

The Runestone: Voice of the Asatru Folk Assembly



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WORDS FROM THE ALSHERJARGOTHI



Fall is definitely here and this starts my favorite time of the year. I have always loved Fall and Winter, always made me feel cozy and I am smiling just thinking about it. One thing I love about Autumn and "the Holiday season" is that it is a time for friends and family to come together and celebrate. Be it the Harvest, the holy tide of Yule, this period of the year is marked by tradition and celebration.

Many of us were fortunate enough to start this Fall of with AFA Fallfest IV. Fallfest was amazing this year and I am so glad to have gone. I want to thank the Ulfhednar Clan and the Northern Blood Kindred for hosting such an outstanding event for all of us. If you could not get enough of the AFA fellowship or if you missed this event, please take the opportunity to join your AFA family for Winter Nights in the Poconos. Winter Nights is the second oldest National AFA event and has a proud tradition. The location is amazing, the fellowship is top notch. We look forward to seeing all our Northeast AFA family and all the rest of us who are able to attend October 18-20.

Make this October truly special, take the time to enjoy the crisp air and the changing colors all around you. This time of the year, the veil between the worlds is thin and our ancestors are closest to us. Take the time to let them in, listen to them and feel them in your life.

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Hail the AFA!



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GOTHAR UPDATE



At Fallfest IV something of great significance happened. At Fallfest IV our newest member of the Assembly of Gothar, Anna Funk, was ordained as a Gythia. Not only is she the first Gythia to be ordained in several years, she is currently the only ordained Gythia we have in the whole of the Asatru Folk Assembly.

I was fortunate enough to have been able to mentor Anna personally. I watched her change over the course of a year of intensive academic study.....I watched as she overcame many obstacles in her personal life while persevering through the Gothar program with no complaints or excuses. I am very proud to stand with her in our Assembly of Gothar.

Hail Gythia Anna Funk!



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KINDRED SPOTLIGHT

In this month's Kindred spotlight the AFA would like to recognize and honor the Austral Folk Asatru Kindred of Brazil. We want to thank you for stepping up and helping to represent our church in the Southern Hemisphere. AFA Kindreds are the local congregations and they are here to help guide our folk home and host events to bring people together. Thanks again for putting in all the hard work!

Hail the Austral Folk Asatru Kindred!



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Winter Finding at Óðinshof

A touch of Fall was in the air as we entered our sacred circle for the Welcoming Ceremony. A horn was raised to the Holy Powers and poured out to nourish the Landvaetr. We made a round of introductions, warmly welcoming all our new friends. This past month was not easy for many of our folk, but Odinhof proved to be a great place to lift spirits.

The tables in the hall, in a Eiwaz pattern, were quickly dressed with white tablecloths. We assembled there to hear our Alsherjargothi Matt Flavel share the status of the AFA at this time and his vision for our future. Words of inspiration flowed from him as he spoke of this being a “golden age” for the AFA with so many accomplishments behind us. It was upbeat and positive, leaving us with a warm glow the rest of the day.



At 3:00, we again gathered outside the ritual circle where the women blessed the horn in our traditional way, keeping in mind that this ritual would be for our newest AFA-baby, about to receive her name before the Folk. The parents of the baby, her grandmother and little sister all stood at Matt's left. We all galdred the rune Gebo, then Matt called out to the mighty Aesir and Vanir to witness this rite. With great gentleness, he gathered the baby in his arms and spoke to her of the Norns. He whispered that the night before he had asked the Norns for gifts and pulled three runes. These Norns and runes came together to show what awaits this baby. Gothi Matt lightly touched her with water as he announced her name to all, Ida Belle Edelweiss Harlan. Ida Belle's family then shared the drinking horn, bringing forth the power of the ancestral stream that runs through them all. Many eyes were filled with tears as this beautiful baby, her parents, sister and grandmother were all honored with our “hails.”

With tables laden with grilled meat, fresh corn and many dishes, feasting commenced in the hall. The energy was extraordinary. But we weren't done. It was twilight when we again gathered outdoors for the Ullr Blot.

As we were at the Equinox, the time that balances summer and winter, we stood in the liminal light between day and night. Gothi Michael Hunter prepared our minds for honoring this little-known god, Ullr – God of Winter, God of the Bow, of snow, of skis and skates, and of

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(appropriately named) had achieved his aim.

It was now evening, and with so many families and others needing to travel long distances, we said our goodbyes. We joined the VB (Viking Brotherhood) in wishing Brewer's family farewell and safe travels as they move to Washington State next month.

For those who didn't make it to *Winter Finding at Odínshof*, be sure to mark your calendar with *Winter Nights at Odínshof*, October 26 & 27, 2019.



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Food Drive at Óðinshof

Another great turnout for the Odínshof food drive. Eighty-five families received food this month and our efforts were appreciated by all.

I want to give Big Kev a special thank you this month. Kevin goes every month and gets the food from the Yuba County Food Bank. He drives the forty five minutes up to Óðinshof, he coordinates with local volunteers, and he has become a real driving force in our efforts.

Folk like Kevin are what makes things happen!



Marc MacLeod
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Day of Remembrance for Guido von List

Born in October of 1848 in Vienna, Guido Karl Anton List was the son of a prosperous middle-class family who traded and work in the Leather goods industry. Raised a Roman Catholic, List found his love of mythology and history early in life, often acknowledging that his

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strongly into taking over the family business.

In his spare time, he continued to write and paint. He also took part in several leisure sports clubs, such as rowing and mountaineering. During one of his many trips List purportedly left his group to spend a solitary midsummer atop Geiselberg hillfort. Here, it is said, he reaffirmed his belief in Wotan. Upon the death of his father in 1877 List abandoned his family business in favor of pursuing his writing passion.



Guido v. List 1875.



Despite being an avid believer of Wotan, he married his second wife in a Protestant ceremony in 1899. This didn't hamper his writing or his influence, however, and by 1902 when his writings took on a different direction, he was a prolific and well-known voice in the nationalist and volkish movements.

It was in 1902 that von List had his great epiphany. After a cataract surgery left him blind for eleven months, List was left with much time for reflection and meditation. During this time he discovered the Armanen runes. He called this set of runes the Proto-language of the Aryan race. It was through these runes that von Lists occult idea's and writings evolved.

The popularity of his idea's exploded amongst the wealthy, middle class of Austria and Germany at the time and the Guido-von-Gesellschaft was born. The von-List society further evolved and on Midsummer of 1911 the inner group called the High Armanist Order was created. While the main group focused on his occult and political ideologies, the inner group was dedicated to the worship of Wotan through his writings and sacred

pilgrimages.

With food shortages after the war and old-age creeping up on him, von List's health deteriorated and in May of 1919 he passed away at the age of 71. His body was cremated and the buried in an urn in the Vienna central cemetery, Zentralfriedhof.

Among his many novels, plays, and political manuscripts it was his first dedicated occult manuscript, "Das Geheimnis der Runen" or "The Secret of the Runes," that really sets Guido von List up as a forefather of modern Asatru, influencing many including the Asatru Folk Assembly's hero Alexander Rud Mills.

So, raise a horn today to remember one of our Hero's. A staunch volkish man who helped to reawake many of our folk.

Hail to Guido von List!

—Von List, Guido, and Stephen E. Flowers. *The Secret of the Runes*. Destiny Books, 1988.



Catie Erickson

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FallFest report

Fallfest IV was an amazing success, each year we get a little bigger, a little better, and this year was all of that and more.

Opening time on Friday several of us were a bit worried, there just weren't that many people in attendance yet. As the saying goes, "The show must go on.", and so we began Fallfest proper with a very heartfelt, sincere Greeting of the Gods/Opening ceremony led by Gythia student Sheila McNallen. Following that the trihorns of the AFA were hoisted up the flag pole along with the flags of the Ulfhednar Clan and the Northern Blood kindred. It was a nice sight to see, there, blowing in the breeze, were the holy signs of our Folk again flying proudly above Midgard.

Later that afternoon Steve led a very interesting discussion about the state of things in Midgard today. Eye opening does not begin to describe his talk. After such a thought provoking talk we all sat down to a delicious supper prepared by the Ulfhednar Clan; roast, veggies, chili, stuffing..... I saw more than a few people going back through the line a second or even third time.

After dark the torches were lit, the people were assembled, and united as one we gave blot to Odin. Our Alsherjargothi, Matt Flavel, leads one of the most moving rituals I have ever had the privilege of attending. The power and the presence of Odin envelops the circle, all can feel it, it is an experience beyond words. On this night that power seemed somehow amplified beyond the usual.....it was a very moving experience for everyone.



Saturday morning saw a large influx of new attendees and saw us gather for a quick breakfast before the activities began. Members Les Lauer and Shannon Liebold held a hands on blacksmithing demonstration that was very well attended. Hammers clanged, coals burned and out of a formless piece of scrap a Mjolnir was formed, horn holders were formed, it was amazing to see.

Saturday morning also had best selling author, Gothi Bryan Wilton, giving a meaningful presentation. As always an enthusiastic audience sat and absorbed all Gothi Wilton had to say.

Before lunch we all gathered around the fire as I led a blot to Frey. In His name we offered sacrifice and pledged a renewed determination to see our region, and the AFA as a whole, continue to grow and thrive.

A quick lunch and we broke off in to two groups, the women went off to do a women's discussion while Alsherjargothi Flavel and myself led a discussion about masculinity in Asatru. A very straightforward and honest approach to what a man of Asatru should be. From all accounts it was well received and thought provoking.

Our group discussions led into a delicious supper prepared for us by members of the Northern Blood kindred. Lasagna, salad, and garlic bread.....enough to feed all the warriors in Valholl.

After supper came the culmination of many hard months of study, dedication and perseverance. After supper we ordained Anna Funk as a Gythia.....our first ordained Gythia in several years. Hail Anna Funk!

After the ordination our mead competition winner was announced. Congratulations to AFA member Mark Cook who had the best mead out of quite a large field of different meads. And many thanks to our mead judges for their dedication to making sure every mead was tasted, and tasted again, and then tasted yet again. Thank you all for your willingness to make sure no mead went untasted.

Auction time saw member Whitney Schlaffman and member Brandy Vandersloot lead us in a great auction. There were many, many items on the auction table everything from a one of a kind rune mala with handmade trihorn pendant attached to a pair of traditional style handmade horse heads and many things in between. Thank you all for your generous donations and your even more generous donations.

Rounding out the evening we all gathered again around the fire for a beautiful three round sumbel. Horns were raised to the Gods and to the Ancestors. Tears were shed as heartfelt memories were shared. And by the end of the third round we had all laid our layers in the Well and blended our wyrd to bond us together as the family we are.

Saturday morning we grabbed a quick breakfast before gathering together to listen to Gythia student, Sheila McNallen's presentation on Herman Lons and Jack London. It was a presentation I will not soon forget, honestly I had no idea who Herman Lons was beyond the author of "The Warwolf" (which, by the way, is a great book). Thank you Sheila for a very informative presentation.





the fire we all received the blessings of Thor from Gythia Anna Funk who led us in a very warm, spiritual Wayfarer blot.

These weekends always go by far too quick. Fallfest saw people from all across the country come together, over 70 people joining in frith to honour our ancestral ways. There is nothing better in my opinion than these large events. Seeing the children run here and there, meeting the new families and members. They are truly amazing.



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Winter Nights in the Poconos

The eighth annual Winter Nights in the Poconos will be held in Milford, Pennsylvania from October 18 - 20! Since 2012, this long running AFA festival has been dedicated to our ancestral mothers, the Disir. When the harvest is in, the summer plants have died off, and the winter is quickly approaching the veil between the living and dead is said to be at its thinnest.

Again, we will gather to worship our Gods, our Goddesses, and our Ancestral Mothers in the crisp air of mountains as winter sets in. We build upon the success of the Asatru Folk Assembly here in the Northeast by making new friends and renewing old friendships. We look forward to seeing members and friends!



- Kids attend free, kids Halloween costumes are welcome!
- We're going to have an Oktoberfest dance, dress to then eyne!
- If you have a business or a craft, all vendor tables are free with a donation of an auction item.
- There are plenty of cabins for all, but tenting is also welcome!
- Your registration fee includes all workshops, lectures, children's activities, meals prepared by our kindreds, cabin lodging, and of course our holy rituals.
- This event is dedicated to the Disir, so please bring a photo or memento of once of your ancestral mothers for the Disir shrine.
- This event is at a summer camp, in the mountains, in October, so make sure to dress warmly! Pack cold camping bedding, sleeping bags, blankets, long-johns, etc.
- Please do not bring hard alcohol. Beer, mead, wine, and -most of all- responsible drinking are welcome.
- AFA Kindreds, bring your flags!

Please register today or before October 14 at <https://winternights2019.eventbrite.com!>

Ves Heill!



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Italy

Harvest Rite

The morning is quite cold and cloudy. We find ourselves in the usual place to go into the woods. With Kindred there will be no more three people left. Who for personal problems, who for matters not resolved with their past, who for being influenced by the words of other people: "AFA is racist". Useless attempts to explain. Better this way: neither Kindred nor AFA need weak and influential people. Only the strong will survive.

But other people are approaching and 3 have asked to join Kindred. It seems to me an interesting sign.

We are heading towards the forest at an altitude of 1300 mt. In the small clearing we prepare for the Rite. We proceed with purifications with herbs and light the fire. In a circle, I remind the participants of the importance of the Harvest Rite and I leave some time for everyone to silently prepare for the Rite. The girls prepare the food that each of them has brought on mats and which will then be shared.

Two dishes of food offerings are prepared: one for the Gods who will be invited to our table and the other for the Spirits of the forest.



When everything is ready the Rite begins and the sound of the horn and the drums fills the silence of the wood. At that moment a ray of sunshine breaks through the clouds. The music continues in the middle of a curiously very silent wood. I know this forest well, having done many Rites and experiences for more than 7 years. The Landvættir still live here and they are very strong. The woods with its Spirits are silent, as if they were watching us, as if they were looking at the 3 newcomers.

The Rite proceeds: the Gods are invited to our table, then each of us eats a piece of bread with honey on it and takes a sip of beer to bring the strength of the Earth into us. When it's time to put Sheena's piece of bread in the fire that can't be physically with us today, a crow perched on the branches of a tree next to us, throws only one loud cry: "CRA!" The consecrated mjöðr is sprayed on the face of each participant, then the sharing of food begins: first the women then we men. The party starts there. Together we eat, drink beer and mjöðr, talk, tell, laugh. Everything gives the feeling of home and family. Then the closing of the Rite with the food offered to the Gods that is laid in the fire and the one for the Landvættir distributed in the woods, that wood welcomed us as always. The Rite, the drums, the invocations, the fire, the sharing.

We take everything back. The forest must be respected, left as we found it. We greet him and silently walk towards our cars. Another rite has been made, this time with new people, I believe pleasing to the Gods. To 3 other people who wanted to participate, I said no. It was not yet time. Maybe in the near future. Kindred is not for everyone. AFA is not for everyone. Ásatru is not for everyone. I thank the Gods for allowing me to conduct this Rite and I thank my Hugr for having led the Rite of Harvest with the right sacredness.

Heil DÍar

Heil Asa-Ódhinn Kindred

Heil the AFA!



Anders Nilsson

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Midwest

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members present than we had our first regional event in the spring of this year. I believe that we had around 35 members arrive and from every state in the Midwest: Indiana, Ohio, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and Kentucky.

On the first night we had a Handfasting where I united Patrick Westfall and Rachel Miller together. We had a hammer throwing game for the kids, delicious food and great company. The second night we held a Midwest Thing and blot. I cannot express how proud I am to be a part of the Midwest and wouldn't change the people we have around here for anyone. We have such a solid well round group over here!



This year has been exciting for us. We have had three successful regional events which is something that has never happened over here. We have either people regularly getting together in each of our states or beginning to. We have truly come a long way and this is just the beginning.

On another note, my kindred met up this weekend as we do every month. We got to see some new faces and make new friendships. Everyone had a great time as we shared food, stories and covered the changing of the season from outer works to inner works. We are building up on our ancestral connection as we move towards Winter Nights and Yule. A time were our families get together to honor our ancestors and loved one's passed.



I haven't too much else to say besides the work done this year with Kindreds and regional happenings will continue to grow and be prosperous. This year has planted seeds that the winter will not kill but grow even mightier upon the coming of spring!

Hail the Gods!
Hail the Ancestors!
Hail the Midwest!
Hail the Asatru Folk Assembly!



Zach Cato
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Northeast

Updates from Stoneship Hearth



The Stoneship Hearth celebrated Harvest Blot in Plymouth, Massachusetts on a sea side cliff. We had an Amazing Harvest Blot and it is always a pleasure to see my Brothers and Kate made a delicious meal.

For more information on Stoneship Hearth [visit our Facebook page.](#)

Hail Tradition and Folk!
Hail the AFA!



Updates from Lansdale Tru Folk



The Lansdale Tru Folk and friends celebrated the Harvest with a Blot to Lady Sif. We were blessed beautiful weather as well as by a visit by Charles, Alex, and their lovely children. Our members brought tomatoes, peppers, beans, eggplant, and more from our gardens and combined these with crafted handiworks in an offering to Sif in thanks for the bounty provided by She and Thor.



On October 27, Lansdale Tru Folk members will be hosting a next in a series of fall and winter hike moots in beautiful Evansburg State Park! This is

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medium in difficulty hiking trails nestled in the Suburbs of Montgomery County.

After the hike, we will meet at Lansdale Tavern for lunch! For a full list of dates please see [our Facebook events list](#).

Our next ritual day is AFA Winter Nights in the Poconos. Please contact cerickson@runestone.org if interested.



Holy Days celebrated by Lansdale Tru Folk in 2019:

- Thorrablot, Saturday Feb 23 (Thor)
- Ostara, Sunday March 31 (Ostara)
- Sumarsdag, Saturday May 4 (Odin)
- Midsummer (private), Friday June 21 (Sunna)
- Freyfaxi, Sunday August 11 (Frey)
- Harvest, Saturday Sept 21 (Sif)
- Winter Nights in the Poconos (AFA), Fri Oct 18 - Sun Oct 20 (Disir)
- Feast of the Einherjar, Sunday Nov 10 (Einherjar)
- Yule, Saturday Dec 28 (Ancestors)



Please contact Clifford Erickson if you are new interested in any of these events, if you are in the Northeast region looking for other members, or if you will be passing through.

Ves Heill!



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Northern Plains

Updates from Northern Blood Kindred

Group Schedule

- Oct. 12, 2-5pm 4th Annual Disirblót Bloomington, MN
- Oct. 27, 12-2pm Monthly Hike up 12 pm - 2 pm Minnehaha Park, Minneapolis, MN



Jason Gallagher

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Updates from Ulfhednar Clan

On September 28th members of the AFA descended upon the annual Norsk Hostfest (the largest Scandinavian Cultural Event in North America). At Hostfest we met a few people interested in Asatru and the AFA, we reconnected with old friends, and made a few new ones. We try to attend Hostfest every year because it is basically a giant cultural festival with several hundred vendors of unique Scandinavian items and many different cultural performers. Everything from Viking Age re-enactors going to battle to Norwegian folk singers; from a traditional volva of our way giving a talk to storytellers telling tales many of us are very familiar with. Every year we seem to meet and/or see more people that are interested in the native spirituality of their ancestors, it is truly great to see.



October will see members from across the Dakotas attending a Winter Night's celebration at my house on October 26th. Anyone planning on being in the area who hasn't gotten an invite feel free to get in touch with me.



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Northwest

Hails from the great Pacific Northwest!



What a fantastic month September has been for Asatru around the NW. A Remembrance for "Herman of the Cherusci" and Oktoberfest was celebrated in Oregon and Idaho, we had rune studies, exercise meets, and topped it off when Steven McNallen performed a blot for us in Seattle!

September presents us with one of the most important figures in the Runic revival of the past century with a remembrance of the famous Guido von List. There will be Runic studies in Canada, and we will also be honoring the Gods with Winterfinding, sumble and mead making at the end the month.

Every Wednesday evening, we have our "Wodenstag" AFA NW weekly call-in forum, in which we discuss topics ranging from the basics of Asatru' to the other worldly powers of the runes. In next week's forum we will be continuing our discussion of "Dreams and Visions", where we delve into the metaphysical aspect of this daily occurrence in our lives.

If you would like to organize an event in your area, contact me and I will help you set it up.

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October 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 "Wodenstag" AFA NW weekly call-in Forum
 October 6 Remembrance for Guido von List—Oregon
 October 18 Pub Moot, Vinland Volk Vancouver BC
 October 26 Alvar Sumble and mead-making—Kelso, WA

Hail the Gods!
 Hail the Folk!
 Hail the AFA!



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West

Biergarten Brunch



When I first joined the AFA we used to have a monthly brunch meet up at a local Hof Brau. I really enjoyed it, it was always very casual, but kept us all connected throughout the month. Even when it was small, we always got a great meal out of it and were able to relax and catch up on things. For some reason we stopped doing it years ago, until today.

We had our first Biergarten Brunch at a local German Brewery / restaurant called Kathrin's Biergarten. Kathrin is straight from Germany and takes pride in giving a authentic German meal. The food was delicious, the company was great, and I can't wait to do it again next month.



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 Folkbuilder & Witan
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Saga of Vatnsdal, Iceland

The Saga begins in Norway with the birth of Ingimund.

Ingimund fought in the battle of Havsford with what would be the first king of all of Norway, King Harald Fairhair. Contrary to what the Church has stated, King Harald Fairhair was heathen and followed the ancient Way. Years after Fairhair had died and the Nation was officially Christian, Harald Fairhair's remains had been removed from his megalithic tomb and placed in a Christian Church, hence in my opinion retroactively making the first king of Norway a "Christian", most likely this happened when King Saint Olaf was king of Norway, 1000ce.

The story of Ingimund is about his most fortunate life, he was of a noble family, and friend of Harald Fairhair and eventually, a founder of a large Settler family of Iceland.

His fortunate survival in the Battle of Havsford starts when he meets up with his father, in celebration at a feast on his fathers ancestral estate in northern Norway. Many were invited and among the guests was a Lapp woman, a Seeress. Well, the men and Ingimund prepared a 'magic' rite in the old heathen fashion. A High Seat was prepared for the Seeress and she came dressed in fine attire. Many men asked of their future, they all took the news in a different way. The Seeress asked, "why do the young men not ask about their futures?" Ingimund answered, "it is not important to know my future." She answered, " I will nevertheless tell you without being asked. You will settle in a land called Iceland, it is not yet fully settled. There you will become a man of honor and live to a great age. Many of your kinsfolk will be noble figures in that land." Ingimund did not want to go to Iceland and wanted to stay with his father and keep his ancestral land in Norway.

The Lapp Seeress answered, "what I am saying will come to pass and a sign of this is the amulet is missing from your purse, it now lies in the wood where you will settle, and on this silver amulet the figure of freyr is carved and when you establish your homestead, then my prophesy will be fulfilled".

The next morning Ingimund searched for the amulet and could not find it.

When the King had won the Battle he gave gifts and Ingimund received friendship of the King and the amulet. Among those that received gifts was Rognvald of More, he became Earl of Orkney.

Ingimund's father was growing old and ill. Again he travelled to see him. His father, Thorstein said, "now kinsman, It would not seem strange were you to find yourself moving from these ancestral lands and I not allow this to trouble me. The thing which I hold best in my life is that I have not been aggressive towards others, and it is very likely that my life will come to an end in the same peaceful manner because I feel a sickness coming on, now I want to know how my affairs stand. He died shortly afterwards and he was given a fitting burial in the ancient heathen way.

The King arranged a marriage of Vigdis to Ingimund and the King said, "I cannot deny that the may have a purpose and that Freyr might wish his amulet to rest in the place where he wants his seat of honor to be established."

Ingimund said, " he was eager to know whether he could find the amulet after digging was done for his high seat pillars."

Ingimund sent for three Lapp from the north and said, " I will give you butter and tin if you undertake an errand for me and search in Iceland for my amulet and report back to me the lay of the land." They said, " you must shut us up in a shed together and our names must not be revealed". They told Ingimund that it was a dangerous journey, and described the land where he would settle.

After a good voyage Ingimund landed in the northwest coast of Iceland with his kinsfolk. They wintered and when spring came they set out to look for a place where the snow melted from the mountains early. On the way Vigdis gave birth to a girl named Thordis and Ingimund named this place Thorisarholt or Thordis's Wood. They then set off up the valley (Vatnsdal) and found good grass and woods. It was lovely to behold. Ingimund took a large land holding and built a great temple a hundred feet long and when he dug the holes for the high-seat pillars he found the amulet as had been prophesied. He named his farm Hof,(Temple) farm.

Closing thought; when Ingimund left his ancestral land did he cover his sacred site, his Hof, with peat and take his high seat pillars with him to Iceland, could it be the ancient heathen site that was discovered recently and disrespected and destroyed? Just a thought.

Thorgrun Odden

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The Mead of Inspiration

An excerpt from the forthcoming book “*Strength and Beauty*”

Bragi answered: "That tale runs thus: Odin departed from home and came to a certain place where nine thralls were mowing hay. He asked if they desired him to whet their scythes, and they assented. Then he took a hone from his belt and whetted the scythes; it seemed to them that the scythes cut better by far, and they asked that the hone be sold them. But he put such a value on it that whoso desired to buy must give a considerable price: nonetheless all said that they would agree and prayed him to sell it to them. He cast the hone up into the air; but since all wished to lay their hands on it, they became so intermingled with one another that each struck with his scythe against the other's neck.

Such is the way of so many men. In their struggles to one up each other, they believe it is an object that will sharpen a tool they hold which will make them better. Both items are distinct and separate from the man himself. It is an odd turn on the idea that something “out there” will make me better “in here”. We’ve been taught to think that this higher standard or state of being might be accomplished by some possession. See it every night on television. We hear it preached from the pulpit in far too many churches. This mindset of need is made all the more acceptable when permission is given to seek it from the divine. For there could seemingly be no fault in such an origin. That perhaps God gave them one special gift so that they might be better than the next fellow.

Believe you me, people will cut your throat in a heartbeat to ensure everyone knows how much more special they are than you. It is a particularly acute manifestation of “uniqueness” when we hear the terms, “The Gods call who they will.” And an exception is made to whom one allows into their tribe. The messianic overtones are awfully hard to resist. Everyone wants to belong to something true, real, and powerful. When this is challenged it is usually perceived as hateful. Are they being true to themselves? What business is it of anyone’s? Is it worth our while to seek to cultivate and harvest a sense of our own importance by reacting to something outside of our control? Absolutely not.

It means we have once again decided to look outside ourselves for the quality of our being which might be perceived by others. It is a most shallow association. It is the same kind of ire most easily stoked in Loki. This is when he kills those individuals who achieve more acclaim than he does. These 9 men working the field, at any rate, well they become unwilling to share. They have seemingly found something outside of themselves which might make any one of them more important than the other. Their selfishness is powerful enough that they care not for the injuries which they will incur upon each other. The nine months of planting, growing, and harvest, die with the cold steel of winter across their throats.

When people spend the short time of their lives looking outside for a blessing instead of inside for a gift, they are a danger to everyone around them. When they become convinced that the best thing about them is some kind of thing, institution, organization, or government, all of which are outside of their being they will lose all sense of worth about themselves. Life in general will lose its value. Much like the world today, full of drowning rats, it seems at time as if it may be every man for himself. Until the divine shows up and helps humanity sort the wheat from the chaff so to speak.

When the divine comes along in your life, make sure you look inside to see if you’ve developed the gifts which have been so generously bestowed upon you. The instant you begin to look outside of your self for confirmation of your greatness or the tool, thing or idea which will make you great in the eyes of other people, you may well find a blade to your throat, or a knife in the back. The character assassination amongst these types of people takes many different forms.

But for the individual brave enough to wander alone for a minute, brave enough to sacrifice some part of himself which is holding him or her back, they will begin to associate with other people who recognize this effort. And this, this is indeed a powerful bond between people. One which might be strengthened with such high minded words such as honesty, integrity, courage, love, compassion and a host of other words which lose their meaning outside of such an intimate setting.

Notice that the boss will not attempt the work himself. This is a weakness which may be manipulated. A leader would be out there in the field giving it all he's got. But a self-important man who cannot or will not do the work himself is easy prey.

Odin called himself Bölverkr in Baugi's presence; he offered to undertake nine men's work for Baugi and demanded for his wages one drink of Suttungr's Mead. Baugi declared that he had no control whatever over the mead and said that Suttungr was determined to have it to himself but promised to go with Bölverkr and try if they might get the mead.

A deal has been reached. But there are no assurances except that Baugi will ask on his behalf. This is a heck of a thing to commit too. A "maybe"? To do the work of 9 men? Surely something must be afoot. Like I said, small minded men who are convinced of their own importance are easily manipulated. They are most easily told what to do by men who are accustomed to being in charge. Even if they do seem to have the perception of a lower post. People will pay attention to confident individuals. Confident individuals know what they are worth and have qualms about asking for it. Where do they find this worth? They find it within. For here as a lowly farmhand there must surely be nothing to proclaim how great one is. These other men all killed themselves over a simple whetstone seeking to break this bond of mediocrity. But a man who has examined himself will draw people of all positions in life to him like moths to a flame. Odin understands this limbic resonance like very few do. Here he will use it.

During the summer Bölverkr accomplished nine men's work for Baugi, but when winter came, he asked Baugi for his hire.

I would like to point out that Odin has put forth a lot of work to keep his word. How many of us, when we find ourselves in distasteful or hard situations, maintain the presence of mind to realize that we put ourselves in this situation. That the best thinking we could come up with put us in this scenario. It is a commonplace occurrence to watch people build up resentments, assume the role of the victim, and become very unhappy in life because of situations that they themselves created.

Whenever I hear of people calling Odin an oath breaker, I have to wonder about them. Are they truly missing the point, or are they creating for themselves a back door in their thought process to justify their feelings and whatever radical actions they might deem necessary to remediate their problems? Usually, it is the latter.

If you have the presence of mind during the routine of your workday and you find yourself becoming agitated. Stop. Take a long minute to think about how you came to these crossroads. You brought yourself here. With this kind of acceptance of responsibility for your own well being you can now figure out how to change this for the better. In a healthy, well balanced way. For most people, this simple exercise is all that has been missing. There are an awful lot of people sitting around waiting on something "out there" to fix it for them. Asatru is that way of life which puts this responsibility right back into our hands. Moreover, it shows us how to do so and gives us not only permission to do so, but an expectation to accomplish this awakening.

Then they both set out for Suttungr's. Baugi told Suttungr his brother of his bargain with Bölverkr; but Suttungr flatly refused them a single drop of the mead. Then Bölverkr made suggestion to Baugi that they try certain wiles, if perchance they might find means to get at the mead; and Baugi agreed readily.

So let me see if I get this straight. Odin approached the brother of the man who had the mead locked up. Not the owner of the mead himself. He did him a good job, he earned his respect and set him up for failure against his brother. A brother whose entire ego was wrapped around owning that mead. Not drinking it, for it would be gone and then he wouldn't be as important. He would be the guy who "USED" to own the mead of inspiration. Well that's not nearly as impressive. Suttungr's ego will not let him share a drop of it. It is the foundation of who he thinks he is. Odin would have been foolish to try a headlong assault against such a mentality. Much like people who attempt to convince other people who is more right on the internet. But if someone else begins to perceive a benefit in knowing you, you can do two things. You can either continue to try and convince them how right you are, or, you can do some work which might result in some success in their life. Most, if not all, heathen authors, cannot seem to grasp this and it is why I am in a crowd all by myself.

For Baugi, he brought in a fine harvest. His reputation and the success of his farm was maintained. Against all odds. How dare his brother refuse his request. Doesn't he understand what he has had to go through? What he has had to deal with? Won't he at least help him keep his word? Now, Baugi becomes the aggrieved victim. Once again, Odin has a solution. By hook or by crook, the vainglorious man will not have his image tarnished.

Thereupon Bölverkr drew out the auger called Rati, saying that Baugi must bore the rock, if the auger cut. He did so. At last Baugi said that the rock was bored through, but Bölverkr blew into the auger-hole, and the chips flew up at him. Then he discovered that Baugi would have deceived him, and he bade him bore through the rock. Baugi bored anew; and when Bölverkr blew a second time, then the chips were blown in by the blast.

with any kind of person. We should check for thoroughness and hold ourselves to the same standard.

This is especially true of work on ourselves. Are we following a person or are we attempting to emulate the principles they may be espousing? Follow those principles. Never allow your potential to be limited by someone else. Even if it is the person who brought you to the dance. As soon as they see you within reach of something they cannot achieve, who knows, they might try to stab you in the back as well.

Then Bölverkr turned himself into a serpent and crawled into the auger-hole, but Baugi thrust at him from behind with the auger and missed him.

Now Baugi knows he is screwed and attempts to do the right thing. Too late. Odin is within reach of something he has been denied. This is no different than Loki bargaining with Idunna, or Freya as chess pieces in a game to save his own skin. When people are offering you something which is not theirs to give, they are doing so from a position of ego. Not one of presence. It is not your well being they are interested in. It is their own image they wish to project. Once you surpass their self-imposed limitations old mindsets and head games once again come roaring back to the surface.

Bölverkr proceeded to the place where Gunnlöd was and lay with her three nights; and then she gave him leave to drink three draughts of the mead.

So much has been said and implied about these three nights that one may hardly encapsulate them in this style or form of writing. It has been suggested that this Gunnlod is the mother of Bragi from these three magical nights. I think it is fitting. Odin speaks in poignant terms of this relationship on more than one occasion. And if there is one thing a good bard or musician might ever do, it is to regale his audience with a tale which tugs at the heart strings and makes us wonder "what if?".

This Lady with a Mead Cup is an old scenario. Appearing in many ancient tales and mythologies around the world. A serpent arrives and captivates the imagination of a woman. For many long centuries it has represented the special, magical place women have long held in various societies. It was only recently that this union of the feminine with the masculine divine became an evil idea. What fear prompted men to vilify this union which is every bit as necessary as King Arthur's union with the Lady of the Lake? An ego-based fear of men who sought to determine their masculinity by whether or not a woman confers it to him. Women do not confer masculinity upon men. This is the role of the men in the tribe. But I digress. Odin has secured from Gunnlod three drinks of the divine mead made from the blood of Kvasir.

In the first draught he drank every drop out of Ódrerir; and in the second, he emptied Bodn; and in the third, Són; and then he had all the mead.

These three drinks are integral parts of each other. The mead of poetry, the vessel and the reconciliation. What we say, think while operating in this vessel known as human form is the key to our ability to reconcile the vast mysteries of esoteric knowledge available to us. This is the part which was unknown to the lesser beings who simply wanted to own something special. They felt that the simple owning of the mead was enough to make them seem greater than their associates. As we aspire to organize our thoughts into a more suitable pattern for the vessels we inhabit, we will find that there is a depth to this well we might hardly have imagined. We will also find that we are not alone. Our wanderings by ourselves might be at an end.

Then he turned himself into the shape of an eagle and flew as furiously as he could; but when Suttungr saw the eagle's flight, he too assumed the fashion of an eagle and flew after him. When the Æsir saw Odin flying, straightway they set out their vats in the court; and when Odin came into Ásgard, he spat up the mead into the vats.

These friends and initiates into the ways of Asatru know what to do. They willingly help one to share with all so that the whole tribe may benefit. They and we become vessels in our own right. Full to the brim with imagination. Equal parts stirrer of fury and stirrer of inspiration.

Nevertheless he came so near to being caught by Suttungr that he sent some mead backwards, and no heed was taken of this: whosoever would might have that, and we call that the poetaster's part.

No heed was taken. It was up for grabs for anyone who had what it took to claim those few drops. Who knows how effectively this slaked the thirst for knowledge of the spiritual men of the time? Who knows if it provided that impetus for lesser men to rise to some grand occasion? Perhaps it will do so with us.

But Odin gave the mead of Suttungr to the Æsir and to those men who possess the ability to compose. Therefore we call poesy Odin's Booty and Find, and his Drink and Gift, and the Drink of the Æsir."

Odin "gave" the mead to the members of his tribe. The Aesir. Who are now a well-rounded community of the best of the Aesir and Vanir? They are the culmination of beings who have accepted the challenges in their path to becoming something better. They have shaped the

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personal of loves, now possess the ability to do so with a plethora fantastic of words to inspire them. Like an artist painting upon a canvas a unique blend of the world they see and their own touch of the divine in every landscape they paint. These assembled Gods known as the Aesir and Asynjur may paint upon the imaginations of the minds of men and women to help them reconcile those daily troubles. That they may move past them, ever forward towards whatever destiny may in store for them. Now, they may do so as princes, who bravely and gladly go til their day of death is at hand. What are you offering your tribe?



Bryan Wilton
AFA Gothi
bwilton@runestone.org

Circle of Eir

Eir's Blessings!

Everybody needs a little extra help sometimes. Every body does, too. Women, being the frith-y creatures that we are, are uniquely suited to the task of manipulating energy for the purpose of healing. Magic, you could say. Do you have a health concern and need a little extra energy? Are you battling with a mental illness like depression or PTSD? Is your baby having a hard time with teething?

If you've answered yes at all, reach out to us!

Once a month women of the AFA will get together to perform healing rituals all across the globe. If you would like to be included, please send a message to let us know! You can reach us at EirsBlessings@runestone.org

Our next healing ritual will be on Thursday, October 17th, 2019.

Photo courtesy of Kelley Hester, Eir's Blessing ritual from August.



AFA MILITARY PROGRAM



**ASATRU FOLK ASSEMBLY
MILITARY OUTREACH PROGRAM**

Our military program is looking for volunteers, those who wish to help out whether it be for online posts of content, helping your Folkbuilders in your local area better reach out to our military members on base, help out with fundraising, etc.

Before next Yule, we would like to have holiday care packages for our currently deployed members. If this interests you, please send us an email.

Also, I have a few books/pamphlets left from our successful book drive, if you know anyone in your area needing any material; Soldiers Edda and/or the Pocket Voluspa, send me an email as well!

If you are a current business owner and/or in a position of hiring folks and are looking for any transitioning AFA Military members from service to civilian, also send us an email. I am hoping to build a good network for our military members to ensure they are successful and get whatever help needed after their service to



Thank you all!



Kevin Long
AFA Military Program Coordinator

klong@runestone.org

Folk Services

For some it may be a natural disaster. For others an unexpected change in health, and for some just an unforeseen chain of events. Whatever the case may be sometimes we find ourselves in a sticky situation, and although we try and to work and do our best to pull ourselves out, sometimes we may need the help of our Folk community to give us a hand up...



That's when our folks Services Program comes in. We give one-time monetary grants to those members in need. These folks are so grateful and we know that once they get back on track they will contribute to this fund. For those that are able, we are in need of funds so we can be prepared for when these situations arise in our community. If you're able please place a donation today. Even a small donation adds up in the grand scheme of things and even \$5 or \$10 can help if enough people pitch in. If even a fraction of the folks who like the page did that each month, imagine the possibilities!

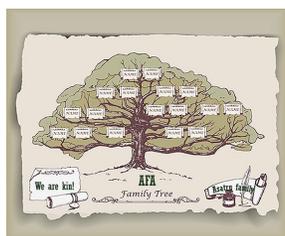
AFA Folk Services is intended to provide modest, one-time monetary grants to AFA members in dire need of basic services. It is also to be a source for referrals and information to help members get help beyond what the AFA can directly provide. For more information, send a private message to the [Folk Services page on Facebook](#).

Your contributions are earnestly solicited and of course are tax-deductible! Please donate to Folk Services or one of our other AFA Fundraisers at <http://www.runestone.org/donate/>.

Thanks in advance!

AFA Genealogy Group

I created the AFA Genealogy Group on Facebook to help our Folk with genealogy and family history research. This is a good place to learn, share tips, and information on genealogy.



Discover if you are related to other AFA members! We use GEDmatch kit numbers to batch process each person to every other person in the database and then post a chart in the group so that you can see if you are connected to other members. Many of us have discovered that other AFA members are also blood family.

Come and join us!

Contact Steve Ingle, Sheila McNallen, or Terry Rumph for an invitation to the group. As a side note, this group is for AFA members only.

Hail the Ancestors!

Steve Ingle
Genealogist/Family History Researcher

AFA 50 and Over Group

This group is a place where AFA members 50 and over can come to support one another in facing the challenges of aging, caring for family and loved ones and exploring how over shared beliefs can help with it all.

To join the group you must be a member of the AFA in good standing. You must be 50 or older, exceptions are the AFA Witan, AFA Folkbuilders and AFA Gothar/Gythia. There is no commercial activity or soliciting in the group.

Hail the AFA!
Hail the Folk!
Hail the Ancestors!
Hail the Gods & Goddesses!

Terry J. Rumph
AFA and over 50 Group Admin Team
tjrump@yaho.com



Baby Blanket Project

The Baby Blanket project is rapidly approaching it's first year mark, and it has been a ROUSING success! The Ladies of the AFA have knitted, crocheted, and sewn beautiful baby blankets for over 20 of our littlest folk, with more on the way. They've been delivered everywhere from Alaska to Florida, California to Sweden!

If you are a member of the AFA and are expecting a baby, please let your Folk Builder know so we can get a blanket to you. If you would like to contribute, either financially or volunteer as a baby blanket crafter, let your folk builder know about that as well, too, and he'll get you in touch with the right people. It's so rewarding to see your handicraft being loved by our little heathens!

The **Women of the AFA** are proud to be continuing this fine and noble work we call the Baby Blanket Project! We're committed to ensuring all new babies born within the AFA are gifted a hand made - knit, crocheted, or woven - baby blanket! It's just our little way of celebrating our new folk!

If you would like a blanket for your newborn, or would like to donate to help with yarn cost (yarn is expensive!) please notify Mandy (mandy@runestone.org) with the subject line: BABY BLANKET.



Call for Photography & Art

We are compiling art and photography!

We have a real need for hi-res photographs of our members gathering, being active in their kindreds, and showing what it means to live Asatru. If anyone has an eye for the camera and enjoys taking pictures at these events please submit your work.

The 2020 AFA Calendar will have the Holy Days for 2020 and other events, and feature art and photography from different members. We'd like to have each month feature photography from AFA events that occurred in 2018 and 2019.



If you are willing to donate some hi-res photos for use in promotions such as the AFA Calendar, the AFA website, our publications, and so on, please email them to photos@runestone.org. The larger the resolution the better, so please email them from the device where the photo was taken.

Frith Weavers

Seeking Submissions!

Ladies of the AFA: We're gearing up for round two of the Frith Weavers monthly email and we can't do it without you! Please consider writing an small article for our ladies!

We need:

- Recipes
- Health and wellness (workouts, healthy living, etc)
- Spirituality (pieces on runes, gods, etc)
- Child raising
- Homesteading (canning, gardening, etc)
- And anything else you think our women might like to learn from you!

Please send submissions to frithweavers@runestone.org by October 3, 2019!

Additionally, If you would like to subscribe to the Frith Weavers monthly newsletter, please email us at frithweavers@runestone.org.

Asatru Folk Assembly Calendar of Holy and Remembrance Days

Date	Observance
January 9	Day of remembrance for Raud the Strong
January 20	Thorrablót
February 9	Day of Remembrance for Eyvind Kinnrifi
February 17	Charming of the Plow
March 9	Day of Remembrance for Olivir of Egg
March 20	Ostara
April 9	Day of Remembrance for Jarl Haakon
April 30	Hexennacht
May 1	May Day
May 9	Day of Remembrance for Else Christensen
June 9	Day of Remembrance for King Athanaric
June 21	Midsummer
July 9	Day of Remembrance for Alexander Rudd Mills
August 9	Day of Remembrance for King Radbod of Frisia
August 18	Freyfaxi
September 9	Day of Remembrance for Herman of the Cherusci
September 23	Winter Finding
October 9	Day of Remembrance for Guido von List
October 20	Winter Nights
November 9	Day of Remembrance for Queen Sigrith of Sweden
November 11	Feast of the Einherjar
December 9	Day of Remembrance for Egil Skallagrimson
December 20-31	Yuletide

Volunteer for the AFA

Want to volunteer for the AFA? [Join us on facebook](#) or contact your Folkbuilder.

AFA Store Member's Discount

AFA members save 5% on any order at checkout. Use promo code **PXLKVV8** at <http://www.runestonegifts.com/>.



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