

CONTRIBUTORS ■■■



Andy Harrop-Smith

Andy resides in Wales and has been a performing storyteller for more than a decade. His passions are history, mythology and legends and he has extended this passion into his stories in a myriad of ways. He is a member of Earthworks Grove, OBOD, & Festival at the Edge.



Caryl Dailey

Caryl lives within the Welsh mountains and is an associate druid companion of OBOD and druidic tutor. She is also a belly-dancer, wand maker and bookworm. A lover of life, cakes, and Astrocelt!



Faye Boyd (Fay)

Faye has a degree in Psychology and Child Studies, has been interested in Nature and all things Celtic for many a year. A member of OBOD, Druidic Dawn, Ord Brighideach International, Celtic Reiki Master, Hot Stone Therapists, Guided Meditations and is a spoken word artist.



Nigel Dailey (Astrocelt)

Astrocelt resides in North Wales and has a variety of interests ranging from Archaeology, Anthropology, Archaeoastronomy, Astrology, Druidry, History, Mythology and Smallholding. All has been gained while traveling through the journey human beings call "life."



Treasa Ní Conchobhair (Oonagh)

Treasa lives in Southeast US and is a digital artist, stock photographer, web designer and library assistant. She is currently self-studying Gaeilge (Irish Gaelic) and is a Gaelic polytheist. She is a member of *An Chuallacht Ghaol Naofa* and *Ord Brighideach*.



Photo © David London (DTL / morguefile.com)

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GENERAL INQUIRIES

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ADVERTISING INQUIRIES

At the time we do not have adverts planned for the newsletter. However, this is subject to change. Email us at the following if you are interested:

DDaontacht@gmail.com

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SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Submissions are welcome but will not be guaranteed publication, this includes artwork and photos as well. Check the magazine's website for full details on submissions and where to send them, or flip to the back of this issue.

THE COOKING CAULDRON



BRIGHID INCENSE

Submitted by Faye Boyd

This is a blend I made one day while I was meditating upon Brigid and how she fits into my life.



© Scott Liddell
hotblack / morguefile

Equal parts of the following:

Sandalwood, Lavender, Dragon's Blood and Black Copal

The sandalwood I use is the tiny pieces of wood, as well as lavenderflowers that I have dried. I unfortunately have to buy the dragon'sblood power and the black copal. I have a dedicated coffee grinderthat I use, as my wrists are not really strong enough to the grindingby hand. I start with the sandalwood and grind until it is a power, then add the copal and grind it in with the sandalwood. I then add the lavender flowers and finally the dragon's blood powder. All the whilecontemplating Brigid. I use a charcoal piece on some sand in a fireproof container and burn it during meditation or when I am using my healing grid.

SPOTTED DOG

Submitted by Treasa

This is a recipe that I make on St. Patrick's Day every year. While the traditional Irish name is Spotted Dog, I've seen it called "Freckle Bread" within the USA, though the recipe varies slightly. Below is the traditional version.



© Kevin Rosseel
kevinrosseel / morguefile

4 cups plain white flour, 1-2 tbs sugar, 1 level tsp salt, 1 tsp baking soda, 3/4 cup raisins, 1-1/4 to 1-1/3 cup buttermilk, 1 egg

Preheat the oven to 450°F. Sieve the dry ingredients, add the raisins and mix well. Make a well in the center and pour in most of the milk with the egg. Using one hand, mix in the flour from the sides of the bowl, adding more milk if needed. The dough should be softish, not too wet and sticky. When it all is incorporated, turn it out on to a floured board and kneed it lightly for a few seconds.

You can either place it in a 1-1/2in deep pan and cut a deep cross on the dough, or create eight balls from the dough and place those into the pan (which is what I do).

Bake for 15 minutes, then turn the oven down to 400°F and continue to cook for approx. 30 minutes. Serve fresh and hot with butter. I will include the "Freckle Bread" recipe in the next issue. Enjoy!

the Legend of *Shamus MacRae*

Introduction

Today there are many superstitions connected with birds, and these vary from region to region, some being good omens, some bad. There is no doubt that most of this folk lore originates from our Celtic ancestors, as they saw little difference between themselves and the animal world. To receive instruction from birds or animals was perfectly natural. The Celts, together with other ancient cultures, used the activities of birds as a means of prophesising the future, divining information and making predictions about the weather, as birds are in perfect harmony with the elements. It is a modern lesson that we overlook the knowledge that birds have to teach us at our own peril.

Birds have been considered to have a magical aspect by many cultures. They may be the messengers of Goddesses or Gods, or may even be a deity or spirit in disguise. The humble Wren is considered the 'King of the Birds' according to Celtic tradition, and is the Druid's messenger between our world and the Otherworld. The fact that birds can exist on earth, in water or in the air qualifies them to pass easily across the veil that separates the two worlds. The flight path of a bird was considered symbolic of the souls journey to the Otherworld after death.



Eilean Donan © Chris Windras (UK)
chris27 / www.sxc.hu

There are many traditional Celtic tales about birds, but one little known story relates the legend that surrounds Shamus MacRae, the man credited with building Eilean Donan castle. In the early 13th century, MacRae, a wealthy man, was commissioned by the king of Scotland to build a fortress to protect the lands of Kintail from the Vikings who had raided and settled in Northern Scotland. Eilean Donan was the perfect defensive position. It still stands today, and is the most photographed Scottish castle, appearing on biscuit tins and bottles of Scotch Whisky from Aberdeen to Afghanistan.

The Legend of Shamus MacRae

There is an old legend in the Scottish Highlands, that a child who is given its first drink of milk from a Raven's skull will have special powers. The Raven is after all thought to be the wisest bird of all. Now long ago there was a Chieftain in the district of Kintail by the name of Angus MacRae, and he decided that he would test the truth of this story, so he gave his little boy and heir, Shamus, his first drink of milk from the skull of a Raven. The child grew up perfectly normally, and it would appear that was no truth in the legend whatsoever. However, one day, when the lad was about 16 years old, his father came across him sitting under a tree, making whistling and chirping noises. As he got closer, a little group of birds took to the air and flew away in fright.

"Oh father, you have frightened them away", said Shamus. "They were me telling about the warm lands they visit over the sea when it is winter here. They told me of blue sparkling oceans and far off lands full of wondrous people and fabulous animals. Those things I would dearly love to see".

"But how can you have been speaking to the birds my son", asked the Chieftain, "they don't speak our language".

"No, but I can understand and speak theirs", replied Shamus as if it were the most normal thing in the world.

So the legend was true after all, and the special power that Shamus had received was the ability to speak to the birds in their own language. As Shamus grew up, he would often speak to the birds round about him. He would hold conversations with

his Falcon, who told him the secrets of hunting. He would speak to the Ravens and the Owls who held the secrets of the Ancient Ones. He would converse with the seabirds who told him how to swim and fish. So Shamus became very knowledgeable about many things at a young age, for birds have a great wealth of wisdom to teach.

However, one fateful day something happened to spoil all this and turn Shamus's father against him. He was about 17 years old at the time and serving his father at table as was the custom in those days. His father asked him, "what in all the world are the Starlings in the rafters making so much noise about, I've never heard such a din".

Shamus looked at his father uneasily, "I'm afraid if I tell you, you will be angry". This only made the Chieftain more curious, so he ordered Shamus to tell him. "They are saying father...", the lad hesitated, "that one day in the future our positions will be reversed, and that it will be you who serves me at the table in the great hall".

"Traitor!!", cried the Chief. "What can this prophecy mean? That you plan to overthrow me and gain the Chieftainship before it is rightfully yours! Get out of my house at once and never let me see you again." However much Shamus tried to make his father understand that he had no wish to betray him, it was of no use, the Chieftain would not listen and the boy was banished from Kintail forever. So with nothing of his own in the world but the clothes on his back, Shamus left his land and his people and set out into the wide world.

"The birds have told me of the blue seas and of the lands that lie across the oceans. I shall see them for myself. I'll find a ship and see if I can't get a job as one of the crew", said Shamus to himself. And so he went down to the port of Mallaig in the Highlands where merchant vessels of all kinds were at the harbour. Now Shamus had grown into a fine strapping care-free lad with a pleasant nature and a willing way, and so he was soon employed as a sailor and was away on a ship off to France. When he got there he thanked the Captain, took his wages and continued his adventure on foot, finding work wherever he could. And so he did pretty well, working here on the farm or there as a shepherd, sometimes milling flour or even tending the tables at the taverns he came across on his journey. He made many friends and his handsome figure caught the eye of many a young lassie on the way. Of course he would speak with the birds whenever he could, for he found them to be the best companions of all. After a long time travelling he came to a great green park filled with many beautiful flowers and trees. In the distance he could just make out the turrets of a grand palace which, he was told, belonged to the King of France himself. With a whistle on his lips and a song in his heart he headed straight for that place, intent on finding work in the kitchens or even better in the gardens. As he reached the great iron gates, he heard the sound of sawing and chopping and saw that some woodcutters were felling a grove of poplar trees. The sky all around was filled with a desperate chirping and cheeping from 100's of small brown birds, lots of sparrows in some sort of distress.

"What an awful noise", said Shamus to one of the workmen.

"Yes", said the woodcutter, "it's the same day and night, their chirping is endless and it drives everyone mad. The King would give a great reward to anyone who found an answer to the problem".

Shamus smiled, "I might be the very person to help", he said and headed for the palace. On the way to the throne room they passed through corridors lined with little birds tweeting and chirping in a ceaseless turmoil. The king himself sat with his head in his hands, a small bird perched on the arm of the throne. The King's eyes were red, for he had not had a wink of sleep for weeks.

"I think I may be able to help you your Majesty, for there must be a reason why the sparrows are waging this war against you".

"If you can help me then you will be well rewarded, for I am at my wits end", said the King.

Shamus turned to the little bird perched at the King's elbow and spoke to it in its own language. The bird replied in its own tongue. After conversing with the little creature for a while, Shamus turned to the king. "Your Majesty", he said, "the answer to your problem is simple. The birds are angry because you are cutting down the poplar trees and they will be homeless. If you stop the wood cutters from destroying any more trees, the birds will return to the wood and never trouble you again".

As soon as the last axe fell silent the sparrows flew out of the castle, rose in a great brown cloud, and flew to the poplar wood where they began to rebuild their nests. As a reward, Shamus asked for a ship and a crew to man it, for he wished to see the other far off lands that the sea birds had told him about. The king was true to his word and gave Shamus a magnificent ship together with a crew and a great deal of gold. So Shamus sailed away to seek more adventures and visited lands all over the world. He traded with many different cultures and he and his crew became very rich. After many years of travelling, Shamus began to grow homesick for the heather and the mountains of his native Scotland. He made up his mind to set sail for home and try to make peace with his father. One misty morning he found himself sailing up the channel that is now known as the Sound of Sleat in to Loch Alsh.

When the people on the shore saw such a fine ship they hurried at once to tell the old Chieftain, who came out at once to offer hospitality to the captain and crew. That evening a great feast was laid out in honour of the rich stranger, and as was the custom, the Chieftain himself served the honoured guest at the table. As the old man stood before him, serving platter in hand, Shamus cried, "father do you not know me. I am the son you sent away because of the prophecy of the birds so many years ago. Now that prophecy has come true and you are serving me at your own table by your own will. Will you at last believe that I do not wish to betray you?"

The old man sprung up and there were tears in his eyes. "Oh son, you have come home at last to take your place as the next Chieftain of the Clan MacRae". And so father and son were reunited. There was much rejoicing in the great hall as had not been seen for many a year. The bards and storytellers carried the tales of Shamus's adventures the length and breadth of the country, until at last the High King of Scotland himself heard them. Now the king was in need of a good man to build a new castle on Eilean Donan, St Donan's Isle, to hold back the Norsemen. He summoned Shamus to his court and they agreed that that a fine stronghold should be built on the shores of that island. That castle stood strong and proud for many 100's of years until the uprising of 1715, when the castle was bombarded from the sea by an English man of war, HMS Worcester. It remained a ruin for a further 200 years until 1920, when a descendant of Shamus MacRae restored the castle to its former glory. And still it stands today, as magnificent as it was when it was first built by a man who could talk to the birds.

fin.



"Eilean Donan"

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Netherlands

[incrediblog.com / www.sxc.hu]

January 2009

8TH JANUARY: 'Walking the Dedicant Path: Druidic Study' Three Cranes Grove, ADF, Columbus, Ohio, USA. To participate and for further details, see:

<http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/186> or
<http://www.threecranes.org/calendars/>

10TH JANUARY: Monthly Meeting of the Nervii Nemeton Grove, Deurne, (Antwerp). Theme of the meeting will be discussing 'The Celts and Pict'. To participate and for further details, see:
<http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/182> or
http://mothergrove.druidcircle.org/nervii/index.php?option=com_eventlist&Itemid=27

10E JANUARI: Maandelijkse bijeenkomst van de Nerviers Nemeton Grove, Deurne (Antwerpen). Thema van de bijeenkomst zullen bespreken "De Kelten en Beeld 'Om deel te nemen en voor verdere details, zie:

<http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/182> or
http://mothergrove.druidcircle.org/nervii/index.php?option=com_eventlist&Itemid=27

16 – 20th JANUARY: New Zealand Lughnasadh Druid Camp 2009 OBOD, to participate and for further details, see:

<http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/172> or
<http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/64> and
<http://www.thewoolshed.com/> or
http://druidry.org/modules.php?op=modload&name=PagEd&file=index&topic_id=2&page_id=146

30th JANUARY to 1st February: Imbolc Retreat, at Shipston-on-Stour Warwickshire. To participate and for further details, see:

<http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/172> or
http://druidry.org/modules.php?op=modload&name=PagEd&file=index&topic_id=2&page_id=146

February 2009

1ST FEBRUARY: Imbolc Rite, Three Cranes Grove, ADF, Columbus, Ohio, USA. To participate and for further details, see:

<http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/186> or
<http://www.threecranes.org/calendars/>

FEBRUARY: Imbolc Elsteddfod, Sacramento Grove of the Oak, California, USA DTB. To participate and for further details, see:
<http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/308> or
<http://www.groveoftheoak.org/events/imbolc.html>

7TH FEBRUARY: Meeting of the Nervii Nemeton Grove, Deurne, (Antwerp). Imbolc ritual in the Rivierenhof, We gather to 18.30 near the parking lot next to the castle in the Sterckshof Rivierenhof. This is followed by a meeting themed around the Imbolc festival at The Brasserie "Heksenketel" To participate and for further details, see

<http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/182> or
http://mothergrove.druidcircle.org/nervii/index.php?option=com_eventlist&Itemid=27

12TH FEBRUARY: Druid Moon Rite: Anagantios, Three Cranes Grove, ADF, Columbus, Ohio, USA. To participate and for further details, see:
<http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/186> or
<http://www.threecranes.org/calendars/>

13-16TH FEBRUARY: Pantheacon; San Jose, Doubletree Hotel, California, USA, With its theme centred on Gods and Goddesses, Eleven Evert Hopman will be appearing here. To participate and for further details, see:

<http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/1167> or
<http://www.pantheacon.com/09/>

20TH-21ST FEBRUARY: Priests and Priestesses Training: Taught by Marie Geever with Caitlin Matthews. To participate and for further information see:

<http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/211> or
<http://www.hallowquest.org.uk/hallowquest-courses-workshops.html>

28TH FEBRUARY: 'The Bardic Experience, Come and join us at Flag Fen for the ultimate Bardic Experience.' Learn the art of storytelling or just simply listen to them. The Ramsey Storytellers are also holding a workshop on the art of story telling. To participate and for further details, see:

<http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/175> or
<http://www.hallowquest.org.uk/hallowquest-courses-workshops.html>

March 2009

6TH MARCH: Obod Druid Gorsedd at Trigonos North Wales. Open to Druid Grade and Associate members of the Order. To participate and for further details, see:

<http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/172> or
http://druidry.org/modules.php?op=modload&name=PagEd&file=index&topic_id=2&page_id=146

7TH MARCH: Meeting of the Nervii Nemeton Grove, Deurne, (Antwerp). Theme to be announced but to participate and for further details, see:

<http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/182> or
http://mothergrove.druidcircle.org/nervii/index.php?option=com_eventlist&Itemid=27

12TH MARCH: Walking the Dedicant Path; Druidic Study; the Three Cranes Grove, Columbus Ohio, USA. To participate and for further details, see:

<http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/186> or
<http://www.threecranes.org/calendars/>

22ND MARCH: Spring Equinox Rite: Three Cranes Grove, ADF, Columbus, Ohio, USA. To participate and for further details, see:

<http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/186> or
<http://www.threecranes.org/calendars/>

22ND MARCH: Ostara Celebration, Grove of the Oak, California, USA DTB. To participate and for further details, see:

<http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/308> or
<http://www.groveoftheoak.org/events/ostara.html>

24-27TH MARCH: Thresholds of Power and Healing with Caitlin Matthews & Jane Dagger. To participate and for further details, see:

<http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/211> or
<http://www.hallowquest.org.uk/hallowquest-courses-workshops.html>

Turn the page to view our
Advanced Notice Calendar



Community Calendar

Events Listings
January to
March 2009

PLEASE NOTE:

Inclusion of events here does not imply endorsement from Druidic Dawn, Aontacht magazine, or its editors.

Want to Have YOUR Event Appear Here?

Listing your event is free and you can send up to five entries at a time. Note: We reserve the right to edit or omit entries.

TO SUBMIT:

Please send an e-mail to admin@druidicdawn.org with 'DD Event Listing' in the subject area. Include the date, title of event, location [incl. country], a short description and any contact details.

April 2009

18TH - 19TH APRIL: Spring Forum, Subject matter to be announced to participate and for further contact details, see: <http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/1228>

May 2009

1ST -3RD MAY: The Beltane Project near Des Moines, Iowa, USA; Speaker at this event is Ellen Evert Hopman. To participate and for further details, see: <http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/1167> or <http://www.geocities.com/thebeltaneproject>

1ST-3RD MAY: Vessels of Change: Creating Shamanic Ritual with Caitlin Matthews. To participate and for further details, see: <http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/211> or <http://www.hallowquest.org.uk/hallowquest-courses-workshops.html>

16-17TH MAY: Walkers between the Worlds, 3rd Oxford Foundation Course, led by John Matthews, assisted by Wil Kinghan. To participate and for further details, see: <http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/211> or <http://www.hallowquest.org.uk/hallowquest-courses-workshops.html>

29TH-30TH MAY: Priests and Priestesses Training: Taught by Marie Geever with Caitlin Matthews. To participate and for further information, see: <http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/211> or <http://www.hallowquest.org.uk/hallowquest-courses-workshops.html>

June 2009

14-15TH JUNE: The 4th Annual Celtic Midsummer Faerie Festival, at Fair Oaks California, Grove of the Oak, California, USA. To participate and for further details, see: <http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/308> or http://www.groveoftheoak.org/events/faerie_festival.html

20TH-21ST JUNE: The Ancient Muse: The Flag Fen Eisteddfod. To participate and for further details, see: <http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/175> or <http://www.theancientmuse.co.uk/index.php?page=home>

July 2009

Date to be arranged, July; Druid Projects Gathering 2009, Earth Sanctuary, Spain, to participate and for further details, see: <http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/1260>

9TH-12TH JULY: The Rivers of Tears and Blood: The Underworld Initiation Revisited; With R.J. Stewart. To participate and for further details, see: <http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/211> or <http://www.hallowquest.org.uk/hallowquest-courses-workshops.html>

August 2009

31ST JULY-3RD AUGUST: Celtic Gathering, Ontario, Canada, to participate and for further details, see: <http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/1267>

20TH-24TH AUGUST: Harkening to the Horse's Mouth: Shamanic Spirit Consultation with Caitlin & Felicity Wombwell. To participate and for further details, see: <http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/211> or <http://www.hallowquest.org.uk/hallowquest-courses-workshops.html>

September 2009

3RD-7TH SEPTEMBER: Harvest Home Gathering; Marlborough, Connecticut, USA. Ellen Evert Hopman will be appearing at this years Harvest Home Gathering. Awaiting more details, however to participate and for further details, see: <http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/1167> or <http://www.harvesthomegathering.com/>

19TH-20TH SEPTEMBER: Walkers between the Worlds, 3rd Oxford Foundation Course, led by John Matthews, assisted by Wil Kinghan. To participate and for further details, see: <http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/211> or <http://www.hallowquest.org.uk/hallowquest-courses-workshops.html>

October 2009

4TH-7TH OCTOBER: Voyages of the Soul: The Shamanic Wisdom of Death with Caitlin & Jane Dagger. To participate and for further details, see: <http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/211> or <http://www.hallowquest.org.uk/hallowquest-courses-workshops.html>

24TH OCTOBER: Celebrate Samhain! at Peterborough, New Hampshire, USA. Ellen Evert Hopman is a returning guest speaker and participant in this years Celebrate Samhain! To participate and for further details, see: <http://www.druidicdawn.org/node/1167> or <http://www.celebratesamhain.com/>



Community Calendar

Advanced Events
Listing for
2009

PLEASE NOTE:

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Dates are subject to change without notice.



Printable Bookmarks

Print out this page, cut out the designs & laminate for custom Celtic bookmarks!
by Treasa Ni Conchobhair (Oonagh)

☉


Eochaid Ollathair,
moladh duit.

Deagh Dia,
moladh duit.

Rúad Ro-fessa,
moladh duit.

Athgen mBeathai,
moladh duit.

Aed Abaid of Ess Rúaid,
moladh duit.





In the heart
of every acorn
lies a mighty
oak tree.




I arise today
through the strength
of heaven,
light of sun,
brilliance of moon,
splendour of fire,
speed of lightening,
swiftness of wind,
depth of sea,
stability of earth,
firmness of rock.

Atromiug indiu
niurt nime,
soilse gréine,
etrochtae éscí,
íne thened,
déne lóchet,
lúathe gáithe,
fudomnae maro,
tairisimíge talman,
cobaidhe íflech.



ireland



Sinne Fianna Fáil
Atá fé gheall ag Éirinn,
buion dár slua
Thar toinn do ráinig
chugainn,
Fé mhóid bheith saor.
Sean tír ár sinsear feasta
Ní fhágar fé'n tiorán ná fé'n
traíll
Anocht a théam sa bhearna
bhaoil,
Le gean ar Ghaeil chun báis
nó saoil
Le gunni scréach fé lámhach
na bpiléar
Seo libh canaidh Amhrán na
bhFiann.

- The Irish National Anthem



druidicdawn
"the wisest interpretation"



let the gates be open!

My tidings for you: the stag bells,
Winter snows, summer is gone. Wind high and cold, low the sun,
Short his course, sea running high.

Deep-red the bracken, its shape all gone –
The wild goose has raised his wonted cry.


Cold has caught the wings of birds:
Season of ice – these are my tidings.



Beannaigh sinn, a Dhéithe
bless us, O Gods



Cuimhnichibh air na daoine
bho'n d'thainig sibh



remember the people whom you come from



beith
glaise m'énis



