

# Drops of the Awen

NEWSLETTER OF THE PAGAN FEDERATION  
SOUTH AND MID WALES REGION  
COVERING WHAT USED TO BE DYFED,  
GLAMORGAN, GWENT AND POWYS.



No. 14 EOSTRA 1999



## EDITORIAL

Dear all, I hope that the onset of spring is bringing fresh vigour into your lives, and stirring you into action. Your editor is currently in the throes of moving house which is creating a certain amount of chaos, and complications. If any of you have contributions to send to the next issue of 'Drops' please post them to the Regional Co-ordinators, and not to the usual editorial address, as the old address is just about to become obsolete, but the new address has not been verified yet! I'm still going to be in the Lampeter area, and the email address will remain the same for the next few months - so please feel welcome to mail me contributions electronically!

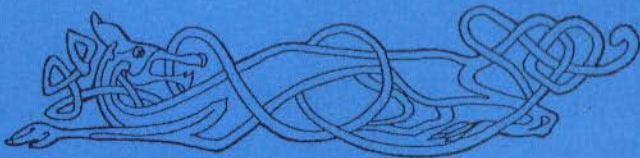
A few apologies to make concerning the last issue, two items were supposed to have been included but got mislaid, one is the letter from Graham and Margaret (included in this issue's letter page), and the other was some pagan Christmas carols, courtesy of Blanche - due to the seasonal nature of this piece I have decided to hold it over until the next Yule issue. Sorry about that.

I'm sure many of you will have been infuriated/upset/angry over the arrival of your plastic wrap Pagan Dawn; included in Co-ordinators' Corner is an apology from Jem Dowse, the current editor of PD. If any of you have an opinion they would like to share on the subject, please remember you are welcome to do so in 'Drops' - this is your regional newsletter, and thus reflects the news, views, and opinions of this region's members. 'Drops', along with all the other regional newsletters, is read by council members, and other district and regional co-ordinators, so it is a good place to air your views!

As this issue goes to press, the second Lampeter Gathering is about to take place, a day of workshops and talks, it is an opportunity for members of the region to meet with one another, and have (hopefully) an interesting and fun day. In a months time there will be another opportunity to take part in a regional get-together, as April 17th is Earth Healing Day, and an event is being hosted in Powys, see page 14 for further details.

I hope to meet some of you at one (or several!) of the regional events being held this year.

Bright Blessings, Karen.



## CO-ORDINATORS' CORNER

Well, what an extraordinary time this has been for the PF... I think you will all know what I mean. The Imbolc issue of Pagan Dawn was despatched in a transparent cover, and those of you who were lucky did *not* get disturbed by this...Judging by our postbag, however, quite a few did; Mike and I had some extremely funny looks from Postie - and since we live in a small place where nearly everybody knows everyone else; since we can't "come out" because of our families and since Mike's brother-in-law is head honcho at the Post Office - well, I'll leave it to your imaginations. Obviously some very strongly worded phone calls were made (our District Manager, Steve, beat us to it in fact) and have resulted in an apology, both from the printers and from Jem Dowse, PD's editor, the gist of which we are asked to pass on to members:

*On behalf of Pagan Dawn and the PF, I would like to apologise to everyone who received their Imbolc 1999 copies of PD exposed through a clear plastic wrapper. We are well aware of the problems this may cause, and assure readers that it was absolutely unintentional. We take the issue of subscriber confidentiality extremely seriously, and efforts had been made to ensure that such a situation would not occur. I personally wish to express my deep regrets that these plans went awry and my hopes and prayers that no-one was badly affected by the mistake.*

*Pagan Dawn has a growing subscription base - it grew by around a thousand in the last year. As such it is no longer physically possible to pack subscribers' copies by hand within a reasonable time. We therefore enlisted the help of our printer in Inverness who are a reputable and licensed mailing house. The theory was that this would speed your copy of PD to the doorstep, save a lot of work for a number of PF volunteers, and save a little money on postage into the bargain. Each copy was to have been covered by a "carrier sheet" totally obscuring the cover. This was then to be wrapped in a clear "polywrap" package, making it secure from prying eyes. I stressed several times to the printers just how important this anonymity was, and they agreed wholeheartedly.*

*As you will know, things did not go as planned. "Bookmag", the printers, have written to every subscriber who was affected by this, apologising and accepting full responsibility. Somehow, despite all our best efforts, the message had not got through. They have now imposed "ISO 9000" guidelines to their whole company to ensure that this kind of error never happens again. However, this is obviously too late for us.*

*Please let me assure all members and other subscribers to Pagan Dawn that this situation will never be repeated. We have abandoned the idea of using a transparent wrapper, and of using an external mailing house, at least in the short term. This may result in a delay to your receiving each issue of PD, however we feel that this is a price worth paying in the interests of your confidentiality.*

*With deep regret for any distress that may have been caused,*

Jem Dowse  
Editor, Pagan Dawn.



In January the first District Council meeting took place in Oswestry (We unfortunately didn't have time to let many people know, and couldn't attend ourselves!). Apparently the main gist of things was that, for the PF in this district (all of Wales and the border counties) to be more lively, and more responsive to you its members, more volunteers, i.e. people to hold moots, seasonal celebrations, offer lifts etc, (this last is being organised hopefully, as I write). Our region's members can take the opportunity to get to meet District Manager, Steve, have their say, and - please! - *volunteer* at the Earth Healing Day, on Saturday April 17th: details further on in this issue; lets get Wales together! Also in this issue, our region's annual campout at Esgair Mill! The new dates are Friday 25th June - Sunday 27th June; Full details and booking form on page []. This new date, i.e. around Midsummer rather than Lammas, - well why not try something different? - is mostly because the usual old timing this year will have been "eclipsed" (oh, dear...). Don't miss it - last year we had over 30 wonderful people and much fun was had by all! Finally just a wish that the returning spring will bring warmth and light to you all.

Bright Blessings

Mike and Angie Walters

## **URBAN PAGAN**

**Madonna blasting from next door's open windows**  
**Sunlight giving warmth and nourishment to the garden bounty**  
**Car alarms alert no-one nearby**  
**Breeze blowing so leaves catch the light in a myriad of ways**  
**Barbecue burning catches at the throat**  
**Blue sky that no paint could ever capture**  
**Drains smell stagnant and over-ripe**  
**Friends call to relax on the lawn, bringing wine to celebrate the summer solstice**  
**Mixed blessings of life in the city**

**Lizzie Wilson**



## **THE GREEN MAN**

**PART 2**



### **THE DUAL NATURE OF THE GREEN MAN**

Certain branches of the Hereditary Craft in Mediaeval France had an officer called the Verdilet, (loosely translated as 'Man in Green'). When the Magister, or male leader, assumed this role at the summer Sabbats of the coven, dressed in a green hat and mantle, he would have been regarded as the earthly representative of the Witches' God; the Green Man. (Jackson;1996)

Mike Howard, writing in the Summer 1991 issue of 'The Cauldron', mentions a skull with foliate tendrils and berries sprouting from the jaw aperture carved on an 18th century memorial in Bristol. Skulls, with or without crossbones, are a common enough decoration on gravestones and tombs of that period so without proof to the contrary this may well just have been some stonemason's flight of fancy had it not been for another skull on the tower of Sheepstor Church near Princetown on Dartmoor. I was told by a churchwarden that it depicted the head of John the Baptist! Whereas this carving can also be proved to be of comparatively modern provenance what Christian mason ever depicted the head of the Baptist as a skull, let alone a skull that has ears of corn sprouting from its jaws and eye-sockets and sits in a cauldron whose pointed lid is remarkably like the archetypal witch's hat? "In these two contrasting images (of Green Man and Foliate Skull) is a graphic illustration of the dual nature of the God as ruler of the twin powers of death and regeneration or destruction and creation. In Traditional Circles the Magister as the witch God wears the foliate mask at Beltaine as May King. At Samhain is the time of the Dark One whose symbol on the altar is the skull and cross bones. In this dark aspect the God stands masked and cloaked at the gates of the Otherworld as Opener of the Way and guide to the ancestral dead." (Howard;1991)

Another, possibly recent, introduction to Witchcraft rituals are the twin aspects of the Green Man, popularly known as the Oak King and the Holly King. In my own Tradition the Oak King rules the land of Summer growth, having fought his brother the Holly King for the hand of the Goddess at the Spring Equinox. Six months later at the Autumn Equinox he yields up 'the Queendom' to the Holly King who then holds sway over the Winter months which include Yuletide and the well-known period of Misrule. (This is a sort of topsy-turvy time of year when candles often won't light, or sometimes don't go out, things can go astray and Christmas cakes sink in the middle!) The Holly King is a trickster, but a very good friend once you get to know Him. Our Yule Rite speaks of Him thus:



Scarlet lights amid the Green,  
Holly King of Winter Queen,  
Sharp ended leaves our skins to pull,  
In this season of Misrule.

Seldom seen  
But carmine eyes,  
Heard mid rustling,  
Waxed-leafed sighs.



Those who have visited our home in rural Carmarthenshire know that the woodland behind it is very much the Holly King's domain and the stream running through the wood is sacred to the Dark Lady, who we sometimes call 'the Washer at the Ford'. Though full of holly trees only one I know ever has berries. It is difficult to express in words our personal feelings for the Green Man. If you live near trees you may already have formed your own.....

### THE GWYR-Y-GOEDWIG, THE WILD MEN, AND THE OAKMEN

Some time before we moved to West Wales, my wife Margaret had a curious 'waking dream'. She remembers, "In the far corner of the room I had the impression of an endless forest. I was seeing it from a point above the trees. The shape of the trees and the winding, deep, alley-like spaces between them looked like a brain. It came to me then that the forest was the manifestation of the God of the Earth, the God of the Woods, the Earth Father, while the trees themselves were the brain of the Goddess; the Earth Mother. At the foot of one of the trees, an ancient male character stepped out from the trunk. He called himself the Gwyr-y-Goedwig". This means 'Man of the Woods' and is a very old Welsh name for the Green Man. The Hereditary Witch Robert Cochrane said he "once had a vision of the Old God as a being, vastly ancient, massive like some great and ancient tree in the dark forest, brooding yet all sentient, smelling of dead leaves and newly turned earth. He was so old, from the beginning of the world". (Valiente;1989) Also very old and often linked with the Green Men are the hairy Wild Men or Woodwoses who turn up again and again in wood-cuts and paintings of the Middle Ages. They had female counterparts called Woodwives and were often shown in the company of unicorns and other strange beasts. It has been suggested that the Wildman is merely a folk memory of some European cousin to Big Foot or the Yeti, but I think most Pagans would agree, seeing them bearded, covered in hair and holding large clubs with which to subdue the beasts of the forest, that they are either wood spirits or perhaps even visual projections of the Lord of the Greenwood Himself. If that is the case then they are possibly related to the one-legged, one-eyed Black Man who carries an iron club and appears in the Welsh tale of The Lady of the Fountain: 'And I asked him what power he had over the animals. "I will show thee, little man," said he. And he took the club in his hand, and with it struck a stag a mighty blow till it gave out a mighty belling, and in

answer to its belling wild animals came till they were numerous as the stars in the firmament, so that there was scant room for me to stand in the clearing with them and all those serpents and lions and vipers and all kinds of animals. And he looked on them and bade them to graze. And then they bowed down their heads and did him obeisance, even as humble subjects would do their lord.' (Trans. Jones & Jones). In legend the Wild Man, and his close cousin the Oakman, is the Master of the Wood. Woebetide anyone who hunts the birds and animals in his keeping or needlessly hacks down trees without his prior permission. It is said that fox-hunting and other obscene country 'sports' distress and anger him. Understandably this has made him antagonistic towards Man. So be extremely careful how you approach coppiced oak woods where people have used the trees for their own purposes. They should be avoided altogether at sunset; in folklore a sort of in-between time that is neither night nor day and when the veil between the worlds is thin. Don't say you haven't been warned!

This is a story about some Oakmen who befriended a fox. It was collected in Cumberland as recently as 1948.

### THE VIXEN AND THE OAKMEN

*A fox had been hunted all day and the hounds were getting closer. And do what she might she couldn't throw them off. "Jump up and climb up me and run along the high stone wall", said the hawthorn tree.*

*"I don't think I could jump up anywhere now", said she, "but thank you kindly". "There's a water gap in the stone wall", said the hawthorn, "on the other side is the forest. Squeeze through. The hedgehog does".*

*"I'm not a hedgehog", said the fox "but thank you kindly". Then she heard the hounds and squeezed herself inside and there she stuck and the hunt came by. They couldn't see her easily for she tucked in her brush and edged a bit more under the thick, stone wall.*

*"The tip of your brush is sticking out", said the tree. "Push your nose out as far as you like the other side of the wall. They'll have to go two miles round to find a gap to come round and see that".*

*So she gave a wriggle and left most of her shoulder pelt on the stones but she got through, and even then she stopped to thank the hawthorn before she limped off. Only one great hound heard her and came snuffling the small water-gap. Then he reached a great paw in and lifted his head to bay, but the hawthorn dropped a bunch of paigles [haws] down his throat and made him cough instead. "You give her a chance," the tree told him. "You're twice her size. Go round if you want to catch her up. She may be a vixen but she's got good manners. She doesn't cough and sputter all over my roots. Be off!". And the hound went.*

*But the fox was very lame and it wasn't long before she heard men again. "I must rest," she said and cowered in the brake ferns. But these men had axes and whispered, even in the forest, and she heard what they said and when they crept on their way she limped on hers, trying to hasten, for again she heard hounds.*

*"Oh Holly Tree, block the way behind, please!" she said.*

*But the holly tree was a barren holly and wicked. "I will if you come here," he told her, but she just looked at him.*



*"My poor little paws are too sore to walk on your leaves, Sir - you might hang me on your branches", and she went well away from his clutch.*

*The hounds drew nearer again. Then she saw the great oak and crawled to it.*

*"Please open and let me in I bring news", she whined. The Oakmen don't believe a fox's word, but they guard all forest beasts so they pulled her safe inside where she lay panting. At last she gasped, "your mistletoe bough - men with axes - going to cut it down - they said so - but they're scared. Am I in time to save it?"*

*"Did you come through all these dangers to tell us that?" said the Oakmen. She had. "Then we'll forget farmer Gregg's geese and ducks and hens," they told her. "We don't shelter thieves but we can shelter a true friend. The hunt has gone past and away, and now you must go too. Wipe your sore paws in our oaktree rain pool". So she did and her coat grew again and her pads were healed.*

*"Keep away from the Barren Holly", they said - she meant to - "and never come here again".*

*And she was off home to her den in the crags like a red flash and curled up and sound asleep in another minute.*

*When she woke Mr Fox had just brought home a fat goose. "One of Farmer Gregg's, my love", he said. "He won't need it and you do. He's hanging high on the branches of a barren holly in the forest and another man with him. Eat the goose, love, and I'll just go back and bring a duck for supper". (Naddair;1987)*

## THE RE-EMERGENCE OF THE GREEN MAN

Much has changed in our society since Lady Raglan 'reintroduced' the Green Man to his people (though in truth he had never been away). In that same year 1939, after much prevarication, Britain bowed to the inevitable and declared war on Nazi Germany. If the traditional working-class folk-culture of these Islands had been in decline since the previous 'war to end all wars' then the cataclysmic changes to come in the wake of the struggle with Hitler would see it apparently dead and buried. Its seeds were not dead however, just waiting patiently in the racial unconscious for the right moment to put out new shoots. Even as the clouds of war were gathering one of these seeds started to germinate in the fertile mind of Gerald Gardner, known to many as the father of the modern Craft; a few days after the outbreak of the Second World War he was initiated into the enigmatic New Forest coven. By 1951 the Witchcraft Act had been repealed and the ground was ready for that seed to burst forth into the light of day. Even before the so-called 'permissive sixties' many people had already begun to doubt the dubious benefits of an increasingly materialistic and technocratic society; seeing instead a world gone mad. Very few of those feeling a need for spiritual fulfilment found what they were looking for in orthodox Christianity and turned instead to Buddhism, Transcendental Meditation or Krishna Consciousness. Some looked closer to home and began to explore their native spirituality. For such as these Dr. Gardner's unique brand of Witchcraft, or Wicca as he called it, had an instant appeal. This was the beginning of the Pagan revival which by the late 1980s had spawned a whole sub-culture with books by the thousand, newsletters, magazines that catered for the myriad groupings and divisions within Paganism and contact organisations specifically designed to enable this new generation to

meet others similarly inclined. Paganism has continued to spread hand in glove with a growing concern for the environment and all the horrendous things mankind has done to it in the name of 'progress'. A new sort of Pagan has emerged in recent years; the Eco-Warrior. No longer content to leave it up to parliament to do something more than mouth platitudes and mither on about 'specific targets' which, all too often, get bogged down in long-winded legislation, increasing numbers of courageous men and women are taking to the fields and forests of our still beautiful countryside. They sit in the path of bulldozers, barricade themselves inside concrete 'lock-ins', occupy the Green Man's beloved trees, often at considerable risk to life and limb, in order to make their point, which is simple and uncompromising; enough is enough! The roles of the Green Man and his modern champion, the Eco-warrior, have overlapped. Some modern writers have suggested it is ecological concerns alone which have triggered the return of the Green Man into popular consciousness. Some time ago I had a dream in which a man with a green tattooed face and ivy tendrils coming out of his mouth was being hunted by the police in the run-down backstreets of a big city. He had committed several murders, in fact he was a sort of ecological serial killer because his victims all had one thing in common; they had been once or were still involved in the wholesale destruction of the environment. Remember the fate of Farmer Gregg in the story of the Vixen and the Oakmen? Was this killer/vigilante the Green Man? That was my first thought on waking up. The Gods know that there are some awful things happening in this infinitely precious world of ours as it moves battered, but somehow still in one piece, towards the 21st. Century. I have reason to believe that I am not the only one to have had such dreams. It would seem the Green Man wants those of us who care to know about what is going on and try, in whatever way we can, to do something about it. He is making His presence felt. How many of us will keep faith with Him and tread the timeless steps of His ancient dance?

## NICK GRAHAM

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## LETTERS PAGE

(Here, as mentioned in the editorial, is a letter from Graham and Margaret, our ex-RC's, which was supposed to have been printed in the last issue - many apologies, ED.)

Dear Friends,

We should like to say a few 'thankyou's', firstly to Mike and Angie for their kind thoughts in the last (but one) issue of 'Drops'. Secondly to Blanche and Jenny for their entertaining articles about the Campout - we enjoyed having everybody here and are very interested to see what effect it had on those brave (or foolish) enough to join us in the madhouse. You will be pleased to know that we were not washed away during the recent flood, and the wood is wetter than ever . . .

We did manage during the Campout to acquire two items that we should be pleased to reunite with their owners. The first is a single (now-clean) sock, oatmealish and warm-looking presently sitting forlornly in the office. The second is a flat gold bracelet or ankle chain. If anyone claims either of these, please get in touch.

Angie and Mike are thinking in terms of a campout here next year again, so we will be delighted to see you all for more madness. . .

In the meantime, love and best wishes to you all,

GRAHAM & MARGARET.

Dear Drops,

Levannah Morgan is quite right to tackle the (far too numerous) people who put stuff into print without getting their lore and their facts right first. I once started reading the sequel to "21 Lessons of Merlin" until I got to the bit about him arriving at "the village of Merthyr Tydfil". I'm sure the Morris-dancing locals in the green lanes of Gurnos had a little smile about that one.

Unfortunately it's not just the Americans who get it wrong. Cheryl Traffon in "Pagan Cornwall", says at one point that Paviland Cave is "near Bristol". Well, maybe if you're a seagull, but anyone actually trying it might get just a bit wet..

But my real favourite is a bloke named Richard Webster who talks about a book of Celtic Wisdom called (wait for it) Bardass!

I've heard of "bard in bed under the doctor" but this is ridiculous.

gwyn eich byd

Ffred

Dear Drops,

I too agree with Levannah Morgan's annoyance at the way so many books are written with a 'New Age' or 'Pagan' audience in mind but which perpetuate points of ignorance. It is not just the ones about 'Celtic Spirituality' that are at fault, it occurs right across the board. My own speciality is Greek Mythology (mainly from an academic point of view) and so I find myself cringing at many badly researched, and even worsely interpreted, books on this subject. I think it is disgusting that authors can get away with such sloppy work, which may not be picked up upon by their readers if they are not experts in the subject themselves. You shouldn't have to be an expert to notice the errors or deliberate manipulation of 'facts', as an audience we deserve to be treated with respect. I suspect that the 'new age' and 'pagan' markets may be particularly vulnerable to this kind of slipshod authorship, which is a great shame. One has to develop a certain nous when choosing books to read/buy, knowing which are 'good' authors and 'bad' authors. Maybe this is the same in all subjects, but I do think we get exploited a lot of the time.

BB,  
Diana B.

## OLD WAYS IN A MODERN WORLD

Some people, when they learn I follow a Craft tradition based mostly on Anglo-Saxon and Norse elements and live in West Wales, ask me why I am not a follower of modern wicca or druidism. My simple answer to this is that parts of West Wales were colonised by Danish Vikings and the evidence for this still remains today in Norse place-names. Also, as an Englishman (albeit with 50% Irish blood!), I am naturally drawn to the Old Gods of my ancestors.

That is the simple answer. The more complex one is that recent historical research suggests that there was no such thing as a Celtic people, but only a series of forms of language used by ancient Europeans which have been classified as 'Celtic'. In reality the differences between the so-called 'Celts' and the Norse and Germanic tribes is very blurred. For instance the famous Celtic Gundustrup cauldron was not found in Gaul, but in Denmark and was probably Thracian in manufacture. In fact, my practices and beliefs as a pagan do contain many 'Celtic' elements, which are common to the Indo-European culture and religion which was created when the Iron Age people inter-married with the racial remnants of the Neolithic and Bronze Age folk.

The Northern Tradition, so-called, has not been so popular as the Celtic traditions in the modern revival. True the runes have been successful on a commercial level, but mostly as a straightforward alternative to the Tarot of the I-Ching. In this respect they are often divorced from their original culture and ancestral roots. In fact only recently I saw a glossy pack of 'Zen Runes' (sic). This monstrosity claimed to combine 'the insights of Zen' with the Norse-Saxon runic alphabet!



Part of the problem has also been the mistaken idea that the Northern Tradition per se is 'patriarchal' and 'Male chauvinist'. This has been exaggerated by an unbalanced emphasis on the relatively short Viking period, especially its Hollywood image, and by male dominated groups devoted exclusively to Odin and sometimes advocating extreme political views. However, there are a lot more Northern gods than Old Greybeard. If you go back to the Iron Age and Bronze Age in Northern Europe you will find plenty of evidence for Goddess worship and the cults of the Vanir deities, who were gods of earth and hearth. Anyway, Odin's development as a battle god is a later one and many, like myself, prefer to relate to his more magical and shamanistic qualities.

In recent years the 'feminine mysteries' of the Northern way have also been written about widely by myself and others. The role of the goddesses such as Freya, Frigga, Holda and Sif have been recognised and emphasised. In addition to the male trinity of Odin, Thor and Tiw who were worshipped in the Viking period before Christianity came, the important position of the Vanir gods such as Frey and the giant-born androgynous Loki have also been recognised. On another level, the magical art of seidr, taught by Freya to Odin, is now accepted by many writers on the Northern tradition as the prototype for Saxon and medieval witchcraft. In its revival from today it is the basis of what is called 'English Traditional Craft', whose God and Goddess forms are Herne (Woden) and Freya-Holda.

Our Northern European ancestors were down-to-earth, practical people who made their living from agriculture and by trading merchandise with countries as far away as Russia. They were also natural explorers who it is believed may have travelled as far as North America and China. They possessed a strict moral code which was based on the Nine Noble Virtues. In a modernised form these are courage, truth, honour, loyalty, hospitality, industriousness, perseverance, self-discipline and self-reliance.

Above everything else, the Northern folk were worshippers of the life force in its many varied forms. Their magick was not airy-fairy, but concerned with the powers of birth, life and death. It was not for this reason that their runic divination on a popular level dealt with the basics of daily life and such issues as health, wealth and love. This is not to say that they did not have a sophisticated or complex belief system, but like most ancient cultures their myths were based on story-telling and the adventures of heroes and gods. These exploits both mirrored human life on Middle Earth and concealed moral and spiritual teachings and truths.

Today we are not Bronze Age folk or Vikings and for that reason we should not attempt to culturally reproduce or imitate what they did or believed in exactly. However, in common with other revived pagan paths today, the modern Northern tradition has much to teach us on a moral and practical level about our relationship to each other and the natural world. Even at the end of the 20th century, with all its myriad horrors and wonders, on a daily basis we still have to deal with the forces of birth, life and death and the elemental powers of nature. We are still affected by the seasonal cycle, even if it is for most people only the effects of a (rare) summer heatwave or winter floods. As global warming becomes more of a problem so we will have to find new ways of coming to terms with these elemental forces and climate change.

We should be able to adopt the best aspects of the old paganism to suit the type of lifestyle we are following at the dawn of the Aquarian Age. If we do this will create a

progressive, non-atavistic, forward-looking form of paganism. One that is capable of providing us with both a spiritual framework in which to live and a practical way of dealing with the increasing problems of modern society.

Michael Howard

For further information on the Northern pagan path and runecraft read *The Mysteries of the Runes* by Michael Howard, published by Capall Bann. (Blatant plug!)

#### DREAM?

I woke up in the night  
A beautiful bright moon shone through my window  
The lady herself spoke softly to me  
Soothing me back to sleep with feelings of comfort and love  
I dreamt I was in a cave  
Fantastic animals and people were portrayed in earth colours  
Decorating the walls to show how close all the creatures were  
Flickering light played shadows across the paintings giving them life  
I could hear them breathing  
Fear arose in me as the cave lurched and swayed  
Forcing me through the entrance to where a beautiful wild man waited for me  
He asked where I had been  
He smiled and held my hands  
He led me to a circle of stones  
Blue shafts of energy formed a corona around the sacred area  
We floated on a bed of pure love  
A group of tourists approached from a coach  
They surrounded the stones  
Many looked nervous  
They turned away, looking at guidebooks  
They couldn't see us  
They walked through the blue back to their temporary home  
Only one person looked back  
Our eyes met  
She smiled and opened her hands  
Blue snakes circled her wrists  
She turned to give comfort and love to her new friends

Lizzie Wilson



## EARTH HEALING DAY

SATURDAY 17TH APRIL 1999  
2pm at the Dingle (Bach Dingle), Powys

This is our chance at last to hold an all - Wales (and the Marches) Earth Healing Day! From about 1.30pm there will be someone at the Dingle to meet and greet you, and show you hopefully where "your" tree will be; the Earth Healing Ritual, in English and Welsh, should start around 4-ish.

PLEASE bring a NATIVE BRITISH tree to plant if you possibly can; the site is Pagan-owned and the guardian spirits very welcoming - so "your" tree will have a chance to live its natural span in the wild, loved, cared for and free from interference.

"THE DINGLE" lies between the towns of Knighton and Presteigne - from either take the B4355, and about 3 1/2 miles from either you will find on the east side of the road a sign marked Bach Dingle, which leads down a steep unmade road - you are here! It is a sparsely-wooded, steep "V" -shaped, wild and wonderful place with a stream flowing at the bottom. There is not much parking, so perhaps people could meet in Knighton or Presteigne and share cars? (A pit-stop in either is strongly recommended, as there are no "facilities"...). It is requested that you be reasonably circumspect in the towns - no athame-brandishing, etc.

Some of the more intrepid souls will be camping on the Saturday night and you are welcome to bring a tent - and, of course, the things you will need - fires (small) will be permitted, and there are reasonably flat grassy areas dotted around. All in all, it should be a wonderful time and a chance to meet fellow Pagans from all over the District - see you there!

### GATHERING # 1 - The Talks

Now available, resulting from the success of last year's Lampeter Gathering, is a booklet containing the three talks: Graham Matthews - *The Green Man*; Elaine Howells - *Dowsing the Chakras*; Hilaire Wood - *The Goddess Brigit*; and a copy of the Earth Healing Ritual. To receive a copy of this 25 page, black and white A5 booklet please send a £1 cheque made out to S. Barrett, and a stamped self addressed A5 envelope to: S. Barrett, Desdemona, 39 North Parade, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion, SY23 2JN.

## MAGAZINES (produced within the region)

STONE TEMPLE - covering Wicca and Paganism in South Wales. Please send a cheque/PO for £1 payable to C. Breen, 65 Vale Street, Barry, Glamorgan (No Callers Please).

THE CAULDRON - a much respected journal of the old ways. Please send a cheque/PO for £8 (4 issues) payable to Mike Howard, Caemorgan Cottage, Caemorgan Road, Cardigan, SA43 1QU. DO NOT write 'The Cauldron' or put pagan stickers on envelope - thanks!

If anyone knows of any other pagan magazines produced in the region please send the details to the editorial address.

### THE REGION'S PREMIER ANNUAL EVENT

#### MIDSUMMER CAMPOUT AT ESGAIR MILL!

Friday 25th June - Sunday 27th June 1999

In a beautiful woodland valley near Carmarthen - now in its third year and still growing!

#### CAMPING \* WORKSHOPS \* RITUAL \* MOOT

Places £7.50 (members), £8.50 (non-members)

£4.00 (Saturday only)

Limited to first forty places only due to space

#### BOOKING FORM

I/we require \_\_\_\_\_ places @ £7.50

\_\_\_\_\_ places @ £8.50

\_\_\_\_\_ Saturday only @ £4.00

Name \_\_\_\_\_ PF Membership No. \_\_\_\_\_

Total £ \_\_\_\_\_

Please return with cheque/P.O. to: A Robbins, Flat 1, 36 Broad Street, Ross-on-Wye, HR9 7DY. Acknowledgement, approximate timetable of events, and directions to Esgair Mill will be sent return post on receipt of booking form.



## ROUND THE REGION

It is always encouraging to find PF members actively involved with their spirituality, and willing to share with others. This space is for you! If you would like us to publish details/dates/venues of your group/society/moot/workshops etc. which you think would interest other members then don't hesitate to contact us for inclusion in Drops!

BARRY: Contact Chris and Maria for details of open rituals and workshops - (01446) 730221  
email: Stotemple@aol.com

CARDIFF: Contact Gareth for further information - (01222)397147  
email: Onnen@Bigfoot.com

CARMARTHEN: Sweat Lodges, held monthly in a secluded grove by woodland stream. All welcome, no charge. Enquiries to - J. Adams, c/o The Farmhouse, Marchogywyn Fawr, Llanfynydd, Carmarthen, SA32 7UQ

LAMPETER: University Pagan Society, regular meetings, talks and workshops during term time. All welcome. For further details please contact K. Pierce c/o Pagan Society, Student's Union, Lampeter University, Lampeter, Ceredigion.  
email: pn027@Lampeter.ac.uk

POWYS: Discussion group/house moot hosted by Iain Steele in Felindre, Knighton, Powys. For details please ring (01547) 510343.

SWANSEA: Pagan social meetings, contact Ffred for details - (01792) 426506  
email: 126469.93@Swansea.ac.uk

DROPS OF THE AWEN is your newsletter, here to reflect your views, voice your opinions, and answer your questions - please use it!! To contribute please send a neatly written proof, typed script, or disc (Word for Windows version 6). We also need illustrations, stories, poems, helpful hints, news etc.....

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the editor, or the Pagan Federation as a whole. The Editor has the right to 'edit' all submissions as she sees fit.

Editorial Address: (for next issue only, please write c/o of the Regional Co-ordinators)  
email: pn027@Lampeter.ac.uk

Regional Co-ordinators: Mike and Angie Walters, Flat 1, 36 Broad Street, Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire, HR9 7DY (please do not put anything too "interesting" on the envelope...)

