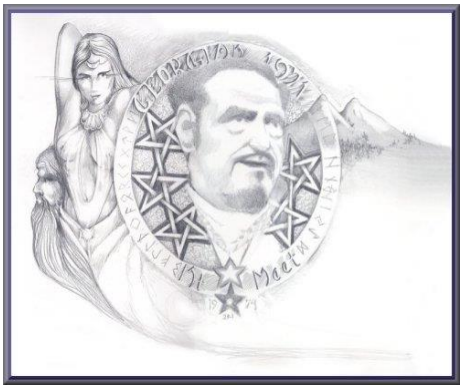
THE GEORGIAN NEWSLETTER



Imbolc 2015

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SPOT LIGHT

GAIL POWELL-BILSBOROUGH

GNL- When did you discover paganism?
Gail -I discovered paganism back in the late 1974. I was married at that time, and after ten years of marriage and the age of 24 my life was definitely lacking something important within myself, and I had no clue what it was. After thinking about it for some time, I knew that I needed religion. I was ready in my heart and mind to become religious, but had no idea what religion I wanted or what would be best for me.

All I needed to do was make up my mind that I was ready, which I did, and then it was like this hand came down, took over, led me right where I needed to be. Soon after, I kept getting these little revealing messages about Witchcraft. I really didn't know what it was except what I saw on TV's 'Bewitched', magic, spells, and scary stuff. So I bought a book but only to find very little info on what it was 'really' about.
The more I thought about it, the more I became obsessed with it.
Then one day things changed for me very drastically. I felt a compelling force that drew me to a neighbor and friend's house. There I met a 'new' friend when I ran into sweet, and lovely Georgia Reavis. We got into a conversation, I told her that I was reading up on Witchcraft but couldn't find much info on it. It just so happen that she knew a lot about it too, and she mentioned a place there in Bakersfield called the Georgian Church of Wicca. "CHURCH??!!" WOW!!! Coincidence?!! Before then I didn't know that witchcraft was a religion.
I had a strong feeling that I was on the right path now. She instructed me on how I could find an ad with information that led me to Pat Patterson's, and there I could learn so much more about the religion. I am so thankful she did. That was the beginning of my life, and these were the first days of my awakening.

It became my life, and I became blessed.

GNL What tradition did you start in?

Gail -Georgian was my first and last. It is plenty good enough for me. Oh I am not saying that I wouldn't try something new, I just never felt the need. However, over the years, I had been invited to join other celebrations by other traditions and gladly accepted. It was nice to know there were so many other like-minded pagan folk out there, and I was able to learn and seeing things done differently.

GNL- Are you a Georgian initiate?

Gail -Yes, three times. The first time in 1976

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

Gail -As I had explained before, it all happened for me in 1974. I learned and knew that this was the way for me. There was no turning back for me. Couldn't drag me away from the craft. Hu-uh! Can't make me!!

GNL- How long have you been a Georgian? Who you brought you into this trad?

Gail - I was initiated in 1976 by Pat Patterson and Bobbie Kennedy. A little while later I started training to be a practicing HPS with Walt Bowser as practicing HP. Trained by Pat/Bobbie, and Merle/Shirley. There were just so many people participating and Pat saw it was time to branch out.

GNL- Children/ Grandchildren.

Gail -I had three children. I had my first one when I was 16, Rob. Then at 20 years old I had my daughter, Laura. I was divorced at 24. Started going to church at Pat's. Took a break, fell in love and had another son, Michael. Lived in Boise for a while. Moved back to Bakersfield. Went back to school. Ended up moving around quite a bit. I haven't stopped yet. Hope I do soon though.

My oldest son crossed over when he was 28 and hadn't any children. My two younger children are grown, but neither has children, so for now I have no grandchildren. I do hope to have someday, but for now it is probably best until the time is right.

GNL- Describe your life a little these days.

Gail -Today I am single. One time I read that Sagittarian's are called 'Bachelors of the zodiac', and I realized that maybe there is some truth in this.

Although, I do hope to meet my soul mate some day and spend the rest of my life with, if I could find such a person to suit me or put up with my wacky sense-of-humor.

Recently I moved from a three bedroom house into a 2 bedroom apartment. Moving takes so much energy, I work part-time as a massage therapist/body worker here in Las Vegas, NV, and I am having a wonderful time here at the age of 62. I meet very nice, interesting people, and I'm having lots of fun.

These days I am starting to feel as though my retirement may not be too far in the future. That's ok. When I retire I hope to do more traveling, make use of my Nikon D3200 camera, meet other crafters or like-minded people, adventure in nature, hot tubing, camping, visiting beautiful places that I've never seen before, and finding my place here on earth where I would love to settle down and plant roots, quit moving around, if the gods will so allow, and last but most important, achieve my purpose, spread the messages of love, light, and peace, and adopt a few little critters who can take me for walks.

GNL- Attended any Mt. Meet??

Gail -Oh I have been to a few. Not enough of them though, but when I do go to them I always make up for the ones that I've missed. Sometimes I feel like I make a spectacle of myself. Hahha, but I have loads of fun. Always a pleasure getting close to nature and join together with old brothers and sisters and meet new ones, laugh and love.

GNL- Have you been to any other gatherings, not just pagan, that you've enjoyed?

Gail -Yes, I always enjoy a good gathering with kindred spirits as long as it is a fun-loving, happy, and great atmosphere. Now and then I love a good BBQ and skinny dip. Maybe even a fun orgy, swing party or two. I loved taking my class in belly dancing years ago, it just seems to bring out the passion and sensuousness in me. Must've done it in a past life cause learning and doing it came very natural.

A few other interests are participating in drum circles, meditation circles, and sweat lodge, psychic fairs, Erotic massage, and other interests that have to do with the spiritual, physical, mental, or supernatural subjects.

GNL- Any stories you wish to share?

Gail - Maybe someday, hopefully we all get to sit around a fire together, then I will share what's in my caldron

ANNOUNCEMENTS !

Dedication / Initiation:

~3rd degree: It is with great pleasure and pride that I make the announcement. Tonight Grove of the Old Ways has elevated Serissa has been elevated to the 3rd Degree by her Priest Lord Raven Spirit and Priestess of our Mother Coven Lady Hazel
She has worked hard and it has shown.

Raven Spirit

Birthdays;
Cindy – January 16
Lady Autumn Star – Feb 3
Fresno Jeff's - February 21 (RIP)

Imbolc

The Festival of Bridget is the celebration of the return of the Maiden of Spring. Now the Crone undergoes her wonderful transformation into the beautiful Maiden of Flowers, Mistress of the Hunt. Imbolc is the festival of light in the darkness, the celebration of rekindled fire. Most witches light as many candles in their house or witch's room to bring on light and warmth and say goodbye to the dark. This is the time of individuation: within the measures of the spiral, we each light our own light, and become uniquely ourselves. It is the time of initiation, of beginning when seeds that will later sprout and grow begin to stir from their dark sleep.
This Sabbat also honors the moon as source of fertility for the months to come. The winter still cold reawakens and first feels the quickening of life. It is a time for changes below the surface of things, when solstice birth first begins to manifest. It is the time of year to make a commitment or recommitment to your spiritual growth. It is a time to look ahead in hope and joy for what is to come. It is a time of divination, looking into the coming year. It is a time for cleaning and purification. Self-dedication. It is a time for looking for early spring. Crossroads figure prominently in this Sabbat. This is a night that spirits of the dead are said to walk among the living. The Crossroads also represent an equal-armed cross which is seen as a symbol of balance and protection. On the eve before this Sabbat, go to a crossroad and bury negativity so it cannot escape.
Incense: Frankincense, myrrh, jasmine, camphor, cinnamon and lotus, basil, wisteria.
Candles: Red and white.
Gemstones: Amethyst, garnet, onyx, turquoise
Ritual Herbs: Angelica, basil, bay, benzoin, celandine, heather, myrrh, frankincense.

Imbolc Lore

(February 2nd)
Imbolc, (pronounced "IM-bulk" or "EM-bowlk"), also called Oimealg, ("IM-mol'g), by the Druids, is the festival of the lactating sheep. It is derived from the Gaelic word "oimelc" which means "ewes milk". Herd animals have either given birth to the first offspring of the year or their wombs are swollen and the milk of life is flowing into their teats and udders. It is the time of Blessing of the seeds and consecration of agricultural tools. It marks the center point of the dark half of the year. It is the festival of the Maiden, for from this day to March 21st, it is her season to prepare for growth and renewal. Brighid's snake emerges from the womb of the Earth Mother to test the weather, (the origin of Ground Hog Day), and in many places the first Crocus flowers began to spring forth from the frozen earth.

The Maiden is honored, as the Bride, on this Sabbat. Straw Brideo'gas (corn dollies) are created from oat or wheat straw and placed in baskets with white flower bedding. Young girls then carry the Brideo'gas door to door, and gifts are bestowed upon the image from each household. Afterwards at the traditional feast, the older women make special acorn wands for the dollies to hold, and in the morning the ashes in the hearth are examined to see if the magic wands left marks as a good omen. Brighid's Crosses are fashioned from wheat stalks and exchanged as symbols of protection and prosperity in the coming year. Home hearth fires are put out and re-lit, and a besom is place by the front door to symbolize sweeping out the old and welcoming the new. Candles are lit and placed in each room of the house to honor the re-birth of the Sun.

Another traditional symbol of Imbolc is the plough. In some areas, this is the first day of ploughing in

preparation of the first planting of crops. A decorated plough is dragged from door to door, with costumed children following asking for food, drinks, or money. Should they be refused, the household is paid back by having its front garden ploughed up. In other areas, the plough is decorated and then Whiskey, the "water of life" is poured over it. Pieces of cheese and bread are left by the plough and in the newly turned furrows as offerings to the nature spirits. It is considered taboo to cut or pick plants during this time.

Various other names for this Greater Sabbat are Imbolgc Brigantia (Caledonni), Imbolic (Celtic), Disting (Teutonic, Feb 14th), Lupercus (Strega), St. Bridget's Day (Christian), Candlemas, Candlelaria (Mexican), the Snowdrop Festival. The Festival of Lights, or the Feast of the Virgin. All Virgin and Maiden Goddesses are honored at this time.

Deities of Imbolc:
All Virgin/Maiden Goddesses, Brighid, Aradia, Athena, Inanna, Gaia, and Februa, and Gods of Love and Fertility, Aengus Og, Eros, and Februus.

Symbolism of Imbolc:
Purity, Growth and Re-Newal, The Re-Union of the Goddess and the God, Fertility, and dispensing of the old and making way for the new.

Symbols of Imbolc:
Brideo'gas, Besoms, White Flowers, Candle Wheels, Brighid's Crosses, Priapic Wands (acorn-tipped), and Ploughs.

Herbs of Imbolc:
Angelica, Basil, Bay Laurel, Blackberry, Celandine, Coltsfoot, Heather, Iris, Myrrh, Tansy, Violets, and all white or yellow flowers.

Foods of Imbolc:
Pumpkin seeds, Sunflower seeds, Poppy seed Cakes, muffins, scones, and breads, all dairy products, Peppers, Onions, Garlic, Raisins, Spiced Wines and Herbal Teas.

Incense of Imbolc:
Basil, Bay, Wisteria, Cinnamon, Violet, Vanilla, Myrrh.

Colors of Imbolc:
White, Pink, Red, Yellow, lt. Green, Brown.

Stones of Imbolc:
Amethyst, Bloodstone, Garnet, Ruby, Onyx, Turquoise.

Activities of Imbolc:
Candle Lighting, Stone Gatherings, Snow Hiking and Searching for Signs of Spring, Making of Brideo'gas and Bride's Beds, Making Priapic Wands, Decorating Ploughs, Feasting, and Bon Fires maybe lit.

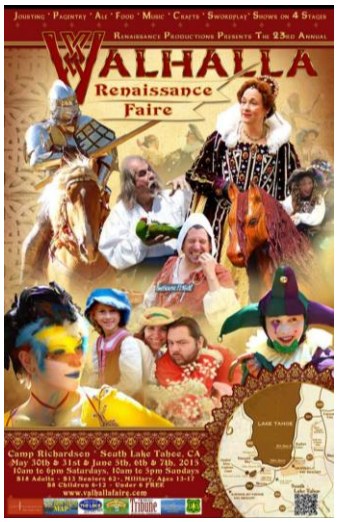
UPCOMING EVENTS

Mountain Meet 2015

June 24th thru July 1st
Sequoia National Forest, California
POC – Loye Pourner

Valhalla Renaissance Faire

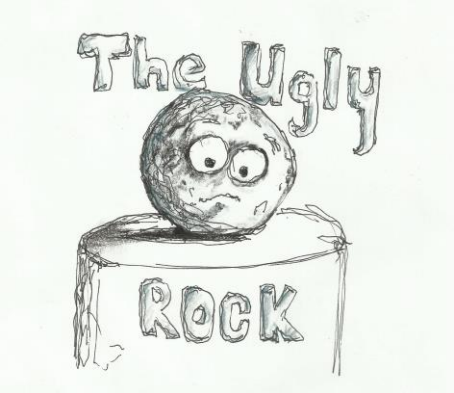
South Lake Tahoe Ca.
May 30th & 31st
June 5th, 6th & 7th
www.valhallafaire.com



The Sonora Celtic Faire

Mother Lode Fairgrounds Sonora
March 6th, 7th & 8th

Sonoracelticfaire.com



The Ugly Rock

There once was a rock, not very pretty, as a matter of fact, rather ugly! The only special thing about this rock was that it was kind of round, but all bumply, and rough. It sat in a rock shop full of beautiful rocks of all colors, red, green, blue, purple, yellow and rainbow. All the other rocks teased the ugly gray roundish rock and told it that the only reason it was there was because it was roundish. This made the rock sad, very sad indeed. One day, two children were looking at all the beautiful rocks and when they came to the ugly rock, they stopped and looked at it for a very long time. Finally, the boy looked at the store owner and asked "ma'am, why on earth would you put such an ugly rock with all of these beautiful ones?" The owner looked at the children and smiled, then said. "That rock, children is one of my most special rocks, it reminds me of people". The little girl looked a little skeptical and asked how? Well said the own, you can never tell by looking at a person what they are like on the inside. The outside can be very beautiful, plain or not very pretty, but the inside can be warm and beautiful or dark and ugly. The kids agreed, because they knew some other kids that were pretty or handsome, but very mean and cruel to others, and other kids that were not very good looking but was so very nice to everyone. With that, the owner dropped the rock into a heavy leather bag, picked up a hammer and hit the rock!! She then reached inside and pulled out the most beautiful amethyst crystal filled piece of the rock!! The girl LOVED amethyst, with it's beautiful purple crystals. The other rocks in the shop couldn't believe what they saw!! That ugly old rock was one of the most beautiful rocks they had ever seen…if they had eyes that is! The owner gave the children each a piece of the ugly old rock, which she explained was a geode and off they went, happily to show their mom their new treasure. The rest of the geode was placed back in its special spot, where it sat proudly with its new baby rocks. So, never judge a rock by its outside or people!, it may well be a beautiful geode!!

By Loye Pourner
For Kendra

Recipe

Branwen's Imbolc Corn Casserole

Preheat oven to 350 F.

Ingredients:

4 cans shoepeg corn drained (has to be shoepeg)
2 Pkgs of cream cheese softened to room temp. (can use the lower fat version)
2 cans chopped green chiles drained
1/2 stick butter melted
1 teas. Salt
1 teas. Coarse black pepper
Dash of Tabasco
Approx. 3/4 cup of milk
1 package of pre shredded cheddar cheese (16oz.)

Combine cream cheese, butter and milk, you will need a hand mixer for this, blend until everything is well incorporated- it should be smooth but still thick, not runny. Add corn, chiles, salt, pepper, Tabasco and half of the bag of cheese to the cream cheese base. Stir until well blended. Pour into a casserole pan that has been sprayed with non-stick cooking spray, sprinkle remaining cheese on top. Bake until bubbly on the sides and everything is melted in the middle, do not over brown.

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PANTHEACON

Georgian Family Picture rendering the Georgian Salute!!

With Kurt Hunter, Traci Ardren, Canu Nodiad, Gypsey Teague and Dana Alvara at PantheaCon.

Gypsey doing her workshop on wands

I'm sure that on any given day, you can find Gypsey on the streets in south side Diagon Alley headed to Ollivanders to supply Garrick aka Mr Ollivander with a new supply of beautifully hand crafted wands!

Coven Symbollic's

Imbolc Gathering

Front Row –Julie, Matt, Loye, Elizabeth, Janice
Back Row – Bob, Darlene and Arthur
This was Elizabeth's first time in center stage! She did an outstanding job as High Priestess in training coached by me, the High Priest. The Altar Maiden was Matt and the Quarters were called by Bob, Dar, Janice and Arthur.

Crafts

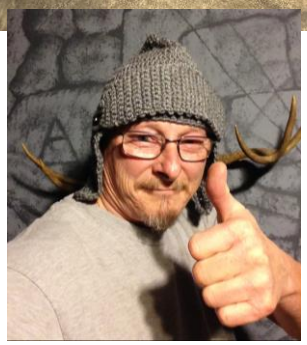
Jenice's Crochet Magick

www.jenicecrochetmagick.etsy.com

Jenice is a truly talented woman with a hooked stick and string! Here are some samples of her handy work, and don't forget to take a peek at her Etsy site!! Her prices are reasonable and she has a pretty smile!!

This particular viking hat is mine!!

And so is this roman soldier hat!



Blessings and Light
The Georgian Newsletter Staff.
Lord Bel Taran and Ursa Reyjon Taran