THE GEORGIAN NEWSLETTER

SAMHAIN 2013

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The Legend of the Wheel: A Celtic Story of the Wheel

ADAPTED FROM CELTIC LEGENDS AND PAGAN SYMBOLISM

by Lady Allusha, aka Rose English

Samhain: October 31

In the Land of the Celts, the old King has died. The Druids meet in council at Tara, home of the High King, and center of all Ireland. They hold a grand festival, as they sit in judgment of what was and what will be. It is decreed that all fires shall die out, then a fresh Sacred Bonfire lit. Into this fire were thrown the remains of the old King, that he may be freed of his mortal past, and his spirit could enter the Land of the Dead.

The land lay cold and barren and many clans warmed themselves by this Sacred Fire. The spirits of the dead King and other benevolent deceased were invited to warm themselves, visit, and feast once more. There was much singing and dancing and revelry I honor of the Dead.

But the people needed a King. And so it was, that the Druids drank and feasted until they fell into a trance, that they may beseech the Gods to send a ruler to the Land. In answer to their pleas, the Crone, Cailleach, the withered old Earth Goddess, appeared before them. She would use her sorcery to aid them in obtaining a King. In return, the people must revere and honor their aged. So it was decreed. SN to the aged of each clan, whose lives have made them ready for Divine Wisdom, the God Mananan the Wise gave the gifts of the "Apples of Immortality" and the "Nuts of Knowledge."

As Cailleach had instructed, the Druids now directed the people to build the fire higher and higher, and to dance 'round it faster and faster. Meanwhile, Cailleach had gone into the depths of the forest, and gathered together dark rich earth, leaves and branches from Sacred Trees, and skin and horns of the giant stag. She formed these into a man-like shape, dark and large in stature. She invoked the Lord of Darkness from his realm by the magick of the Sacred Fire and the Power of the Dance. She called him forth into this body of the earth, and his name resounded through the woods…Cernunos!

'Round the fire the people dances, feeling ecstatic as the Power coursed through their veins. Their frenzy was so great that even the Gods were affected. And so it was that the Dagda, father of the

Gods, known as the Good God, mated with Morrigan the Dark Goddess, and their seed spilled all over the land.

From deep within the woods came the sound of a horn blowing. Cernnnos stepped forth from the flickering shadows and joined in the Dance. He led them in the Dances of the Spiral and of the Hunt. When the dancing was at an end, the people crowned him with a wreath of holly and ivy. Thus did the Lord of Darkness attain the Throne of Power, and he reigned over the land.

Through the cunning and sorcery of Cailleach, Cernunnos became ruler. Together they wield the Powers of Darkness and Mystery. The land became more cold and barren, and as the white hairs covered the head of the Crone, so too the white snow covered the land.

And it came to pass that the Celts longed for warmth, so they went to the Druids, begging for some form of release from this Dark Rule. The Druids then went to the High Mountains to consult the Wyrrd, who are the Guardians of Fate, Destiny and Prophecy. The Wyrrd instructed them to search for and find the Sacred Seed of Life, which had fallen to earth. This seed was to be planted deep within the bosom of the earth, and Druid wizardry worked over it. In return, the people must worship the Horned God by day and the Goddess by night. And so the worship of the Sun and the Moon was decreed.

Through the power of the Druid's magick, the earth quietly gained the powers needed to nurture the Seeds of Life, thus becoming a Mother Goddess, and was named Tailliu.

…to be continued…

Cernunnos

~SPOTLIGHT

Zoe Rhodes

GNL-When did you "discover" Paganism and Wicca? Tell us a little bit.

Zoe-Actually my mother did readings back in the day which kind of made me a little more open minded towards other people, things and religion. I had always had some interest in Witchcraft, however, it wasn't until 2001 when my husband bought me a Silver RavenWolf book to get me started.

GNL-What tradition did you start in? If any…

Zoe-I kind of played around a little on m own, then my husband and I joined a coven a little ways from where we lived. They were eclectic ad I staued with them for a year and a day and then left to find pagans closer to my own home.

GNL-Are you a Georgian initiate?

Zoe-Yes I am.

GNL- How long have you been interested in the craft?

Zoe- On and off my entire life but I didn't really start researching until 2001.

GNL- How long have you been a Georgian? Who damned you to this trad? <g>

Zoe- LOL. My friends and HPS/HP, Rain and Rob Shinn, chased after me for about four years. The commitment

level the tradition requires made me wary of joining. But finally they wore me down and I've been in their coven since 2011.

GNL- Children or granchildren? (How many?)

Zoe- Yes I have one biological child and one that moved into my home a year ago. Steven (born of my loins) will be 21 and Patrick is 23.

GNL- Describe your life a little these days, what great is going on?

Zoe-Hmm, my life is pretty full, but all in all every day to me is a chance for fun. I'm blessed to be self employed with enough money coming in every month that I can live pretty simply. I'm blessed with family that I adore, great friend and a bunch of furry folk that love on me all the time. I'm doing great!

GNL-Attended/Missed any Mt. Meets (East or West)? Other gatherings, not just Pagan, but ones you have enjoyed?

Zoe-Well, went to St. Louis in August and was supposed to get to go to a Pagan concert. The bands name escapes me now (menopause... I'm writing a song on menopause…but I digress). Anyway, I didn't make it because I hadn't been back there in almost two decades so I missed that. But I am attending a Samhain Florida Pagan Gathering!

GNL-Any really good stories you fondly remember or shiver at the thought of these days that you might want to share with us?

Zoe-I once got so drunk that I fell into my own garbage can in the garage of my house…upside down. I insisted I was fine…

Thank you Zoe for sharing with us!

Announcements!

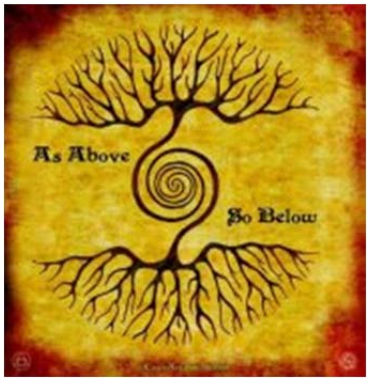
Dedications:
~1st degree-
~2nd degree -
~3rd degree –

Birthdays!
Sibyl Shadowdrake - September 22nd , 1964.
Fig - October 17th
Taran YoungOak - October 13th at 4:43am
Raven Spirit - Oct 17th, 1970
Indigo – October 28th
Lord Josh-wa-ah - Oct 13, 1949

Our editor, Loye C. Pourner, Jr. is having his first children's book published!

The Land of Getalong

It is the story of a little gray dragon who believed he could find a place where he belonged, where no one would tease him for being different. Together, with his friends, they search for a place called The Land of Getalong. Along the way they meet unique creatures, all different in their own way, share an adventure, and build friendships that will teach them an important lesson in life. Look for it online, as an e-book and in stores soon…



Upcoming Events

Pantheacon 2014

February 14-17

Doubletree Hotel in San Jose, CA
2050 Gateway Place San Jose, CA

This Year's Theme:
Networks of Community & Diversity, Pleasure & Service

$65 until Jan 1st
$75 after Jan 1st
Or $35 for a full day and $20 for an evening

More information at:
www.pantheacon.com
or email info@panthacon.com

The History Of Samhain And Halloween

Article Found from
http://www.paganspath.com/magik/samhain-history.htm

Samhain's History

Samhain (pronounced Sow-en), dates back to the ancient Celts who lived 2,000 years ago. Contrary to what some believe, is not a celebration of a Celtic god of the dead. Instead, it is a Celtic word meaning "summer's end." The Celts believed that summer came to an end on October 31st and the New Year began on November 1st with the start of winter. But the Celts also followed a lunar calendar and their celebrations began at sunset the night before.

Many today see Halloween as the pagan holiday. But that's not really accurate. As the pagan holiday of Samhain is on November 1st. But their celebrations did and still do, start at sunset on October 31st, on Samhain Eve. During the day on October 31st, the fires within the home are extinguished. Often families would engage in a good "fall" cleaning to clear out the old and make way for the new. Starting the winter months with fresh and clean household items.

At sunset on October 31, clans or local villages begin the formal ceremonies of Samhain by lighting a giant bonfire. The people would gather around the fire to burn crops and animals as sacrifices to the Celtic deities. It was a method of giving the Gods and Goddesses their share of the previous years herd or crops. In addition these sacred fires were a big part of the cleansing of the old year and a method to prepare for the coming new year.

During the celebration, the Celts wore costumes, and danced around the bonfire. Many of these dances told stories or played out the cycles of life and death or commemorated the cycle of Wheel of Life. These costumes were adorned for three primary reasons.

The first was to honor the dead who were allowed to rise from the Otherworld. The Celts believed that souls were set free from the land of the dead during the eve of Samhain. Those that had been trapped in the bodies of animals were released by the Lord of the Dead and sent to their new incarnations. The wearing of these costumes signified the release of these souls into the physical world.

Not all of these souls were honored and respected. Some were also feared as they would return to the physical

world and destroy crops, hide livestock or 'haunt' the living who may have done them wrong. The second reason for these traditional costumes was to hide from these malevolent spirits to escape their trickery.

The final representation was a method to honor the Celtic Gods and Goddesses of the harvest, fields and flocks. Giving thanks and homage to those deities who assisted the village or clan through the trials and tribulations of the previous year. And to ask for their favor during the coming year and the harsh winter months that were approaching.

In addition to celebrations and dance, it was believed that this thin veil between the physical world and the Otherworld provided extra energy for communications between the living and the dead. With these communications, Druid Priests, and Celtic Shamans would attempted to tell the fortunes of individual people through a variety of methods. For a people entirely dependent on the volatile natural world, these prophecies were an important source of comfort and direction during the long, dark winter.

These psychic readings would be conducted with a variety of divination tools. Such as throwing bones, or casting the Celtic Ogham. There is some historical evidence that additional tools of divination were also used. Most of this comes from writings recorded by Roman invaders, but there are stories of reading tea leaves, rocks and twigs, and even simple spiritual communications that today we'd call Channeling. Some historians have suggested that these early people were the first to use tiles made from wood and painted with various images which were the precursor to Tarot Cards. There's no real evidence to support this, but the 'story' of these tiles has lingered for centuries.

When the community celebration was over, each family would take a torch or burning ember from the sacred bonfire and return to their own home. The home fires that has been extinguished during the day were re-lit by the flame of the sacred bonfire to help protect the dwelling and it's inhabitants during the coming winter. These fires were kept burning night and day during the next several months. It was believed that if a home lost it's fire, tragedy and troubles would soon follow.

With the hearth fires lit, the families would place food and drink outside their doors. This was done to appease the roaming spirits who might play tricks on the family.

The Romans began to conquer the Celtic territories. By A.D. 43 they had succeeded in claiming the majority of the Celtic lands. They ruled for approximately four hundred years combining or influencing many Celtic traditional celebrations with their own. Two Roman holidays were merged with Samhain.

1. Feralia, a day in late October when the Romans traditionally commemorated the passing of the dead.
2. Pomona's Day of Honoring, the Roman goddess of fruit and trees. The symbol of Pomona is the apple and the incorporation of this celebration into Samhain probably explains the tradition of "bobbing" for apples that is practiced today on Halloween.

Samhain Traditions

To pagans the world over, November 1st, still marks the beginning of the New Year. To Witches and Pagans, Samhain is the Festival of the Dead, and for many, it is the most important Sabbat (Holiday) of the year. Although the Feast of the Dead forms a major part of most Pagan celebrations on this eve, and at Samhain voluntary communications are expected and hoped for. The departed are never harassed, and their presence is never commanded. The spirits of the dead are, however, ritually invited to attend the Sabbat and to be present within the Circle.

Orange and Black:
The colors of this Sabbat are black and orange. Black to represent the time of darkness after the death of the God (who is represented by fire and the sun) during an earlier sabbat known as Lughnasadh, and the waning of light during the day. Orange represents the awaiting of the dawn during Yule (Dec. 21st to Jan. 1st) when the God is reborn.

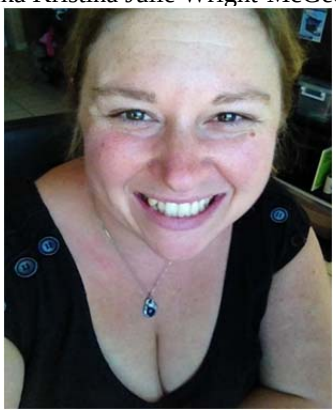
Additional Reading:

In addition to the sources listed below that were used to write this article, you might also check out the following resources:

- Natural History periodical - October 1983 p43-44
- Pagan Celtic Britain by Anne Ross
- Celtic Mythology by McCane
- The Druids and Their Heritage by Ward Rutherford
- The Black Arts by Richard Cavendish
- Human Sacrifice by Lewis Spencer
- The History and Origins of Druidism by Lewis Spencer

Ankou:
King or Queen of the Dead

Written by Reyjon Taran
(aka Kristina Julie Wright-McGee)

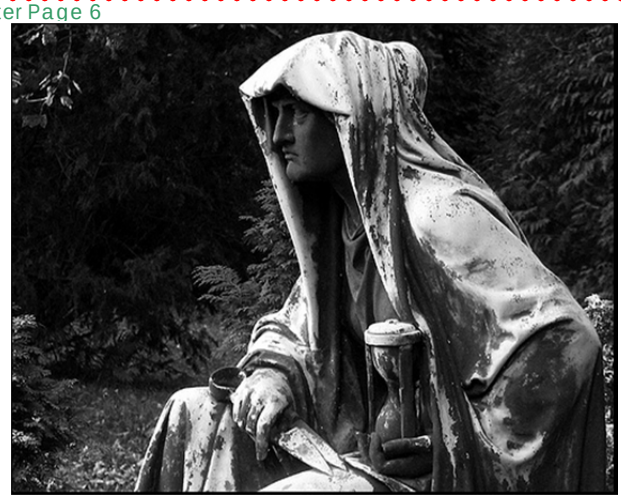


The Ankou is a figure in Celtic folklore that carries a death omen whom collects the souls of the dead. Also known as the King of the Dead, it is believed to be the spirit of the last person of the year to die. The new Ankou assumes his or her position for the following year.

The Ankou can be male or female and is often portrayed as a tall, haggard figure with white hair, or a "skeleton with a revolving head able to see everybody everywhere."

One myth reveals that it drives a cart accompanied by two figures whom will stop at your door when your time for death has arrived and load you onto the cart with the rest of the dead that have been collected. Another tells of a prince who died on a hunting trip and challenged Death for his life, but Death won and punished him by making him collect other souls.

Despite its origin, this figure is portrayed in many religions and myths, including medieval Christian folklore's tale of the Grim Reaper where he is seen as a man with a hooded robe and scythe. Of all the mythological figures the Ankou is the most commonly revered, as everyone fears the unknown aspect of death.



Sources attained from:
www.mythicalcreaturesguide.com
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ankou

A Samhain Memory

Written by Lady Allusha
(aka Rose English)

As a Witch of the Gardnerian Tradition, I am unaccustomed to doing the Sabbat Rituals by myself..Since my status as Retired Elder qualifies me as "put out to pasture," my Sabbat celebrations have become primarily a solitary affair. I try to incorporate as many pertinent symbols as I can into my solo endeavors of acknowledgement and homage.

One of my favorite solo celebrations of Samhain was when I went to San Gregorio beach. This little California beach is usually quiet, due to the difficulty in getting there. It was a full moon night, so I had little trouble hiking down the cliffs, despite being dressed in my full ritual regalia. In my "Have Altar, Will Travel" tote I carried the makings of a small fire, my pentacle chalice and plate made of pewter, the cakes and wine, some sea salt, and a small cassette

player already loaded with my favorite Samhain music.

Daylight was just beginning to fade as I lit the fire and threw a very large sea salt Circle. The Sun was now just touching the horizon. I set out my cakes and wine, disrobed (except for my cape), and turned on the music. I danced as I watched the sunset display of colors. I called to the Lord and the Lady to join me in the cakes and wine. We all shared in this simple Love Feast, and I danced some more for their pleasure. The waves danced with me, sparkling in the moonlight.

The sand at the beach has a phosphorescent quality, which captured any and all bits of light, making it look like a thousand tine diamonds. I was surrounded by the shimmering spectacle, entranced by the magick it made.

When I finished dancing, I grabbed a handful of sand, and threw it into the air. I said, "Hail and Farewell" to the Lord and Lady. A slight breeze caught the airborne sand and carried it out to the ocean Then I dressed, put out the fire, broke the Circle, packed my tote, rechecked the fire, and headed home.

San Gregorio Beach, California

Samhain Poem

By Patricia Ann Clark

Out of the Shadows they came to be
Circling around an Old Oak Tree
Sages and Witches of Old and new
Welcoming the Souls that are passing thru
Crone of Night will be with them soon
Under the darkness of the moon
Fairies abound when the veil is thin
Dancing with all their Kith and Kin
All are celebrating their special light
On this wondrous Samhain Night

Recipes

Fortune-Telling Bread

Samhain begins the new year and everyone wonders what it holds in store. Many Traditional Samhain recipes call for baking charms into the bread to tell what the future holds—marriage, wealth, or dental work to repair a tooth broken from biting into a charm.

- 1/2 cup lukewarm milk
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon fresh yeast
- 2 cups plain flour
- 1 teaspoon mixed spice,
- pinch of salt
- 1 egg
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 2 cups mixed, dried fruit
- Metallic charms

1. **Warm up the milk** to lukewarm in the microwave or in a saucepan and stir in the sugar and yeast.
2. **Add the egg** and beat it in.
3. **Sift the flour** and spice and blend in the butter.
4. **Make a well** in the middle of the flour mixture and add the yeast mixture.
5. **Beat** until a good dough forms.
6. **Add fruit**, salt and charms, and knead well.
7. **Put in a warm bowl**, cover and allow to rise in a warm place until doubled in size.
8. **Preheat oven to 400°F**. Knead and place in a lightly-greased seven-inch cake pan for another 30 minutes.
9. **Bake** for 45 minutes.

Soul Cakes

Both Pagan and Christian children went house to house caroling for soul cakes on Samhain night. For Pagan children, it was a ritual to honor the dead.

- 5 oz butter
- 5 oz sugar
- 2 cups flour
- 3 egg yolks
- 1 tbsp pumpkin pie spice
- 1 tsp allspice
- 3 tbsp currants
- 2 tsp milk

1. **Sift flour** and spices into a bowl.
2. **Cream together** butter and sugar.
3. **Beat egg yolks** and add to the creamed mixture, beating well.
4. **Add flour**a nd spice mix and stir in the currants.
5. **Add milk** to form a soft dough.
6. **Place dough on a lightly-floured surfac e**and shape into flat cakes about two-or-three-inches in diameter.
7. **Transfer to a well-buttered baking tray** and place in an oven pre-heated to 180°C and bake until lightly golden.
8. **Cool** on a wire rack.

Recipes

Mulled wines are a traditional favorite, no matter what the occasion, but Halloween presents a terrific opportunity to introduce others to its appeal. The Banshee Mulled Wine recipe is a warm wine punch sure to clutch the palate of all Halloween gouls.

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Cook Time: 25 minutes

Total Time: 30 minutes

Ingredients:

- One bottle of red wine (suggestions: Cabernet Sauvignon, Zinfandel, Merlot or a Spanish red)
- One peeled and sliced orange (keep peel to add zest to taste into cooking pot)
- One peeled and sliced lemon (keep peel to add zest to taste in cooking pot)
- 1 tsp ground nutmeg
- 2 tsp ground ginger
- 5 whole cloves
- 3 cinnamon sticks
- 1/2 cup sugar (or honey can be substituted)
- 2/3 cup brandy or cognac
- 1/2 cup water

Preparation:

Combine all ingredients in either a large pot or a slow cooker. Gently warm the ingredients on low to medium heat (avoid boiling), for 20-25 minutes. Stir occasionally to make sure that the honey or sugar has completely dissolved. When the wine is steaming and the ingredients have blended well it is ready to serve. Ladle into mugs (leaving seasonings behind), garnish with a blood orange segment and perhaps black plastic, Halloween spiders and enjoy!

Witch's Punch

Ingredients

- 2 oz Skyy Infusions citrus vodka
- ½ oz fresh lemon juice
- ¼ oz fresh pomegranate juice
- 1 oz simple syrup
- **Instructions**

Shake all ingredients well with ice and strain into a chilled highball glass. Garnish with blueberries and serve.

Witch's Brew

Prepare your spells…you'll be needing them once you indulge in Witches Brew! You don't see many witches walking around W Los Angeles – Westwood, but some may appear at Whiskey Blue inside the hotel once they take a sip of this delicious cocktail!

Ingredients

- 2.25 oz Caliche Rum
- 2.25 oz Dark Rum
- 1.25 oz Bacardi 151
- 2.5 oz Pineapple Juice
- 0.75 oz Lime Juice
- 0.75 oz Simple Syrup
- 1.25 oz Grenadine
- A multitude of Gummy Worms!
- As many silly straws as desired

Instructions

Fill a large goblet (or large glass) with ice and add Caliche Rum, Dark Rum, Bacardi 151, Pineapple Juice, Lime Juice, Simple Syrup and Grenadine. Use a bar spoon to stir the drink until all of the ingredients are combined, creating a pinkish red color. Throw in a handful of gummy worms and the appropriate amount of silly straws needed for sharing.

Recipes found from:

www.**mademan.com**/mm/5-traditional-**samhain-recipes**.html

http://wine.about.com/od/holidayswithwine/r/mulledwinepunch.htm

www.drinkoftheweek.com

Jenice Wright-Armenta

Art and Crafts

Crochet Creations

Baskets, Bags, Scarves and more by.....

Art and Crafts

Re-Labeled Old Bottles

by Earth Creations

(Kristina Julie Wright-McGee)

Georgian on Samhain Pics

coven Symbollic- Loye, Bob, Tessa, Kristina and Dar

Loye at the Blue Mt Pagan Community Samhain ritual. Mentally preparing as the High Priest for the ritual .

Julie- at the Blue Mt Pagan Community Samhain ritual.

Loye and baby Ursa at the Blue Mt Pagan Community Samhain Festival.

This is Ursa's first outing! many more to come, and she was such a good puppy, everyone loved her : at the Blue Mt Pagan Community Samhain ritual. :)

Hope you enjoyed this edition of the Georgian Newsletter.

The Georgian Newsletter Staff
Loye and Julie