of the Order of Worship services that Isaac wrote, omitting or reworking the wording of the sacrifice and consecration of Waters of Life, until the pseudo-messianic arrival of a itinerant Third Order. This ProtoGrove model allowed them a pseudo-Grove status to advertise more members, feel a sense of belonging, and they could devise their own side-services to meet their needs until one could be trained to the Third Order during visits to the nearest full Grove, or if a wandering Third Order passed through their area. Technically, since only an active Arch Druid can ordain, the visiting Third Order would have to be temporarily elected as an Arch Druid before ordaining the local members. Once a new local Third Order existed in the Grove, and after a Server and Preceptor were ordained, a full Constitution was enacted and a copy sent to the record keeper of the Carleton Arch Druid. Then they became a full Grove in the fullest good standing with tradition. This convoluted process may seem a little confusing the first time you read through it, but it tends to work out well within a year with a little effort.

Thirdly, Grove hiving is when an existing Grove splits its membership apart into two or three pieces for reasons of either enormous size of membership or internal faction fighting. This notably happened in the Berkeley Grove in the late 1970s. Berkeley was an old Grove, with long-term, consistent membership and a slow build-up of several Third Order Druids, each with their own visions and developing agendas. Eventually a mixture of strong personalities, keen organizational preferences and avid revisionism rent the group asunder into the Berkeley Grove of the Bay Area, the Clann na Bracheta Grove, the Hazlenut Grove of San Jose and the Live Oak Grove of Orinda; all within a few miles of each other.

In a hiving model, one Grove usually keeps the originally title and the other Groves go off and establish new constitutions and elect new officers, although they may actually use the same ritual/meeting site, using it in turns like a timeshare arrangement. This is similar to a separation agreement in a marriage, hopefully on friendly terms, but often not so. Although Wicca & magic-intensive groups may have a practical limit to the number of attendees, Druidism is more amenably oriented to

mass-gatherings. It is still conceivable that a really charismatic Grove may outgrow the facilities or other factors and necessitate a spin-off Grove. However, I haven't seen this yet, since we could hold services in an open-air football stadium, if necessary.

The Third Order Factor

As you can see, the key factor to traditional Grove formation is a present Third Order. Like the Catholic and Anglican models, the RDNA Orders were laid out in a sort of "top-down" hierarchy depending on "apostolic succession". All 1st, 2nd and 3rd Order Druids are ordained by an Arch Druid who was ordained herself into the Third Order by a previous Arch Druid of another Grove; and so on back to David Fisher in 1963 whose ordination is a mystery. However, there is also a "bottom-up" democratic element, in that the congregation must elect a Third Order Druid into the position of the Arch Druid. If they are unsatisfied, they can vote for another viable candidate next year (or earlier) into the position or they can abandon the Grove. So, in a sense, part of a Third Order Druid's ability to consecrate ordinations or hold services comes from his or her elected position in the Grove, in addition to their innate possession of the Order's title and experience, and the blessing of the higher powers. In this way, the leadership and the Grove are symbiotically dependent upon each other for purpose and existence. No Grove, no Arch Druid. No Arch Druid, no Grove. But remember, you can still be a Druid without being active in a Grove.

All Third Order Druids are automatically members of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu (headed by the often busy Carleton AD) and must follow their simple rules for ordination and Grove formation, but each Third Order Druid (who becomes an Arch Druid) may ordain any viable candidate they wish without seeking permission from the Council (or they may also decline on their own criteria, although this is rare). There is no known council for 1st or 2nd Druids as yet (those folk usually being more concerned with in-Grove matters), although the Higher Orders (4-10) and side-orders have councils with their own rules. The Higher Orders are to encourage further efforts by Third Orders and many side-orders have been opened up as Special Interest Groups for usually all Druids to pursue interests in a less hierarchical manner.

If you can't convince a Third Order to visit your ProtoGrove in a reasonable period, then you must select a member to visit an nearby existing Grove to become ordained; or roust up an old "retired" Third Order Druid to do the work. You've heard the saying, "If Mohammad won't go to the mountain, then the mountain must come to Mohammad." There is a bit of an element of a quest involved here, especially when entry to a Higher Order is involved.

Now each Third Order Druid has a free hand in how they choose people to be ordained. Some Arch Druids, like myself, will ordain quite quickly, on the spot even, if the ordainer finds the ordainee to be sincere, honorable, reasonably sane, of good humor, witty, benevolent in manner, reverently irreverent, possessing that deep vocational love for the Earth and bearing some quality whiskey. Other Arch Druids are slower to warm to a stranger or short-term guest and may require attendance at several services, spend a while in residence, or require lengthy correspondence before a grudgingly granted mutually-agreed meeting. Indeed, in retrospect, some people even like to work hard like this for their ordinations, "earning them" through sweat equity in RDNA activities, although I also tend to take into account their previous experience before joining the RDNA.

Your best bet is to ask around to the different Groves or seek out retired ADs (I might suggest a few) of a compatible nature. The Carleton Grove in MN and myself in DC are usually of the former method, which tends to be most conducive to ordainees residing in remote locations. Naturally, Carleton has heart-breakingly history-drenched beautiful scenery, lots of young

perky members, and some great camping options. I would highly recommend that every Third Order Druid visit the campus at least once in their lifetimes. I call it the Mecca of the Middle-West.

Go-It-Alone Option

As we've explained, when access to a Third Order has proven impossible or resolutely impractical, the ordination system traditionally ground to a halt and Grove formation stopped at the ProtoGrove stage. And sometimes waiting for Fate to change our fortunes is good, too. Some Groves, like Carleton (1985-1993) did self-ordinations, and devised their own services "until such time as we are blessed by a wandering Third". Naturally, some of the self-made RDNA ProtoGroves eventually preferred their self-devised non-order-dependent services (originally temporary fill-ins) to the traditional ones, and often the Earth-mother seemed to respond equally favorably, so some would say Grove legitimacy is more about pleasing fellow mortals. A few went off to form their own religions, such as Reformed Druidic Wicca over in Oklahoma, without ever becoming a functional RDNA Grove, and they seem happy enough. So that's always a fourth course to consider, although you should not be surprised if some "Ordered" Arch Druids do get a bit huffy about these other self-initiated Arch Druids. Hierarchies invariably tend to be self-supportive that way and very particular about membership rules, so even the best of the RDNA might get some twinges of conscience in these matters. I think most in the RDNA still feel some sense of common purpose and belonging to this sprawling family of "American Druidism" that includes such spin-offs like RDW/MOCC, ADF and Keltria, among others.

Long-Distance Ordination

A fifth option is the technology's ability to supersede the tyranny of distance. Telephone ordination was first performed in the 1960s by David Frangquist to ordain a Carleton AD during the breakage of succession in the 1967-1968, when there were unannounced study-abroad shenanigans of the previous AD. I've done a handful of these myself, due to reasons of extreme distance, where the likelihood of meeting was scarce in the next few years (e.g. people at Thule AFB in Greenland on a 3 year tour of duty). In fact, I did one in August for Sister Colleen in Alaska. I see them as equally effective and minimally sufficient for the task, but aesthetically less than a third as enjoyable or memorable, as some traditions are best enjoyed in the subtle gestures, the shared sights & sounds, and physical mannerisms that occur during in-person ordinations. But whenever possible, I try to first arrange for a meeting with someone closer to them, and only perform them for overseas visits nowadays.

My own general strategy in those telephone cases was to have a long period of frequent written and telephonic conversation with the new person beforehand; to better understand their needs and style. After that, I had a service at my Grove, and retained some of the (hopefully) successfully consecrated Waters-of-Life and resealed them in a bottle. I then mailed the consecrated whiskey, a sealed copy of the services, reading material, ribbons and a Druid Sigil necklace to the ordainee-wannabee. I discussed a few final matters with the ordainee at sunset (their time), ordained them to 1st and 2nd (with part of sent Waters), sent them off to start a fire and vigil away the evening. Myself, I bided my time in late-night walks in DC's nearby forests until I was contacted by them by cell-phone at sunrise (their time). I blessed the phone by the power of Taranis, establishing a contact with them through the planet and air itself (we're all just out of sight of each other, you know) and performed the services and pack them off to get some sleep. I try to limit myself to 4 or 5 vigils in a year, for personal reasons or ordination purposes, due to the amount of effort, time and energy I have to invest.

My only concern is that the newly ordained folks will miss the aesthetic stimulation and gestures, pacing and mannerisms, unless they see a service in person, and the way I prepare sacrifices and set up the site. To alleviate that problem, I'm considering the idea of making a "training video tape" to accompany long distance ordination; but my other alternative for now, is to recommend that when circumstances later permit, the ordainee should visit CA, MN or DC and attend one or two traditional services to enhance their understanding of Druidism further. Certainly they might wish to continue correspondence with me, their mentor and other active Groves during the initial start-up period when those predictable mini-dilemmas will arise.

Final Notes on Groving

Ordinations traditionally only occur during the Season of Life [i.e. between Beltane (May 1st) and Samhain (Nov 1st)], except in periods of disaster or pressing emergency. This is because, it is only during that time that the Waters of Life, crucial to ordinations, can be traditionally consecrated; and even then it's up to the Earth-Mother. During the Season of Sleep (i.e. Samhain to Beltane) only the Waters of Sleep (plain water) are usually consecrated in our tradition. Therefore, there is only a six-month window for ordinations every year, and you must plan ahead accordingly. 1st and 2nd ordinations conceivably can be inserted into a standard Order of Worship service on the same day, although most Druids like to separate them by varying periods of time to have a period of groving.

Third Order ordinations take place only after a supervised (but solitary) vigil of at least seven hours duration (usually sunset to sunrise) by a fire (if possible) without sleep, with the ordination at dawn the next day by the Arch Druid, and attended by any other Third Order Druids in the area. I should note, that I highly encourage a 24 hour period of awakesness (sunrise, noon, sunset & night) when vigiling. Some Groves have further elaborated the various ordinations, so they might not even closely resemble the services in the ARDA liturgies on first glance. Some Groves send out emissaries to visit and discuss matters for a short while with the vigiler during the night, add extra quests, questions, and others play wry pranks on them. There is a lot of room for invention here, and a few traditionalists will object to adding, but they certainly hesitate if you remove material.

I could go on for hours longer on matters related to Groves, but I think I've laid out some recognizable rational frameworks for making a decision "to Grove or not to Grove" and my next article will address the important factors to contemplate before making the choice to enter Orders, or to vigil for the Third Order. Please refer to the following recommended resources if you want to found a Grove, or contact me at mikerdna@hotmail.com As always, Druidism can be as simple or complicated as you want it to be, but always leave the same option to your other members.

Further resources:

General History of Reformed Druidism in Part 8
The Apocrypha of Part 2 describes a great deal about the purpose of ordination, Groves and liturgy.

Thoughts on Ordinations

By Mike of DC Grove, 2004

A discussion of Grove formation would not be complete without a discussion on the process of seeking Ordinations, particularly the Third Order when setting up a Grove. How does being an ordained Druid really differ from being an associated Druid in the RDNA tradition? I can not speak definitively ex-cathedra on the matter of ordination, and these are only my observations based on my research, interviews and practice. However, my words might bring some aspects of the processes into clearer focus, and assist you in making your own decisions about ordination.

Some Lengthy Background Notes

You might wonder at why the various Orders even exist. The Orders in the RDNA were probably devised as a result of several factors common to the Founders at Carleton College four decades ago. One reason was that the college required elected officers for the club's constitution. Second, several members were from hierarchical religious backgrounds, like Episcopalianism, with a clear layered structure of laymen, deacons, priests, bishops & archbishops (although there were no Orders at the original services). Third, more than a few of the Founders had been members of fraternal organizations, or were clearly familiar with the general structure of Boy Scouts, Masonry or parliamentary procedures. Fourth, although Greek fraternities & sororities were banned at Carleton at the time, [I guess Celtic fraternities were okay?] first-year students were still hazed (ask your parents), rites of passage were more pronounced, and there were clear differentiated barriers between members of different class-years even in the 1960s. Fifth, ordination was a fun way to "pass the torch" off to carefully selected leaders who had "jumped through the right hoops" of the departing leadership (although I can point to few examples of refused members). Sixth, there were clear cultural/religious examples in society about knights vigiling before entering service or holy people praying off in the wilderness before entering a vocation.

Things have changed over the years since the Counter-Culture revolution, and I think Americans, in general, have become less enamored with hierarchical rankings in the four decades since the Druids were founded, especially after the decline of fraternities, fraternal organization, recent church scandals and conservative reactionary activities by church leadership, Watergate, the increasing casual style of treating colleagues as equals despite differences in age, wealth or experience. This has naturally influenced the RDNA structure in recent years, giving new options and possibilities of interaction, along with the plentiful examples available now from the proliferation of non-hierarchical liberal offshoots of monotheism. (On the other hand, other parts of our society, of course, are seemingly more willing than ever to hand over spiritual authority to charismatic or dogmatic church leaders.)

When I first started my own Druidic path and joined the existing Carleton Grove in 1990, it was particularly functioning, but a bit anarchic then since the loss of Third Order continuity in 1983 and the graduation of the revivalist Druids from 1985-1989. Their departure left a new generation of Druids who did not share the experience of communal quarters on an adjacent farm to the campus. The group was searching for a new stable base, and would settle on different off-campus houses and dormitories every two years or so; while often dining or attending folk-dance, SCA or sci-fi club meetings together. The Carleton Grove was definitely leaning towards Wiccan and Native American themes, but still open to members of different traditions, with a fun eclectic range of activities. In the revival period, people initiated

each other at Carleton to the 1st and 2nd Orders, and simply vigiled on their own for a Third Order, which was recognized by others as a sort of an individual vision quest. I did so likewise, and found it very empowering and sufficient in many ways; but yet there was still a small doubt that I might be missing out on something else, although I couldn't put a finger on it.

Finally, in 1993, I found Richard Shelton (AD 1969-1971) who came to Carleton to re-establish the "Apostolic Succession." After becoming interested in the older lost traditions of the RDNA, I thought about bringing back the Order of Worship and traditional ordination patterns. The Order of Worship was not well received, considered too staid and churchy, with people preferring more creative methods of worship, but the Ordinations proved popular and permanent. I thought this surprising as the Order evolved out of the liturgical positions of the Order of Worship service. The traditional ordinations seemed to provide a stronger sense of continuity for a constantly mutating college Grove. After my own vigil, being historically inclined by nature, I felt a great sense of comfort from belonging to a line of succession and the influence of a strengthened sense of common mission, not unlike joining a police or boy-scout squad; a sense of passage or a step forward on a journey. It motivates me to live up to my oaths when I'm down, and restrains me when I'm tempted to excess in my roles. I feel a sense of being watched and guided by Dalon (or Something) and felt the invisible influence of the other members of the Order, in a healthy supportive manner; like a school principal or the U.S. President feeling the weight of her predecessors. It might have been possible to have reached this state without ordination, but perhaps it came easier with a little structure and tradition? It certainly turned out to be a memorable rite of passage for me that I've enjoyed sharing with many people over the years. Since 1993, I have been present or officiated at about 25 vigils for Third Order (including 4 telephone ordinations), dozens of 1st & 2nd ordinations, and a handful of higher orders (which are a whole discussion in themselves). This has been both draining and empowering to be part of those moments. Self-initiations still sometimes occur at Carleton (and in a few other Groves), but regular ordination still seems the general rule, although Carleton often embellishes the traditional services to make it more amusing and moving for the ordainee. And each ordination has had a unique stamp of circumstances upon it. I've seen many different people enter 1st, 2nd, & 3rd Orders for many different reasons, although the Book of Customs in the Druid Chronicles gives good summaries that I like to follow. What follows may not make sense to some, but each person chooses/refuses Orders for unique reasons that have to be thoughtfully weighed.

Hesitation on Ordination

What's the big hurry? Ordination is not for everyone, and many RDNA Druids get along just fine without it, or choose only to do 1st Order at most, and enjoying long productive solitary ways. Awareness is not the sole possession of the Orders. Some folk don't have the time, motivation, or "pieces of the puzzle" ready for such a decision. I pushed Orders rather hard in my Grove at Carleton, St. Cloud & Akita, but few decided to enter them, possibly because of varying reasons of interest in organizational power, distaste of liturgical activity, "speed", "old ties", "grovity" and plain disinterest. As for the last, disinterest, mature Groves with 16 people and 8 years of stability will certainly have different dynamics motivating ordinations than a missionary start-up Grove as described in the earlier essay.

Regarding power, many Druids want to jump to Third Order quickly. This is quite understandable, as the Third Order has many well-known attributed rights (or should I say "roles"?), and far less-well-known responsibilities. However, I believe a 1st Order Druid is equally as "good" a Druid as a 3rd Order Druid, but I feel a Third has undertaken greater responsibilities and dedication to

the "organization" and members of the RDNA, little as there is in this group. I personally think the Earth-Mother will hear a devout heart regardless of their Order at a service, but tradition exists in most Groves for Third Order Druids to preside at a service. I have to acknowledge that each Order (1st-10th) has their own traditional organizational/liturgical/spiritual roles which, if followed in succession with proper performance, will deepen the spiritual experience of those Druids and sense of attachment to a band of siblings. As an ordainer of a simple, flexible tradition, I try to balance and adjust the ordination to meet the needs of the ordainee as much as possible, without losing all traces of tradition and continuity. I then always instruct the ordainee to give their next ordainees options of strict ordination and the possibility of some flexibility, according to a mutual decision of what's most proper. I believe in options.

Although some people see the Orders as spiritual rites of passage, the Orders predominantly exist to fill liturgical roles. A Server in the Order of Worship must be of the 1st Order, a Preceptor of the 2nd Order and an Arch Druid at a service of the Third Order. In practice, 1st Order sometimes doubled as Preceptor in a bind; and sometimes a 3rd or even a 2nd Order has led a service, or a make-shift meditation, when the Arch Druid didn't show up. There are always exceptions, but the traditional pattern is the most often the preferred pattern in many Groves, so far. As you can tell from perusing the Apocrypha and interviews with "retired" Druids, RDNA Druids have always had issues on whether liturgy is more conducive or distracting to the core goals of Druidical activity; which are the observation and contemplation of Nature's aspects and learning from the wisest in the world. Indeed, in what ways are you less of a Druid if you never partake of rituals? Is not life itself a long series of religious moments, that Zen-like, are of greater importance than our attempts to verbalize or sacralize them through short periods of liturgy? For those who eschew liturgy and tend towards contemplation and sacred living, ordination may not seem an important goal.

There are different "speeds" in the ordination process for varying reasons. Some people are glacially ponderous in making the decision to enter an Order, taking many years in one case (like Sister Stacey), weighing each aspect of the responsibility and feeling out whether they have the "gravitas" or *Je-ne-sais-quoi* involved, and who already made the choice and are just trying to find an ordainer (it took 2 years for me). In some Groves, people take at least a year between Orders (slow-and-steady model), other Groves do them in rapid fire succession as needed to fill out the liturgical roles or when suddenly presented with a mature candidate. Some egalitarian Groves (e.g. Amon Sul Grove and Swamp Grove) don't participate in Orders in the traditional sense (as did Carleton from 1985-1993), and those who could lead there, did and do so, and without titles, quite contentedly it seems.

"Old Ties" hesitations refers to discontentful links to previous religions among members. Reformed Druidism doesn't require abandonment of previous beliefs; it merely encourages an honest re-evaluation and thoughtful contemplation of them. Certainly, some other beliefs systems do not accept any association with Reformed Druidism, and some members decline to enter Orders for fear of being shunned by the jealousy of the old system. This concern kept me back for a year as I worked out my personal relationship with Catholicism in 1991-2. Taking Orders in the Reform, as in Christianity, is a major step for some people who take oaths and ministry very seriously, because it involves a change of identity at some level inside; one that is hard to reverse or decline without losing a bit of honor. I have noticed that the step into the 1st Order was much more momentous for some than the achievement of entering the 3rd Order. Originally, a Grove usually only had a single Third Order member (often the Arch Druid), and only ordained more when someone was leaving/graduating to go form a new Grove or succeed a retiring

Arch Druid. This impending "grovity" led to vigiling activity, for aforesaid practical missionary activity reasons. In some Groves, however, you may have many core members in the Third Order due to varied reasons of protecting continuity in a rapid turn-over environment (like Carleton), or for the fact that a Grove has been around for a dozen years (like the Berkeley Groves) and many long-term members have eventually seen a need to vigil themselves over the years.

The Calling

Not every religion has priests. Some faiths have ministers, rabbis, mullahs, magi, shamans, etc. Each operates in a different manner. What these clergy have in common is a desire to assist others, usually groups, in their spiritual journey, using whatever skills or areas of expertise they have. There are often many more dedicated "laity pillars" than "priests", that is, folks who don't undertake the public title and role of clergy, but do much of the same work. Sometimes priests made the shift-over because of a "calling" or decisive moment. Perhaps they had a dramatic dream, or a waking vision that precipitated the decision. It might have come together from a suggestion by a friend that they should seek ministry as an outlet. Or maybe, it just felt like the right thing to do, and the feeling just grew more comfortable. Perhaps for a few, like an arranged marriage, taking on the priesthood is a purely practical need to fill the liturgical role for a new grove, hoping and praying that one will just grow inspired while holding the position. Regardless, there is often a sensing of driving urgency, an impulse that can't be ignored, like a flower wishing to unfurl its budded petals to the sun; and most grow quite a bit more through on-the-job experience and training of hard-knocks.

Rights of the Third Order

Although the 1st and 2nd Orders have prescribed liturgical roles, they appear to have no defined particular defined "powers," except possibly determining if the sacrifice was accepted, by some interpretations of the liturgy. A Grove or individual appear to be welcome to encourage, assign or assume powers to them; such as to devise separate liturgy formats for just 2nd Order, weather working, blessings, do Bardic performance at service, do divination, gather sacrifice or purify a site or props. The more comfortable you are with your Order, the more creative you can become, and reduce the gulf in popularity, that encourages the rush to the Third Order. I theorize the power comes from the Earth, the Grove members, and their own experience. Recently I've been awarding clear-tape ribbons to 2nd Order Druids, to remind them of the need to think clearly, be pure and adapt to the coloration of society. I might also permit services to be done, while under supervision of an attending Third Order. Similar to Sister Stacey's Grove, I also require them to read the early Druid Chronicles, find a cup (either Gregorian style or their own choice), write a little comparing Druidism and a religion of their choice and to find their own ribbons. I'll keep you updated on how it works.

A nice aspect of ordination is the mentorship relationship usually involved both before and after the ordination. Depending on the people and personalities involved, it may vary from a short period with a few wise suggestions and simple factual answers, to a deeper life-long bond that might broach advice on other aspects of life like choosing a job, finding a companion or other life issues. The Third Order also has a number of privileges, in addition to the invoking of Dalon's "seven-fold powers and three ways of day and one of night," that they have granted unto themselves; the most widely known are namely:

1. Right to vote in the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, which is more-or-less defunct now in a legislative sense due to numbers and unanimity traditions, but still possesses a sense of camaraderie.
2. Right to be elected as an Arch-Druid and start a Grove.

3. As an elected Arch Druid, you may ordain people to 1st, 2nd, 3rd Order, or to the Arch Druidcy, although in practice some Thirds choose to ordain regardless of being an Arch Druid, which they see as a ten minute formality (to construct a temporary Grove).
4. May enter the higher Orders, if invited.
5. May conduct almost any rite or service of the Reform (excepting ordaining people to higher orders to which you don't belong); including the right to write rites.
6. Consecrate the Waters of Life and Waters of Sleep.
7. Wear a red ribbon for summer services and a white ribbon for winter services.
8. Employ really bad puns, sarcasm, irony and witty comments to the amazement of one's friend & foes.
9. Use of fancy titles, like:
Priest/ess of the Third Order
Priest/ess of the Reform
Priest/ess of the Order of Dalon Ap Landu
A Reformed Druid Priest/ess
Sign the letters O.D.A.L. or write a sigil after your name.
Call yourself "Reverend", or whatever is appropriate, which might be sufficient in some states & commonwealths to perform marriages & funerals.

The Responsibilities

As with any public role, of course, there are even heavier responsibilities upon the Second Order, and especially the Third Order, although they are less clearly laid out than implied and unmistakably felt, and each person tends to enunciate them in a different manner. I have devised my own nine rules that have mostly governed my actions, since I was a 1st Order Druid, with a few tweaks. You are welcome to borrow some elements or come up with your own set.

1. Study widely, keep skills honed, and contemplate deeply.
2. Live a wholesome and respectable life according to a stable code of ethics.
3. Follow the general customs & practices of the Druids.
4. Encourage the best performances from others.
5. Assist and guide all who come in search of Druidism onto their correct paths.
6. Be available for consultation, assist & visit with vigilers in your area.
7. Revere Nature and protect it (and the weak) from unbridled predation .
8. Avoid the fossilizing touch of dogma, mandatory traditions, and unnecessary organization.
9. Keep a strong sense of cheeky humor.

Conclusion

Again, these are my own thoughts on the matter, but you can see that there are a number of issues with pros and cons to consider when choosing an ordination or considering an alternative course of leadership or spiritual initiation. Take the time to complete an honest self-evaluation of whether and how you would like to undergo an ordination. If you are thinking of entering the 1st, 2nd or 3rd Order, feel free to confer with your nearest Arch Druid, or give me an e-mail to me to discuss the matter at mikerdna@hotmail.com In any case, I hope that your path will be clearer and full of bright promise and rewarding challenges.

Standard Constitution Format

By David Frangquist, 1966
Unofficial, of course.

REFORMED DRUIDS OF NORTH AMERICA
_____ GROVE

13, October, 1966
Constitution of the Reformed Druids of North America at _____

Article I The name of this organization shall be the Reformed Druids of North America at _____.

Article II Any (resident of/student at/etc.) _____ may become a member of this organization upon presenting a petition, which may be oral, stating that he believes in the Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism as set forth in this Constitution.

Article III The Basic Tenets of North American Reformed Druidism are these:

- 1) North American Reformed Druids believe that one of the many ways in which the object of man's search for religious truth can be found is through Nature, the Earth-Mother.
- 2) North American Reformed Druids believe that Nature, being one of the primary concerns in man's life and struggle, and being one of the Objects of Creation, is important to man's spiritual quests.

Article IV There shall be (#) officers of the Reformed Druids of North America:

- 1) The Arch Druid must be at least a third-order North American Reformed priest. He shall preside over all meetings.
- 2) The Preceptor must be at least a second-order North American Reformed Druid, shall assist in services, and shall be the principal officer in the secular arm of this organization.
- 3) The Server must be at least a first-order North American Reformed Druid, and shall assist in services.
- 4) (Provision may here be made for such other officers as may be needed.)

Article V Elections of officers shall be held annually, in (month). (Here may be specified the method, i.e. voice vote, ballot, etc.) Only those qualified to hold the posts may be nominated for them.

Article VI This Constitution may be attended by a majority vote in two consecutive meetings of this organization. A quorum, which shall be (fraction) of the members, must be present at each meeting.

I certify this to be a true and accurate copy of the Constitution of the Reformed Druids of North America at _____, read and approved at two consecutive meetings.

/Signature/
John Doe
Arch-Druid

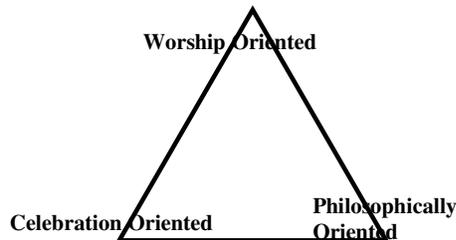
(SAMPLE IN STANDARD FORMAT).

Feel free to modernize language and make it applicable to your situation, by simplification or adding important points. Send a signed copy to: Carleton Arch Druid, Carleton College, Northfield, MN 55057

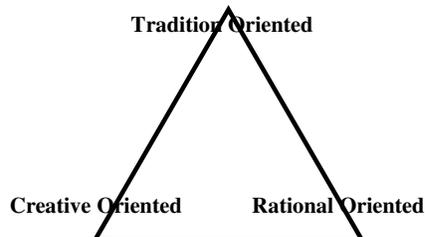
Oriented Differently

By Mike of D.C. Grove, 2005

You might notice after a few months that not all Groves or individuals have the same priorities, and are rather different. Sometimes the leaders and congregation have markedly different characteristics. This is the diversity of Reformed Druidism. The following diagrams might be useful for understanding individual or Grove orientations and you can consider how they fall within the three points of the triangle in my system. I don't like to use bi-polar opposites all the time, so I chose the three-sided triangle instead.



One dynamic you will see is that some Druids like to invoke lots of Gods, talk to them on a personal level, and dedicate their actions to a higher being. Other folks just love a party and are intimate with the changing seasons. Then there are those folks who dissect and discuss topics, but have trouble with liturgy or having a good time. As you might suspect, most people fall somewhere in between these three points or move about inside.



In a similar manner, you might place Druids in three types based on how they approach customs. Some folks won't do anything that isn't documented in a book or are hesitant if it hasn't been done for generations and endorsed by prominent folk. Other Druids love to brainstorm and research outside the box and experiment madly with things they've heard about. Finally, there are Druids who deduce the group's needs and analyze ideas solely by their positive or negative aspects, regardless of their beauty or long practice, and adopt and test them individually. Again, most Druids fall somewhere in the middle, or push towards a corner on certain issues.

By considering your Grove's dynamics and the orientations of your members, you are better able to anticipate which issues will bother certain folks and be embraced by others, and you can try to introduce a proper balance to meet your Grove's needs. It sometimes feel as you are an interpreter for people from different countries.

The Missionary Im-Position

By Mike of D.C. Grove, 2003

Naturally, I speak here only for my own opinion. As you may have been following in the RDNAtalk conference, my thoughts have been turning to those young MIB who knock on my door to share the Good News with me. I'd like to share some thoughts based on my own limited experience in door-to-door sales of the mundane variety, although I have little academic marketing experience. However, perhaps some of the parallels may be interesting.

I should start off by admitting that I actually admire the dedication and sense of inquiry that most door-to-door missionaries possess. I am also a somewhat reluctant spiritual missionary myself, as is shown by the fact that most of you are reading this essay because of my outreach internet efforts, providing access to RDNA historical material. My strategy is however naturally passive. I make suggestions but do not insist on them to the exclusion of others. I am just there. People come, sometimes stay, and often leave soon. Like a tree, I passively watch their passage and shade them while they are near by. I occasionally invite a friend to attend. Many pass under my limbs without even knowing a Druid is present. This I feel is a rather common RDNA method of Grove dynamics, it may not be the most organizationally effective way, but it is the most satisfactory method I have found. It is one way, yea, one way among many.

Now, if I was a Treant, like in the Tolkien movie, I could pull out my roots and walk about lobbing boulders about and being a noisy nuisance. And in certain circumstances, I might contemplate such action. Others make this a matter of course, and we see them at our doors every month or two, because we have a large Mormon barn in our neighborhood, so we tend to get the lazy ones who are not willing to travel far. It pains my cynical post-modernist heart to credit them, but most of those to whom I talk to are actually rather nice, wholesome people with more community spirit that my hermitic nature can muster up. But there is something rather unsettling about the whole door-to-door thing, and I'm not sure that they are aware of it. Occasionally, you'll get the hard sell from some door-to-door friends, that reminds me of a past part-time job that I once had, I think you'll see the parallels and be forewarned.

Nature Abhors a Vacuum Salesperson

In 1995, I answered one of those "Big money for part-time fun work" posters, and got sucked up into a scam-filled operation selling well-known expensive vacuum cleaners in Minnesota. I learned a lot about the way you set up a campaign with many applications to missionary activities. First you divide up a town among the employees, distribute invitations for a free "no-obligation" comparison test via newspapers or coupons, with free complimentary present and literature. When someone bites at the bait, you send out the young commission-paid worker to the address at the appointed time, with promises of how well they will be awarded on the often slim chance of a successful sales (10% conversion rate is considered high, with a 10% cut of the overpriced good). Othertimes you just knock on doors up and down the neighborhood taking advantage of your sad tired visage to entice compassionate people to invite you in.

What happens next is you give your spiel, and start doing good deeds (such as vacuuming like a madman around the house) and showing off the features of a professional cleaner. Now most people, (and few will admit it), don't mind a little grime in the corners, dust on the lampshade, or dirt under the sofa-cushions. People get by with a simple system of their own, but feel a bit

guilty about it, and this is your entry point. You, as a seller, by your zealous example associate your vacuum cleaner with a virtuous clean lifestyle. Mites and dust are a natural part of life, and for most of us they actually build-up our immunological defenses against real parasites; but if given a choice in life, people would like to live in aseptically clean environment, free of grossness. The odds are, even if they buy your brand of cleaner, that they wouldn't put that much more effort into cleaning, but they COULD if they wanted to.

This is called "overbuying" and the car and computer salesmen ply this trick just as often as door-to-door salesmen. The customer is also acquiring "membership" or association with great clean people, who like mountains, are more often admired from afar or bypassed, rather than climbed and imitated. Certainly, some will actually read your cleaning suggestions book and may actually follow the instruction manual you provide; but similar results could probably be had by diligently using any other cheaper vacuum cleaner.

Cleanliness is like unto Godliness

Mark Twain once said, "A cynic knows the price of everything but not its worth." Every salesman must truly believe in the product that they are selling. You must study the other brands of vacuum cleaners only so far as to know their weaknesses, to be able to denigrate them, and then select tests that you know are going to show those faults. Few people are prepared to defend their own cleaners to a well-prepared offense that they are not expecting. The salesman makes it a matter of faith that your own product's deficiencies are more than matched by its strengths; and the cleaner must naturally be taken as a whole item. I spent 30 minutes being instructed in the cleverness of its foaming carpet cleaner head. All types of methods of agitating the cleaning liquid were attempted before the inventor realized that a simple cheap cloth mesh over the end would foam-up the liquid. When explaining this to the people, they begin to associate a few clever features of the cleaner to the rest of the whole contraption, which may indeed be pretty standard fare.

Now the vacuum cleaner sales pitch would start by discussing how much it cost to attain this marvelous product, for which a newly invented need was now apparent. For those of you interested, this \$900 vacuum cleaner really only cost \$250 to produce, and were sold to the local head agent for \$300. The salesman would naturally calm down the customer and "call his boss" to cut a deal, say to \$750, which was still too much. Eventually you barter down to a reasonable \$500 in regular payments. They get a slightly sup-ed up cleaner, and probably put on a list of "easy marks" for other high-pressure sales agents. You and your boss split the profits. My idealism got the better of me, as did low sales performance, and I left soon afterwards.

What to do with Door Knockers

I know that most missionaries perform their actions as a matter of testing the strength of their faith, a sign of compassion to the beknighted followers of the wrong faith, and to follow the instructions of their superiors, and these I tolerate and a few I admire. A few are witless and naive people with but a few scraps of scripture to cover their nakedness, and I try not to scare them in their delicate condition. For some, their sense of self-worth is painfully dependent on getting others to follow their own pathway, and I feel sorry for these. Indeed I generally feel that those who come to my door may well indeed be the gods in disguise and I feel obligated to assist them in some fashion, even salesmen and missionaries. However, others are belligerently bigoted and seek to stamp out anything that disagrees with their vision, and these I abhor.

Recruiting Advice

By Mike the Fool, 2005

I suspect that many of these groups are outward oriented, sometimes in a pyramid scheme, with all the spiritual profits rising organizationally to the founder. It is true that perhaps some form of spiritual community is better than none, but I like to think that the ones that I choose are better, than the ones that choose me; assuming there is free will, of course. Most people, I believe, tend to belong to a faith that operates nearby out of convenience more than avid support of their "small print" of social policies and theological beliefs outlined by their inner circle of organizers. I have always wondered why they don't apply this strong energy into improving the members that are already part of their community? Some groups even seem to exist only to recruit more members. The Mormons are so desperate for growth, as to actually convert the already deceased ancestors of current members, and as a result, they have one of the most massive genealogical collections in the world, as my parents found out in their own family research. Quite likely, several of your own ancestors have been converted in this manner already! Thus much good occasionally does appear to result indirectly from these activities.

There appears to be a few common responses in the Neo-Pagan and Druid community towards these wandering door knockers. Some choose the "duck and cover" maneuver and refuse to answer the door, which is avoiding the whole issue. There a few (like me) who politely listen and refuse to respond either way, giving neither support nor denial to their cause, basically taking up their time to save some other unknown resident the experience. The most popular and funny, but probably rarely performed, are the "shock and awe" responses of overwhelming these people from narrow backgrounds with lavish displays of "see how weird and unsettling my lifestyle is! oooga booga!"

However, if you think you can surprise them with your Druidness, your mirthful days may be numbered. I recently came across a book which I read a 92 page point-by-point book of a series by Zondervan Guides to Cults and Religious Movement that teach how to witness to Pagans. It is called Goddess Worship, Witchcraft and Neo-Paganism. (ISBN 0-310-48881-8 \$6.00) If you want to go head to head against the toughest bible-thumper, I recommend you read it to see what arguments are coming. It was an interesting applying logical methods to sell rather non-sensical fantastical spiritual myths. It is another of those circular argumentative systems that once you accept one point, you are locked into a series of semi-logical faith-based points of belief. Maddening as I found it, it provides intriguing insights into the whole process.

A nice counterpoint is to realize that world views are a dollar a dozen, and I'd recommend reviewing the following two books: The Truth About Neo-Paganism written by one-time RDNA member Anodea Judith (of Chakra fame). ISBN 1-56718-567-3 which is \$3 at 60 pages. Another book is Pagans and the Law: Understand Your Rights which is a good handbook to simple legal questions that many Pagans should know, if you get flak for your religious beliefs. I'll hopefully be reviewing this book in a future issue.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I believe that the best preparation for dealing with the missionary is to follow the Druidic path of asking yourself the hardest questions ahead of time, to know what you really believe; and find out what areas of your spiritual life can be met with community involvement, psychiatry, lifestyle modifications and simple greater awareness. After you've done that you should be able to explain the satisfactory nature of your beliefs and perhaps give them a little useful insight to take back with them.

Okay, you know you can be solitary, and know how to start a Proto-Grove. So, if you DO want to start a Proto-Grove, with all the inherent headaches and bother, then how do you find folks to join you, without (you know) scaring them? Most people are quite wary about joining small religious movements, after all.

Well the first question you should consider is "How many people would be about right?" Converting the world has never been a significant goal for us. I feel if I'm changed myself, then I've more than done my bit to improve the world. Maybe three, eight, thirteen, thirty, a hundred folk is comfortable for your resources? Pick something you can handle and then set a reasonable time-frame, and select a series of activities to find people. Also it is important to decide what methods you WILL NOT use.

Well, there is the classic way, of asking folks you already know who seem interested in Nature and willingness to explore religious concepts (difficult to do if you're still in the closet). If they aren't interested in Druidism, maybe they know somebody ELSE who would be a good fit. Networking.

You could advertise that you want to have more members. Newspapers, magazines, web-lists, bulletin boards in occult shops, new age stores are possibilities. Local neo-pagan, folk societies, sci-fi guys, colleges, or environmental groups might be good places to join anyway for skill-building; and you might meet some Druidically inclined folk there as an unexpected side-perk.

Yelling loudly on street corners, randomly calling people on phones, untargeted mailings and spam are not likely to be very useful and will likely just annoy people. Having a booth at a fair, related public event or convention might be a feasible route. You will also have a few less-than-supportive visitors in this manner. Don't be an apologist or play by their rules. Be honest, tactful and admit what you don't know yet. Likely questions you'll hear are "Is it a real religion?", "Do I need to stop being a Christian?", "Are bloody sacrifices necessary?", "I'm not Irish, is that OK?", "Do you have a heaven?" and "Can you do XYZ type of magic?" Sadly, it is quite rare for someone to ask, "Will it make me wiser?"

Although you may be discreet, more than likely, everyone else probably knows that you're "different" in some manner, and you might have nick names like "nature boy", "green thumb", "Mr. Weird" or "the artist". People of like-mind will eventually FIND YOU, even if you aren't actively looking for them. This is the passive method, it takes one to know one. Besides, what's the big hurry? A lot of Groves start very small, and stay that way, fluctuating a bit, but growing larger over a long period until they reach some type of practical plateau or split.

Don't try to just find people like you. It is nice to find people who complement you, even if they don't compliment you. A little diversity helps to shake things up and keep you out of a rut. My personal tradition is that anyone who finds me is possibly a divinely-sent guest who is worthy of respect. Other Groves are much more cautious and have a series of screening processes to separate crazy folks from the eccentric, and avoid certain types of people they are not comfortable with. This is indeed a gray area, where prejudices might sub-consciously operate, so review those procedures and their results occasionally.

But in summary, you need to know the needs of your group, what attracts people to Druidism, do a lot of trial and error, and properly utilize resources you did not even know you had.

Druid: What's in a Name?

by Mike the Fool, 2005

You probably realize that without the word, "Druid", in the RDNA, you probably would never have found such a small group like us. Why do you suppose we, and other modern groups, use the term "Druid", when we are not predominantly Celtic oriented? This is a crucial and recurring topic for you to consider in upcoming recruiting and public representation. What gives it that "buzz" factor?

The RDNA selected the term, "Druid", for a handful of reasons rather than "eclectic free-thinking outdoor celebrant". In the 1960s, they were attracted by its venerable age, outdoor connotations, rebellious reputation, academic prowess, and the amazing lack of theological baggage. These were actually the same reasons for the 16th century revivalists that you will read in the following article.

Most Reformed Druids are resistant to wholesale continuation of all inherited traditions, but those they do like, they hold onto quite tenaciously. Sometimes a new revolutionary movement will tap into an ancient symbol or historical event to give it some immediate gravitas. If you don't like modern religious movements, why not look to a movement that existed before your opponents? Many mainstream movements also re-examine their own roots to search for un-traveled branch roads and alternatives that didn't come to fruition.

One advantage of going back further in time, is that there is less and less information about the symbol you are drawing upon, and consequently, more and more room for guess-work and imagination to fill in the gaps. Although they studied 20 years and were quite gifted, ancient Druids never wrote down anything, being a predominantly oral culture of pre-medieval Europe. Thus little was reliably known about the ancient Druids and most was third-hand information by hostile Romans or later unsympathetic Catholic monks. So the RDNA Founders felt they would not be challenged on their own innovations as much as if they had adopted ancient Roman or Greek formats. When they obviously differed from what was known, such as a prohibition on bloody sacrifice, the RDNA emphasized the word, "Reformed".

If they were simply picking an ethnicity close to their own roots, they probably would have picked Norse or German archetypes; or perhaps have chosen Lakota or Ojibwe local Native American practices. They picked an ostensibly Celtic window-dressing because the Celts were historically envisioned as the anti-thesis of both the pagan Roman Empire, its Roman Catholic successor AND the stuffy English empire of the later medieval era. Like most neighboring & conquered minorities, for 2500 years, the Celts were seen as rural, closer to Nature, traditional, barbaric (in either a Noble Savage or Cruel sense), lovers of arts, tribal, rebellious, heroic, disorganized and emotional; the opposite of the modern civilized urbanite. As the RDNA was opposing the organizational tendencies in religious matters, it seemed an attractive label for their purposes.

Finally there was the outdoor element. Druids thought "outside the box" in this sense. The environmental movement was still in its infancy, but the boundless reaches of the sky and horizon was a symbol of fighting limiting definitions of religion. Alcohol was also not permitted in buildings, but was unenforced in the nearby "wilds" of the arboretum. Nature was seen as the neutral childhood teacher of all religion to the Founders, so they went back to the source, and the Druids seemed another appropriate fit. As people became more involved in earth-oriented spirituality, this grew in prominence with the RDNA.

Knowing better the general attraction to the term, Druid, and how it inspires you, will greatly help in your recruiting and expression of Druidism in the years to come.

All essays and nearly all RDNA documents in the UWP are un-official and represent purely the opinions of their authors.

Ancient Druids and Pre-Modern Druids

Although the RDNA has many differences from the ancient Druids, it would be well for you to know more about them so a few books at www.geocities.com/mikerdna/celtic.html are good starts and available at www.amazon.com. Until you do your own research, the following essay will also give you the basic facts on how other groups in the 16th-20th century also appropriated the image of Druid for forming organizations, such as the still surviving OBOD and UAOD I have mentioned earlier in UWP.

Following article is:

Extracted from "*The Other Druids*" by Isaac Bonewits, In the 1976 DC(E) with later amendments in brackets

It will come as a surprise to no one that the Reformed Druid movements in North America were not the first attempt to resurrect Druidism. There are, in fact, dozens of groups that have been started over the centuries in an attempt to carry on or reinvent what their founders thought were the principles and practices of Druidism. Although none of the Branches of the Reform have any historical connection with any of these (up to the present, anyway) with one minor exception considered near the end of this article; nonetheless, a brief review of the histories of these groups will prove of interest to most Reformed Druids.

{ "The term "Pagan" comes from the Latin *paganus*, which appears to have mean "country dweller, villager, or hick," and not necessarily in a polite way. The Roman army seems to have used the term to mean "a civilian," and the Roman Church later used it to refer to those who were not part of "the Armies of the Lord," i.e., those who were non-Christian. After 1500 years of propaganda, the term became synonymous in many people's minds with "atheist, devil worshipper, or heathen" (heathen, of course, means "people of the heath, where heather grows.") Today, most people who define themselves as Pagans use the word as a general term for "native and natural religions, usually polytheistic, and their members." }

{ "This is the sense in which this author uses it. The term "Paleopagan" refers to the original polytheistic tribal faiths of Europe, Africa, Asia, the Americas and Australia, when they were still practiced as intact belief systems. "Mesopagan refers to those movements founded as attempts to recreate or revive what the founders thought of as the (usually European) Paleopagan faiths of their ancestors; but which were developed by those founders within the basically monotheistic or dualistic worldview of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. "Neopaganism" refers to the recent attempts to revive what the founders perceived as the best elements of Paleopaganism (of varying ethnic origins) within the context of modern humanistic ideas of psychological growth needs and mutual human interdependence. The first term was coined by this author, the second by Robin Goodfellow, and the third (as "Neo-Paganism") was rediscovered by Tim Zell." }

But first let us go over what we know of the original Paleopagan Druids. This can be accomplished swiftly, we actually know very little of them. The ancient Greek writers who mentioned the Druids were, according to Stuart Piggot's *The Druids* (which is the best book in English available on the subject,) for the most part suffering from either the Savage Barbarian ("Hard Primitivism") or else the Noble Savage mystique ("Soft Primitivism.") The accounts of Julius Caesar are mostly war propaganda, heavily weighed down with atrocity tales designed to make the Celts look terrible and the Romans look wonderful. The same comment, of course, holds for the writings of the early Christian missionaries, some of them encountered Druids in Ireland and Scotland, and found them to be far less

gullible than the populace. Indeed, it seems that the overwhelming majority of books written about the Druids, until the 20th century, were far more fancy than fact.

The really hard facts and probabilities about Paleopagan Druidism can be summed up briefly; the Druids practiced a system of Priestcraft that was perhaps similar in *some* ways to that of the Brahmins in India. They were active throughout Gaul and the "British" Isles, and *perhaps* in other Celtic territories as well. They were the victims of a series of successful genocide campaigns waged against them by the Roman Empire and the Church of Rome. First to taste defeat were the Druids of Gaul, around 54 c.e. and those of Britain around 61 c.e. (all by the Roman Legions.) The Christians managed to obliterate Druidism (or at least drive it completely underground) in Ireland, Scotland and the outer Isles during the fifth and sixth centuries c.e. How long Druidism may have lasted (either aboveground or underground) in Wales and other outposts is unknown, but it was probably not for very much longer.

As a social class, they seem to have been just below the warrior/nobility class in power and prestige, though they apparently had the political and religious power to be noncombatants and to start or stop wars. Their training could take as long as twenty years and seems to have included poetical composition, memorization techniques, law, ritual practice, weather predicting and other specialties. There appear to have been several subcategories, all vaguely called "Druid." For example; the "Bards" were in charge of music, poetry, singing and dance; the "Vates" or "Ovates" were in charge of prophecy and divination; the "Brehons" (whom some say were not Druids at all) were judges and law-givers; etc. Druids per se were primarily teachers, magicians and priests. All of these categories seem to have overlapped, along with healing, animal husbandry, time keeping, astrology and the transmission of oral traditions.

They definitely were respected authority figures and this may relate to the fact that the word "Druid" is from the root "dru-" meaning "oak tree, firm, strong." Therefore, it is possible that "druidecht" or Druidism may relate much to the concepts of "firm knowledge givers," "dogma knowers" or "sources of orthodoxy" as it does to "oak worshipping priests." This would make it an interesting contrast to "wiccaecraft" or "Witchcraft," which seems to mean "the craft of bending" or "the twisting skill" (standard terms used for magical workers, but seldom for religious authorities.)

Druid places of worship seem to have been mainly oak Groves. They practiced animal (and *perhaps* human) sacrifices and may have performed divination from the remains. They were touchingly fond of mistletoe, especially if it grew oak trees. They appear to have been polytheists (probably "conditional polytheists") rather than monotheists or duotheists. They believed in an afterlife very much like the fleshly one (not, it would appear, in reincarnation or transmigration, except for Heroes, Wizards and Gods) and made it a special point to bury tools, weapons, animals and food with the warriors and kings for use in the Celtic equivalent of the "Happy Hunting Grounds" believed in by some Native Americans. A favorite day for rituals (as well as for cutting mistletoe) seems to have been the sixth day after the night in which the new moon was first visible. They did not appreciate either the Roman Paleopagans nor the Roman PaleoChristians that much.

That just about sums up what we really know for sure about the Paleopagan Druids. There are no real indications that they used stone altars (at Stonehenge or anywhere else); that they were better philosophers than the Greeks or Egyptians; that they had anything to do at all with the mythical continents of Atlantis or Mu; that they wore gold Masonic regalia or used Rosicrucian passwords; that they were the architects of (a) Stonehenge, (b) the megalithic circles and lines of Northwestern Europe, (c) the

Pyramids of Egypt, (d) the Pyramids of the Americas, (e) the statues of Easter Island, of (f) anything other than wooden barns and stone houses. Neither is there any proof that the Ancient Druids were "Pre-Christian Christians;" that they understood or invented either Pythagorean or Gnostic or Cabalistic mysticism; or that they all had long white beards and golden sickles. We don't even have any proof that they were the only magical workers among the Paleopagan Celts (or among the tribes conquered by the Celts.) And although there are sporadic references to a "seminary" for higher training of Druids in "Albion" (which could have meant either the physical country of Britain or Wales, or else the Gaelic "Otherworld," i.e., "Higher training between lives"); there is no proof for this nor any really developed intertribal communications network of Druids.

With that background in mind, let us attempt to trace the revival/survival of Druidism in the Celtic and Gaulish territories. As near as we can tell, Druidism as such had vanished as a public activity by the end of the sixth centuries of the common era. Bards, however, seem to have survived fairly well, at least in Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and the outer Isles. Whether they also managed to keep alive (as an underground cult) other aspect of Paleopagan Druidism, as has been claimed, remains to be proven. It is also possible, though unproven, (and perhaps unprovable,) that some of the so-called "Family Traditions" of Witches in these territories kept alive some of the knowledge of the Ancient Druids.

We do know, that as far back as the 12th Century c.e., Bards in Wales were holding large competitions, to which the generic name "Eisteddfod" has been attached. One of them was held in 1176 c.e. in Cardigan Castle, sponsored by a Lord Rhys, but it was almost three centuries before another competition of any significance was held at Carmarthenshire in 1450. The next appears to have been in the north of Wales in 1523, at Caerwys, and another in 1568 where Queen Elizabeth (who was anxious to control the traveling minstrels she saw probably correctly - as a threat to British rule, examined the bards and granted license to some of them to travel and collect fees.

Throughout these centuries, the scholarship of learned men (women weren't allowed to write) concerning the Druids was abysmal. The same Greek and Roman commentaries were dug up and rehashed, over and over again, and fanciful theories were built upon them. Most of these "scholars" were not very romantic in their treatment of the Druids, on the contrary, writers seemed to vie with one another in "revealing" the foolishness, barbarity and vanity of Druid worship. This was of course the proper party-line to take for a scholar wishing to survive with either his reputation or his head in Christendom. It did not, however, improve the image of Pre-Christian religions in Europe.

It is said by some that in 1245 c.e. a gathering was held of underground Druids and Bards from several of the British Isles, and that a theological unity was agreed upon and a special group or Grove founded, called the *Mount Haemus Grove*, which is said to still be in existence, with an "unbroken line" leading back. Such claims need to be treated most carefully. There does seem to be a group by that name, recognized by some of the modern Druids in England, but this hardly constitutes proof of such an extraordinary claim. It may indeed go back a few centuries (probably to the id 1700) but that does not make it an unbroken heritage from 1245.

In 1659 c.e., the scholar John Aubrey, having done some archeological fieldwork at Stonehenge, made the suggestion that Stonehenge *might* have been a temple of the Druids. He developed this suggestion cautiously over the next few decades in his correspondence with his fellow scholars and in the notes for his never fully-published work, *Templa Druidum*. In 1694, a fiery young Deist named John Toland discussed the theory with him and became very enthusiastic over it. In 1659, excerpts from Aubrey's book were published, including his theory about Druids at Stonehenge, which then saw light for the first time.

In 1717, a young antiquary named William Stuckeley obtained a transcript of Aubrey's complete manuscript of *Templa Druidum*, including the portions never published. Stuckeley thought the theory about Stonehenge being a Druid Temple was a terrific idea and began to develop it far beyond Aubrey's original concepts.

Also in that year, it is claimed, John Toland held a meeting at which Druidic and Bardic representatives from Wales, Cornwall, Brittany, Ireland, Scotland, Anglesey, Many, York, Oxford and London appeared and formed *The Universal Druid Bond* (U.D.B.). The UDB has supposedly continued to this very day (or rather, at least one current Grove is claiming to be part of a Universal Druid BOND says that it goes back this far) and the present name of the head group of the UDB seems to be *The Mother Grove An Tich Geata Gairdeachas*.

In 1723 c.e., the Druid Stone Altar was invented by Rev. Henry Rowlands in his monumental work, *Mona Antiqua Restaurata*. His Druids are Patriarchs right out of the Christian Bible, and the altars they use are cairns and the capstones of cromlechs (though he does at least allow the Druids to remain in their Groves, rather than forcing them to build huge stone temples.) These Druid Stone Altars quickly became part of the rapidly growing folklore of Druidism. Prior to 1723, Druids were required to use altars made of sod or tree stumps, adequate, perhaps, but hardly as glamorous.

In 1726, John Toland published his *History of the Druids*, in which he pictured the Druids as unscrupulous mountebanks and theocratic tyrants. This was rather surprising act for the man who had supposedly had, nine years earlier, helped to found a Universal Druid Bond and been its first "Chosen Chief." He did, however, put further forward the Stonehenge theory of Druid worship.

Scholarship of equal value was, of course, being produced in France as well. In 1727, Jean Martin presented Patriarchal Druid (Christian style) in his *Religion des Gaulois*. Throughout this century, on both sides of the Channel, Druids were being invented east and west, though in France these "Pre-Christian Christians" tended to be patriotic heroes resisting foreign invasion, while their English counterparts were the greatest mystics in history.

In London, throughout the century, "Druid" groups appeared along with Rosicrucian and Freemasonic organizations. In 1781 c.e., Henry Hurle set up *The Ancient Order of Druids* (AOD), a secret society based on Masonic patterns (not surprising, since Hurle was a carpenter and house builder.) This group, like most of the similar mystic societies form at the time, was heavily influenced by Jacob Boehme. Jacob Boehme, 1675-1724 c.e., was a Protestant mystic, greatly involved with alchemy, hermeticism and Christian Cabala, as well as being a student of the famous Meister Eckhart. His mystical writings attempted to reconcile all these influences and had a tremendous impact upon later generations of mystical Christians, Rosicrucians, Freemasons, and Theosophists.

["Overseas, the link between Deism, Masonry and Druidism was once again established, in the small town of Newburgh, New York. G. Adolf Koch has an entire chapter on "The Society of Druids" in his book *Religion of the American Enlightenment*. Deism and downright atheism were popular during the 1780's and 90's among the American intelligentsia, especially those who had supported the American and French revolutions. In fact, a rather large number of the key political figures involved in both revolutions were Deistic Masons and Rosicrucians (see Neal Wilgus, *The Illuminoids*.) Koch tells the story of the Newburgh Druids thusly:]

["Some Influential citizens of Newburgh had organized themselves into an interesting radical religious body called "The Druid Society." Like its sister organization, the Deistic Society in New York, it was a radical offshoot of an earlier and more

conservative society. A Masonic lodge had been established in Newburgh in 1788, and it seems, as one attempts to piece together the fragmentary facts, that as the brothers, or at least a number of them, became more and more radical in the feverish days of the French Revolution, the metamorphosis from Mason to Druid resulted. The Druids held their meetings in the room formerly occupied by the Masons and continued to use a ceremony similar to the Masonic. It is interesting to note, too, that as the Druid Society dies out contemporaneously with the end of Palmers' activities in New York City (he was a famous Deist of the time-PEIB,) a new Masonic lodge was instituted in Newburgh in 1806."}

["Koch continues, "The question naturally arises as to why those apostate Masons chose the name of Druids. It seems that when they abandoned Christianity, with which Masonry in America had not been incompatible, they went back to the religion (as they conceived of it -PEIB) of the ancient Druids who were sun worshippers. It was commonly believed at that time, by the radicals of course, that both Christianity and Masonry were derived from the worship of the sun.. The Druids thus went back to the pure worship of the great luminary, the visible agent of a great invisible first cause, and regarded Christianity as a later accretion and subversion of the true faith, a superstition, in short, developed by a designing and unscrupulous priesthood, to put it mildly in the language of the day." "}

["It appears that Thomas Paine, among other radicals of the time, was convinced that Masonry was descended from Druidism. Koch refers us to an essay by Pain, *The Origin of Freemasonry*, written in New York City in 1805. In this essay he mentions a society of Masons in Dublin who called themselves Druids. The spectacular fantasies and conjectures that have been offered over the centuries to explain the origins of Masonry and Rosicrucianism will have to await another article to be properly discussed. Suffice it to say for now that the sorts of Druidism with which the noble Paine and his friends might have been familiar were far more likely to have been offshoots of Masonry than vice versa."}

["As for the group of Druid Masons in Dublin, this author knows nothing else about them. Perhaps they were a branch of the UDB or AOD. I will speculate that they may very well have been intimately linked with the Irish Revolutionary politics, which might or might not have strained their relations with Druid Masons in England. There doesn't seem to be much data about Irish Masonic Druidism available in this county, but we do know a bit about developments in Wales."}

Following the tremendously successful Eisteddfod organized by Thomas Jones in Corwen in 1789, a huge variety of Welsh cultural and literary societies mushroomed and flourished. In 1792, a member of several of these groups in London named Edward Williams, using the pen name of *Iolo Morganwg* (Iolo of Glamorgan,) held an Autumnal Equinox ceremony on top of Primrose Hill (in London.) Along with some other Welsh Bards, he set up a small circle of pebbles and an altar, called the *Mean Gorsedd*. There was a naked sword on this altar and a part of the ritual involved the sheathing of this sword. At the time, no one paid very much attention to the ceremony or its obvious sexual symbolism (which if noticed, might legitimately have been called "Pagan,") at least not outside of the London Bardic community.

Iolo, however, was not daunted. He declared that the Glamorganshire Bards had an unbroken line of Bardic-Druidic tradition going back to the Ancient Druids, and that his little ceremony was part of it. He then proceeds (almost all scholars agree) to *forge* various documents and to mistranslate a number of manuscripts, in order to "prove" this and his subsequent claims. Many people feel that he muddled genuine Welsh scholarship for over a hundred years.

In 1819, Iolo managed to get his stone circle and its ceremony (now called, as a whole, the Gorsedd inserted into the genuine Eisteddfod in Carmarthen, Wales. It was a tremendous success with the Bards and the tourists, and has been a part of the Eisteddfod tradition ever since, with greater and greater elaborations.

Iolo's effects did not stop there however, for later writers such as Lewis Spence (who produced more fantasy about Celtic Paleopaganism than any writer of the last century,) Robert Graves and Gerald Gardner apparently took Iolo's "Scholarship" at face value and proceeded to put forward theories that have launched dozens of occult and mystical organizations (most of them having little if anything to do with Paleopagan Druidism.)

By 1796 c.e., all megalithic monuments in Northwestern Europe were firmly defined as "Druidic," especially if they were in the form of circles or lines of standing stones. In that year, yet another element was added, in La Tour D'Auvergne's book, *Origines Gauloises*. He thought he had discovered a word in the Breton language for megalithic tombs, "dolmin," and by both this spelling and that of "dolmen" this term became part of the archeological jargon and of the growing Druid folklore.

At this point the folklore, also called "Celtomania," went roughly like this: "the Celts are the oldest people in the world; their language is preserved practically intact in Bas-Breton; they were profound philosophers whose inspired doctrines have been handed down by the Welsh Bardic Schools; dolmens are their altars where their priests the Druids offered human sacrifice; stone alignments were their astronomical observatories..." (Salomon Reinach, quoted by Piggot)

Art, music, drama, and poetry were using these fanciful Druids as characters and sources of inspiration. Various eccentrics, many of them devout (if unorthodox) Christians, claimed to be Druids and made colorful headlines. Wealthy people built miniature Stonehenges in their gardens and hired fake Druids to scare their guests. Mystically oriented individuals drifted from Masonic groups to Rosicrucian lodges to Druid Groves, and hardly anyone, then or now, could tell the difference. Ecumenicalism was the order of the day and in 1878, at the Pontypridd Eisteddfod, the Arch Druid presiding over the Gorsedd ceremony inserted a prayer to Mother Kali of India! This might have been magically quite sensible, and was certainly in keeping with traditional Pagan attitudes of religious eclecticism, except for the face that the British attitude towards Indian culture and religion was not exactly the most cordial at the time (of course, if there were no British people leading the rite, it might have been a deliberate bit of Welsh nationalistic magic against England!)

But before this, in 1833, the Ancient Order of Druids (the secret society founded by Hurle) split up over the question of whether it should be mainly a benefit (charitable) society or a mystical one. The majority voted for being a charitable society and changed its name to *The United Ancient Order of Druids* (UAOD.) This group, with branches all over the world, still exists as a charitable and fraternal organization rather like the Elks or Shriners. An example of their philosophy may be found in a collection of their sayings entitled *The Seven Precepts of the Prophet Merlin*:

"First: Labor diligently to acquire knowledge, for it is power.

"Second: When in authority, decide reasonably, for thine authority may cease.

"Third: Bear with fortitude the ills of life, remembering that no mortal sorrow is perpetual.

"Fourth: Love virtue, for it bringeth peace.

"Fifth: Abhor vice, for it bringeth evil upon all.

"Sixth: Obey those in authority in all just things, that virtue may be exalted.

"Seventh: Cultivate the social virtues, so shalt thou be beloved by all men."

Meanwhile, the minority group, still calling itself by the old name (AOD,) also continued to exist, as a mystical Masonic sort of organization. The AOD may have been among the groups known to have held ceremonies (Summer Solstice rites were the only ones held by anyone it seems) at Stonehenge prior to 1900 c.e. (it was a popular pastime) and in any event, there were several such groups using the site. In 1900, one of the standing stones fell over and the angry owner of the land (Sir Edward Antrobus) decided to fence the monument and charge admission, the better to (a) keep a closer watch on it and (b) to earn enough money to repair the damage being committed by tourists. This caused a problem almost immediately, when a Druidic group was holding the very next Summer Solstice ceremonies and the Chief Druid was kicked out by the police (he laid a curse on Sir Edward, the effects of which are unrecorded.)

Although the AOD, in the form of one of its subgroups (the Albion Lodge at Oxford) gained a certain amount of notice when they initiated Winston Churchill in August of 1908, the rite was performed at Blenheim Park, not Stonehenge. The only Druidic group known for sure to have used the monument during the years between 1901 and 1914 was called *The Druid Hermeticists*. In 1915, Stonehenge was sold by the weary owner to someone else who immediately gave it to the British Government, at a ceremony in which Druids of some sort assisted. Since 1919 c.e., when Stonehenge became a national monument, at least five different Druid groups have asked government permission to use it, although other groups have celebrated at various nearby spots (because of political and metaphysical squabbles) and some group, of course, may have used Stonehenge without government permission or knowledge.

By 1949, only two groups seem to have been left using Stonehenge for the Summer Solstice rites; the AOD and the British Circle of the Universal Bond (BCUB.) In 1955 the AOD seems to have disappeared, leaving the plain to the BCUB. But the latter also had a problem, when a group succeeded in 1963-4, calling itself The Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids (OBOD,) and decided to celebrate elsewhere (usually Primrose Hill.)

Things of a Druidic nature were occurring outside of Stonehenge, of course. In Wales, the National Eisteddfod Court runs an Eisteddfod every year (alternating between northern and southern Wales) and has the "Gorsedd of Bards" arrange the rituals for each occasion. Bardic and Druidic groups have also arisen in France, Brittany, Cornwall, the Isle of Man, Scotland, Ireland and in various parts of England. While the Welsh groups (Bardic, Druidic and Bardic-Druidic) spend most of their time and energy looking down their noses at all the non-Welsh groups (and even being so rude as to kick non-Welsh Druids out of their ceremonies); the others in turn spent tremendous amounts of time and energy on internal warfare.

Ecumenical movements, of course, have appeared and disappeared. The UDB, supposedly founded in 1717 by John Toland, claims to have survived since then under a succession of Chosen Chiefs, including such names as Toland, Stuckeley, Lord Winchelsea, Blake and Spence, among others. It appears to have been their English group (the BCUB referred to above) that suffered the split in 1963-4. Both groups, naturally, claim to be the only legitimate representatives in the UDB. There do appear to be a couple of dozen public Druid groups in France and the "British" Isles, many of them using the "Bards, Ovates and Druids" phraseology. One leader states that there may be as many 400 independent Druids not affiliated with groups. Such estimates, like those of underground Witches, Occultists and Pagans, must remain speculation since (thanks to religious bigotry) the estimates cannot be tested without risking the lives of those so exposed.

Finding Excellent Mentorship(s)

By Mike the Fool, 2005

(This should go in Section Three, there wasn't sufficient room.)

As I mentioned in the Quick Resource List, there are several resources for Druids to access in the Reform. And, you know now a great deal about the dis-organization of the Reformed Druids; and indeed this unofficial guide should be enough to let you hit the ground with your wheels spinning. But, eventually, you might like to get some consistent advice from a few fellows who've been around the forest a few times. How do you find them? How do you evaluate them?

What you are probably seeking is a mentor or patron, a concept that has been around under different names for millennia. You've probably found a few while growing up.

History of the Concept (borrowed essay)

Mentoring is a powerful and popular way for people to learn a variety of personal and professional skills. In fact, mentoring is one of the oldest forms of influence. Popular mentoring literature attributes the origin of the term mentoring to Homer, one of the ancient Greek story tellers. In his classic tale Homer tells of the King of Ithaca, who asked his friend Mentor to look after his son Telemachus while he fought to win the Trojan War. However, scholars familiar with the original work believe that the model of mentoring portrayed by Homer would make most relationships fizzle rather than sizzle. In fact, the true origin of the modern use of the term mentoring more likely comes from the work of 18th century French writer Fenelon who was also an educator. African scholars have noted that mentors were commonplace in Africa, long before the ancient Greek civilization.

Regardless of the origins of the term and although not everyone takes the place of a king, most adults can identify a person who, at some time in their life, had a significant and positive impact on them. Mentors can be friends, relatives, co-workers, teachers, as well as historic or contemporary personalities. Most often, a mentor is a more experienced or older person who acts as a role model, compatriot, challenger, guide or cheerleader.

Mentoring has become an effective method for businesses to help employees with orientation, career advancement, problem solving, coaching, and support. In addition, mentors can assist people to deal with the challenges associated with successful, productive, meaningful work life.

Some General Examples of Mentoring

- Women executives assist other women to break the "glass ceiling"
- Senior citizens demonstrate hobbies to elementary students
- Business managers take new employees "under their wings"
- Volunteers partner with students at risk of dropping out of school
- People managing life challenges provide support and wisdom to others
- Older students help younger students cope with peer pressure
- University alumni provide guidance to students seeking business careers
- Experienced faculty members assist their newer colleagues
- Successful business people help new entrepreneurs starting out

Reasons for Mentoring in Reformed Druidry

There is no formal program of mentoring, but it happens here and there when two (or more) Druids realize that each has something to offer each other to improve their Druidry that is not necessarily a "Grove"-type relationship.

It is said that one can learn a great deal about a subject by trying to teach it. The process of formulating, clarifying it, or just examining it through new ideas can deepen one's understanding of an issue. Sometimes the teachers grow more than the students. Some find it amusing.

Other Druids feel that since they were bestowed with a chance to learn from another, they also feel obligated to pass on that sort of assistance to a few others (kind of like the movie, "Pay It Forward") to settle their Karmic debt.

Selfishly, mentoring also often gives the mentor an ally for future projects or campaigns, although there are more than a few cases in the business and political world where the dog has bitten the hand that feeds it, sometimes because the dog is more ethical than the master that trained it! Both sides should benefit professionally from the exchange, and hone their skills.

Mentoring Development

Although some mentorships develop along vague pathways at first, you should eventually try to focus it on a few areas that the mentor has specific skill or pull in arranging for the mentee. Some subsidiary lessons might be learned on the side, but try to stay on target, and when that's finished, then the mentorship should formally end a phase. For example, one mentor may be great at botany and biology, and after a few years of guiding study for the student, they may choose to reclassify their relationship as colleagues or fellow researchers or even friends. Networking.

Mentorships are rarely contracted or defined on paper and can vary widely in time and harshness. One mentor may be a spoon-feeding coddler and another may be a hickory-switch bearing martinet. Don't pick someone whose teaching style doesn't fit you, just because they are conveniently nearby and available. If they go too far in some manner (see Section Three), then you might wish to cancel it and find another suitable person.

Not all Druids are able to find a mentor within Reformed Druidism. Most Druids piece things together on their own with a little help from their friends. It is a privilege and stroke of luck to secure a mentorship, you can't force or strong arm a person into that role. Either they are too far away, the most matching person is too busy or a variety of other factors may require you to look elsewhere, or to wait a long time for things to line up.

Finding a Mentor

If you are looking within the Reform, the best thing to do is to ask around for who has done it before. A mentor might not necessarily be an Arch-Druid. If you find a reading in ARDA 2 that indicates a close kindred spirit, you might follow up and contact the author.

Perhaps a member of another Druidic community might exist, or in a completely different religion. Don't limit yourself to the word, "Druid". There are many folks going by other names who are doing similar things.

If you need to look elsewhere, then consider the various prominent or widely respected women and men of your community (clergy, politicians, coaches, teachers, doctors, lawyers, activists and other get-it-done folks) in addition to those more hermitic types like artists, writers or monks who may be less easily spotted. One won't find much if you don't search.

So I hope this concept, even if not possible now, will one day blossom for you.

Section Three:

Cautionary Advice

Introduction

After reading Section Two, you will realize that Druids have a love-hate relationship with organization and greatly prize freedom and independence. This also has potential drawbacks.

While Reformed Druidry is usually a pretty jovial simple matter, there are theoretical and eventual problems that may pop up over the coming years that you might want to consider and prepare for. We've never assembled a section like this before, but perhaps it's about time. It's not a matter of being paranoid, but we are resigned to the eventual possibility of problems. More advice may build up later on, but this is the best I find for you at the present.

Quite a few Reformed Druids come from traditions that did not treat them well, and some times it is difficult to shake off those ingrained habits and assumptions about what spirituality has to look like, and those very things they left from are brought with them. Hopefully, they'll be able to start anew and build a friendlier organization. If they fall back into those behaviors they sought to escape from, you will have to consider if and how you will respond.

If there is one thing that Reformed Druids have stressed since the beginning, it is that Druids must stand up for their rights and dignity against forces that would use religion as an excuse to control them.

Read the following essays and think about them.

And let's hope, it is never necessary to refer again to this section in real life.



Celtic vs. Cultic Things to watch for:

It has come to my attention that, as with almost any religion, charity, or philosophy, eventually you will get a few bad-eggs that are going to use a good thing as a front for some type of scam or hurtful purpose.

So I think the new-comer to Reformed Druidism should be aware of what are the usual clues for detecting, shall we say, unsavory practices in a group they decide to join. Please take care to note who is running things and **HOW** they operate.

Inherent Weaknesses in the Reform

Perhaps intentionally, the RDNA is an unusually dis-organized group on the national level, with a very strong tradition of local autonomy for Groves and independent Druids. A regretful consequence of this freedom is that there seem to be few practical group-wide steps that Reformed Druids can invoke upon unsavory Groves to correct their actions. The most we can do is passing notices, sharing complaints, informing “ensnared” members of their rights, and avoiding those folk we dislike or distrust. Most other modern Druid groups, like [ADF](#), [Keltria](#) or [OBOD](#) were created with some type of conflict resolution mechanism on a centralized level.

Some Groves you’ll find are sloppy or poorly managed, but you may run across a Grove operating rather inappropriately, and we’d **really** like to know about it. However, there is no formal judicial means to address grievances on a national level, although you can find sympathetic ears and varying opinions from numerous established Groves on the [RDNAtalk](#) conference on <http://groups.yahoo.com> that I mentioned in the Quick Resources.

Those customary RDNA-wide limits are **not** intended as condoning bad practices. Rather, it requires that individuals or Groves must be prepared to make their own policies and stand independently against what they believe is wrongful treatment. Although Groves differ widely, they are often simple set-ups with colorful local customs and often few set rules as I mention in my slightly flippant article, “[less is more](#)” in this publication.

It takes only a few minutes to register into the RDNAtalk conference, anonymously if you’d like, and you’ll certainly get some advice there and the company will be comforting. (I’d recommend “daily digest” setting or “no e-mail” and check the posts online, as the convenience arises.

Inherent Resistance Strength in the Reform

As I’ve mentioned elsewhere, trying to build a “cult” within the RDNA is probably a very counter-productive choice to consciously make, despite its inviting disorganization.

Reformed Druids are perhaps some of the most contentious and rebellious Druids who have walked upon this Earth. Many have been treated badly once in previous religious groups, and are vociferous critics of those practices. They cherish their independence quite dearly. This is found repeatedly in their literature, conferences and discussions, and any decent research by a member would uncover this nowadays.

For example, if the late red-baiter Senator McCarthy was trying to build a coercive anti-communist organization in the 21st century, it would be a bit silly for him to call it the “Beatnik Brigade”, just because “Beatniks” sounds real “hip” and they are disorganized. Anyone joining the Beatnik Brigade would eventually look up the term on the internet, notice the freedom-loving, poetry-spewing rebellious origins of the word, and notice they are not harmonious with the group’s purposes and activities of anti-communism.

Similarly, if I were interested in conning Christian folk into giving me money and following me blindly, I wouldn’t adopt the name “Roman Catholic Church”, which would raise flags of suspicion from those familiar with it. Instead I’d make up a new name, like “Reformed Christian Fellowship”, and then I’d be able to avoid disparaging comparison with better behaving groups of the same name. Similarly, if someone wants a “cult”, better to found a new group, like “True United Renaissance Druids”, rather than using the term “Reformed Druid.”

So as long as Reformed Druids continue to insist on their independence of individualism and Grove autonomy, and simplicity of structure; their reputation in Druid circles and on the internet should dissuade most intentionally harmful cult founders from settling in our ranks.

However, that indicates to me the more likely scenario is that of an immature or shallow person, on a small scale in an obscure location, perhaps just taking advantage over a few members; perhaps without either he or they realizing it, by sliding by degrees over years towards authoritarianism, as more moderate voices leave, rather than make the effort to reform the group.

Individual Responsibility

Therefore, since every Druid is only responsible for their own actions, you should stop and take a few serious moments and think about your rights and the kind of requirements that you expect from a Grove that you may join, or the type of character you want in a mentor you choose to study from. Just because you join a group, doesn’t mean you give up your civic rights as a citizen. Of course, you can’t always get what you’d like, people will always disagree on style. But, I believe that a good Reformed Druidic Grove should have a spirit of **cooperation** and **compromise**, rather than **coercion** or **control**.

If you can’t find a Grove or mentor for you needs, then you should start your own group, or study on your own rather than settle for some dissatisfactory substitute. It is much better to leave than take abuse or tolerate harmful incompetence. As my old civics professor explained in junior high school, “Other people’s indisputable rights end when they mean yours. And when they meet either compromise or agreement to disagree must be made.”

So without getting paranoid or jumpy, let’s rationally consider a few steps we can take as individuals or Groves to prepare ourselves for a possible problem in the future. Hopefully, this will never happen, but best to think about the possibilities. An ounce or two of prevention is worth a few pounds of cure in this matter.

Sensible Steps You Can Take

- Ask widely for good mentors, and evaluate them carefully, rather than taking the first one you can find.
- If you see something out of place, ask a few older Groves for a second or third opinion of the practice in question.
- Read widely in Reformed Druid essays about what other Groves have done and don’t do.
- Discuss what you think are sensible limits of power within your Grove and make an informal Bill of Rights.
- Stand up to bullies and offer your support to people who you think are taking advantage of new members.
- Report criminal acts to local police immediately.
- Think of ways to subvert your own Grove, then fight attempts by others to employ such tactics, but sometimes the cure is worse than the disease you are trying to eradicate.
- Be a shining example to encourage others.
- Don’t accept excuses that wouldn’t fly in a secular club (e.g. bowling league) “just because” it is a religious group.

Druid Etiquette 101

By Elm-ily Post (A.k.a. Mike)

I've watched Druids communicate for a long time, and they have a bit of an unwritten code of behavior that they expect. Some have even accused Druids of being snooty or snobbish. It is hazardous for me to attempt to codify them, but if you follow these general guidelines, you might avoid putting your foot in your mouth, and probably be respected for your manners.

Reformed Druids usually get irate when someone sets themselves up as the mouthpiece of the entire Reform. You don't want to get that flak from folks when you don't mean to offend.

This is mostly oriented for on-line conference usage, but might also work for in-person relations.

This is just some personal advice, from me to you.

0. Do unto others as you'd have them do unto you.

1. Avoid words like all, everyone, noone, never, always, "every Druid", or "Druidism believes" and other general terms that imply that ALL Reformed Druids believe X or Y. Exceptions are frequent. Instead, you should prefer to use words like; many, most, some, a few, often, sometimes, it seems, it appears.

2. When you are talking about ancient Druidism, say so, when you are talking about modern Druidism, say so; and when you are talking about Reformed Druidism, say so.

3. When expressing a personal or Grove opinion, say so frequently; using words like I think, I believe, for me, in my opinion, personally, in my Grove, or I feel.

4. Use a consistent name in conferences, even if you primarily use an alias. Using multiple accounts or names is not only confusing to many, but may actually engender suspicion that you are trying to "agree with yourself" by using alternative identities. Put your name with a criticism and stand by your words as long as you think you are correct.

5. Be courteous and cordial with each other, even when they ain't.

6. Give each other the benefit of doubt in uncertain matters.

7. Use proper grammar and clear terms and emoticons.

8. Review all letters for a moment before sending, to check for improperly stated thoughts. Write slowly and thoughtfully.

9. Being funny is a fine thing, but apologize if you perhaps poke someone a bit too deeply.

10. Do not be afraid to state your personal beliefs, but try to do so in a tactful or diplomatic manner, when you think they might be controversial. There's a way to make a point without making an enemy.

11. Do not completely demonize or ridicule opponents. Try to give a more balanced and objective view of the situation, although you are welcome to state where your preferences lie.

12. Agreeing with people is nice, tell them so on those rare occasions. Put the extra effort to turn a bland "yeah, me too" agreement posting into a deeper more interesting response, giving illuminating examples from your life or some complementary thoughts.

13. Don't just "quote scripture" on people on an issue. Give clear rational arguments why you believe so, because not everyone agrees that your source material is without doubt.

14. Remember not everyone is as well versed as you. By giving a bit of a clear simple lead-in, you can draw in a bigger audience, than if you start off using technical words they don't know.

15. Try to cite your sources, if you are heavily relying on a few obscure authorities for your opinion.

16. Accept that people will not always agree with you.

17. Listen and try to understand someone you disagree with, then you constructively criticize, also offer a variety of viable alternatives and solutions.

18. Spend less time worrying about organizing, and more about experiencing things. You might change a Grove, but the Reform is very resistant to overall officially proclaimed change.

19. Separate facts from theories.

20. Share fun ideas that work locally, but don't be hurt if they aren't adopted elsewhere.

21. Don't expect even the greatest ideas to be accepted as official outside your Grove.

22. Attempts to make codes of morals are likely to irk people.

23. Don't try to "pull rank" on folks with less seniority or orders.

24. If you say everything you want to say, you'll probably hear something you don't want to hear.

25. Don't post people's private e-mails in a conference without permission or maliciously reveal things in confidence, just to hurt someone.

26. Write a thank you note when someone does something nice for you, or goes out of their way to advise you.

27. Volunteer to help someone who has too many duties.

28. Straight-out refuse (politely) anything you can't handle.

29. Delegate tasks around the Grove fairly, giving others a chance to learn the tasks too.

30. Be on time or reasonably early for activities. Tell people if you are coming or if you need to cancel.

31. Some Groves do not permit minors to be ordained or partake of the Waters of Life (or even attend services) without their parents' written permission for legal or ethical reasons.

32. Be honest, but tactful. Timing & phrasing is key.

33. Except on manners or age, it's rather hard to imagine any Groves treating members less well based on appearance, background, opinion, or orientation.

Basic Rights at the D.C. Grove

As generally in practice in my own local Grove as of May 2004. Not all other Groves have made a list of rights, nor do some legitimately desire to go about the drudgery of enumerating them. This version is meant only as an example, not representative of the RDNA as a whole, although I think them common, some with more, some with less.

1. Right to be treated fairly and with respect.

2. Right to come and leave the Grove freely.

3. Right to believe or worship in your own way.

4. Right to ask and refuse advice or instruction.

5. Right to choose your leaders and vote in Grove decisions equally.

6. Right to disagree or refuse requests.

7. Right to have cross-memberships, join other groups and form your own splinter Groves if you leave.

8. Right not to have others speak on your behalf.

9. Right to critique others without harassment.

10. Right to call yourself a Reformed Druid if you believe in the two Basic Tenets.

11. Right to talk with whoever you want inside or outside the group.

12. Right to refuse to associate with someone you do not like.

13. Right to choose a neutral mediator to settle an issue.

You probably have many more rights.

Please respect other's rights likewise.

34 *All essays and nearly all RDNA documents in the UWP are un-official and represent purely the opinions of their authors.*

The Advanced Bonewits' Cult Danger Evaluation Frame (ABCDEF)

(Version 2.6)

The following lengthy article and checklist is by a long-time Reformed Druid, Isaac Bonewits. It has proven useful as a simple guide for self-rating a local group that you join, and provoke some reflection. The higher the score you chart for a group, compared to other religions in your region or familiarity, the more cause for concern; although a very high score in just one area might be a tip-off of a problem worth monitoring.

For example, in Item #1 below, the lack of institutionalized rights in the RDNA, allows for potential mini-dictators or hurtful practices to develop in a Grove. This has rarely happened, as the rather fierce anti-dogmatic and rebellious nature of most Reformed Druids and their writings tends to minimize tolerance this kind of abuse by leaders.

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Isaac Bonewits

Introduction

Events in the last several decades have clearly indicated just how dangerous some religious and secular groups (usually called "cults" by those opposed to them) can be to their own members as well as to anyone else whom they can influence. "Brainwashing," beatings, child abuse, rapes, murders, mass suicides, military drilling and gunrunning, meddling in civil governments, international terrorism, and other crimes have been charged against leaders and members of many groups, and in far too many cases those accusations have been correct. None of this has been very surprising to historians of religion or to other scholars of what are usually labeled "new" religions (no matter how old they may be in their cultures of origin). Minority groups, especially religious ones, are often accused of crimes by members of the current majority. In many ways, for example, the "Mormons" were the "Moonies" of the 19th century — at least in terms of being an unusual minority belief system that many found "shocking" at the time — and the members of the Unification Church could be just as "respectable" a hundred years from now as the Latter Day Saints are today.

Nonetheless, despite all the historical and philosophical warnings that could be issued, ordinary people faced with friends or loved ones joining an "unusual" group, or perhaps contemplating joining one themselves, need a relatively simple way to evaluate just how dangerous or harmless a given group is liable to be, without either subjecting themselves to its power or judging it solely on theological or ideological grounds (the usual method used by anti-cult groups).

In 1979 I constructed an evaluation tool which I now call the "Advanced Bonewits' Cult Danger Evaluation Frame" or the "ABCDEF" (because evaluating these groups should be elementary). A copy was included in that year's revised edition of my book, *Real Magic*. I realize its shortcomings, but feel that it can be effectively used to separate harmless groups from the merely unusual-to-the-observer ones. Feedback from those attempting to use the system has always been appreciated. Indirect feedback, in terms of the number of places on and off the Net this ABCDEF has shown up, has been mostly favorable. For example, it was chosen by and is now displayed on the website of the

Institute for Social Inventions, who paraphrased it for their "[Best Ideas — A compendium of social innovations](#)" listing.

The purpose of this evaluation tool is to help both amateur and professional observers, including current or would-be members, of various organizations (including religious, occult, psychological or political groups) to determine just how dangerous a given group is liable to be, in comparison with other groups, to the physical and mental health of its members and of other people subject to its influence. It cannot speak to the "spiritual dangers," if any, that might be involved, for the simple reason that one person's path to enlightenment or "salvation" is often viewed by another as a path to ignorance or "damnation."

As a general rule, the higher the numerical total scored by a given group (the further to the right of the scale), the more dangerous it is likely to be. Though it is obvious that many of the scales in the frame are subjective, it is still possible to make practical judgments using it, at least of the "is this group more dangerous than that one?" sort. This is if all numerical assignments are based on accurate and unbiased observation of actual behavior by the groups and their top levels of leadership (as distinct from official pronouncements). This means that you need to pay attention to what the secondary and tertiary leaders are saying and doing, as much (or more so) than the central leadership — after all, "plausible deniability" is not a recent historical invention.

This tool can be used by parents, reporters, law enforcement agents, social scientists and others interested in evaluating the actual dangers presented by a given group or movement. Obviously, different observers will achieve differing degrees of precision, depending upon the sophistication of their numerical assignments on each scale. However, if the same observers use the same methods of scoring and weighting each scale, their comparisons of relative danger or harmlessness between groups will be reasonably valid, at least for their own purposes. People who cannot, on the other hand, view competing belief systems as ever having possible spiritual value to anyone, will find the ABCDEF annoyingly useless for promoting their theological agendas. Worse, these members of the [Religious Reich](#) and their fellow theocrats will find that their own organizations (and quite a few large mainstream churches) are far more "cult-like" than many of the minority belief systems they so bitterly oppose.

It should be pointed out that the ABCDEF is founded upon both modern psychological theories about mental health and personal growth, and my many years of participant observation and historical research into minority belief systems. Those who believe that relativism and anarchy are as dangerous to mental health as absolutism and authoritarianism, could (I suppose) count groups with total scores nearing either extreme (high or low) as being equally hazardous. As far as dangers to physical well-being are concerned, however, both historical records and current events clearly indicate the direction in which the greatest threats lie. This is especially so since the low-scoring groups usually seem to have survival and growth rates so small that they seldom develop the abilities to commit large scale atrocities even had they the philosophical or political inclinations to do so.



Figure 1 Isaac Bonewits, c. 1976.

The Advanced Bonewits' Cult Danger Evaluation Frame
(version 2.6)

Factors:		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10									
		Low					High				
1	Internal Control: Amount of internal political and social power exercised by leader(s) over members; lack of clearly defined organizational rights for members.	1	_____								
2	External Control: Amount of external political and social influence desired or obtained; emphasis on directing members' external political and social behavior.	2	_____								
3	Wisdom/Knowledge Claimed by leader(s); amount of infallibility declared or implied about decisions or doctrinal/scriptural interpretations; number and degree of unverified and/or unverifiable credentials claimed.	3	_____								
4	Wisdom/Knowledge Credited to leader(s) by members; amount of trust in decisions or doctrinal/scriptural interpretations made by leader(s); amount of hostility by members towards internal or external critics and/or towards verification efforts.	4	_____								
5	Dogma: Rigidity of reality concepts taught; amount of doctrinal inflexibility or "fundamentalism;" hostility towards relativism and situationalism.	5	_____								
6	Recruiting: Emphasis put on attracting new members; amount of proselytizing; requirement for all members to bring in new ones.	6	_____								
7	Front Groups: Number of subsidiary groups using different names from that of main group, especially when connections are hidden.	7	_____								
8	Wealth: Amount of money and/or property desired or obtained by group; emphasis on members' donations; economic lifestyle of leader(s) compared to ordinary members.	8	_____								
9	Sexual Manipulation of members by leader(s) of non-tantric groups; amount of control exercised over sexuality of members in terms of sexual orientation, behavior, and/or choice of partners.	9	_____								
10	Sexual Favoritism: Advancement or preferential treatment dependent upon sexual activity with the leader(s) of non-tantric groups.	10	_____								

11	Censorship: Amount of control over members' access to outside opinions on group, its doctrines or leader(s).	11	_____
12	Isolation: Amount of effort to keep members from communicating with non-members, including family, friends and lovers.	12	_____

Factors:		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10										
		Low					High					
13	Dropout Control: Intensity of efforts directed at preventing or returning dropouts.	13	_____									
14	Violence: Amount of approval when used by or for the group, its doctrines or leader(s).	14	_____									
15	Paranoia: Amount of fear concerning real or imagined enemies; exaggeration of perceived power of opponents; prevalence of conspiracy theories.	15	_____									
16	Grimness: Amount of disapproval concerning jokes about the group, its doctrines or its leader(s).	16	_____									
17	Surrender of Will: Amount of emphasis on members not having to be responsible for personal decisions; degree of individual disempowerment created by the group, its doctrines or its leader(s).	17	_____									
18	Hypocrisy: amount of approval for actions which the group officially considers immoral or unethical, when done by or for the group, its doctrines or leader(s); willingness to violate the group's declared principles for political, psychological, social, economic, military, or other gain.	18	_____									
<p>A German translation of the 2.0 version of this is available at: Isaac Bonewits' Sektengefahr Checkliste.</p> <p>A French translation of the 2.6 version is available at: Grille avancée de Bonewits pour l'évaluation du danger potentiel d'une secte.</p> <p>An Italian translation of the 2.6 version is available at: Documento Avanzato di Isaac Bonewits per la Valutazione del Pericolo del Culto.</p> <p>A Polish translation of the 2.6 version is available at: Zaawansowany Kwestionariusz Bonewitsa Oceniający Niebezpieczeństwo Sekty.</p> <p>A Portuguese translation of the 2.6 version is available at: A Ferramenta Avançada de Bonewits para Avaliação de Seitas.</p> <p>Other translations will be posted as they are done.</p>		<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p> <p>Low High</p> <p>Copyright © 1979, 2001 c.e., Isaac Bonewits. This text file may be freely distributed on the Net, provided that no editing is done, the version number is retained, and everything in this notice box is included. If you would like to be on one or more of Isaac Bonewits' emailing lists, click here to get subscription information.</p> <p>Again, remember it's important to judge by reality rather than simply by documentation.</p>										

Other Resources for Information

<http://www.religioustolerance.org/cultmenu.htm> A rather neutral overview to begin study on the topic, and simple information on those groups most often targeted by anti-cultist prosecutors.

21 Likely Tactics Used by Corrupted or Inept Leaders And ways that I would personally respond.

When a *less-than-desirable* leader or group is questioned or challenged, they may pull several tactics rather than forthrightly address, clarify or fix a problem. Most of these methods are rather unethical to me, but also might be used mistakenly by an inexperienced leader, and might be correctable. They are not just applicable to groups within Reformed Druidism, but might also be revealing about various clubs or organizations you belong to.

Only you can be certain of local conditions, and you must use your own common sense, especially if you sense some danger involved. This is just my casual advice and personal feelings.

1. Ridicule and Harassment.

I understand that sometimes a teacher may have to cajole or good heartedly poke fun at a student to coax them into trying harder and getting past an perception barrier; but comments aimed at demeaning or breaking down their will are unacceptable to me. Pestering recalcitrant members, such as calling at work, incessant e-mail or telephoning, or following them is usually called harassment or stalking in most states and it is a criminal offense. It has been regrettably shown in both cults (and the equally disturbing methods of "deprogrammers") that the average person is only prepared to fend off three rebukes; so I'd expect a Reformed Druid should be prepared to steel themselves for far more than that.

2. Threats or bribes.

If you can't convince me of the soundness of your views and their applicability to me by reason, rational debate or clear evidence, then using violence or bribes merely shows that you are the one who is probably wrong. I'd report threats to the law enforcement authorities and would leave such a dangerous group, encouraging others to do likewise. Claims of "hellfire", "damnation", spiritual pollution, or barring from afterlife, could be construed as threats in certain situations.

3. "God told me so."

That's nice, I'll await his/her direct message to me, to confirm that matter. Reformed Druids may claim that they are inspired sometimes, but most seem very hesitant to insist that others believe another's personal revelations. Most folk seem to require more rational evidence or reasoning, rather than a blind reliance on an unverifiable source.

4. "It's in the scriptures."

Like point three, many Reformed Druids are reluctant to believe something just because it was written down and adopted by another group of people. It might be interesting, but we're interested in the writings of many faiths. There are no official or preferred scriptures. We have no official scriptures in the Reform, and don't intend on having any. We have writings, but most Reformed Druids are very careful to claim that they are espousing their personal view on matters they discuss. Each is weighed individually upon their merits by each reader.

5. "We decided that already."

You may have, but I disagree with this decision for reasons of x, y & z. Could we re-open that custom, tradition, rule or law for possible revision and a new referendum or vote at an upcoming meeting? I have suggestions of a, b & c as an alternative. If this is indeed the group preference, you should be confident that it will pass again.

6. "I'm the most qualified to lead."

You may have been so at the time of your election, but it may be time for rotation of leadership or the training or delegation of power to other members. Mr. A, B & C have shown interest in taking on great responsibility, and they would possibly like some mentoring, but also wish the opportunity to lead more activities. There is an unspoken assumption that the number of consecutive terms implies greater achievement by a leader, but giving the helm to someone else who has the group confidence is a great achievement too. Make more leaders rather than followers.

7. "I alone have secret knowledge."

I see. I understand that some personal communications with members might be qualified by clergy-confidentiality, and that some traditions have some initiation elements that are revealed in stages. However, I feel sorely left out and do not understand the references and in-jokes that are being made. What are the steps that I must take to also learn this knowledge that you keep? Must it truly be kept secret, or is that status merely a ploy to prop up a limited pool of people to fill leadership positions?

8. "This is how the ancient Druids did it."

But we are not ancient Druids, we are Reformed Druids. Just as Reformed Jews do not carry out every practice that Orthodox Jews practice, so we Reformed Druids have to interpret and choose which ones are appropriate and useful for the modern era. I will grant that if the Ancient Druids did do it, it will likely be one of the first traditions that we will consider for adopting. However, much of what the ancient Druids did has been lost or forgotten or misplaced; much of what we do know is scanty, piecemeal or a remnant collected in the middle ages long after important social changes in Celtic countries, and filtered by various monks and oral transmission. There are also traditions by many other peoples who have revered the earth that we should examine. Some things are no longer appropriate for our modern sensibilities.

9. "Everybody in Reformed Druidry does it this way."

I believe there is very little that is done the same way by all Reformed Druids. Each Grove and individual may have differing ways that meet their needs and desires. What's to say that we may not go down a new road or explore a new tradition or remove one that no longer assists us? Passing on lore is one thing, but one need not also follow everything one has learned, it may again be applicable at a future date, but it does not seem right at this moment.

10. "More people agree with me than with you."

I care not if the entire world disagrees with me, I have a right to my opinion. I feel a responsibility to voice my concerns and objections. If this Grove is a democracy, I will tend to follow the decisions of the group on stylistic issues so far as they do not unfairly impinge on my personal core rights. If the group decides on a policy or rule that I cannot abide by, then I may choose to leave and invite similar-thinking people to join with me.

11. "Without me you can't have a service."

Similar to #6 or #7. We know longer choose to have you as our leader, but respect your title and ask you to choose a successor from among us to lead future services. If you will not do so, we will seek elsewhere for the necessary ordinations. Perhaps in the meantime we will jury-rig a temporary service that does not need your skills or authority. No leader is indispensable, not matter how valued or venerable. When a great tree falls in the forest, new trees will get more sun, grow, and fill the canopy.

12. “You’re new here and just don’t understand.”

Then tell me what the issues are, how they were derived and the reasons for them. I should not be dismissed merely on seniority. I am rational and can be convinced if I’m wrong. Be more patient with me. If others don’t know, then invite them also to attend and learn with me at a reasonably soon time, for this issue is very important for me. There are no stupid questions.

13. Keeping you too busy.

This has been done for ages. I feel that I have been assigned an unfair burden of the chores or given un-necessary work merely to keep me too busy to consider the ramifications of recent issues or organize opposition. Perhaps you do not realize the extent of the responsibilities in my personal life. Perhaps the size of the workload is purposely too great to discredit me when I inevitably fail to accomplish it. I wish to contribute to the Grove’s activities, but I need more time to rest and recuperate and reflect. I must refuse to do x, y, and z. I may assist the Grove in less time/resource demanding ways by my advice and wisdom.

14. Mobilizing against a large enemy

Similar to #13. When a president has a troubled domestic situation, rather than sensibly deal with that as early as possible, it often seems more convenient to rally the group against an assigned enemy. People tend to stick together better when they feel besieged or threatened, but this is only a temporary fix. Constantly finding new threats, more entangling campaigns and new causes can eventually burn-out and demoralize a group, which may refocus on a domestic issue with greater severity afterwards. Our usual goal is to know the world better, not necessarily to completely change it to our preferences.

15. Lying, confusing and distracting.

Although some truths are difficult to swallow, and some mysteries difficult to penetrate, I prefer to be spoken to honestly and straight-forwardly. If you don’t know or can’t explain something, then just say so, don’t just make up an answer to satisfy me if it will lead me astray later on. I do not expect you to be an all knowing guru. Admitting that we are indeed wrong is also stating that we are wiser today than we were yesterday.

16. “You’ll lose your friends if you misbehave.”

This could be interpreted as a threat to quell reasonable dissent. If my manners have been inappropriate then I might need to amend them, but if my issue is valid then I demand a timely and appropriate hearing. If the group tires of my company and requests me to leave, I will go my own way rather than stultify under unethical dynamics. I can find enlightenment, good company and awareness in many formats besides this group. If they are truly my friends, they will understand this and not hold it against me.

17. Falsifying elections.

Each Grove has its own system of voting and the necessary quorums, % of voters, timing of elections, etc. If I doubt the accuracy of the count or the result, then I would like to have a method that respects the confidentiality, but is more verifiable. If the Grove will not abide by a fair voting system, then I may wish to leave and take so-minded folks with me.

18. Setting you up for a fall.

Like #13, some leaders, fearing a rising talented & good-natured rival may assign you an impossible task, produce false evidence against you or trump up a minor misdemeanor against you. I find this to be the hardest to deal with. If increased abilities of some members disturbs them, then that leader is power-hungry and too insecure to be a good leader.

19. Hold secret meetings to deal with you.

Similar to #18. If you have a valid complaint of a non-personal nature with me, tell me in front of the group so that I may directly address the charges and call witnesses and present evidence in my defense.

20. Blacklist you.

If a leader goes around to other groups and says false or wrong things about me, it is more shameful for them than it is for me. It might be difficult to fight this back-alley politicking. I have the self confidence in my worth and my position on the issues, and I will present my side of the story to other groups, and ask them to judge me on what they see and observe rather than what they have heard.

21. Being unaccessible.

Some cults have prominent leaders who are too rarified or special to be contacted by ordinary members. Separation implies that they are above mere politics and mundane motivations. All contact with them is mediated by select individuals. When this happens, even if the leader is a good person, the intermediaries may become a problem. In some cases, the leader may not even exist, as in the movie, The Wizard of Oz. While I can understand some folks being busy, having a shadowy leader is not acceptable to me.

Attributes of a Leader

Drawn from a list I made in 1992 as I contemplated Druidic priesthood, slightly updated. I wished to acquire or improve these traits, and I realize I still have a long way towards achieving them. I look for them in my friends I study with and in the priests I train. Why do you not see: "beautiful, powerful, rich, perfect, pure, or popular?" I came up with 80 traits to guide myself, recognizing that blind immoderation in any of them could lead to trouble. It is better to me to be honorable and respectable than honored and respected. I’m sure I missed some, but then, it’s just my personal priorities, and you might add or change some. So, in no order:

Flexible	Integrated	Listening	Visionary
Moderate	Open-minded	Confident	Charismatic
Brave	Knowledgeable	Respectful	Caring
Curious	Prioritizing	Problem-Solver	Competent
Aware	Instructive	Humorous	Friendly
Green	Dedicated	Virtuous	Sensible
Loving	Grateful	Graceful	Reasonable
Active	Constructive	Thoughtful	Honest
Fair	Delegatious	Reflective	Meditative
Clever	Supportive	Industrious	Responsive
Tactful	Pro-active	Traditionish	Calm
Decisive	Creative	Nurturing	Sensitive
Trusting	Generous	Rewarding	Humble
Decent	Enlivening	Enlightening	Reliable
Kind	Efficient	Inclusive	Humane
Balanced	Approachable	Practical	Unstressed
Peaceful	Polite	Organized	Inventive
Mystical	Mature	Studious	Unselfish
Inspiring	Enduring	Thrifty	Careful
Celebrating	Empathic	Patient	Intuitive

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Vocation vs. Vacation

By Mike the Fool, 2005

After reading all that cautionary advice, I'm sure you're on alert for anyone pushing you around, but the most likely person to hurt you is, oddly enough, yourself. You are potentially your own greatest ally and enemy, if you abandon moderation and balance in your Druidry.

While I have listed many admirable traits and unofficial minimal manners for Druids, I want to encourage you to place some sensible maximum limits on your expectations and duties. You do not have to impress anyone or be Super-Druid, who is all things to all folks. Rome wasn't built in one day, and several smaller towns are quite nice to live in too.

Over the years, I have seen a number of Groves and Covens falter (which is sometimes a good thing) not due to persecution, from lazy or inept leaders, but due to "burn-out" among the leadership. Druids who plan Proto-Groves often go on to become Priests and Arch Druids. They are dedicated folk with a mission. Some of these Druids, and I've been one of them, want to try out every idea, hold frequent liturgies, provide oodles of assistance, to dozens of folks, have a dozen Druidry projects, all at the same time, and still expect to remain sane for years on end.

A vocation is sometimes recognized by contentment with the drudgery of an often thankless job. My mentor, Richard Shelton, has said that the key to being a priest is about service, not slavery. The Arch Druid also has a right not to be over-utilized by the rest of the Grove. There's a saying at Carleton, that the one who runs away from responsibility the slowest becomes Arch Druid. I would add a corollary that sometimes the Arch Druid must run away a little faster for their own health.

As far as I know, there are no professional RDNA Priests who are financially supported by their Groves. We have jobs, we have classes, we have families, there are friendships, we have civic obligations, and we have a private personal life. Neglecting or ignoring these responsibilities to help your grovmates is neither admirable nor honorable in my book if it becomes habit. What kind of example is it to others to be obsessive rather than dedicated? Living a sensible life might be a great lesson to them.

Druids praise the cycles of Nature, but do not realize that they themselves wax and wane too. The sun and the moon do not always shine, the sea rises and falls, and leaves bud, grow and fall off. In the same way, a priest must now when to take a break, when to refuse the assumption of another duty, pull-back on what they do offer, and regenerate their energies. Even if you give your best, your "best" might get persistently worse without adequate rest. All work and no play makes Robin a dull Druid.

What is worrisome is that when you are over-burdened and not in moderated balance, you are more likely to make mistakes, hasty decisions or snap at someone when a little thing goes wrong. If not for your own sake, then for the grovelings' sakes, allot your resources and responsibilities wisely. All too often, when a Super-Druid burns-out, after having done nearly ALL the work, there are rarely any competent back-up folk trained to step in and take up the slack.

How to Recognize Stress

Americans like to live on the edge with rather stuffed schedules. Even when we can't honestly admit that we are doing too much and pushing ourselves past our tolerance level, our body will give us clues. The following is a list of symptoms which have all been proven to be stress-related and can appear due to imbalance in jobs, relationships or even your religious activities. Many of these symptoms may be caused by organic illnesses, but they are also symptoms of excessive stress. In the absence of the confirmed diagnosis of an organic malady, consider the possibility

that excessive stress may be the cause of these symptoms and see your physician and reconsider your workload and priorities.

- Insomnia or nightmares
- Lack of spirituality vitality or "connection"
- General irritability, hyperexcitation, or depression.
- Pounding of the heart (high blood pressure symptom).
- Dryness of the throat and mouth.
- Social withdrawal from friends and family.
- Impulsive behavior, emotional instability.
- The overpowering urge to cry, or run and hide.
- Inability to concentrate and general disorientation.
- Feelings of unreality, weakness, or dizziness.
- Predilection to become fatigued, and loss of the "joie de vivre".
- "Floating anxiety," a generalized apprehension without a focus.
- Emotional tension and alertness; a feeling of being "keyed up."
- Trembling, and nervous ties
- Tendency to become easily startled by inconsequential stimuli.
- High pitched, nervous laughter, or stuttering.
- Bruxism (grinding the teeth, especially at night).
- Hypermotility; excessive activity in the stomach and intestines.
- Excessive sweating without physical exertion.
- The frequent need to urinate.
- Diarrhea, indigestion, queasiness in the stomach, and vomiting.
- Migraine headaches, or pain in the neck or lower back
- Premenstrual tension or missed menstrual cycles.
- Loss of appetite or compulsive eating.
- Increased smoking, alcohol, or use of legally prescribed drugs, such as tranquilizers or stimulants.
- Accident proneness.

How to Handle Responsibilities

As I mentioned in UWP's article, "Solitary Druidism", there are times when you need to step down from office, take a sabbatical from duties, or delegate a season to another person to handle things. Very often, these breaks, like a tree falling in the forest, give others a chance to step forward and acquire leadership skills that they were either too lazy or too humble to undertake.

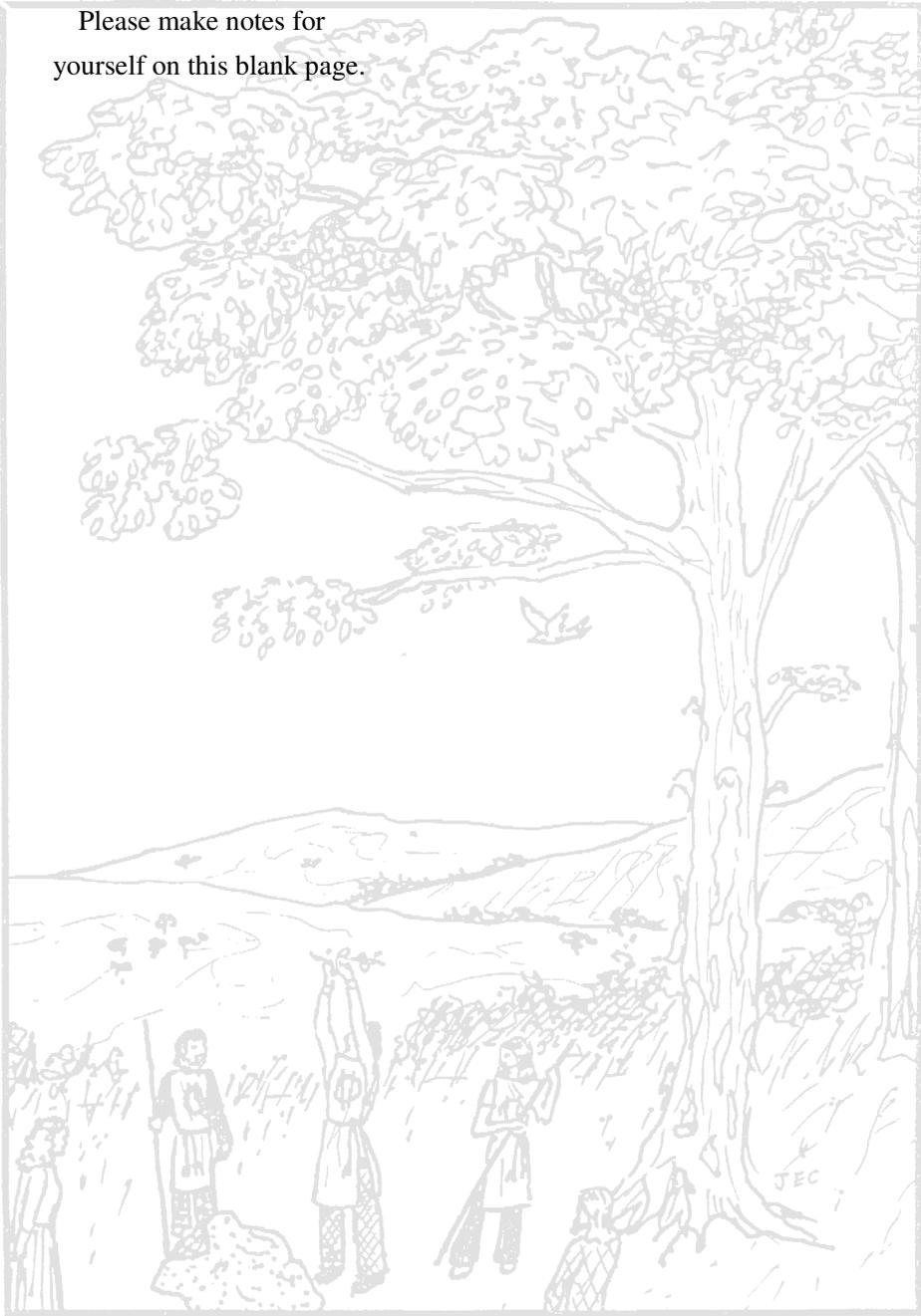
I would rather have potential compatriots and comrades than permanent underlings, disciples or scions. I love to share what I know and think with folks, but I want them to reciprocate that by helping others and learning from yet other people. Two horses can get the wagon out of the mud hole better than one. And I secretly delight when they construct an innovative personal thought-out stand on an issue they would previously have simply sought an authority's opinion to defer to.

Consider having a Co-Arch-Druid and establishing a rotation of responsibility for services, incommunicado days, strict "business hours", vacations and sabbaticals. One option I have seen for very busy folk is to make every third or fifth service a big deal, and tone down the other of the "Big Eight" services. Eventually with two or three years, each is done in grand style.

Sometimes folks are more willing to volunteer to lead activities than liturgies, due to a perceived necessity of some type of "license" to hold services or purposely skip a seasonal festival so that people can spend more time with their families (Yule or Lughnasadh is a good one). Consider having an activity instead of a service to break up the pattern.

When your Grove is brainstorming about possible activities, ask folks occasionally, "That's a good idea and quite possible, who would like to be in charge of it?" As with kindling a fire, start with kindling and add larger and larger wood with each success. Hopefully, with diligence and some advice along the way, members will realize they are capable of bonfire-size duties and you'll avoid burning out.

Please make notes for yourself on this blank page.



Section Four: Proto-Grove Liturgical Primer

2005 Introduction

ARDA 2 has oodles of liturgies and Ordination rites, and it is a bit confusing for new comers to know which of these the average Druid can perform officially. So I've put together this little collection of services and activities that should keep you busy for several months or even a year or so.

Most of these activities in UWP can be practiced by a Druid of any Order, or by complete outsiders to Reformed Druidism, if there are any. They may enrich the breadth of possibilities for Druids wishing to diversify their event portfolio, especially when unwillingly alone, or not feeling in the mood for group activities.

Indeed many Druids do not feel the need to hold services with Groves and prefer to study and celebrate nature on their own, for them this section has been accumulated to give them activities to pursue outside the traditional framework of the liturgies. For me, liturgy is much like fungus. About 98% of the life of a fungus is spent underground, happily munching on earthy matters, then when the weather is good and moist, it pops out of the ground in a mushroom, disseminates seeds, then withers away, returning to earthy pursuits.

They have been culled from the Druid Missal-Any and various other sources, by Druids of varying degrees of ritual skill, and a few are a bit tongue-in-cheek from their outward appearance. I make no guarantees that they will actually work or that other Druids will recognize them, but here they are.

Of course, there is no requirement that Druids should pursue these, or limit themselves only to these activities. You're more than welcome to come up with more on your own if you think it is necessary. Early leaders may prefer activity-based meetings until they are brave enough to lead a service. As you gain confidence, you might add or subtract elements. Magic has rarely been that big an element of services, rather more on celebration, but it is conceivable that some Groves could devise a more theoretically sound magical service; and I recommend you to ADF for samples.

Even with the same liturgical outline, no two Druid services are the same. There are innumerable unpredictable factors that affect each service, and will surprise and perturb a desire for exact replication. Your service is influenced significantly by changes in location, congregation composition, participation interest, weather, season, pressing themes in social discourse, distractions, divination omens, selection of sacrifice, selection of poems/meditations/songs, quality of musician, and your moods.

You must expect and incorporate the unexpected. Like a harried orchestra conductor with a hundred instruments of varying performance, you try to create a concerted piece of beautiful music, despite snapping strings, ill-tuned instruments, trombone players falling asleep, etc. It's not always ideal, but it is usually good enough.

-Mike

The Drynemetum Press



My Thoughts on Liturgy

Ritual is simply actions you like to do, over and over again. Your liturgies are only limited by your knowledge, imagination and experience. For those of us not gifted in public performance, it can be a series of difficult hard-fought lessons as you put together the pieces and styles that you can call your own, hopefully with the advice & example of a mentor, but often a result of trial & error and much reflection. It would be well for an aspiring liturgist to attend the services of as many different religions as is possible, to see in practice how different techniques are employed and how different elements are absent or held in common; especially since there are few comparative books on liturgy. You need not belong only to your Grove's community. A few acting lessons, a public speaking course, and simple practice in a mirror or before a trusted friend will vastly improve your performance ability. Explore, contemplate, try, decide and repeat. Then with honed skills and a fresh appreciation for the diversity, you may see how other parts of ARDA 2 may enrich your own liturgical design.

One interesting trend is the element of randomness. In early traditions of Carleton and Berkeley, although the winds are divined, in nearly every case, the sacrifice was accepted in the summer and rejected in the winter. Since the 1980s, many Groves have begun to actually acknowledge that the sacrifice is a less assumed item. How you deal with a "failure" is a good sign that we don't "control" nature and it's a good test of a leader's mettle, requiring some quick thinking, in which case it is good to have a "back up" plan. Proper rest, eating, contemplation, familiarization and rehearsal will do wonders for you.

The Liturgy has an unusual place and role in Reformed Druidism, unlike that found in most other religions. Reformed Druidism began as a protest against enforced attendance and fixed liturgies as found at the mandatory Carleton College Chapel service of the early 60s. It would be a very sad day when a fixed or forced liturgy were to become established in Reformed Druidism itself! There are several points about Reformed Druid liturgy that should be remembered: irregular attendance is acceptable (perhaps even desirable), it isn't fixed in its final form and the existence of liturgy may even be antithetical to Reformed Druidism itself

Irregular Attendance:

While many earlier college members may have enjoyed going to every Saturday services and to every one of the eight great festivals; this was not the case with everyone. For many, the need to gather in a group for "formal" worship is an urge that only comes once in long time. One can have a great many religious moments outside of a group, perhaps even purer moments. Many a person would come to a Druid ritual and just sunbathe, ignoring the ritual in effect, being there just to be with the people. Attendance has no reflection on how "Druidic" you are. Others took it quite seriously.

Nor is liturgical attendance the only way to be with other Druids. Over the years, both at Carleton and abroad at our missionary Groves, there have been many other group activities that have developed that don't use a standard liturgy (or even need a liturgy). Such activities include: sweat lodges, candle-making parties, Bardic sing-a-longs, group-feasts, nature-walks, group meditation sessions, pseudo-theological debates, magic-working groups, book reading clubs, herbology and many other activities (depending on local talents that exist within the group). However, some groups just did the services 4 times a year and nothing else.

The Liturgy isn't fixed in its final form

Even from the beginning, the liturgies have been constantly changing. Although the Council of Dalon Ap Landu had voted that they:

"adopt the Order of Worship of the Carleton Grove (as formulated by David H. Fisher) as the **basic** order of worship of the Reformed Druids of West America."

This restriction has been stretched and experimented with. Every priest is expected to change, adopt and mutate the liturgy to fit the existing mood, their religious sensibilities, and the specific purposes of the moment. Ad libbing and spontaneity, within reasonable bounds, is encouraged. As a result there are dozens and dozens of alternatives to every single ritual example that will be presented to you in this book.

Many a person has added Wiccan elements or Cabalistic elements or Judeo-Christian elements, etc. The purpose of the liturgy is to bring people together, and if the majority of the people in the Grove belong to one particular tradition you can add elements from that tradition (if you want to). However, the original version has been judged over the years to be relatively ecumenical enough and dogma-free to be acceptable to most people, so we recommend it when dealing with a "mixed" crowd.

The Liturgy isn't Sacrosanct

There is no claim of divine origin for these liturgies, although a few writers may have felt a bit inspired when they wrote them. Sanctity is in the eye of the beholder, isn't it? For many, the liturgy is merely a philosophical exposition by the Priest who is using deities in the Jungian sense of the archetype. For others, the liturgy is the direct invocation and worship of whatever deities are being invoked. For some it is merely being quiet together at someplace while someone reads something out loud. For some, powerful magickal energies are conjured forth by the magickal words and the power is delegated to various tasks. For others, it's a quaint little service that's fun to attend. Let us respect the right of the beholder and individual congregant to have their own interpretation of the liturgy.

The liturgy may even be antithetical

Perhaps it was the Protestant streak in the early founders which made Reformed Druidism into the religion of the individual. The goal of Reformed Druidism, for many, is a never-ending search for religious truth; a truth which can be meaningful only to the particular individual who grasps it. Words and gestures cannot communicate the subtleties that define our thoughts (little can, unless you have telepathy). Let us beware from ever taking the liturgy as the only effective way of expressing our religious thoughts!

Who can say whether the individual with the title "Priest" has any better understanding of her/his religion than the young first-order Druid sitting near them? For all we know, the role/title of "Priest" within Reformed Druidism may be merely an "ego-stroke" of comfort for those who feel the need to make sure that someone in the group holds a service every now and then. I hope not, although I have been a priest, for three years as of writing this, I don't feel any more divine than the next guy.

Michael Scharding
Day 31 of Geimredh, Year XXXIII of the Reform
December 1st, 1995 c.e.

Ordination of Zero Order Druids

(Order of the Acorn)
Unofficial. Recently invented by Mike, 2002

For people who wish to become Reformed Druids, yet due to age, distance, handicap or some other hardship, are unable to meet with a Grove. The Book of Maccabees says, "Don't make a long introduction to a short story", so let's keep it simple, but feel free to elaborate if you wish.

The Acorn ordination should ideally be done outdoors between Beltane and Samhain. Perhaps you'd wish to reaffirm this status annually to yourself ("Next year in Carleton!" or some sort of deadline)? It is basically, the affirmation of the two basic tenets, bringing you into the organizational body of the Druids. In a way this is fulfilling half of the 1st Order requirements (Druid Chronicles, the Book of Customs, Chapter 1). Someday, if fate arranges it, you will meet a Druid who can take you into other Orders, if you wish.

Praise:

Insert whatever warm ups you think necessary. Perhaps a song.

Invocation:

O Dalon Ap Landu and Earth-Mother,
I know not the ways of the Druids, yet I wish to become one.
I cannot join their activities, yet I wish to act.
I know not when I'll enter Orders, but I wish to start now.
Please bless my search, and fill me with wisdom and Awareness.

Offering of some seeds, preferably acorns:

I wish to be a Reformed Druid and I believe that:

The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.

And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it we do live, yea, even as we do struggle through life are we come face to face with it.

It is an unclear path that I begin today, but I will learn by doing. I offer you my activities in the time to come, as a sacrifice, whether it be for a few days or many years.

During this upcoming year, I intend to do the following....

Please show me your favor, by bringing the path of the proper Druid across mine, in the proper way, at the proper time, at the proper place. If I am to follow this course by myself, so be it with great wisdom and small discoveries from your lessons around me.

Meditation:

Think on the signs that may appear during this ceremony.

Conclusion:

Be there with me through these trying times. Thank you.

Ordination of First Order Druids

By Founders, 1963
Written up by Mike, 1996

Unlike the other Orders of Reformed Druidism, there is no fixed liturgy of ordination, and at least during the first year 1963-1964, anyone who partook of the waters or claimed to be a Druid was considered one; which is a quiet tradition among many for Druids to this day.

There is a general custom which can be elaborated upon as the Priest sees fit, derived from the Book of Customs in the Druid Chronicles that they must believe the two basic tenets and partake of the Waters of Life. Usually the Priest will ask for aspirants to the First Order, just before the waters are about to be passed around. The Priest will then go to the aspirant and ask if the aspirant believes in the two Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism, such as this version:

The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.

And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it we do live, yea, even as we do struggle through life are we come face to face with it.

If the aspirant replies affirmatively, the Priest takes the chalice and dips their fingers in the Waters and draws the Druid Sigil on the forehead of the aspirant (not anointed in every Grove). Then the aspirant drinks some of the Waters. The Priest then declares them to be a First Order Druid.

If there are several aspirants to the First Order, say a half-dozen or more, instead of going through each separately, they may be asked the basic tenets as a group, followed by separate head-anointings.

Another custom has developed at Carleton College. There, anyone of the first or second orders being able to ordain another person into their own orders, in the absence of an existing Priest. This tradition kept the Carleton Druids going from 1985 to 1992.

Ordination of Second Order Druids

By Founders, 1964

To be inserted after the **consecration** and before the **meditation** in the Order or Worship. It can of course be the sole purpose of the Order of Worship, or an incidental part. It is generally only done in the Summer Half of the Year as it requires Alcohol or Potent Sugar-water. Usually the Priest of the service asks if anyone wishes to enter the Second Order, after having consecrated the Waters and performs this service.

Another alternative is to bring the aspirant forward during the Order of Worship's **invocation** and after asking the **Questions, shown below**, have the aspirant respond to the normal **Catechism of the Waters**. After the **Consecration of the Waters**, proceed to the **Sealing to the Second Order**.

(NOTE Have everybody sip the Waters before the initiate, but leave plenty for her/him to drink. It is often a good idea to consecrate a second chalice to ensure there's enough)

Invocation

PRIEST: O Earth-Mother, bountiful and ever flowing forth, we Thy children, invoke Thy blessing upon this aspirant to serve thee.

Questions

PRIEST: Do you, in full consciousness, promise to serve faithfully the Earth-Mother, ministering to Her followers, and following you duties as a Druid of the Second Order to the best of your ability? Do you?

Aspirant: I do. (or close enough)

PRIEST: Do you understand from whence comes the source of all life, and the nature of the source of all life? Do you?

Aspirant: I do.

PRIEST: Do you understand the partaking of the Waters-of-Life, and the sacrifice of life that we offer-up to our Mother? Do you?

Aspirant: I do.

PRIEST: Are you ready, then, to be sealed up to the service of the Earth-Mother? Are you?

Aspirant: I am.

Sealing to the Second Order

(Priest dips fingers in consecrated waters and makes a Sigil on forehead of the candidate every time the word "seal" is spoken in the following:)

In the name of the Earth-Mother;

I seal you to Her service in the house of the spirit of the South.

I seal you to Her service in the house of the Spirit of the North.

I seal you to Her service in the house of the Spirit of the West.

I seal you to Her service in the house of the Spirit of the East.

Finally, I seal you to the service of the mighty, the blessed, all powerful and fertile All-Mother Earth, thus consecrating your life to Her cause.

The Ordeal

(Hand the candidate all the remaining Waters-of-Life)

PRIEST: Take and drink, all of it!

(Return to the Order of Worship, usually at the Meditation)

Order of Common Worship for a ProtoGrove.

By Isaac Bonewits, 1976

This SDNA service is designed for a ProtoGrove, i.e., one without a true Arch Druid (a member of the Order of Dalon Ap Landu). It is designed for 4 Speakers. If there are fewer, they may reassign the parts. P=People. Service starts with all some distance away from the altar, which is usually a rock at the foot of a tree, or any other place of natural beauty.

Invocation

SP 1: O lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations; Thou art everywhere,

P: But we worship Thee here;

SP 2: Thou are without form,

P: but we worship Thee in these forms;

SP 3: Thou has no need of prayers and sacrifices.

P: Yet we offer Thee these prayers and sacrifices.

SP 4: O Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations.

P: O, Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation.

Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, all divide to form a circle around it.

Praise

Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by any.

Offertory

SP 1: From the Earth-Mother comes the gift of Life, and it brings us together here. In thanks we bring these gifts, wrought of Her bounty and our effort. O Mighty Eagle, bear these gifts of love aloft as bread for the Gods, that they may bless our works.

(People bring any gifts they may have for the Gods to the altar. There follows a brief silence, in which each person asks for the fulfillment of material or external needs.)

SP2: From Be'al comes the gift of awareness, and it brings us together here. In wonder we bring this praise, wrought of His light and of our effort. O Flowing Winds, carry our songs of love on high as wine to the Gods, that they may guide our sight.

(People offer songs, poetry, etc, if they have them, individually or as a group. There follows a brief silence, in which each person asks for the fulfillment of spiritual or internal needs.)

Sharing

SP 3: Places filled chalice of Waters (Summer-alcoholic, Winter-plain water) on the altar and speaks:

SP 3: O Earth-Mother, bountiful and ever flowing forth, we ask your blessings on these Waters. In them, help us to find strength and enlightenment, like a circle of trees on the top of a hill. With them, make us one with each other, and with all thy children, like a ring of trees in the heart of the forest. Through them, bring us one consecrated in Dalon Ap Landu, and make of us a Grove in the midst of the world. O Be'al,

who dwellest in every heart, lead us on the path to awareness.

SP 3: retrieves the Chalice and sips from it, passing it to the one on his (Summer-left, Winter-right). Each person sips and passes it on. When it returns to SP 3, a small amount should be left. SP 3 pours the remains onto the altar, saying:

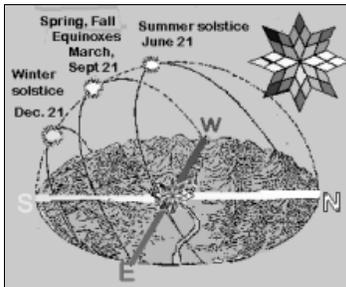
SP 3: To thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to Thee.

Meditation Benediction

SP 4: Let us go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that the Gods have heard us, that Be'al will answer our prayers and that we go forth with the blessings of the Earth-Mother.

The Druid/ess blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!



Another ProtoGrove Service

This service is designed for a ProtoGrove, i.e.,
one without a true Arch Druid
(ordained in the Order of Dalon Ap Landu).
By Weinberger, 2002

The service starts some distance from the altar.

D: Druid E: Everybody

Invocation

O Earth Mother!
We praise Thee that seed springeth,
That flower openeth, that grass waveth.

We praise Thee for winds that whisper
through the graceful elm,
through the shapely maple,
through the lively pine,
through the shining birch,
through the mighty oak.

We praise Thee for all things,
O Earth Mother,
Who givest Life.

D: O Be'al, forgive these three errors that are upon us due to our mortal limitations:

Thou art everywhere,

E: Yet we worship Thee here.

D: Thou art without form,

E: Yet we worship Thee in these forms.

D: Thou has no need of our prayers and sacrifices,

E: Yet we offer Thee these prayers and sacrifices.

D: O Be'al, forgive these three errors that are upon us due to our mortal limitations.

All: O Mother, calm our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation.

Procession to the Grove.

Upon arrival near the altar the Druid/ess uses a staff to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground around the altar. After the Druid/ess steps around to the front of the altar, the members divide to form a semi-circle around the front of it.

Praise

D: Does anyone have any praise or requests of the Gods?

At this time people may give thanks, make requests, and/or bring any gifts. They may have for the Deities of their choice to the altar. There follows a silent time in which each person asks for the fulfillment of their material/external or spiritual needs.

Offertory

The Druid/ess holds up the offering to the sky, while saying:

D: From the Earth Mother comes the gift of life. In thanks, I offer up this gift, wrought of Her bounty and of my effort and dedication. Oh, Mighty Eagle, bear this gift of love aloft as bread for the Gods, that they might bless my works.

D: From Beal comes the gift of awareness. In wonder I bring this praise, wrought of His light and of my effort and dedication. Oh flowing Winds, carry my songs of love on high as wine for the Gods, that they may guide my sight.

Sharing

Druid/ess takes up the chalice filled with plain spring water.

D: O Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, bless these waters that are held in Thy Name. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by Thy power.

D: O Earth Mother, bountiful and ever flowing forth, in these waters help us to find strength and light. O Be'al, who dwells in every heart, lead us unto the path of awareness.

The last person should NOT finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Presiding Druid/ess with the last exchange of blessings. Then the Presiding Druid/ess takes the last sip, pouring the remainder upon the altar and down the offering shaft, saying:

D: To Thee we return this portion of our bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return unto Thee.

Offering

At this point, at the Orinda Grove site, the Druid/ess pours out the offering to the trees.

Meditation

Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture the Druid/ess may choose for that purpose. After this comes a few brief words of meditation from the Druid/ess and a period of silence and private meditation (usually two to three minutes-though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually the Druid/ess signals the end of the Service with:

Benediction

D: Let us go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that Be'al will answer our prayers, that our offering has found acceptance in the Earth Mother's sight, and that we go forth with Her blessing.

The Presiding Druid/ess blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

The Sigil is taken up by the Druid/ess.

An offering is made to the Big Oak.

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WORSHIP
FOR SAMRADH AND FOGHAMHAR

Daily Druid Devotional

By Pat Haneke, Akita Grove, August 2002

I do this (almost) every day, and it is my incremental regimen, beginning with a cup of steaming coffee. No too much at any time, but like a snowball rolling down the hill (or Milo of Crotona carrying a calf up the stairs everyday) it strengthens your wits and brings you into a greater communion with the world of Nature and profusion of ideas around you. Most of it is stuff we do everyday, but taken one step further in Awareness. It becomes rather difficult to continue finding new examples after a hundred days, and it thus would be an excellent journal activity during the 180 days in the Time of Sleep between Samhain and Beltane. It's as easy as 1, 2, 3. Every day, when possible:

The Zeroes:

- Listen to someone, without a preconception of them.
- Do nothing for a moment in the midst of your busiest time.
- Purposely skip one of the following activities.

The Singles:

- Touch a new and different organism every day. If you don't know the real name, give it a temporary name.
- Read one page that you don't have to, on a topic you don't know much about.
- Greet or salute one person you've never acknowledged before.
-

The Doubles:

- Notice one parallel or lesson between Nature and human society; such as nesting and mortgages.
- Resist one urge and give into another urge every day; until you are master of them.
- Notice an opposite in the world; and see if you can find a "gray" example.

The Triples:

- Take one idea of whose veracity you're sure of, and think of three counter arguments against it or three people who would object to it.
- Take one idea you think is wrong, and think of three supportive arguments or people who would support it.
- Now, take one idea that you're unsure of and bring it up in conversation with three people.



Some Optional Activities for Voluntary Simplicity

By Alex Strongbow, 2003

Looking back on earlier Missal-Anies, it seems that Samhain and Yule activities are well covered. Besides if you can't think of things to do on those two holidays, then you probably couldn't find your butt with both hands. So, instead, I'd like to write for a few issues about volunteering and simplicity, a different type of activity, one that involves you with others.

Winter is one of the harshest time in the year, when the Earth-Mother, withdraws much of her nourishment from the northern temperate areas. Bird, animals and people are hard put to survive outdoors in our towns and cities. We've all seen those Thanksgiving soup-kitchens and Christmas toy charities, but these are just the apexes of the daily, continual efforts to assist our fellow citizens who haven't been able to meet all their needs.

The greatest obstacle to the joys of volunteering is finding some time to do it in. Who wouldn't gladly lend their energy and expertise to serving our community, pro bono, if we could just solve those little technicalities-making a living, for example, or getting enough sleep? You've heard about the 5% rule, spending about 30 minutes a day or three hours a week on something meaningful? To assist a cause, you have to build up reserves of money, time, and inspiration.

One way, yea, one way among many, to acquiring more discretionary time is the path of voluntary simplicity. That has been defined as "living purposefully, with a minimum of needless distraction." Cut out the junk. Most people find that when they carefully coordinate their use of money and time with their deepest held values, the less important things fade away. This opens up more time and inner space for more discretionary activities, including volunteer services.

How to direct our money and time is a question that requires careful reflection and planning. You don't just throw all your possessions in a trash can and run out to save the world (although that might work). Some of the best ideas on this subject came from Steven Covey's classic *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. This is more than a book for just econometricians, it could also be called *The Seven Habits of an Aware Life*. It is chock full of good tips.

We all need "time off," a sabbatical to marshal our forces. Some tips for building space for solitude is in *Shelter for the Spirit: Creating Your Own Haven in a Hectic World* by Harper Perennial, 1997. A quick Druidic paraphrasing of this will now follow:

- 1. Say No.** Save your time and stamina for what truly speaks to your heart. Don't chase every rabbit that you see.
- 2. Tithe Your Time.** Tithing was a time-honored tradition of giving money to charities in a planned, orderly way. Time can also be tithed, giving to something that really speaks and tugs at your heart. You say "no" without guilt to the rest, and things that are beyond achievement.
- 3. Put Things with Feelings First.** Put more importance to the condition of sentient beings than the quality of your stereo sound. This is not to deny the effect that a healthier environment has on living creatures. One hour helping the environment, might be helping hundreds of critters and people in small ways.
- 4. Allow More Time.** We often waste time by cutting things close, by rushing about and forgetting and making mistakes. If you always budget in an extra 5-10% of time for a task, then you will usually have time to finish things in a careful controlled manner. No more half-ass mules, my mom would say. If all things go well, then you can read or chat or just breathe. What a gift! You might also be able to notice things that need fixing.

All essays and nearly all RDNA documents in the UWP are un-official and represent purely the opinions of their authors.

5. Prioritize with the ABC method. Label your daily task sheet with A for "priority-must be done today," B for "important--needs to be done soon;" and C for "necessary-should be done sometime." That way, even if only the A list gets done that day, at least everything that really needs to be done will be done. As time passes, the Bs and Cs will rise in importance or drop off the list.

6. Stay Well. There is nothing more time-consuming than being sick. You're little use to anyone, stuck in bed. Time spent preserving health-nutrition, exercise, spiritual practice, sleep-is a no-risk, high-return investment. Think twice before running to catch the bus in the rain, on what a slip and sprained ankle would do to your weekly schedule.

7. Let the machine get it. There is no requirement to drop everything and run to the phone if it rings. Let your answering machine and e-mail be your secretary, and check in every few hours, and you can return your calls at your convenience.

8. Turn off the TV. It takes up time. Choose consciously how much time you wish to spend with your electronic friends (TV, VCR, computer) and don't use them when you're just feeling bored.

9. Put off Procrastination. Some goldbricks spend twice the effort to avoid work. Do the things on your list or drop them. Your list will shrink quickly.

10. Schedule in Fun. Recreation is nourishment for the soul. It is a necessity not an option. Keep it high on the list, and you'll realize what motivates you keep plugging away through a dull job.

By the way, volunteering can be a fun way to spend time with the family, and build up their civic responsibility. For more on "voluntary simplicity," go to Northwest Earth Institute's site (www.nwei.org) or look for more on a web search.



Fields of Study

Druids are often incessant students. Rivers with the same quantity of water flowage can run wide and shallow or they can be narrow and deep. I feel a liberal-arts education is an excellent base for an aspiring Druid. Even if you can't attend a university, you can get a book and study on your own Sermon writing, parish handbooks and ministry guides are out there if you look hard. I think the following topics may likely improve your Druidry in unexpected ways;

Botany, biology, environmentalism, geology, medicine.
Administration, leadership, management, public speaking
Theology, mythology, Paranormal Science, liturgical design.
History, sociology, anthropology, political science.
Drama, poetry, music composition, choreography.
Comparative religion, Jungian philosophy, ethics

Sigil Construction 101

By Mike, Order of Lugh, 2002

For 40 years, the RDNA, ADF, and Keltria have been flashing those Druid Sigils with a circle and two parallel lines. We don't know where it came from, except possibly from Fisher's feverish mind (see <http://www.geocities.com/mikerdna/sigil.html> for more on sigils), but people have been asking me to sell them one, and I get this wonderful idea. Why don't we just make them? We make up everything else in this group, so why not? Revolt against pre-fab, mass-made religious articles!

Being inspired by Lugh, and being a cubicle-bound secretary, I open the drawer to actualize my words. All the materials I need are in there. First take a book ring (see illustration to right) which will form the ring base of the sigil, and they come in many sizes. A side benefit is that you can clip your final sigil on to a button hold, hand it from one of your pierced body-parts, use it to remove ticks and chiggers, or to pick-up and turn-over bacon (large model recommended).

Now to lay the bars onto the circle, balanced on either side of the joint-hinge and the snap-close. These bars can come from snipped coat hangers, paper clips, wire stocks at a bead and jewelry store, or hardware store by the foot. To avoid a sigil that is heavy on the front side, and looks funny when it inevitably flips over, you may wish to in-set the bars. If you have access to a metal shop with a fine-quality metal file (or a simple nail file and lots of patience) you can gouge the four grooves into the book ring. I like to divide the circle into three sections of equal horizontal width, but perhaps you like each section to contain equal amounts of area (remember your geometry classes?), follow your muse here. The bars or rods can then be either welded, set with epoxy, or tied on with clear fishing line (if you're skillful). Don't have the bars extend past the circle too far, or they'll catch on things and poke you (round and polishing the edges is advisable) Goldish bars on a silvery ring make a nice contrast. To avoid the problem of flip-over, some put a circle on both sides of the sandwiched bars. A weight of about one ounce (four ounces is the same as a quarter-pounder patty) will make it hang well, any lighter and it will flop about. I caution against soldering, since the lead prevents you from dipping your sigil into the Waters (if you're into that custom).

The final step is getting the string. You can use yarn (if you're daring), leather, waxed cotton cord (found at bead and craft stores in various colors, I like black), ribbon, parachute cord, fishing line, or twine. Just remember if you catch your necklace on something, you'll get garroted! For the knot to close the string, I like to tie a double-fisherman's knot, which has the added advantage of allowing you to adjust the length while you're wearing it, by pulling the knots closer or farther apart.

Attaching the pendant. The following is one way, yea, one way among many. I detest running the cord simply through the book ring, as it never lies flat, the knot closing the string always works its way around to the pendant, and the book ring might open (unless you solder it shut) and you lose the pendant (life is about giving up possessions too, I suppose). I like to hide the joint of the book ring by binding a "prussic knot" over the hinge, between the two bars on the top of the sigil. That way the knot closing the loop of the necklace will lie at the nape of your neck, and can be lengthened and shortened easily.

Cost of the materials, with borrowed tools and free labor, about \$2 each. You're welcome to mass-produce them with this design and process. They're not copyrighted. Enjoy.

The Four Salutations of the Day

Circa 1986 by Emmon Bodfish

Many readers who have been doing the Proto-Grove ritual on their own for awhile write to us asking "What is the next step?" and "Is there a Druid training program?" There is no Druid Training program yet for those not involved in active Groves. We are working on it. But meanwhile a fruitful place to start your training is with the Four Salutations to the Day. If you have been at one of the regular bi-monthly Summer Services of an R.D.N.A. Grove, you have heard the invocation of the "three ways of day and one of night." In this contemplative exercise you will be marking these four turning points of the day with a short, specific ritual, an active meditation in which you will be learning several basic essentials of all psychic or meditative work. It will keep you mindful of your intention to train and of your specifically Druidic vocation and heritage.

These four times, "trathan" in the old Gaidhlig, are noted in Welsh and Irish folklore as magical times when the "other world" is especially close to ours and communication or passage between the two is easiest. The old epic and Bardic poems speak of these times as power-times when spell working was done and an adept person might receive a vision or message from an ancestor or a patron Deity, a moment when a bard, inspired, might speak a prophecy. These are DAWN, NOON, SUNSET, and STARS. STARS is usually interpreted to be midnight.

One of our former Arch Druids recounts that when an acquaintance of his was traveling through rural Ireland recently he found that the cottagers stayed indoors or stayed quiet around the noon point of the day. When he rose to go out, or to move on about some mundane business, they would say, "Oh, sit a while. Have another cup of tea." When asked, they would say something vague to the effect that it is a tricky time, unlucky to be bustling about. He did not ascertain whether they did not know why this was so, or if they were just cautious in talking about such matters to a stranger. Most, he felt, did not know why, and this taboo on activity is the last little remainder in folk memory of the old custom of observing the trathan.

The first purpose of the four Salutations is to put you in tune with the natural, celestial rhythms of the day and the changing seasons. The second purpose of the Salutations is a meditative practice, to practice entering an altered state of consciousness at will. The third purpose is to remind you of your Druidic commitment and to organize your day around the four natural turning points of Earth's time clock, providing stop-points in which you take stock of your day, of the passage of time, of nature and your own existence in it.

You will begin by learning to achieve mental silence, to stop thought, and to hold your mind silent for the time it takes the Sun to rise or set. In the temperate latitudes this is about 2 1/2 to 4 minutes counted from the Sun disk's first contact with the horizon to its last contact, assuming a flat horizon for averaging's sake.



The first skill to be mastered in the Salutations is the ability to hold the mind silent. You must learn to stop thought. By thought I mean the sentences that are normally running through your mind all day and in your dreams at night. I do not mean

becoming unconscious, hypnotized, nor losing awareness of yourself or your surroundings. In the Silence you will in fact become more aware than usual of your immediate surroundings. Some Eastern sects consider this the only "true" form of meditation. This is "outward directed" meditation, as contrasted with inner contemplation, "astral travel," or hypnotic trance. It is harder than it sounds, at first, though most people can do it for a few seconds right off. That's enough to start you. Here are some techniques to help you get further into that state and to help you learn to use it. In this wordless state, your consciousness may be turned by your will either inward or outward. In the Salutations it is turned outward. It surprises many people to find that they can perceive, in an acute detail, without any thoughts or words going through their minds. You will progress through this silent space to other states of consciousness. As you are able to hold the Silence longer you will learn from it and be able to explore with it.

1. Repeat a simple phrase, silently in your mind until all other thoughts cease, then let the phrase grow fainter and fainter and fade out. For the solar Salutations, "Hail Belenos!" This is a crutch; drop it as soon as you can.

2. Enter the Silence. Listen to your breath. Listen as though it were the most important instructions you were ever to hear, and which you must memorize. This will stop your mental sentences.

3. Listen to all the ambient sounds as if they were music.

4. Think to yourself down in to the heels of your feet and the heels of your hands. Feel yourself exist.

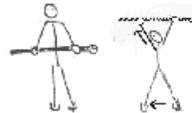
In doing the Salutations four times a day, you are learning to enter a different state of consciousness at will, regularly and often. These three: will, consistency, and practice are the keys to meditative and psychic progress. The goal is to be able to enter, at will, the state of consciousness that you will need in order to do a particular psychic or spiritual work. Small amounts of frequent practice achieve more than an occasional long session.

Do the four Salutations by the celestial clock, at Dawn, Noon, Sunset and Stars whether you are "in the mood" or not. This way you will become capable of entering this clear, silent state at any time, regardless of moods and circumstances, "to find a refuge outside the passions" of the moment, as an old book says. This practice builds and furnishes that refuge, a base-of-operations, for your further work. When you can hold silence for twelve to thirty seconds at a time, alert, eyes open, taking in perceptions as far around toward the corners of your peripheral field as you can, you will notice that things look different from the way that they do in your normal, "mundane" state of consciousness. I won't list the changes because I do not want to bias your perceptions, the self-fulfilling prop. Not everyone gets all the different changes, but you will discover yours. (Write to the Missal-Any when you do, we like feedback, and we can answer questions individually.) These changes will be your signal that you are in a meditative state, at the Silent Place, rung one of the metaphorical ladder of meditative training. When you have completed the Salutation, the, in line with the third purpose, take some time to consider from this higher perspective what you have been occupied with since the last Salutation. It is a step in getting control of your time, your habits and your life.

Stand, waiting for the first bit of the sun's disk to appear over the horizon. Hold your staff in front of you, your hands in front of your breast bone. Your left hand is above your right hand and the staff is not touching the ground.



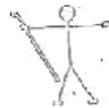
When the first bit of the sun's disk clears the horizon, turn your staff horizontal and raise it over your head in one motion. Breathe in a full breath as you raise the staff, and at the same time step to the right with your right foot. Hold the breath; silence your mind. Your arms and your legs now form two triangles and you are looking at the first sun through a "trilithion" formed by your arms and staff.



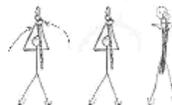
Holding the breath, turn your staff back vertical, and, holding it at arm's length, exhale slowly as you lower the staff between your gaze and the morning sun, momentarily blocking it out, until it seems to rise again over the top of the staff.



Let go your left hand from the staff and holding it in your right, sweep both of your arms up and outward, breathing in until you reach full extension. Your head, arms, and legs form a pentagram, your lungs are filled with the new air and you are fully open to the morning light. This is true even when there is rain falling in your face in the winter. Then you are open to that truth, that dawn and that aspect of Nature. You hold mental silence here in the open position until the sun's disk clears the horizon.



When it is free of the last horizon (horizon is trees, buildings, mountains, freeway "on" ramps, whatever is between you and the setting or rising sun) sweep your hands up and together over your right hand, as you inhale. Hold the breath for an instant, then begin slowly exhaling as your turn the staff back to vertical again and lower it again with your line of sight and the risen sun.



Continue on down, touching your staff to the ground, arms fully extended and your head bowed between them. Concentrate on the ground and your staff and feel the earth energy move up the staff, through your arms and to your lungs as you inhale another full breath. Raise your head and pull your staff in toward your heart as you straighten up and inhale fully.



Your hands on your staff, touch your breastbone. Hold silence. Perceive the dawning light all around you. Take several (three to nine) calm breaths. Then as you exhale, lower your staff and step right bringing your feet together and the staff to rest on the ground between your two big toes. Press it down. "Ground down" mentally; return to the mundane mental level and worldly functioning. The day has begun.



At NOON you face due south. At solar noon, as opposed to clock noon, the sun will be at the highest point in the sky that it will reach that day, and it will also be directly South. The movements and the breathing for the NOON Salutation are the same as for the DAWN, however do not look directly at the noon sun. Look at the southern horizon directly below it. Feel the rays and the warmth. Hold silence in the open position for twenty four breaths. Finish the Salutations as at DAWN.



Open Position

At evening, when the sun is about to set over whatever is your local western horizon, take your stance facing it. When the sun's disk touches tangent to the first bit of the horizon, inhale and raise your staff over your head in the first movement of the Salutation. Holding silence, draw it down between yourself and the setting sun until the sun reappears over the top of the staff. Breathe out as you do this. Move to the open position as before and hold it out as you do this. Move to the open position as before and hold it in silence until the last bit of the solar disk is about to sink below the horizon. At that moment, inhaling, bring your arms up and together with the staff between you and the sun. Then as in the other Salutations, exhale as you bring the staff down to ground at arm's length in front of you, bowing forward as the last gleam disappears under the horizon. Feel yourself "bowing down the sun" in synchronization with it. When you feel the ground energy move up along the staff, through your arms, and body, inhale, mind silent, eyes totally perceiving. Hold your staff and hands at heart level as before. See the night begin around you. One day is over; a new day has begun. Press your staff down to the ground again at your feet. "Ground down" mentally. Come back to the mundane world, refreshed. Recall what has happened since NOON.

At celestial midnight, STARS, the sun is on the other side of the world directly below your feet. At this midnight or just before you go to sleep, do the Salutation to the STARS. Face the North Star. Calm your mind. Recall what you have been doing since the last Salutation. When you have achieved mental silence once more, then raise your staff over your head and inhale. View the North Star then raise your staff over your head and inhale. View the North Star through the "trilithion" of your arms and staff. The rest of the Salutation proceeds like the NOON Salutation. Here you will draw your staff down until the North Star seems to rise over the tip of it. You hold silence in the open position for twenty four breaths, then complete the movements as at NOON. Ground down. Retire. Sleep.

Druid Seasons of the Year

The following selection was written by Isaac Bonewits and Robert Larson for DC(E) contains lots of trivia about the origins of these ancient festivals. As such, this information could be useful for everyone in the Reform and can be useful. Much more can be found about RDNA calendar habits and festivals in Part 4 of Main Volume and Green Book 7. Most folks do them on the nearest weekend, college or family groups might have weekly services, some groups have services on new or full moons.

The Druid year is divided into four seasons, marked by the four Major High Days of Samhain, Oimelc, Beltane and Lughnasadh (see below).

Samhain begins the season of Geimredh (gee-ru), in Modern Irish an Geimhreadh (uN gee-ru); which is Winter, running from roughly the beginning of November till the end of January.

Oimelc begins the season of Earrach (u-RoCH), now an tEarrach (uN tu-RoCH); which is Spring, running roughly from the beginning of February till the end of April. Together, these two seasons constitute "the Winter Half of the Year", otherwise known as "the Season of Sleep".

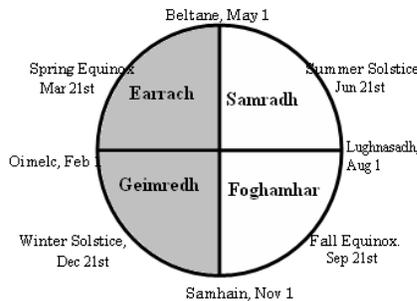
Beltane begins the season of Samradh (S,u-Ru), now an Samhradh (un S,u-Ru); which is Summer, running from roughly the beginning of May till the end of July.

Lughnasadh begins the season of Foghamhar (FÜR), now an Fomhar (uN FÜR); which is fall or autumn, running from roughly the beginning of August till the end of October. Together, these two seasons constitute "the Summer Half of the Year" or "the Season of Life".

The Major and Minor High Days

There are four Major High Days (Samhain, Oimelc, Beltane & Lughnasadh) and four Minor High Days (Winter Solstice or "Midwinter", Spring Equinox, Summer Solstice or "Midsummer", and Fall Equinox) in the Druid year. While the Minor High Days are easy to obtain from any good astrological ephemeris or almanac, the methods for calculation of the Major High Days will vary from Grove to Grove and branch to branch of the Reform.

The most common practice for the calculation of Samhain, Oimelc, Beltane and Lughnasadh is to use the civil calendar days or eves of November 1st, February 1st, May 1st, and August 1st, respectively. Another way is to use the weekend closest to these dates. Still others use the sixth day after the new or full moon closest to each of these dates. Astrologically oriented Druids use the days upon which the Sun enters 15 degrees of each of the "Fixed Signs" of the Zodiac to wit: Eagle Point - 15 deg Scorpio, Man or Angel Point - 15 deg Aquarius, Ox Point - 15 deg Taurus and Lion Point - 15 deg Leo.



8 festivals, 4 seasons and 2 halves of the year.

Non-Liturgical Festival Activities For 8 Seasons

All too often, festivals have over-emphasized the liturgy at the expense of the celebration. The following articles are mostly drawn from the Druid Missal-Any and should give you some ideas on how to draw the more activity-oriented members of your Grove into attending your rites, by appealing to their lower instincts to have a good time.

Uncommon Activities for Samhain

By Mortus, 2001

1. Visit & tidy-up the graves of family, friends and respected people.
1. Séances are popular at this time of year, but book in advance!
2. Hold a “dumb feast” with no talking and plates for ancestors.
3. Contemplate your own funeral arrangements, especially if you want to fight “The Industry” and have a natural funeral free of chemical and air-tight sealed caskets.
4. Include the dead in your thoughts during the daily grind.
5. Begin a custom of thanking the things we kill and eat.
6. Visit an abattoir or kill your own dinner (fish is the least unpleasant), which will open your eyes & heart to some cold facts.
7. Work on your will, living-will, powers-of-attorney, and insurances.
8. “Sacrifice” some fun, for retirement planning.
9. Discuss deeper issues of after-life with your children & spouse.
10. Research genealogy and visit elderly relatives (research for Eulogies).
11. Get a health-check-up and other medical appointments. Quit smoking.
12. Rake leaves, plan a composting heap (done properly, they don’t stink)
13. Plant acorns, salt meat & jerky, pickle things.
14. Go hunting or fishing [or “camera-stalking” of prominent politicians...]
15. Volunteer to escort children for Halloween (you get candy, too!)
16. Adopt an overseas child or assist a charity.
17. At Carleton, we’d pour molten-lead or wax into cold water and divine things.
18. Protest the most recent prejudiced horror-flick of the season.
19. Lobby against the funeral industry.
20. Make a list of 100 things you’ve done, and 100 more you want to do.
21. Contemplate capital punishment, war, crime, sanitation & vegetarianism.
22. Bless your pets with smoke (yes, jumping through a fiery hoop is okay...)
23. Clean your home, extinguish your oven/furnace’s pilot-light and relight it.
24. Replace the batteries in your smoke detector, buy a fire extinguisher, etc.
25. Write long-winded, disconnected rambles & lists about Samhain & Sacrifice.

Various Winter Customs to Try Out

By Eric, ex-Akita Grove, 2001

I enjoyed the Samhain activities, and spent four hours searching for good customs to complement the next issue. It’s a simple list of what I plan to do, because I’m not much of a writer.

- Nov 23 Divining the best presents after a hearty Thanksgiving meal by asking relatives and the Gods..
- Dec 1st Cleaning out the house thoroughly- Any remaining dust is “Not mine, please ignore it.”
- Dec 2nd Light “advent candles” or Yule Candles marking down the Solstice Sun’s arrival.
- Dec 15th Decorating the House- Holly, Mistletoe, tree setup, bunting, Yule-logs, front lawn décor. Mail out blessings (Christmas cards) to friends & curses to enemies.
- Dec 19th Donate 10% of December Paycheck to charities closest to my house. And carry small presents to distribute to beggars & muggers in NYC.
- Dec 20th Wassailing and Caroling.- Nothing more than Trick or Treating for the winter, fun to do with the Christians.
- Dec 21st Vigiling in the Grove- Spend the longest night of the year in the Grove with a fire, several blankets and some friends to encourage the sun to make a come back.
- Dec 21st Mari Lwyd in Wales (Lair Bhan in Ireland)- The Welsh visited houses with a draped horse skull, interrogated their neighbours with strange questions, and got free booze if the homeowner couldn’t come up with decent answers.
- Dec 22nd Namahage- In Akita, drunken barefoot men in demon masks, straw clothing, flaming torches (my that’s dangerous sounding) would burst into pre-decided homes “surprising” a family at dinner and terrorizing the bejezus out of small kids. The father would ransom their children’s lives with more booze, and the demons would bless the house to protect it from fires and further burglar intrusions. Very similar to German house visits by Father Christmas (Weihnachtsmann or Julknap) & his point man, the “Black Moor” (Knecht Ruprecht Don’t you pity my neighbours?)
- Dec 23rd Celebrate the Emperor of Japan’s Birthday (he is the descendent of the Sun Goddess after all)
- Dec 24th. Presents and Party
- Dec 25th Hanging out sheafs of corn or bird seed AFTER Christmas for the all-winter birds.
- Dec 26th, Divination- by dropping a handful of pine-needles into a bowl and Rorschach patterns.
- Dec 26th Boxing. Put away boxes and decorations. As for the Tree: Put the tree in a safe spot in the yard (needles still on) away from the house. Allow to thoroughly dry and use it to light Beltane fire. WHOOSH! What a sight!
- Dec 27th Return presents and Buy discounted goods at stores for next year!. A gift of the Gods!
- Dec 30th New Year Resolutions- Adding thanks for last year’s completed ones and a tweak from everyone in the room for not finishing the last ones.
- Dec 31st Fireworks, all-night parties are fine to continue.
- Jan 1st, Sleep to Noon. Pray to Bracicea for forgiveness and mercy.
- Jan 6th, “Epiphany”. Credit card bills arrive. Holidays are officially over.

Yule Time Caroling

By Sine Ceolbhinn, 2001

Strangely enough, Christmas is one of the few times of the year that we feel like singing with our neighbours outside of a karaoke bar. Easter songs? A few. Groundhog Day songs? Not likely. We all want to sing, but trip over the uncomfortable lyrics, right? I decided to but together a little list of songs that a pagan could use in company with their monotheistic friends.

A few hours of scanning the internet has given me a collection of popular songs that didn't dwell on babies in food troughs, righteous crowns, deceased people with bird wings, and ecstatic shepherds hearing voices in the dark (won't even go there). I prefer my own improbable stories (grin). Just change "Christmas" to "Yule time" and most are okay. Santa Claus is rather unavoidable, but he's nearly pagan, and so I let him slide. Many of the songs on the list below have on-line free music-files and lyrics at: <http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/~ai251/xcarol.html>

- Auld Lang Syne
- Christmas Song (Chestnuts roasting)
- Deck the Halls
- Do they know it's Christmastime at all?
- Frosty the Snowman
- Grandma Got Hit by a Reindeer
- The Grinch's Theme Song
- Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas
- Here Comes Santa Claus
- Holly Jolly Christmas
- Home For The Holidays
- I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus
- Jingle Bells
- Jingle Bell Rock
- I'll Be Home For Christmas
- It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas
- It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year
- Jolly Old Saint Nicholas
- Let It Snow
- O Christmas Tree
- Rocking Around the Christmas Tree
- Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer
- Silver and Gold Silver Bells
- Sleigh Ride
- That Christmas Feeling
- Up on the Rooftop
- We Wish You a Merry Christmas
- White Christmas
- Winter Wonderland

Now, I was going to make a list of filkable songs, but surprise, somebody's gone ahead and re-done most of the Christmas songs in a Neo-Pagan flavor. Isn't it great that people do all the work for us? You could spent weeks studying the solstice. Enjoy!!

Christmas Plants & Picking the Yule Log

By Mairi Ceolbhinn, 2001

Druids love and respect their plants and truly wish them to return to full vitality in the spring. Without plants, how'd we do our sacrifices? What we'd eat? What'd we wear? It's nice to know that in the depths of winter, when the days are shortest, that some plants are doing rather well. We wish to celebrate this with Christmas trees and such and bring their blessings into our homes. See also the site. <http://www.circlesanctuary.org/pholidays/SolsticePlanningGuide.html>

Mistletoe, as we all know, was considered sacred, by our ancient Siblings and has remained such throughout the years. Its Gaelic name still means "all healing," although I'm not sure how to use it safely, since it is rather poisonous. Perhaps, it is by its poison, that it fends off winter's blight, and manages to bloom around the solstice? Its persistent fertility is therefore an established trait that gives us that great custom of "kissing under the sprig of mistletoe" which would happen in a night of partying and debauchery. That age-old theme of commemorating the death of the "old Sun" and birth of the "new Sun" is now popularly incorporated into the images of "Old Man Time and Baby New Year" doing a tag-team on January 1st every year.

Holly berries, like Mistletoe, bloom amidst the snow as if to defy winter and encourage the return to life. Its green boughs were of course common decorations on buildings, holy places and public buildings during the winter festival, and this tradition has fortunately continued to this very day. Even the Japanese, Mike Scharding says, have a "kadomatsu" placed in front of the door at New Year's Eve.

Yule Log Tradition:

Not to be morbid, but a sacrifice is necessary to rekindle the life of the dying sun (no, I'm not pro-Aztec, which sounds like a marketable drug), and it seems the Yule Log has filled that role for several centuries. "Yule" comes from "hweol," meaning "wheel," which is a frequent European symbol for the Sun. So you're basically giving the Sun a good-needed torching to warm it up.

According to various sources, it is widely agreed that the hearth of the Celtic House was the home of a protective spirit, and (for practical and symbolic reasons) the fire was rarely allowed to die out except once or twice a year during the big fire holidays. Special prayers were and are still spoken before leaving the banked fire of turf for the night in rural areas. Much magic also went on around the fire during cooking, story telling, and entertaining of guests. The hearth was basically the pre-modern "Home Entertainment Center." If you've ever noticed, televisions also send comforting relaxing flickers of light into a darkened room while you stare blankly?

Now, back in those days, people had access to common forests surrounding their village. The choice of the wood varied greatly among locales, but one good size tree would provide several logs for a neighborhood. But under no circumstances, should you steal one from a neighbor's private land (and no buying one at a parking lot, good religion is do-it-yourself). I've not heard of any special methods of cutting a tree down, but a short ceremony, and posting a few days advance notice for malevolent or uninterested spirits to depart, would certainly be in order. (No, that Golden Sickle is no more effective than a haddock, get a good steel axe.) Angry spirits will make the tree conk you on the head; so be forewarned.

Once cut down, a goodly size log was the festooned and regally dragged back to town through the streets. As the Log entered the house, some cultures would give it a hearty drink of oil, salt and mulled wine, with a song perhaps. In more recent times, it was burned on Christmas Eve (which is close enough to the Solstice), with music, activities and frolicking. To kindle the fire, splinters from last year's logs (saved by the eldest daughter) were used to get the substrate of dry logs going, since those Yule-logs are hard to burn by themselves. Guests were encouraged to toss sprigs of holly on the fire to take away bad luck. The way it burned would prognosticate the future.

Splinters of the log and cinders were taken home to protect against fires, lightning and tax-collectors at their home. Now the Yule Log tradition, widespread since the 12th century, nearly died out with the change to pot-belly stoves and grills in the late 19th Century. The tradition still survives in sizeable pockets today in the country-side today. For fire sensitive areas, a smaller log-shaped cake now decorates the dining room table. I've tried this custom for a few years in my little BBQ next to my house (sneaking one from the River Creek National Park), and saved some ashes, and no disasters have yet befallen my home (well, except the Pentagon in Virginian Commonwealth, but that's the workplace, perhaps the White House and the "Mystic District" of Washington, D.C. were spared because of their National Yule Log?).

For me a Christmas tree is just another elaboration on "bringing the greenery in," and it certainly is a younger tradition than the Yule Log, perhaps a merger of pagan Nordic tree worship and perhaps the 13th century morality plays' "Tree of Life" (from the Garden of Eden) which was often the only stage prop, and conveniently performed around the Solstice. Perhaps, the inability to have a Yule Log burning and urbanization led to the soaring popularity of the Christmas tree in the 19th century? So go get your plants!



Figure 2 Minnesota in early summer.

Some Optional Things for Oimele

By Alex Strongbow, 2002

Well, here's my list of things to do for Oimele, Imbolg, Candlemas, Ostara or whatever you wish to call it. It's a multi-faceted festival reflecting Bridget's diverse talents. If you were to combine them all you'd be "writing poems by candlelight about flaming metallic sheep." Sounds strange, but where do you think "steel wool" is from? Do not put it in the microwave, though, unless you want to see visions of Pikachu!

- Banana-Split candles (Cherry, banana, pineapple ring; possible imagery...)
- Make decorated candlestick holders.
- Try to Predict (e.g. candle divining) whether winter will end soon and what day the last snow will be gone in the Grove or some other spot.
- Start planting seeds in little pots.
- Get a candle-making kit at an art store.
- Spring Cleaning Party
- Make homemade butter or ice-cream (try goat's milk)
- Fireworks (if legal, secretly if illegal...)
- Make a contest to find first flowers or awakened hibernators
- Decorate the house: Bridget's Straw Crosses, ironwork, stained glass, candelabras, lava lamps, anything that's bright,
- Melt lead and pour into molds to make items.
- Sharpen knife, repair or replace tool collection
- Rent "Lambchop's Funniest Songs"
- Write poems together (perhaps within 5 minutes on a theme)
- Rent "Babe" or "Ground Hog Day" with Bill Murray
- Rent "Bell, Book , Candle" with James Stewart or "Silence of the Lambs"...
- Rent "Wallace and Grommit" (Perhaps "A Close Shave" is best episode)
- Decorate chair by fireplace.
- Burn the dried up Christmas tree (watch it go fuuumph!)
- Have a sheep day
- <http://www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Hills/9609/sheeptxt.html>
- Call up a farmer and have the kids come down for a sheep birthing.
- Do some knitting with wool.

Also see:

<http://pages.ivillage.com/paganparent/imbolic.html> packed with stuff
<http://www.web-holidays.com/candle/> fun
<http://www.circlesanctuary.org/pholidays/CandlemasCustomsLore.html> overview
<http://www.partytown.com/menus/imbolc.htm> for a meal
http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson048.shtml about Groundhog Day
<http://orderofthecauldron.homestead.com/candlemas.html> nice discussion on Candlemas
<http://www.ghostdragon.net/sabbats/imbolcactivities.html> more activities.
<http://members.tripod.com/acorns3/archives.html> pagan kids activities back issues (look also under ostara)

Things to Do for Spring Equinox

By Alex Strongbow, 2002

Well, that's a really hard question. We know that most sowing in the fields would be done by now and it was time to change to spring clothes and spend more time outdoors. When it comes down to, we're talking about eggs and sunlight, right?

1. Break down, and enjoy the Easter egg decoration party. Especially the Ukrainian style wax and decoration. If you're an overachiever, go into Faberge.
2. Have half an omelet, sunny side up, of course.
3. Hide treasures in the forest or park. Tall grasses equals stepped-on eggs.
4. Be early for April Fool's day.
5. Go out to the pub for Saint Patrick's day and live it up.
6. Spend the whole day with a watch and see if day REALLY equals night.
7. Set up and synchronize your solar-calendar (that rock-henge in your back yard. A great site, for setting up your stones in a parking lot or a field is www.efn.org/~jack_v/AstronomicalCalendar.html Strangely, the design looks like a basketball courts lines! Could there be a connection?!
8. Get your garden planted, if you haven't started. Try old-fashioned "heirloom seeds" at www.seedsavers.org or Seed Savers Exchange (SSE) at 3076 North Winn Road, Decorah Iowa 52101 at 319-382-5990.
9. Make waffles. Write "Clinton" with maple syrup. Hee. Hee. Enjoy taking half-way opinions on important subjects and carefully study both sides of issues.
10. Change your wardrobe to summer-style suits, sandals and wear a flower. I've been thinking. Many religions have strange headgear or hair-styles, and we haven't since that weird "bald-forehead" style in the 450s AD, so let's go out for straw hats?!



10 Things to Do for Beltane

By Alex Strongbow, 2002

1. Sex. Of course!
2. Wake up early, greet the sun, wash your face in the morning dew. Collect flowers and make garlands for those you care about.
3. An Oak King can be selected by various athletic competitions such as: races, wrestling, archery, stone tossing, sit-ups in one minute, fire kindling contest (first to boil cup of water), greased pole climbing, rodeo riding, or a combination of foolish macho things.
4. A maypole dance for the women (men too if not enough people). Last woman holding the ribbon will become the May Queen The May Queen and Oak King should symbolically (or actually) consummate their "marriage" in a symbolic gesture. <http://altreligion.about.com/library/howto/htmaypole.htm>
5. Picnic, leaving a symbolic offering of one piece of everything. Possibly foods are oatmeal, dairy, berries, greens, wine, barley, honey, eggs, sweets. <http://www.keirle.freeseve.co.uk/page18.htm>
6. Drama or play of Persephone returning from the underworld or a story of a woman returning from the fairy lands. Divination is a possibility.
7. Enjoy the Waters of Life (i.e. whiskey). If you're solitary, do some self-nurturing type of activity, like a walk in the woods of a state park and camp out or vigil.
8. Raise stones. Its always a good time to bring the community together to haul rocks around and make a memorial of some type to the event. I recommend using car hoods from a junk yard, long levers, and 15 ropes and a pulley.

Build a Bonfire.

This might be hard for those of you in fire-prone areas like California, but a cauldron fire might be possible, or just use a barbeque/hibachi for the job. Some of you are girl-scouts, but here's some advice for the rest of you.

Apparently, the traditional wood to burn is oak, ash, thorn, rowan, apple, birch, alder, maple, elm, gorse, holly, hawthorn, and others from a story about the Battle of the Trees. I'd add a piece from any other tree in your forest. Collecting the woods and maypole would be a nice combination activity, and give time for certain members to "dally".

Be sure to remove all the dry materials in the vicinity and dampen the area. Now you can just pile a lot of logs if you'd like, or you can stack them. A pyramid shape or teppe shape is considered ideal, as boxy shapes tend to fall to the side rather than collapse inward (1999 Texas A&M disaster, anyone?). I recommend that you don't get too close to the fire, just in case a log rolls out. Leave spaces between the logs to allow air to circulate. Old Christmas trees make great center pieces (whooom!). Put the kindling and ever large pieces in the center.

There are many ways to make the initial flame. Magnifying glass, parabolic mirror, iron & flint, rubbing two sticks (use a bow to spin faster), magma, lightning, natural forest fires, and matches. As always, the key is to start small with shaved wood, dried grass, lint, cotton (yes, toilet paper is good) and add that to small sticks than keep adding bigger stick until the logs reach the magic temperature of 451F. If all else fails, CAREFULLY throw a cup of gasoline onto it.

Dance around it, watch it, talk to your friends. Throw negativity away into the fire. Or send up prayers with the fire.

Young couples may wish to jump over the fire together after it burns down.

As always, stay with the fire until you are able to handle all the ashes with your bare hand. If you can, you take a candle home and relight your furnace, like the ancient Celts did.

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Oracle/6992/bonfires.html>

Or you can do something no one else has thought that you really like! See these sites for ideas:

http://altreligion.about.com/c/ht/00/07/How_Celebrate_Beltane09_62933966.htm Fun.

<http://www.circlesanctuary.org/pholidays/Beltane.html> Good customs.

<http://www.witchvox.com/holidays/beltaine/beltainehistory.html>

A lot of info.

<http://paganwiccan.about.com/cs/beltanemaydayb/>
www.cyberwitch.com/wychwood/Temple/beltane.htm good history

Summer Solstice Activities

By Alex Strongbow, ex-Carleton Grove
A Druid Missal-Any, Summer Solstice 2002

It is not a major holiday, but here are some activities to surround the holiday.

Short and simple, the list looks like this:

- Picnics, beach parties, and fireworks
- Bonfire (It's always a good time)
- Fire-Fly searching, bug collecting (and release?)
- College or family reunions
- Charging magical tools
- Hardest work on a long-term project or making a journey
- Eating a super-big sundae
- Hauling rocks and attuning your megalithic calendar
- Baseball, soccer, hurley, outdoor games.
- Searching for St. John's Wort
- Backyard volcano building (see familyeducation.com site)



Some Possible

Lughnasadh Activities

By Alex Strongbow, 2002

Basically, early August is a "hey, the farming is turning out alright!" agricultural festival and horse race time. Because it is a rather warm time of the year, and like other parts of the Northern Hemisphere, it is also a good time for big crowds of people to travel and have some constructive fun. Tailtiu, Lugh's mom, is commemorated in funeral games that last a week or so. I've put together a list of some events that might be done throughout August.

- Food was scarce before the harvest, so you might consider fasting before the festival begins, eating only seasonal foods that you can research as being available before world-grocerying began. Perhaps combined with a camping trip, to test your rigor.
- Brehon Wedding/Handfasting: A young couple will put their hand through a hole in a stone and pledge to officiant and public their intention to try living together for a year before deciding on a permanent marriage.
- Settling of Legal Disputes: Advice or mediation in long-term disputes could be sought from other members of the Grove (perhaps on slips of paper pulled from an anonymous box). Alliances with other organizations may be approved now.
- Horse racing: Well, few of us have horses, but a trip to a derby, dog track, or Nascar race would be appropriate, as would attending a summer track and field meet. Gambling is encouraged. If you do have a few horses (or can rent them), it is traditional to race along a river or ford a river mid-race.
- Bonfire: Not associated with hearth-fires, but just for fun and illumination of nocturnal partying. Sacrifice bad habits and unwanted things from your life by throwing symbols of them into the fire, this is good anytime. Perhaps, a competition between teams to build the biggest/oddest Lammastower?
- Prearrange to collect the last sheaf of wheat from a farmer and make it a Cailleach doll (old woman), much like the Bride-og at Oimeal in February. It should be placed on the mantle over the winter and destroyed in the spring, perhaps ploughed into the ground.
- Celtic Olympics: Yes the games of Tailtean, were held until the time of the Norman invasions in the 12th century. Perhaps modeling them on a highland games, which are frequent this time of year, would be apt. Events could include:
 - Wrestling in either Greco-Roman fashion (pinning shoulders to the ground), Sumo (no touching ground except feet or leaving circle) or WWF smackdown rules.
 - Hurley, Cricket, Soccer, or Rugby matches.
 - Foot races, wheelbarrow races, bicycle, piggy-back, sack-races, obstacle courses
 - Hammer Toss, Shot put, heavy rock lifting or caber toss
 - Sword dancing, country dancing, interpretive dance etc.
 - Long jump, high jump, pole-vaulting with walking sticks
 - Boffer-sword/Quarter-staff bouts, preferably on a log over a river.
 - Massive tug-a-wars, wacky relays, tag, human pyramids, or egg-toss contests.
 - Archery, fire-arms, catapulting, slinging or spear toss contest

- Have a “Rhibo,” a Welsh game where people line up facing each other, making a bed of arms and then fling them up in the air. It is advisable to catch them on the way down.
- Mental contests for the less physically-gifted: Chess, poetry, story-telling, lying contests, geometry jousts and math matches (bring out old SAT prep sheets), joke-telling, banjo-dueling, scavenging hunts.
- Large elaborate parades or activities to test the strength and endurance of young folk, usually through a forest, to a special spring or well or curving up and around a hill.
- Make plans for the winterization preparations.
- Feasting!: Foodstuffs include Beef, broccoli, cherries, spinach, any type of early berry, corn, potatoes, homemade bread (particularly wheat, oat, and especially corn bread), berry pies, barley cakes, nuts, apples, rice, roast lamb, acorns, crab apples, summer squash, turnips, oats, and all grains. Drinks: Elderberry Wine, Mead, Ale, Meadowsweet Tea, and Cider
- If you live near an abattoir, you could attempt a Tarbh Feis (cattle meditation) by wrapping yourself in a freshly killed bull’s hide after eating 10 pounds of beef at a crossroads and sleeping overnight while Druids sing around you. You could then prophesy the 2002 elections by this method, perhaps, or the fertility of the harvest might be gauged from your dreams.
- Offer first-fruits from your garden and plant all the seed of fruits eaten at festival. Bake a loaf of bread in the guise of a man and tear him apart by wild-cats. Include bilberries or blueberries in your feast; these were a traditional fruit, whose abundance was seen as an indicator of the harvest to come. Make a cornwheel of ripe grains.
- Gather and make acorn bread.

Some Optional Activities for Fall Equinox

By Alex Strongbow, 2002

Fall Equinox is the opposite twin of Spring Equinox, only that life is now giving fruit and dying at this point in the year’s cycles, sometimes known as Michaelmas in the Catholic calendar; when contracts and rents were collected (as at Easter). What harvesting began in Lughnasadh should be about finished by the Equinox. In times past, autumn was a dreaded season, as people scrambled to prepare food for the long, deadly winter. Only in recent centuries, with assured food supplies, have we begun to romanticize the season. For modern society it is a time for starting school and the end of summer vacations.

- It’s possibly the last chance to have the types of fun summer outdoor group activities that characterize Beltane, Mid-summer and Lughnasadh. So it offers an opportunity to repeat previous ones, or try out one that you didn’t have time for.
- A picnic is definitely in order or participation in final harvesting. Traditional choices would be grapes, acorns, wheat bread, goat, Indian corn, horn of plenty, cornbread, corn, root crops (i.e. onions, carrots, potatoes, etc.), pomegranates, nuts, goose, mutton, dried fruits, apples, beans, and squash.
- Prayers towards protection, balance, and success in life are auspicious.
- Building a doll of grains to be burnt in the spring or fed to animals.
- Sitting under trees with nets to catch falling nuts and leaves, perhaps saving a leaf from each year in a collection. The rest should be made into a leaf pile for the kids.
- The changing leaves can also be dipped in paraffin and put on wax paper. After the leaves dry, they may be placed around the house or in large jars with sigils of protection and/or abundance
- Take notes on which trees turn color first, which fall soonest, and into which colors.
- Follow the migration of birds.
- String nuts into a necklace.
- Plan a trip to see the fall colors in the mountains.
- Do the Halloween farm-visit early and beat the crowds.
- Make a grapevine wreath for the door.
- Deer season opens. Contemplate it and find some deer. Vegetarians can protest the sporting elements of it.
- A good time to give to local charities to feed the poor.
- When do certain animals begin to disappear?
- Bake bread from scratch (i.e. grind the grains into flour).
- Note the date of the first frost and its effects on plant life.
- Put up storm windows, check insulation and pack away the air conditioner.
- Start notice the location and time of sunrise, noon and sunset and continue through winter.
- Plant acorns and other nuts and wait for spring growth.



Figure 3 Another View of Druid Bridge in Northfield over Cannon river with 165+ Druid Sigils.

101 Non-Festival Activities for Groves

It is quite common for Druids to mistakenly assume that being a Druid is all about showing up for liturgical services. This is simply not the case. Most religions encourage people to examine their everyday lives for questions and lessons.

Actually, Groves can choose to do ABSOLUTELY NOTHING at all. Some Groves are just cover for a group of friends, whose various activities sometimes get celebratory in a Nature sense. If you group is not comfortable with liturgy, then perhaps making holding varying activities is the better way to develop at the start and see where it goes?

I've put together a list of activities that are generally fun to do as a group or with one's family or coterie. It'd be awful hard and fatiguing to do all of them, but a couple might be possible, and it gives you a chance to delegate responsibility to others to organize events they are experienced at. I've found that political causes tend to divide the group as do many types of intensive activism. Groves tend to be small, so don't be proud, take advantage of already set up programs in your community, it saves you headaches, and the results are good.

1. Book club discussions
2. Video club viewing & discussion
3. Park or neighborhood clean-up
4. Participation in inter-faith councils
5. Prison visits for Druids in jail or hospital
6. Tea and crumpets and topical debate
7. Camping trips
8. Sponsoring a scholarship
9. Adopting and following a charity
10. Group healthy life programs
11. Sleep-over parties
12. Barbecue parties
13. Garage sales
14. Form a sports team (cricket, croquette, orienteering, kickball, dodgeball, broomball, badminton, softball...)
15. Poetry contests
16. Bardic sing-togethers
17. Put on a play
18. Collect stories for an anthology
19. Start a garden
20. Plant trees
21. Quilting
22. Produce paraphernalia for services
23. Visit and observe other religious ceremonies
24. Weekend retreats (monasteries, community centers or various camps exist in your area)
25. Be a source of counsel for local police
26. Take night classes
27. Build a group book or video library
28. Start an on-line conference
29. Attend conventions
30. Invite a speaker
31. Go fishing
32. Work in a homeless shelter
33. Follow local environmental issues
34. Write all documents in ogham for a week.
35. Do a recycling workshop
36. Assemble or try a collection of recipes
37. E-mail a newsletter
38. Work on tree/flower/rock identification skills
39. Old-fashioned fire-making workshop, fire from scratch, firewood collecting, torch, lamp & candle making.
40. Join tours by local historical society
41. Research history of local indigenous peoples
42. Attend town meetings
43. Do story presentations at library
44. Teach people to read
45. Make a Grove flag, seal, coat of arms, Grove name, slogan, anthem or mascot.
46. Group photo day
47. Divination workshop
48. Craft workshops
49. New home/car/boat/job blessing
50. Weddings, funerals, memorials, graduations
51. Feng-shui or Taoist design orientation seminar
52. Folkdance or Country Line-dance classes
53. Staff, cloak, wand, sigil workshop
54. Society for Creative Anachronism (medieval)
55. Set us a Grove website
56. Carry a common item, like a ring, a small rock or bark chip or acorn as a sign of fellowship.
57. Puzzle, joke and riddle collections and passing about.
58. Role Playing Games
59. Pressed plant collections for local herbs
60. Build bird and bat homes.
61. Make a parade float
62. Hold a concert
63. Write letters to newspapers
64. Raise a stone or log circle
65. Choreograph a simple liturgical dance
66. Secret handshakes and password nonsense
67. Build an altar (portable is advisable)
68. Meditation class (yoga, tai-chi, aikido, zen)
69. Encourage people to start personal journals
70. Star-gazing workshop
71. Wildlife photography project
72. Responsibly start a bird feeder
73. Painting or drawing workshop
74. Walk about your town
75. Start a daily prayer regimen
76. Investigate types of alternative therapies
77. Visit your neighbors more
78. Check the lists of available books in your library
79. Find ways to simplify your life of distractions
80. Start a Grove-wide pen-pal with somebody from an interesting overseas land.
81. Practice toast-mastering and public speaking
82. Have a whiskey tasting party to select official spirits
83. Notice where large numbers of accidents happen and see if you can improve the location.
84. Big Brother/Big Sister or Boys/Girls Club of America
85. Natural disaster awareness planning
86. Share knowledge of what community education and night school classes are in your area.
87. Brush up on home conservation tips
88. Explore organic and conventional food nutrition
89. Temporarily train pets and socialize them for a shelter
90. Note which religious groups are in your area.
91. Learn an entertainment skill like juggling or performance magic
92. Volunteer to lead or chaperone field trips
93. Exercise more... outdoors.
94. Attend a concert
95. Get a Grove mailbox
96. Do group subscription for a magazines
97. Help get rid of non-native invasive species in area.
98. Gentility lessons at a finishing school
99. Give an award to someone who has gone unnoticed in your community for good deeds.
100. Help poorer members improve their work skills and access helpful services in the area.
101. Be nice to other folks, for no good reason.

Public Presentation Skills

By Mike the Fool, 2005

In modern society, it is quite rare outside of church for non-evangelical folk to speak about religious or philosophical matters with anyone but a very close friend. There are people of just too many religious and atheistic persuasions out there, and most are not comfortable with the topic of religion. Many believe their way is the only viable one, and do not brook dissent on many points. Leading a diverse crowd often can be frightening if you look at what divides you, but when you touch on common goals and aspirations, it becomes much more thrilling and pleasant. Know well what brings you together, and hit those points a lot.

In most Groves, the people know you a lot better than the average Catholic congregation knows its parish priest. Why? Because you are a smaller group, and you haven't been separated from them by an impassible chasm of dogma and years of seminary training. You are pretty much just like them. They know you don't have professional training, and most are willing to give you a lot of lee-way on minor flubs. I laugh when I make an amusing error, and it dissolves the tension.

It might be daunting the first time you stand in front of six or seven people and start doing the mumbo-jumbo of a liturgy, while keeping track of the pace, looking about, remembering your lines, and practicing smooth transitions. It gets better with practice and simple but careful planning on what the purpose is.

You have to just be yourself. If you are extroverted, then be the noisy entertainer, with lots of pomp. If you are introverted by nature, then solemn and quiet might be your style. Other participants with complementary skills or personalities might balance out yours. Watch how others perform in public, and take notes, but do not ape them. Most of us are not good enough actors to fake another priest's style, other folks would see through the impression. There is no style that pleases everyone or is "the best way," do the best you can at the time, for what it's worth. And, crucially, you don't have to do everything you know how. Pick.

You can run a bare-bones service, or you can greatly elaborate it. It can be solo or interactive. Watch televised services, attend local church meetings. Look at the stylistic diversity out there. Think of the many types of clothing, various seating/standing/kneeling arrangements, the musicians/choirs, the incense/bells/candles/lighting, the use of readings/speeches, the use of mudras, and movement/dance or the clumsy choreographed maneuvering of altar boys.

Some Druids in the ordinary service will read a few meditations and then give a short sermon and a period of silence. Presenting a sermon or inserting ad-libbed comments is quite daunting for people unaccustomed to leaving a script.

With a sermon or a pre-liturgical speech, 5 minutes is usually plenty, you only need to hit at most three points on a topic of importance to you, or present an alternative summary of how you interpreted the readings, or schedule a workshop if you'd like to give a hour-long lecture. Those types of impromptu speeches have a beginning, a middle, and an end; just like essay writing in school with a few supporting facts or lovely examples from your own humble life. Don't stick in too much, or it will overwhelm and stretch too long. You can discuss points in greater detail after a service.

The more you do public speaking, the better you get at selecting better words and feeling more relaxed to concentrate on the rhythm, pace, tone, gesturing and other little helping steps.

Our TV generation is used to highly practiced and polished programming and commercial music, so remember to you're your hopes realistic. Don't get too hung up about any SINGLE service.

Look beyond it to an overall series of improving performances. Even the worst one will teach you to be better. Think about what types of topics you'd like to raise over a season or two. If your Grove doesn't really need to celebrate the Fall Equinox, or it doesn't really enthrall them, then tone down the service and do more activities instead. The service does not have to be the centerpiece, but might be an appetizer or dessert or a salad to the main meal of the evening.

When you are first preparing, especially for the first time, it might be good to do a few dress rehearsals on your own next to a tape recorder or video camera, just to get a better picture of how you appear, and remove any annoying mannerisms, remove "uh, ers" in your speaking, and work on that posture. Are you too monotonic, do you look too stiff, should you move about a bit? Do you need someone to hold something at a certain spot to free up your hands?

Encourage rotation of public presentations by the Grove, so that they will understand what it's like to be in the hot seat. They will then be able to give you even more constructive advice than before. Sometimes the quietest members may surprise you when they reveal hidden speaking skills.

There are numerous books out there on public speaking, night classes, toastmaster clubs, and internet web-sites full of tips. Access these sites and dispel those myths and hang-ups that inhibit your from talking about your favorite subject, Druidism.

Tips For Successful Public Speaking

Feeling some nervousness before giving a speech is natural and healthy. It shows you care about doing well. But, too much nervousness can be detrimental. Here's how you can control your nervousness and make effective, memorable presentations:

1. **Know the site.** Be familiar with the place in which you will speak. Arrive early, walk around the speaking area and practice using the inherent area's sound quality and any visual aids.
2. **Know the audience.** Greet some of the audience as they arrive. It's easier to speak to a group of friends than to a group of strangers.
3. **Know your material.** If you're not familiar with your material or are uncomfortable with it, your nervousness will increase. Practice your speech and revise it if necessary.
4. **Relax.** Ease tension by doing exercises.
5. **Visualize yourself giving your speech.** Imagine yourself speaking, your voice loud, clear, and assured. When you visualize yourself as successful, you will be successful.
6. **Realize that people want you to succeed.** Audiences want you to be interesting, stimulating, informative, and entertaining. They don't want you to fail.
7. **Don't apologize.** If you mention your nervousness or apologize for any problems you think you have with your speech, you may be calling the audience's attention to something they hadn't noticed. Keep silent.
8. **Concentrate on the message -- not the medium.** Focus your attention away from your own anxieties, and outwardly toward your message and your audience. Your nervousness will dissipate.
9. **Turn nervousness into positive energy.** Harness your nervous energy and transform it into vitality and enthusiasm.
10. **Gain experience.** Experience builds confidence, which is the key to effective speaking. A Toastmasters club can provide the experience you need.

Section Five:

Other Materials of Interest

A selection of a few historical documents that may be of some assistance to a fledgling Druid or Proto-Grove, namely:

1. The Druid Chronicles (20 pgs)

How the RDNA got started at Carleton College in 1963-64

2. Endnotes of Druid Chronicles (4 pgs)

Little back-stories to de-mystify some strange events in the Chronicles

3. Letters of the Apocrypha (6 pgs)

These are some later essays by prominent members which are well-written.

4. Simple Table of Contents of ARDA 2

To give you an idea of the scale of these past resources.

5. Other Non-RDNA Resources,

Because you should keep your options open locally.



Druid Chronicles (Reformed)

a.k.a.

The Chronicles of the Foundation

Written 1963 - 1964 by David Frangquist

1996 Introduction

Originally published under the title of The Druid Chronicles (Reformed), abbreviated DC(R) and nicknamed The Chronicles, these books contain the basic history and beliefs of the first year of the original branch of the Reform founded at Carleton College from which all the past, present and future Branches of the Reformed Druidism spring. Thus the Chronicles are the about the only section of A Reformed Druid Anthology that is acknowledged by every group. The primary author, David Frangquist, has made no claim of divine inspiration; nor has any other branch of the Reform. These five books have no canonical status, but they're chock-full of interesting and fun stuff. Don't take it too seriously and try to see the message that underlies all the outer-trappings, holidays and names.

For a more detailed discussion on the Chronicles see the End-Notes, Printing History and Historiography at the end of end of this Part One. Internal cross-referencing is indicated by raised numbers. The existence of detailed endnotes related to a verse is signaled by asterixes. Both are listed at the end.

The Drynemetum Press

All essays and nearly all RDNA documents in the UWP are un-official and represent purely the opinions of their authors.



The Early Chronicles

Chapter the FIRST

1. The first of the chronicles of the disciples of the Earth-mother, and of the various and wondrous events which did occur to them who gave themselves in service to the establishment of the reform, which branch of the order was in Northfield, which is a city in Minnesota, the south-east part thereof. Peace be unto those whose hope lies in the comfort of the Earth-mother.
2. In those days (when Nason was president at Carleton) a decree went out from the Administration that all Sundays must be accounted for. So each went to his own place of worship in order that there credit might be established on his record.
3. And it came to pass that there were those among these people who chose to pursue such forms of worship as were not at that time in general acceptance. And one of these was a man named David, who was also a Fisher.
4. Now he did appear in the area which is north of the Lake of Lyman, proclaiming the glory which was Druid. And a few there were who listened to him and consulted with him.
5. And it came to pass that when a group of the faithful were gathered on a hill, where there had been set up in a small monument in stone, they concluded among themselves that this place should be the new location of an altar, which would be built with the work of their hands out of rough stone.
6. And it also came to be revealed, at that time, that David, who was a Fisher, was a priest in the order of the Druids, and that his rank was that of the Third Order Priest.
7. Now it was decided that there should be a regular service of worship which would be held in the appointed place, and which would be held on the last day of the week, which is Saturday, according to the old custom.
8. All of those things, which have been presently related, did occur during the month of April, which is just before the celebration of Beltane, and that time is generally held to be the time of the beginning of the reform.

Chapter the SECOND

1. And it came to pass that when the celebration of Beltane (which is the first day of the month of May) was held, there was not yet completed the altar which was to be built of stone, according to the plan which had been adopted by the faithful.
2. And so it was that an altar which was small and portable and made out of steel came to be used for the service. And it was generally agreed that it was indeed an inferior type of altar.
3. Thus, a group of disciples began to assemble the rough stones which were necessary to build the new altar. And although their numbers were small in the beginning, those who did lend their help did increase until their number was nearly doubled.
4. Now when the last stones had been laid in the altar, the priest did step back from it, and did look upon it, and he

said: "It is good.^a We shall hold services here around it today, after the noon" (for it was Saturday).

5. And the altar did measure about two cubits high, and about two cubits wide, and about three cubits long.
6. And it came to pass that there were in number about a dozen people who did gather at the altar that day, and who did partake of the waters-of-life.
7. After the waters of life had been passed, Howard who was called Cherniack, did rise up (for he was a Preceptor, and of the Second Order), and he did read to them from a paper.
8. The purpose of this paper was to establish for them a constitution; so when the reading had been completed, the Arch-Druid (for such was the priest to be called) did ask those who were gathered if they did approve.
9. Now all who were present did give their assent, save one who was not yet of the First Order. And it came to pass that when the question was again asked on the week following, all did again approve, save one who did not disapprove of the paper, and so it was considered unanimous.
10. And so after the paper had been accepted in this manner, the congregation of the disciples was then known as the Reformed Druids.^b

Chapter the THIRD

1. Now after the paper had been read on the first Saturday after the celebration of Beltane, it was perceived that the sky was covered by clouds. And this was not good for a Saturday evening.
2. Thus did the Arch-Druid go and kneel before the altar and invoke the Earth-mother asking for a clearing of the weather.
3. And the Earth-mother did look upon the congregation of the faithful, and did look upon the altar which had been built to her glory, and saw that it was good.
4. And, behold, there was a great wind in the sky, and it did blow from the sky in the space of less than two hours all of the clouds, yea, even the last vestige thereof. And the sun shone brightly in the sky.
5. And this was taken to be a sign.^c
6. But some there were those in the area who did scoff, for their hearts were hardened. And they did conspire, saying: "Let us tear down the stones from the altar which has been built on the hill."
7. And they did go in secret to the altar, and did tear at the altar, each with his bare hands, and did take therefrom the stones which had been set there, yea, even down to the foundation thereof.
8. And the Earth-mother did look upon this with disfavor, for it was the defilement of the altar which had been built to her glory.

^a Other authorities read: "It looks good."

^b Other authorities read: "of North America."

^c See E.C. 3:11; 4:4, 13; 6:9; L.C. 1:7; 2:11; 6:8

9. And so it came to pass that in that same day, even as the last stones were being removed, a storm did gather, and there was thunder and lightning and rain;
10. and it was exceedingly cold, and the clouds did not leave the skies for a period of four days.
11. And this also was taken to be a sign.^d

Chapter the FOURTH

1. And it came to pass that when those of the faithful who had built the altar, each one with his bare hands, did find that the altar had been defiled, they did rend the air with their lamentations.
 2. And they did set themselves to the task there of once again building the altar, that is, of rebuilding it; and they did set each stone in the place which had been appointed to it.
 3. And as they did complete their task, the sun did make a brief appearance unto them from in the midst of those clouds which were covered over the sky;
 4. and each took this to be a sign, each in his own way.^e
 5. Now after the work was the second time completed, those whose purpose it was to do evil unto the altar did come the second time also;
 6. and they did come in the darkness of the night, for they were the Anti-Druids.
 7. Now when these Anti-Druids did come, their coming being covered by the darkness of the night, they did come with the smell of drink heavy upon them; yea, were they so filled with drink that they were under the influence thereof.
 8. And they did pull at the stones of the altar, yea, did they tear at the altar with their bare hands, and they did pull the stones away, one from the other.
 9. Now as the Anti-Druids did defile the altar in this manner, one of their number did shout in his loudest voice: "Blasphemy!...Blasphemy!" for so was he under the power of strong drink.
 10. And it came to pass that the faithful did perceive that the altar had once again been attacked by the hand of violence, then did they again rend the air with their lamentation, so great was their grief.
 11. Wherefore they did set to the task which was before them, which was the task of placing the stones the third time in their proper places; but they did fix them there this time with mortar,^f that they might not be wrested therefrom by the hand of the Anti-Druid.
 12. And a curse was placed on the altar; and the Arch-Druid spake unto the Druids assembled saying: "Verily I say unto you, whosoever findeth him who hath done this thing, be he admonished to do whatsoever he will to make for him his life miserable."
 13. And it came to pass that it was made known to them that one of the Anti-Druids had come to twist his ankle, yea, even to sprain it; and this was taken to be a sign.^g
1. And it came to pass that the time was near at hand for the altar to be consecrated.
 2. Now it was the custom that when an altar was to be consecrated, that a sacrifice should be made upon it, which sacrifice should be of a living thing, yea, a thing which doth testify to the bounty of the Earth-mother.
 3. And the purpose of this sacrifice is to consecrate the altar.
 4. But behold, there did arise a dispute among the Druids concerning this sacrifice which was to be made upon the altar.
 5. For there were some among them who were in favor of a small sacrifice and some who were persuaded that the sacrifice should be a large one;
 6. those being in favor of the small sacrifice having a desire that it be of the living leaves and branches of a tree;
 7. those being in favor of the large sacrifice having a desire that it be of the living flesh and blood of an animal or bird.
 8. Wherefore, there did ensue a dispute among them concerning the manner in which this sacrifice should be made.
 9. And it came to pass that Howard, who was Preceptor, did arise and he spake unto them saying: "Have ye not forgotten that we are reformed, yea, even do we call ourselves by the name of reformed,^h wherefore we must put behind us those things which do bring offense to our senses;" for Howard was one of them who were in favor of the small sacrifice.
 10. But another did arise, who did call himself Jan, for he was in favor of the sacrifice of an animal, and he spake unto them saying: "Have ye not forgotten the customs of old—which were the customs of our predecessors before us? Verily I say unto you, nothing will be acceptable to the Earth-mother save it were nothing smaller than an animal or fowl, yea, even a chicken."
 11. Wherefore, there was about to occur a great schism between those on the one hand who were of the first faction and those on the other hand who were of the second faction.
 12. And they were exceedingly wroth one with the other.
 13. But behold, Jan did rise up and relent his position, asking neither that flesh nor blood be spilt upon the altar; for he did perceive that they were not strong enough and that such a schism would be their end, wherefore he did relent that the schism might not take place.
 14. And it came to pass that the altar was consecrated by the burning of living leaves and branches of a tree;ⁱ and it came to pass that the altar was consecrated on the third Saturday after the celebration of Beltane (which is the first day of the month of May).

Chapter the FIFTH

^d See E.C. 3:5; 4:4, 13; 6:9; L.C. 1:7; 2:11; 6:8

^e See E.C. 3:5, 11; 4:13; 6:9; Med. 6:1; L.C. 1:7; 2:11; 6:8

^f See L.C. 7:7

^g See E.C. 3:5, 11; 4:4; 6:9; L.C. 1:7; 2:11; 6:8

^h See E.C. 2:10

ⁱ See Med. 2:6

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Chapter the SIXTH

1. Now it came to pass that on the fourth Saturday after the celebration of Beltane, it came to be decided that petition be made unto the authorities, that is the Administration, concerning recognition of the activities of the Druids.
2. And it came to pass that there were many among them who did approve; for they were in number about one score and two.
3. And each went and prepared his petition in the manner that was prescribed by the Administration.
4. But behold, there were then returned notices which did say: "Thy actions are not acceptable in our sight."
5. Wherefore, Howard, who was preceptor, did go up unto the authorities saying: "Do ye not see that there are many like us which do go by strange creeds?"
6. And he was answered: "Yea, verily we do see that there be many like ye which do go by strange creeds. Neither ye nor they are acceptable in our sight."
7. And Howard spake saying: "By what method do ye judge?"
8. And he was answered: "We are chosen that we should be judges. Yea, even do we judge according to our judgements."
9. But there were two of the petitions which were not rejected, for they were the domain of a different authority; and this was taken to be a good sign.^j

Chapter the SEVENTH

1. Now on the fifth Saturday after the celebration of Beltane, the Druids were assembled as usual; and after the waters-of-life had been passed, the Arch-Druid spake unto them saying:
2. "Behold, how our altar is attacked on the one side,^k and our recognition is rejected on the other.^l Are we not afflicted even as were our predecessors before us?"
3. "Our predecessors of old did take up the sword and fight with those who afflicted them, but they were defeated.
4. "Wherefore, we must not take up the sword, but remain tolerant and patient in our afflictions that there might be peace."
5. And he spake saying: "Behold, this is the last time we shall be together for a long time. The time is at hand when we shall depart, each of us going his separate way.
6. "Behold the flowers of the earth and the beauty thereof; and behold the sky and the clouds and the beauty thereof; and behold all the handiwork of the Earth-mother and the Beauty thereof.
7. "Be ye firm in the faith; and as ye go your separate ways take time to pause before all the glory of the Earth-mother (which is Nature); and fail not to meditate on that which has been said and done here, yea, even as the sun does reach it height in the north (which is Midsummer and an important day with us) should ye meditate on these things.
8. "For verily I say unto you, when the sun crosses the equator, shall ye be again reunited here with these thy brethren."^m

9. And each went his own way glorifying the Earth-mother and singing her praises, yea, even unto the very ends of the land did they journey praising the beauty of all that is to be found in earth and sky.
10. Now these are the records which have been made to the glory and honor of the Earth-mother. Praise be to the Earth-mother for the beauty which is in her in the earth and in the sky; all the birds of the air and the animals of the ground are a testimony to her excellence. Even as the dawn of the new day brings new light, is there new hope.

Peace!



Figure 4 Nelson, Fisher & Frangquist on Hill of 3 Oaks, 1964 with original record-stand altar.

^j See E.C. 3:5, 11; 4:4, 13; L.C. 1:7; 2:11; 6:8

^k See E.C. 4:8

^l See E.C. 6:4

^m L.C. 1:2-4

The Book of the Law

1. The Book of the Law as revealed by the Reformed Druids, in council at Carleton College, for the purpose of making more fruitful their existence.
2. And it came to pass that they did take upon themselves a name, which is "The Reformed Druids of North America."^a
3. And it came to be revealed that any person could become a member of them;^b but any who would become a member would be first required to submit humbly a petition, which petition is a declaration of his subscribing to the Basic Tenets. And this petition may be written with the pen, or it may be spoken aloud with the mouth.
4. Now the Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism are these:
5. The object of the search for religious truth, which is a universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.
6. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual importance, of Nature, which is the Earth-mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it men do live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face to face with it.
7. Now there shall be instituted in the Grove three officers whose duty it shall be to minister unto the needs thereof.
8. And first among them shall be the Arch-Druid, who shall be a priest of the Third Order or higher;^c and the Arch-Druid shall preside over the Druids assembled.
9. And second among them shall be the Preceptor, who shall be a Druid of the Second Order or higher;^d and he shall deal in the spiritual insofar as directed by the Arch-Druid, but he shall act foremost in affairs not of the spiritual, that is, the secular.
10. And third among them shall be the Server, who shall be of the First Order of the Druid or higher;^e and he shall assist the Arch-Druid insofar as she or he may be called to serve.
11. And none shall serve in these positions save it shall be that he is selected by the members; and none shall serve save it shall be that he is worthy to serve; and selection shall be made each year during the period of Foghamhar.^f
12. This is the Law which was revealed, but it is not all, for there is yet more. And no thing shall be revealed save it shall be to a majority of the faithful; and no thing shall be revealed save it shall be revealed twice, that is, at two meetings, the second of which shall be the first to be held after the first; and no thing shall be revealed save it shall be when one third are present to bear witness unto it.
13. Yea, and this record is a true one and an accurate one.

Peace!

^a Other authorities add: "at Carleton College."

^b Other authorities add "Save he were first a student."

^c See Cus. 6:7

^d See Cus. 3:5

^e See Cus. 1:8

^f See Cus. 4:7

The Customs of the Druids

Chapter the FIRST

1. Now it was the custom among the Druids, who were reformed, that at every meeting of the congregation, the waters-of-life should be passed to those present.^a
2. Now he who subscribe to the Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism, as prescribed in the Book of the Law, he is accepted into the body of Druidism which is the organizational body of Druidism only.^b
3. But, they who partake of the waters-of-life in communion with the congregation, they are accepted into the great body of Druidism which is the spiritual body of Druidism only.
4. But the whole and complete body of Druidism consists neither of the organizational body only nor of the spiritual body only, but of the both of them, which are then in whole and complete union.
5. Wherefore, he who has been accepted into the organizational body only is not of the whole body of Druidism;
6. wherefore, neither is he who is of the spiritual body only accepted into the whole body of Druidism.
7. Whereas, they who have been accepted into the spiritual body of Druidism and also into the organizational body thereof is thus accepted into the whole and complete body of the membership of the Reformed Druids;
8. and is thenceforth called by them a Druid of the First Order.

Chapter the SECOND

(A Chant)

1. O Earth-mother!
We praise thee that seed springeth,
that flower openeth,
that grass waveth.
2. We praise thee for winds that whispers,
through the graceful elm,
through the shapely maple,
through the lively pine,
through the shining birch,
through the mighty oak.
3. We praise thee for all things,
O Earth-mother,
who givest life.

Chapter the THIRD

1. Now some there are among the congregations of the faithful who shall be set aside from the others as better;
2. for, they it is who have been chosen to serve the Earth-mother and to do her work.
3. And none shall be chosen save he shall be pure in spirit and save he shall have bowed himself down in humility before the powers which are manifested in the Earth-mother;
4. And none shall be chosen save they shall be imbued with the spirit of the love of the service of the Earth-mother;
5. For those who are chosen to be honored are chosen also to be elevated to the Second Order, which is in the succession to the priesthood of the Druids.^c
6. And those who have been chosen shall be questioned, and they shall be questioned in the following manner:
7. "Do you, in full consciousness, promise to serve faithfully the Earth-mother, ministering to her followers, and following your duties as a Druid of the Second Order to the best of your ability?"
8. "Do you understand from whence comes the source of all life, and the nature of the source of all life?"
9. "Do you understand the partaking of the waters-of-life, and the sacrifice of life that we offer up to our Mother?"
10. "Are you ready, then to sealed up to the service of the Earth-mother?"
11. And none shall be honored with the Second Order save he shall answer these questions in the proper manner.
12. And none shall be elevated save he shall partake of the waters-of-life in communion with the Arch-Druid and save he shall partake of them to the fullest extent.
13. These are the things which are prescribed, for so it must be done. Thus it was, and thus it is, and thus it is to be.

Chapter the FOURTH

1. Now these are the commandments which were given concerning the observance of those days which were considered sacred to the Druids.
2. Ye shall observe always the festival of Samhain,^d for it is the beginning of the period of Geimredh, and also of the year. This day shall ye celebrate by the lighting of great fires, for soon is the land to become cold in the time of apparent death.
3. Ye shall celebrate on the day of Midwinter, for on that day doth the sun begin again to rise in the south; so shall ye celebrate it with the burning of logs and making merry. So also shall ye make merry on the day of Oimele,^e which is the first day of the period of Earrach;
4. and on these days shall ye glorify the mistletoe and the evergreen, for it is a living testimony to the continuance of life, yea, even in the midst of a dead world.

^a See Cus. 5:5

^b See Law 4-6

^c See Cus. 6:7; 8:1

^d November 1st.

^e February 1st.

5. Of great importance is the festival of Beltane,^f which is at the beginning of Samradh. Then shall ye observe great ceremony; and with the kindling of large fires on the hilltops, and the glorification of the renewed tree shall ye celebrate the renewed life.
6. Ye shall take note of the decline of the sun in the sky, which doth begin on the day of Midsummer. Ye shall light your fires and let them die in token of the great fire which doth roll down in the sky even as a ball doth roll down a hill.
7. Lughnasadh,^g which is the beginning of the period of Foghamhar, shall ye mark by the coming together in groups in order that ye might feast upon the fruits of the Earth-mother; and then shall ye offer up a sacrifice unto your prosperity.

Chapter the FIFTH

1. Also, shall ye observe the periods of the moon: the dates thereof when it is full and when it is new; for thus is seen reflected the birth and death, the growth and diminishing of all that is to be seen in Nature.
2. Ye shall begin new projects when the moon is waxing; but ye shall end old ones when it is waning.
3. And on the night of the full moon shall ye rejoice in the fullness of it; but on the night of the new moon shall ye be given over to vigils and to meditation.
4. When ye come together that ye might worship, shall ye come together in Nature, that ye might offer up on the altar of stone your sacrifice of life.
5. Then shall ye pass amongst you the waters-of-life, that ye may know the continual flow and renewal of life.
6. For they shall taste of the very essence of life, hallowed in the bosom of the earth, and purified by the worship of men.
7. And when all have partaken of the waters-of-life, then ye shall pour a libation of it on the altar, saying as ye do it:
8. "To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee."
9. Then shall ye go forth into the world of Men, secure in the knowledge that your sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-mother's sight.
10. Peace! Peace! Peace!

Chapter the SIXTH

1. Behold, there is not one among you who is greater than him who have given of himself in service to you.
2. For it is for this reason that the priests among you have been called to their station, that they might serve you.
3. And none shall be called except that they have sealed themselves up unto the Grove.
4. And none shall be called except that they have been Druids of the Second Order.
5. And none shall be called except that they have dedicated themselves to the search for truth in Nature.
6. And none shall be called except that they have kept the vigil upon the bosom of the Earth-mother.

^f May 1st.

^g August 1st.

All essays and nearly all RDNA documents in the UWP are un-official and represent purely the opinions of their authors.

7. This is the Third Order, the Order of the priesthood, the Order of Dalon Ap Landu.^h
8. Unto it shall be given the consecration of the waters-of-life.
9. Unto it shall be given the consecration of the Second Order.
10. Unto it shall be given the sacrificing of life.
11. Unto it shall be given the mysteries of the worship of the Earth-mother.
12. For, even as priests are called unto it, shall they also call others.

Chapter the SEVENTH

(A Response at Samhain)

1. Ea, lord, Ea, Mother, thou with uncounted names and faces, thou of the many faceted nature in and above all, to thee we sing our chants of praise.
2. Go thou not from us.
3. Dalon Ap Landu, lord of this and all Groves, mover by night and by day, descend not beneath the earth, turn not thy pleasing face from us.
4. Go thou not from us.
5. The leaves wither; the trees and fields are barren; on what can we depend? Where is thy order, where thy strength?
6. Depart not from our midst, sleep not, O most high.
7. The sun, the bright fire of day withdraws his chariot; his face is veiled with clouds, and the breath of the north wind walks the land.
8. Return to us his warmth.
9. Lo, we are as wraiths; our fire is turned to ashes and darkness walks the land.
10. Preserve us O spirit of day. Keep us in thy mind, O spirit of power.
11. O Earth-mother, guide our paths. If thou wilt leave us, save us through the time of silence, keep bright within our hearts til spring.
12. So let it be, O our Mother, for we are faithful, and would keep thy ways.

Chapter the EIGHTH

1. Behold, some there are among you whose reflections and whose deeds are of exceedingly great merit.
2. And they shall be selected for the great honor of the high Orders of the priesthood;
3. and they shall be selected by the Patriarchs, each to his own Order.
4. The council of the Third Order, of Dalon Ap Landu, shall select the Patriarch of the Fourth Order, of Grannos;
5. and also the council of the Fourth Order shall select the Patriarch of the Fifth Order, of Braciaca;
6. and also the council of the Fifth Order shall select the Patriarch of the Sixth Order, of Belenos;

^h See Med. 4:12

7. and also the council of the Sixth Order shall select the Patriarch of the Seventh Order, of Sirona;
8. and also the council of the Seventh Order shall select the Patriarch of the Eighth Order, of Taranis;
9. and also the council of the Eighth Order shall select the Patriarch of the Ninth Order, of Llyr;
10. and the council of the Order of Llyr shall have dominion over the selection of the Patriarch of the Tenth Order, the highest of them, which is the Order dedicated unto Danu.¹
11. For such are the Orders of the priesthood, and so are they also dedicated.
12. And no one shall be Patriarch of more than one Order, for no one can be so dedicated.
13. But no priestess shall be admitted into the councils of the priesthood, but rather she shall be given unto one of them as a gift of service to beauty.
14. For she who is called to be a priest shall be sealed up unto one Order only, and unto her shall be given the service of it for all time;
15. and she shall be called a priestess not of the Order, but rather a priestess unto the Order.
16. For so it is written; thus it was, thus it is, and thus it is to be.

Chapter the NINTH (Incantation)

1. Fain we ask Erinn,
Faring o'er oceans',
Motions to mountains,
Fountains and bowers,
Showers, rills rushing,
Gushing waves welling,
Swelling streams calling,
Falling foam-thunder,
Under lakes filling,
Willing-abiding,
Riding rounds, holding,
Olden fairs meetly-
2. Fleet to lift loyal,
Royal king's towers,
Bowers for crowning,
Frowning foes over-
3. Rover Mil's warlike,
Starlike sons therein,
Erinn shall longer,
Stronger, show honour,
On our Milesians-
4. Wishing, in trouble,
Noble isles' wooing,
Suing, we stay here-
5. Pray here to sail in,
Wailing maids royal,

Loyal chief-leaders,
Pleader, blend pray'r in
So we seek Erinn—

Chapter the TENTH (Invocation)

1. I invoke the land of Erinn,
Much-coursed be the fertile sea,
Fertile be the fruit-strewn mountain,
2. Fruit-strewn be the showery wood,
Showery be the river of waterfalls,
Of Waterfall be the lake of deep pools,
Deep-pooled be the hill-top well,
3. A well of tribes be the assembly,
An assembly of kings be Temair,
Temair be a hill of tribes,
The tribes of the sons of Mil,
4. Of Mil of the ships, the barks,
Let the lofty bark be Erinn,
Lofty Erinn, darkly sung,
An incantation of great cunning,
5. The great cunning of the wives of Bres,
The wives of Bres, of Buaigne,
The great lady of Erinn,
Eremon hath conquered her,
Ir, Eber have conquered her,
I invoke the land of Erinn.

Chapter the ELEVENTH (The Mystery)

1. I am the wind which breathes on the sea,
I am the wave of the ocean,
I am the murmur of the willows,
I am the ox of the seven combats,
I am the vulture upon the rocks,
I am a beam of the sun,
2. I am the fairest of plants,
I am a wild boar in valour,
I am a salmon in the water,
I am a lake in the plain,
I am a word of knowledge,
I am the point of the lance of battle,
I am the God who created in the head the fire,
3. Who is it who throws light into the meeting on the mountain?
Who announces the ages of the moon?
Who teaches the place where couches the sun?
If not I?
Peace!

ⁱ See Med. 4:13-20

The Latter Chronicles

Chapter the FIRST

1. The chronicles of the acts of the remnant after the faithful were scattered over the face of the land. Which record is a true and an accurate one of the Reformed Druids of North America.
2. Now it came to pass that on the fifth Saturday before the festival of Samhain,^a a number of the faithful did gather on the hill where the altar had been built in the period of Samradh.^b
3. And this was to fulfill the prophecy which had been made:
4. "For verily I say unto you, ye shall be reunited here with these thy brethren."^c
5. And they did perceive that the altar which had been built did still stand upon the hill where it had been built.
6. And all did wonder, yea, they did marvel that the altar had been preserved in their absence from the hand of the Anti-Druid.
7. And this was taken to be a sign.^d
8. But it came to pass that not all of the faithful had returned, for there was only a remnant that did come back.
9. Jan,^e who was one of the faithful who was of the Second Order, and one of those who did not return, but who did choose to remain in a distant place to there continue in the work of the Earth-mother, did send unto them an epistle.
10. And this epistle was then brought to the faithful by the hand of Norman who was Server.^f
11. And Norman did reveal unto them the epistle which had been written by the hand of Jan; and Jan did admonish them in the epistle to remain strong in the faith, and he did express to them his desire that the Reform should gain in strength.

Chapter the SECOND

1. It came to pass that the Arch-Druid was one day walking in the woods, and he was sore perplexed, for it did happen to begin to rain.
2. And he was exceeding wroth, so that he did feel tempted to utter a vile curse.
3. And it came to pass that he did so utter a vile curse, for such was his wrath.
4. And this curse which he did utter was a vile curse which was a vile curse which did call down the wrath of the Earth-mother, yea, even did it call upon the power of the Earth-mother.
5. And it came to pass that when he had spoken, there was a period of time which did last no longer than the space of a few seconds, and it passed.
6. And suddenly, there did occur a most horrible sound, and a blinding light did fill all the sky about.

^a See Cus. 4:2

^b See E.C. 4:11

^c See E.C. 7:8

^d See E.C. 3:5, 11; 4:4, 13; 6:9; L.C. 2:11; 6:8

^e See E.C. 5:10

^f See Law 10; L.C. 9:1

7. For behold, all the power of Taranis was caused to be unleashed,^g and it did fly as a spear, and did strike a tree which was rooted in the earth.
8. And Behold, from the tree to the Arch-Druid was a space not more than fifteen cubits in length, and he was sore afraid.
9. So he did go back among the faithful, and he did say unto them: "Curse not in the name of the Earth-mother, for verily I say unto you: ye know not what it is that ye say."
10. And when he had told them of these things which he had seen and heard, they did marvel at it.
11. And it was taken by them to be a sign.^h

Chapter the THIRD

1. It came to pass that the Druids did continue to meet and to pass the waters-of-lifeⁱ for the period of one month.
2. But they did become anxious because there were left only a remnant of them.
3. Nevertheless, they did not come to be discouraged, for the size of their numbers did come to increase, though it was not by a very great amount.
4. And their efforts did continue to be thwarted, for the authorities had hardened their hearts against them.^j

Chapter the FOURTH

1. But behold, it came to pass that they were gathered together on the hill, by the altar, on the Saturday before the eve of Samhain.
2. And it came to pass that there did gather on the hill a multitude of people, the number of them being great than any which had ever been gathered at any other time.
3. Wherefore, the faithful did rejoice greatly, for they did see that it was not all come to nought, but that the truth was now spread among the people.
4. And they did behold the success of the reform, and they were glad in their hearts.
5. And the Arch-Druid did look upon the great number who were gathered, and he said: "It is good."^k
6. And he did speak unto them and he did welcome them, and he did tell them of the wondrous things which were to occur on the eve of Samhain,^l which was near at hand.

^g See Med. 4:5

^h See E.C. 3:5, 11; 4:4, 13; 6:9; L.C. 1:7; 6:8

ⁱ See Cus. 5:5

^j See E.C. 6:4

^k See E.C. 2:4

^l See Cus. 2:4

Chapter the FIFTH

1. Now it did come to pass that the eve of Samhain did approach; and the moon was full.^m
2. And they did gather in the light of the full moon, and did come together in the usual spot which was upon the hill near the altar.ⁿ
3. And there was a multitude of them, being in all greater than one score and ten in number.
4. The Arch-Druid did then offer up the sacrifice of life, but it was not accepted, for behold, the night of Samhain was at hand. Wherefore they did pass among them the waters, but they were not the waters-of-life, but rather the waters-of-sleep, for there was no life in them.^o
5. And a great wailing did go up among them, for they did lament the ending of the summer, and the beginning of the winter season.^p
6. The Arch-Druid did then light his torch and he did carry it before all those gathered as they did begin the pilgrimage. And they did all follow the torch, making their way to the Grove, which was a Grove of oak.
7. And when they had arrived at the Grove of oak, the Arch-Druid did take the torch and light with it the fire, and so the flames did rise high up out of the fire,^q testifying to the glory of Belenos.
8. And all were cheered by it.
9. Now the Arch-Druid did ask all who were gathered that they might sit upon the earth in the fashion of a great circle, each holding the hand of him next to him. And he did ask that they might examine their souls,^r and speak such as they felt they ought to tell the others.
10. And there did follow a period of silence which was exceeding long.
11. And behold, some did begin to speak, and their voices were lifted up above the crackling of the fire in the silence of the Grove.
12. And one did prophesy much, at times speaking in tongues, and then saying: "Someone is dead...I see a great many people...and a large circular room there...but they need not be afraid...everything is going to be all right."^s
13. And behold, another did speak, saying: "I see... three stones on a black sky."
14. And many other great and wonderful things were spoken, for it was the eve of Samhain.
15. Now as the fire did die down, many did begin to leave the Grove; but some there were who did stay, and who did undertake to jump over the fire seven times each, thereby insuring their luck during the coming season.
16. And when the fire had died down to ashes, they did all depart; and the moon was full.

^m See Cus. 5:1

ⁿ See E.C. 1:5

^o See L.C. 6:10

^p See Cus. 7; Med. 1:2

^q See Cus. 7:2

^r See Med. 1:11

^s See L.C. 6:3-5

Chapter the SIXTH

1. Now it came to pass that it was not long after the feast of Samhain when the chief of all the land did go out in a long procession among the people of the land.
2. And as he passed among them, a man who was his enemy did attack him.
3. And behold, the chief of all the land was smitten by the hand of his attacker; and he was slain.
4. And a great crying and also a great wailing did go up from all the people.
5. And it came to pass that the body of the chief of all the land was taken up into the principal city of the land, and there was placed in the chief building, in the great circular room thereof.
6. But among the Druids there were those who were sore afraid at these events. For they did say among themselves:
7. Behold, for this is now the fulfillment of the prophesy of the night of Samhain; for it is now all come to pass as it was spoken.^t
8. And they did marvel at it, for it was taken as a sign.^u
9. Now it came to pass that during the periods of Geimredh and Earrach, the earth did have the appearance of death; for the wind of the north did sweep over the land, and barrenness did settle upon the branches of the wood.
10. And there were during this time no meetings of the Druids, for there was no rejoicing in the time of sleep.^v
11. But it came to pass that the Druids did come together to celebrate the coming of the period of Earrach, which is the festival of Oimeic.^w
12. And they did rejoice that the time was half passed in its course from Samhain to Beltane.
13. And there was a man who came unto them at that time who was called John the Messenger. And he came from across the sea from the land of Erinn.
14. And he brought unto them writings which were of the ancients: the incantations of Erinn.^x

Chapter the SEVENTH

1. Now it came to pass that the festival of Beltane was near at hand; so the Druids did go up upon the hill of their altar, that they might see that all was in order.
2. And it came to pass that they did come up upon the hill, which was the one upon which was their altar, and they did look upon the altar which was there.
3. And they did say, one to the other, "Behold, our altar has not well weathered the periods of Geimredh and Earrach."
4. And they did say, one to the other, "Let us now go and fetch great stones, and place them together in a new altar, which shall be the greatest of all the altars which we have built."
5. Wherefore, they did go and fetch great stones, and they did bring them to the place of the altar. And they did begin

^t See L.C. 5:12

^u See E.C. 3:5, 11; 4:4, 13; 6:9; L.C. 1:7; 2:11

^v See L.C. 4:4

^w See Cus. 4:3

^x See Cus. 9:1-5; 10:1-5; 11:1-3

to place them together in their proper places, according to the shapes thereof.^y

6. And each Druid did work at the building of the altar with his bare hands.^z
7. And they did fix the stones of the altar in their places with mortar, that they might not be wrested therefrom again by the hand of the Anti-Druid.^{aa}
8. And when they had completed the altar, they did stand back from it and rejoice in its completion; for it was the finest of all the altars which had been built.
9. And the altar was about four cubits long, and about three cubits wide, and about three cubits high.^{bb}
10. And there was a passage through the center of it which did extend from the top of the altar down to the very bottom thereof, and through it could pass the smoke of the altar fires.
11. And it came to pass that they did become apprehensive, for they did perceive that the mortar was still not dry;
12. and they did say: "Behold, the mortar is not yet dry, and the Anti-Druid will come and he will tear the stones from their places in the altar before they have been fixed there by the drying of the mortar."^c
13. And they were sore afraid.
14. But it came to pass that one of them did step forward, and his name was David (the Chronicler). And he did offer himself for the purpose of the guarding of the altar.
15. And he did take it upon himself to stay by the altar until the mortar had dried.
16. And as he sat by the altar he did see the sun go down in the west; and all the majesty of the heavens were opened unto him.
17. And he did keep his vigil upon the bosom of the Earth-mother^{cc} as the moon did rise in the east, and yet as it did set in the west.
18. And behold, as the sun did rise again in the east, and all the Earth was bathed in the warmth thereof,^{dd} the Arch-Druid did come up upon the hill of the altar.
19. And they did kneel before the altar; and the Arch-Druid did consecrate David (who was the Chronicler) as a priest of the Order of Dalon Ap Landu.^{ee}

Chapter the EIGHTH

1. Now it came to pass that the festival of Beltane was near at hand; so the Druids did go up upon the hill of their altar, that they might see that all was in order.^{ff}
2. And when they had come to the place of the altar, they did find it not. And they did find there not even the least stone thereof.

^y See E.C. 4:2, 11

^z See E.C. 4:1

^{aa} See E.C. 4:11

^{bb} See E.C. 2:5

^{cc} See Cus. 6:6

^{dd} See Med. 1:13

^{ee} See Cus. 6:7

^{ff} See L.C. 7:1

3. For behold, all that was the altar had disappeared, yea, even the last vestige thereof.
4. And they did perceive that the altar had been again destroyed by the hand of the Anti-Druids.^{gg}
5. And this was the fourth time that the altar had been defiled by the Anti-Druids, and this was the most complete and utter destruction that had yet come to pass. For they had destroyed it with hammer and chisel and all manner of terrible weapon.
6. And it came to pass that a great wailing and moaning did go up, and the air was rent by the lamentation of the Druids.^{hh}
7. But behold, they did go up from that place, and they did celebrate the festival of Beltane;ⁱⁱ for even in the midst of their misfortune did they rejoice in the return of spring, and in the abundance of life which is the perpetual gift of the Earth-mother.
8. And they did go up upon the hill which was a short way off; and at the top of the hill they did find a Grove of three oaks.
9. And they did rejoice in the renewal of the flow of the waters-of-life; and they did pour a libation of them upon the rock which they did find upon the hill where the three oaks did stand strong against the dark sky.
10. And that place came to be revered among the Druids, for it was the place of refuge in the time of their troubles.
11. And they did call that place the Hill of the Three Oaks.

Chapter the NINTH

1. Now it came to pass that in the time after the festival of Beltane, which is the period of Samradh, Norman, who had been Server, did go up unto the Hill of the Three Oaks.
2. And he did go up onto the Hill of the Three Oaks in order that he might better appreciate the wonders of the Earth-mother which were to be beheld there.^{jj}
3. And it came to pass that he did remain there until darkness had fallen over all the land around; and behold, the firmament was opened up unto him and he did behold the glory of it.
4. And he did continue to make his vigil until the dawn.
5. And it came to pass that as the sun rose in the east, he was met by the priests of Dalon Ap Landu who had come up onto the Hill of the Three Oaks.
6. And they did consecrate Norman, who had been Server to Dalon Ap Landu.^{kk}
7. And it came to pass that after Norman had become priest of the Order of Dalon Ap Landu, the priests of the Order of Dalon Ap Landu did gather together in council.
8. And the Council of Dalon Ap Landu did call upon David, who was a Fisher, and declare him Patriarch of the Order

^{gg} See E.C. 3:6; 4:6

^{hh} See E.C. 4:1, 10

ⁱⁱ See E.C. 2:1; Cus. 4:5

^{jj} See Med. 7:4

^{kk} See Cus. 6:8; Med. 4:12

- of Grannos,^{ll} which is the first of the Patriarchs, and with all the powers thereof.
9. And it came to pass that the Patriarch of the Order of Grannos did call upon those who were priests of Dalon Ap Landu.
 10. And he did consecrate them unto Grannos: priests of the Fourth Order.
 11. And it came to pass that the priests of the Order of Grannos did gather together in council.
 12. And the Council of Grannos did call upon Norman, who had been Server, and declared him to be Patriarch of Braciaca,^{mmm} with all the powers thereof.
 13. And it came to pass that the Patriarch of the Order of Braciaca did call upon all the priests of Grannos.
 14. And he did consecrate them unto Braciaca; priests of the Fifth Order.
 15. And it came to pass that the priests of the Order of Braciaca did gather together in council.
 16. And the council of Braciaca did call upon David (the Chronicler) and declared him to be Patriarch of Belenos,ⁿⁿ with all powers thereof.
 17. And it came to pass that the Patriarch of the Order of Belenos did call upon those who were priests of Braciaca.
 18. And he did consecrate them unto Belenos: priests of the Sixth Order.

Chapter the TENTH

1. Now it came to pass that in those last days a decree went out from the authorities;
2. and they did declare to be abolished the regulations which had been placed upon the^{oo} worship of those at Carleton.
3. And behold, a great rejoicing did go up from all the land for the wonders which had come to pass.
4. And all the earth did burst forth into song in the hour of salvation.
5. And in the time of exaltation, the fulfillment of their hopes,^{pp} the Druids did sing the praises of the Earth-mother.
6. O Earth-mother, we praise thee.
7. In all that we do we praise thee: In our getting up and in our lying down, in our sleeping and in our waking; in our eating and in our drinking: in our working and in our times of leisure; for we are alive only through thee,^{qq} and in our every act too we praise thee.
8. O Earth-mother, we praise thee.
9. In all that we see do we praise thee: in the sky and the sea, the hills and the plains; in the clouds and the stars, the moon and the sun;^{rr} in the birds and the flowers, the butterflies and the myriad-colored fishes.

10. We praise thee with our admiration of the sunset and of the mountains, of the trees and of the streams. For thou hast made all things, and for all we see do we praise thee.
11. O Earth-mother, we praise thee.
12. In all that we hear and smell and feel and taste do we praise thee: in the song of birds and the roar of the sea; in the perfumes of flowers and freshness of a summer rain;
13. in the softness of a kitten and the coolness of a lake; in the sweetness of honey and the savor of fruits; for all that we hear and smell and feel and taste is of thee,^{ss} and for all sensible do we praise thee.
14. O Earth-mother, we praise thee.
15. For all that we love do we praise thee: for the love of our parents, and for the love of others; for the act and emotion of love is an act and emotion of praise, and in loving do we praise thee.
16. O Earth-mother, we praise thee.
17. In our meditations^{tt} and services do we praise and think upon thy works and power.
18. O Earth-mother, we praise thee.
19. In all the whole world do we praise thee, from the east to the west do we praise thee and from the nadir to the zenith do we praise thee.
20. We praise thee in the day, and in the night, in all seasons of the year, and in the myriad of years.^{uu}
21. We praise thee knowing and unknowing, believing and of little faith, for thou hast made all and art all, and we can praise and admire nothing without praising and admiring thee.
22. O Earth-mother, we praise thee.
23. Peace! Peace! Peace!

^{ll} See Cus. 8:4; Med. 4:16

^{mmm} See Cus. 8:5; Med. 4:13

ⁿⁿ See Cus. 8:6; Med. 4:17

^{oo} See E.C. 1:2

^{pp} See E.C. 1:3; 6:1

^{qq} See Med. 5:6

^{rr} See Med. 3:1-3

^{ss} See Med. 3:6

^{tt} See Med. 7:7

^{uu} See Cus. 4:1-7

Meditations

Chapter the FIRST

1. I was standing alone. And behold, I heard my name called, and I went.
2. And I had been called to a place where there was a great fire, and the flames of the fire did rise as high as the tops of the trees.
3. Near the fire there stood a man; and he said unto me: "Follow me!" And I followed him.
4. Now we went far into the darkness of the night, and I followed him to an open space in the forest, which was like a small valley.
5. He said to me: "Behold;" and I looked where it was that he had pointed, and there was a pile of sticks.
6. And he said to me: "here you will stay; and do not allow sleep to overtake you, but keep open your ears that you might hear."
7. And again he said "Behold;" and I looked where he had pointed and I saw there a small fire. And he said: "Take from the fire a brand."
8. Now I went to the fire, and took a burning brand from it, and returned to where the man had stood; but behold, he had disappeared.
9. So I took the brand and lit with it the sticks. And I sat down to listen and to meditate.
10. And I did not sleep.
11. And behold, I did hear my name called, and I answered. And a voice came out of the darkness and bade me not sleep but rather to examine my soul. And behold, this did happen twice.
12. And I was alone, but I did not any longer feel alone.
13. And as I watched my fire and contemplated the warmth and the light of it, behold, the sun did come up in the east, and I was bathed in the light and the warmth of it.
14. And I had not slept.
15. But I had seen things that I had not seen, and I had heard things that I had not heard and I had felt things that I had not felt.
16. And I arose, and left that place, glorifying Be'al and all the works of his hand, for I had seen the Earth-mother.^a

Chapter the SECOND

1. How wonderful are the works of Be'al!
2. How beautiful are all the things which are in the earth, which are on the face of the earth, and which are above the earth in the sky.
3. How beautiful are the flowers of the earth and the birds of the air. How beautiful are the stars and the moon, and the reflection of them upon the waters.
4. For these things are of Be'al, and not of man.
5. For thus saith the Earth-mother: "The Groves of the forest are my temples, and the trees of the Groves are my icons,

6. "and the branches of the trees are my sacred scepters, and the green leaves of the branches are my sacrifice, which is a living sacrifice up unto beauty."^b
7. Yea, how excellent are all these things, for they are created of Be'al, and they are not of man, Wherefore, they are sacred before us.

Chapter the THIRD

1. Behold the rocks of the mountains, and the trees above the grass waving; this is the Earth-mother.
2. Behold the ocean on the right, and the sea on the left, and mighty river which is but a trickle; this is the Earth-mother.
3. Behold the blue which is day and the black which is the night, salted with the stars, all above; even this is the Earth-mother.
4. The Earth-mother is one.
5. The sun is her right eye, the moon her left; and the clouds are her silver hair. The rivers are her fingers, the oceans are cradled in her hands, as a child.
6. For the Earth-mother is all which is revealed unto our sight, and which our ears do perceive, and which we do touch as we reach out with our hands.
7. For the Earth-mother is all things which do make themselves apparent unto our sense.
8. She is Disorder—Ordered;
9. she is Power—Impotent;
10. she is Ugliness—Beautiful.
11. And Be'al, he is cradled in the bosom of the Earth-mother;
12. and the eye of Be'al has entirely encompassed her.

Chapter the FOURTH

1. He is that which we have seen—not with the eyes; and we have called his name Be'al.
2. And we have heard that which he is—not with our ears; for his name we have called Be'al.
3. The taste which he leaves is not in the mouth; the odor of his presence is not sensed in the nose.
4. We have reached out, and touched, feeling his essence, though never with our fingers.
5. We have cried out in our anguish, our sublime anguish, and have called his name, yea, one name among many; we have called him Be'al.
6. For our knowledge of him is as that of the form in the fog, which has no form; we see it, and there is the more of it which we do not see; but it is.
7. Be'al is!
8. Yea, Be'al is one; even as he is many.
9. He has gathered the worlds in his net, even as they also have drawn him to them.
10. For all things are delivered unto him.

^a See Cus 6:6; Med. 10:7

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^b See E.C. 5:14

11. His glories they are many, yea, as are many the names we have given him according as his glories are manifested unto us.
12. We have seen him on the bosom of the Earth-mother; huge woody arms raised to the sky in adoration, strong and alive; and we have called his name Dalon Ap Landu.^c
13. Of his goodness we have tasted, yea, have we drunk of the fruits of the Earth-mother which he hath poured out before us; and his name we have called Braciaca.
14. We have seen him in the surf, beating his fists against the shore, and his vast body stretching to the horizon; and we have called his name Llyr.
15. His voice we have heard thundering in the heavens, his power we have seen flash across the sky; and his name we have called Taranis.
16. Out of the bowels of the earth has he poured forth the water of his life, healing, soothing; his name is Grannos.
17. We have seen his smile, bright, radiant, raining glory and warmth down upon the bosom of the earth from his seat on high in the midst of the blue heaven; and we have called his name Belenos.
18. And the other faces of Be'al also have been turned kindly toward us.
19. Merrily merrily, bubbling, gurgling, we have seen her dancing over the rocks down to her marriage with Llyr; and her we have called Sirona.
20. We have seen her laugh with the young baby, fly with the bird, burst forth her abundance with the corn; in all that hath breath and life have we seen her good face; and her name is Danu—the bountiful.^d

Chapter the FIFTH

1. Ye have seen the glory which is day in the rising of the sun, and also the wonder which is night; and what greater thing is there?
2. Ye have seen the power of the floods and the tides; and what greater thing is there?
3. Yea, even have ye seen the bosom of the earth rent in twain, and fire and brimstone poured forth out of the bowels thereof; and what things is there which is greater?
4. Verily I say unto you: consider the small creatures of the forest which scamper gaily from bush to bush; are not they more wonderful than these other things?
5. Consider even the dainty flower, how exalted is the glory of it.
6. For these are possessed of the greatest and most wonderful of all of the gifts of the Earth-mother: which gift is that of life.
7. Wherefore, consider this tree, which ye have selected for the great size thereof; for this tree is possessed of great age.
8. Great is the abundance of life which is in it, and which has passed through it; wherefore ye have raised up your praises unto it.

9. For ye have offered up your worship unto this in which life is great, that your worship of the greatness thereof might be multiplied in the tree.
10. This tree is your Bile.
11. For without life is there nothing which is anything.
12. The sun is as darkness without that it shines down on the living things; and the earth is as empty space without that it is a pedestal upon which have been placed the living things.
13. Thus, even the least leaf of this tree is greater than on the earth and the sun.
14. For life is not of the Earth-mother, and life is not of Be'al, rather life is of them both.^e And great is the power thereof.

Chapter the SIXTH

1. Verily I say unto you: is it not written: "and each took this to be a sign, each in his own way?"^f
2. Which of you, having risen up saying: "this is truth, for I have seen it," will be followed? For even as ye have seen it, have not the others also seen it not; and where therein is the proof?
3. Rather, that which is as the bright light unto one man is as but the thick cloud unto the other.
4. For no man shall have truth save that he shall also have awareness.
5. Truth is as a bubble which dances in the air. Truly, it can be seen and the eye is aware of it; but it cannot be grasped by the hand, nor possessed. Neither can it be given to you by anyone.
6. Beware those men who say: "Follow my way, for mine is the way unto Be'al, and there is no other way."
7. Their numbers are great and their voices are loud. They shall present much authority before you, and say: "We know our way to be the only way, for it is the way of our fathers."
8. But take heed, lest you should fall into the trap.
9. For awareness shall come unto no man save it shall be in his own way; and it shall come unto no man save he shall come unto it.
10. Go ye, therefore, and seek after Be'al. And make your way not after the way of other men, but after your own way;^g
11. and go too to the fountain of Awareness, which is in Nature.^h

Chapter the SEVENTH

1. For what reasons is that ye sit here under the oak? Why is it that ye have come out together under the stars?
2. Have ye come that ye might not be alone? If so, it is good.
3. But verily I say unto you: many there are who have come together, yet remain alone.

^c See Med. 8:6

^f See E.C. 4:4

^g See Med. 4:4

^h See Law 4-6

^c See Cus 6:7

^d See Cus. 8:4-10

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4. Do ye sit in the open that ye might come to know Nature? If so, it is good.
5. But verily I say unto you: many there are who have sat for hours and have risen up knowing less than when they sat down.
6. Rather, in your coming together, seek to know in what way ye may help him who is next to you, and strive to act justly toward.
7. And in your sitting down in the fields of the Earth-mother, open your minds as well as your eyes. Let your meditation grow and branch out as the oak which is over your head.
8. Except that ye have done these things, your sitting is in vain and coming is futility.
9. And why is it that ye do stand up before others and speak unto them?
10. Do ye teach unto them the ways of the Ancient Druids? If so, it is good.^l
11. For they had their wisdom, and that is oft forgot. But verily I say unto you: in their day, even they also were young in their traditions.^l
12. The wise man is not constrained to learn only that which he is taught. Yea, even as there is a time for talking, is there also a time for no talking.
13. In the silence of your being shall ye find that which is not of your being; and in the Earth-mother shall ye find that which is not of the Earth-mother; in Be'al shall ye be made aware, and your awareness shall fill you.
14. Ye shall be like the morning sun which has risen and whose brightness is already full, but whose path is yet ever upward;
15. and the light of your awareness shall sweep before it all the shadows of your uncertainty.
16. Then shall ye need wait no more; for this is the great end and all else is but beginning.

Chapter the EIGHTH

1. When they come to you and then ask you "After what do ye seek?" then ye shall answer them saying: "Awareness;" for this is the first lesson.
2. For without awareness is there nothing which is.
3. But in your seeking of awareness, seek not it alone, as separate from all else;
4. for in seeking awareness ye shall find it not, and ye shall find it only in that ye seek it not.
5. Seek ye, therefore, after Be'al, for your awareness shall be in unity with Be'al.^k
6. And make first your search in the dominion of the Earth-mother, for the Earth-mother and Be'al are not to be separated.

Chapter the NINTH

1. Behold, they shall come unto you, scoffing, and mocking the words that ye have spoken, and saying: "There is no thing at all which is this awareness; what proof do ye give of it?"
2. And ye shall answer them in a parable, for this is the second lesson:
3. There was a small village in which was produced the finest cheese in all the world. There was none other anywhere that was like unto it.
4. And it came to pass that a traveler, who was a merchant, came to the village; for it was his desire that the finest of all foods should be served upon his table.
5. Wherefore, he did seek out the makers of the cheese.
6. But behold, when he was given a piece of the cheese, he did thrust it away from him, for he was offended by the foul smell thereof; for it was an exceeding foul smell indeed.
7. And he said unto them: "I do not believe that the taste of this cheese can be good, for it doth have an odor which is foul like unto no other!"
8. And he was answered: "Thou needst only to taste once of the cheese, and thou wilt see for thyself that it be good."
9. But it came to pass that the merchant did go away again, having not partaken of the fine cheese.
10. And he never did have served on his table the finest of all cheeses, for he would not taste it, any of it.
11. Verily I say unto you: in all the books of Man is there not one word which can give you proof even of the taste of a cheese.

Chapter the TENTH

1. And when they come unto you and say: "And what, then, is the nature of this thing which ye do call awareness?" then shall ye give answer unto them in silence, for this is the third lesson.
2. For there be not one man who doth have awareness, save also that he is aware thereof.
3. And he is like unto him whose eyes are filled with the glory of all things upon which the light of the sun has cast itself.
4. But there are many, yea, it is the greater number, who, in their unawareness, are aware not even of their unawareness;
5. and they are like unto them who are blind from the day of their birth, and see not, nor know what it is to see.
6. But some there are who are aware only that they are also unaware; hallowed are they for they are the children of Be'al.
7. One of these is like unto him who keeps the vigil,^l for his gaze cannot pierce the mantle of darkness which is thrown over all the world about them, but they rest secure in the knowledge of the return of day.
9. In your awareness shall ye be as at the moment of the rising sun;^m
10. and your spirit shall rise up even as the bird flies up to meet the light which is above, but which, hidden by the mountain, has fallen not yet upon the earth below.

Peace!

ⁱ See E.C. 5:10

^j See E.C. 6:4

^k See Med. 7:13

^l See Cus. 6:6; Med. 1:1-16

^m See E.C. 7:10

Between-the-Lines

(Endnotes to the Druid Chronicles)

A “founder’s-eye view” Of the Druid Chronicles (Reformed) by Norm Nelson, Second Arch-Druid of Carleton and Patriarch of the Fifth Order to explain some of the more mysterious references in the Chronicles.

[NOTE: except as noted, the Chronicles are the work of David Frangquist, Patriarch Sixth. References are to the 5th (1970) printing.]

EARLY CHRONICLES

I:2 The Reformed Druids of North America [henceforward, RDNA or Druids] were founded in the spring of 1963; John Nason was at that time President of Carleton College, a private Liberal Arts college in Northfield, Minnesota.

The precise wording of the requirement mentioned is to be found on p. 138 of the Carleton College Bulletin (Catalog Number) for March, 1963: “ATTENDANCE is required at the College Service of Worship or at the Sunday Evening Program or at any regularly organized service of public worship. Each [10-week] term every student must attend seven of the services or religious meetings.”

I:3 As I recall it, the sole motive was to protest the requirement, not to try for alternatives for worship. If a “regularly organized service” was required, we decided to organize one! Chief among those involved were David Fisher and David Frangquist (then sophomores), Howard Cherniack, Jan Johnson and me (then all juniors).

It is important to note that, while some were areligious, other were churchgoers who felt that compulsory religion was a disservice to religion. There was never any intention to mock any religion; it was not intended that RDNA should compete with or supplant any other faith. We tried to write a service which could be attended “in good faith” by anyone; it require no renunciation of any faith to profess Druidism. If our protest was to work, the last thing we needed was antagonism from anyone.

I:4 Lyman Lakes extend across the north side of the campus proper, lying in a valley. Most of us lived in a new dorm just north of the lakes, at the base of a hill. Immediately at the top of the hill was the soccer practice field and, just to the east of that, an area called Monument Hill (bearing a stele commemorating several pioneer events). Further north, across the soccer field, is a slight rise with a large rock sticking out of the ground, and with three trees; this became known as The Hill of the Three Oaks.

RMS: By the late sixties, the name had become shortened to the Hill of Three Oaks. The name was used by everyone, not just Druids.

I:5 Monument Hill.

I:6 So far as I know, Fisher actually created the whole first ritual at this time; his story was that he had been made a Druid in high school, since it made it more acceptable if it was an on-going thing.

I:8 *RMS: In a letter to me dated 5 May 1976, Norm wrote: “I’ve been looking back thru old calendars to see what I can find—the first mention of a Druid service is Saturday, April 20, 1963, with subsequent entries each Saturday until (thru) June 1, when I noted that Bard Smith (then a prof. in the religion dept., later Dean) attended. Also noted a service on May 1st. Since I kept my calendars as a sort of diary, I assume that April 20 was the true birthday of RDNA. If there had been an earlier service, I would have listed it.”*

II:2 The “altar” was Fisher’s phonograph stand/record rack, draped with a cloth.

II:3 The stones came from a place in the Arboretum, just north of Monument Hill I don’t remember how many worked—it was something like 3, increasing to 5.

II:7-10 The original Constitution had an amusing error: Article VI set the quorum for amendment at “one-third of those known to be officers”!

II:8 *IB: Mrs. Penick, the Carleton College Archivist, has asked Br. Shelton to convey the data to your Editor that the RDNA never did attain full legal status as an official student organization. The Editor has in his possession copies, sent by Mrs. Penick, of “Student Organization Reports” for ’64 and ’65 for the RDNA, and it was these which led him to assume that the RDNA became official. It seems that the college’s Executive Committee needed to approve the group, and they never did.*

III A little hyperbole aside, this is essentially a factual account.

76 *All essays and nearly all RDNA documents in the UWP are un-official and represent purely the opinions of their authors.*

- IV:3 Really spooky—a ray of sunlight broke through the cloud-cover and hit the altar.
- IV:7 No liquor was allowed at Carleton. This rule was not enforced in “the Arb,” and quite a many students wandered home on Saturday Night/Sunday Morning under the influence. In the case of the repeated destruction of the altar, there was a specific (small) group which didn’t like us as individuals, and took it out on our altars. I don’t remember if we thought they were anti-Druid or just anti-us.
- V The dispute is reflected in the changes made in the Ceremony of Consecration.
- RMS: In the ceremony preserved in the Black Book (which contained all the early liturgy), the following changes were written by hand on May 18th 1963:*
- “Attend us now o Spirits, as we offer this sacrifice of consecration” became
 “Attend us now O Spirits, as we light this fire of consecration.”
 (Here the blood of the sacrifice shall be spilled upon the altar) became
 (Here the fire shall be lit upon the altar)
 “Accept this, our sacrifice” became
 “Accept this, consecrate it.”
- VI:1-3 After six of seven “regularly organized services of public worship,” we filled out “chapel slips” listing the Druid services as our church for the week. These slips were handed out at campus services, and were available in the dorms for those who had attended services in town.
- VI:4 The Chapel Slips were rejected by the Dean of Men’s office, which had charge of such matters for men students.
- VI:5-8 Cherniack went to the Dean with a list of various peculiar religious organizations gleaned from the Minneapolis and St. Paul yellow pages. After it was admitted that most of them would be acceptable, he asked why the RDNA wasn’t. The answer boiled down, amounted to “You don’t have a faculty advisor.”
- VI:9 The Dean of Women’s office accepted the Chapel Slips from the two girls who submitted them: apparently her office didn’t consult with the Dean of Men’s Office!
- VII:2-4 Or words to that effect.

THE BOOK OF THE LAW

- 1 is a paraphrase of the Constitution of the Carleton Grove.
- 12 My original copy of the Constitution sets the quorum (after corrections: see note on EC II:7-10 above) at one-eighth, not one-third.
- RMS One version of the Constitution in the Grove Archives was signed and certified by David Fisher as “the original copy of the Constitution of the Reformed Druids of North America at Carleton College, drawn and prepared by Hillel Howard David Cherniack, Preceptor. And read and approved at two consecutive meetings by all members present.” This version reads: “A quorum...shall be one eight[h] of those members known to the officers...”*
- A much commoner mimeographed version reads “one-third” and “to be officers”, as in Norman’s note to EC II:7-10 above. This one has at the end: “I certify this to be a true and accurate copy of the Constitution of the Reformed Druids of North America at Carleton College, read and approved at two consecutive meeting by all members present” and Fisher’s mimeographed name but no signature. Norman’s copy evidently was one of these, to which corrections had been applied. Frangquist must have been working from an uncorrected copy.*
- A much later note by Fisher in the College Archives observes that “several errors in printing were noticed after copies had been sent out”, and on an attached copy of the mimeographed version he gives the explicit corrections. Also in the College Archives in the copy originally sent to the Dean of the College (Dean Gilman); it is stamped “Received May 24, 1963.”*

THE CUSTOMS OF THE DRUIDS

- I cf. Law
- II The words of the Chant were written by Kathie Courtice, and set to music by Peter Basquin. It was regularly sung as part of the Service of Worship.
- III cf. Second Order Service of Ordination

- V Based, so far as I know, on Frangquist's research. He spent quite a bit of time on research as writing the Chronicles turned from the frivolity obvious in the first few chapters of Early Chronicles to the serious undertaking recognizable later on.
- VI:6 An all-night vigil is (was?) one of the requirements before Third Order ordination. The service was then held just after sunrise, the other Third Order priests coming out to join the 'postulant' and conduct him to the service.
RMS alters: ...is (was?) [is! – RMS]
- VII I don't know who wrote this chant; I would guess it's by Frangquist
RMS: This was attributed in the Order of Worship (which was compiled by Frangquist) to David Fisher.
- VIII:1-12 The Council of any particular Order elects the Patriarch of the next higher Order; he then ordains who he wishes to honor to that Order, forming its Council, which in turn elects... A nice self-perpetuating sequence, no?
 The Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Orders came into being on the same day. Fisher, Frangquist, and Nelson were the entire Council of Dalon ap Landu: we chose Fisher as Patriarch of the Fourth Order, and he ordained us to the Fourth Order. As the Council of the 4th Order, we elected me as Patriarch of the Fifth, and I ordained them. As the Council of the 5th Order, we elected Frangquist Patriarch of the Sixth Order, and he ordained us to the 6th Order (cf. L.C. IX:7-18).
 It should be noted that this was prearranged to the extent that we had our services of ordination written ahead of time.
 At least one more higher Patriarch has been chosen, I believe, but I don't have any names.
RMS adds: There has been exactly one more Patriarch: Gary Zempel of the 7th Order.
- VIII:13-16 This provision has been up for proposed revision by the Council of Dalon ap Landu, but since mail ballots are required, I don't think a quorum has ever been reached.
RMS: The revision passed: cf. Record of Council 29 March 1966 and 1 May 1971.
RMS: To some extent, the restrictions on women in the priesthood stemmed from the curfew imposed on women students by the College at this time, which made it difficult for women to vigil overnight. The institution of priestess "unto" an order was meant partly as a way of allowing women to enter the priesthood without vigiling, while reserving full priestly authority to men who had vigiled. The necessity of this was challenged by Deborah Gavrin in the fall of 1965, when one night she calmly signed out of her dormitory to "Hill of Three Oaks, Northfield, Minn." And there held her vigil and was consecrated the following morning as a priestess of the Third Order and a priestess of the Sixth Order (in separate ceremonies) by David Frangquist. Since then, the Council has moved somewhat fitfully to grant full equality to women, until finally with the resolution of 1 May 1971 all restrictions were abolished.
- IX,X,XI These are translations of genuine Old Irish poems, which were provided by Dr. John Messenger (cf. L.C. VI:13-14 and attached notes below). Notice the unusual "chain" rhyme-scheme of these chants: the last word in each line and the first of the next; this is found in many pre-Christian poems in Britain.

LATTER CHRONICLES

- I:2 School started again on Sept. 23, 1963; the first service of the Fall was therefore Saturday, Sept. 28, 1963.
- I:9 Jan Johnson lived in Seattle, Washington and did not return for his senior year. (He had been my roommate in '61-'62)
- II:2 He was wroth because he intended to go "to the Arb" with his girlfriend that night, and it was raining.
- II:8 It was actually a greater distance (I gather about 300 yards) but close enough to be very startling, he said.
- II:9 To the best of my knowledge, the "Druid Curse" was used three times: twice against those who tore down the altar and once as detailed here. Net total was one broken leg, one sprained ankle, and one bolt of lightning. It was decided that "the Curse" would never be used again, and that we would not teach it to anyone who did not then know it.
- III:1 Two humorous incidents occurred, which somehow didn't get into the Chronicles. At one service, the Waters of Life had more life than we really wanted—a grasshopper jumped into the cup as it sat on the altar! (It was flicked out again and most of the 'congregation' did not know it had happened.)

Another time, Howard Cherniack was solemnly intoning the Preceptor's responses just before the consecration until "Has the Earth-Mother given forth of Her bounty?" "YUP". It was weeks before we could get through a service with straight faces!

RMS: Believe it or not, this is one of traditions that did survive the Great Interim. Very occasionally, the Preceptor would give what was known as the "Cherniack Response" and we couldn't keep straight faces either!

III:4 As noted above, we weren't getting "chapel credit." Dr. Messenger became our faculty advisor that fall, before the events of Chapter V.

V:6 The customs repeated in this chapter were based on ancient customs detailed by Dr. Messenger.

V:12 This really happened. We sat around the fire, passing a bottle or two of wine (we were in the Arb), then joined hands and sat in silence for some time. It was a girl whose name I forget who first 'spoke in tongues,' then began to repeat, over and over again, words such as those given here. It must have lasted for 4-5 minutes. She later told us that she did not remember speaking at all.

VI:1 Dallas, Texas; 22 November 1963.

VI:13 Dr. John Messenger, (now at Ohio State) came to Carleton that fall as professor of anthropology. At one of the first [weekly, mandatory] convocations he spoke about his research in the Aran Isles (mouth of Galway Bay) and mentioned various Druid customs still extant there under a thin veil of Christianity. Before he left the room that night, we had our faculty advisor!

RMS: An article by Messenger on the Aran Islands appears in the November 1974 issue of Natural History.

RMS: Many years later, Professor David Sipfle in the Philosophy Department told me how Messenger had recounted to him the bizarre activities transpiring on the Hill of Three Oaks. Messenger concluded in disbelief: "And you know, they really seem to believe that stuff!"

VII:14 David Frangquist

VIII:11 We knew the hill was there, with the rock and the three trees; we moved over there, intending to "dub" the trees as honorary oaks. When we got there, all three were found to be oaks, "and this was taken to be a sign."

X:1-2 On the day of my graduation (June 12, 1964) the Board of Trustees abolished the religious attendance requirement.

Interestingly enough, we had invited the College administrators to the last full service of the year (before finals week) and none attended. During Finals Week, we planned an abbreviated service. As I approached the Hill of the Three Oaks (a few minutes late) carrying the Waters in the chalice, I could see the regular group gathered around a couple resting on a blanket. My first thought was that someone was "arb-ing" and that we were going to have to dispute them for possession of the Hill. As I reached the Hill, I saw that they were Pres. and Mrs. Nason! He apologized for not having been able to attend the week before and they stayed for the service and partook of the Waters.

I served the Waters with my fingers crossed! At a school where possession of liquor could result in a ten-day suspension, he literally could have prevented me from graduating; nothing was ever said about it. I still wonder if I was the only student (until the rule was changed a few years ago) to ever have served liquor to the college President on campus!

X:5-23 Written by Norman Nelson (the previous summer); verse 23 sums up the entire chant, and reflects what I consider to be the basic idea of Reformed Druidism.

MEDITATIONS

I David Frangquist's description of his Third order vigil [cf. note, CUS VI:6 above]

I:16 Be'al: The Druid name of old; it is apparently related to the Semitic word BAAL, meaning Lord.

All the "god names" in this book are authentic, I believe, coming from Frangquist's research or from Dr. Messenger.

II:5-6 This is the Scriptural sanction for the sacrificing of plants rather than animals in the Reformed Druid rituals.

Letters of the Apocrypha

A tiny sampling of five essays from the 120+ eccentric entries in the Apocrypha of ARDA 2, which might shed light on Reformed Druidism and may help a founder of a Proto-Grove.

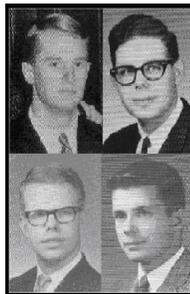
The Book of Faith

(by David Fisher, 1964)

1. I, David, Arch Druid of the Grove at Carleton, write these words so that those who come after me may know and understand some of the feelings which moved me to found the Druid movement. The tone of these writings will differ from the rest of the Books, but I write as I do for clarity, and, in accordance with Druid practice, make no request that my words become a dogma.
2. In the beginning, Druidism was formed as a protest against a religious requirement at Carleton College, not in affirmation of anything, except to affirm a mutual protest against coerced religion. The History of the Druids will be found elsewhere in the various books of this canon.¹
3. The founders varied considerably in their degree of religious commitment. Some believed in no God, others in their own uncertainty, and others in the Christian religion. I am a believer in Christianity, and still hold myself as such.
4. Attacks have shifted in time from charges of insincerity to charges of emptiness and lack of real value. I write to reaffirm a new purpose, set forth elsewhere in the canon.
5. Druidism boasts no ethos. Since Druidism has never claimed to be a religion, dogmatism has always seemed incompatible with the organization. This does not mean that, as an individual Druid, I have no ethic, nor that any others who call themselves Druid are without beliefs as to what is right and wrong. As Druids, however, we can only affirm a mutual desire to ask ourselves questions about the meaning of life, and about the degree to which religious truth can be truth for us.
6. If I were to pass on any advice to my followers, it would be to never consider that they have found, as Druids, the ultimate answer to any of their questions. Druidism is a faith, if a faith, in questioning, not in answering. Awareness, to a Druid, is an individual thing, to be shared, perhaps, but never codified.
7. It has been asked, and with good reason: what is awareness. I can only answer that for me, awareness has meant a strengthening of my own faith, through communing with myself and with the world of Nature around me. I have come to a closer vision of the greater Reality that lies beyond this world, precisely because I have come to appreciate this world.
8. It has been asked, and again with good reason: if your purpose is to ask and to inquire, then why your use of ritual? Can not men seek for answers without the crutch of a ritual which has no real religious purpose? I can only answer that the Druid ritual has a value because it can be used by different men in different ways.

9. For one man, the sacrifice of life is the offering up of himself to a god or gods. To another, it is an offering up of his mind to a search for truth. As a priest, I repeat the great Answer to calm men's hearts and minds, not as a magical formula of absolution; but for some, the Answer is an absolution, washing away the distractions of a week of worry, and reaffirming confidence in the idea of a purpose in life.
10. For one man, the partaking of the Waters of Life is a mystical sacrament of communion with a god or gods. For another, it is an act of common fellowship with other seekers of the truth. As a priest, I do not seek to consecrate the Water to any use with my words, but rather think of my words as a common means for others, who watch and listen, to consecrate the Water within themselves.
11. Whether what has been founded at Carleton remains or passes away is now unclear. I will always have a concern for the Druids. My own feeling is that if the experience has helped any men to better see themselves, and to become aware of the problems of life in a new way, then it will have served its purpose.
12. I have called this book the Book of Faith. It is my faith in what I have done and in what I have seen grow. In accordance with a basic principle of Druidism, I do not presume to speak for anyone else except for myself. Yet I would add one word to the skeptical, to the vain, and to the self-satisfied.
13. Before you, O reader, pass a judgment on the Reformed Druids, look first into your own heart and be very sure that all is right and at peace. Then without false pride, ask those who call themselves Druids what they have learned from being Druids. Then, when you have weighed the amused against the serious, the scoffers against the men who call themselves aware, then only will you be able to judge.
14. In the name of the Earth Mother, the great personification of all that moves and walks and lives and is upon the Earth, and in the name of Be'al, the source of all truth without whom no Druid is aware, but whose nature remains to each man his own mystery, I ask upon you peace. May you, in your own way, find the truth, as I have found it.

So be it.
David Fisher
April 12th, 1964



**Figure 5 The Founders of the RDNA:
Top (L to R) David Fisher & Howard Cherniack,
Bottom (L to R) Norman Nelson & David Frangquist.
Taken c. 1961-1962.**

Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals

(By David Frangquist, 1966)
(Carleton and Berkeley Apocryphas)

BEING: a brief catalogue of the major quasi-metaphysical theological conclusions which may be abstracted from and by the application of the Reformed Druid point of view to questions of ultimate relevance (in outline form).

THE THREE PILLARS (or treasures, or paths, or baskets, or roots, or branches, or wondrous illuminations)

I. The Relentless Rebellion (threefold)

A. The categorical If

No Intellectually honest mind can long remain so termed unless it is willing to submit all things to rigorous examination, even the most sacred provinces. Blind faith is no faith; it is blindness.

B. The Principle of Non-Confirmation

Applying rigorous scrutiny to the world's religions, we find, especially in western form, universal claims to exclusiveness; yet none submits any more proof of its claim than an appeal to faith. Logically, therefore, all are equal.

C. The Principle of Non-Conformation

In the face of the insoluble problem of selecting the "one true faith" most people conform to one of two patterns:

1. The True Believer embraces the faith of his fathers wholeheartedly and unquestioningly, fearing to face the logical possibility (probability?) that he is wrong.

2. The Non-Believer rejects all faiths out of hand, fearing that he might prove himself a fool by choosing the wrong one.

Reformed Druids reject the necessity of conforming to either of these patterns based on fear. True spiritual growth exists only in the *Relentless Rebellion* against petrified norms.

II. The Paths of Paradox (also threefold)

A. The Ceremonial Syndrome

Man is incurably finite. He cannot conceive of spiritual activity except in terms of ritualistic hocus-pocus. But ritual must be carefully selected or it will independently acquire magical properties of its own. Ritual properly constitutes a springboard for the spirit only. Oak worship is ideal for this purpose (see also III).

B. The Primacy of Ambiguity

True spiritual growth consisting of personal effort and rebellion. Reformed Druidism must remain devoid of orthodoxy. All writings must be ambiguous and non-final (present dissertation included).

C. The Principle of Non-Confirmation (rears its ugly head again)

You'll get no pat answers here. There being no logical basis for the acceptance or denial of any faith, Reformed Druidism confirms nothing (including Reformed Druidism). You're welcome to, but you're on your own.

III. The Last Refuge (whadaya know?...threefold!)

A. The Noble Fivefold Formulation

1. The Nature of Life

Life is defined as the unity of the spiritual (Be'al) and the material (the Earth-Mother). Without the material the spiritual has no form; without the spiritual the material is dead.

2. And Man?

Man, as a living animal, ideally consists of both material and spiritual.

3. And Man?

Man is unique. This is because he has self-awareness. He passes from self-awareness through self-centeredness to self-importance, thence to self-isolation, resulting in self-misery.

4. Unity for All and All for Unity

Man's self-importance cuts him off from the life-giving benefits of unity with the spirit and Nature (the material). Druids sometimes call unity *Awareness*. It is the object of religion to restore unity; most concentrate on the direct attainment of spiritual unity, ignoring (or rejecting) the material.

5. Back to Nature

Druids (at least some of them) believe that a good approach is to first restore material unity. Having broken down part of the barrier around the self, the rest should then be easier. Hence, Druid Nature worship: the ideality of going to worship oaks.

B. The Basic Tenets

The Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism, which form the basis (believe it or not) for the preceding discussion, are found in the Constitution of the Reformed Druids, and in another form in the Book of the Law in *The Druid Chronicles (Reformed)*. They are the quintessences of Druidism, such that a person need accept nothing else and still become a Reformed Druid. They are here presented in their most concentrated form:

1. Nature is good!

And the second is like unto the first:

2. Nature is good!

C. The Last Refuge

It is simple to grind out these systems. It is the expected thing to do. Perhaps it is useful. It is meaningless!

It is simple to sit on the Hill of the Three Oaks and look at the pretty blue sky. That, too, can be meaningless!

It is not so simple to stand alone under the pretty blue sky and watch all your preconceived systems come tumbling down.

But when they come tumbling down, there is a refuge: in Nature. There one may find a clearing of the head, a freedom from stagnant forms, a beginning. (The End)

David Frangquist
6/6/66

The Discourse of Thomas the Fool

(By Thomas McCausland, 1970)

I Invocation

O Grannos, hallow this thy essence by thy renewing power and by thy way of many-yet-one paths. Cleanse us. Purify us. Remind us that this thy essence is also ours and that as thou art many-yet-one, so too are we. Show us thy All-penetrating wisdom, and prepare us to receive thee as fully as thou hast received us.

II Text

I am the wind which breathes upon the sea,
I am the wave of the ocean,
I am the murmur of the willows,
I am the ox of the seven combats,
I am the vulture upon the rocks,
I am a beam of the sun,
I am the fairest of plants,
I am a wild boar in valor,
I am a salmon in the water,
I am a lake in the plain,
I am a word of knowledge,
I am the point of the lance of battle,
I am the God who created in the head the fire:

Who is it who throws light into the meeting on the mountain?
Who announces the ages of the moon?
Who teaches the place where couches the sun?

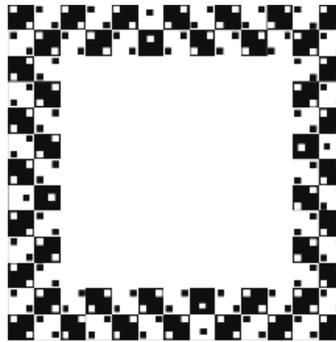
If not I-

III Discourse

1. Often it is that the Arch Druids do read this ancient mystery. It is indeed one of the greatest treasures we know for it came verily from the ancient Sage-Druids who pleased the earth in younger times. But who among you have verily heard this ancient mystery?
2. Oft it seems that these lines refer to the All-Mother, for she is truly all of these and more. But what is the mystery there? Not mystery but shining fact. No, the mystery is not the Mother. Nor is it Be'al. For this mystery is even more secret than He, though He knows and speaks it.
3. Verily, I am that mystery. Not the Mother, not Be'al, but I. How is it that I came to be all these things? I am the God who created in the head the fire! It is there. Look and understand! Who else could it be, if not I?
4. Now there may be some among you who would agree and would say that this was so, for ultimately Be'al and I are one. How deceived they are! While I am, Be'al is not, and there is no touching of these two. No, not oneness. For Be'al is not to have oneness with. Be'al is not! Understand this. It is only delusion which lends you to believe in Him and the Mother. Verily, a poor hoax it is!
5. Now listen carefully so you can understand. Be'al is not, for he is invented by man. He was invented to give man the freedom to relax in Man's creation. If Be'al is great, how

much greater is man, the creator of Be'al. Nothing more than the Highest spirit of man is Be'al. And though that seems most wondrous, it is but a poor hoax. Be'al is not great for He needs Existence and Non-Existence. He is All and Nothing. Can One be great and still be so dependent upon such limited realms? No. Be'al, though He is more than you or I can comprehend, is very powerless.

6. He who created the Universe cares not for All and Nothing. They are nothing to Him. He is so beyond that even all the Words of Knowledge said at one time would change Him not a drop. Be'al is merely the half-drop that almost changed.
7. Great it is to be one with Be'al, but to be one with Him is not great at all. *If not I.* Is the water great because it flows and trickles and dances, in other words, because it is water? No, water is not great: it is merely water. He is not great. I am not great. He and I are one. But hear the greatest mystery.
8. He is all of me, but I am not all of Him. And yet, by being merely a drop of Him, I am all of Him. Understand this!
9. Now you understand the Words of Power. Be the lake in the plain; be the ox and the boar; throw light upon the mountain. *If not I.*



The Wisdom of Thomas the Fool

(By Thomas McCausland, 1970)

Chapter the First

1. Listen, my brethren, and I will tell you the great secret of Druidism. This I tell in order to assure the pure transmission of Druidism for all time. Many of you are there who have the spirit of the Mother burning brightly inside of you and yet, lacking a priest, must let this fire die. Hear and understand. Here is the great Wisdom known to all the Druids of old. Here is the one wisdom you must grasp if you would stay in the bosom of the Mother forever!

Chapter the Second

1. The great secret of Druidism is this: All the powers of the Mother are yours if you but learn your True Name. Even if you are but of the First Order, no secret shall be hidden once you learn this great secret.
2. The way is hard. The Three Ways of Day and One of Night must be traveled. The Wisdom of the Waters of Life must be heard.
3. What are the Three Ways of Day? The Way of the rising sun; the Way of the setting sun; the Way of the sun at Zenith.
4. What is the wisdom of the Waters of Life? The Wisdom of ice; the Wisdom of steam; the Wisdom of water.
5. Yet it is not in the Three Ways of Day that your True Name dwells; nor in the Wisdom of the Waters of Life. Neither is your Name of the Mother or of Be'al. It is of them both and of them not at all. Your True Name is in the Way of Darkness. Yet it is not of darkness nor was it of darkness born nor shall it die of darkness. Though Be'al is born of darkness and dies in darkness, your True Name knows darkness not at all.
6. Your True Name will be heard upon the bosom of the Mother; yet She hears it not, for it is not Her Name. Your Name, when it is truly heard, will rock Be'al from his slumber and cause rain to fall in the center of a stone.
7. To hear your Name, hear the Mother. To hear your Name, hear Her not. To hear your Name, hear the Mother!
8. This is the most powerful secret of Be'al! It is the most powerful secret in all of the Realm of the Four Ways and the Seven Powers and the Thirteenfold Mystery.
9. It is the Word which makes of all ends a beginning.
10. Only this is necessary. Know your True Name! All else is but the dreams of sand.

Chapter the Third

1. But how do we know that True Names exist? Listen and understand!
2. When we consecrate the waters, we do not say, "O great and glorious Grove, thou of power deep rooted in the Mother; thou of power deep rooted in the Mother; thou of power sky rending; thou of power to block the sun and rain; consecrate these waters." Nor do we say, "O Healing waters, consecrate

this thyself by thy powers of All-pervading Wisdom." nor yet, "O power of the most secret essence of the vine, hallow this." nor even, "Mighty swirling Ocean, pounding the Mother, as mighty and as vast as even She is, hallow this drop of thee." We do not say, "O great light which rends the sky in storm, hallow this as thou dost hallow the rain by the great leveling fire." nor, "O greatest of the powers we see, Mighty Sun, hallow this which thou didst bring into being!" Nor do we say, "O gentle stream, by thy joyous power hallow this thy essence." nor even, "O great mysterious Life, hallow this, the essence of all life."³

3. Verily, all this is great Wisdom. And yet I tell you that this Wisdom consecrates not even the water of man's dreams.
4. If one but says "Dalon ap Landu" with the knowledge of the power of it, truly the whole Universe will be forever consecrated!
5. Understand the Thirteen-fold Mystery⁵ and then understand how much more powerful is the knowledge of your True Name than the knowledge of the Names of the Mother. Your Name will consecrate even Be'al!
6. Brethren, hear your Name! Listen every moment, for the wind and the waters and all that dwell upon the Mother speak all the Names that are. Only by continual vigilance will ye hear your Name when it is spoken.
7. Be'al knows your Name. The Mother knows your Name. The Patriarchs know your Name. And ye, with every breath speak your Name. Listen and understand. Your every breath speaks your Name. Great is this secret. I pay for the carrying of it with my very life. Hear and understand. Listen always, for the Mother will speak your Name a moment before it is expected. Only by constant vigilance will ye be prepared.

Chapter the Fourth

1. I pray that the Mother will act kindly towards one such as I, who must tell these lies to those who would truly seek her. The Wise will hear me not. The Dull will hear me not. Only those who vigil will hear me, and maybe even they will not hear. For the sake of purity I tell these lies. May the Mother forgive such a fool as I who would have men chasing the bile of trees.

This is my folly.
Thomas the Fool
August 25th, 1970
Peace to those who dwell in the Mother!



The Arch Epistle

(By Mike of D.C. Grove, 2004)

Chapter the First

1. Dear Brother Ian,
2. Thank you for your welcome e-mail on Friday the 13th, alleviating an otherwise thankfully uneventful day.....
8. Now that I'm done with my letters, I will continue with your letter.

Chapter the Second

1. I noted the question at the end of your missive, "How can I be a good Arch Druid?" I thought you already knew.
2. But, I feel like the Japanese monk who exhorted his disciple, "Strike me hard like a bell, that I may peal even louder in my reply."
3. You will indeed have more of a challenge organizing humans, as opposed to your ministrations to penguins and monkeys in your last few Grove attempts.
4. I caution you to be careful as the former are less forgiving and far more unruly, for they resemble cats when herded.
5. I feel a word to the wise on the matter of Arch Druids is enough, but in your case, a single letter should suffice.
6. As you mentioned, locked into every word of our language are associations and roots which give a hint as to what a word means and what we should do.
7. The word Arch Druid (or its alternative Arch Druid), doesn't appear in the dictionary, so I will instead concentrate on "arch."
8. As I attempt to define "arch", I must paraphrase Brother Irony that "Like a moth before a flame, the Druid is doggedly drawn towards their doom in definitions."
9. I also hesitated to write this as every bit of advice I will give here is often a painful reminder of a lesson learned by failure or missed opportunity.
10. Hopefully, you will avoid my mistakes and surpass my successes and find the path to greatness more well-lit and cleared of obstacles that trip or slow you.
11. Yet, so I must try to define the indefinable.

Chapter the Third

1. Literally, the prefix "arch" in Arch Druid is derived from Latin "archus" or Greek "Arkhi," meaning "chief, highest or most important." And much is hidden in that meaning.
2. In the Roman Church, there are Archdeacons, Archpriests, Archbishops who are the head of the deacons, priests or bishops in their domain. In this way, you are the chief of the Druids in your Grove.

3. You are high, in that you are raised by the election to hold much responsibility. No matter how high you go, do not forget those who support you.
4. You are most important, in that without an Arch Druid, the Grove cannot function well as we know it. However, beware of pride, for although the role is often necessary, you are not irreplaceable; and it were far better for a Grove to have no Arch Druid than a bad Arch Druid.

Chapter the Fourth

1. The most obvious origin of the arch is a bow, the tool from which the archer derives his occupation [L. Arcus], and you are indeed a tool of the Grove.
2. The bow directs immense power to the task of flinging objects; whose speed, distance and trajectory are uniquely determined by many combined factors: the degree to which the bow is flexed, the direction & strength of the winds, the skill of the archer, the angle fired, the whims of Gods, the laws of Physics, and most importantly; the strength, shape and material of the bow and arrows.
3. Take these elements into consideration when assisting fledgling [fletching?] Druids on their way, and do not quiver before the task, and so be of good aim and choose your targets well.

Chapter the Fifth

1. Some history about buildings and its relation to Druidism.
2. The ancient Greeks, although they used bows, did not significantly use the arch in their largest buildings, which relied on columns to support the dead weight of roofs vertically.
3. As a result, the space between columns had to be kept short, resulting in large building being filled with a forests of columns, choking out the interior space; but the columns could be shifted a little without endangering the building, which is important in an earth-quake zone.
4. The ancient Romans lacked the immense marble slabs of the Greeks, and used smaller materials like bricks and molded-concrete, so they adopted the arch and oval as their standard.
5. Roman architecture abounds with arches, bridges spanning unthinkable rivers, and domes providing more spacious and taller buildings at lower cost with less materials and difficulty.
6. But the graceful arch has many weaknesses in addition to its strengths; for if one stone in the arch should be removed the whole structure will collapse, and an arch requires a solid, immovable foundation, pulling the bases of support towards each other.
7. Using this analogy, an Arch Druid's authority rests on two foundations; first their wisdom and Awareness of Nature, and secondly the trust and goals of the membership which elected them. Without that, there is rubble and grumble.
8. But remember, of course, that we Druids are an outdoor people, for even the grandeur of the cathedral pales before the majestic canopy of an oak forest.
9. Indeed, our churches are without walls, roofs or boundaries, ever present in the world around and within us.

Chapter the Sixth

1. Arch also implies an attitude that is “mischievous or roguish,” as in an “arch glance.”
2. For though an Arch Druidcy is a serious undertaking, it need not be a dull or stuffy one.
3. Since our beginning, the RDNA has been a thorn in the side of many pretentious civil and secular authorities; and the Arch Druid has often been the wry mouthpiece of the Grove.
4. Verily, in those ventures, we are a bit like foxy outlaws, bound together by circumstances and camaraderie, on the fringes of the respectable mainstream of religions; without the laws or the easily recognizable traits that most large traditions have embraced. Mobile, clever and stinging in our forays of Guerilla Druidism.
5. Without our humor, impishness and joviality we would become dour and disapproving.
6. Without our rebellious nature, we would congeal into a ossified religion of superstitions and dogma.
7. It is a delicate balance, like riding a tiger, too much disorder and the group loses its focus or becomes frenetic; too much order and it is unable to adapt or adopt new practices or goals.
8. It is your job to steer the Grove towards its goals in this manner.

Chapter the Eighth

1. The term arch is also used to mean “principal or strongest,” as in archfoe, archenemy, archfiend, archangel, archrival, archconservative or archliberal.
2. This term implies a bit of extremism that discomforts me, for Druidism is about the moderate third way between the unlivable environment of the extremes.
3. Like it not, you are the role model for new Druids, and your virtues and vices will be noted and scrutinized; so act and speak with care in times of trouble and historic moments.

Chapter the Ninth

1. Finally, there is the term archetype, archive and archaic which have implications for Druidism, derived from Greek “Arkhi,” meaning “beginning” or “primordial.”
2. The Arch Druid is often the first Druid in an area, and the one who bears the seeds of wisdom, Awareness and traditions for founding a Grove, always in a unique blend.
3. Choose carefully, for the Grove will undoubtedly in the beginning mistakenly believe that all Druidism is in your mold; but you should always make them aware of alternatives, for one day they may have to steer a new course in uncharted waters without your assistance.
4. The Arch Druid must archive the actions and words of her Grove, either on paper or in her heart, so that they can be brought up again for review and amendment. To know a Grove’s future, you must know and understand its past.
5. The Arch Druid must also avoid the deadening hand of archaic tradition, for if the origin of customs becomes too

difficult to recognize or justify, then they must be dropped to better utilize the time and effort of the Grove’s members.

6. Thus, by carefully selecting, creating, collecting and explaining the terms and practices of Druidry to incoming members, instead of relying on blind faith, you will soon realize how many and which customs and traditions can be best borne and applied by the Grove.

Chapter the Ninth

1. And so Brother Ian, these are my rambling thoughts on running a Grove as an Arch Druid.
2. I may have more advice on the topic later, but this should be enough to get started.
3. You need not do it all, for you will often rely on the other Druids in your Grove, nor need you be the only Arch Druid.
4. I hopefully can live up to my own advice, which I’m far better at giving than following.
5. Finally, I must add that it is in service to others that we best serve ourselves, for that is why we are called to Arch Druidry, and we will often have to choose the more difficult course if we are to succeed.
6. I wish you the best of luck in your endeavors.
7. Write more often, even if things go well.

Yours in the Mother,
Mike the Fool
Day 20 of Foghamhar, Year XLII of the Reform
August 20th, 2004 c.e.



Simple Table of Contents of A Reformed Druid Anthology 2

40 years of advice and ideas from past Reformed Druids.
ARDA 2 is divided in three separate volumes (900 pages each):

The Main Volume Parts 0-5, 7-10
The Green Books Part 6 (with 12 sub-sections)
Magazine Volume Parts 11-14

*Naturally, you don't have to read any of this, or even agree with it,
but it is interesting reading, nonetheless*

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Magazine Conclusion -M762

Part Twelve: Conclusion -M763

Part Thirteen: "Gatorr, Fighting Rabbit" DVD -M765

Part Fourteen: CD-ROMS of ARDA files. -M771

Other Non-RDNA Resources

You need not look solely within the RDNA and to the wild undisciplined lessons of Nature for inspiration. Many other groups have blazed trails into the uncertain worlds that we are exploring. ADF, Keltria & OBOD have seminary or study programs. Rather than re-inventing the wheel in all matters, perhaps you can borrow a few lessons from them and the following groups.

Universal Life Church (ULC)

This group founded in the 1950s or 1960s has a free mail-in application to be ordained a minister in a eclectic not-necessarily-Christian open religion. They affirm that you should only do what is right. That's it. As a result they have figured out all the registration rules for all 50 states and the district of DC. Rather than trying to figure out the incorporation rules for a tax-exempt organization, follow their simple church rules and get it done quickly and professionally. Other services and ancillary training programs are optional for minor fees.

Home page is <http://www.ulc.net/>

Covenant of the Universal Unitarian Pagans (CUUPS)

We all know how vague and ecumenical the Unitarians Universalists are. This is a sub-set of the UUs, devoted primarily to increasing interaction among UU's more pagan-flavored members. Like ULC, it is an option for those seeking seminary training and setting up a state recognized church.

Home Page is <http://www.cuups.org/>

Cherry Hill Seminary of Vermont

Even if you are registered as a priest for various ministerial practices, and have a tax-exempt church; perhaps you'd like to have more pagan-oriented training to perform your functions better? That's what Cherry Hill does, and you can either attend condensed coursework in person, or take several courses on-line for reasonable tuition fees.

Homepage is <http://www.cherryhillseminary.org/index.html>

The Witch's Voice (Witchvox)

This is one of the largest and wide-ranging on-line websites for Neo-pagans and Wiccans in the world since 1997. Not all Reformed Druids are pagan, but the networking, informative essays, news reports, links are quite valuable here. It is very professionally run and frequently updated.

Homepage is <http://www.witchvox.com/>

"Pagan-Clergy" Conference

This group (like RDNAtalk) is on www.yahogroups.com and has 200+ clergy members from a wide variety of pagan traditions. It is feast or famine here with regards to the frequency of postings. What is most useful are the resources they have collected, opinions they can provide on training, and it gives one a good place to check the uncoded standards of the pagan community once in a while on an issue bothering you.

Your Neighborhood Minister, Priest, Mullah, Rabbi

Okay, so some of them might be hesitant to talk with a Druid, but most clergy of mainstream religions have had both a great deal of graduate school training and a lot of hands-on experience dealing with congregations. Many of the more tolerant folk belong to "inter-faith" or ecumenical local councils.

Section Six:

Selections from the Green Books

During services, Reformed Druids often introduce a few readings they've come across in recent weeks that are thought provoking and have a simple message. They then meditate for a few moments on what they think about it.

I'm a lover of parables and stories. Here's a tiny selection of some ten such past collections of offered materials, that we call, "the Green Books". I feel every Druid should discover new sources for themselves and build their own set over time and share with their friends.

The Original 1966 Introduction of Green Book #1

Those who join the Reformed Druids are, in one sense or another, religious rebels. They are usually fed up with the hypocrisies and inadequacies of the institutionalized churches. They seek a satyric outlet, and they find it in Druidism. But they are seldom anti-religious. On the contrary, they often feel that there is in fact some truth to be found in religion, and this belief is affirmed in the Basic Tenets. A common complaint among Druids is that the truth has been obscured because they have been forced, more or less against their will, into various particular religious molds. They seek to be freed in order to freely seek, and to make independent judgments on what passes for religious truth.

Druidism, as an institution, must remain independent. It can never hope to profess absolute truth; for when it does, it then will become no better than the fossilized institutions from which its members have fled. But even while it systematically shuns dogmatism, it can, and must still lead. It must provide the opportunity for discovery, which many of its members have never had. It must, in short, provide in its written meditations a taste of the writings of the world's great religions, in the hope that this taste will stimulate a wider search for knowledge and wisdom in the quest for religious truth.

As Arch-Druid, you are charged with preparing meditations, which will prove meaningful to the congregation. In order to do this, you must choose selections from the Buddhists, the Hindus, the Taoists, the Muslims, and many others, as well as from the Bible. You must provide a wide variety in order to give truth a chance. The best method is to study widely yourself. But this can be too time-consuming. I therefore strongly urge you to purchase, for your own edification, an excellent and useful collection: Viking Portable #5, Henry Ballou's World Bible. It is available in paper for less than \$2.00, or in hardcover for slightly more. The selections are short and illuminating, and the editor exhibits a bias, which can almost be called Druidic. It makes a good beginning.

For those Arch-Druids who are lazier still, or who suddenly find themselves in desperate need of a meditation at the last minute, I offer the following collection. It is hoped that the collection, although short, is representative and especially useful for Reformed Druids.

-David Frangquist 1966

Midwinter

When the wind blows cold
on the Hill of Three Oaks
the hearth fire is warm.

-Richard Smiley, 1964

The Drynemetum Press



Green Book One Excerpts:

Sayings of the Hindus:

(From the works of Sri Ramakrishna)

People partition off their lands by means of boundaries, but no one can partition off the all-embracing sky overhead. The indivisible sky surrounds all and includes all. So common man in ignorance says, "My religion is the only one, my religion is the best." But when his heart is illumined by true knowledge, he knows that above all these wars of sects and sectarians presides the one indivisible, eternal, all-knowing bliss.

As a mother, in nursing her sick children, gives rice and curry to one, and sago arrowroot to another, and bread and butter to a third, so the Lord has laid out different paths for different men suitable to their natures.

Dispute not. As you rest firmly on your own faith and opinion, allow others also the equal liberty to stand by their own faiths and opinions. By mere disputation you will never succeed in convincing another of his error. When the grace of God descends on him, each one will understand his own mistakes.

So long as the bee is outside the petals of the lily, and has not tasted the sweetness of its honey, it hovers round the flower emitting its buzzing sound; but when it is inside the flower, it noiselessly drink its nectar. So long as a man quarrels and disputes about doctrines and dogmas, he has not tasted the nectar of true faith; when he has tasted it, he becomes quiet and full of peace.

A man after fourteen year's penance in a solitary forest obtained at last the power of walking on water. Overjoyed at this, he went to his Guru and said, "Master, master, I have acquired the power of walking on water." The master rebukingly replied, "Fie, O child! Is this the result of thy fourteen years' labours? Verily thou has obtained only that which is worth a penny; for what thou hast accomplished after fourteen years' arduous labour ordinary men do by paying a penny to the boatman."

Selections from:

Robert O. Ballou. *World Bible*. New York, The Viking Press, 1944. p. 83, 88.

Sayings of the Zen Masters:

(Trading Dialogue for Lodging)

Providing he make and wins an argument about Buddhism with those who live there, any wandering monk can remain in a Zen temple. If he is defeated, he has to move on.

In a temple in the northern part of Japan two brother monks were dwelling together. The elder one was learned, but the younger one was stupid and had but one eye.

A wandering monk came and asked for lodging, properly challenging them to a debate about the sublime teaching. The elder brother, tired that day from much studying, told the younger one to take his place. "Go and request the dialogue in silence," he cautioned.

So the young monk and the stranger went to the shrine and sat down.

Shortly afterwards the traveler rose and went in to the elder brother and said: "Your young brother is a wonderful fellow. He defeated me."

"Relate the dialogue to me," said the elder one.

"Well," explained the traveler, "first I held up one finger, representing Buddha, the enlightened one. So he held up two fingers, signifying Buddha and his teaching. I held up three fingers, representing Buddha, his teaching, and his followers, living the harmonious life. Then he shook his clenched fist in my face, indicating that all three come from one realization. Thus he won and so I have no right to remain here." With this, the traveler left.

"Where is that fellow?" asked the younger one, running in to his elder brother.

"I understand you won the debate."

"Won nothing. I'm going to beat him up."

"Tell me the subject of the debate," asked the elder one.

"Why, the minute he saw me he held up one finger, insulting me by insinuating that I have only one eye. Since he was a stranger I thought I would be polite to him, so I held up two fingers, congratulating him that he has two eyes. Then the impolite wretch held up three fingers, suggesting that between us we have only three eyes. So I got mad and started to punch him, but he ran out and that ended it!"

Selections from:

Paul Reps, ed. *Zen Flesh, Zen Bones*. Garden City, Doubleday Anchor (A233), 1961. pp. 92, 28.

(I Corinthians 13)

If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing. Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child; now I am become a man, I have put away childish things. For now we see in a mirror darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know fully even as also I was fully known. But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three: and the greatest of these is love.

Sayings of the Psychologists: Cathedrals & Robes

In the traditional psychologies, one group may find that a certain technique works well in a given situation. Its members may tend to apply it in situations where it is inappropriate, or with people for whom it is inappropriate. Because the technique works for them, they come to believe that it ought to work for everyone at all times. The technique becomes the end, and may become an obsession. Those who are involved in using such a technique, be it a particular meditation technique or a certain breathing exercise, can become fixated and restricted to what the technique has to offer. The adherents may set up schools to teach the "sacred" ritual, forgetting that any technique has its relevance only for a certain community at a certain time. Just as can happen with any scientific technique which is overextended or which persists for too long, the original application and intent of the esoteric technique may become lost, although the surface appearance of the enterprise is well-maintained. Religions construct cathedrals and design robes, just as scientists develop elaborate equipment and professional journals, but all too often the enterprise may become limited to a propagation of the means, with the original end, the desired objective, forgotten.

Selection from:

Robert E. Ornstein. *The Psychology of Consciousness*. New York, The Viking Press, 1972. pp. 97-98.

Green Book Two Excerpts

King Cormac's Advice on Leadership

Be not too wise, not too foolish,
be not too conceited, nor too diffident,
be not too haughty, nor too humble,
be not too talkative, nor too silent
be not too hard, nor too feeble.

for:

If you be too wise, one will expect too much of you;
if you be too foolish, you will be deceived;
if you be too conceited, you will be thought vexatious;
if you be too humble, you will be without honor;
if you be too talkative, you will not be heeded;
if you be too silent, you will not be regarded;
if you be too hard, you will be broken;
if you be too feeble, you will be crushed.

"It is through these habits," adds Cormac,
"That the young become old and kingly warriors."

Native Americans: Silent Vigils

In my opinion, it was chiefly owing to their deep contemplation in their silent retreats in the days of youth that the old Indian orators acquired the habit of carefully arranging their thoughts.

They listened to the warbling of birds and noted the grandeur and the beauties of the forest. The majestic clouds, which appear like mountains of granite floating in the air, the golden tints of a summer evening sky, and all the changes of nature, possessed a mysterious significance.

All this combined to furnish ample matter for reflection to the contemplating youth.

-Francis Assikinack (Blackbird) Ottawa

African Proverbs: On Leadership

People count what they are refused, not what they are given.

The ears of the leader are like a strainer; there are more than a thousand openings to them.

Power must be handled in the manner of holding an egg in the hand: if you hold it too firmly it breaks; if you hold it too loosely it drops.

The hen knows when it is dawn but she leaves the crowing to the cock.

Aesop's Proverbs: Frogs and a King

The Frogs were living as happy as could be in a marshy swamp that just suited them; they went splashing about caring for nobody and nobody troubling with them. But some of them thought that this was not right, that they should have a king and a proper constitution, so they determined to send up a petition to Jove to give them what they wanted. "Mighty Jove," they cried, "send unto us a king that will rule over us and keep us in order." Jove laughed at their croaking, and threw down into the swamp a huge Log, which came down -kerplash!- into the swamp.

The Frogs were frightened out of their lives by the commotion made in their midst, and all rushed to the bank to look at the horrible monster; but after a time, seeing that it did not move, one or two of the boldest of them ventured out towards the Log, and even dared to touch it; still it did not move. Then the greatest hero of the Frogs jumped upon the Log and commenced dancing up and down upon it, thereupon all the Frogs came and did the same; and for some time the Frogs went about their business every day without taking the slightest notice of their new King Log lying in their midst. But this did not suit them, so they sent another petition to Jove, and said to him: "We want a real king; one that will really rule over us." Now this made Jove angry, so he sent among them a big Stork that soon set to work gobbling them all up. Then the Frogs repented when too late.

Better no rule than cruel rule.

Green Book Three Excerpts

Thoughts from Confucius

The Master said, "Yu, have you heard about the six qualities and the six attendant faults?" "No." "Be seated and I shall tell you. To love benevolence without loving learning is liable to lead to foolishness. To love cleverness without loving learning is liable to lead to deviation from the right path. To love trustworthiness in word without loving learning is liable to lead to harmful behaviour. To love forthrightness without loving learning is liable to lead to intolerance. To love courage without loving learning is liable to lead to insubordination. To love unbending strength without loving learning is liable to lead to indiscipline." (XVII:8)

The Master said, "What the gentleman seeks, he seeks within himself; what the small man seeks, he seeks in others." (XV:21)

Japanese Haiku Translated

Walk on deliberately
And you'll surely see the world
Beyond the thousand miles,
Even if you walk
As slow as a cow. 114.

Everyone admires
Beautiful flowers in bloom,
But the ones who know
Visit them
After they've fallen. 284

What shall I leave as
A keepsake after I die?
In spring, flowers;
Summer, cuckoos;
Fall, red maple leaves;
Winter, snow. 169.

The Cork, The Tao of Pooh pg. 88

The Wu Wei principle underlying Tai Chi Ch'uan can be understood by striking at a piece of cork floating in water. The harder you hit it, the more it yields; the more it yields, the harder it bounces back. Without expending energy, the cork can easily wear you out. So, Wu Wei overcomes force by neutralizing its power, rather than by adding to the conflict. With other approaches, you may fight fire with fire, but with Wu Wei you fight fire with water.

Chinese Thoughts: The Sacred Tortoise

Once, when Chuang Tzu was fishing in the P'u River, the kind of Ch'u sent two officials to go and announce to him: "I would like to trouble you with the administration of my realm."

Chuang Tzu held on to the fishing pole and, without turning his head, said, "I have heard that there is a sacred tortoise in Ch'u that has been dead for three thousand years. The king keeps it wrapped in cloth and boxed, and stores it in the ancestral temple. Now would you this tortoise rather be dead and have its bone left

behind and honored? Or would it rather be alive and dragging its tail in the mud?"

It would rather be alive and dragging its tail in the mud," said the two officials.

Chuang Tzu said, "Go away! I'll drag my tail in the mud!"

The Island with Two Churches

Collected by Sam Adams, o.d.a.l., gr., be.

A Welshman was shipwrecked upon a deserted island for twenty years before a rescue party finally discovered him. The Welshman was delighted at his rescue, but wished to show his rescuers all the work that he had done. He had missed civilization greatly, so he had cut down several trees in order to build a village. There was a bank, a theatre, a pub, a hotel, a jail and two churches. When the rescuers saw the two churches they asked him why he had built two churches.

He smugly replied, "You see the one on the left? That's the one I don't go to!"

Sufi Thoughts: The Mirror

A Fool was walking down a road when he saw a valuable silver mirror lying in the road. He picked up the mirror and saw his reflection. Immediately he placed the mirror back on the road and apologized, "I'm sorry, I didn't know that the mirror belonged to you!"

Sufi Thoughts: Is It Me?

Nasrudin went into a bank with a cheque to cash.
"Can you identify yourself?" asked the clerk.
Nasrudin took out a mirror and peered into it.
"Yes, that's me all right," he said.

Sufi Thoughts: Not a Good pupil

One day Mulla Nasrudin found a tortoise. He tied it to his belt and continued his work in the fields. The tortoise started to struggle. The Mulla held it up and asked:

"What's the matter, don't you want to learn how to plough?"

Sufi Thoughts: Looking for Keys

Someone saw Nasrudin searching for something on the sidewalk.

"What have you lost, Mulla?" he asked. "My key," said the Mulla. So they both went down on their knees and looked for it.

After a time the other man asked: "Where exactly did you drop it?"

"In my house."

"Then why are you looking here?"

"There is more light out here than inside my own house."

Ethnic Quotations: On Leadership

90 *All essays and nearly all RDNA documents in the UWP are un-official and represent purely the opinions of their authors.*

Even a fool can govern if nothing happens. -German
 If you want to know a man, give him authority. -Montenegrin
 The tyrant is only a slave turned inside out. -Egyptian
 The five fingers are not equal. -Turkish
 To alter and to make better are two different things; much has been altered but little has been made better in the world. -German
 The ditch is the master of the field. -Finnish
 Honors change manners. -Latin
 Shadows follow those who walk in the sun. -German
 Do not blame what you permit. -Latin
 Heroism consists in hanging on one minute longer. -Norwegian

Everyone who is successful must have dreamed of something. -Maricopa
 The one who tells the stories rules the world. -Hopi
 Force, no matter how concealed, begets resistance. -Lakota
 When you see a rattlesnake poised to strike, strike first. -Navaho
 Never part from the Chief's path, no matter how short or beautiful the byway may be. -Seneca
 A good chief gives, he does not take. -Mohawk
 Before you choose a counselor, watch him with his neighbor's children. -Sioux
 He who would do great things should not attempt them all alone. -Seneca
 You already possess everything necessary to become great. -Crow

Green Book Four Excerpts

Earth Teach me to Remember (Ute tribe, North America)

Earth teach me stillness
 as the grasses are stilled at morning light.
 Earth teach me suffering
 as old stones suffer with memory.
 Earth teach me humility
 as blossoms are humble with beginning.
 Earth teach me caring
 as the mother who secures her young.
 Earth teach me courage
 as the tree which stands all alone.
 Earth teach me limitation
 as the ant which crawls on the ground.
 Earth teach me freedom
 as the eagle which soars in the sky.
 Earth teach me resignation
 as the leaves which die in the fall.
 Earth teach me regeneration
 as the seed which rises in the spring.
 Earth teach me to forget myself
 as melted snow forgets its life.
 Earth teach me to remember kindness
 as dry fields weep with rain.

Native American Quotes on Leadership

I seek strength, not to be greater than my brother, but to fight my greatest enemy-myself. -Unknown
 Who serves his fellows is greatest of all. -Dakota.
 Don't walk behind me; I may not lead. Don't walk in front of me; I may not follow. Walk beside me that we may be as one. -Ute
 The greatest strength is gentleness. -Iroquois
 Show respect for all men, but Grovel to none. -Shawnee
 Do not only point out the way, but lead the way. -Sioux
 In twenty-four hours, a louse can become a patriarch. -Seneca

More Aesop: Springtime & Wintertime

Winter scoffed tauntingly at Spring. 'When you appear,' he said, 'no one stays still a moment longer. Some are off to meadows or woods: they must needs be picking lilies and other flowers, twiddling rose round their fingers to examine them, or sticking them in their hair. Other go on board ship and cross the wide ocean, maybe, to visit men of other lands; and not a man troubles himself anymore about gales or downpours of rain. Now I am like a rule or dictator. I bid men look not up to the sky but down to the earth with fear and trembling, and sometime they have to resign themselves to staying indoors all day.' 'Yes,' replied Spring, 'and therefore men would gladly be rid of you. But with me it is different. they think my name very lovely - yes, by Zeus, the loveliest name of all names. When I am absent they cherish my memory, and when I reappear they are full of rejoicing.'

Women's Quotes: On Leadership

None who have always been free can understand the terrible fascinating power of the hope of freedom to those who are not free. -Pearl S. Buck
 The real menace in dealing with a five-year old is that in no time at all you begin to sound like a five-year old. -Jean Kerr
 The feeble tremble before opinion, the foolish defy it, the wise judge it, the skillful direct it. -Jeanne de la Platiere
 There is no king who has not a slave among his ancestors, and no slave who has not had a king among his. -Helen Keller
 If I had to name one quality as the genius of patriarchy, it would be compartmentalization, the capacity for institutionalizing disconnection. Intellect severed from emotion. Thought separated from action. Science split from art. The earth itself divided; national borders. Human beings categorized: by sex, age, race, ethnicity, sexual preference, height, weight, class, religion, physical ability, ad nauseam. The person isolated from the political. Sex divorced from love. The material ruptured from the spiritual. Law detached from justice. Vision disassociated from reality. -Robin Morgan
 There is nothing in the universe that I fear, but that I shall not know all my duty, or shall fail to do it. -Mary Lyon

The first duty of a human being is to assume the right relationship to society, more briefly, to find your real job, and do it. -Charlotte Perkins Gilman

Don't identify too strongly with your work. Stay fluid behind those black and white words. They are not you. They were a great moment going through you. A moment you were awake enough to write down and capture. -Natalie Goldberg

Failing to plan is a plan to fail. -Effie Jones

I fell strongly that I have a responsibility to all the sources that I am: to all past and future ancestors, to my home country, to all places that I touch down on, and that are myself, to all voices, all women, all of my tribe, all people, all earth, and beyond that to all beginnings and endings. -Joy Harjo

Way of Sufi Muslims:

The Three Candidates

Three men made their way to the circle of a Sufi, seeking admission to his teachings.

One of them almost at once detached himself, angered by the erratic behavior of the master.

The second was told by another disciple (on the master's instructions) that the sage was a fraud. He withdrew very soon afterwards.

The Third was allowed to talk, but was offered no teaching for so long that he lost interest and left the circle.

When they had all gone away, the teacher instructed his circle thus:

"The first man was an illustration of the principle: "Do not judge fundamental things by sight." The second was an illustration of the injunction: "Do not judge things of deep importance by hearing." The third was an example of the dictum: "Never judge by speech, or the lack of it."

Asked by a disciple why the applicants could not have been instructed in this matter, the sage retorted: 'I am here to give higher knowledge; not to teach what people pretend that they already know at their mothers' knees.'

Way of Sufi: Cherished Notions

Sadik Hamzawi was asked:

'How do you come to succeed, by his own wish, the sage of Samarkand, when you were only a servant in his house?'

He said: 'He taught me what he wanted to teach me, and I learned it. He said once: "I cannot teach the others, the disciples, to the same degree, because they want to ask the questions, they demand the meetings, they impose the framework, they therefore only teach themselves what they already know."

I said to him: "Teach me what you can and tell me how to learn." This is how I became his successor. People have cherished notions about how teaching and learning should take place. They cannot have the notions and also the learning.'

Way of Sufi: Eat No Stones

A hunter, walking through some woods, came upon a notice. He read the words: "Stone Eating is Forbidden."

His curiosity was stimulated, and he followed a track which led past the sign until he came to a cave at the entrance to which a Sufi was sitting.

The Sufi said to him: 'The answer to your question is that you have never seen a notice prohibiting the eating of stones because there is no need for one. Not to eat stones may be called a common habit. Only when the human being is able similarly to avoid other habits, even more destructive than eating stones, will he be able to get beyond his present pitiful state.'

Koranic Advice to the Vigiler

O you wrapped up in your raiment!
Keep vigil the night long, save a little-
A half thereof, or abate a little thereof
Or add thereto and chant the Qur'an in measure,
For We shall charge you with a word of weight.
Lo! The vigil of the night is when impression is more keen and speech more certain.
Lo! You have by day a chain of business.
So remember the name of your Lord and devote yourself with complete devotion.
-Qur'an 73.1-8

Two Jewish Stories

A group of rabbis were gathered at a celebration. They began to discuss their well-known rabbinical ancestors. Rabbi Yechiel had to say, "I'm the first eminent ancestor in my family." The collected rabbis were very surprised to hear this comment.

The conversation naturally turned to the Torah. Each rabbi began to explain a text by using the teachings and sayings of one of his rabbinical ancestors. Finally it was time for Rabbi Yechiel to speak. He got up and said, "My father was a simple baker. His teaching was that only fresh bread tastes good, and so I should avoid stale bread. This is also true of learning."

-Yechiel of Ostrowce 1851-1928, Rabbi & Scholar

King David went to the court jeweler. He told the jeweler to make him a ring and to inscribe on it some statement that would temper excessive delight in an hour of triumph, but also lift him from despair in an hour of loss. The jeweler thought long and hard about what kind of statement should be inscribed. But he was perplexed; he could not find suitable words.

Solomon finally offered a suggestion: "Inscribe on the ring the words Gam Zeh Ya-avor - This, too, shall pass."

-David reigned 1010-970 B.C.E., Second king of Israel

Jewish Thoughts: On One Foot

A stranger came to the house of Shammai. Shammai greeted the stranger and asked what he wanted. The stranger said that he wanted to learn the whole of the Torah while he stood on one foot. Shammai immediately saw that the stranger wished to make fun of him. He became angry and told the stranger to go away.

The stranger then went to the house of Hillel. Hillel greeted him and asked what he wanted. The stranger repeated his jeering request to be taught the whole of the Torah while standing on one foot. Hillel also saw that the stranger was mocking him, but Hillel did not become angry. Instead, Hillel said that he would teach the stranger as was wished.

Hillel began the lesson. "What is hateful to you do not do to your neighbor."

The stranger waited for more. Finally he asked, "Is that all the Torah?"

"Yes," said Hillel. "That is the foundation. All the rest is commentary. Go and study."

The stranger said, "Thank you Hillel. If that is the foundation, I will study all the Torah."

-Hillel first cent B.C.E. - first cent C.E., Famous scholar

Christian Thoughts: Serenity Prayer

God grant me

the serenity to accept the things I cannot change

the courage to change the things I can and

the wisdom to know the difference.

-Reinhold Niebuhr 1892-1971, Protestant theologian

Jainist Thoughts:

What is Ritual and Religion?

Many people put great emphasis on rites and rituals. Because of this, some people think the religion is the thing of past. It is waste of time. Religion is rigid and orthodox. Religion represents narrow-mindedness. Science has progressed beyond religion. Some people are worshipping. Some are reciting mantra. Some are moving beads on a mala (rosary.) Some are singing religious songs. Some are visiting religious places like Palitana. Some are asking for rewards from god. Some want to improve their fate. Some are praying to go to heaven. Many activities like these are practiced on the name of religion. Is this really the religion? Answer is no if this is nothing more to it. Answer is yes if there is more to it.

Jainist Thoughts: Truth & Knowledge?

Do not live to know, know to live. Knowledge is not the religion, practice is the religion. Good conduct is the religion. In our conduct we should look at happiness and unhappiness with equanimity. We should believe in possibilities. Even opposing views can be parts of one truth. Accept co-existence with others. Look at the good side of others. The religion is for self-improvement not for improving others. If each individual improves, the society, nation and world will automatically improve.

Japanese Buddhism: Parable of the Raft

"O monks, a man is on a journey. He comes to a vast stretch of water. On this side the shore is dangerous, but on the other it is safe and without danger. No boat goes to the other shore which is safe and without danger, nor is there any bridge for crossing over. Then that man gathers grass, wood, branches, and leaves and makes a raft, and with the help of that raft crosses over safely to the other side, exerting himself with his hands and feet. Having safely crossed over and gotten to the other side, he thinks, 'This raft was of great help to me. With its aid I have crossed safely over to this side, exerting myself with my hands and feet. It would be good if I carry this raft on my head or on my back whenever I go.'

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"What do you think, O monks, if he acted in this way would that man be acting properly with regard to the raft?"

"No, sir."

"In which way, then, would he be acting properly with regard to the raft? Having crossed and gone over to the other side, suppose that man should think, 'It would be good if I beached this raft on the shore, or moored it and left it afloat, and then went on my way wherever it may be.' Acting in this way would that man act properly with regard to the raft."

"In the same manner, O monks, I have taught a doctrine similar to a raft- it is for crossing over, and not for carrying. You who understand that the teaching is similar to a raft, should give up attachment to even the good Dharma; how much more then should you give up evil things."

-Majjhima Nikaya i.134-135

Green Book Five Excerpts

Monkey Business: The Flute Player

Whenever King Xuan of Qi had musicians playing the yu, a wind instrument with reed, he will have three hundred of them playing together. Knowing this, a student from Nanguo applied for a job. The king accepted and paid him the same salary as the others.

After the death of King Xuan, King Min became the ruler of Qi. He liked to have the musicians playing solo. The student from Nanguo fled.

-Han Fei Zi

What is the moral of this story? One way to weed out the incompetent is to measure each individually.

Monkey Business: The Garden Keeper

A priest was in charge of the garden within a famous Zen temple. He had been given the job because he loved the flowers, shrubs, and trees. Next to the temple there was another, smaller temple where there lived a very old Zen master. One day, when the priest was expecting some special guests, he took extra care in tending to the garden. He pulled the weeds, trimmed the shrubs, combed the moss, and spent a long time meticulously raking up and carefully arranging all the dry autumn leaves. As he worked, the old master watched him with interest from across the wall that separated the temples.

When he had finished, the priest stood back to admire his work. "Isn't it beautiful," he called out to the old master. "Yes," replied the old man, "but there is something missing. Help me over this wall and I'll put it right for you."

After hesitating, the priest lifted the old fellow over and set him down. Slowly, the master walked to the tree near the center of the garden, grabbed it by the trunk, and shook it. Leaves showered down all over the garden.

"There," said the old man, "you can put me back now."

Sufi Jokes: Watering the Plants

Nasrudin used to water his plants daily. He would bring the container near the plants and pour from it. But no water would come out. But he kept pouring one by one lost in his own world.

His close neighbor who was watching this for quite some days came to him and asked, "Excuse me, Nasrudin, may I ask you something?"

Nasrudin smiled, "Sure"

Neighbor, "You are pouring water to these plants everyday but I don't see water coming out from the container. What is the matter?"

Nasrudin again smiled, "No need of water. What do you think these plants are? They are all plastic."

The neighbor (even more confused): "For god's sake, tell me then why is there any need of pretending to put water in these plastic plants?"

Nasrudin laughed: "So that the neighbors would not think these are plastic plants. It is just between you and me. If I don't pretend to water them regularly, they might find out these are not real, after all."

Sufi Jokes: 100 Silver Coins

Nasruddin opened a booth at the fair with a sign above it: "Two Questions On Any Subject Answered For Only 100 Silver Coins."

A man who had two very urgent questions handed over his money, saying: "A hundred silver coins is rather expensive for two questions, isn't it?"

"Yes," said Nasruddin, "and the next question, please?"

Wisdom of the Internet:

The Talking Clock

While proudly showing off his new apartment to friends, a college student led the way into the den.

"What is the big brass gong and hammer for?" one of his friends asked.

"That is the talking clock," the student replied.

"How's it work?" the friend asked.

"Watch," the kid says, then proceeds to give the gong an ear shattering pound with the hammer.

Suddenly someone screams from the other side of the wall, "*Knock it off, you ass! It's two am!*"

Internet: The Pit

A man fell into a pit and couldn't get himself out.

A subjective person came along and said, "I feel for you down there."

An objective person came along and said, "It's logical that someone would fall down there."

A Christian Scientist came along and said, "You only think you're in the pit."

Confucius said, "If you would have listened to me you wouldn't be in that pit."

Buddha said, "Your pit is only a state of mind."

A realist said, "That's a pit."

A scientist calculated the pressure necessary, pounds and square inches, to get him out of the pit.

A geologist told him to appreciate and study the rock strata.

An evolutionist said, "You are a rejected mutant destined to be removed from the evolutionary cycle, in other words he is going to die in the pit so he can't produce any more pit falling offspring."

The game warden said, "Did you have a permit to dig that pit?"

A professor lectured him on elementary principles of the pit.

A self-pitying person said, "You haven't seen anything until you've seen my pit."

An optimist said, "Things could get worse."

A pessimist said, "Things are going to get worse."

A friend saw the man in the pit, took him by the hand and lifted him out.

Falling Hazelnuts: Cats in the Corner

From Alyx in CO

There was a master in a monastery that had about thirty disciples. They used to conduct meditation, prayer, and other spiritual exercises. The master loved cats, and therefore had a cat in his monastery. During meditation, the cat would run around disturbing the meditation. The disciples complained to the master, so the master tied the cat in the corner of the meditation hall during meditation time, in order that it would not cause a disturbance.

Thus, things went on. During meditation, the cat would be tied in the corner, while at other times it was free to roam. Several years later the master died, but the cat remained, and the disciples continued to tie the cat in the corner during meditation.

Eventually, the disciples changed; the new disciples did not know why there was a cat inside the hall during meditation, but they nevertheless continued to tie it in the corner at the appropriate time. And when in time the cat died, they went and bought a new one, and tied that one in the corner during meditation time, too.

As time went by the group grew and founded new monasteries. The new master, though he did not know the origin of the cat in the corner, said that it helped the meditation and therefore declared, "Let us have a cat tied in the corner during meditation time in all our monasteries." So in all of their monasteries, there was a cat tied in the corner during meditation time.

Soon many learned treatises were being written about the spiritual importance of tying a cat in the corner during meditation. Some disciples even wrote that it was impossible to meditate properly without the cat.

And this is how Theology and the Philosophy of Religion are created.

Falling Hazelnuts: Druids & the Stars

An old Druid and his student are camping on a mountain, set up their tent, and are asleep. Some hours later, The Druid wakes this faithful friend. "Look up at the sky and tell me what you see."

The student replies, "I see millions of stars."

"What does that tell you?" asks the Druid.

The student ponders for a minute. "Astronomically speaking, it tells me that there are millions of galaxies and potentially billions of planets. Astrologically, it tells me that Saturn is in Leo. Time wise, it appears to be approximately a quarter past three. Theologically, it's evident the Gods are all powerful and we are

small and insignificant. Meteorologically, it seems we will have a beautiful day tomorrow. What does it tell you, teacher?"

The Druid is silent for a moment, then speaks. "You idiot, it means someone has stolen our tent!"

Internet: The Whole World Stinks

Wise men and philosophers throughout the ages have disagreed on many things, but many are in unanimous agreement on one point: "We become what we think about." Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "A man is what he thinks about all day long." The Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius put it this way: "A man's life is what his thoughts make of it." In the Bible we find: "As a man thinks in his heart, so is he."

One Sunday afternoon, a cranky grandfather was visiting his family. As he lay down to take a nap, his grandson decided to have a little fun by putting Limburger cheese on Grandfather's mustache. Soon, grandpa awoke with a snort and charged out of the bedroom saying, "This room stinks." Through the house he went, finding every room smelling the same. Desperately he made his way outside only to find that "the whole world stinks!"

So it is when we fill our minds with negativism. Everything we experience and everybody we encounter will carry the scent we hold in our mind.

Sufi Thoughts: Vigiling

by Jalal ad-Din ar-Rumi 1207-1273

Some nights, stay up till dawn.

As the moon sometimes does for the sun.

Be a full bucket pulled up the dark way

of a well, then lifted out into light.

Something opens our wings.

Something makes boredom and hurt disappear.

Someone fills the cup in front of us.

We taste only sacredness.

Book of Self Motivation Books:

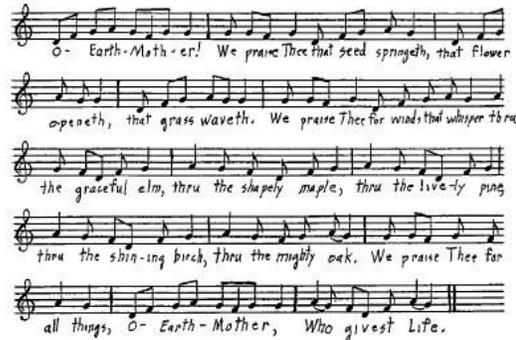
How High Can You Jump?

Flea trainers have observed a predictable and strange habit of fleas while training them. Fleas are trained by putting them in a cardboard box with a top on it. The fleas will jump up and hit the top of the cardboard box over and over and over again. As you watch them jump and hit the lid, something very interesting becomes obvious. The fleas continue to jump, but they are no longer jumping high enough to hit the top. Apparently, Excedrin headache 1738 forces them to limit the height of their jump.

When you take off the lid, the fleas continue to jump, but they will not jump out of the box. They won't jump out because they can't jump out. Why? The reason is simple. They have conditioned themselves to jump just so high. Once they have conditioned themselves to jump just so high, that's all they can do!

Many times, people do the same thing. They restrict themselves and never reach their potential. Just like the fleas, they fail to jump higher, thinking they are doing all they can do.

Song of the Earthmother, which is the RDNA's common song.



Internet: The Wisdom of Silence

Some hunters were in the woods looking for game. They discovered a group of three orangutans and managed to catch one of them. The other two orangutans escaped and hid behind some nearby bushes and trees.

As the hunters were dressing the corpse of the first orangutan, a steam of blood issued forth. "How red the blood is!" cried a hunter.

The second orangutan called out, "It's red from eating so many raspberries."

Hearing the second orangutan, the hunters discovered its hiding place and began to beat it with sticks. As they were killing it, the second orangutan mourned out loud, "Now I know the wisdom of silence. If I had held my tongue, I wouldn't have gotten killed."

Hearing his companion's dying words, the third orangutan said, "Thank God I was wise enough to keep silent."

He was killed.

Self-Motivation: Anyone Up There?

A man was walking in the mountains just enjoying the scenery when he stepped too close to the edge of the mountain and started to fall. In desperation he reached out and grabbed a limb of a gnarly old tree hanging onto the side of the cliff. Full of fear he assessed his situation. He was about 100 feet down a sheer cliff and about 900 feet from the floor of the canyon below. If he should slip again he'd plummet to his death.

Full of fear, he cries out, "Help me!" But there was no answer. Again and again he cried out but to no avail.

Finally he yelled, "Is anybody up there?"

A deep voice replied, "Yes, I'm up here."

"Who is it?"

"It's the L-rd"

"Help me!"

"Let go."

Looking around the man became full of panic. "What?!?"

"Let go. I will catch you."

"Uh... Is there anybody else up there?"