



RUNE TANE



FALL 1994 NUMBER 9

THE RUNESTONE is a journal of the ancient Northern European religion known as Asatru. It is dedicated to our Gods and Goddesses, to the people of the North, and to the values of courage, freedom, and individuality within the context of kinship.

THE RUNESTONE is published four times a year, at the equinoxes and solstices. Subscriptions are \$10 per year in the U.S. and \$15 per year overseas airmail, payable to Stephen A. McNallen.

The opinions in this publication, unless otherwise noted, are those of the editor. We read all correspondence carefully, but the press of other commitments may prevent replies. For our mailing address, please see the back cover.

Submissions of articles are invited. Deadlines are as follows:

Spring - January 15

Summer - April 15

Fall - July 15

Winter - October 15

Cover art: Thanks to Ron McVan

CALENDAR

OCTOBER 8 - Today is a Day of Remembrance for Erik the Red, father of Leif Erikson. Erik was a stalwart fan of Thor, strongest (and, luckily for us, the friendliest) of the Gods. Recall Leif's sire with a toast, and by praising Thor for such robust vikings. Do something for a friend, in imitation of Thor.

OCTOBER 15 - Winter Nights is in honor of the disir. These are female fertility spirits, ruled over by Freya. The female ancestors are sometimes counted among them, so recall some outstanding women in your family line. Do you have photos of them you can look at? The mood is one of conservation of resources in preparation for the scarcities of winter. A libation of ale, milk, or mead is traditionally poured onto the earth as an offering to the disir.

Better dig out your sweaters, because autumn is on the way! While you're rooting around in closets and bottom drawers, this copy of the **THE RUNESTONE** will help you slide into the season with grace and awareness.

Vine Deloria is more likely to be found at a pow-wow than at an Althing, because he's an American Indian writer and spokesman. Nevertheless, he can say some things that I can't get away with, so I've invoked his words to convey some important thoughts about religion and ethnicity, a subject always sure to stir up a crowd of Asafolk!

But Indians aren't the only visitors in this **RUNESTONE**. There's a long article on the Celts and the Germans, with a focus on how similar the two folk groups are. With a name like McNallen, I suppose it's inevitable that I'd write this piece sooner or later!

Just to give you a break from my harangues, Maddy contributed a piece on "soul". Our very own soul sister (no relation to Aretha Franklin) has some original ideas on how you can, in a sense the Christians never figured, "save your soul"!

In the center spread we have the October women. No, that's not like the Playmate of the Month! These women are the

UP FRONT

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disir and their lovely leader, Freya. We've called upon the spirit of writer Ray Bradbury for this one, as well, to get you in that autumn mood.

But there's more! Two new features made their way into this issue, and if you like them, they'll remain. "Profiles in Asatru" is a way of recognizing deserving yet unsung Asafolk, and artist Ron McVan is my first victim. "Tip of the Horn" is a sort of viking "thumbs up, thumbs down" feature...I think you'll get the point!

But enough dithering and bad puns! Hope you like it!

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THE RED TRIBES SPEAK!

by Stephen McNallen

Asatru abounds in issues and controversies, but by far the biggest, scariest, and least understood point of contention in our movement deals with the idea of race. Is there a connection between race and religion, between biology and spirituality? If we say "yes", does that mean we're racist? Where is the line between pride in one's people - a desire to see one's tribe perpetuated - and the phenomenon the media calls "racism"?

Unfortunately, it has become something of a taboo in the United States to speak of race, unless one wishes to take a rather predictable liberal view. Race is to our culture what sex was to the Victorians; everyone thinks about it, but we have to pretend it doesn't exist! Since I am a White male, I am especially restricted by this taboo; anything I have to say will be instantly dismissed by some, whatever the validity of my words and ideas.

Now, I think most RUNESTONE readers are more intelligent and open minded than that, and on another occasion I'll have more to say about all this. But for now, I've found some people who closely reflect my own opinion, and I am going to harness their words to pull my ideological wagon. Since the people I'm quoting are American Indians, maybe even the extreme liberals will listen!

Vine Deloria was one of the biggest Indian names of the 1970's. His militance in behalf of the Indian cause was matched only by his articulate arguments, and he sold lots of books. One of these was called *God is Red*.

Mr. Deloria is able to say something that I cannot. He is able to state outright that there is a relationship between *ethnos* and *ethos*, between a biologically identifiable group of people and the religion that best suits them. To my knowledge, no one has called him a racist for doing so. For now, the best argument that I can make for my own opinions is to cite his words, as excerpted from the above-mentioned volume:

* "...[T]he idea that religion was conceived as originally designed for a specific people relating to a specific god falls well within the experience of the rest of mankind and may conceivably be considered a basic factor in the existence of religion."

THE RUNESTONE

* "...[Perhaps] a religion...
across racial and ethnic lines...attitude...with...

* "Most tribal religions..."

* "The very concept of a..."

What probably religions do not in fact...
their power and identity. It is probably...
groups with different religions."

God is Red sings with common...
in favor of his own people, as he...
White... which is also right and just...
because so much of what he says..."

Vine Deloria isn't the only Indian...
a tribalist called Native Man's Burden...
a sort of American Indian version of...
remember that. In an article on Indian...
of the National Park Service, who is...
saying "Who better to interpret Indian...
no way a non-Indian can correctly interpret..."

Part of me is upset at the...
try substituting "White" for "Indian"...
employ of the Park Service! He'd be...
standard"! But, that aside, he's...
as individuals, but I can't get...
We'd all be better off if we'd just...
while agreeing to treat each other with respect."

Actually, it's mostly as White...
Indians have been decrying the...
spirituality. More than once, I've...
go seek their own people's way. The...
of our brothers and sisters think that...

Some will argue that all this is...
dialog. I disagree, and so does Vine...
tribal culture, and distinctions existing...
themselves. Political activity and...
history is not divided into categories...
political, economic, social, and intellectual...
vernal. Observe the clear connection between...

THE RUNESTONE

* "...[Perhaps] a religious universality cannot be successfully maintained across racial and ethnic lines...ethnicity will almost always triumph."

* "Most tribal religions make no pretense as to their universality..."

* "The very concept of a Chosen People implies a lost religious ethnicity. Most probably religions do not in fact cross national and ethnic lines without losing their power and identity. It is probably more in the nature of things to have different groups with different religions."

God is Red sings with common sense and fairness. The author is partisan in favor of his own people, as he should be, but he is not noticeably anti-White...which is also right and just. I definitely recommend it to every Asaperson, because so much of what he says pertains to us.

Vine Deloria isn't the only Indian with an opinion on the subject. Recently, a tabloid called Native Monthly Reader appeared at the school where I teach. It's a sort of American Indian version of the old Weekly Reader, for those of you who remember that. In an article on Indian sacred sites, the Southwest regional director of the National Park Service, who is part Cherokee, a Mr. John Cook, is quoted as saying "Who better to interpret Indian spirituality than American Indians? There's no way a non-Indian can correctly interpret the value system of an Indian."

Part of me is upset at the double standard implied by that comment. I mean, try substituting "White" for "Indian" and see how long Mr. Cook remains in the employ of the Park Service! He'd be looking for a job before you could say "double standard"! But, that aside, he's essentially right. I may like Indians collectively or as individuals, but I can't get inside their heads - and they can't get inside mine. We'd all be better off if we'd just admit it and quit trying to kid each other, all the while agreeing to treat each other with respect.

Actually, it's mostly us White folks who are fooling ourselves. For years, Indians have been decrying the flood of "wannabees" who swarm around Indian spirituality. More than once, I've read of Indian religious leaders urging Whites to go seek their own people's way. The only problem, of course, has been that most of our brothers and sisters think that Christianity IS our native belief!

Some will argue that all this is politics, and thus irrelevant to religious dialog. I disagree, and so does Vine Deloria. As he says, "Religion dominates the tribal culture, and distinctions existing in Western civilization no longer present themselves. Political activity and religious activity are barely distinguishable. History is not divided into categories of explanation. It is simultaneously religious, political, economic, social, and intellectual." The political is religious, and *vice versa*. Observe the clear connection between Indian spirituality and politics in the

Ghost Dance of the last century, or in today's struggles over fishing rights and tribal autonomy! It is only we modern creatures of the West who insist on compartmentalizing everything into neat boxes. Real life isn't like that.

To my mind, the sort of ideas we've been airing here have no relationship with what Newsweek and CBS call racism. An honest statement that we have inherently different religious needs and expressions doesn't even imply *dislike*, much less hatred. Is it racism to love my people? Is it racism to prefer my people over others? Is it racism to want my people to survive and thrive for a thousand millenia hence? I don't think so. I think these things are natural and good - for us, and for others. This is no time for ethnic masochism! Aren't we Asafolk supposed to have thrown out guilt complexes along with the holy water?

The American Indian has been able to maintain his connection with his traditions, with the land, and with his innermost self. In doing so, he has escaped some of the propaganda that deluges us. Or maybe he's just in a position that is strangely privileged, in that he can speak up honestly for his folk without censure and reflex ravings of "racism". In any case, Vine Deloria and his brothers speak true on the link between race and religion. Respect their words, and honor your ancestors!

THE WISDOM OF A THOUSAND GENERATIONS SLUMBERS IN YOU. WAKEN IT, AND YOU HAVE FOUND THE KEY WHICH WILL OPEN THE DOOR TO YOUR DEEPEST DESIRE. ONLY HE WHO ESTEEMS HIMSELF IS WORTHY OF BEING A MAN. ONLY HE IS A MAN WHO BEARS THE LIVING PAST AND FUTURE IN HIMSELF FOR ONLY HE IS ABLE TO STAND ABOVE THE PRESENT MOMENT AND ONLY HE WHO IS MASTER OF THE PRESENT IS SUCCESSFUL; HE ALONE IS FORTUNATE, AND ONLY IN THE FORTUNATE IS DIVINITY. THUS SAYETH THE VOICE OF OUR ANCESTORS!

— WOLF SOERENSEN

WO TANS VOLK

PROFIB in Asa

If you go to any of Western... things you'll notice is the wealth of... things from banners, or spring... the work of one of Asatra's most... Olympia, Washington. And... found in THE RUNESTONE.

... was born September, 1911... was winning city-wide... much more!

... moved to the Northwest... until he realized that the... continue to play, when not they...

"Reading and collecting... is my favorite hobby... books. It has more to do with... books have always... books, then all of a sudden... in your life."

Like many of us, ... spent a great deal of time... As a martial artist, he was... Western thought, but he looked... philosopher's stones, as well. ... words of the mystic Gurdjieff... Jiddu Krishnamurti, as well, ever... gave himself to any of these... things.

In time, he found... considered him to be... and... "It was becoming... over to build progressively... up. This meant understanding... of our folk and keeping these...

... about the artwork can write... Washington 1956.

PROFILES

in Asatru

If you go to any of Wotan's Kindred's celebrations, one of the first things you'll notice is the wealth of wonderful carvings that hang from trees, dangle from banners, or spring life-like from the soil itself. These creations are the work of one of Asatru's most prolific and talented artists, Ron McVan of Olympia, Washington. And, as you've also noticed, his drawings are frequently found in **THE RUNESTONE**.

Ron was born September 6, 1950, in Philadelphia. Fourteen years later he was winning city-wide fine arts competitions, and he hasn't slowed down much since!

He moved to the Northwest when he was sixteen, and played drums in a band until he realized that the guitar was the right instrument for him. He continues to play, when not busy with the visual arts or his other interests.

"Reading and collecting books and building a selective personal library...is my favorite hobby...I do not collect books for the sake of having a lot of books. It has more to do with an insatiable interest or quest for knowledge...Books have always fascinated me in this way. One can pour over endless shelves of books, then all of a sudden one jumps out at you and opens new doors in your life."

Like many of us, Ron went through a period of searching before coming to the Gods. As a martial artist, he was exposed to Eastern thought, but he looked under other philosophers' stones, as well. Ron read the works of the mystic Gurdjieff and portions of Zen Buddhism, as well, even though he never gave himself to any of these systems as a disciple.

If we are ever to build progressively as a folk we absolutely *must* build from the ground up.

In time, he found Asatru. A friend introduced him to Reinhold and Cathy, and soon he was helping them form Wotan's Kindred. "It was becoming increasingly evident to me that if we are ever to build progressively as a folk we absolutely *must* build from the ground up. This means understanding, practicing, and living the indigenous religion of our folk and keeping those vital bonds of our heritage alive".

No one can accuse Ron of not doing his part! Asafolk wishing to contact him about his artwork can write to him at 1417 Mitchell Avenue, Olympia, Washington 98506.

SOUL

By Maddy Huffer

I had been thinking about the soul before I went to the baseball game, but I hadn't expected any revelations to come my way during half time...

Soul - it's one of those words that everyone uses but that is really quite hard to define. My dictionary of quotations has hundreds of entries using the word and almost as many variations of meaning. It's a remarkably flexible concept, rich and deep, and I've been trying to make my own sense of it recently.

When I think of soul, I have a couple of interpretations. First, the soul is the essential part of the self, the blueprint and guiding light for activity in Midgard. My soul defines me and informs me as an individual. It animates me as Maddy, rather than Jane, or Kathy. But it also connects me with the universe and others in some mysterious way. Surely, it is my soul that speaks to me of nature's greatness when I look out onto the mountains or the rolling ocean; and isn't it my soul that resonates when I feel that unutterable bond with another human, the closeness that goes beyond affection and comradeship?

Have you ever felt those moments of intense understanding? Times when you felt aware of the "big picture" in an unusually profound way? For years, I have called such glimpses "surges" for their powerful emotional quality. They always seemed to me to be important messages of some kind, hard to explain, but wonderful to experience. I have wondered if they reflect the voice of our souls - communication from a deep realm within

us expressing truth we can only partially understand, and can scarcely put into words.

To me, soul identifies us, connects us, and inspires us - brings us alive in the most fundamental way. Our Northern forefathers knew of the soul's complexity, naming the separate parts of the soul/mind complex in dizzying exactitude. I'm impressed by their comprehensive understanding, but I don't intend here to break down the soul into constituent parts to explain it. I'm working with a more poetic view, and anyway, I need to move on to the baseball game.

A couple of things motivated me to go to that game, a Candlestick Park midweek home win. First was the sensation of being part of an enormous mass of people. I usually stay put in my small neighborhood, and this group of thousands was stimulating. I imagined the Roman Empire's huge political rallies. I was aware of the power of numbers, the momentum and a group provides even when not limited to a particular action or belief. Then, as the game progressed and I saw the excitement generated and the emotion raised by the action of the players, I started to think about the soul.

As far as I could see, these people around me were experiencing super-great thrills of sensation that moved them from their seats and had them sailing into the air around them. It seemed that something deep within them was being stirred, and I, along with the crowd,

was being stirred. A recording of a crowd's approval, a missed strike - a sign of the crowd's strength. Were these moments of "surges"? In some way, they were. Perhaps the momentary appeal of competitive sports is a direct appeal to survival, physical prowess, and the loyalty. If so, the soul could be saying that.

Now I'm not trying to pick apart the events of the game, and there's been some destructive work done since. But I did start to ponder what the soul's effect on society, if it is real, is. An individual's soul experiences the results of mass reactions. It's usually pretty healthy, usually engaged and will resist. But I think the case of manipulation by the mass media of popular culture. So I was reminded of the time I was persuaded by an advertisement before I had a chance to watch play. False drama was used to attract attention for entertainment. I had a review of the movie, in case my avid interest in the movie could remember what had just happened. Nothing too sinister, perhaps, but these typical 20th-century methods were operating on the soul of my soul.

I started to wonder what the soul's effect on the ground for soul - movies, music, TV news, documentaries and news programs. When we are "moved" naturally, we feel something strongly, we are made powerful by that intensity. We can believe and act and live our lives to our very depths. We can be the birth of our children and live with them profoundly and keep them safe and devoted parents even when the going gets tough. But what if we are moved because of media ma-

felt my pulse race. A resounding hit - a roar of approval; a missed strike - a sigh ten thousand strong. Were these reactions soul messages? In some way, I think they were. Perhaps the tremendous appeal of competitive sports is ancient, rooted in survival, physical prowess, and clan loyalty. If so, the deep soul-call could be ringing true.

Now I'm not trying to pick apart your favorite relaxation. I had a good time at the game, and there's plenty of more destructive ways to pass the time. But I did start to ponder what would be the effects on society, if all or most of an individual's soul experiences were the results of mass reactions. Baseball is partly healthy rivalry and age-old skill (and will) testing. But it's also the scene of manipulation by the purveyors of popular culture. Slogans and statistics danced before me on huge neon-lit signs persuading me of each player's abilities before I had a chance to see him play. False dramas between coaches and athletes were played out apparently for entertainment only. Video clips reviewed previous field action, in case my awkward brain couldn't remember what had just happened. Nothing too sinister, perhaps, except that these typical 20th century gimmicks were operating on the sensitive field of my soul.

Soon I started to wonder what other areas were fertile ground for soul manipulation - movies, music, TV dramas, documentaries and news programs. When we are "moved" naturally, when we feel something strongly, we can be made powerful by that impression. We can believe and act and live in ways true to our very depths. For example, the birth of our children touches each of us profoundly and keeps us patient and devoted parents even when the going gets tough. But what if we are moved because of media ma-

nipulation? What if we are made to feel emotions that are not really ours, but fabricated, or at least exaggerated? Remember the death of E.T.? Not even a human, and we're weeping. Is our individuality, our soul, reduced by this? If our independent souls lose their ability to speak to us, because of disuse or misuse, what happens to our sense of group? Do we slowly stop recognizing what is right and fitting for us, and simply find ourselves flowing with the emotional tides of popular culture? Feeling what everyone else feels when they feel it? In a general sense, I think we do.

I want to protect my soul; I want it to reflect me, the original, one-and-only Maddy, Odinswoman, herself. And that's going to take work - soul work. Television, movies, the media in any of its forms can be soul-destroying. A little may not hurt, but too much will steal your very self. So what can we do?

Take steps each day to protect your soul. Tune in to your own feelings; there aren't so many: sad-

ness, anger, happiness and fear really summarize them, and you can feel them right in your body. Recognize that truth comes from within rather than without. Stay quiet, listen to your heartbeat and your breath rather than the radio. Read and think and talk while the television is off for several hours. Paint a picture, write in a journal, study the runes, play with your kids, go out into the countryside and search for the spirits of the place. There are hundreds of ways to connect with your natural and holy self. Rub away the debris and let your soul shine through. That way, you'll be safe when some Pepsi media hack tries to tell you how to feel!

Television,
movies, the media
in any of its forms
can be soul-
destroying.

October Women

Can you hear her? Can you hear THEM?
Shut your eyes and listen through the dark.
Rustle, crackle, crunch on the leaves
Once green, now brown, like Freya's cloak.
Green cloaks are for growing things,
And for tossing on the grass for a love-bed.
Brown cloaks, like fallen leaves and bare earth
Are for covering and concealing...for October.

Ray Bradbury knows about October.
But he doesn't know about her
Or it wouldn't be his thumbs that prickle
When frost circles the moon like her necklace
And it's too cold to make love on the stark ground.
Maybe he hears the ones behind her, and fears
The disir - creaking bones? Dried up skin bags?
Wrinkles like old apples in the straw?

But Bradbury's got October right,
At least, as far as he goes.
Summer's end, no more long days
To run in the sun and play in fields like children.
It's adult time now - indoors, schoolbooks open,
turn pages,
Turn inward, and keep the fire lit all night.
Falling leaves turn to falling snow
But the ancient ladies ignore the chill
Out in the paddock stand the burial mounds,

October is just right for the *disir*, for the women ancestors who have left Midgard and look on from beyond our world. It's perfect, too, for Freya's somber side, which we honor at this time of the year. And if you've ever read any Ray Bradbury, you'd know that he's the poet laureat of the October spirit. Here's my tribute to Freya, to the *disir*, and to their special bard, whose stories have meant so much to me.

By Stephen A. McNallen

*Stones all icy, but the disir don't care.
They cackle and call as though the air was warm
And flowers bedecked the barrow in the sun.
You can hear them better this time of year
Without the humming of the insects
Or the sighs of lovers moving over the grass.
The disir, those ancient women, call to you.*

*Mothers, grandmothers, cousins and kin of old
They hail and halloo, as though they'd never left
the fireside.
Remember to feed the animals, the disir say
And brew the fine beer that will keep you cheery.
It's not too cold to take off your clothes under the cover,
Especially if you've someone to snuggle with.
Keep a log on the fire of family's honor
And know that summer lies beyond the snow.*

*Creaking bones, and leathery skin?
Wrinkles, cracked voices, age-dulled eyes?
Mr. Bradbury should know Freya better than that.
October is now, but springtime is forever
And the disir call us from verdant vistas
Their eyes shine brightly and their supple bodies
Twist and weave as they dance in the sun.
"You can make it!" they say, and as usual,
they're right!*

A TIP OF THE HORN...



A TIP OF THE HORN...to Angus Lamond, of the St. Breock Parish Council, in Cornwall. Angus led the fight to keep an international corporation from building a series of wind turbines on a religious site famed for its standing stones and megalithic tombs. The Japanese-financed corporation has won the first battles, but last word was that Angus is still fighting.

A TIP OF THE HORN...to the city fathers of San Jose, California, for spending \$500,000 to erect a 25-foot tall statue of the Aztec deity, Quetzalcoatl. Sucking up to current demographic trends, rather than a sudden interest in Meso-American mythology, is the suspected motive for the project.

AND, THE OTHER TIP OF THE HORN...



LIVING ASATRU by Stephen A. McNallen

A Complete Guide to Lively and Informal Celebrations of Asatru
Three sections: Asatru at Home; Rites of Linkage; A Year in Midgard
Spiral Bound; 52 pages; \$8.00

P.O. Box 445, Nevada City, CA 95959

OTHER DIVINE BEINGS

Giants? The Celts have them, as do the Romans, and the Celtic Gods, both together, they play is pretty much the same energy in the cosmos.

Valkyries find their reflection in the battlefield who grant victory, spin the wheel of fate. This twin aspect - friends of the living on the other - is found in both Celtic and Germanic sagas tell of supernatural women, the chosen heroes. Brynhild teaches Sigurd, the hero Scathach ("Shadow") takes the sword that makes him the warrior he is destined to be. Sigurd and Cu Chulainn are descended from the same lineage.

Don't forget the "lesser" beings, the folk and poetry, but who make the life of the warrior bearable. The land spirits, for example, and the connections of these wights to the ancient Teuton and his or her Celtic counterparts.

Overall culture, deities, and imagery they do not exhaust the parallels between the two. In the next issue, we will continue our investigation of practices and cosmology. Until then, it is appropriate to drink your Guinness from a horn.

Thunder from the North The Way of the Teutonic Warrior

An exploration of Western martial philosophy and techniques for today's warrior. 194

Make checks payable to: Steve McNallen

OTHER DIVINE BEINGS...

Giants? The Celts have them just as Asafolk do; they're called the Fomorians, and the Celtic Gods battle mightily against them. Moreover, the role they play is pretty much the same - representing the forces of inertia and entropy in the cosmos.

Valkyries find their reflection in the Morrigan, fierce Goddesses of the battlefield who grant victory, spin the fates of war, and serve the heroes in the afterlife. This twin aspect - fiends of blood and death on the one hand, enticing lovers on the other - is found in both cultures. Similarly, both Celtic and Germanic sagas tell of supernatural women warriors who instruct and initiate the chosen heroes. Brynhild teaches Sigurd hidden magical lore, and the female chieftain Scathach ("Shadow") takes the Irish Cu Chulain under her care and makes him the warrior he is destined to become. It is probably no accident that Sigurd and Cu Chulain are descended from Odin and Lugh, respectively.

Don't forget the "lesser" beings, the ones that seldom figure in myth and poetry, but who make the life of the common man and woman more bearable. The land spirits, for example, are alike in both cultures. Elf lore, and the connections of these wights to the ancestors, was recognizably the same to the ancient Teuton and his or her Celtic contemporaries.

Overall culture, deities, and demigods - all these are important, yet they do not exhaust the parallels between the kindred nations of old Europe. In the next issue, we will continue our investigation by comparing actual religious practices and cosmology. Until then, rest easy in the knowledge that it's quite appropriate to drink your Guinness from a horn!

Thunder from the North

The Way of the Teutonic Warrior

An exploration of Western martial philosophy and techniques for today's warrior. (\$4)

Make checks payable to: Steve
McNallen

BRING THE POWER OF THE RUNES
INTO YOUR EVERYDAY LIFE!

A RUNIC INSPIRATION

by Maddy Hutter & Steve McNallen

24 Runes, key concepts,
affirmations, & poems. (\$5)

P.O. Box 445, Nevada City, CA 95959

The connection between runes and warriors is an ancient one. Men in combat have traditionally used any means, mundane or magical, to emerge the victor, and runes have long been a part of that arsenal. Scan the runic charms mentioned in "Havamal", and you'll readily see that about a third to a half of them pertain directly to combat. Runes carved in stone have immortalized the deeds of fallen warriors, and runes graven in steel have given strength and speed to swords.

Next, I devised a plan to use these runes. My scheme went like this: Each day, I did the three postures designed to increase my receptivity to the runic forces - *Isa*, *Uruz*, and *Elhaz* respectively. Then, I spent several minutes working with the posture and the sound/name of the rune. A daily journal recorded my observations, associations, and activities.

But these purely runic exercises didn't seem enough for some-

strength of will, concentration, and calmness under the stresses of battle. It can be used for centering and for the gracious acceptance of one's fate or gring. But there's more; I found a connection between the old ideas of ice and iron, and perhaps with Conan's "riddle of steel". There isn't room to go into it here, but the enterprising investigator can check it out for him- or herself.

WARRIOR RUNES

by Stephen A. McNallen

It was predictable, then, that I would use runes to deepen my understanding of the Warrior Way. I want to share with you two things - what I found out about warriorhood, and the method I used to make these discoveries. You can adapt my techniques to your own spiritual needs, whatever they might be.

To begin, I chose nine runes that I thought especially important to the warrior. Other people might pick different ones, of course. There's a certain subjective judgement involved, but that's okay; you'll choose your nine runes for reasons of your own, whether conscious or otherwise.

one who wants to grow in the warrior virtues, so I added two meditation sessions of twenty minutes each, one in the morning and one at night. A trip to the gym five days a week completed the routine.

I devoted a week to each rune before moving on to the next one.

So how did it go? Here are the nine runes I chose, along with the insights I garnered:

I - *Isa* ("ice") seemed a good place to start, dealing as it does with the ego or conscious self. For the warrior, *isa* stands for

U - *Uruz* ("aurochs") represents ferocity, strength, and power from the past. This rune teaches us to overcome our "battle shyness", our reluctance to use violence. In this regard, *uruz* relates to the part of a warrior's initiation which demands the youth slay a dangerous animal. The *sumbel* is a religious custom which can help the would-be warrior realize his or her intimate link to the power of the past, and help to draw that might into the present.

F - *Fehu* ("cattle") was next. The warrior needs energy to overcome lethargy and fatigue, whether in the context of a one-on-one fight, a proper battle, or a prolonged campaign that wears down the individual's stamina. But, unexpectedly, I also found a connection with sacrifice: Gold has to be kept circulating, or it becomes poisonous. This is one reason generosity is so important. The life-force has to be kept moving, also. The more we live, the more we CAN live! But

strength of will, concentration, and calmness under the stresses of battle. It can be used for centering and for the gracious acceptance of one's fate or orlog. But there's more; I found a connection between the old ideas of ice and iron, and perhaps with Conan's "riddle of steel". There isn't room to go into it here, but the enterprising investigator can check it out for him- or herself.

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when the time comes to forfeit life, we have to be generous there, too, and give up this most precious of gifts.

Þ Thurisaz ("the strong one"), of course, makes us think of Thor and his great strength and vitality. Notice that this rune combines the shapes of "ice" and "torch", giving its possessor the explosive power of steam! Did you ever think that this might be the artilleryman's rune?

↑ - Tiwaz (Tyr) gives the warrior many gifts. Victory is one; valor, steadfastness, and devotion to duty are others. This rune teaches us to sacrifice for our family, tribe, or nation just as Tyr himself gave up his hand to bind the wolf. A person standing in the tiwaz position, arms open and accepting, is offering himself to the enemy spears, ready to die that his people may live.

‡ - Nauthiz ("need", "constraint") is the rune of desperate circumstances. You can invoke this rune when you exert all of your power to win against overwhelming odds. On the lowest level, as Gundarson has pointed out, it is exemplified by the body's production of adrenalin to allow the accomplishment of seemingly superhuman feats of strength. Nauthiz expresses our struggle against the decrees of fate; even if we don't win, we grow stronger!

Continued on next page

Y - *Elhaz* ("elk", "protection") is a rune of protection, and of communion with the Gods through both prayer and shamanic ritual. In the latter context, this is the rune of Bifrost, the bridge into the Gods' realm. The valkyrie, the shining maid who bears the hero to Valhalla, is connected to this rune as well. Finally, *elhaz* stands for luck, one of the best possessions a warrior can own!

J - *Eihwaz* ("yew") tells of the warrior's endurance, toughness, and resilience. It also holds the mystery of life's persistence, of rebirth after Ragnarok and after the minor Ragnarok that is the death of the individual. When the warrior *knows* that death is not the end, fear becomes only a relex to be mastered.

h - *Perthro* ("dice-throw") represents the workings of *odds*, the fate we make for ourselves". For the warrior it means "blind chance", the "bullet with your name on it", and the initiation ritual which hides in the myth of Balder. The warrior first learns to accept his fate with grace. Then, as his understanding grows, he learns to read that fate through divination. Finally, he masters the art of "writing around" that fate, using the might of the runes.

This nine-week program did a lot to increase my understanding of the warrior's runes, and I recommend a similar self-imposed course to anyone who wants to deepen some specific area of his or her spirituality - not just the warrior aspect. Choose your objective, select the runes that will best help you in your search, and go to work!



RUNE NAME: *Nauthiz*

KEY CONCEPTS: *Nauthiz* symbolizes both the constraints of a difficult situation, and the internal resources with which we overcome it. This is the rune of bold action born of desperation, the fire of need which flares in the human breast.

AFFIRMATION: Vital energy blazes through me. I will act; I will win!

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**BHS
& PIECES**

You may remember the *Calans*, or "California Asafrik", that we rather facetiously mentioned a few issues back as a modern tribe or nation similar to the Hessians, the Sami, and the Afrikaners. Well, it's not facetious anymore! In a recent mailing, we gave life to this new nationality. The time is right for "Fourth World Nations", for building a folk aspect of the larger, worldwide Folk. Long live the *Calans*! Long live our people in California!

There's a new book called *Practical Magic: Serendipity and Intuition in Genealogy* by Henry Z. Jones, (Genealogical Publishing Company) which will be of interest to Asafolk. Briefly, Jones describes cases in which people researching their family trees experienced psychic phenomena or synchronistic events which aided them in their search for their ancestors. The connections with what Asafolk call "metagenetics" are obvious.

Renewal is a new, and promising, *Glimist* publication out of Australia. The writing is lively, and the tone reminiscent of our English cousins. Well done, and good fortune to them! Write them at P.O. Box 4333, University of Melbourne, Victoria 3052; the cost is \$20 Australian per year, plus \$8 for airmail - Australian currency only!

BITS & PIECES

The Odinist Prison Project is seeking lawyers and paralegals to help get religious rights for incarcerated Odinists/Asafolk. They're also serving as outside sponsors for prison kindreds. Drop them a line at P.O. Box 6088, c/o W.H.N., Harrisburg, PA 17112-0088. This is quite a task they've taken on, and we hope you'll help them any way you can.

You may remember the *Calasa*, or "California Asafolk", that we rather fancifully mentioned a few issues back as a modern tribe or nation similar to the Frisians, the Sami, and the Afrikaners. Well, it's not fanciful anymore! In a recent mailing, we gave life to this new folk entity. The time is right for "Fourth World Asatru", for *building a folk* as part of the larger, worldwide Folk. Long live the Calasa! Long live our people in California!

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Rare books located! The latest Barnes & Noble catalog lists two volumes we've lusted after for years. Hilda Davidson's **The Sword in Anglo-Saxon England** is item number E104051 and it sells for \$10.98. **The Aryans** by V. Gordon Childe costs only \$7.98 and its number is 1453729. You can call 1-800-242-6657 to order, around the clock. They'll ask for the catalog key, which is E40A, 146P.

Did you see **The Ancient American**, volume 1, number 6? It's dedicated entirely to the presence of vikings in North America. Among other things, new arguments (both pro and con) are offered on the controversial Kensington runestone. The address of this magazine is P.O. Box 370, Colfax, WI 54730.



Dear Runestone:

Just finished reading the Summer '94, number 8 issue. Thought it was a really outstanding one. Like your new masthead and the cover art work done by Kevin Knight. I have some footnotes on the Thorstein Veblen article by Jonathan Larson (which I found very informative). I plowed through Veblen's The Theory of the Leisure Class many years ago, in my early teens, and not much remains in my memory today. I will, however, go back to it soon with a renewed interest.

Veblen, I am told by local people in my community, lived here on Washington Island many years ago. He supposedly wrote some of the leisure class book while residing in a small cabin on the north side of the island.

In conversation with natives here I have gathered that he was quite knowledgeable in Norse studies and related topics. He also ran a newsclipping service from the island at that time. He was reputed to have been quite a character in his own right. He was described to me by one oldster, with a twinkle in his eye, as a womanizer, as well as one who imbibed of "the waters of life" frequently. The cabin where he once lived is still standing, but is presently unoccupied. Unfortunately no plaque has as yet been placed there to mark the cabin as having this historical distinction. Perhaps there's another project at hand for me and mine to get one placed there.

Synchronicity be damned! The same day I received my copy of The Runestone I also received a book catalog in the mail from Transaction Publishers, Rutgers State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick, NJ 08903 (908)932-2280. In the catalog were the following books for sale:

Thorstein Veblen by David Riesman,

ISBN: 1-5600-776-1 (paper) 248 pp., \$21.95, to be published October 1994.

The Higher Learning in America, Thorstein Veblen,

ISBN: 1-5600-600-5, 1992. 254pp., \$21.95.

The Theory of Business Enterprise, Thorstein Veblen,

ISBN: 0-87855-599-0, paper, 420 pp., \$19.95.

That about sums it up. Take care, and keep up the good work on The Runestone .

Skuld!
Robert Taylor

Heilsa, Robert!

Thanks for the information. And, by the way, congratulations on the success of your latest Viking Games!

Odin Lives!
Steve

Heilsa Maddy,

Just a note to correct a few errors in the article as printed in No. 8, Summer 1994, pp. 13-15.

My initials are J.H.P....not J.V.P. as shown on page 13. Then in the calendar shown on p. 15, the Nordic name Lenten should have been spelled Lencten. It means "spring" in Old English. Under Nordic name for the fifth month, only the name "Shearing" is shown. I wrote it originally as Shearing or Walburga.

True, Walpurgis Nacht is April 30, but this is no more peculiar than Ostara's Day being always in March, while the month of Ostara is April. (Ostara's Day is the first Sunday following the Spring Evennight, which means it can never be later than March 31, even when March 24 is the previous Sunday, and the old date is used, March 25, for the beginning of spring.)

I don't want to imply that I'm advocating that we go back to a lunar calendar. Our forefathers had a love of symmetry, regularity, and perfection which they compared to beauty or divinity. But there is no rational reason why a full moon festival couldn't be celebrated on a different day each month, instead of the same one each month.

Sincerely,
J. H. P.



(Calendar continued from front cover)

NOVEMBER 11 - The Einherjar are the chosen heroes who sit in Odin's hall, and this day, the Feast of the Einherjar, is for them. On it we honor those dead kin who gave their lives for family and Folk. Celebrate Veteran's Day. If you have friends or relatives who died in battle, visit their graves. If that is not possible, offer a toast in their memory.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

What does Asatru teach about an afterlife?

We believe that there is an afterlife, and that those who have lived virtuous lives will go on to experience greater fulfillment, pleasure, and challenge. Those who have led lives characterized more by vice than by virtue will be separated from kin, doomed to an existence of dullness and gloom. The precise nature of the afterlife - what it will look like, what it will feel like - is beyond our understanding and is dealt with symbolically in the myths.

A portion of our soul, including certain spiritual qualities and powers, is released at death and can be reborn from generation to generation in the family line. Thus, we live on through our descendants quite apart from an afterlife in the usual sense.

Tradition teaches us that the dead and the living continually interact in subtle ways - our ancestors guide and advise us as we live our lives in this world.

A note: We of Asatru do not overly concern ourselves with our abode in the next life. We live here and now. The next world will take care of itself.

- adapted from *What is Asatru?*
(Available from Worldtree Publications)