

# THE RUNESTONE

Celebrating the Indigenous Religion of European Americans

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SUMMER 1997  
ISSUE #19



**Boar Hunting  
with Spears!**

**Odin's Nation Rises**

**Future Famine?**

**More on Ancient  
Caucasians!**

**Freedom for the  
Folkmother**

*plus pictures from  
the PRE-THING!*



# ASATRU

## AN OVERVIEW

Are you new to Asatru, or is this your first copy of The Runestone? If so, you might like a little background on what this is all about, so you can better understand the contents of our magazine.

Asatru is the original, pre-Christian religion of northwestern Europe. It was followed by the Germanic tribes that became today's Englishmen, Scandinavians, Dutch, and, of course, Germans. A related religion and way of life was practiced by the Celts - our modern Irish, Scottish, and Welsh. Because these two groups are so similar, it's fair to say that Asatru expresses the heritage of Northern European-descended people as a whole. In short, this is the faith of our ancestors! Because it is our native belief, we feel it best expresses our way of looking at the world. It helps us live lives of virtue and honor, in touch with the turning of the seasons and with all those who have gone before us. It is a spiritual path of wisdom and courage in a world that sorely needs these traits.

Our forebears believed in a number of Gods and Goddesses. Some of us think of them as real in the most literal sense, and others view them as symbols that help us understand the divine aspects of the universe. However you consider them, it is useful to know the names and roles of some of the main ones:

ODIN - father of the Gods, associated with wisdom, magic, and ecstasy

THOR - a God of strength and might, defender of Gods and humans

FRIGGA - mother of the Gods, wise, involved with family and children

TYR - renowned for valor, sacrifice, and warrior prowess

BALDER - most beautiful of the Gods, soft-spoken, brave, and good

SKADI - mountain-dwelling Goddess who hunts on skis

HEIMDAL - guardian of the Rainbow Bridge, leading to the realm of the Gods

IDUN - Goddess who keeps the magic apples that restore the Gods' youth

LOKI - mischievous trickster of the Gods who often works against their aims

FREYA - Goddess of love and fertility, but who also has a warrior aspect

FREY - a virile fertility God whose domain includes love, joy, and prosperity

NJORD - God connected with the sea as a source of food and wealth

What does our religion value? We preach and practice courage, honor, the importance of family and ancestral bonds, strength, freedom, and joyful, vigorous life.

THE RUNESTONE is published by the Asatru Folk Assembly, a modern European-American tribe honoring the spiritual path of our ancestors.



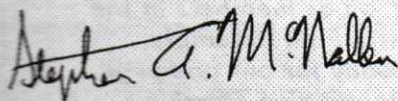
# UP FRONT

Over the last few months, I've noticed something very good happening in Asatru - a coming together, a tendency toward cooperation, and an awareness that when we work together we can accomplish heroic things!

Looking back at recent years, I can see that this tendency actually began some while ago. The AFA, immediately after its formation, announced its support for the Asatru Alliance. Calasa Kindred, made up of the inner circle of the AFA, then applied for admission to the Alliance and was promptly accepted. Any of our opponents who had hoped to see our two organizations bickering and fighting were disappointed; we've only reinforced each other's efforts.

In recent months the trend has accelerated. Wotan's Kindred, led by the dynamic Reinhold Clinton, is petitioning to join the Alliance after several years of alienation. The Asatru Folk Assembly, the Asatru Alliance, and the Odinic Rite have come together as founding members of the new International Asatru/Odinic Alliance. The OR has opened a Vinland branch, allowing them to work more closely with us than in the past. They also issued a statement supporting the AFA's stand on the Kennewick Man. Calasa Kindred, of the AFA and the AA, hosted the Alliance's pre-Allthing meeting - which was attended by many Asatruar with ties to both organizations. Valgard Murray, leader of the Alliance, is working closely with a guild in the AFA.

This intertwining web of activity sends a clear message: Asatru groups dedicated to our Folkish vision are working together as never before. *The results will be apparent in the months and years to come, but we must not take this for granted!* On the contrary, now is the time to battle all the harder, and win still more victories!



# SUMMER 1997

THE RUNESTONE • A Journal of Evolutionary Asatru

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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.

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The opinions in this publication, unless otherwise noted, are those of the author. We read all correspondence, but the press of other commitments may prevent replies. For best response, keep your letters to one page and one or two subjects.

Submissions of articles, photographs, and artwork are invited. Please enclose a SASE if you wish to have them returned.

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# AFA Membership!

The AFA is proud to announce  
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- Direct feedback on the course of the AFA, through a series of member polls...
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The cost for new members is only \$25 per year.

We invite all of you who share our beliefs to inquire now about signing on as members in the Asatru Folk Assembly.  
 Send today for our one-page application form!



## REVIVING THE ANCIENT BOAR HUNT

On March 11, 1977, an Asatruarman went on what may have been the first sacred boar hunt in more than a thousand years.

Here is how it came to be...

by REINHOLD CLINTON

# SPEAR AGAINST TUSK

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### BACKGROUND

One of the most important elements of a tribal religion is its warrior tradition. This includes, among other things, (1) the initiation of young men through a rite of passage, and (2) the cult of a sacred tribal animal spirit and its influence on the individual warrior. In *A History of Pagan Europe* by Prudence Jones and Nigel Pennick, the authors offer valuable information on these subjects: "The northern warrior tradition appears to have originated from hunting magic. In the heroic period it had developed into a form of physical spiritual martial arts activity comparable to the later Japanese Samurai Shinto code of Bushido. At all times the warrior had to exercise self reliance and always be willing to die selflessly for family and comrades. In order to be capable of feats of arms, a strict training in self control was necessary, and this was essentially religious. Later the religious element seems to have been taken over by Christianity, transforming the northern martial arts into the knightly arts of chivalry, and the totemic animals into heraldic devices. There were three main animal cults in the northern martial arts: those of the bear, wolf, and boar..."

The authors point out how the boar influenced the warriors who followed its cult. For instance, devotees emulated the animal's fighting techniques, its mastery of disguise and escape, and - most importantly - its strength. But precisely how was this done?

In the northern bear cult, the adherents of which were the famous berserks, we find that various tests were employed to prove to the bear spirit that its followers were worthy of its gifts. For instance, Pennick and Jones cite *Hrolf's Saga Kraki* in recounting how the berserks were required to drink the bear's blood and kill its image in ritual.

In the excellent movie *The Pathfinder*, about the pagan Sami in early medieval northern Europe, we see a ritualized bear hunt. The privilege of the kill is initially given to a young member of the tribe so that he can prove his worth. After the hunt, a ceremony honors the animal totem.

The aurochs was a fierce bison revered by the early Germanic tribes. According to Julius Caesar, as part of initiation into warriorhood, young Germans would descend into a pit to battle this beast, armed only with a simple knife. Judging from this and other examples, we can conclude that (1) our warrior ancestors sought gifts or powers from a sacred animal and in return sought to prove their worthiness, (2) a passage into manhood in pre-Christian northern Europe could involve battling such an animal, and (3) the animal spirit cult was an extremely important martial influence on the warrior of the north.



Artifacts relating to the boar hunt have been discovered in early Bronze Age graves among the Celts, who held the boar as a sacred totem spirit. One of the recovered items shows a charioteer clutching a raised spear, while following hounds and a fleeing boar. In Sweden during the Vendel Age and in Anglo-Saxon England, many ceremonial objects, including helmets, have the image of the boar on them. According to the respected scholar H. E. Davidson, priests of the boar cult wore ceremonial masks representing this animal.

The boar was especially holy to the family of deities known as the Vanir. Frey and Freya, worshipped for their powers of fertility, are associated with a boar and a sow respectively. In addition to its ferocity and courage in battle, and its renowned fertility, the boar also had access to the underworld. Davidson notes that the boar was linked to the *minne* drunk at the feast honoring dead ancestors. Finally, the boar was said to be able to protect men's lives as long as they wore its symbol.

### SACRED BOAR HUNT

Early in the history of Wotan's Kindred, we decided that a way to help revive our warrior tradition was to piece together the sacred boar hunt of our ancestors. What follows is an account of such a hunt, using the ancient tools of our forebears - spears and dogs.

On the night of March 10, 1997, rites in honor of the boar spirit of the Northern tribes were conducted in my home as an important prelude to the following day's hunt. The details of the rites before, during, and after the hunt will not be divulged here, out of reverence for these mysteries.

After the ritual, at about 11 PM, Jim and I left my house and arrived at Clover Creek ranch in central Oregon at 4 AM. After sleeping for three hours, we arose, dressed, and hit the trail at 7 o'clock, hoping to catch the feeding boars before they retreated into the hills as the morning sun rose. As we hiked up a steep hill leading to one of the valleys where wild boar were known to feed, I surveyed the high country, dotted by juniper trees and the occasional prairie sagebrush. While the ranch encompassed only 2,000 acres, it was linked to hundreds of miles of wide open high desert where survival of the fittest was the rule.

The wind began to pick up as our little party reached the crest. We were two spearmen, a dog handler, and a tracker/guide. As we looked down into the nearby valley, two large black specks darted from

behind a juniper tree about two hundred yards in front of us. Because the wind was blowing from the right, we decided to circle around to the left as we made our way down the hillside to encounter two very large black Russian boars. My adrenaline really started to pump as I tightened my grip on the ten-foot spear, with its thirteen and a half inch razor sharp head. I had awaited this moment for seven years...

We approached a thicket of densely-crowded junipers, and two Russian pigs came into sight - a sow with seven or eight piglets, along with a large male. I worked my way around and down to the left as Jim, the other spearman, moved a little to his right and straight ahead. I was about 35 yards from the boar when it lifted its trash-can sized head and saw me. He locked his eyes on me and readied for a charge as I picked my way slowly toward him.

After about six steps I caught motion to my right and saw Jim pointing. I froze at what I saw. The sow had moved to stand about 15 yards to my direct right, and its big shaggy head was intensely focused on me. We didn't want to take a sow, especially one with piglets. More importantly, I stood a good chance of getting caught in a pincer between two charging wild Russian pigs. I very carefully retraced my steps, keeping my eyes on the big pigs who glared back at me.

By the time I returned to the others, the two pigs had vanished to our right. We decided to keep moving to our left and down, further into the valley, in an effort to circle around on them. We walked cautiously through the terrain, watching for movement in the junipers and sagebrush which provided excellent cover for these noble but deadly animals. Our senses sharpened when our guide informed us that it wasn't uncommon for these boars to wait until a hunter passed their hiding place, and then to suddenly rush from only a few feet away.

We crossed over a stream bed, and our tracker pointed back up the hill we had just descended. Three large dots were almost stationary about a third of the way down the slope and were partially obscured by the junipers. We quickened our pace, re climbed the hill, and began to move to our right. The wind was blowing from the right, which meant our scent would carry, but we were intent on stalking the big boars we had seen. After about one hundred yards we came across pig droppings, which we hoped had been left by our quarry.

We walked for another hundred yards at the same level where we had found the droppings, until our tracker waved us to move up. As we reached him,



our eyes followed his to see three very large and powerful-looking boars rooting in the underbrush about forty yards away. Jim, moving very quickly, got to within sixty feet of them before being seen. As we moved to close the distance between us and Jim's right flank, the pig was only about twenty feet from Jim, standing still and eyeing him as if deciding what to do. Unfortunately, the dogs chose this moment to become animated, and the boar took off - but not before turning and snorting at us in defiance. The dogs gave chase and we were off!

The boar led us down the hill and into a valley with a creek running through the middle. Fortunately for us, the dogs had lost the fleeing boar and were now after one of the other two that we had seen earlier. Their current quarry was much bigger than the one we had just encountered, and was moving toward the creek bed with our dogs hot after him. Jim was close behind as the boar chose to make a stand. Unfortunately, the dogs were not aggressive enough; before Jim had a chance to close with the animal, it crossed over the creek bed to the other side. We decided that Jim would move downstream and then cross over, while I would cross immediately in an effort to outflank it.

As I traversed the stream bed along with the dogs and their handler, our white bitch ran with blinding speed in front of the boar and prevented his escape. I approached him from behind and was about forty feet from him before he turned and stared at me. I lowered my spear and stood still, braced for what I anticipated would be a sudden charge. The seconds seemed like an eternity, and then the boar whipped around on the dog, who had begun to move closer to him. I chose this moment to drop my big spear and exchange it for my throwing spear from the dog handler. I took aim, drew my arm back, and released. My spear struck him a hard shot in the soft side of his right underbelly. He shot forward as the spear seemed to glance off him. When I next looked, I saw his intestines hanging like a bag out of his belly.

He was now about fifty feet away, standing beside a bush and facing me. I retrieved my throwing spear and threw it again, hoping to provoke a charge. This time the spear hit him in the right shoulder before ricocheting off to the right. The boar finally decided to come for me, as he lowered his head and pawed the ground. I grabbed the big spear from the handler and advanced for the showdown.



When I was within twenty feet, he began walking quickly in my direction before suddenly beginning to sway. The gut shot was taking its toll as I rushed him, driving my spear into his shoulder. He screamed as he went down and was thrashing around as Jim suddenly came up from behind and drove his weapon between the animal's shoulder blades and down through his heart. The boar fought for another seven seconds before expiring. At this point we laid down our spears and performed a ritual of which our ancestors would have been proud. Afterwards we honored this great beast, and dressed him using a recently cast replica of a Bronze Age axe and ceremonial dagger. The guide went back to the ranch for a jeep and later transported the carcass back for butchering. It was estimated that the boar weighed 300 pounds.

*Continued on page 21*



# ODIN'S NATION RISING AGAIN!

*The following is a message from Heimgest, Director of the Court of Gothar of the Odinic Rite. It originally appeared in ORBriefing 160, published in April.*

As most readers will know, the Odinic Rite promotes the philosophy of "The Nation of Odin." Briefly, this realises that our first Nation, regardless of the geographical location of the land in which we reside, is the Folk Nation of Odin. A Nation not defined/restricted by the arbitrary and now outmoded geographical boundaries, but by our natural religion and blood kinship. This initiative supersedes the "petty nationalism" which has in truth set brother against brother, usually for the benefit of a stranger folk or creed. The "nation state" is outmoded - the Folk Nation rises - Odin's Nation exists.

The advance of Odin's Holy Nation is one of our primary goals, and towards this aim we have established firm bonds with the Odinic/Asatru groups who also share our sacred vision. Among the topics discussed with our comrades of the Asatru Alliance of the US, and the Asatru Folk Assembly of the US during my visit to Vinland as a special guest of the AA on the occasion of their Althing of 1995 C.E., was the increase and formalising of our bonds with these and other comrade groups. This would be achieved at one level by the formation of an International Axis of such groups. Plans toward this have continued until now when we can announce the formation of the International Asatru/Odinic Alliance (IAOA). The founder members of this folk bond being the Odinic Rite, the Asatru Alliance, and the Asatru Folk Assembly. The finer details are being honed and will be announced, but for now it is important to announce the formation of the IAOA - the vision is reality.

Thanks must be given to all who have worked toward this, especially Valgard Murray who heads the AA and who has devoted much time and energy to this advance. ALL PRAISE TO OUR GODS AND GODDESSES!!

Heimgest DCG

## *Comments by Steve McNallen -*

What Heimgest refers to as Odin's Nation is very compatible with the idea I have advocated in the past, known as the "Ingathering of the Folk" and, more recently, "Fourth World Asatru." These concepts emphasize that Asatru is much more than just doctrine and ritual - it is a way of life and a statement of our relationship to kin. The Asatru Folk Assembly is proud to stand alongside the Odinic Rite and the Asatru Alliance in this move toward the Asatru of the twenty-first century!



# ROOTS AND BRANCHES

by HNIKAR

**T**hat the indigenous religions of the various branches of the Indo-European people are related and share a common origin is well established. This primal Ur-Faith of prehistoric times was the spiritual expression of that people, true to their nature and expressing their outlook. While the spiritual nature of a people is inherent, the outlook can to some extent vary in reference to the particular conditions of time and place. As the Indo-European people followed their exploratory and inquisitive impulses and spread far and wide across the globe, each branch took on characteristics all its own. Each branch, therefore, applied the outlook of its time and place to its religious practice, elucidating new forms - each true to the primal spirit, but varying in ways particular to that branch of the Folk.

In addition to this divergence into various forms, many branches also adopted portions of non-Indo-European religious forms expressing the outlook of shared time and space. Though the origins of the Etruscans remain a matter of uncertainty, their influence on Roman ritual may be an example of this. Certainly the influence of Christianity on many who today seek to restore the indigenous faith is evident, though that is a much



more extreme case. Most syncretism was a good deal more subtle and was not disruptive to the framework of the indigenous faith, though it altered it in some particulars. Early Middle Eastern influence on Roman religion is a better model of this.

More interesting, though, is the sort of reconvergent syncretism one sees when branches of the Indo-European people encounter one another again after the differentiation of religious form. Such reconvergence offers a means of comparative analysis, a deeper understanding of the common spirit of the primal faith, of our people's spiritual nature. It's rather like being able to observe an object from a variety of perspectives and thus getting a better understanding of its whole.

Precisely what has my attention as I write is the correspondence between Roman and Germanic gods as those faith-forms reconverged. These are evidenced in a number of literary and archeological sources and in fact we en-

counter them each time we notice the names of the days of the week in Germanic and Latin-derived languages. Tuesday, the day of Tiw-Tyr-Tiwaz, was *dies Martis* to the Romans, the day of Mars. Tiwaz and Mars were generally considered cognate with one another. Wednesday, the day of Woden-Odin-Wotan, was *dies Mercurius*, the day of Mercury. And Thursday, the day of Thunor-Thor-Donar, was *dies Jovis*, the day of Jove or Jupiter.

To some extent, one may see why the people of that era arrived at these correspondences. Tiwaz and Mars were both then considered to be primarily gods of war. Donar was a thunder god, held to be the highest god among many tribes of Germans, and these were attributes of Jupiter. Mercury was a clever or wise god, a psychopomp, and these attributes matched Wotan fairly well.

But a strong case can be made that these correspondences were somewhat myopic and contrary to the true correspondences drawn in reference to the primal Indo-European faith.

A very clear example of that evidence demonstrates that Tiwaz and Jupiter were once one. The name Jupiter arose from *Dyauspitar*.



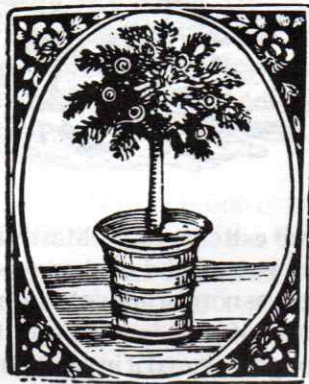
The second element of the name means "father". The first element of the name, however, is closely related to the Greek Zeus (with whom he was identified in syncretic Greco-Roman correspondences) and the Germanic Tiwaz, among others, and seems to originate in the Indo-European *dyēus*, which imparts the sense of sky, light and god in its various derivations. Tiwaz and Jupiter then were in the primal faith the same sky god.

Certainly in the historical context of the German-Roman reconvergence, the case for identifying Donar instead with Jupiter had solid foundations. Jupiter had Donar-like aspects as *Jupiter Pluvius* (the rain bringer), *Jupiter Elicius* (also a rain or storm aspect), and *Fulgur* (a thunder aspect). He was also seen as a resident spirit of the *lapides silices*, ancient stones thought to be thunderbolts kept in his Capitoline temple and used for the swearing of oaths. The use of Mjollnir to bless weddings ties in well with the attendance of Jupiter's priests to the most sacred and ancient Roman wedding ceremony, the *confarreatio*. And to which Germanic god could the label "jovial" be better applied?

Perhaps even Jupiter's aspect as *Feretrius*, the smiter, would seem to make the "fit" better with Donar, but here I think we are back to evidence of Tiwaz instead. The *Ludi Romani* were games originally given in honor of Jupiter if he brought success in war. One of the primary reasons the ancients compared Tiwaz to Mars was his strong association with warfare - we see that Jupiter retained such ties as well.

The association of Mercury and Wotan is one that has always seemed to me to do the latter injustice. Mercury's role was much more limited. His name derives from *merx* or *mercis*, wares or trade. He was particularly the god of mer-

chants and merchandise and his festival of 15 May (shared with Maia) was of special importance to the guild of merchants (*merca--ores, mercuriales*). He shares this attribute with Wotan as "god of cargoes" and this involved a more violent aspect than we might tend to think today, given the integration of warlike and peaceful means in ancient economic activity. This also gives Mercury such traits as eloquence, cleverness, travel and as a guide for the dead - all of which tie into Wotan quite well. But the focus, the personality, is markedly different.



Wotan's character runs deeper, darker, wiser, more warlike, more central to the faith. The origin of Wotan's name is "frenzy" or "fury" - quite different from Mercury's!

I think a better "fit" by far is with Mars. Mars was an ancient deity, one of the three high gods - Jupiter, Mars, Quirius - from earliest Roman history.

Like Wotan, he was linked with wolves. He was by tradition, the father of Romulus and Remus, who were suckled by a she-wolf. Like Wotan, he was closely identified with the spear. He was known as *Mars Hasta*, Mars the spear, and a sacred spear (or spears), also called Mars, was kept in a *sacrarium*, apparently in the *Regia*. Upon the outbreak of war the consul raised the spear, brandished it and called "*Mars vigila!*" (Mars awake!)

His priests were known for their leaping dances in his honor, in which they would beat spears against their shields, the original of which was said to have fallen from the sky.

Like Wotan, he was associated with rulers. The *Regia*, for instance, was the abode of the kings prior to the Republic. And as *Mars Ultor* (the avenger), he became the personal god of Octavian, the avenger of Caesar.

Like Wotan, he was associated with horses. Horse sacrifice, by the way, is generally thought to have been a part of the primal Indo-European faith. His *Equus October* festival was related to the Indic *asvamedha* (also interesting is the linguistic link between such festivals and mead, another tie-in between Mars and Wotan, as explored in Mallory's *In Search of the Indo-Europeans*).

The *Equus October* began as a horse-race. The winning horse was then slain by the *Flamen Martialis*. The tail was taken to the *Regia*, where it was allowed to drip blood over the hearth. Vestals collected some of this blood for distribution at the *Parilia* for the purification of cattle stalls, to increase the herds. Residents of two sections of the city (*Via Sacra* and the *Subura*) then battled over it, the winners garlanding it with loaves of bread for prosperity.

This is a far cry from Odin and Sleipnir, of course, but related by the spiritual significance of the horse in the common Indo-European faith. (We could complicate matters a bit more by throwing Freyr into the mix...)

Mars, like Wotan, was a very complex deity. Cato the Censor left a record of a rite in which a suckling swine, ram and bull were offered to *Mars Silvanus* (a title indicating a woodland aspect) to ensure health, good weather, abundant harvests,



strong flocks, etc. A more ancient hymn calls on him to keep enemies of all kinds from crops and herds. Also instructive is that the name is derived from the word for tribe or people (as with Teuton and Theodoric). To some extent the identification with Ares decreased the importance of Mars, limiting him more exclusively to the role as war god. This one-dimensional depiction may account, as much as anything, for his not being seen by the ancients as cognate with the complex Wotan.

The development of the common Indo-European faith and of each of its branches offers many fascinating insights relevant to our faith today. Each question we ask leads to other questions - such is the nature of all exploration. He whose life is richest will have the most unanswered puzzles - so, too, with religion. But with each question we come to a deeper understanding of Asatru, of the primal faith, and of our people's spiritual nature. ♦

## A TIP OF THE HORN...



A TIP OF THE HORN...To an Asaman, identified only as "Thor's son." Surrounded by a hostile audience at a conference on "The Making and Unmaking of Whiteness," he stood up and accused the presenter of promoting Eurocide. His gutsy outburst came after the speaker suggested that perhaps "white folks" didn't really have souls!

AND THE OTHER TIP OF THE HORN...To the Center for the Study of Whiteness, one of the organizations responsible for the above-mentioned conference. The Center devotes its time and energy to defaming European Americans, while pretending to study "whiteness." In truth, it is a viciously racist group with a political agenda.

## AND THE OTHER TIP OF THE HORN...



## Our special thanks to those of you who have made contributions to the Asatru Folk Assembly

Your generosity has provided us with a new computer, a scanner, a photocopier, legal expenses for Else Christensen, a web page, legal assistance, materials for a viking ship, and much more!

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If you would like your full name published, or if your name was omitted, please let us know!



# GUILD NEWS

Aerospace Technology

Warrior

Seith

Organic Gardening

Genealogy

Viking Ship Guild

Back-to-Basics Guild

## The Warrior Guild

The Warrior Guild proudly announces the seventh issue of *Wolf Age*, complete with Gunnora's article on the role of the berserker in Norse society, and Steve's piece on the relevance of the *berserksganger* on today's battlefield. Swedish subscriber Rickard Behrendt wrote about his country's rangers, who are prepared to carry on the fine Viking tradition of partisan warfare - and there's a discussion of the rune *perthro*, and how it relates to the warrior's fate.

Elsewhere in this *Runestone* you'll find Reinhold's account of his successful boar hunt. For him, and for us, this was no mere sport; it was a giant step toward reviving the warrior traditions of the Northlands! The next hunt is scheduled for October 18, for those of you who would like to take part in this spiritual quest. For Guild members, this can serve as an initiation - for others, it can still be a transformative religious experience.

## Aerospace Technology Guild

Members of the ATG met recently in the Guildmaster's home for a pre-launch planning session, and to watch a video on amateur rocketry. The movie showed an incredible series of launches by Trans Lunar Research and the Pacific Rocket Society in the years 1995-1997. Some were spectacular successes...and others were suitably dramatic *failures!* There's nothing like a launch pad explosion to get your attention!

This meeting was followed a few days later by our first outing. We went camping high in the Sierras, then rolled into Reno the next day for a trip to the planetarium and some rocket activity - or an attempt at it, anyway. The winds were not cooperating. Although we gave *Ari* (Old Norse for "Eagle") its maiden flight with an "F" engine, the conditions were too unpredictable for the larger "G" engines we had with us. After some rather significant side trips, we headed back to the campground for another evening of Asatru fellowship around the fire.

Aside from all this activity, issue number nine of the Guild's journal, *Sleipnir*, is in the hands of readers. How will we know when to celebrate Asatru's seasonal festivals when we live in orbiting space colonies, or on other planets? We've got some ideas! Did that garage-built rocket scheduled for launch last May become the first amateur shot to reach space, as predicted? When will the ATG have its next rocket launch? Read *Sleipnir* and find out!

## Organic Gardening Guild

Cathy has been preoccupied with tending to her newest flower, young Haley! But Annabel has been dropping by to plant marigolds and other annuals around the house. Annabel says she likes to do her gardening without gloves, because it helps ground her out!

Do you want to take part in a seed exchange or send tips for a newsletter? Contact Cathy about a free listing in her upcoming OGG Directory.

Those of you interested in organic gardening can contact Cathy Clinton at 8709 NE Winters Road, Camas, WA 98607.

## Viking Ship Guild

The Viking Ship Guild has run aground, but we expect it will be moving again soon! A lot of the things that have had Reinhold tied to the mast, so to speak, are now lightening up - so write him at the same address as the Organic Gardening Guild if you want to help us build a sea dragon of our own.

Rumors are that, when revived, the Guild will seek to construct a vessel larger than the thirty-five to forty foot one previously planned...and with the help of corporate sponsorship!



## Back-to-Basics Guild

This guild is so new, I'm not even sure if this will be its final name. The theme will be self-sufficiency, food preservation, and simple living. This is a continuation of the guild that Valgard Murray ran for the old Asatru Free Assembly, and its publication will pick up exactly where *Nerthus*, Valgard's newsletter, left off. We are still working on the interface with the Organic Gardening Guild, as we want the two to be complementary. It will also have a strong emphasis on the spiritual nature of families. You can definitely get in on the ground floor with this one!

Contact Scott or Julie at the AFA's address or you may email Julie at: [clanaubyn@deepwell.com](mailto:clanaubyn@deepwell.com)

## Genealogy Guild

Guild supporters have been sending in lots of useful materials, including booklets, articles for cyber-searchers, and a pedigree chart of an AFA member which goes back to Odin himself! (When you consider rebirth in the family line...!) Our newsletter (available in September) also includes a listing of surnames being searched. We're offering this service free of charge; so send in those surnames ASAP. The newsletter is \$2.00 per issue.

For those without computerized programs, we offer a BASIC GENEALOGY KIT (\$3.00) with custom-designed forms for recording data. Our BONUS KIT (\$5.00) includes extra copies of the above forms for those without access to photocopiers. Make checks payable to the AFA. Send all correspondence to Sheila Edlund c/o the AFA.

## Seith Guild

The seith guild is a gathering of Norse shamans. Experience in shamanism isn't necessary, but a willingness to learn is expected. In a world where material wealth and lack of spirituality are actively promoted, the guild is committed to the following goals:

- a) Reestablishing contact with the inherent, indwelling folk-consciousness of our ancestors.
- b) Contacting power animals, landvaettir, hyter spirits, and wights that have protected and warded our folk for thousands of years.
- c) Spearheading the establishment of holy ground for our people and the generations to come.

Subscriptions to EARTHWAYS, is \$5 for four issues. Contact Ragnar Schuett at P.O. Box 2366, Loveland, CO 80539. (email: [RagnarS145@aol.com](mailto:RagnarS145@aol.com))

# Book of Blotar



*Reviewed by Steve McNallen*

Back in the early 1970's, when I began publishing the very first issues of *The Runestone*, I was intrigued to find that a comparable effort had been initiated independently in England. Since that day, I've maintained a high regard for the Committee for the Restoration of the Odinic Rite and its successor, today's Odinic Rite.

It wasn't until a few days ago, however, that I first saw their *Book of Blotar*. This 111-page spiral-bound volume includes all their monthly blots, their rites of passage, numerous shorter invocations, and a wealth of general information and background on ritual practice. It is as rich as it is lengthy, with a style and an appreciation for prose that makes it a significant addition to our emerging Asatru/Odinist cultures.

Readers will notice several differences between these rituals and the ones modeled on those of the early Asatru Free Assembly. The OR's blot structure is more complex than what many of us are used to, which is only a natural reflection of the aforementioned richness. They use a number of ritual tools unfamiliar to most of us, and they allocate a different blot for each month rather than having a few basic ones designed for seasonal festivals or to honor specific deities. These differences are, however, invigorating rather than irritating.

You can only benefit by getting this book, and putting it to work! It can be ordered for \$12, postpaid, from the newly-formed Odinic Rite Vinland, PO Box 2022, Sandusky, OH 44871-2022. Make checks payable to the Odinic Rite Vinland.



# FREEDOM

FOR THE

## Folkmother

Else Christensen is Homeward Bound

**E**lse Christensen will be a free woman in early October, ending an injustice that has dragged on for several years. The challenge now is to head off yet another wrong, by preventing her deportation to Canada upon her release!

Else was one of the founders of Odinism/Asatru in North America. Beginning in the early 1970's, she published *The Odinist* and was leader of the Odinist Fellowship, first from Canada and later from Florida.

When she was railroaded into prison on dubious testimony some years back, we all knew this was an injustice. When the Feds announced they might try to deport her upon the completion of her sentence, the AFA could no longer sit idly by. We retained an attorney, Mr. Jimmy Browning of Breckenridge, Texas, to defend

her and we continue to monitor her situation.

So what's happening lately? Here is the latest, in her own words:

*"Thanks...for your support in the last year - or should I say passing year - I appreciate what you're doing for me.*

*This leads me to thinking of Jimmy Browning. I've just written him asking to request a hearing before the immigration judge. I may get one before release which would be much to prefer. Otherwise, on my release date (Oct. '97) I would be picked up by the marshals and then taken to a holding place until the hearing can be held. I hope I have enough points in my favor to stay in Florida but we'll see how it comes out; there may be a middle ground or ways to get around the problem..."*

The AFA will be conferring with Mr. Browning to see what more we can do to help Else in this situation.

In the meantime, Else hasn't been sitting idle. With the help of friend Rick, she's planning a web page which will be her public voice upon release, and she's continually in the middle of a good book. She works with other alternative religious groups and has taken part in assorted projects behind the walls. The movement stands ready to benefit from Else's energy and wisdom once she among us again!

**SPECIAL NOTICE!**  
After her release, supporters will be able to reach Else at  
**The Odinist Fellowship**  
**PO Box 1647**  
**Crystal River, FL 32629!**



Heritage & Tradition of Canada has minted a commemorative "coin of tradition" in her honor. It is available in several designs and choices of metal. Or show your support by wearing this custom designed T-shirt to Scandinavian fests and Scottish games. It features *The Odinist* logo and runic lettering, in dramatic red, white, and black. \$17 for L and XL, \$19 for XXL - postage included. Send inquiries or checks to:

**Heritage and Tradition**  
**C.P. 244, Succ. P.A.T.**  
**Montreal, Quebec H1B 5K3 CANADA**

Available in the US from:  
**World Tree Publications**  
**P.O. Box 961, Payson, AZ 85547**



# pre-Thing report

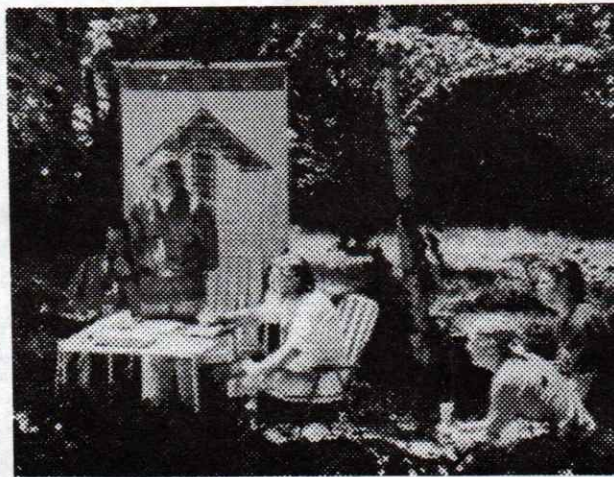
STEPHEN A. McNALLEN

As many of our readers know, the Asatru Folk Assembly has strong links to the Asatru Alliance. Both the AA and the AFA, along with the Odinic Rite, are founding members of the new International Asatru/Odinic Alliance, and we share both a common history and an overlapping membership. The AFA's Calasa Kindred, for example, is a member of the Alliance.

When Calasa Kindred offered to host a pre-Althing gathering for the Alliance, it was our way of showing support. Additionally, it was an opportunity to get together with some of the leading lights of Asatru in Vinland and to talk about the challenges we face, as well as to lift a horn and catch up on gossip. We accomplished all this, and more, from June 13-15!

Perhaps the remark most heard over the weekend was that this gathering had a pervading sense of harmony, of Folkish family, to it. Indeed, not a harsh word or a negative comment was heard to break the feeling of common purpose and cooperation.

Delegates and guests were greeted with a banner-lined road leading into the twenty-four acre site, and the spacious meadows and wooded patches provided plenty of room for camping. A thunder-



storm on the night of the 12th kept the fire danger down, lowered the temperatures into an unseasonably mild range, and refreshed the wildflowers.

Counting children and babies, a total of at least forty-five people attended the event.

Friday was given over to setup and socializing, punctuated by a simple ritual of greeting and dinner. At each meal, the food was blessed by a different gothi, with the idea of spreading duties and participation among all the kindreds. We topped off the day with informal discussions around the campfire.

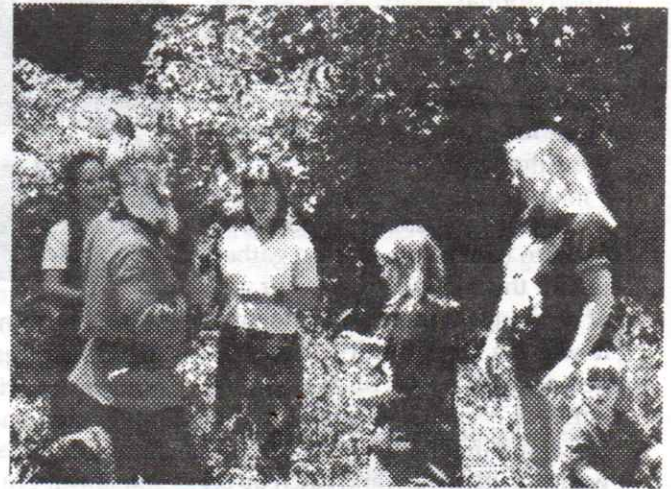
Saturday was our work day. Valgard Murray opened the Thing with a Tyr-blót and a bless-

ing of weapons. I gave the Thing invocation, and we got down to business. The major item on the agenda was the preamble and by-laws of the International Asatru/Odinic Alliance. Delegates argued the wording back and forth, and finally breezed through the last few points. The resulting version will be forwarded to the Odinic Rite for their recommendations.

Throughout the gathering, we made a special effort to provide foods in keeping with our ethnic heritage. Cornish pasties, smoked salmon, red cabbage and Danish dishes tempted palates and filled plates.

Three kindreds petitioning for admission at the next Alliance Althing introduced themselves and answered questions regarding their





accomplishments. All three kindreds have strong ties to the AFA, so once again the links between the two organizations were emphasized. That evening, a sumbel witnessed the usual range of toasts, as well as an amazing poem based on *Laxdaela Saga*, and a rendition of one of Josef's songs praising Odin. Later, Michael and Annabel played a number of traditional Celtic tunes on bodhran and fiddle. Robert Taylor danced by firelight, when he wasn't entertain-

ing us with stories or making insightful analyses of the state of the movement.

On Sunday, I was gothi as we offered blot to Odin. It was, after all, Father's Day, so why not honor the All Father? At one point in the rite, participants named a male ancestor in whose memory they gave blot. More music and singing of some of Odin's names by the Folk gave the rite an added dimension. Immediately afterward,

Barbara and Joe were married with the wedding ritual used years ago by the old Asatru Free Assembly. Breakfast - featuring the traditional Spam and a delicious array of ethnic foods - celebrated Father's Day, Odin's gifts, and the wedding simultaneously.

By late afternoon all the delegates and guests had departed, but the memories, and the accomplishments, remain strong!

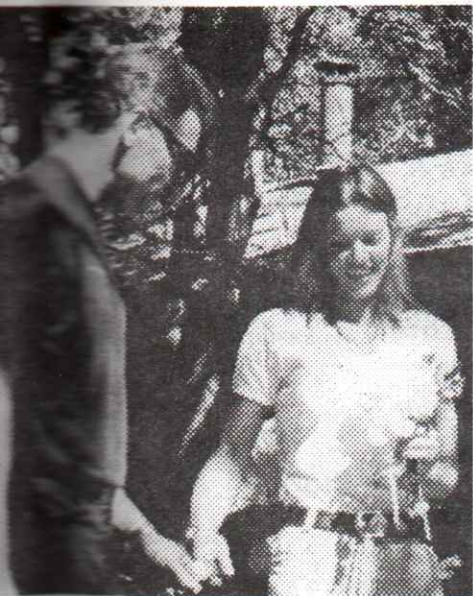




CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FIRST PLACE WINNERS  
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**RAGNAR**  
**SAM**  
**DON**





## BATTLE OVER

# ANCIENT CAUCASIAN

## HEATS UP!

### VICTORIES LIKELY IN THE KENNEWICK MAN CASE!

While we don't want to be prematurely optimistic, the AFA's attorney expects at least some victories in our struggle for justice.

The judge in our case has now reviewed statements from the US Army Corps of Engineers, and has ruled that they acted prematurely when they decided to turn the remains over to the Indians. Furthermore, he recommended they change their position to allow the scientists to have access to the skeleton. *It now looks as if the bones will be studied!*

The AFA could still possibly get the remains, but the demise of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act makes this less likely than before. Nevertheless, we can claim a share of the victory in the recommendation to permit study, because our suit definitely strengthened the scientists' hand.

### "THE STORY SO FAR..."

About a year ago, scientists examined the 9,300 year old remains of a man who died near what is now Kennewick, Washington. Skeletal measurements showed strong Caucasoid traits, leading to the idea that relatives of modern Europeans might have made the long trek across the Bering land bridge many thousands of years ago.

**T**he Asatru Folk Assembly filed suit in Federal court to keep the remains from being surrendered to local Indian tribes. Our feeling was that if the deceased was one of our ancestors, he ought not to be buried by an alien people. In order to determine the "next of kin," further study is necessary - study which the Indian tribes say they will not permit if the bones are turned over to them.

As the months passed, evidence accumulated to show that the earliest peoples in the Americas may have been either Caucasians or their immediate relatives. Native American groups have

strongly contested this idea, perceiving that they have much to lose if their status as the "First Americans" is overturned. Alongside this is the prevailing cultural norm which dictates that any development which might benefit European Americans at the expense of any other group is to be resisted and condemned.

The legal battle continues, but the truth is out. The idea that Caucasians played a role in the very early peopling of this land is now respectable, and increasingly well known. The establishment will have a very hard time sweeping this information under history's rug!



## THE NEW YORKER LEAKS THE TRUTH

In terms of media, perhaps the biggest breakthrough came from *The New Yorker*, in their June 16th issue. Douglas Preston's dramatic eleven-page article explains that the tool making techniques of the earliest Americans does not resemble that of Asia - but it is identical to that of the Solutrean people of southwestern France and Spain.

Elsewhere in the article, forensic anthropologist James Chatters gives the opinion that, based on the shape of his skull, Kennewick Man would have looked a lot like actor Patrick Stewart, who plays Captain Picard on "Star Trek."

The *New Yorker* article is a "must" for anyone interested in the subject.

## NEW MAPS AND OLD NORSEMEN

Since our last issue, new statements and articles have continued to appear in the public press. A map in the *Washington Post* shows early Caucasoid population flows extending all the way from Europe, across north Asia, and into North America. Some scientists now hypothesize that relatives of modern-day Europeans once occupied the entire region across the top of Asia, putting them in excellent position to cross the Bering land bridge.

Their argument is strengthened by the fact that Kennewick Man does not stand alone. There is an entire group of skeletons similar to him, all dating from about the same period. Douglas Owsley, a forensic anthropologist at the National Museum of Natural History, examining a find from Nevada called the Spirit Cave man, re-

marked that this specimen is "most similar to the Ainu from Japan and a medieval Norse population...I'm reluctant to say he's a white guy, but he's certainly very different from modern Asians and Native Americans."

## ATLANTIC MIGRATION?

Is the Bering land bridge the only way Caucasians could have come to North America? Dr. Rob Bonnicksen, director of the Center for the Study of the First Americans at Oregon State University, has an alternative hypothesis. He thinks that some of the first Americans came by skin boat from Europe, moving from England to Iceland, Greenland and eventually to Canada. This route would have been feasible because the lower sea level at that time made the watery traverses shorter. Although no archeological evidence has yet been found to support this idea, it could explain the Caucasian appearances of the early skeletons, as well as the discomfiting fact that the oldest American tools resemble European finds more than they do those from Asia.

## CHEDDAR MAN

Meanwhile, in England, another case has stimulated discussion. Adrian Targett, a history teacher in the town of Cheddar, has turned out to be a relative of a 9,000 year-old man unearthed near that town! The ancestral link, established by comparing mitochondrial DNA, makes this the longest human lineage ever traced. Apparently the two men shared a common ancestor about 10,000 years ago. It is interesting that Cheddar Man, a contemporary of Kennewick Man, should emerge in the spotlight at this time. Wouldn't it be interesting to compare the DNA of these two ancient men?

## ODINIC RITE SUPPORTS AFA ON KENNEWICK MAN

Detractors of the Asatru Folk Assembly's law suit have suggested that other Asatru/Odinist groups do not agree with us on this issue. They were no doubt displeased when Heimgest, Director of the Court of Gothar of the Odinic Rite, made this announcement -

*The ongoing controversy surrounding the "Kennewick Man" and the larger issue of biology and Odinism (as we commonly speak of it in Europe) is of importance and concern to the Odinic Rite collectively and to each member personally; the OR gives full and unhesitating support to the AFA, and all parties in accord with their action. If "Kennewick Man" becomes the firebrand that creates radical revision of contemporary archeological theory, and upheavals in the rank of Asatruar and Odinists as they are forced to more deeply examine their religious natures, then so much the better!*

## ASATRU, KENNEWICK MAN, AND US

Some individuals have suggested that since Kennewick Man predated not only the Viking Age but in fact our parent Indo-European culture itself, he is not relevant to Asatru. These people fail to understand the significance of the ancestral link.

Our Gods and Goddesses did not spring into being at the beginning of the Viking Age, nor earlier when Tacitus wrote his commentaries on the Germans, nor even when the first recognizably Teutonic tribe sat around its campfires in the European forest. In precisely what year was Wotan born, or Frigg - one hundred years BCE? One



- one hundred years BCE? One thousand BCE? Ten thousand BCE?

The Holy Powers have *always* been with us, and have continually revealed themselves to us through the millenia. Their connection to us is organic, interdependent, and inherent. As Edred Thorsson put it in *A Book of Troth*, "We are, in one way or another, descended from them [the Gods and Goddesses] body and soul...Ours is not a 'contractual' relationship, it is one of blood. So long as we exist, the gods and goddesses exist...They can be put to sleep, they can be silenced, but they cannot be killed, unless the thread or organic being that they set into motion, stretching from generation to generation, be ended." To his "So long as we exist," we might add "and for so long as we *have existed*." The Gods and Goddesses are coexistent in time and space with our branch of the human race. ♦

## MORE EVIDENCE OF GOVERNMENT DISCRIMINATION!

Last week, *The Runestone* learned that the US Army Corps of Engineers permitted Indian representatives access to the Kennewick Man remains on several occasions, so they could perform religious rites over them! This completely insensitive action constitutes endorsement of the Indian position, and can only give psychological support to the unwarranted supposition that the remains are Native American. The AFA has formally requested the same privilege of access.

This is not the first evidence of government bias against the suit filed by the AFA and by a number of respected scientists. Recently discovered Corps memoranda commented on the need to acquiesce to the Indians as much as possible, for political reasons. But the latest example comes from another agency, the National Park Service.

A committee was formed to "monitor and review the implementation of the inventory and identification process and repatriation activities required under...the American Indian Graves Protection and Repatriation Act" - the legislation under which the Army is doing everything it can to hand Kennewick Man over to the Indians. This committee consists of three scientists and three Indians. One of the latter is Armand Minthorne, a key player in the Kennewick Man case! Asatruar, or members of any other native European group, are conspicuously absent.

Aren't you glad your tax dollars are helping pay for this?

## Northwest Folk Community



Join like-minded Asatru couples in building "The Enhanced Community" in southwest Washington, within easy commute of Portland. We have professionals who will assist you in finding suitable employment and housing!

Land overlooking Mt. Hood and the Columbia River has been broken and construction started for a traditional Hof which will function as a church, community center, and school for our Folk.

We're making our dreams come true - and you can do the same. Bring your energy and industriousness, and help shape a better life!

Interested couples should contact Reinhold Clinton for more details.

8709 NE Winters Road • Camas, WA 98607



RUNE NAME: *Uruz*  
(*aurochs*)

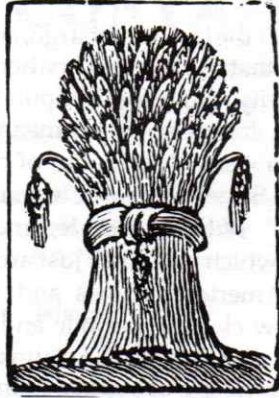
### KEY CONCEPTS:

*Uruz* shapes, organizes, and patterns. In all realms - animate, inanimate and social - it offers an organic strength derived from an ancient past linked to a healthy and vital future. The now-extinct bison after which it is named calls to mind the early Germanic initiation rites, in which an aurochs might be hunted and killed.

### AFFIRMATION:

*I am healthy and whole.  
Patterns from my past  
shape my strength.*





CHARLES SPRATLING

# Sif's BOUNTY

---

I t's very difficult for even the most Heathen of modern city-dwellers to get into the spirit of a harvest festival. After all, to the extent we're aware of the season, it's a time for vacation and play, not to work overtime. But locked away in air-conditioned glass towers, or the "little boxes on the hillside" for most of our day, we're totally cut off from nature's seasonal rhythm. So what's the big deal about harvest, anyway?

Our ancestors would never have asked such a question. In the days before food stamps and interstate transportation of foodstuffs, a successful harvest meant life, plain and simple. A failed harvest meant hunger, pestilence, and death.

Nordic folk enjoyed a great variety of foods, and were less dependent on the grain harvest than were other peoples. If a blight brought low the barley and rot got the rye, there was still livestock and dairy foods, fruits, roots, and vegetables, as well as fish and game. In the North, bread was not the "staff of life." But anywhere grain could be grown, it was of primary importance.

A great many of the Aesir and Asynjur were, and are, associated with the harvest in some way. The word itself means "Har's (Odin's) feast." But the reaping of grain in particular conjures up images of Sif's haircut. It's especially appropriate to refer to those "amber waves of grain" as Sif's Bounty. This bounty provides us with not only bread and beer, but also with meat and even some plastics. It's also a significant trade export.

I've been blessed to live closer to the land than do most Americans. Many a mouse I've turned up with the plow, just as in Robert Burns' poem. Many indeed are the acres I've gleaned of Sif's Bounty. Even before I'd heard of Asatru, before I ever heard Stevie Windwood sing a note of *John Barleycorn Must Die*, I knew harvesting was a sacred act. I could just feel it in my heart of hearts. The wagons I loaded with wheat and barley didn't just *represent* life in some abstract, symbolic sense. To thousands of hungry people, they *were* life.

I've followed Sif's Bounty to port cities, where it's stacked in elevators tall as skyscrapers. Ships from around the world, huge behemoths a furlong and more in length, gather to gorge themselves. Like revelers to the feast they arrive with bellies empty and depart stuffed full. I've been to the Board of Trade, and watched the traders perform. A cryptic hand signal and a nod transforms Sif's Bounty into gold, as if by magic. The ships depart to feed hungry masses in foreign lands, and somehow the check in my hands seems anticlimactic.

Far more satisfying was my visit to the now-barren fields. The good earth just keeps on giving, and what can I give her back? Thanks for the sun (Balder), the rain (Frey), the lightning (Thor) which fixes the nitrogen. Not to mention thanks for the soil (Frigga), the seed (Sif), and the peace (Tyr) to let it grow.

And there in the center of the field is something I've left for nature's creatures. No matter how careful the combine operator, there's always one swath



of grain left standing, inches wide and dozens of yards long. It's just not worth the time or fuel to turn the giant machine around for those last few pounds of grain. This is the sheaf left standing for Sleipnir, as he and Allfather lead the Raging Host in the Wild Hunt. It's a snack for Hugin and Munin on their daily survey of the world. The last standing stalks sustain the fieldmouse, until I once again turn her out of her home with the plow. The mouse, garnering grain for the cold months of winter, knows that the harvest is sacred. People in a cash economy (which is now most of the world) have largely forgotten.

## A HARSH REMINDER

It's easy for us in this rich land to take Sif's Bounty for granted. The ignorant never know what they have 'til it's gone. But we're in for a rude awakening, a harsh reminder that Sif's Bounty is not boundless. As I write these words, the massive grain elevators stand nearly empty, the usual stockpiles depleted. Harvests worldwide are poor for the third year in a row, so those stockpiles won't be replenished anytime soon.

The price of grain has nearly doubled this year. You won't notice when you buy bread, but meat will be expensive. Farmers are selling off herds they can't afford to feed. There's less grain and more hungry masses in foreign lands. They're getting the grain which once went to our hogs and steers. As our real incomes fall, we're priced out of red meat, forced to substitute fowl and "veggie-burgers."

Every president since Carter has maintained that any oil embargo, or even a hefty price increase, is the equivalent of an act of war. Had Saddam kept oil cheap, the Emir of Kuwait would still be in exile. Every presi-

dent since the 1970's has held that war is preferable to the economic dislocations of a fuel price increase.

Remember the last oil embargo, and the havoc it created? But that was just a matter of relative economic prosperity. To a food-importing country, any shortening of the grain supply means mass starvation. And it's not simply a matter of charity; with money from Wall Street, these are "economically developing nations." With "free trade," industry seeks the lowest wage, which is usually just around starvation level. As America declines and "backward" countries find new clout (economic and otherwise), should it surprise us if they stake a claim to our grain? Wouldn't any shortening of supply or increase in its price be an act of war? And won't the "one worlders" insist we sell it to them?

We'll survive the present series of poor harvests by feeding less grain to livestock, eating a diet lower in protein. We may not be so lucky next time.

Remember that the Fimbul winter comes before Ragnarok; three years of poor harvests, then all Hel breaks loose. I seem to remember that Mormons keep a year's supply of food on hand. Should we do the same? Is that any more security than the mouse in her nest?

Sif's Bounty is truly a blessing; be sure to bless her in return. It's not something to take for granted. We might also give a thought to what we'll do when her bounty disappears, or is sold out from under us. Time was when a successful local harvest meant life for kith and kin. Only the occasional excess was traded to strangers. But today we bid in the marketplace for our daily bread, the stuff of life itself. Recognizing the importance of the harvest isn't just a quaint relic of the past. It's the pressing issue of the future. ♦

NEW VIDEO  
*from the AFA!*

## ASATRU, THE SOUL, AND NITIATION

In this hour-long presentation, Steve McNallen explains the essentials of Asatru to the Portland Theosophical Society and guests. He covers our major Gods and Goddesses, describes our essential values, and clarifies the nature of the human soul. Steve also discusses initiatory motifs in Asatru, ranging from Odin's hanging on the tree to the warrior initiation implied in the myth of Balder.

This is a good overview of Asatru, with additional focus on aspects neglected elsewhere. Includes a question-and-answer period.

**\$15.00**

Please include \$1.50 S&H, plus 7.25% tax if you're a California resident. Make checks payable to the

**AFA**

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## CONTACTS WANTED

Local contacts for fellowship, study  
groups, and kindred formation

### Massachusetts (Boston)

Spencer Henderson (Email:  
Forseti@aol.com)

### Florida (Miami)

Kenneth Speakman  
609 Siesta Key Circle #3148  
Deerfield Beach, FL 33441  
(Quieton@aol.com)

### Indiana

Brent Koch,  
1709 S. Fares,  
Evansville, IN 47714

### Iowa

Duane Smith #803893  
Iowa State Pen.  
P.O. Box 316  
Ft. Madison, IA 52627

### Nevada

L. Bryant  
P.O. Box 1230  
Round Mountain, NV 89045

### Texas (Dallas/Ft. Worth)

Lawrence Hagan, tdc#610144  
P.O. Box 128  
Tennessee Colony, TX 75880

### Wisconsin, Madison

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(wahanna@students.wisc.edu)

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As a RUNESTONE subscriber, we will run your listing for two issues, free of charge. Send your request to  
**AFA (Contacts Wanted), P.O. Box 445, Nevada City, CA 95959**

## Why YOUR Kindred Should Affiliate with the AFA!

The Asatru Folk Assembly is expanding its program of developing alternative, tribally-oriented systems consistent with our religious beliefs. As a part of that Folk-building, we are inviting the participation of kindreds who would like to be involved with this endeavor.

This is not meant to suggest an exclusive relationship between any kindred and the AFA. On the contrary, AFA-affiliated kindreds would be encouraged to participate in the Asatru Alliance or similar groups.

### Kindreds affiliating with the AFA get the following benefits:

- Participation in Folk-building networks above the kindred level. One of the major goals of the Asatru Folk Assembly is to build social/religious systems consistent with our worldview. This Folk-building process starts with the individual, continues through the kindred, and then expands to include networks of kindreds working together for the good of all.
- Assistance in obtaining legal recognition as a branch of the AFA.
- Ongoing training for kindred leaders in the form of a weekend seminar each year dedicated to professional development, improving personal skills, and issues in leadership.

**Interested kindreds are invited to inquire about affiliation.**



# BITS & PIECES

The ancient Hungarian religion is the subject of the 16-page journal *Napkelet* ("Sunrise"), published more or less monthly by Magyar Vallas Kozossege, H-1399 Budapest, Pf. 701/655, Hungary. The old Hungarian beliefs are recognized by the government of that country, in yet another example of the blossoming religious impulse sweeping the nations of Eastern Europe.

Members of Mjollnir Kindred, in Holmes Correctional Institution, Bonifay, Florida, have won the right to regularly show **Asatru-related videos** in the prison chapel on a monthly basis. Participation has been good. This is clearly the result of much effort on their part, and we congratulate them on this victory! We hope that the Supreme Court's action regarding the Religious Freedom Restoration Act will not endanger this progress.

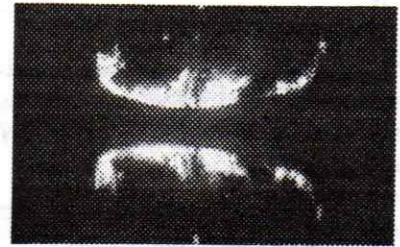
The *Snorri*, a fifty-four foot long replica of a Viking knarr, or cargo ship, is making the sea journey from Greenland to Vinland as this issue of *The Runestone* prepares to go to press. Built by W. Hodding Carter, the vessel is named after the first known White child born in North America. Lisa Lattes, Carter's wife, is on record as having prayed to our Gods that her husband would return from the trip by August 26th, when their own baby is due!

In a crushing blow at religious freedom, the Supreme Court has struck down the **Religious Freedom Restoration Act** of 1993. The six to three decision will make it harder to succeed when claiming that actions taken by the government improperly restrict religious freedom. Mainstream faiths will not experience much inconvenience because of the ruling, but small or unconventional religions - such as Asatru - will be significantly impacted.

Asatruar in prisons will be particularly likely to suffer from this decision. However, it is important to note that all Asatruar, in or out of prison, will be affected by this ruling any time government policy conflicts with our beliefs and practices.

The "oldest ship in the world" may have been discovered off Hayling Island, Hampshire, England, according to the May 7th issue of the *Yorkshire Post*. Members of a crack diving crew were investigating a Roman causeway at Hayling when they discovered wood which was later dated to about 6,400 years ago. Electronic sounding of the site revealed the shape of a ship. If this turns out to be true, the Hayling ship will be the world's oldest shipwreck - of a vessel built before the Great Pyramid was erected on the Giza plain.

Wotan's Kindred celebrated Midsummer on June 21st, as part of the festival cycle they have honored faithfully since 1991. This year's event featured an inspiring ritual in their impressive stone circle, honoring Sunna and Balder. The burning of the fifteen-foot Viking ship was as powerful as always, with the flames reflecting magically in the water. Other topics were boar hunts, women's mysteries, Beowulf, and a sumbel. About twenty-eight Asatruar were on hand for the celebration.



The Court of Gothar of the Odinic Rite (BMC Runic; London WC1N 3XX UK) is pleased to announce the formation of the **Odinic Rite Vinland** branch, under the leadership of Osferth OR. This fully functioning OR branch invites all interested US and Canadian comrades to contact them for membership details.

The ORV has launched a full publishing center, and are pleased to offer *The Book of Blotar of the Odinic Rite*. It contains the twelve major monthly rituals as well as Rites of Passage, a Healing Blot, Sword Naming, Land Reclamation, Banner Consecration, short invocations, daily rituals and more. See our review elsewhere in this *Runestone*. Checks may be made payable to "Odinic Rite Vinland" and snail-posted to -

Odinic Rite Vinland  
PO Box 2022  
Sandusky, OH 44871-2022

Email: Heidentor@lrbcg.com  
OR website:  
<http://www.lrbcg.com/heathen>



An Anglo-Saxon helmet dating from about 600-650 C.E. has been discovered in a burial recently unearthed in England.

This helmet is only the second one ever found with an intact boar-shaped crest (Another boar crest was found without a helmet, and there are literary references to them in *Beowulf*).

Other artifacts in the grave included a bronze bowl with enameled decoration, a pattern-welded sword in a scabbard, a small iron buckle, and what appears to be an iron knife. Several bones, to include the top of the skull, were also recovered. Additional items may have been lost over the centuries from repeated plowing of the ground.

Archeologists think the helmet's owner may have been a prince or nobleman. From the condition of his teeth, he was about thirty-five to forty-five years old at the time of his death.



One problem with many recovery programs - whether from alcohol abuse, drugs, or whatever - is that they are generally full of Christian assumptions. With that in mind, Thorr Sheil has written *Hard-Hitting Heathen Recovery* from the standpoint of our Northern beliefs. It comes with good recommendations from those who have "been there." You can get a copy by sending \$10.99 plus \$4 shipping to Thorr at PO Box 080437, Staten Island, NY 10308-0005.

## R E S O U R C E S

### PUBLICATIONS

**Huginn and Muninn**, P.O. Box 1159, 121 Reykjavik, Iceland. Dedicated to the Nyall philosophy associated with Asatru in Iceland. \$10 US, preferably cash.

**Lina**, P.O. Box 12012, Champaign, IL 61826. Quarterly journal of Frigga's Web. \$20 annually, check or money order only, payable to Frigga's Web. Internationally, \$28.

**Renewal**, Box 4333, University of Melbourne, Victoria, 2052 Australia. Very good writing, particularly "Ota's Talking Point," and lots of information that you just won't find anywhere else. \$12 Australian, plus \$4 for airmail.

**Theod**, P.O. Box 8062, Watertown, NY 13601. A magazine dedicated to Anglo Saxon religion. Lots of material, with a emphasis on "the big picture." \$15 per year.

**Uncle Thorr's Magazine**, P.O. Box 080437, Staten Island, NY 10308-0005. Outspoken, frequently humorous comment on the Northern religious scene. Quarterly, \$15 per year.

**Vor Tru**, P.O. Box 961, Payson, AZ 85547. Journal of the Asatru Alliance, with which the AFA is closely allied. An important publication which has grown with the Asatru community for twenty years. Over 80 pages of content. \$18 for four issues.

**Wodensdag**, P.O. Box 190, Union Bay, British Columbia V0R3B0 Canada. A noteworthy kindred journal from one of Asatru's most passionate writers. \$8 for four issues, \$3 for a sample copy (US funds). Make checks payable to: E. Max Hyatt.

### WEB SITES

**Gert's Theodish Homepage**  
[www2.webzone.net/~gerda/](http://www2.webzone.net/~gerda/)

**Frigga's Web**  
[nmia.com/~seaxnet/Friggas.htm](http://nmia.com/~seaxnet/Friggas.htm)

**Hnikar's Folkish Asatru Page**  
[www.geocities.com/Athens/Forum/5056/index.html](http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Forum/5056/index.html)

**Odinic Rite of England**  
[www.lrbcg.com/heathen/](http://www.lrbcg.com/heathen/)

**Ragnar's Asatru Homepage** (Lone Tree Kindred)  
[our.world.compuserve.com/homepages/R\\_Schuett/4/](http://our.world.compuserve.com/homepages/R_Schuett/4/)

**Raven Kindred of the Asatru Alliance**  
[www.asatru.org](http://www.asatru.org)



# FRONTLINE

What can you do to help the AFA to grow?  
LOTS! Here are some ideas -

**JOIN US!** We have added several new benefits to membership, making it more interactive and dynamic than ever before. Get in on our email list, our networking directory, and all the other exciting things underway here at the AFA!

**AFFILIATE YOUR KINDRED WITH THE AFA!** It's time to build systems, to implement the "Ingathering of the Folk" - and your kindred can be a part of it! Check out the other benefits of AFA affiliation mentioned elsewhere in this issue.

**SEND US MONEY!** Simple, obvious, but true. Advertising takes money. The Kennewick Man case has cost us a lot in legal and travel expenses. Most of the other things we do, such as publishing, barely pay for themselves. We can use your donations!

**WRITE FOR US!** Good manuscripts are always welcome. Send today for a copy of our writer's guidelines.



**TELL YOUR FRIENDS ABOUT US!** There are plenty of fine folks out there who only need to be told that we exist. Do you know some of them? Why not share the adventure of Asatru with your friends? Word of mouth is the best form of advertising!



**Have YOU seen it?**

<http://runestone.org>

By the time you read this, we should have our new, huge, "no frills" webpage online. You'll find everything from articles on Kennewick Man and Native Americans, kindred & guild activities, background and basic documents on the AFA (including our Declaration of Purpose and application form), ordering information, and lots of full-color pictures!



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# MOOT POINT

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Hailsa Stephen!

Just a quick fax to let you know that we received the most recent issue of *The Runestone*, and as always - EXCELLENT!...

I found the article on "death" especially interesting. If I had the time right now, which I don't, I would tell you about my many years "sitting before the wall," a Buddhist term which refers to the act of meditation. I also studied the Tibetan *Book of the Dead*, but it was as a Buddhist back in the early '70's. I, not unlike yourself, instinctively knew that much of it was "dead on," excuse the pun! And [I] incorporated much of it into my life from that time forward. Actually, the Tibetan form of Buddhism (I've studied and practiced them all) is based more on the former, native Pagan religion of the people living there, than most other forms of Buddhism (The Tibetan Pagan religion is called the "Bon," if memory serves me right). The majority of the information contained in that particular form of Buddhism is actually Pagan or Heathen - to be perfectly honest. If you study the so-called original teachings of the Buddha and then compare them to the various "ethnic" forms of Buddhism around Asia, you soon come to realize that not unlike Christianity, they are basically just reworked versions of the Heathen religion that preceded them...

By the way, thank you for the mention of our publication in *The Runestone*. Just one thing; our subscription rate is now \$8 per year, and \$3 for a sample issue. If you could change that it would be greatly appreciated by me...

Hail the Aesir! Hail the Vanir!

Max Hyatt

Heilsa, Max!

*Bon does incorporate a lot of pre-Buddhist lore, and seems to represent an earlier shamanic tradition. I have always wanted to travel to Tibet and circumambulate Mount Kailas. The Buddhists walk around the holy mountain clockwise - and the Bon ("bad boys of the Himalayas") make their journey the opposite direction!*

*Furthermore, given all that is coming to light concerning the presence of early Caucasians in central Asia (the Tarim Basin mummies, for example), I suspect that the Bon may have preserved archaic material relating to our traditions. Time will tell!*

*[A note to our readers: Max is the editor and publisher of Wodanesday, which we recommend. You'll find his address with the list of publications, elsewhere in this issue.]*

Hail the Gods!

Steve

Hailsa Steve:

A few comments on your most recent "Tip of the Horn." The young man who was shot by the Arab on the Empire State Building is still alive but paraplegic from the bullet to the brain. He and his brother are members of a band called "The Bush Pilots" and have been wearing Thor's Hammers longer than I. From all accounts he was loved by everyone who ever knew him, and is making considerable progress from his devastating injury. His brother was wearing his Hammer and Thor's T-shirt on "Good Morning America" when he was interviewed. There was an hour long "View Point" concerning this tragedy and every home video and photo shown revealed the



injured man's love of his family and friends, and him proudly wearing his Hammer. As for the young Danish man who was killed by the Arab...he was a friend of the brothers, also a musician, and in Vinland to try to get a break in the music industry.

The point here is, yes, Asa-Thor's Hammer is not the ideal image for an anti-gun group, but the Hammer was there long before the shootings or the group. You asked, "Why the hammer?" Possibly, it was at the young injured man's request since he is seen wearing his long before the shooting, while lying in his hospital bed on the verge of death, and the light dancing off it while he struggles with simple, rehabilitative exercises. Unfortunately, the coward from the Middle East "ate his own gun" to avoid true vengeance...that would be best dealt out with a Hammer, axe, or other sharp, steel weapon of honor.

Hail Sigfather!

Vandal Falke

*Heilsa, Vandal!*

*Thank you for giving us the background on this tragedy. Of course we honor those who wear the hammer out of love for Thor and for the old ways of our Folk. We have nothing but contempt for the assailant who attacked these men.*

*Still, the Hammer of Thor is a poor choice for an anti-gun symbol. If they wanted to use it as the logo for an anti-crime group, or for a committee dedicated to the eradication of murderous criminals, I would enthusiastically applaud. However, we must not be stampeded into surrendering our right to bear arms when an incident like this occurs. Instead, let's get rid of the problem - certain kinds of people, not the weapons.*

Hail Thor!

Steve

Steve:

Having read most of the Asatru material available and as a regular subscriber to *The Runestone*, I remain a bit confused about Asatru's position on persons of both Germanic and Celtic ancestry, particularly as it relates to the Northern gods...

Why this keeps cropping up in my mind is that my gene memory continues to resonate to both the Norse and Celtic themes and clearly to the Germanic Anglo-Saxon harmonies. There is no doubt in my mind

that, as Jung observed, we do carry a deep collective unconscious awareness of our ancestry and the gene pools from which we descend. What is particularly interesting to me is that both sides of my family, after arriving in the New World in the 17th century (one side with Lord Baltimore in 1638 and the other with a group of adventurers in New England in 1684), have consistently married within the gene pool. As the families moved west through Kentucky, Ohio, Missouri, and Kansas, the names all ring of either Anglo-Saxon or Celtic ancestry. My children are twelfth generation in the New World and continue the favoring of this same gene pool in their marriages.

Perhaps you will write again and more thoroughly about the linkage you see between the two basic northern European ethnic groups with particular reference to the ancient Indo-European origins, the similarities of their gods and myths and the position Asatru takes on these links...

If you ever hear of anyone attempting to establish a kindred in south-central Oregon (i.e., Klamath Falls, Bend, Lakeview) please advise them of my long-time interest in Asatru and in an accessible kindred.

Ed

Greetings, Ed!

*As one who also possesses Germanic and Celtic ancestry, I share your interest in this question. Asatru, per se, doesn't have an official opinion on any of this...but I do, of course!*

*Perhaps I'll write more on it in the future, but for now I'll just reiterate my feeling that the Celts and the Germans are closer kin than most people realize. In many respects, their religions are common expressions of a northern European religiosity - there are astounding parallels in both their mythology and their cultic expressions.*

*Like you, I feel the tugs of both cultures: My obvious attachment to the Germanic world, and especially the Vikings, is clear from my long involvement in Asatru. At the same time, I respond emotionally to my Irish roots - I am profoundly moved by certain music and cultural themes. I need to have an ancestral regression done some day.*

*The best single source I know that analyzes the Celtic/German connection is Hilda Davidson's **Myths and Symbols in Pagan Europe** (Syracuse University Press, Syracuse, New York, 1988).*

Hail Odin!

Steve



Greetings, Folk,

...Now that I have a young family, my wife and I long for kinship with folk like us. We looked into the mainstream [!] Pagan community and found nothing that appealed to us. The fact that we were meat eating, leather wearing, gun owing Pagans didn't mesh well with the New Age drivel in *Evolving Times* magazine... "Get closer to the Goddess by way of herbal colon cleansing!" I don't think so! Thankfully, I discovered Asatru.

...Recently my family and I went to the coastal mountains of Mendocino county. We stopped along the roadway and hiked down to a stream. My daughter, aged three, waded in the cool water while my wife breast fed our infant son.

I noticed movement out of the corner of my eye and saw a man watching us from behind a tree about thirty yards away. I didn't like the vibe I was getting, so I casually drew my dagger and, almost without thought, scratched a protection rune onto a stone I was holding. I cast the stone into the water, all the while "staring down" our voyeur. He got the message and wandered off somewhere out of sight. At that point I heard a screech and looked up to see a huge raven land on the branch above us. As we made our way back to the van the raven flew from tree to tree, all the while staying within eyesight of us. Before I left, I carved Odin's symbol [*The rune othala - Editor.*] into a stone and cast it into the waters below. I hoped my humble offering was conferred by the raven to the One who sent him...

K.T.

Heilsa!

*Welcome to the tribe! No colonic irrigation here! Your response to the intruder was extremely appropriate, perhaps even more so than you know. Well done!*

*Your reaction to "mainstream Paganism" (or its reaction to you) reminds me of the time I was attending an "Earth Energies" workshop in northern California. At one point I suggested to some of the participants that maybe we ought to go into town and get a cheeseburger and a milkshake. Having chocolate on your breath will get you readily condemned in some circles!*

Wotan Lebt!

Steve

Dear Friends!

Many thanks for your copies of your wonderful magazine, *The Runestone*. It's very interesting example for us. What do you think regarding our work in the *l' Araldo di Thule*? Are you interested in a possible translation of your articles into Italian?

Another question: Do you know persons of Langobard heritage in your community or in your country? We're interested in making contact with them.

...With all our sympathy -

Hail the Aesir and Vanir!

Paolo Gauna

*We mentioned l' Araldo di Thule in a recent issue - without actually reviewing it, since we don't read Italian! Nevertheless, this is an attractive and appealing publication which seems to be in sympathy with our basic worldview. Any of you who are of Langobardic descent may want to contact Mr. Gauna at Via Garibaldi 8, F. P. 14047, Mombercelli (AT), Italy.*

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

...I'm preparing a book on Ullr...Do you know anyone collecting, like me, material (medals, illustrations etc.) devoted to Ullr and Skadi?

Reinhold Jordan

Friend of Thor

Editors note: *Runestone* readers can contact Mr. Jordan at Freitagstrasse 32, 97422 Schweinfurt, Germany.



The following letter was received from Edred Thorsson in response to private communication about death and the after-death experience. Because our conversation was entwined with last issue's article on preparing for this great transition, we include these thoughts as a follow-on to that piece.

Heilsa, Steve!

...The experience of all souls is not the same in the postmortem state. Immortality of the *ego* (ek) is a hard-won thing - and then it is only the most *powerful* parts of the ego which can possibly survive the blast-furnace that is the death experience. It is *power*, not *morality*, that determines these parts, though it should be noted that true ethical discipline is one of the chief sources of power available. Life in Midgard is an opportunity to shape our power in an environment of resistance (Need) which is unavailable elsewhere in the World(s). The path of Memory, or retaining the ego conscious memories (at the peak level again) is achieved by separating one's Self from the flow of Nature. This does not mean that one becomes a dualist, or ascribes "evil" to Nature, and so forth. It is simply an act of resolve to be the rider of the Horse, not to lose one's consciousness in the Horse (Elhaz/Mannaz).

The other path of immortality is organic, the rebirth of the *hamingja/fylgja* through metagenetic lines. The first path is that of Asgard, and the way is found by the polar route to the North Star; the other is equatorial and is the road to Hel. It is in Hel that the souls await rebirth - and not all of the realms of Hel are as dreary as some of the myths imply - but even paradise is a dreary place for men and women who desire to live in the flesh of Midgard.

Our way of life is VERY different from the Buddhist way, of course. For them all "life is suffering." This is the FIRST of the Noble Truths. For us LIFE IS JOY. I believe that the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism are actually a "satanic" reversal of some of the best folk beliefs of the Indo-Europeans.

Reyn til Runa!

Edred

## Announcements

### Weddings

**Joe Emert and Barbara Holder** were wedded before the Gods and the Folk on Sunday, June 15th. Valgard Murray of the Asatru Alliance performed the ceremony, which followed an Odin-blot by Steve McNallen. Don Cunningham, Barbara's son, was witness for both bride and groom.

An auspicious rune-reading the night before had confirmed the appropriateness and timing of the match, and final preparations were launched with enthusiasm.

Barbara held a bouquet of wild sweet peas and star jasmine. A wedding cake decorated with flowers and runes was served, along with a breakfast feast featuring smoked salmon and Valgard's "Spam special."

### Welcome to Midgard!

...to **Megin Kathleen Steiner**, born Tyrday, June 17th, to Monica and Greg! The father tells us that "...as labor was beginning, I donned my Hammer, lit candles to Tyr, and performed a Hammer Rite for luck, energy, and protection for my wife...I then painted runes on Monica's wrists and palms to bring the right power to the birth - *fehu*, *berkano*, and *perthro* - and I invoked the light alfar, Frigga, and Eira as I clasped my wife's wrists..."

...and to **Thorrin Magni Camp**, born Odinsday, June 18th! Parents Larry and Heidrun inform us that young Thorrin weighed in at 9 pounds, 6 ounces and is a sizeable 21.5 inches long. "He has red-blond hair, blue eyes, and a massive appetite" reports the proud father. Who says a name doesn't matter?

### Final Farings

**Ralph D. Schuett**, grandfather of Ragnar Schuett, died at his home on June 14, 1997, at the age of 83. Mr. Schuett, born June 4, 1914 in Cairo, Nebraska, had worked as a fireman and engineer for the Union Pacific railroad from 1941 to 1980. He will be remembered for his nature as a generous, hardworking, and caring person - a man who epitomized so much of the best in our Folk. May his power and virtue be reborn in numerous descendants!



# CALENDAR

**JUNE 8 - LINDISFARNE DAY.** In the year 793, three Norwegian dragon ships raided the monastery at Lindisfarne, officially starting the Viking Age. Toast them with your favorite beverage and leaf through a good book about our sea-wolf ancestors.

**JUNE 9 - DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR SIGURD THE VOLSUNG.** No Teutonic hero outshines Sigmund's noble son. His courage and nobility won him fame shining through the centuries. Recall his glory by listening to Wagner's *Ring* operas, or by doing something generous, in imitation of Sigurd's goodness of heart.

**JUNE 20 - MIDSUMMER.** This is the sun's moment of greatest glory, and the time of longest daylight. After today, the sun's decline begins. Decorate your house with sunwheels (☼), and burn a candle in her honor.

**JULY 9 - DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR UNN THE DEEP MINDED.** Unn was a strong-willed matriarch who established dynasties in the Orkneys, Faroes, and Iceland. Do something to make your family line stronger and more permanent. Recall the deep-minded women of your clan today.

**AUGUST 9 - DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR KING RADBOD.** This Frisian king ejected Christian missionaries and upheld Asatru in his country against great pressure. Pour a libation to the ancient Frisian Goddess Friagabi, "Giver of Freedom." Like Radbod, you can renounce the alien faith. Here are some words reversing the Christian oath the Saxons were made to swear: "I forsake the Christian God, and I forsake all worship of him, and I renounce all his works! I take up the words and work and worship of our Gods and Goddesses, of Thor and Odin and Tyr and all who are their companions!"





