CALENDAR

June 8 - LINDISFARNE DAY. On this date in the year 793, three Viking ships raided the island of Lindisfarne and sacked the monastery there, officially opening the Viking Age and undermining our people’s resistance to religious imperialism. Pausa today in memory of these sea raiders who fought for our Folk.

June 21 - MIDSUMMER. This is the longest day (and shortest night) of the year. Now the Sun begins its long decline, sliding into the darkness which will culminate six months from now at Yule. Identifying the Sun with the Brightness of Baalism, we celebrate in honor of both, to something due and festive to honor the event.

July 22 - SINKLESTAD DAY. Olaf the Lawbreaker (“Saint Olaf”) was killed at the battle of Stiklestad on this date in the year 1030. Olaf acquired a reputation for killing, raping, and enslaving his fellow Norwegians who would not convert to Christianity, and for carrying an army with him in violation of the law to help him accomplish this oppression. Commemorate the folk who overthrew him by doing something positive act for our gods today.

August 1 - FREYFAI. A festival honoring Frey was celebrated in ancient times in the month of August. The feast was on the harvest, and on horses as well as on the virility of the God. Be glad for the rewards you have reaped, and toast Frey with joy.

August 9 - DAY OF REMEMBRANCE, FOR RADBOOD. On this arbitrarily chosen date, we honor Radbod, a king of Frisians who was an early target for Christian missionaries. Just before his baptism ceremony, he asked the clergy what fate had awaited his ancestors who died loyal to Asatrí. The missionaries replied that Radbod’s forefathers were burning in Hell – to which the king replied “Then I will rather die there with my ancestors than go to heaven with a parcel of beggars.” The baptism was cancelled, the aliens expelled, and Frisian remained free. Drink a horn this day, in memory of stalwart Radbod!
EDITORIAL

It's easy to expose a code of honor, when we're talking about HONOR - the exceptional deeds of high virtue that come along rarely in our lives. But what about lower come honor, that kind we can practice every day? Sure, it isn't as dramatic as the life-and-death stuff, but maybe it's even more important. After all, if we can't train ourselves toward perfection in the small things, how can we possibly handle the larger ones?

Practicing honor in daily life isn't difficult. It just takes attention to what one does, and a determination to do it properly. The precise applications will be different for each of us, because our lives are so varied. Reduced to its essentials, a lot of it simply consists of meeting our obligations, of keeping our pledged word.

Every? Yes and no. Most people do it, in a general sort of way. But that isn't enough for us. We're not just any old bunch of people, we're Asafolk! We have to be impeccable, or at least strive to be. That means meeting our financial obligations - carrying through with our promises - doing all the things we've said we would do (better to keep quiet than to pledge more than can be delivered!).

Remember, other people will judge us, and our Gods, by what they see reflected in our lives. Shoddy performance makes us all look bad.

If we all strive to make our word our bond, and to otherwise practice honor in the littlest as well as in the largest matters, we will build our characters in the right direction, enabling us to better serve our Folk and our Gods. Not only that, but we'll get a lot of personal satisfaction.

8 Stephen McKallen

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let's get lucky with leif

The 500th anniversary of Columbus' voyage to America is still six years off, but already the politicians see building up steam for the event. Major media offensive will be orchestrated to reap a propaganda harvest - for Cuba, the nations of Central and South America, and the Mediterranean lands.

By contrast, a recent move by Iceland to honor Bjarni Herjulfsson (who spotted North America 500 years before Columbus set sail) was of course defeated soundly by the Third World-dominated United Nations.

Somewhere, the ghosts of Erik the Red and Leif Eriksson and a host of other Viking explorers call out for vengeance, demanding retribution for the murder of our Northern culture, our very identity as people of Germanic heritage. The Anstru Free Assembly will answer that call.

We hold nothing against Chris Columbus. He was a lot more like us than like the people of Cuba, for example. But we will not allow our accomplishments as a folk to be buried. The Gods themselves must be shouting their anger at this injustice!

In our next issue, we will present a plan to help remedy this disgrace by telling our side of the story - to literally millions of people - in a dramatic burst of concerted action. We will need you help. Stand by to help redeem our history!

@ Stephen McElhaney

I wish to help make land for Anstru become a reality! Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation, payable to "AFA Land Funds".

$10  $15  $25  $50  $100  $500  Other amount $____

NAME:
ADDRESS:

My contribution is $25 or more. Please send me an AFA T-Shirt size ___ (Men's S.M.L.XL: Women's S.M.L.)

My contribution is $100 or more. If my donation is the highest this issue, in addition to my T-shirt, please send me a horn carved with a ___ theme. (Choose one of the following: Asatir, Vanir, Runic.)

Please do _ do not _ publish my name as a contributor.

********************
Yea, it's really going to happen! In the reasonably near future, there is going to be a piece of land, dedicated to our Gods, where Asafolk can begin to experience community and to live in keeping with our innermost social and spiritual needs!

Piece at a time, things are falling into place. The fund made a thousand dollars at the Stithing auction and then a small contribution from the APA kicked the balance over the $2,500 mark, enabling us to put the money into an interest-bearing account. Volunteers are coming forward - architects to help us design buildings, engineers to plan roads and utilities. Raven has built a small model showing what our settlement could look like. Sketches and schemes emerge, are rejected, or modified and put on file. Gradually, the whole endeavor comes into sharper, more exact focus. Our criteria for the land in question are being hammered out, and the long process of selecting the desired geographical location has begun with a careful map reconnaissance of areas with the right characteristics.

However, we need your help for all this to work. With the first eager rush of donations past, we still must have contributions - or better yet, pledges of regular monthly donations - to get us to our goal. We have a long way to go, and the best plan in the world lacks resources to implement them.

As time goes, on the APA plans a number of Land Fund benefit activities - another Stithing Auction, special rewards for generous donations, perhaps regional fundraisers of one sort or another. Up to now we have offered all donors of $10.00 or more a wooden amulet, hand-carved by Redwood and bearing the Land Fund symbol of the Odin rune. With this issue we are giving an APA T-Shirt to everyone donating $25.00 or more and we are offering a horn, beautifully carved by Raven, to the highest donation over $100 received before August 1, 1986. Just fill out the coupon in this issue. Let's make land for Asafolk happen, too!
In his article in the last issue of The Ragnarok, Richard Simmons quite rightly warned against the dangers of dwelling on Ragnarok in a kind of melancholic wutor. It's a valid point, especially as it concerns our people's morale. But there is also the danger of minimizing Ragnarok, of overlooking the unique knowledge it embodies precisely because it is unique and therefore doesn't fit into prescribed notions of shamanism, many of which are derived from other cultures. I'll go so far as to say this: Ragnarok is the central event in Teutonic mythology (even if historical evidence of it is slight from early Germanic times, which isn't surprising considering the scarcity of material). In a sense, this sacred narrative separate Asatru from other world views, in that it reconciles transcendent reality with the impulse to lead a purposeful, free, heroic life in this non-transcendental world where every individual faces loss and death. Ragnarok teaches us what we require most just now — wisdom.

As Simmons points out, Ragnarok is at heart shamanic. In fact, it is even more shamanic than most people will allow. Taken as a whole, the story depicts a cycle of destruction and reawakening: a new world rises from the deep, order is reestablished, Helder and the Asatru return to a purer realm. Naturally, there are cries of Christian interjection here, though it is hard to see why a cleric would want to make a pagan myth more palatable, and why he would tolerate Viking Gods in his millenium. If the story has a Christian ring at this point, my response is that I'm not surprised Christian exegetes would steal good ideas and powerful imagery from our ancestors. Who can blame the poor, dull fellows?

But, of course, what fascinates us about Ragnarok, and what needs to be explained, is the Gods' confrontation with defeat and death. This is what evokes the perception that Asatru is a religion of pessimism and angst. Robert Wood has written an excellent article called "The Viking Universe" (Studies for Finn Hauske), where he argues that, on the contrary, it is just this confrontation that sparked Norse cosmology from the spiritual flagellation going on in medieval Europe (or modern America, I might add). The human condition really matters to our ancestors in a way it cannot to those who see this world as an illusion, a mere projection of a transcendent divinity who hoards all value. Asatru loves life, and a religion of life, of reality, reveres Gods who participate in life, not abstract entities paring their finesses in millions of glory. The Norse Gods are involved in the same struggle for existence non-being men are, are subject to the same cavils, caught up in the same looming fate — in short, are non-transcendent.

Or it might be best to say that in the story of Ragnarok, the Gods manifest themselves as non-transcendent, not to instill a morose attitude toward li face. It didn't make things as Havestad believed, my friend, but the Gods have a way of making things work in the end. And what is the point of life if it is not the pursuit of knowledge? A life without learning is like a body without life. The wise man learns and the fool perishes. This is the lesson we have to learn in order to avoid the fate of bloodshed.

From A.H. 1445

9 C. Hane

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# Submit
toward life, but to remind us of our nature and the nature of the struggle we face. It’s a lesson, it means, we need to learn time and time again, but we didn’t make this world, nor do we control its laws. Cattle die; men die; things fall apart — let the doctrine of lesser men run from these facts. Nevertheless, it is just this limitation which permits us to assert our individual and communal identity. Fate can, and will, snatch away everything a man has — family, wealth, life, and in the case of Ragnarok, the universal order itself. But it cannot deprive him of his courage if he doesn’t let it. Odin and Thor demonstrate this at Ragnarok. Therefore, though we don’t control fate, we can determine our identity in relation to it: creator or destroyer, hero or coward, free men or slave. Courage is the only thing that transcends Weird.

And it means nothing to talk about it in the abstract. Anybody can do that. But to demonstrate courage while the Frrei Giantes march, that makes an authentic claim on existence, which applies not to some far-off battle in Asgard, but to everyday life — the giants of chance are on the march today, this very moment. Ragnarok gives us a paradigm to show our courage daily, to live as free men and women, to defend family, kin and culture with the full awareness of our individual limitations and ultimate demise.

I believe this knowledge is necessary for the resurgence of our people, and that is why the story of Ragnarok has come down to us. By sacrificing individuality and kinship, Eastern religions like Christianity cringe before obsolute divinities for a begrudged immortality. Materialist philosophy fears freedom more than the devil himself because it forces a man to take a responsibility for who he is. These are the ideologies of Mithile. But in the case of Mithile’s born at Ragnarok, a defiant, never-ending challenge to the power that would nullify us through time — and in our hearts, today, to the many enemies our people face. We can see in Freir’s ravens eyes the glory of heroes who will let nothing deny their identity; and we can see in the glover of Surt’s flames the radiance of Balder reborn.

Ragnarok is not an occasion for deception. It is, like the heroic lives it will continue, a triumph of being.

C. Hanne

ON PIGEONHOLDING ASATRU AS A MINDLESS, INSENSITIVE WARRIOR SULT

"... the temptation is strong to offer generalizations about the viking himself, produce a ‘typical’ figure, and prop him against the museum wall with his catalogue number and descriptive label. It is a temptation to be resisted because of its limiting and misleading consequences. Harald Hardrada, who waged war from Asia Minor to Stanford Bridge for thirty-five years was a viking; so was his father Sigurd Sow, who stayed home and counted haystacks. Hastein, who led the Great Army of the Danes into England in the early 890s, was a viking; so was Utgar, who came peaceably to his lord king Alfred’s court with walrus tusks and lessons in northern geography. The men who destroyed churches in England, Ireland and France were vikings; so were the woodcarvers of Dieburg and the metal-workers of Hammum. The men who said ‘With law shall the land be built up and with lovelessness wasted away’ were vikings; so were the practisers and curtailers of blood-feud, the profit-makers and those who robbed them of profit, the explorers and colonizers, the shapers of verse-forms and makers of legend.


# Submitted by Ed Neville
As the 1960's and early 70's produced the 'counterculture' music wave of Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix and countless others, the 1980's are starting to present a purge of music (be it ever so small right now) that at least is "in tune" with what rebellious, Odinsite/Asgardian bikers and other Heathen idealists believe.

Part of this trend can be credited to the medium of the novel 'Compact Disc' which has been dominated not by rock, soul or even jazz, but by classical. Baroque and Bach have never been so popular! The intrinsic beauty of musical delivery by the digital age has given classical a rebirth unparalleled in this era!

Of 'hard rockers' and newsmen, a Swede named Yngvie J. Mildstream and his 'Rising Force' band have produced their latest album entitled 'Marching Out'. It's available on Polydor Records and Tapes.

Yngvie's sure-to-be Odinsite classic number is 'I AM A VIKING', a very defiant song with guetto and lyrics to turn on the 'Barmekker' in most anyone of Northern heritage. As rock videos use the new sounds of electronics in their sensual messages of hedonize and political/social relevance, it is refreshing to hear true 'Barbarian Music' emanating from a Swedish band.

While we Northerners have dulcimers, fiddles, mandolins, and flutes, they can hardly compete in the modern market with heavy metal and loud rock set-ups so popular on the streets today. Thw Yngvie is to some of us a 'folk hero' for his hard-hitting message and Viking punk that makes this 'our song' for the '80's. Here's the chorus:

I AM A VIKING

As the shores of my home disappear I sail over the sea without fear! Dragon ships are charging through the waves Just want to sail away into the sea yeah, yeah

O Paul-Erik Palmström
THE 1986 WESTCOAST FOLKNOW III

The Los Angeles and Arizona Members of The Guernsey Fellowship are sponsoring the Third Annual Westcoast Folknova during the weekend of June 20th-22nd, 1986. This will be for only major gathering of Guernseyans on the Westcoast with over 200 expected to attend.

PLACE: A reserved campground in an alpine setting near Ashwood Lake, Calif. This is a 3-hour drive from Orange County, CA. The site is easily reached by car. Fully developed camping area for tents, plenty of room for dances and demonstrations. You are requested to bring your own water for drinking and washing purposes. This is a beautiful campground in an alpine setting, with tall pines and a lake close by.

ACTIVITIES: 2nd Annual Viking Games. Events for all ages. Sue Longing, archery, the non-tour musk, and foot course and more. Prizes will be awarded. There will be informative sessions and demonstrations pertaining to our past. Rituals and ceremonies of the folk, feasting and kindship, food tasting, singing and revellry. Viking are rauffly, free, and fine.

PRICE OF ADMISSION: 20 dollars per family in advance, 25 dollars at the gate. Price includes camping fee, two sumptuous feasts, admission to the Viking games and more.

This will be an historical gathering, with many of the leadership personalities of the Guernsey Fellowship and other Guernsey & Family in attendance. There are excellent facilities, and room reserved nearby. Airport transportation from Ontario Airport, with advance notification. Camping can be arranged in some cases. Advance reservations very helpful for logistical purposes.

For further information, or to make advance reservations, contact The Arizona Fellowship, Post Office Box 908, Phoenix, Arizona 85067. Please make all checks or money orders payable to: The Guernsey Fellowship of Arizona.
What happened at Althing Seven?

If last year was "the boot camp of Althings" because of the hot weather and the spartan facilities, this year's event was definitely "the luxury special". Not that we were so pampered - but there was running water, electricity, and indoor shelter, all of which greatly eased logistics and made the Althing a smoother, more enjoyable time for everyone concerned.

The focal point for our doin's was a large stone hall complete with a massive fireplace, which we decked with banners in best Viking style. Tyr was invoked in the opening ritual early Friday afternoon, followed by time for browsing among the various guild exhibits (The Brewing Guild in particular got a lot of attention!). The rest of the afternoon was punctuated with demonstrations by the guilds. Bob and Chip of the Warrior Guild showed us what rappelling looks like, and gave Jim, Alice, and myself a go at it. Later, Brynhild, Thor, Loki, Njord and other personalities from our myths came alive in a series of characterizations offered by the Eddic Guild. The Aerospace Technology Guild launched a rocket and the Norse Culture and Saga Guild under Thorsteinn staged a holedg, or Viking duel, in which Chip and Mike proceeded to bash each other over a young woman's hand. (Well, actually, it was more than her hand!). That evening, we wrapped up the day with our traditional read 'n cookies in front of the fireplace.

Saturday opened to an early-morning Greeting to Sol, after which aspiring martial artists were led by Greg through the groaning exertions of kline postures for the benefit of body and mind. Having given the physical its due, it was time for a change - in the form of a presentation by Raddy and me. We described how changes can be effected in the awareness of others through cultural projects such as distributing the Eddas and publicizing Leif Erikson Day.

The last session of the morning was a talk by Alice on "creative mythology" - and specifically on her personal encounter with one of Goddesses, Eir. After lunch, Ariel continued the theme with a guided meditation on another of our female deities, Ostara.

Shifting gears from the contemplative to the active, we kicked off the games with a tug-of-war, and moved quickly on to the Ostara egg throw and cober toss with Carleen and Ongulf officiating. Our culminating sporting event was the boat race, with four-person teams paddling competitively against the clock. Each crew had to paddle down a distant stone jetty, carry the boat over it, and paddle back around the end, while using appropriate tactics against a boxload of competitors. All who survived seem to have had a fine time...
That evening we feasted on venison (courtesy of Bob and Kelly) before a cracking fire, commingled with our ancestors with a mug of ale, and settled in for some serious bead tasting. You just haven’t lived until you’ve dipped some "Leather Man" — not to mention "Uff Da Dil"!

Sunday started with more excitement for the kids, namely an Ostara-egg hunt (Earlier, they had had a coloring contest, a raft-building session, and a competitive team pick-up). A tip of the horned hat to Cheryl for her patience and energy.

A short update on the state of the APA preceded the Land Fund auction. Etched mirrors, statues of Odin and Thor and Tyr, game sets, jewelry, and a host of other items were sold to eager bidders who saw this as a chance to acquire some very hard-to-get goods. When the shouting and gavel-hanging was over, we had netted almost a thousand dollars for the Land Fund, much more than we had hoped. Right now we do good a time as any to thank those open-handed folks who donated things to be auctioned off — and to the people who bid so generously for them.

Lunch, a closing ritual, leave-takings ... soon it was over. But not really over, just adjourned. It was for us a wonderful chance to meet new friends and to renew ties with old timers, affirming our Gods and the bonds between us. Our heartfelt thanks to all who helped it happen. See you next Ostara weekend at the same site!

Stephen Mcallen

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Let me start this article by stating that I wish to take nothing away from kinman Brian Began’s thoughts, which appeared in the Winter 1985 edition of The Runestone (#24). As a matter of fact, it was he who inspired me to attempt a piece of my own on the subject of housing for our people.

Not long ago, I had the opportunity to read and study a book titled The Viking World by James Graham-Campbell. This informative work showed excavations and reconstructions of Viking houses which were long in shape, some with three vinges in a "T" shape, with a central doorway. They were built of sod and timbers with the walls tapering from about 6 feet at the base to about 4 feet at the top. This type of house afforded the owner with many advantages over contemporary houses and a similar type of structure can be built today which will offer those same benefits to modern day Asafolk. I am speaking of the bermed, earth-sheltered, or underground house design.

In the bermed design, earth is piled up on the top and walls of the outer shell of the house, and some kind of ground covering such as grass is then placed over it once everything has either settled or been compacted.

In the earth-sheltered design, one wall of the house is usually exposed with the three remaining walls covered with both earth and some kind of ground covering. This includes the roof of the house.

The underground design is usually just that, with only the entrance way shoving above the ground with perhaps some sky lights or with an open-air section above a central courtyard.

To begin with, this type of design is very close to the traditional house of the Vikings, or at least those in permanent settlements and forts. Differences are that the sod in the modern house is usually laid as a covering instead of making up the walls, and timber is replaced with steel and concrete. (Although some designs today still incorporate wood.) This design blends naturally with its surroundings instead of standing out from these like many contemporary houses.

The advantages of this house style are many. It has very little temperature variation and can be heated or cooled with minimal expense. A 2500 square foot home could probably be therally controlled with a unit the size of the average one-room "window-shaker" air conditioner on a low setting. These types of buildings retain air temperature for a rather long time with very little fluctuation because the walls and grass act as an extremely efficient insulation.
They are also quiet. Very quiet. You might come outside after a couple of hours and wonder where all of the noise came from! The earth and grass, as well as the other building materials, act as a super noise insulator. So, if you want the sounds of the outdoors in your house, put them on tape and play them at your leisure.

Such houses are easy to maintain and will cost you a lot less in this department as well. When built properly, they do not leak. And to re-shingle your house or roof, if you should somehow happen to damage a section, you have only to look in your yard for a place that you would like to start a new garden, or plant a tree, or put out flowers and move the damage to the damaged section. Water and cut as needed.

These shelters also lend themselves well to custom designs. Who cares if the rooms run a jagged line on the outside? All anyone is going to see is your lawn, your windows, and your doors, anyway! So how you shape your house is pretty much up to you. You can be as individualistic as you please.

For those who hold survivalist inclinations, the house can easily be turned into a safe, reliable fallout shelter with little effort, and quickly. Or into a fortress that is deadly to the enemy.

Earth structures blend themselves well with the alternative utilities such as wind, solar, and hydro-electric power plants or water systems, and between the three styles, there is a house suitable to any geographical region.

Now, as far as the initial cost goes, done houses might be a cheaper buy. That would depend a lot on where you are and whether you build it yourself, and what style of home you choose. But in overall cost, those nice monthly utilities payments will run you more than the average buried, earth-sheltered, or underground home. There are plenty of books on the subject that will tell you all that you need to know to design and build a good, solid, reliable home in any of the three styles.

For those of you who are steadfast done home enthusiasts and would like to stick to this kind of structure, I suggest the following:

Gene Hopster has a book out which will explain how to build and design a done which is just as strong as the geodesic, but cheaper and easier to construct. Two people can assemble and put up the shell in a day (You could be living in your home a week from the starting date). The volume is How To Design and Build Your Dome Home (1981, pub., $5.95, I.S.B.N. 0-69586-100-3) It is available from R.P. Books, P.O. Box 5367, Tucson, AZ 85702. Telephone 502-488-2150. This book is nicely illustrated and covers the topic well.

A word of caution. Be sure to check the zoning and other laws, rules, regulations, and ordinances to see if they prevent the building of whichever home you choose!

@ Michael J. Brown
A BLOT FOR ULLER

Arrow-god! Hear us, we call on you
Drift-Vaeker! Hear us, we call on you
Snowshoe-god! Hear us, we call on you
Shield-god! Hear us, we call on you

Uller
Winter lord, hear us

Uller
We have gathered in your name
Archer, hear us

Uller
Shield-god, hear us

Hear us, Uller, stepeon of Thor
Come to us, winter king
Uller, snow lord;
By the arrow which strikes the deer
Send us game

Hail Uller, winter lord
By the pets of the bow-slain
Send us wealth

Hail Uller, winter lord
By the trees you robe in snow;
Keep our homes

Hail Uller, winter lord
Hail Uller, bowman
Hail Uller, strider in snow
Hail Uller, shield god

Uller!
As snowshoes guard your feet
The snow shields the earth
Hail Uller!
Gift-giver to sleeping soul
When the stakes are set
make fire our hearts
When the shields are raised
make our blades bite
When the sword is drawn
make strong our arms
Uller, shield god!

May our strength
as you are strong
Make us fearless
against foe or beast
Make us shrug
at stern hardship
Uller, hear us
In your name we eat
In your name we drink
In your name will vine
and sing through winter nights
Hail Uller, frost lord

When the winds blow
walk with us
When the snow falls
walk with us
When the cold bites
walk with us
Snowshoe-god
Archer
Shield-god

Uller, stepson of Thor
Uller, winter god
Uller, friend of frost folk

Uller,
Join our feast!
Hail Uller!

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THE MONTANA ODINIST KINDRED is an independent Odinist group now forming. Comprised of several energetic individuals, the budding organization has laid groundwork for a newsletter, "Horvolf", and has devised a "Statement of Purpose and Principles". Interested readers may contact them by writing to Mr. J. Varman, P.O. Box 709, Lincoln, MT 59639

CONGRATULATIONS, CARLEEN AND OHRULF on your recent wedding! Yew, FOLKE, April in Texas was the time and place of the latest AFA marriage, at which your Alsherjar-gothi was honored to officiate. A backyard full of neighbors and family, plus supporting Aasfolk, were on hand. Ocin and Frigga, give good fortune!

"MIDGARD" PAGAN COMPUTER BULLETIN BOARD is open to serve you! To find out more, contact Vidar and Lycia Andreweon, P.O. Box 256, North Highlands, CA 95660. Although the bulletin board is open to all pagans, Vidar and Lycia are AFA members, and head up LagugThe Kindred of the AFA.

Announcing... the publication of an all-Aestru ANTHOLOGY OF POETRY from the vanguard of the Aestru/ Odinist world revival! If you are a poet, artist, or cultural essayist who creates in the spirit and tradition of Aestru, we encourage you to write us for full details and/or submit your work to: "Vordanitha" Skaldic Guild, AFA, P.O. Box 56374, Harwood Heights, IL 60656

THE SOCIETY FOR THE ERADICATION OF TELEVISION is a group for people who don’t like TV. As they put it, "The ads sell products you don’t need, and the program sell a view of reality that discourages individual thinking." If you agree, write for information from S.E.T., P.O. Box 1124, Albuquerque, NM 87103.


TEXAS GATHERING - JULY 4-5, 1986 Home kindred of the AFA is sponsoring a weekend get-together in a beautiful lakeside setting. All Texas subscribers will be notified of details; others who would like to attend are welcome and should write for information to AFA, P.O. Box 1754, Breckenridge, TX 76424. 
ODIN AND THE NEAR DEATH EXPERIENCE

Almost everyone today has heard or read of the Near Death Experience or 'NDE'. The dying soul
1. suddenly finds itself outside of its body
2. in many cases perceives its own life in its totality, or selected portions of it, in a kind of 'replay'
3. often moves through a dark whirlwind or tunnel
4. often encounters a radiant light, usually described as golden or white, and as being magnetic or loving
5. tends to feel at one with the universe, and as having suddenly been enlightened with infinite knowledge
6. frequently meets others, often those known to be deceased
7. not seldom comes to some kind of boundary representing the 'point of no return' between life and death
8. on rare occasions enters a landscape or city
9. returns to the body, voluntarily or involuntarily.

The 'light' mentioned above is often linked with some supernatural entity such as Christ, the Buddha, a saint or angel, a god or other personality who represents or is the (divine) light in its personal aspect. The psychic impact of the whole event is in many cases so moving, overwhelming and powerful that it is unsuspected by anything else in human experience. There is a strong tendency for anyone who has gone through it to become far more spiritually oriented, although not necessarily involved with any organized religion.

What is going on here?

Many people, unable to make sense of the conflicting reports, maintain that some kind of brain malfunction is occurring due to lack or oxygen or something of the kind. Others take everything literally, believing that the after-death realm must be exactly as perceived. Few people have taken the trouble to look at the reports from the viewpoint of depth psychology. Let's come from the viewpoint of a pagan theologian.

Let us get to the heart of the matter: human beings do not see reality as it is in itself. We translate it. And since the translating organs and the conditions of any two people are different, their memory impressions of 'the same thing' also differ.

What are we talking about?

In the external world, to take but one instance, there is absolutely no color. Repeat! no color. There are only light waves (that is, electromagnetic waves) of different lengths. Some of these waves are TV and radio waves, others infrared or microwaves (in ovens), and so forth. The wavelengths are infinite in number. Yet humans take a very small portion of these different wavelengths and translate them into a 'feeling' of color.
similar process occurs in smell, hearing, pain, et cetera. Even our sensations of space and time themselves are due to some kind of 'translation', if modern physics is correct (and we have every reason to believe it is).

The same thing is true for us when our souls leave (or seem to leave) our bodies. What we experience is not the Other Realm as it is in itself, but only as our souls are structured — and have structured themselves — to perceive it. And since individuals differ, they perceive differently what is in itself essentially one and the same thing.

From the viewpoint of the history of religions, the NDE is the basic shamanic experience. From comparative religiology we know that the shaman is often initiated, after much study and spiritual and intellectual preparation, by deliberately exhausting and generally overstating the physical body to the point of collapse. Initiation is sometimes, but by no means always, triggered by the intake of hallucinogenic substances.

Ancient Germanic religion centered around shamanism. For nine nights Odin hung spear-wounded and without nourishment, lashed to the shamanic tree, the gallova (Vasgothic olluva). This gallova-tree provided the image which assisted him in visualizing the inner patterns of his body, his central nervous system. And in this way the tree (that is, the mental image of the tree, not the tree itself) became his body and his central nervous system. This "inner" tree is Yggdrasill, the world-tree to which the soul of Odin found itself estranged.

Finally, physically overcome, he left his world-tree-body and went down to discover the runes, the mysterious "secrets" which underlie the visible world. These he took in with a shamanic trance-cry and returned to his body, thereupon descending from the gallova-tree.

From that time on, Odin, like many moderns who have had an NDE, had the ability to tell the future, and other psychic capabilities, including the casting of spells, to a degree unknown to normal mortals.

In addition, from earliest times Odin has been worshiped as the god who travels down to the realm of the dead and back. He has always been the shaman of shamanism. This is why Tacitus (in chapter nine of his Germania, written about 98 C.E.) translates his name as "Mercury" for a Roman audience: "Of all the Gods it is Mercury whom (the Germans) worship most highly." For Mercury, in the Roman world, was the god who accompanied newly dead souls to the underworld. Incidentally, Christianity reports that even Jesus spent forty days and nights out in the desert without nourishment before he spoke with the devil and began his career. And according to the "Apocalypse" Creed of the Roman Catholic Church, he is said to have "descended into hell" after his crucifixion — that is, into the Christian hell and brimstone but into the realm of the dead, as the Latin descendit in infernum makes clear. So Jesus, too, may have undergone a shamanic NDE and may in fact have been a shaman.

At this point, let us make one thing quite clear. The experiences of shamans are not due to oxygen deprivation in the brain. The bodies of shamans in trance continue to breathe normally. Presumably their brainwave patterns are quite slow, perhaps even delta-wave (1/2 to 3 cycles per second). But there is no basis for believing that their brains have been deprived of blood or oxygen. Indeed most shamans stand on platforms, move around and talk
during their out-of-body-experiences and trance states. As far as the states of possession among the devotees of Odin, the berserkers of the North, are concerned, it is out of the question that men who were fighting savagely would at the same time have had no oxygen supplied to their brains.

Ancient Germanic religion, the earliest Aesatu, explained the unseen roots of life through symbols, since psychologists were not around to give them a modern vocabulary. These symbols are as valid today as they ever were. In addition, they show us how modern Aesatur can interpret the mystical dramas which happen to them when they have an NDE, or when we finally go to our Gods as we all must. The religious symbols of the Northern still work. Before we explain some of these symbols, however, something must be said to forestall certain false notions about what we are discussing.

We live in an age of materialism. Materialism is the belief that the only things which exist are the things we can experience through our outward senses or with machinery (such as TV, radio, Geiger counters, etc.) of some sort.

Materialism is the decay product of Judaism and Christianity, which declare that the world is "dead matter" and that their God, Yahweh, represented among the Christians by Jesus, is outside the universe, in "heaven." Aesatu rejects not only their oriental God, but also the idea that the world is dead. Our ancestors believed that everything is bewailed and alive—merely in differing degrees. This was expressed by the belligerent elves, trolls, dwarves, gnomes, thors (giants) and wights of all sorts who lived everywhere in and about the whole earth.

Today more people than ever are being saved from death and are returning to tell of their NDE's. It is the strong suspicion of this writer that this is happening for a purpose. That purpose is to make men in general, but especially people of Northern ancestry, aware that materialism is false and that we do indeed have a meaning which reaches beyond ourselves and our personal urges and desires. That meaning lies in the fact that we Northerners are ourselves the key to the continued growth and intellectual development of the World Soul.

Astounding? Possibly so— but there is more to be said about Near Death Experiences, and we'll continue this investigation in the next Runestone.

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KINSHIP-A POSITIVE SOLUTION

In the early 1970's, a team of British naturalists developed a landmark answer to the greatest single remaining anomaly in Darwin's evolutionary theory: why do animals cooperate when "survival of the fittest" implies unremitting and endless competition for food, mates and territory? This team demonstrated through classic Mendelian theory and calculation that cooperation is, in fact, a very effective survival strategy if the aim is to assure the survival of the shared gene pool, and that such cooperation is directly proportional to the degrees of shared genes. . . .or, in everyday terms, to kinship. The most extreme examples of this cooperation occur in ant, termite and bee cultures where all members have a common parent (the queen) and are, in effect, all sisters and brothers. These colonies carry cooperation to the extreme that the colony acts as a single individual with many parts. Later field studies found the same phenomenon operating in birds, herding animals and even fish. The lesson, equally applicable to all animals including man, is that cooperation and harmony within a group are directly proportional to, and a product of, a common genetic heritage. Where such societies exist in the world, in countries like Japan and in some Northern European countries and elsewhere, the societies are relatively free of internal turmoil and divisiveness. Where artificial political boundaries have been created which ignore such bonding, however, upheaval, revolution and terrorism are frequent. This is evident in Africa and Southeast Asia where former colonial borders were used to create "modern" nations without regard to kinship or tribal bonds and perhaps most tragically in Ireland and French-speaking Canada.

We live in a world rampant with separatist movements and civil wars, many of which get little attention in the West. Basques in Spain, Baltes and Sunnis and Druse and Moslems in the artificial political structures of the Middle East, Sikhs in India, Kheer in Southeast Asia, Tamil on Sri Lanka (Ceylon), Moros in the Philippines, Amharic tribes in Ethiopia, Ibo in Nigeria, and on and on. Some universalists and "one-worlders" like to characterize these as national liberation and anti-imperialist uprisings or as machinations of the superpowers, but they are usually not. They are kinship groups rebelling against cooperation with what are perceived as unrelated and non-kindred adversaries. It is a typical tactic of manipulative external forces to encourage these divisions as a means to incite and later take over "civil" wars for their own political purposes. We've seen this so often in the 20th century that we've become inured to it and lose sight of why the groups within these wars originally confronted each other. Ideologies of the people who would banish kinship and genetic bonding as a legitimate and natural force in our world require these wars to be interpreted as East vs. West superpower imperialism when, in truth, they are nothing more than manifestations of the same cooperative phenomenon isolated by the British naturalists.

Does it serve humanity to try to make genetic bonds somehow "racist" or evil in intent? Do we truly act in a liberal-minded way when we tell our children that they should feel the same compassion and concern for all humans regardless of our kinship (or lack of it) with them? It may be emotionally appealing, but it is, when examined closely, like going to a rock concert because one feels badly about the killing of whales. It does the whales no good at all, but it puts a lot of money in the pockets of promoters and performers and gives us an emotional quick fix which reduces guilt... a meaningless and, in the end, counterproductive act. Would it not be much more likely to reduce tension and upheaval in our world to recognize and accept the facts revealed by the British naturalists, see them as legitimate and natural phenomena and adjust our solutions to world problems by taking them into account? Racism, per se, the premise that one racial group is inherently superior to another, is destructive and open to argument on
As we discussed in the "State of the APA" presentation at Althing Seven, we have spent the last couple of years preparing a sound organizational framework for the APA. Now it is time to flesh out that skeleton, so to speak, by adding bodies - individually as members, and in groups as kindreds.

APA membership is not for everyone. But if you agree with the values we promote - if you wish to serve the ends listed in our Statement of Purpose - if you want to honor those Northern European ancestors of whom you are an extension - then it may be for you. We will gladly send the relevant information to interested readers.

Many of you who are already members may want more out of your APA affiliation, and forming a kindred may be a way of satisfying that need. Remember, we now have considerable material to help you accomplish this task.

It is time for the Astrap Free Assembly to grow numerically. If you are ready to take part in that process, we invite your inquiry!

CONTACT PROJECT DISCONTINUED

We are continually examining our procedures, trying to make them as effective as possible for the attainment of our many tasks. Sometimes that means adding projects, sometimes it means discontinuing those that don't work well.

The contact program has fallen into the latter category, and we won't be doing it any more.

Why? Because it was a nightmare administrative hassle which yielded - with a few exceptions - meager results.

Furthermore, it was largely duplicative of (and confused with) the more comprehensive networking directory which is available to members.

There is only so much time and energy in our possession for the accomplishment of our goals - and we can better utilize those valuable resources by deepening the contact project and emphasizing member networking instead. We urge all APA members to take full advantage of this latter endeavor!
THE NORSE CULTURE AND SAGA GUILD
Thorstein Thorsnescon, 2922 S.
Martin Ave., Tucson, AZ 85730

THE SWING GUILD
Caroline webber, 3501 Bernard St.,
#2A, Bakersfield, CA 93306

THE BREWING GUILD
Jane Crouch, c/o the AFA, P.O.Box
1734, Breckenridge, TX 76024

THE ARTISTS GUILD
Skjold Skull, c/o S. Bernard, 21
North St., Burlington, VT 05401

THE WARRIOR GUILD
John Ryan, Tyrone Services
Int., Contract Station, #26, P.O.Box
332566, Bill Garland Dr., Denver, CO
80233

THE COMPUTER/SHAMANISM GUILD
Richard Simons, 884 S. Lewis St.,
Lakewood, CO 80226

THE AEROSPACE TECHNOLOGY GUILD
Stephen McEwen, P.O.Box 1734,
Breckenridge, TX 76024

THE WRITERS GUILD
Ratt Phippe, 76 Flagg St., West
Hartford, CT 06107

THE CONTINUING CLAN
A parent and child guild; Cheryl Pollette, P.O.Box 1182, New
Raven, CT 06615.

"WONDESTRINESS" - THE SKALDIC GUILD
of the AFA is alive and well and
removing memberships as well as
seeking new members. In the plan-
ning states are several important
projects. (See poetry anthology
announcement elsewhere.) For mem-
bership or information, write:
"Vordenith", APA Saldic Guild,
P.O.Box 56374, Harvard Heights, IL
60636

A "ROMANCE GUILD" to get Aasen and
Aaswomn together? Some interest
has already been expressed, and it
possibly happen if there's enough
support. Write to the AFA if you'd
care to be involved!

THE SOCIAL SERVICE GUILD is a
proprietor entity of the AFA for
those with a degree in - or an in-
terest in - social work, mental
health, counseling and guidance,
family therapy, education - and a
host of related fields. Interested
people can write, care of the AFA,
for details. We sure to see an ar-
ticle on this subject in the next
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Steve and Raddy,

I loved the latest Runestones. Come to think of it, I loved all the Runestones I have received. I disagree on very little in it, but I am a little disturbed about the high-tech guide. I am not saying they shouldn't exist, but spacecraft and computers have a sterile, unnatural look and feel about them. A longship was born of nature, wood, and the hands of men who understood nature and lived beside it - not against it.

Pay no mind to my ramblings; I am just too old-fashioned. I ride a horse instead of driving a car, read instead of watching television. I love to hunt with lance and bow. My way of thinking is old and obsolete, but isn't that what some say about our religion? There is life in things of wood, leather and hand-forged iron. To me, plastic, aluminum, and fiberglass are the poisons from which our people are dying. There are chemicals in all our food, water and clothes and contaminated medicines can send you to Valhalla early. Fanatics put ground glass in baby foods. People pump poison into Mother Earth's streams and into her skies - all in the name of technology. I had rather die a living musem piece than know I had a hand in killing the Earth and our Northern folk.

Heritage, Freedom and Truth,

C.P.

Your remarks make some excellent points; points of which it's good to be reminded. I agree very much with the spirit of what you're saying. I just don't see how that conflicts with the appropriate use of technology. Take myself, for example: I'm very interested in high-tech subjects - but like you, I don't own a television, and I wish I didn't need a car. The way I see it, our machines can serve us and our values, or they can master us and create our values (TV is a prime example of the latter). But to chalk all advanced technology out the window is to leave ourselves defenseless against folks unfriendly to us who retain these capabilities.

Let's not let people with values radically different from ours monopolize all the power!
Dear Steve and Maddy:

As you may have guessed, Althing 7 was an exceptionally positive experience for me. Although I have been involved with the APA for some time, I have always had a few reservations; largely because I had never met the people involved. I no longer have any reservations. Althing was better than I could have imagined. The people were the friendliest I have ever met, and made me feel very welcome indeed! I salute then. You and Maddy are to be congratulated on the fine job of picking the site, getting all of the madness organized, and working overtime to make Althing 7 much a great success. As Paul Flasenu suggested, for a few days we all walked and sang in Valhalla. I brought a lot of it home with me. Maybe we should hold Althing 8 next month instead of next year? At any rate, you can put me down for the long haul. You wrote earlier that one of the things that made Althing 6 so great was the sense of participation. Participation is the word for me from now on: it's time for me to quit admiring the longship and to pick up an oar.

All hail our Gods and heroes!

J.C.

Thanks for the rave review! We enjoyed it too, and we thank the many people who made it a success - not least of all yourself and the Brewing Guild, Jace.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

...we discussed the need for our movement to bring couples together; an Odinist dating service as it were. I strongly agree on the need for this, as it is very difficult for those of us who are "of the Folk" to find a suitable bride among the yuppies and xians...

HAIL ODIN!

K.A.

Dear Maddy,

...I also wanted to ask you how dow an Odinist fellow in prison go about finding an Odinist lady to write to? I mean a single Odinist lady who's interested in finding a single Odinist fellow! I'd really like to know. Is there a correspondence list or could I run an ad in back of The Runestone, and how to I go about it?

Hail the Gods!

C.W.

We've received several letters of late mentioning the difficulty Amalfolk have in finding "dates and mates" who share their religious views. If you find yourself in that category, now's your chance! K.A. has volunteered to head up a guild for the specific purpose of putting eligible folks of the Folk in touch with each other. If you want to be listed, or just want to know more, drop us a line and we'll see what we can get going here.
Hi Steve and Naddy,

As the land becomes a reality, remember that I’m a registered professional engineer in the State of Texas, so I can design roads, buildings, utility systems (water, sewer, etc.) that will be acceptable to the State, county and all the Iowa agencies of government. Of course, anything that I did of this nature would be part of my personal donation to the fund... 

HAIL ODIN!

D.S.

Glad to take you up on that! It’s still quite amazing to realize that our land acquisition is actually going to happen. Every day brings us a little bit closer to that goal, and your offer is one that gives us still more encouragement.

THANKS to all who donated to the AFA LAND FUND this past season.

G. Saunders  
R. Wurbs  
R. Sillman  
M. Thatcher  
Herb Felgate  
J. Stilley  
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E. Hail  
R. W. Warren  
L. Stoten  
J. Chisholm  
A. Ahnapish  
E. Hansnesson  

Thanks also to those who wished to remain anonymous and to all who contributed in goods or cash to the Ailting Seven Land Fund Auction.

THE BIRTHINGS

Thor’s passion was not gentle;  
the rains pounded the earth until his phallic power 
flooded her, the wind that she was enclosed 
in water inch by inch. Thundercloud days 
followed nights deeper than the flood. 
three times before an earth maiden breathed 
a candle flame’s heat and light into dawn, drawing in, 
TH TH TH TH TH TH TH TH TH TH
and letting it out again. 
echoing forth the sun’s warm and rays,  
a brutal love followed by a softer healing, 
wind emerging from womb, a regeneration, a continuance.

8 Patricia Ann Truet