

THE HAZEL NUT

A Journal of Celtic Spirituality and Sacred Trees

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1994
Issue 11



This
Issue's
Feature:

IVY and
REED MOONS

\$2.00

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In Celtic legend, the hazel tree drops its nuts into the well below, where they are consumed by the salmon. While cooking one of these salmon, Fionn accidentally tastes it, and instantly gains all knowledge. As such, the hazelnut has come to symbolize wisdom in a nutshell. **THE HAZEL NUT** attempts to bring you this wisdom in a small package every issue, with historical research, herbal information, viewpoints, poetry, artwork, and reader submissions. We also explore, in depth, one or more trees of the Celtic tree calendar/alphabet (Beth-Luis-Nion system) as researched and explained by Robert Graves in The White Goddess. This includes its herbal uses, folklore, esoterica, lunar energies, psychology, mythology, symbolism, and other aspects. In this we hope to make the sacred trees a real, and positive, part of your everyday life.

Ivy is the eleventh tree in the Celtic tree calendar. It usually occurs in October or November, and this year it runs from October 4-November 2.

Reed is the twelfth tree in the Celtic tree calendar. It usually occurs in November or December, and this year it runs from November 2-December 1.

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Out On a Limb...

From the desk of the editor

It seems like festivals are becoming more common, and easier to afford. This past spring, there was MoonDance, and just last month was EarthDance. I recently heard of a Highland Samhain gathering to be held in Tennessee, with special guests Otter and Morning Glory Zell. Around the end of August there was a festival in north Georgia that had about 60 people attending. All of these festivals were in the \$20.00-\$35.00 range, as is the upcoming FallFling, which we're all looking forward to. That's great news for us poor Pagans, who can barely afford to buy groceries sometimes.

Huge, week-long gatherings are fun, if you can afford the entry fee, the gas and supplies, and the time off of work. But for the rest of us, small weekend gatherings tend to be much more intimate and meaningful; you can actually speak to everyone there and remember them later! If you've ever remotely considered putting on your own festival, GO FOR IT! Find a site, set a date, recruit lots of help, and do it. We'll all appreciate you for it. It's not that difficult, and the rewards are incredible. Don't worry about it not being 'like the

big ones'; Pagans are a forgiving sort, and many of us have never been to a huge gathering anyway, so we won't know what we're missing. Don't be afraid of goof-ups, either; a little chaos is good for the soul.

The articles on cold-weather events and outdoor cooking may not seem exactly Pagan, but many of these small festivals are at primitive camping sites, and several of them are during the fall and winter months. Although we purport to be nature-worshippers, lots of us live in the city, and only go outdoors in not-so-perfect weather when we really have to. These weekend warriors then go to a camping event, and find themselves grossly unprepared for cold and rain. And even outdoorsy-types can find themselves at a loss when confronted with a pot-luck feast, and no knowledge of what to cook on a fire beyond a steak or a can of beanie-weenies. I hope to address some of these problems with these articles, and if you like the idea of recipes for pot-lucks and outdoor cooking, we'll print some every issue or so. Send in your favorites!

Until next time, party on, dudes!

Muirghen

from BRÍGHID'S hearth

Ginseng

by Brigid MoonFire



Ginseng (*Panax ginseng*) is cultivated in China, Korea and N.E. America¹. It has an ancient history and as such has accumulated much folklore about its actions and uses. Many of the claims that surround it are definitely inflated, but it is clear that this is a unique plant. In China it is called "Renshen" or manroot, king of all tonics². It is found in the Christian bible in Ezekiel 27:17, where Ginseng was used in the market place; it was traded as "Pannag" or the all-healing Ginseng³. Father Jartoux, in 1679, noticed the American Indians employing it as a medication and started exporting it to England^{4,5}.

There are many different grades of ginseng. Wild ginseng, particularly from Manchuria, is considered the best but it is extremely expensive⁶. Cultivated ginseng comes in two varieties, white and red. The red is cured by steaming, which gives it its color and reputedly a warmer nature than the white. Most Korean ginseng is of the red

variety and is stronger or more yang in nature than that from China⁷.

Ginseng is a wonderful treatment for indigestion⁸. It stimulates the healthy secretions of pepsin. It is a powerful antispasmodic and suggests its use in other spasmodic and reflex nervous diseases. It has the power to move a person to their physical peak, generally increasing vitality and physical performance⁹. Specifically it will raise lowered blood pressure to a normal level. It affects depression, especially when due to debility and exhaustion¹⁰.

Ginseng also has a reputation as an aphrodisiac. Dr. Raymond Bernard A.B.N.A., Ph.D., says: "The term 'aphrodisiac' should not be misunderstood, and we must differentiate between aphrodisiacal drugs which produce their effects by irritation of the sexual centres and herbs like Ginseng which regenerate and rebuild the vitality but do not act by mere stimulation or irritation¹¹."

There have been many misconceptions about ginseng. Despite its Latin name of *Panax*, it is not univerrally applicable in every illness. It should not be taken during acute inflammatory disease or bronchitis since it can drive the disease deeper and make it worse. In most cases ginseng is rarely used on its own, but is combined with other herbs. It is best taken by someone made weak by disease or old age. It is known to improve the concentration and endurance¹².

Ginseng is known to give off organic radioactive rays resembling the Gartwitch rays of onions which stimulate vital processes in living cells¹³. The older the root is the less the dosage from it. You can tell the age of a root by counting the rings around the plant. To find a root of 50 in North America is impressive, yet in the Far East some plants have reached the age of 100, 200, and even 400 years old¹⁴.

Notes:

¹ Hoffmann, David. The Holistic Herbal. 1983. Element Books, Dorset, England, pg. 197.

² Mabey, Richard. The New Age Herbalist. 1988. Collier Books, New York, NY, pg. 2.

³ Hutchens, Alma. Indian Herbarology of North America. 1973. Shambhala, Boston, MA, pg. 138.

⁴ Ibid, pg. 138.

⁵ Grieve, Mrs. M. A Modern Herbal. 1931. Dorset Press, New York, NY, pg. 356.

⁶ Mabey, pg. 28.

⁷ Ibid, pg. 28.

⁸ Hutchens, pg. 138.

⁹ Ibid, pg. 138.

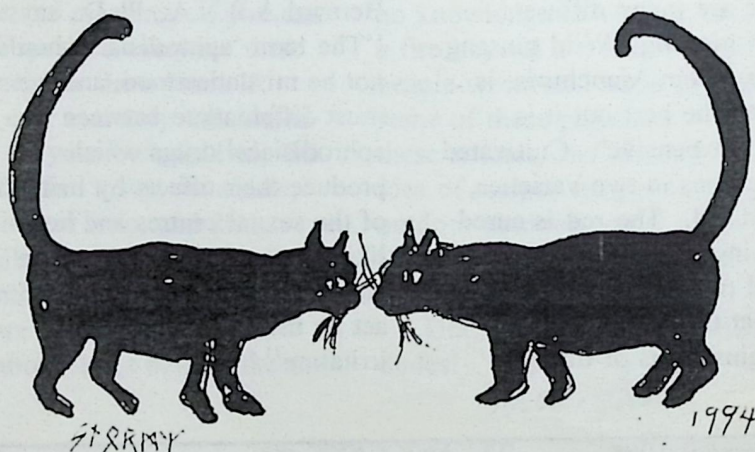
¹⁰ Hoffmann, pg. 197.

¹¹ Hutchens, pg. 139.

¹² Mabey, pg. 28.

¹³ Hutchens, pg. 140.

¹⁴ Ibid, pg. 141.



RUNES By STORMY

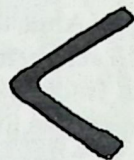
Germanic: KENAZ - torch; or KAUNAZ - sore

Gothic: KUSMA - swelling

Old English: CEN or KEN - torch

Old Norse: KAUN - sore, boil

KEY WORDS: Opening, light, torch, fire,
artistic creativity



Mythology:

The Scottish word Ken meant "to know" but the Old English word meant "to see." Ken can also mean that one is on the right path to discovery, but it is the heart that is doing the guiding.

For this reason the sixth rune of the FUTHARK is attributed to Frigg and to the three Norn sisters: Urdhr (Past), Verthandi (Present), and Skul (Future). In Norse mythology, they are the ones knowing and seeing all, the weavers of destiny.

Odin and Frigg's son Baldr has a recurring dream about his doom. He tells Frigg, and as a protective mother she takes action because she does "know." She gets the counsel of the gods and it is decided to ask protection from all kinds of danger for Baldr by taking solemn oaths from all things. Baldr should not be harmed by fire, water, iron, all kinds of metal, stones, the earth, trees,

sicknesses, beasts, birds, poison, snakes, etc. (see the Snorra Edda, Ch. 3) This kind of curse is called an 'orlog.' Loki, the trickster and blood brother to Odin, tries to find a loophole in her promises and oaths from all things. He turns himself into mistletoe and he refuses to pledge an oath not to harm Baldr. Frigg does her best to save her son, but it is too late, and Hodhr (really Odin) spears Baldr with a shaft of mistletoe, killing him.

Only Odin and Baldr know that Baldr must die and be reborn in the company of adult men. Even Frigg does not know this, but I would assume that the three Norns do, but remain silent because it is destiny.

Upon his death, Baldr goes to Hel. The goddess Hella will not let Baldr leave unless everything in the Nine Worlds weeps for him. Of course, Loki will not

weep and says, "Hel can keep him!" It is with the goddess Hella that Baldr must stay, because if he goes to Walhalla he will not be able to come back after the final battle of the Ragnorok. After the Ragnorok, Baldr will return from Hel and then with Hodhr will replace Odin and live in his sig-halls.

The Rune:

This is a very optimistic rune in beginnings or renewals. It can signify that healing is on the way. In matters of the heart, there is a possibility of commitment. Otherwise, more positive overtones in a relationship can develop. Your inner voice knows; listen to its intelligence and conscious awareness. This rune can also indicate protection from worries, and good things coming into your life.

Upright Position:

Light a candle in your mind—you do know. Use your intuition. Your innerself probably knows the answer already.

Reversed Position:

Signifies an ending, a loss, a delay or blockage in progress. In matters of the heart, it could mean a possible realization that it was never meant to be. Not a

good time for business opportunities. It is not uncommon for confusion to obscure thoughts or answers to existing problems.

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Sunny Leaves

I'm enjoying this journey. I remember what was before and what is now.
It's like the most beautiful things are things that I already know from
before...

I remember walking grassy fields,
Eating sweet honey and dipping my hands in the cool waters of a running
stream,
Looking with love at my companions,
Brother and Sister by my side.

We all ran thru the fields and played
in this earthy heaven.
Restraint was lost and had no use since we were innocent and harmful to no
one or thing.
Contempt was utterly foreign since all things understood us and we knew
each other without words.

- by Lee Webb



Snakes and Spiders and Bats, On My!

by Brigid MoonFire

For years people have thought that innocent creatures such as snakes, spiders, and bats are highly evil, or if not evil, at least highly dangerous. Now I'm not saying that I'm ready to curl up with a rattlesnake in my bed at night, but for the most part these creatures have gotten a bad rap.

Snakes need an open habitat in the sun in order to live, being cold-blooded creatures, and so they must risk being spotted during the day. All reptiles have fixed territories and snakes are no exception¹. If you are truly afraid of them for their poison, then study them and learn which are poisonous and which are not. There are many snakes in the non-poisonous category which would appreciate your knowledge, not to mention the fact that snakes often eat rodents and other creatures. I know for a lot of you out there it's a toss-up which is worse, a snake or a mouse; but just remember, if you get rid of all the predators, think of how the rodent population will grow.

Spiders are often thought of

as icky, frightening things that are purposefully out to scare humans. Is it any wonder with all the publicity that they get on Halloween? Or how about in nursery rhymes? Little Miss Muffet didn't seem to love spiders.

Spiders love insects and will eat many of the annoying ones that attack you and your gardens² if you allow them to. Remember that they are there to help you, so don't destroy them or their webs. If you absolutely can't stand spiders, you can always remove them from your house



and put them outside, alive. Of course, there will be times when you may need to kill a spider or the eggs. In the southeast we have black widows, so we have to be careful and always on the lookout; but if we know that it's a friendly spider, out he/she goes to attack our insects.

Bats are known to be the stuff horror stories are made from; after all, didn't Count Dracula turn himself into a bat to disappear? But bats are once again our misunderstood friends. Seventy percent of bats eat insects³. The rest eat tropical fruits and nectar, or are carnivorous, eating frogs and mice. There are a few—very few—vampire bats which live only in Latin America⁴. In fact, except for 3 species of nectar-feeding bats that live along the Mexican border of Arizona and Texas, all bats in the United States and Canada are insectivorous⁵.

A single bat can catch up to 600 mosquitoes in one hour, and large colonies of bats can consume countless billions of insects in a single summer. In fact, the 20 million free-tailed bats from Bracken Cave in Central Texas eat a quarter of a million pounds or more of insects in a single night⁶. Bats also eat numerous agricultural pests, including corn borers, grain and

cutworm moths, potato beetles, and grasshoppers⁷.

Many bats live in buildings, but generally because they now have no alternatives. While some do live in caves, many are now finding shelter in bat houses. These are specially-built shelters that can be hung on your house or in a tree to provide homes for bats. In fact, the summer resort of Chautauqua, New York, doesn't use pesticides at all. For more than 50 years they have been encouraging bats, and are able to enjoy their outdoors recreations without the insect problem⁸.

So the question is, why are all these good and beneficial creatures known for having such a bad rap? The answer lies in history.

Bats mean good fortune and great happiness in China, yet in Europe the bat was associated with demons, which Christian artists provided with bat wings⁹. Bats were also supposed to be synonymous with pagan ancestors. It was said that human souls take the form of bats when they leave the body during sleep, which is why bats are not seen by day when people are awake. It was also believed that the pagan dead might take the form of bats flying around in search of a means of rebirth, or the blood that is the life of all

creatures¹⁰. Of course, most bats can't pierce human skin, and those that can don't live in Europe. Bats were also thought to get themselves trapped and tangled in human hair. Yet bats can detect and avoid a wire as thin as a human hair with their excellent sonar. This hair myth seems to have stemmed from the Christian notion that women's hair attracts demons; the same notion that caused Saint Paul to order women to cover their heads in church¹¹.

Spiders have been associated with many goddesses in many different religions. Most famous, or rather, most well-known is that of Athene, who was the spinner, measurer, and cutter of life's threads of the souls in her cosmic spinning wheel of fate. Many East Indian goddesses are represented with 6 arms and 2 legs, which may have been associated with the spider's 8 legs. The Crone, or Destroyer, aspect of the goddess devouring her consort at the moment of his love-death is also seen in several species of spiders. To the Pueblo Indians she was Spider Woman, creator of the universe, with names like Kokyangwuti, Tsitsicinako, and Sussistanako. To the Kiowas she was Spider Grandmother, who brought fire to the world. In Ghana she is Anansi; in Haitian voodoo she is

known as Aunt Nancy¹².

In Aztec myth, spiders represented the souls of warrior women from the pre-Aztec matriarchy. At the end of the world, these women would descend from heaven on their silken threads and eat up all the men on earth, like eight-legged Valkyries¹³. And yet it is this rich and varied heritage that led the spider, as well as the bat, to be associated with witches in medieval Europe, thus dooming them, it seems, to be considered 'evil.'

The snake, or serpent, is one of the more complex creatures throughout history. The letter S was one of the oldest symbols of serpenthood, both in its shape and in its sibilant sound; and the serpent was one of the oldest symbols of female power¹⁴. Both women and the serpent were considered holy in preclassic Aegean civilization, on the basis that both seemed to embody the power of life¹⁵. Snakes were considered to be immortal because it was believed that they renewed themselves forever by shedding their skin¹⁶. The Greeks called this casting off skin *geras*, or old age¹⁷. The Melanesians say to "slough one's skin" means eternal life¹⁸.

Mythologically the serpent has always been a female deity. The Earth goddess Gaea whom

Homer spoke of was known as Gaea Pelope, the female serpent. In India, the Earth goddess was sometimes called Sarparajni, or Serpent Queen; in Egypt, Iusaset; in Greece, Buto¹⁹.

Just as she was called by many names, the serpent also had several actions that were attributed to her. As the Kundalini, she represented the inner power of the human body, coiled in the pelvis like woman's organs of life-giving²⁰. Through proper practice of yoga, she could be induced to uncoil and mount through the spinal chakras toward the head, bringing infinite wisdom²¹. As Mehen, she enclosed the phallus of Ra, the sun god, at night. It was indicated that this nightly sexual communion with the Mother Earth was the real source of Ra's renewed power to light up the world again each day²². In the Middle East, the words for snake, life, and teaching all related to the name of Eve—the Biblical version of the Goddess with her serpent form, who gave the food of enlightenment to the first man²³. Of course, this was turned into an act of evil by the Christians, yet several Gnostics viewed it as providing the essential knowledge that made humans, humans. Many other religions also had a Tree of Life guarded by a serpent.

Christians adopted the Great Serpent as a form of their devil, and even went so far as to wipe out serpents in other religions. Nehushtat, the Goddess of Kadesh, had her shrine violated and the priestesses raped because Moses and Yahweh had to placate the angry serpent goddess²⁴. And yet, it's interesting to note that the Hebrew word for the divine fiery serpent was Seraph, which later became an angel²⁵. In fact, the seraphim were originally serpent-spirits, like those created by Hermes. Jewish medallions of the 1st and 2nd centuries B.C. represented Jehovah as a serpent god²⁶.

Of course, the serpent still lived on with the notion that it was a life giver. In the 18th century, it was believed that stags reversed the effects of old age and restored their youth by feeding on vipers and serpents²⁷.



Notes:

¹ Vallye, Bernadette. 1,001 Ways to Save the Planet. 1990.

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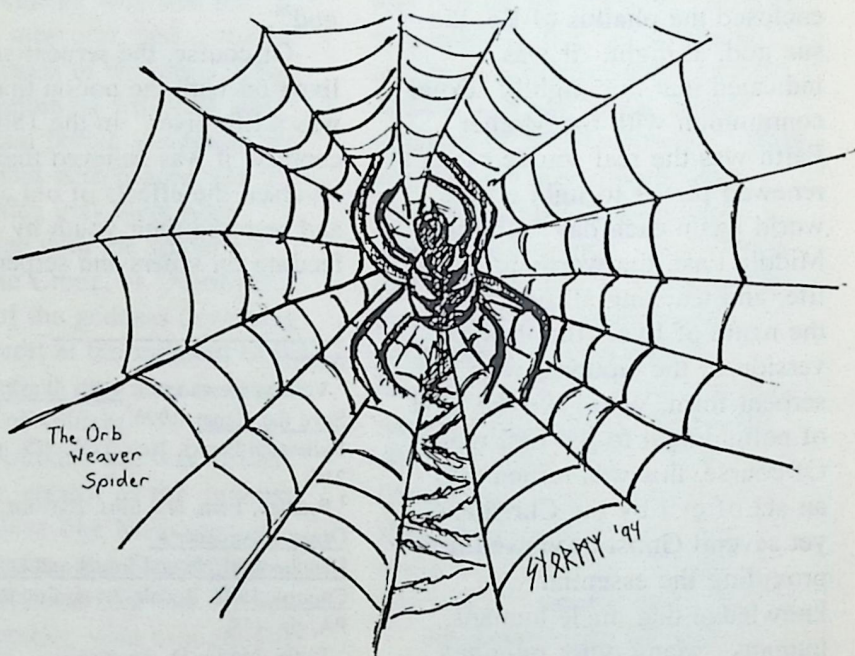
² Bradley, Fern, and Ellis, Barbara. The Organic Gardener's Handbook of Natural Insect and Disease Control. 1992. Rodale Press, Emmaus, PA, pg. 458.

³ Tuttle, Merlin D. America's Neighborhood Bats. 1988.

University of Texas Press, TX, pg. 13.

⁴ Ibid, pg. 13.

- ⁵ Ibid, pg. 13.
- ⁶ Ibid, pg. 13-14.
- ⁷ Ibid, pg. 39.
- ⁸ Ibid, pg. 40.
- ⁹ Walker, Barbara. The Woman's Dictionary of Symbols and Sacred Objects. 1988. Harper and Row, San Francisco, CA, pg. 362.
- ¹⁰ Ibid, pg. 362.
- ¹¹ Ibid, pg. 362.
- ¹² Ibid, pg. 419-420.
- ¹³ Walker, Barbara. The Woman's Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets. 1983. HarperCollins, San Francisco, CA, pg. 958.
- ¹⁴ Walker, The Woman's Dictionary of Symbols and Sacred Objects, pg. 387.
- ¹⁵ Ibid, pg. 387.
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- ¹⁸ Ibid, pg. 903.
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- ²² Walker, The Woman's Dictionary of Symbols and Sacred Objects, pg. 388.
- ²³ Ibid, pg. 388.
- ²⁴ Ibid, pg. 387.
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- ²⁶ Ibid, pg. 905.
- ²⁷ Walker, The Woman's Dictionary of Symbols and Sacred Objects, pg. 389.



ECLIPSE!

A Story of She-Who-Saved-The-World

by Miriam Carroll

Y ii! What is changing here? I sense the stillness in the forest. Why have the winged ones ceased their trilling? Look, the very air moves not. Something is changing. I am filled with dread foreboding.

I must stop skinning this meat and call my small ones to me. Oh, Spirit! It grows dark at midday! The lives will end!

Smiling Face, come to me from your gathering. Bring Buck Deer with you. Hurry, hurry to my side. We must seek the safety of the cave. See how dark it grows? Is this the prophecy of The Ancient Ones coming to pass? That the Beasts Which Came and Died are returning to eat our Sun Fire? We will die with them if that is so. The darkness grows!

How still it is! The color of the air—look! Shadows are not cast. No male is here to kill the monsters. Buck Deer, can't you go faster? Here, let me carry you. Suckle not, small male. No, we must run. The cave is near. The monsters will not reach us, and if we must die, it will be at our own hearth. Here we are. Under the flat rock with both of us. I will busy myself trying to save the life of us, or

our tribe will perish like the dragons. I must try! The Sky Fire is dying. Here is the sacred stone that glitters. I lay it here with bright feathers and water creature shells. On the wall I make a magic sign of the big-toothed animal to help us with its strength and fearsomeness. What magic words must be the ones to save the world? I know not, but will sit by the fire and try.

Oh, Spirit of the Sky Fire! Hear this woman, Skin Flayer. Be brave. You are the power of the sky. Fight back with the sharp teeth I have drawn. Bite the monster that bites your hide. Burn his skin with your fire, that you may return to warm us and give us light. See, I hold the magic stone that glitters. Now, it is dark like you. I clatter the shells, draw on the wall your name. Do not desert us and make us die with you. I give you my woman power to help fight the monster that eats you. I give! I give!

O Spirit! You are turning the battle! Fight strongly with my strength. You are returning. The darkness lifts a little. I, Skin Flayer, fight with you. Take courage! Make the shadows return. Each beat of my

inside-drum helps you. The dragon is dying. Come back, Fire Spirit! Come with your life-giving warmth and light. Slay, kill, escape!

See, the land greens again. Your light returns. We have killed. My magic was good for helping you. O Spirit, only my little ones here will know who saved all Life.

I am Woman of Power. My Words were good. The stone sparkles. Sharp teeth aided you. Salt from my eyes comes for me to lick. The battle is won.

I would rest a while, but food is not prepared. The little ones

wail in hunger. Is my work never done?

Little ones, I have made it safe. Shadows play in the forest again. The air moves.

Listen, the feathered ones sing for us.

This story, I tell you, children of my many children. That was long ago, when I was strong. Heed my tale; some day Sky Fire may darken again. Do what you are in power to do. That day, children, I changed the world. I changed my name. Thereafter, I was She-who-Saved-The-World!



Night Stalking: Star-Watching

by Stormy

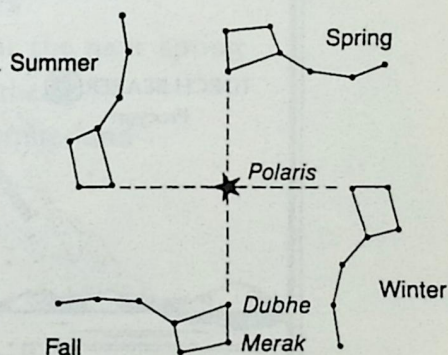
Some stars can only be viewed during a certain time of the year. In the last issue of The Hazel Nut (Issue 10), I mentioned two asterisms; the **Summer Triangle**, which is seen only in the summer night sky, and the **Autumn Equinox Triangle**, which is seen in the autumn night sky. An example of a constellation viewed only during the winter months is Orion, the Hunter (traditional); also known as Frigg on her Distaff (Old Norse) or Spider Woman (Hopi Indians). Beltane marks the end of the journey of Orion and Pleiades from the lower southeastern sky at the beginning of winter to the southwestern sky, before their disappearance for the summer.

There are a number of constellations that can be seen throughout the year, the most well-known being the Big Dipper. This is also known as Ursa Major (Traditional), the Bear (Old English) (as in Artu or King Arthur, whose name means bear), or Woden's Wagon (Old Norse). Go outside at night and face west. Turn your head and look over your right shoulder; this is approximately north. Unless you are at the North Pole,

the Big Dipper will appear in the northern sky. It is in the shape of a large pot or dipper with a curved handle. The two brightest stars in the Big Dipper are *Dubhe* and *Merak*; they are in the front of the dipper part. The two are in a line, and point directly at the North Star, which is also called Polaris (Traditional), or Tyr (Old Norse). Norse sailors refer to it as the "nail in the sky."

The Big Dipper's position as it rotates around Polaris is an indicator of the season we are in. Look for the Dipper's fall position in the figure, and compare it to the night sky. You will discover that its position is similar to if not the same as in

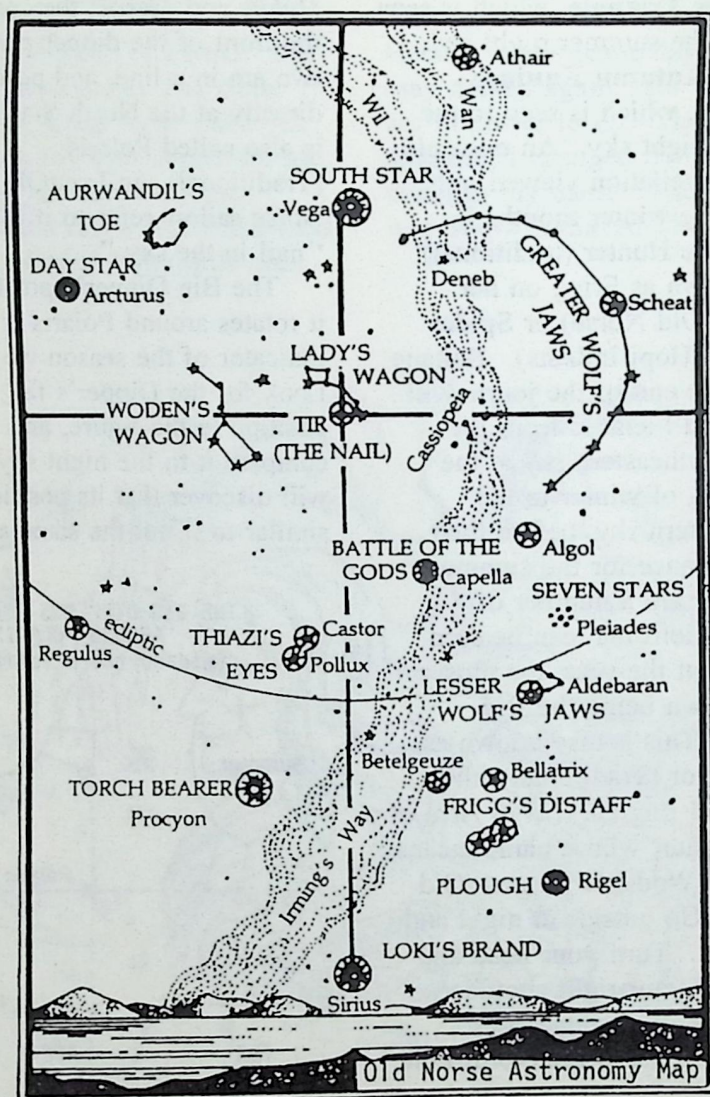
THE BIG DIPPER'S ROTATION
AROUND POLARIS
(mid-northern latitudes)



the figure! Use this knowledge to continue to track the Big Dipper's positions through the seasons. An old wives' tale says: "In the fall, the fluid in the dipper does not spill out. Through winter, spring and summer it's difficult to maintain the liquid in the dipper!"

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thoughts: autumnal equinox

I am in the Autumn of my years

Sun in Libra

balanced between

The Woman The Crone

The fulcrum:

The Child

My emanations are crimson of the sunset

golden of the sleepy maple

Silver is my Crown like the sheen

of cool water

under the harvest moon

I gather my blessings around me

keep the chill from my bones

for winter nips playfully

at my slower footfall

My blessings are carefully polished

to set forth upon my table

for all to share

To know me:

Spirit Knowledge Silence Volition Daring

In balance I look back fifty years

My children's children will plant the next spring

Gazing through dry cornfields ahead

Transformation waits in Summerland

There I will take my bounty

playing there in warmth

forever

- by Miriam Carroll

The Festival of Samhain

by Coll

The Celtic lunar month of Gort or Negetal (Ivy or Reed in the Beth-Luis-Nion tradition) marks the time of Samhain, the end of the old year and the beginning of the new. As the festival of Beltane is a celebration of life marked by the rising of the Pleiades in the constellation of Taurus, Samhain is a festival of death marked by their setting.

Our Earth Mother Goddess has come full circle, from fertile maiden, to life-giving mother, to withering and wise crone. The harvest has been taken from Her breast. Now is the time that She must sleep, and let the God of the Hunt rule throughout the dark times of winter.

In one legend, the god of life, the Dagda, has intercourse with the Morrigan, a goddess of death, while she stands astride the river Unius in Connaught, Ireland. Here she is washing the dead of a forthcoming battle. This is an expression of the great universal forces of life and death represented in archetypal form for human understanding.

Samhain is an in-between time, and this is recognized by those carrying on the Celtic Pagan traditions. The veil which

separates the living from the dead is at its thinnest. This is the time when spirits can pass easily from one world into the other. In fact, one of the oldest known spellings of Samhain is 'Samildanach' (from the Scots-Gaelic), which literally means 'the DEAD WALK!'

In many cases, these spirits are beneficial and customs have arisen to welcome departed ancestors who have come to warm themselves by the hearthfire. But there are also malicious spirits who cross over, and protective measures are taken which still exist today, to confuse spirits which are harmful.

In Ireland to this day, the old customs survive. Street signs are changed around and veils are hung over mirrors in an effort to confuse these malevolent spirits. In our own country we carve spooky faces into pumpkins and wear costumes in reverence of these old ways.

Since Samhain marks the end of the old year and the beginning of the new year, it is also an auspicious time for divining the future. In our modern traditions as in times of old, we consult the tarot cards, runes, or ogham sticks to see what the new year

will bring. Young Irish maidens are known to set pairs of nuts in a fire, representing the maiden and a possible future husband. If a nut jumps, it means he will be unfaithful. If the two nuts burn together, the marriage will last a lifetime.

In the highlands of Scotland, 'Samhnagan' fires are lit next to each person's home, and a contest is held to see which is the biggest. When the fires die down, the ash is carefully collected and made into a circle. Stones are placed inside the perimeter of the circle representing each person involved (usually several families). If a stone is found disturbed the next morning, it is believed that the person will not survive the year.

Listed here were just a few of the customs surviving from aboriginal times which celebrate this most sacred time for Pagans, Druids, and Witches. It is interesting that these ancient traditions are today carried on by those not even claiming such a heritage. Though they do not understand the significance of these customs, let us remember and welcome those familiar spirits who cross the

veil, bidding them a warm "Merry Meet!"

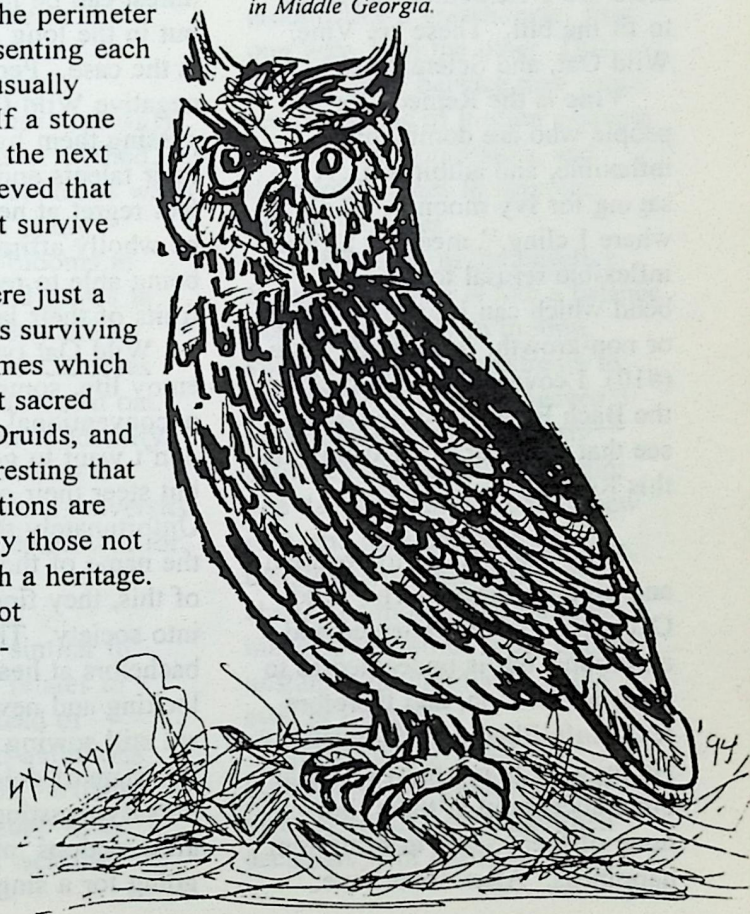
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Coll is the Druid Priest of C.O.R. (Coven and Church of Rhiannon), which is based in Middle Georgia.



Bach Flowers:

IVY

by Muirghein uí Dhún Aonghasa

Ivy, like all the moons, has more than one distinct energy. As there is no prepared Ivy Remedy, we must choose an appropriate one from the 38 Bach Flower Remedies, or simply make our own Ivy remedy from scratch (see issue #9 for directions). As far as substitutes, there are 3 Remedies that seem to fit the bill. These are Vine, Wild Oat, and Scleranthus.

Vine is the Remedy for people who are dominating, inflexible, and ambitious. A saying for Ivy moon is "I die where I cling," meaning a rigid, inflexible refusal to change or bend which can lead to 'death,' or non-growth. In the last issue (#10), I covered Vine Remedy in the Bach Flowers: Vine article; see that issue for more details on this Remedy.

Wild Oat relates to vocation and purposefulness. The Wild Oat person is very talented and ambitious, but is undecided as to his true vocation, and therefore feels unfulfilled and dissatisfied. He may try many things, and be quite successful at them, but none of them seem to bring him happiness. After some time,

formerly enjoyable work begins to pall, and colleagues are judged rather boring, so the Wild Oat person tears down what he has built up, and moves on to the next opportunity. "Someone who has had no experience of such things might well imagine that such a state of creative unrest can be most stimulating, but in the long run the opposite is the case. People in the negative Wild Oat state feel life passing them by, in spite of all their talents and activities. They feel regret at never being able to be wholly affirmative, never being able to really enjoy the fruits of their labours¹."

Wild Oat types also want to enjoy life, sometimes in unconventional ways. "They don't want to go with the current but steer their own craft. Unfortunately they do not know the name of the port²." Because of this, they find it difficult to fit into society. They are eternal bachelors at heart, always looking and never finding. They are still sowing their wild oats in this state of delayed mental puberty, wasting their energies in all directions rather than finally going for a single goal. "There

is an Irish saying that describes the Wild Oat state of mind exactly: 'An Irishman never knows what he wants, and won't be happy until he gets it.'³

A person in the negative Wild Oat state is self-willed and self-centered. One needs to learn to go for depth rather than breadth. "A person taking Wild Oat will feel himself gradually growing calmer, clearer and more certain in heart and mind. Little by little he will have a clearer picture of what it is he really wants, and will come to act intuitively rather than impulsively⁴."

Wild Oat (*Bromus ramosus*) is prepared by the sun method. Pick the flowering spikelets when in full pollen, from many grasses. Wild Oat blooms in July and August, and grows in damp woods, thickets, and by roadsides. The Wild Oat does not look like the cultivated oat, and may be difficult to identify. If you are unsure, collect a sample and send it to a university or college botany department for identification⁵.

Scleranthus is similar to Wild Oat in that it relates to indecision, but instead of indefinite ideas and ambitions, the Scleranthus type vacillates between two polar opposites. Scleranthus people lack the

ability to make up their minds, and thus are swayed between two choices. They are unable to concentrate due to their constantly changing outlook. In conversation they tend to jump from one subject to another. When ill, their symptoms come and go or move about, or change from one extreme to another; i.e., from diarrhea to constipation, or from ravenous hunger to no appetite. Any outside impulse is enough to get a reaction from the Scleranthus person; they jump around like a grasshopper, first one way, then the other. This lack of inner balance may cause various kinds of motion sickness or inner ear complaints, and outwardly, leads to nervous, dithery gestures.

"A person in the negative Scleranthus state is like a balance that is constantly in motion, swinging from one extreme to the other—in seventh heaven or miserable as hell, extremely active or completely apathetic; one day enthusiastic over a new idea, the next completely disinterested. This constant change of moods and opinions makes Scleranthus types appear unstable and unreliable in the eyes of others⁶."

In the positive state, Scleranthus people have great inner strength, and make their decisions with intuitive

confidence. They are calm, unambiguous, and determined, and have a calming effect on nervous people around them.

Scleranthus (*Scleranthus annuus*) is a small bushy plant which grows 2-4" high, and is found in wheat fields and sandy and gravelly soils. It is prepared by the sun method; pick the flowering stems and leaves, which bloom from July to September⁷.

Notes:

¹ Scheffer, Mechthild. Bach Flower Therapy - Theory and Practice. 1981. Munchen, West Germany, pg. 190.

² Ibid, pg. 189.

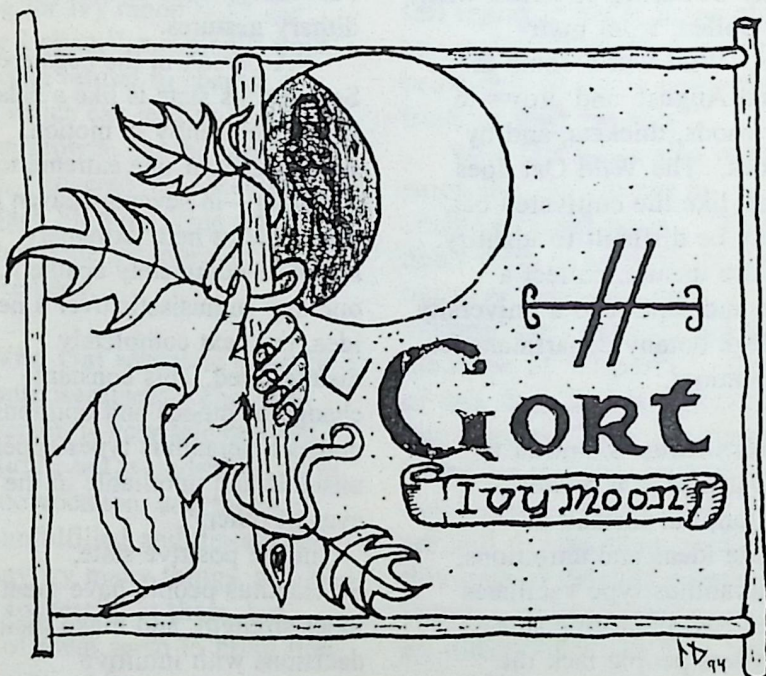
³ Chancellor, Dr. Philip M. Handbook of the Bach Flower Remedies. 1971. Keats Publishing, Inc., New Canaan, CT, pg. 218.

⁴ Scheffer, pg. 190.

⁵ Weeks, Nora, and Bullen, Victor. The Bach Flower Remedies - Illustrations and Preparation. 1964. C.W. Daniel Co. Ltd., London, England, pg. 32.

⁶ Scheffer, pg. 152-153.

⁷ Weeks and Bullen, pg. 30.



Lunar Energies & Esoterica:

IVY

by Imré K. Rainey

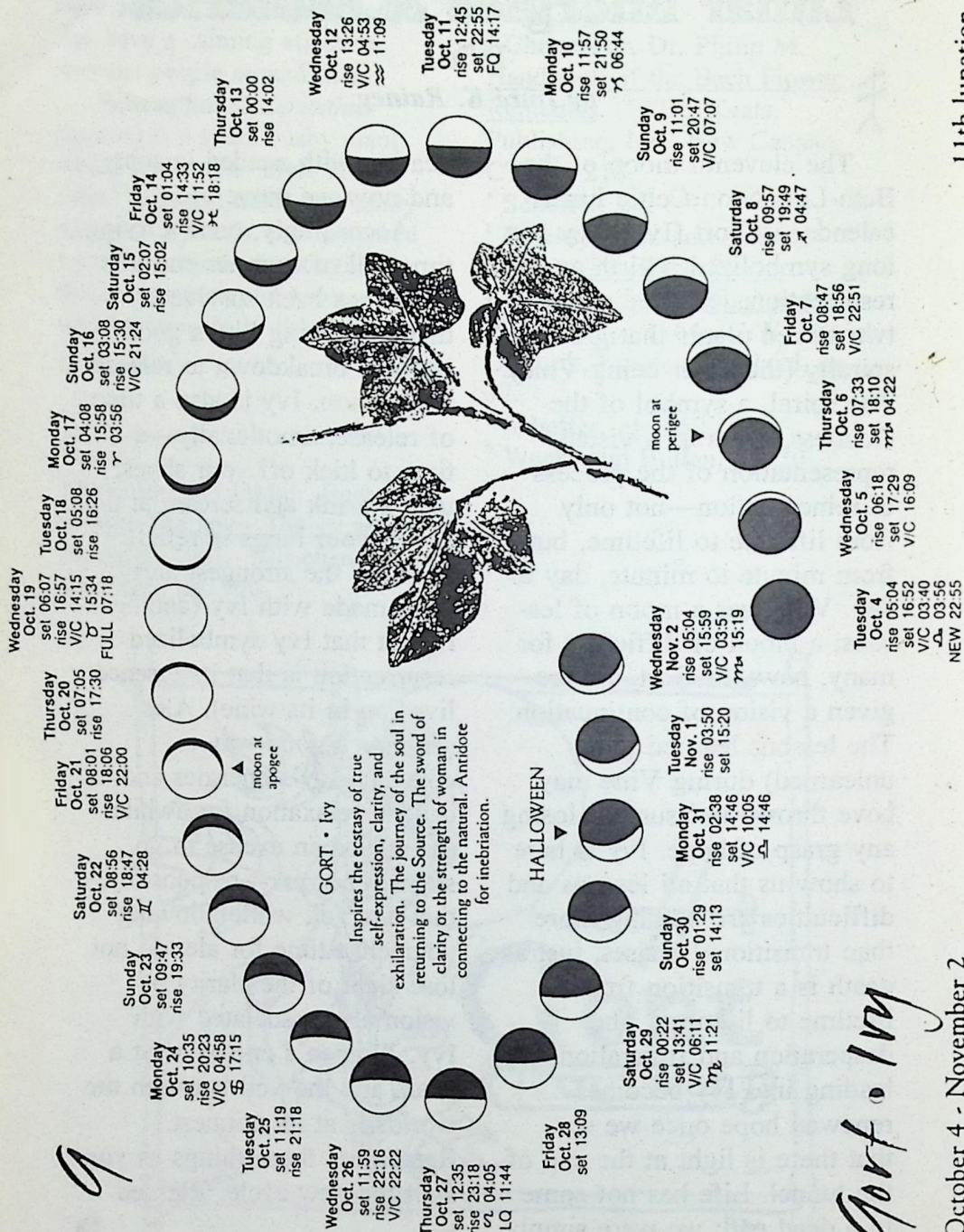


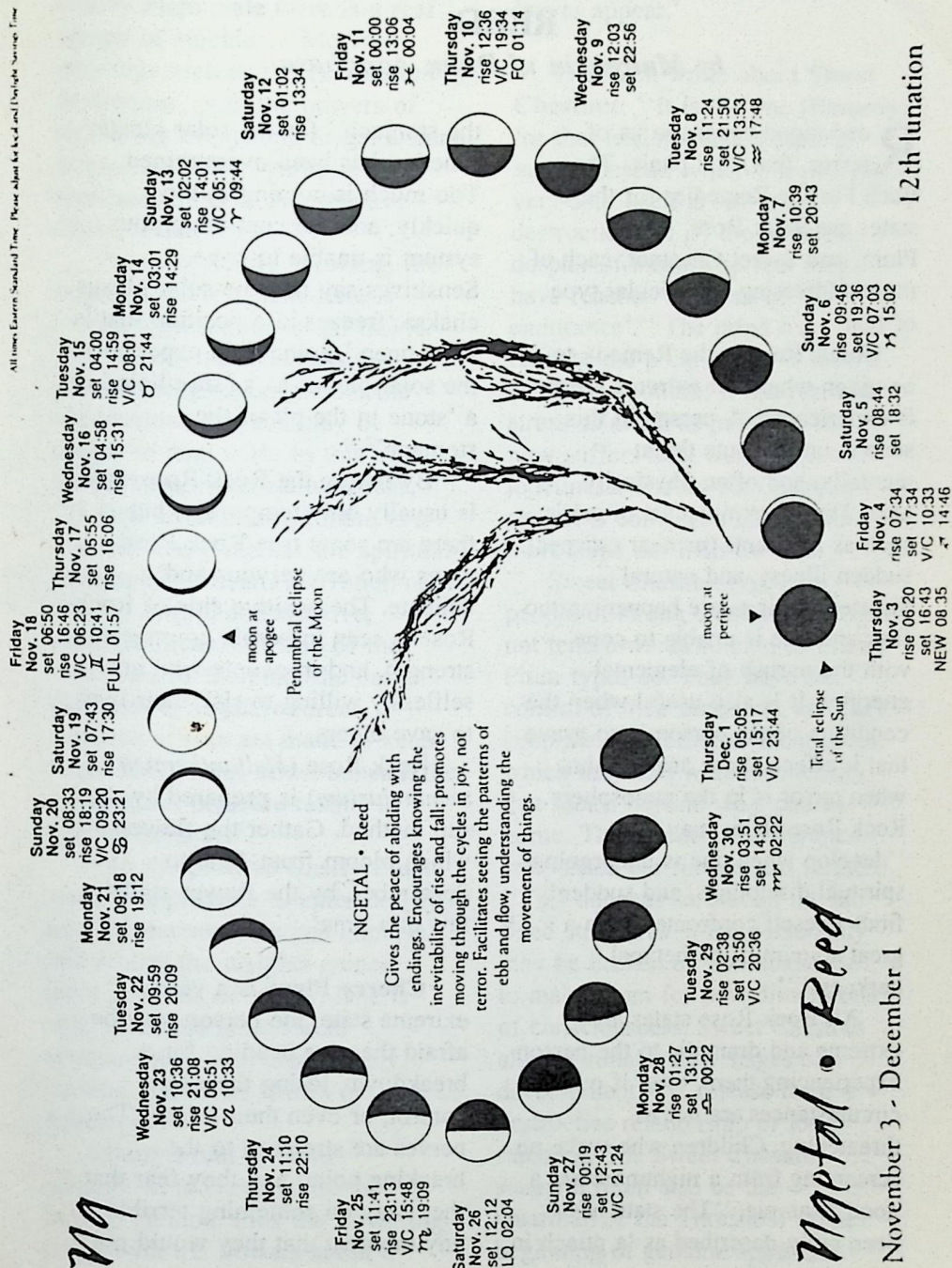
The eleventh moon of the Beth-Luis-Nion Celtic lunar calendar is Gort (Ivy). Ivy has long symbolized rebirth and resurrection. It is one of the two sacred plants that grows spirally (the other being Vine). The spiral, a symbol of the Goddess, gives us a visual representation of the process of reincarnation—not only from lifetime to lifetime, but from minute to minute, day to day. Vine was a moon of lessons; a moon of difficulty for many. Now, in Gort, we are given a vision of continuation. The lessons learned (and unlearned) during Vine may have thrown us asunder, losing any grasp of hope. Ivy is here to show us that all lessons and difficulties are nothing more than transitional phases, just as death is a transition from lifetime to lifetime. The desperation and frustration leading into Ivy becomes renewed hope once we see that there is light at the end of the tunnel. Life has not come to a dead end; we were simply

dealing with needed lessons, and now we move on.

Accordingly, once a trying time (all of summer and into Vine) has been survived, there's nothing like a good nervous breakdown to release the tension. Ivy is also a time of release, emotionally—a time to kick off your shoes, take a drink and scream at the top of your lungs in relief. Some of the strongest ales were made with Ivy (another reason that Ivy symbolized resurrection is that its essence lives on in its wine). Ales serve as a good way to consume Ivy's energies and to drift in relaxation for awhile (or maybe an excuse to go slightly berzerk—responsibly, that is). Yet, while allowing yourself a time for ale, do not lose sight of the clarity of vision also associated with Ivy. Women's energy is at a peak, and the veil between the worlds is at its thinnest. Remember these things as you start the new cycle. Blessed be!







Bach Flowers:

REED

by Muirghoin uí Dhún Aonghasa

Reed moon speaks to us of terror, fear, and panic. The Bach Flower Remedies for these states are Rock Rose, Cherry Plum, and Sweet Chestnut, each of these addressing a particular type of fear.

Rock Rose is the Remedy to be given whenever extreme terror is experienced. A person in this state is under acute threat mentally, and often physically, also. These are moments of crisis, such as accidents (or near escapes), sudden illness, and natural disasters. Things are happening too fast, and one is unable to cope with the onrush of elemental energies. It is also useful when the condition of the person is so grave that it affects those around him, when terror is in the atmosphere. Rock Rose states may also "develop when one is undergoing spiritual disciplines, and suddenly finds oneself confronted with a great amount of archetypal darkness¹."

All Rock Rose states are extreme and dramatic to the person experiencing them, even if outside circumstances are not as threatening. Children who wake up screaming from a nightmare are a good example. "The state has been aptly described as 'a punch in

the stomach,' for the solar plexus function has been overstrained. Too much is coming in too quickly, and the central nervous system is unable to cope. Sensitives say that the solar plexus chakra 'freezes in a position that is wide open.' Some then experience the solar plexus as a 'sore hole,' or a 'stone in the pit of the stomach'²."

By nature the Rock Rose state is usually only temporary, but there are some true Rock Rose types who are nervous and delicate. The positive side of Rock Rose is seen in heroic courage and strength, and in people who are selflessly willing to risk their lives to save others.

Rock Rose (*Helianthemum nummularium*) is prepared by the sun method. Gather the flowers, which bloom from June to September, by the flower-stalks, a few at a time³.

Cherry Plum is a very extreme state; the person may be afraid they are heading for a breakdown, losing their self-control, or even their minds. The nerves are stretched to the breaking point, and they fear that they may do something terrible at any moment that they would not

normally do, either to themselves or to someone else. In the extreme Cherry Plum state there is a real danger of suicide. "Medieval paintings such as the *Temptation of St Anthony*, with the powers of hell doing everything to get a saint to capitulate, are symbolic representations of the negative Cherry Plum state⁴."

Psychologically speaking, the negative Cherry Plum state is caused by a fear to let go inside. The person makes efforts to prevent things arising from the unconscious that she may be unable to deal with. In this state, the personality reacts with fear. "It fails to realize that there is a law that every mental and spiritual development means activation not only of bright, constructive, positive forces, but also of the other side of the coin, the dark, destructive, negative forces. Anxious efforts are made to keep those dark forces down beneath the surface; but pressure results in counter-pressure⁵."

"In the positive Cherry Plum state, it is possible to enter deeply into the unconscious and express and realize the insights gained there in terms of reality. One is able to handle great forces spontaneously and composedly, making enormous strides in development⁶."

Cherry Plum (*Prunus cerasifera*) is prepared by the boiling method. Pick the flowering twigs with the flowers about 6"

long. It blooms in early spring, February to April, before the leaves appear.⁷

Dr. Bach wrote about **Sweet Chestnut**: "It is the one [Remedy] for that terrible, that appalling mental despair when it seems the very soul itself is suffering destruction. [It is] the hopeless despair of those who feel they have reached the limit of their endurance⁸." The mind has reached the point where it feels it can bear no more; it has resisted stress as much as possible, and now suffers total exhaustion and loneliness. The Sweet Chestnut person is convinced there is no more hope nor help for him.

Sweet Chestnut types are people of strong character, who do not tend towards suicide as Cherry Plum types do. They have full control of their emotions, and they keep their suffering to themselves, which they feel with an intensity that seems beyond what can be borne. Their limits of endurance are pushed out further and further. "This happens so that all the old fixed structures in the personality may be broken up and abandoned, to make room for new dimensions of consciousness. Sweet Chestnut always initiates new stages of development, e.g. release from a destructive relationship of long standing. The Sweet Chestnut state will often also be the Guardian of the Threshold at the beginning of genuine spiritual

development...One realizes that everything is taken from one because one needs to go forward empty handed if one is to be able to take hold of the new life that is coming towards one; that one has to give oneself up completely to be totally reborn⁹."

The positive aspect is seen in those who, even in their anguish, are able to call out to and trust in their Higher Self. Sweet Chestnut helps us get through difficult periods of transformation without losing ourselves. Help is nearest when the need is greatest.

Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*) is prepared by the boiling method. It blooms from June to August, after the leaves appear. Gather about 6" of the twig with leaves and male and female flowers¹

and Preparation. 1964. C.W. Daniel Co. Ltd., London, England, pg. 26.

⁴ Scheffer, pg. 60.

⁵ Ibid, pg. 60.

⁶ Ibid, pg. 60.

⁷ Weeks and Bullen, pg 58.

⁸ Chancellor, Dr. Philip M. Handbook of the Bach Flower Remedies. 1971. Keats Publishing, Inc., New Canaan, CT, pg. 185.

⁹ Scheffer, pg. 162.

¹⁰ Weeks and Bullen, pg. 90.

Notes:

¹ Scheffer, Methchild. Bach Flower Therapy - Theory and Practice. 1981. Munchen, West Germany, pg. 145.

² Ibid, pg. 144.

³ Weeks, Nora, and Bullen, Victor. The Bach Flower Remedies - Illustrations



Lunar Energies & Esoterica:

REED

by *Brigid MoonFire*



"I am the threatening noise of the sea" is the glyph of the 12th moon. And like the sea, this can be a time of turmoil. If you have not reconciled your feelings in the last moon, now is the time that your emotions can take over. You must find a suitable outlet for them, for repressing them will only lead to an explosion.

The sea is a powerful and potentially deadly force, and as such this moon is known as the Death Moon. All around us we can see images of death. The leaves are dying on the trees, the sun goes into hiding, and we are left with many more night-time hours to think and speculate on the meaning of our life, and our own survival. We are closer to the creatures of the night, especially the owl, which is the bird of this moon. The owl is associated with the goddess Hecate, the Crone, the death aspect of the Triple Goddess.

The Reed can be a powerful object. Besides reminding us of death, it was used to make arrows, and it is said to heal the wound of an arrow. Reeds were also used for thatching the roofs of huts and homes in preparation for the fast-approaching winter

months. A new couple's home was said not to be complete until they had done their winter thatching. While today we do not have to worry with thatching our roofs, it is the time to make sure we, like the squirrels and the bears, have prepared ourselves for winter and her cold chill. This is the time to make sure we have all our firewood, unperishable storage items, and enough projects to keep us from being bored and restless during the cold and dark months ahead.

The sea can be deadly, but she is also beautiful and fun. Likewise, the other side of this moon is joy and music; the Reed can be used to make pipes; its music can hold at bay the terrors of this moon. As such, the Reed moon is sacred to Pan (from whose name the word *panic* is derived) and his pipes. Remember when you feel cloistered in your protected home: the wind through the ice-covered trees, the crunch of the snow beneath your feet, and the sound (or silence) of snowflakes falling are all part of Nature's music. Enjoy and learn to love and respect this part of Nature and this time on the Wheel of the Year.

What To Do When Ghosts Pop In

by ShadowCat

To me, being without ghostly goings-on would be strange. You see, I have had ghosts around me, in one form or another, since I was a child. Around the age of 6, I lived for a while with my Grandpa and Grandma in a small house, a shack actually, in the country. Here life was very different from what I had experienced earlier on an Air Force Base in Japan. Our stove ran on wood, the heater ran on coal, and if you wanted to go to the bathroom you had to go outside to the outhouse. Here is also where I began to get acquainted with the spirit world, mostly through the stories my Grandma told me. The spirit world was very real to my Grandma. She was one of those people who could 'see things,' as my Momma used to say. There was the story of a baby that had just died appearing to my Grandma one night when she had to go to the outhouse. That one always sent chills up my spine when I was a child.

Now, very little about the supernatural frightens me. I have had so many experiences with spirits at my aunt's mansion in Tennessee that I began to find it amusing when other people were

frightened. My aunt's mansion consisted of nothing but antiques, including my aunt. The mansion was at least 200 years old, complete with tower and winding staircase. Ghosts were plentiful there, as well as stories of ghostly goings-on.

My sister woke one night to the sound of a party going on in the den. Not wanting to be left out, she rose and went to investigate. She was shocked to find everyone in their beds and no one, at least no one living, astir. My mother was chased back up the steps of the trailer we had in my aunt's trailer park by the ghost of one of my dead aunts. My father, a sworn disbeliever in the supernatural, had his hair stand on end while watching my uncle, who had been the victim of a stroke that left him with the mind of a child, conversing with spirit of an aunt I had had recently pass away. I was frightened into record running speed when an irritated spirit groaned in my ear to frighten me off one day.

In all these incidents one thing is clear—no one was ever harmed by the spirit that appeared to them. I have never been harmed by any entity that

has appeared to me. However, that doesn't mean ghosts can't cause you to harm yourself. Fear can make people do lots of things they wouldn't normally do, like running through a screen door or wetting their pants. I've experienced both.

The sad thing about the way we usually react to ghosts is that, for the most part, the last thing they want is for us to run away. Most spirits are lonely and afraid. It's a terrible blow to them when we turn and flee at their approach. Once I was visiting a girlfriend of mine at an old Methodist's Children's Home in Macon, Georgia. She was upstairs getting ready for our date and I was downstairs waiting in a little room with a large bricked-in fireplace. As I sat on the vinyl couch, I suddenly felt a presence in the room. As it passed by me I noticed the scent of a child's sweat and the feeling of illness, like that of someone with a fever. I followed the feeling of a presence with my eyes and was surprised to see the seat on the couch beside me depress as if someone had just sat down. Suddenly my left hand became cold as ice. Someone had just taken hold of my hand and I immediately became overwhelmed by a sense of loneliness and grief. I then did

something I regret to this day. I jumped up and ran out of the room. I wish now I had stayed to comfort that sad spirit of a lost child. I found out later that several children had died in that room long ago from an outbreak of rubella.

These days, visits from the otherworld are not uncommon where I live. I even have the honor of the watchful presence of my spirit guide, Karol. She has been a great help in my coming to understand the people of the otherworld. I live not very far from a cemetery and am always being visited by people recently departed. I asked Karol why this was so, and she replied by sending me a vision of the woods in the direction of my house as seen from the cemetery. The sky over the house was glowing as if some great fire were present there, yet out of sight. I knew then why so many spirits had visited me; my house was simply the first thing they would notice that would pique their curiosity when they looked in my direction. I asked her why my house appeared to be glowing, and she gave me the impression that my house was sitting on something like a gateway or node.

I have somewhat of an open door policy with guests at my house. All who come here say the place makes them feel very

comfortable and many of them end up wishing they didn't have to leave when time for departure comes. Many spend the night. One of the first things I do is warn them that strange things happen in my house and please don't scare the ghosts. Most of them laugh, at least the ones who have never been here before. Almost all of them come away from here with some kind of supernatural experience to tell of.

Once, a friend of mine had come by for a brief visit, bringing along her small son. This particular person knew nothing of my spiritual guests, nor did her son. After a brief while her son poked his head around the corner and asked, "Do you have ghosts here?" We followed him into the other room, where he showed us how the ghost had been throwing an empty soda can back at him whenever he placed it on the bar. He then took us to a wall where he demonstrated that when he knocked on it a number of times the ghost would knock back accordingly. So even people with no idea of the potential for "spiritual enlightenment" that lies waiting beyond my front door can have surprises waiting for them.

Here are some tips on what to do when confronted by a spirit. First of all, don't panic!

Yes, I know this one can be a little hard, especially when someone pale as death is standing there with his head in his arms, but it can be done with practice. Try to radiate peace and good will. Fear can feed confused or angry spirits, making things much worse. Acknowledge their presence. Most spirits are afraid no one will respond to them. Let them know that they need to relax and let go, letting things happen naturally. Most earthbound spirits are bound by their strong emotions and their fears of losing control. You might think that, once dead, you would have little to fear, but for some people, that just isn't true. They are in an entirely new environment, one they don't really know the rules to yet. Make them feel welcome and safe.

Even though ghosts can be mostly harmless, they can become very annoying. You must let them know what your boundaries are. It's no fun to be having sex with someone only to have the sheet snatched off you by a ghostly presence. Remember, as practitioners of a magical art, we have ways of dealing with unruly spirits. Don't be afraid to let them know this. It's your house, after all!

If you have had trouble seeing ghosts, but think they

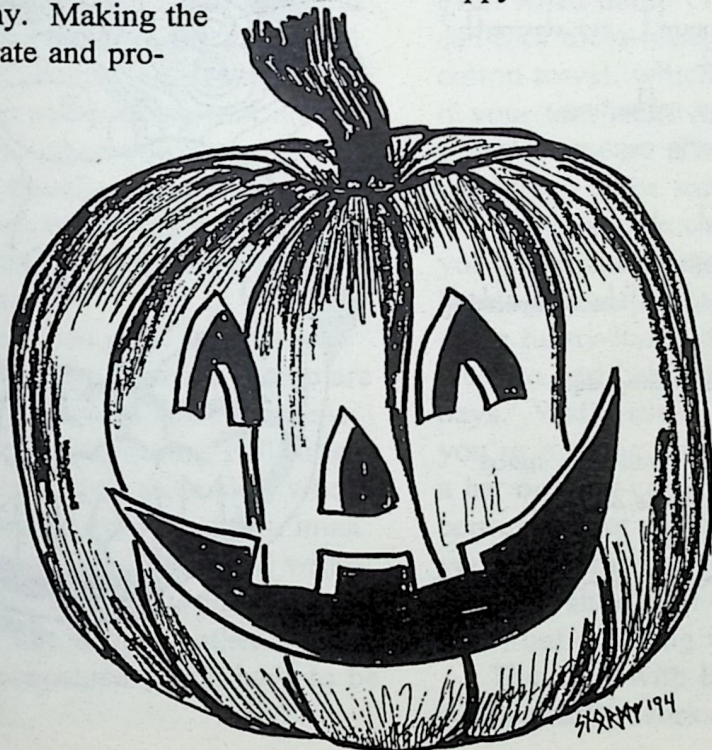
might be present, try looking only with your peripheral vision. Focusing all of your attention on a ghost can be too much of a psychic blow to many of them and will result in them quickly vanishing. Don't dismiss things that seem out of place. If you see a man standing in a doorway out of the corner of your eye and look again only to find him gone, this doesn't mean you didn't see anything the first time you looked. If you notice a glow in one corner of your room, don't blink your eyes and try to make it go away. Pay attention!

In most cases it is very difficult for spirits to make sounds, and they prefer to communicate through a kind of telepathy. Making the air vibrate and pro-

ducing sounds or manifesting for your visual pleasure can be very draining on them. If you are visited by an entity and feel the room go cold, you can bet they are draining the energy in order to do something. It is unusual but not unheard of for a ghost to drain energy from you. If it does happen, it should not become an everyday thing, and if the spirit does this without your consent, they should be told to leave.

Many spirits communicate only to receive recognition, and will fabricate almost anything to get your attention, but there are those with much to teach us. Keep an open mind and a sharp eye and you may learn a lot.

Happy Samhain, everyone!



Luna Vita

Twilit, waiflike, as last week
Shrouded in meager, chilled black
Slept you? where? and this night?

Straggly runny hair
Omni eyes scattering
Focus-free, restless, fleeing
As your minimal shuffle scuttles
Escaping—what?

Surely not my sympathetic ear?
Hateful thought: I can do no thing
Can't know your need—you're not
telling
I won't hear of madness—
fantasy convenience!

How dimmed your Luna strength?
Who damned?

Luna substance reflecting
empty uncaring neon our blank
faces
Your warm halo obscured
Your wild quarter-moon face—
half mystery—half heartbreaking
luminosity
too clear to feeling eyes

Adrift through inner city space
Random crash some distant,
freezing corner
You're not circling me—are you?

Leave the clouds—hiding your
shadow
Embrace your earth—sing your
own light
Your ecstatic erratic self
A goddess now closed to us all
regardless we see you

Some little thing—
maybe a cup of tea
could be your world now
Wait! It's not all cold!

- by Greg Moorcroft, 1994



Surviving a Cold-Weather Festival

by Muirghein uí Dhún Aonghasa

Most Pagan festivals take place in the spring and summer, but a few are planned on Samhain, Winter Solstice, or Imbolc. With this in mind, and with FallFling coming up in November in Alabama, I thought I'd offer a bit of advice on surviving a cold-weather festival.

First of all, be prepared for the weather! Watch the weather reports for the weekend, or call the organizer to see what the weather is forecasted to be in that area. The worst things you'll have to deal with are cold and rain (and possibly snow and ice), so assume it will be below freezing and pouring rain all weekend when you pack. Unless you're traveling on a motorcycle or two-seater sports car, it's better to carry too much than not enough.

What you pack depends on the site of the festival. Some are at nice sites with heated cabins, but several (including FallFling) are at more primitive sites where it's camping only, and you must carry everything you need with you. So, obviously, the more you're out in the weather, the more concerned you'll have to be with it.

Let's assume you'll be camping outdoors all weekend. For sleeping, you'll need a warm, high quality sleeping bag, not a cheapie slumber bag, with some kind of pad to provide insulation from the ground. Close-cell foam is a good choice, and you can get it at any outdoor store, or possibly even Wal-Mart. Don't rely on an inflatable air mattress; they allow too much cold air to circulate underneath you. Wool blankets are also a good idea; wool will retain heat even when damp or wet, and you can blot most water out with a cotton towel, which is a big plus if your tent leaks in the (planned-for) downpour. There's also something to be said for sleeping in your clothes, or at least in your longjohns. Remember hearing about nightcaps? They're those funny-looking hats people wore to bed back in the 'old days.' Well, just like when you're running around outdoors, a hat or head-covering will conserve a lot of body heat when you're sleeping. I've been known to pull a sheepskin over my head, but anything warm will do.

The trick with layering your clothes really works; it just

makes it difficult to go to the outhouse. But if it's 20° out, I'd rather have warmth than convenience. Several thin layers retain heat better than one bulky layer. I wear silk longjohns (top and bottom), then cotton longjohns (bottoms), with maybe some cotton/lycra leggings underneath, a wool/cotton blend longjohn top available through Gander Mountain, then pants, shirt, and wool sweater. Wool is one of the best choices as far as outer clothing goes, because it's warm and it dries quickly. There are several new man-made fabrics available for longjohns; check the catalogs to see which suits you best. I don't recommend wearing tight jeans over all this; for one thing, cotton wicks in moisture, and thick cotton, like jeans, takes forever to dry. Also, tight pants will constrict you and the underwear, making you cold. Try loose pants of a cotton/nylon blend. Toss on a down, sheepskin or even a fake fur vest, and you're set to go.

With all this on, unless it's really cold, I don't usually need a coat or jacket until nightfall. Make sure yours has a waterproof shell; even a canvas coat can be waterproofed with Scotch-Guard, Camp-Dry, or Thompson's Water Seal (although this will darken it

slightly and make it a bit stiff). If the coat's not heavy enough, go to your local Army surplus store and buy a field jacket liner for about \$15.00. This can be buttoned into your coat for cold weather and taken out in milder weather. Keep a good pair of gloves and glove liners in the pockets. Look for a pair that's warm, but doesn't constrict your hand's movements or circulation. Glove liners work sort of like longjohns, offering extra warmth without bulk.

Don't forget a hat! Keep your head and ears covered, and you'll be amazed how much warmer you'll be. A knit cap, or a military-style hat with ear flaps is good. My husband made a Mongol-style hat out of an old sheepskin car seat cover; it's real funky-looking and very warm. (I can provide pattern and instructions; write to me at The Hazel Nut.) For rain, a wide-brimmed felt (beaver is better than wool) or leather hat is excellent for shedding water. You don't want a hat that's going to let the rain drip down your collar, or soak through onto your head. Another option is to buy or make a detachable hood for your coat, and wear a brimmed cap underneath to keep the rain from your face.

What about your feet? You want them to stay warm and dry,

not cold, clammy, wet, or sweaty. Forget tennis shoes and duck boots. Get shoes or boots made out of leather—it breathes, letting moisture and sweat evaporate and escape, which would otherwise sit on your feet and chill them; plus it's easily waterproofed. If the boots are new, break them in before the weekend. Treat them with mink oil or neet's foot oil; this will condition the leather and waterproof them. Gore-Tex boots are also available; they are waterproof and breathable. Make sure the boots or shoes fit properly! If your shoes are too tight, your foot will be right up against the boot, which will act as a cold sink. This means cold feet. Not only do you need room for thick socks, you need room for a bit of air circulation around your feet.

If the boots will be for mostly winter use, and if they're not already lined, get them about 1/2 to 1 size too big so you'll have room for felt liners. Buy or make some felted wool insoles (at least 1/4" thick), or even complete liners, to fit inside the boots. (If you can, buy the liners and boots together so you can make sure there's room for your foot. Liners take up a bit of room in the boot. Also have your wool socks with you when you try them on. If you mail order, ask

the phone clerk's advice on sizes.) I wear thick felt wool insoles inside my leather shoes with a pair of wool socks, and I have toasty feet, even in 25° weather. Speaking of wool socks, I found some incredibly thick ones (I can't wear them with my wool insoles in—they don't fit!) in Cabela's catalog that come up over the knee, and stay up, that only cost about \$12.00 (cheap). They also carry mukluks, which are boots that are completely lined with fake shearling and have very thick crepe rubber soles, and cost about \$80.00. They're so warm I can only wear them when it's really cold, and they look neat, too. They're leather, but they have lace-up fronts, so don't step in puddles more than ankle deep.

Okay, you're warm, and hopefully not so bundled up you look like the kid in "A Christmas Story." A few more hints: make sure your layers, including the socks, are done in such a way that you can shed them easily in the daytime, and then put them back on in the evening. Make sure you have extra clothes, socks and shoes in a plastic bag in your car in case you get drenched in spite of all your preparations. Let your wet underclothes get completely dry before you put them back on, and remember, when you're

drying your clothes over a campfire, wool burns. So does leather. Be careful.

Other things to prepare for in case of rain: when you pack your tent, check to make sure you have the rain fly! To keep your tent dry in downpours, use a groundcloth—the sides should not stick out past the tent, or they'll collect rain and bring it right in underneath you. Another way to use a groundcloth is to put it inside the tent, covering the floor and the first few inches of the walls. Bring a dining fly or tarp that you can set up to cover your camping area; that way you're not confined to your bubble tent during the downpour. Pack things in waterproof bags or containers. Army duffle and kit bags are already slightly waterproof, and can be made more so with Thompson's Water Seal. Don't pack in cardboard boxes—they seem to attract every water puddle in the tent. If you put your cooking gear and extra stuff in a plastic storage box with a good lid, you can leave it outside the tent, even in the rain. And bring an umbrella for each person in the party.

Finally, keep your body temperature up by eating the proper foods. Meat is great when you're outdoors (unless you're a vegetarian). Fatty and greasy foods are guilt-free in cold

weather. Eat plenty of sugars and carbohydrates; energy= warmth. And contrary to popular belief, alcohol does not increase body temperature; rather, it lowers it and increases your susceptibility to cold. When you're drinking and partying in cold weather, make sure you eat plenty.

Happy camping!



Mail order sources:

Cabela's
812 13th Avenue
Sidney, NB 69160
800-237-4444

Gander Mountain, Inc.
Box 248, Hwy. W
Wilmot, WI 53192
800-558-9410



Cooking Outdoors and Favorite Feast Recipes

by Muirghein uí Dhún Aonghasa

Cooking outdoors goes along with surviving cold-weather festivals, and when done right, can go a long way towards making a cold, wet weekend more bearable, or a warm, dry weekend wonderful.

There are two basic ways of cooking outdoors. One: you can carry dry firewood to the site with you (never assume they'll have dry wood there), an axe to split it with, and some charcoal starter to help things out.

Actually, this is a good idea whether you plan to cook over your fire or not; even a small fire can make you feel much warmer on a cold night. For cooking, you'll need a trivet (a grill with legs), a grate, a tripod, or some other means of supporting cookpot, skillet, coffee pot, steaks, or whatever. You could also build your fire in a portable grill or hibachi, or use charcoal. Don't wait till you get to the site to figure out how to build a fire; you should know how before. In addition to wood, you'll want dry tinder, maybe some kindlin', and some lighter wood. Ideally, you should bring these with you. Keep your matches in a waterproof container; wet

matches won't start fires.

Candles are a good way to start a fire in poor conditions, so bring a few with you. Another good idea is to make a 'fire-starter' kit. Take wooden kitchen matches and soak them in wax.

This will seal and protect the wood and the powder on the tip, and provide fuel. Light one with a regular match, and it will burn for about 6 minutes; long enough to dry out wet wood. By the way, only cook over hardwoods or fruit tree woods, NOT pine.

Way number two: carry a Coleman stove and extra fuel. This is easier, but doesn't provide the warmth of a campfire. Food just tastes better cooked over a fire, anyway. However, if you have one, bring it and use it. Make sure it works beforehand, and that you, not the husband or kid or store clerk, know how to start it and refill it.

What will you cook, what will you cook in, how will you stir the pot, how will you take the hot lid off or take the pot off the fire? Consider these things, and you'll know what to pack. A lid on the pot makes it heat quicker. Your stirring spoon should have a long enough

handle to reach the bottom of the pot. Your skillet should not have a wooden or plastic handle that will burn off. Don't bring your fancy copper bottom, stainless steel pot and expect it to stay shiny new—fire makes pots and skillets black with soot (if you coat the bottoms with liquid dish soap first, it makes the soot much easier to wash off later). And don't forget something to wash dishes in.

We do a lot of primitive camping, and we're getting the feel for simple, effective cooking outdoors. Plan for 1-dish meals that don't need a lot of preparation. You can cook steaks on the grill while boiling a pot of stew next to them or suspended from a tripod. You can grill sandwiches over the fire. You can wrap potatoes or corn (or most anything) in heavy tin foil and just toss in the coals. Tin foil is wonderful; slice onions, bell peppers and mushrooms, put in foil with some butter, garlic, and worcestershire sauce, close package, and grill for 15-20 minutes. Serve with your grilled steak or hamburger. Other uses for tin foil: beef stew, pot roast, roast chicken, baked apples, mixed veggies, desserts, etc. You can even bake in a Dutch oven in the coals, but this takes a little practice. Carry dehydrated

foods, instant mixes, canned goods, etc. Do as much of your food preparation at home beforehand as you can, and put in baggies or tupperware. Finally, make sure you have lots of snack foods or pre-made stuff that doesn't have to be cooked. For quick energy and warmth, bring dried fruits and trail mixes, and candy or granola bars.

What to cook? Obviously, you can cook food straight on the grill: steaks and chicken, hot dogs and hamburgers, etc. Or you can use your cookpot and make chili or catch-all stew. But the purpose of this article is to get you out of the chili/stew/steak thinking mode, and present recipes for small meals and pot-lucks feasts that'll have folks wondering where your traveling kitchen & crew is. Double or triple the following recipes for pot-luck feasts, or cut food into smaller portions. And if you like what this idea, send me your favorite feast recipes, and we'll print a few every issue.

Beef Burgundy

Combine in a double sheet of heavy duty foil 3 lbs. cubed beef, 4 cans mushrooms (or 2 cups fresh), 1 chopped onion, and 1 bottle burgundy wine. Close package and grill 2-3 hours till meat is tender. Serves 6-10 people.

Jamaican Jerk Chicken

At home, combine in blender or food processor: ¼ cup chopped onion, 1 tsp. thyme, 2 tsp. sugar, 1 tsp. black pepper, ½ tsp. allspice, ¼ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes, 1 Tbsp. oil. Blend until mixture is a paste. Cut up and skin 1 frying chicken, rub paste on all sides of chicken pieces. Place in a large zip-lock bag, seal, and refrigerate at least 3 hours.

At the campsite, place the seasoned chicken on an 18" square of heavy-duty foil. Wrap securely, place on grill. Cook 1 hour or until chicken is tender and juices run clear, turning once. Remove chicken from foil, reserving juices; place chicken on grill. Cook 10-15 min. or until chicken is golden brown, turning once and basting occasionally with reserved juices. 4-6 servings.

Confetti Supper Combo

Heat 2 Tbsp. oil in a large skillet over grill till hot. Add: ½ cup chopped onion, ½ cup chopped green bell pepper, ½ cup thinly sliced carrot, ½ cup uncooked regular rice, and ½ cup dry lentils, sorted, rinsed and drained (prepare all these at home). Cook and stir 3-4 min. or until veggies are crisp-tender. Stir in: 1 can chicken broth, 1 Tbsp. worcestershire sauce, ¼

tsp. garlic powder, ¼ tsp. salt, ¼ tsp. thyme, 1/8 tsp. cayenne (combine spices at home, put in bag), and 1 can fresh-shelled blackeye peas, drained. Bring to a boil, move away from the fire. Cover and simmer 15-20 min. or until veggies are tender and liquid is absorbed, stirring occasionally. 4 servings.

Dilled Alaskan Garden Medley

Heat 2 Tbsp. oil in large skillet. Add 4 cups coarsely chopped cabbage, 1 cup chopped onions, 1 cup chopped green or firm red tomatoes, and 1 cup coarsely shredded carrots. Cook and stir 8-10 min. or until veggies are crisp-tender, stir in 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh dill or 1 tsp. dried dill weed, and ½ tsp. salt. Move away from fire, cover and cook 2-3 min. or till veggies are tender. 7 servings.

Grilled Stuffed Mushrooms

1 lb. very large mushrooms, about 2½" in diameter
½ cup fresh bread crumbs
2 Tbsp. chopped fresh or 2 tsp. dried basil leaves
1 Tbsp. grated Parmesan cheese
1 Tbsp. olive or vegetable oil
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
dash of salt

Grease square aluminum foil pan, 8x8x2". Remove stems from mushrooms. Place mushroom tops, stem sides up, in pan. Chop

mushroom stems. Mix chopped mushroom stems and remaining ingredients; spoon onto mushroom tops. Cover with aluminum foil, sealing edges securely. Grill pan over medium coals 15-20 min. or until mushrooms are tender. 4 servings.

Zucchini Stuffed with Corn and Cheese

3 medium zucchini
vegetable oil
2/3 cup canned corn with red and green peppers, drained
1/3 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese

Cut zucchini lengthwise in half. Scoop centers from zucchini; discard. Brush outside of zucchini shells with oil. Mix corn and cheese; spoon into zucchini shells. Cover and grill zucchini, cut sides up, over medium coals 10-12 min. 6 servings.

Caribbean Curried Bananas

2 Tbsp. margarine or butter, melted
1 tsp. curry powder
3 large firm ripe bananas
lime juice

Mix margarine and curry powder in large square of heavy-duty foil. Peel bananas; cut each crosswise in half. Roll bananas in mixture. Squeeze a few drops of lime juice over bananas. Close

foil package, sealing securely. Grill 12-15 min., turning bananas once, until they are golden brown and tender. 3 servings. (I know this one sounds weird, but it really is good! I've had several people try it and like it.)

Grilled Pears with Raspberry Sauce

3 large firm ripe pears (about 1½ lbs.)
1 Tbsp. vegetable oil
1 package (10 oz.) frozen raspberries in 'lite' syrup, thawed
1 tsp. lemon juice
3 Tbsp. hot fudge sauce, heated, if desired

At home, place raspberries and lemon juice in blender or food processor. Cover and blend on medium speed, stopping blender occasionally to scrape sides, or process about 30 sec., until smooth. Strain to remove seeds if desired. Store in a zip-lock bag in fridge.

Peel pears; cut lengthwise in half and remove cores. Brush lightly with oil. Cover and grill pears, cut sides up, for 5 min., turn. Cover and grill about 5 min. longer or until tender. Serve hot pears with raspberry sauce. Drizzle with hot fudge (put a bit in a foil packet on grill to heat). 6 servings.

Happy cooking!





FALLFLING

NOVEMBER 4-6, 1994

What is FallFling? A celebration of Samhain, the fall, and well, just a party! Why is FallFling when it is? Well, it's not on the traditional Samhain because we know that most people want to party with the rest of the world on Halloween, and we don't want you to have any excuse not to come. Also, November 5 is the actual Cross-Quarter day, half-way between the Fall Equinox and Winter Solstice.

What will we do? On Friday, for early arrivals, there will be a bardic circle. Bring stories, songs, and instruments (especially DRUMS). We'll have games, divinations, and classes on Saturday and Sunday, including dowsing, past life regression, and colors (yes, you can hold a class too; see registration form); a ritual to celebrate Samhain, and a masquerade on Saturday night with prizes for the best costumes. Also, bring something for a Giveaway on Sunday. This offering should be something inexpensive, but relatively nice: something you wouldn't mind receiving. No one will go away empty-handed.

There is also a POT-LUCK feast Saturday night; bring food that can be served cold, or cooked or heated on a grill. If your last name starts with: A-G, bring vegetable dishes; H-L, bring meat dishes; M-P, bring desserts; Q-V, bring appetizers & salads; or W-Z, bring breads & cheeses. Please label your dish with all ingredients on an index card so allergies, etc. can be avoided! You'll need to bring food and cookware for all other meals. Fire pits and a grill will be available with firewood; or you can bring your own grill or campstove. Also bring feast gear—plate, bowl, cup, and utensils. Disposable feast gear is fine, but please, no styrofoam. You'll also need beverages (we'll have a keg Saturday night!). Bring a chair and/or blanket or cushion to sit on—feast will be served partly on the ground, partly on tables.

We will have a supply of water for drinking, washing and cooking, but no running water. You should bring water for your campsite—1-2 gallons. Solar showers will be set up, but if you have one, please bring it! Pets are welcome, as long as they're well-mannered around people and other animals.

About the site:

The festival is at "Roxanna," near Auburn, Alabama. It is a primitive camping site. This means no cabins, no kitchen, no indoor plumbing, no electricity, and NO HEAT! It is a piece of land with clearings, woods, a pond, and magnificent expanses of exposed bedrock. It's also very private: alcohol allowed, clothing optional. We have privies and solar showers. The nearest store is 8 miles away—bring extra cokes and cigarettes. There are also reasonably priced hotels within 20 miles. NOTE: Plan for temperatures from 75° to 20°. Check the weather reports and come prepared! (We don't want people sleeping in their cars again.) The site will open Friday night, November 4, at 5:00 Central Standard Time, and close Sunday, November 6, at 5:00 CST.

The cost: cheap!! \$15 till October 1; \$20 till October 31 (per person). Children under 14 are 1/2 price; babes in arms are free. Pre-payment is REQUIRED; deadline is October 31, 1994. Refunds will be given in full until October 31, at a 50% rate until the weekend of the festival, and none afterwards. If you send someone else in your place, please let us know beforehand. NO UNREGISTERED GUESTS WILL BE ALLOWED IN THE GATE!! This is to protect your privacy; please help with your cooperation.

Send reservations and direct questions to:

Sherlock
820 Lee Rd. 394
Auburn, AL 36830 205-826-9808



Make checks out to: Sherry O'Brien
Please send separate registration
form for each participant

Letters to the Editor:

Greetings,

I have enclosed another piece of artwork that I thought you might want to include in the next issue of THE HAZEL NUT. Again, I enjoyed the Hazel and Vine moon issue. I thought the article by Brighid MoonFire on responsible camping was excellent. My wife and I really enjoy camping. But I hate to get into a beautiful place in the woods only to find old plastic bags, beer cans and other nasty debris left by other campers. I only wish that other non-pagan campers would show the respect for the Earth Mother that pagans do! I think that this type of education would not only help to keep nature more beautiful, but would also help to show pagans' great love for the environment. Perhaps a pamphlet with an article like Brighid's would be a good thing to pass out at festivals and other gatherings.

**Sincerely Yours in
the Ancient Grove,
Les Martin
Dresden, ME**

Hi Muirghein!

I'm enclosing this diskette with three more submissions of my writings to THE HAZEL NUT. I was delighted to see that you enjoyed my untitled piece

enough to include it in the June/July (#9) issue. Actually, I didn't even notice that I had not titled it until I saw it in print! I hope other readers felt the empowerment that I believe the piece embodies. I appreciate the artwork with which it was embellished at the bottom of the page. Thanks for including my work in THE HAZEL NUT.

**Bright blessings,
Lee Webb
Marietta, GA**

Greetings!

I just finished reading your newsletter. It is a true gem; informative, thoughtful, well written. (Enclosed is payment for my subscription, in case you haven't guessed!)

I'm new to the Auburn area. Fearing Alabama to be the buckle of the Bible Belt, I wondered if there were any other Pagans nearby. Thank Goddess!!!

I am basically a solitary Gardnerian (a slight contradiction in terms) Wiccan, who has drawn a lot of inspiration from the writer Starhawk. The Celtic tree calendar isn't exactly foreign to me, but I have much to learn about it.

**Maiden Bless,
Chrisailes
LaFayette, AL**

Classified Ads:

Classifieds are 10¢/word per issue; P.O. box and number count as one word; city, state and zip as two words. 10% discount for 6 issues paid in advance. Deadline for next issue: November 11. Enclose payment with ad; make checks payable to The Hazel Nut.

CONTACTS

Solitary Celtic/Dianic Wiccan, 22, seeking to correspond with or meet other wiccans/pagans in but not limited to eastern Alabama. Age and gender not important. Artemis, PO Box 1189, Jacksonville, AL, 36265.

Male Fairie Faith/Shamanic/Wiccan, 35, seeking Norse group for study within easy driving distance of East Alabama. Ivar, 1831 Opelika Rd., Auburn, AL 36830.

Announcements:

Announcements are published as a community service; there is no charge for this listing. Publish your classes, workshops, handfastings, initiations, etc.

On September 11, at 9:00 a.m., Larry Miller and David Hardin were handfasted by the lake at EarthDance festival, Pine Mountain, Georgia, by Muirghein uí Dhún Aonghasa, a High Priestess of the Faerie Faith. Participating were Yvonne, Scott, Wendy, Jean, Sherlock, Bryon, Ivar, and Jim.

Brigid MoonFire and Miach were given their 2nd degree initiation on April 22 at Roxanna, Alabama, by Muirghein uí Dhún Aonghasa, a High Priestess of the Faerie Faith. Brigantia lended much-needed assistance, and Fionn joined us for the full moon ritual, which was written by Miach. We welcome two new witches to the fold.

Idhunn Sága received her 2nd degree initiation on June 21, in Atlanta, Georgia, from Lord Adrian Loaghrian, High Priest of Cuallacht Tuatha Uidh-Déithe, a Gaelic-Shamanic tradition. Welcome, Idhunn!

Past Life Regression Seminar: Experience five different forms of past life regression, using hypnosis. Learn how past life trauma and relationships affect this life, and how to get rid of these traumas. Taught by Imré K. Rainey, C.H.

October 9, Sunday, 1:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. Fee is \$35.00 pre-paid, or \$40.00 door. Limited to 10 people. At Crystal Cave, 418 S. Gay St., Auburn, AL. Call Imré K. Rainey at 205-887-7625 for info or to register.

Metaphysical Discussion

Group: Meets every other Monday at 7:00, beginning October 3, at Crystal Cave, 418 S. Gay St., Auburn, AL. Call Imré K. Rainey at 205-887-7625 for info.

Creative Peace Meditation:

A simple and active relaxation breathing technique, charged with goodwill and holy sounds of your faith. Taught by Dr. N.S. Malladi.

Classes are Wednesdays, 7:30-8:30 p.m., at Crystal Cave, 410 S. Gay St., Auburn, AL, beginning Septebmer 28. For more info, call Imré K. Rainey, 205-887-7625.

Meditation and Yoga

Posture: Classes are every Monday and Wednesday. Although there are mats, please bring something to sit on.



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Box 186, Auburn, AL 36831-0186.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS and

GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The next issue of **THE HAZEL NUT** will focus on the Elder, Birch and Rowan trees, and Winter Solstice and Imbolc. Please submit relevant articles, rituals, artwork, fiction, or poetry. We also welcome your general-interest contributions and letters to the editor. Deadline for all submissions is November 11. Please provide your name and address for our records, and a brief bio to be printed with your article or ritual; this can include your legal or magickal name and/or address, if you wish. Be sure to specify your by-line name. Text should be typed, black ink on white paper; provide a DOS ASCII disk if possible. Artwork should be black ink on plain white paper; no pencil drawings! Originals will be returned with a SASE. We reserve the right to edit for length, and to refuse publication of any submission or letter. Mail all submissions to: Linda Kerr, **THE HAZEL NUT**, P.O. Box 186, Auburn, AL 36831-0186.

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Bubbles From the Cauldron

Book Reviews, Etc.

**EarthDance, FDR State Park,
Pine Mountain, Georgia,
September 9-11, 1994.**

It looks like this first festival, organized by ShadowCat, was successful enough to be repeated next year. There were about 60 people there, and if you weren't one of them, you really missed out. The people were great, the energies were good, and the whole atmosphere was happy and laid-back.

There was a Pagan film fest on Friday night, and on Saturday several well-attended classes, a wonderful pot-luck feast, a full-moon earth-healing ritual, and great music, thanks to Lord Senthor and his band.

Congratulations and thanks to Shadowcat for a wonderful festival; we'll see you there next year!

Reviewed by Muirghein

**Catmagic, a Novel by Whitley
Strieber. 1986. Tom Doherty
Associates, Inc. New York, NY.
Softcover, \$4.95.**

I'm sure most of you have heard of or read Communion, Strieber's account of alien visitors and their abductions of him. But how many of you have heard of Catmagic? Strieber says, "I wrote Catmagic in 1984, well before I was consciously aware

of the visitors who figure in Communion.

"Communion is the story of how it felt to have personal contact with the visitors. The mysterious small beings that figure prominently in Catmagic seem to be an unconscious rendering of them, created before I was aware that they may be real." (Author's Foreword)

Catmagic centers around a coven of witches in a small town. These are not your typical Hollywood witches, but real. Pagan/Wiccans. He met with some Witches while doing research for the book and has nothing but good things to say about them and the Wiccan path, and even refers readers to Circle for more info on the "old religion."

The book has lots of good witchy things in it, such as the fairies on the hill, the wild hunt, a really nasty fundamentalist preacher, and a journey of intense personal transformation for the main character, who has to enter death, then try to return.

The story is not only entertaining, it's enlightening. Don't let the fact that this is a novel fool you; there's a lot of wisdom to be gleaned from it, if you know how to look.

Reviewed by Muirghein

Linda Kerr
THE HAZEL NUT
P.O. Box 186
Auburn, AL 36831-0186

Linda Kerr