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# Henge Happenings

The Henge of Keltria, PO Box 17969, Long Beach, CA 90807-7969

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Volume #42

Editor: Tony Taylor

[HengeofK@aol.com](mailto:HengeofK@aol.com)

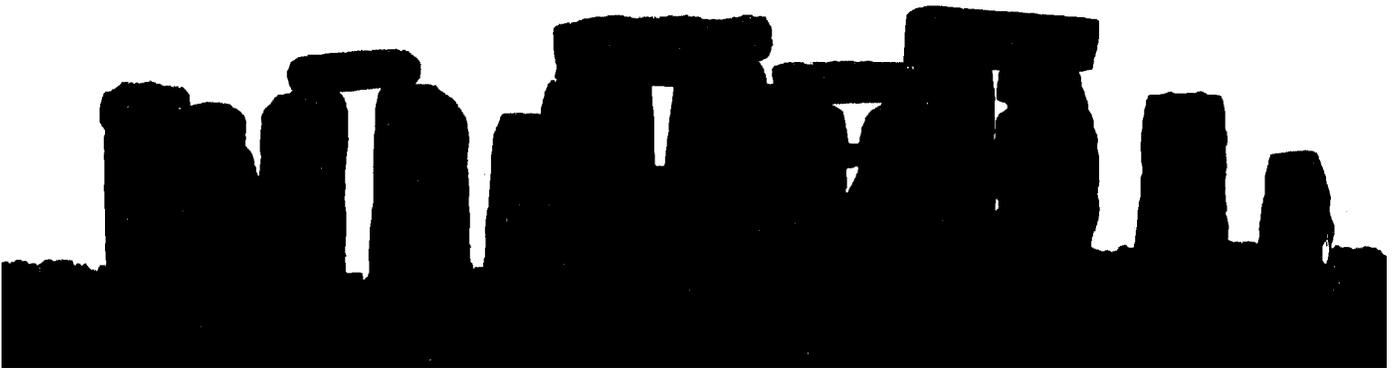
Beltaine 1999

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*public edition*

*COVER STORY  
AVAILABLE ONLY IN  
THE  
MEMBER'S EDITION*



# from the president

## a history lesson

Once upon a time in the deepest, darkest, early 1980's two people decided that they would like to contribute to the growing neo-pagan community. Both had been on the pagan path seeking and learning for a decade and desired to offer their skills to the community at large. Pat and Tony Taylor were active members of Mensa and believed that a productive way to serve was to publish a small Special Interest Group newsletter for the Minnesota chapter of that organization. This is how *Wodenwood* was conceived and brought into being. Its focus was broad, encompassing the Pagan/Occult/Witchcraft Special Interest Group of Minnesota Mensa. As it evolved through the years, the focus narrowed until it concentrated only Druidism and specific Celtic interests and became *Keltria Journal*.

The Henge of Keltria itself had its beginnings about fifteen years ago. Separate from the newsletter, it began with a small group of friends who desired specific things from their spiritual path that they did not find in other places. To describe it in a romantic storytelling manner, it was created in Love's kitchen using reverence and respect for the Old Gods and the Old Ways as the main ingredients. Remaining as true to scholarship as possible, they also kept an eye on their own spiritual needs in a modern world. These friends made a noise like a party and it wasn't long before others asked to be invited to share the wonderful food. Invited they were as they continue to be.

We do receive kind letters and E-mails of support and for those, I am grateful. They make the hours of work I do for the Henge delightful and well worth my sacrifices. However, there is a trend that I find disheartening. It's the "Okay, you have my twelve bucks so what are you going to do for me?" attitude. It's hurtful when people become down right rude when

other resources are suggested for basic background information. We try to explain that we cannot tell them everything we've learned about the Celts – ancient and modern, Druidism in general, Keltrian Druidism in particular and how it compares to other organizations past, present and future all in one breath in a single personal letter or E-mail typing with one finger by lamplight in a strong wind blowing uphill both ways. (The run-on sentence was intentional.)



To these folks I say the membership money is allotted this way: One dollar goes to a Benevolent Fund and one dollar goes to an Emergency Fund. In the past, some Keltrians have suffered in natural disasters such as hurricanes, floods, and earthquakes. Others are in sincere need of scholarship assistance. We have been unable to help in the past, but are making an effort to do so in the future. These funds are in their infancy and not ready for general distribution, but we are doing our best to see that they will be available in the future. The balance of ten dollars covers the cost of printing the newsletter, purchasing envelopes and subsequent postage. The little bit of change left goes to general operating expenses.

That being said, we are willing to invite folks into our kitchen to share our spiritual food. It is up to the individual member to partake of it. It is not up to us to force-feed. Nor is it our responsibility to unzip peoples' heads and pour into them what has taken us years of study and trial to achieve. When I ask whether someone is working with the Keltrian rituals, I receive a blank stare or its equivalent if I ask the question in writing. If a person wants to experience the Keltrian path, working with the rituals is essential. For a solitary practitioner, the rituals are easily adapted for one person. The individual is also responsible for their

own research into the history and culture of the old religion that we celebrate.

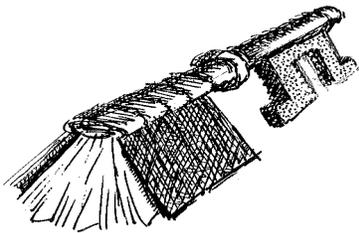
We have many, many fine people associated with the Henge who are delighted to answer specific questions regarding basic beliefs and the workings of Keltrian ritual. We will also help with specific questions on history and mythology. If one person does not have the answer, it is easy to get one. We do as much as we are able to be available. However, we do need to be met at least in the middle. Read the material, try the rituals, and take the time to formulate questions that can be answered.

The opening paragraphs of this editorial are by no means a historical account of the formation of the Henge of Keltria. It's a simple explanation of where we've been on the way to where we're going. I hope this gives folks a wee insight as to how the Henge of Keltria had its beginnings. The publication spread the word about what was cooking in the kitchen as both evolved. Otherwise, it's more than likely that it would still be a few friends and family members cooking for themselves. Eventually, we sacrificed the journal to give our undivided attention to the membership through several venues one of which is Henge Happenings.

We are happy to serve; however, it's up to the individual to sit down at the table. We've provided the main course.

The light is on in the kitchen...

Walk with Wisdom,  
Wren



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## Advertise in Henge Happenings

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*Henge Happenings will now accept advertising. For a copy of our advertising guidelines, please send a SASE to The Henge of Keltria. Attn.: Advertising Guidelines, P.O. Box 17969, Long Beach, CA 90807.*

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the  
member's edition

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This publication also is:  
**Protected by the Berne Convention.**

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## gatherings

**FL – May 13-16.** The Florida Pagan Gathering Betaine is sponsored by Church of Iron Oak, and will be held at Boyd Hill, St. Petersburg, FL. Church of the Iron Oak, P.O. Box 060672, Palm Bay, FL 32906-0672; phone: 407-722-0291; FPG@ironoak.org, or www.ironoak.org for information.

**OH – June 20-27.** The 1999 Pagan Spirit Gathering is sponsored by Circle Sanctuary, and will be held in South-eastern Ohio at Westeria Campground. Contact Circle Sanctuary, P.O. Box 219, Mt. Horeb, WI 53572; phone: 608-924-2216; circle@mhtc.net, or www.circlesanctuary.org for information.

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amendment  
proposal # 22

**Submission Information**

All submissions to Henge Happenings become property of The Henge of Keltria, Inc., a nonprofit religious corporation. Categories for submissions are based upon who they are from: Officers, Elders, Coordinators, Groves, Members and the Henge Office. Members submissions are further divided based upon subject matter, Bardic, Seer, Druid, or Solitaire Special Interest Groups.

**DRUID anthology  
moved**

Michael Scharding's *A Reformed Druid Anthology* [Reviewed in Keltria Journal Issue #39] was recently moved to a more permanent home on a different server. It is now available at:  
<http://www.student.carleton.edu/orgs/druids/arda/>

*This amendment proposes a new membership type, an Associate Member. An associate membership is intended to be the second member in the same household. Associate members would be eligible to vote but would not receive regular mailings.*

**ARTICLE X — INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP**

*Add paragraph 10.3.1.*

10.3.1. An associate membership is available to the second adult individual at the same address. Households with a Member and an Associate Member will receive one set of informational mailings, such as Henge Happenings and special announcements.

*Add Paragraph 10.4.2.3.*

10.4.2.3. Associate Membership - An Individual which is the second membership at the same address and who does not receive mailings. Associate Members may vote at the annual meeting as Individual Members.

# are you a BARD?

By: ceallaigh maccaith  
chairperson - BARDIC SIG

When I was elected to fill this post I was invited to lay down the criteria by which a member of Keltria might legitimately call her/himself a Bard. So I thought awhile on the things we know historically about Bards. It's pretty impressive stuff.

Bards were required to memorize hundreds of tales using highly sophisticated mnemonic techniques, many of which are simply lost to us now. In the early days they carried news from tribe to tribe, preserved the lineage and history of the Great Celtic Houses, commemorated significant events with poetry and song, lifted noble behavior high with words of praise, and laid waste to pettiness with brutal satire. In later days they performed these functions and more, since they became one of the sole repositories for Brehon law in a world rife with political and religious rivalries. Finally, the Bard outlasted his (or her, though they were usually men, especially in Ireland) patron when the new religion, the new political structure, and the Protestant landed gentry (who had no use for family Bards) took root in Ireland in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

From the earliest recorded Celtic histories we learn that Bards were accorded a status equal to that of Chieftains. The good word of a respected Bard was the most desirous of endorsements. Conversely, the satire of a Bard, any Bard, was believed to bring real and lasting harm to the recipient of it. The prestige of the Bard and the value of her/his gifts was so high for so long that it's little wonder how many people want to recapture that glory now.

We are not so far removed in time from Aogàn Ò Rathaille and Robert Burns. The wind is still heavy with the molecules of oxygen they themselves inhaled. If we listen carefully, we can still hear them mourn the loss of this ancient and noble heritage in the whisper of the oaks who breathed with them when they were alive. By what right do we pick up the stones of learning that were wrenched from their bellies and place them on our

own? Can any of us hope to live up to the grand heritage of our forefathers and foremothers in the tradition? Even if we can, do we have the right to command the respect that they did? What does it take to be a Bard?

I don't presume to speak for the whole of the Bardic tradition, but I *can* tell you what I'm doing and what I respect in others.

- ◆ Read the sacred tales of the Celts with an eye to their spiritual significance. Among these are the Mabinogion, the Tàin Bò Cuailnge, The Lais of Mairi De France, and the Fenian tales. Learn at least three stories well enough to tell them to others. These will help you to understand the foundation of your craft.
- ◆ Read the folktales of the Celts. There are a number of fabulous compilations by various editors. Sean O'Sullivan's compilation, called Folktales of Ireland, is an especially good one. These will help you to understand the storytelling craft as it was preserved in the last two centuries. Again, learn a few of these well enough to tell to others.
- ◆ Keep the heritage and stories of your family. Encourage your elders to tell their stories. Write them down on special paper. Hold them close to your soul. Tell them to your children.
- ◆ Keep up with the news, and be prepared to discuss it intelligently with others.
- ◆ Read to children, old people, and your lover.
- ◆ Write your own story. Why are you a Celtic Pagan? What brought you to this place? What sacred experiences still give you the shivers when you think about them? What are your own, personal miracles?
- ◆ What else matters to you? Write it down. Tell it.

- ◆ If you play an instrument, practice regularly.
- ◆ Please participate in the Bardic SIG. It's so good to share ideas with like-minded folks. I'd really like for this group to be a place where we can all grow in our respective definitions of the word *Bard* and still have a touchstone to our Keltrian identity.

In short, be grounded in the sacred tales and storytelling technique of our forebears, but live your life and perfect your craft in the present. We cannot go back to the glory days, but we can make new ones.

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## a DRUID alone

a column for solitary  
keltrians

By the topaz owl

Greetings and Blessings, my Solitary Friends!

A relatively new member of Keltria recently wrote to me and asked: How old is the Keltria Organization; ie., when did it officially come into existence? Who were the original founding members and why did they found Keltria?

It occurred to me then that perhaps a lot of our newer members, especially those Solitaires with no access to a Grove, would also be interested in the answers to these questions, and that it might be a good start-off for this column. Those of us who have been around a long time tend to overlook the fact that newer members might like a brief history of the organization.

Since I have only been a member of Keltria for eight years or so, I thought it would be best to go to our Archdruid and one of the founders, Tony Taylor, for this information, which he was happy to provide.

“The Henge of Keltria, Inc.” was incorporated as a nonprofit religious corporation in 1995 and is the direct descendant of The Henge of Keltria, a religious association, established in 1987. (So the Keltria Organization was established in 1987 and incorporated in 1995.)

It was founded by Tony Taylor and Pat Taylor (aka Sable). It was founded in response to theological differences, administrative goals, and other perceived shortcomings of ADF. Tony and Pat were, at that time, coordinators for Mensa's Pagan, Occult & Witchcraft Special Interest Group and were publishing a generic Neopagan, Druidic Leaning publication called Wodenwood. Ellen Evert Hopman (aka Willow) and David Schaal (aka Iarwain) were among the first to be a part of the newly founded organization.

I'm looking forward to more of your questions about Keltria and Keltrian practice. Send them by e-mail to [TopazOwl@aol.com](mailto:TopazOwl@aol.com) or by snail-mail to Topaz Owl in care of The Henge of Keltria.

## whats new with keltria on-line

By Rain, keltria internet  
COORDINATOR

The Keltria Web Site is about to undergo some major additions and your help is needed.

I am still looking for Book Reviews to add to supplement the Recommend Reading List. If you would like to submit one, send it to me at [eml2@cwix.com](mailto:eml2@cwix.com) or you can pass them along to the Henge Office if you do not have Internet access and would still like to write a review.

If you know of a Festival that you attended last year and really enjoyed, pass along the information and I will add it to the Festivals page.

There is page for the Keltria Annual Meeting on the Web Site also for those who may have misplaced the information you were sent on it.

If you would like information about your Grove or Study Group on the Web Site you can pass that along also. There is a page for Groves, although it needs to be updated and not all Groves are listed there.

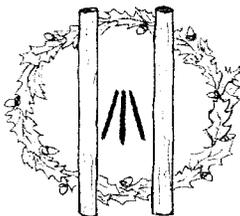
If you have a personal Web Site and would like a link from the Keltria site, pass along your site's address. If you have seen a great site and think it should be linked from the Keltria site, pass that along too.

As always, your comments, suggestions and supplements are welcome for the Web Site.

**Visit the Keltria Web Site at:** <http://www.keltria.org>

**Contact the Webmaster, Rain at:**  
[eml2@cwix.com](mailto:eml2@cwix.com)

Join the Keltria E-mail list by E-mailing Rain (with name and e-mail address).



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### spring

By tamarix  
Banfilí  
(Juniper Grove)



*Persephone stirs from  
Hades-induced sleep and stretches out her  
Mother-of Pearl arms long seashell fingers  
touch the blue moons of March The ides glide  
silently past Impotent against the sun-smile  
awakening of the sleeping queen of hell.*

*Hades scowls and with his dark sceptre rages  
angry ice and howling wind above and dark  
cold below*

*But his time is past and Demeter triumphs  
as her daughter languidly returns to her  
embrace. There is no man or God who can  
penetrate the love of the Mother for her own.*

*Soon Persephone will kiss the Earth, not her  
husband, and we shall all ache with the  
tenderness of her flowered lips.*

# making magickal tools

By Chris Lynner

When I first started practicing Keltrian ritual, I found that the list of tools for ritual seemed quite intimidating. After I started looking around, I found that making my own tools wasn't as difficult as I thought it would be.

My biggest source of inspiration has been looking at the craft books for kids. Since I have kids, I was doing this already. Most libraries are full of these craft books. So they are easy to come by. They also cater to easy instructions that are simple to modify to allow for personal creativity. The materials are usually cheap and simple to get also (a major consideration if you live in a smaller community).

In this article and future articles, I would like to share some of the tools I have made, the Remembrances for ritual and some of the seasonal decorations that help to get one in the "mood" of the season. I would also like to invite you to share your own experiences and ideas.

You can find more information on what tools are used in ritual and how to bless and care for them in the *Henge of Keltria Book of Ritual*. The *Book of Ritual* is available from the Henge Office.



## Bell Branch

The Bell Branch is used in ritual to consecrate sacred space. This tool is based on those of the Druids and Bards of old who used a Bell Branch to symbolize a connection with the Otherworld. Celtic Myth tells us of this. Archeology has also uncovered "wands" that may have been the Bell Branches of Druids or Bards.

For my own Bell Branch, I found a simple branch in my yard. I added three bells tied on to the branch with ribbon (since three is an important number in Keltrian theology). As the Bell Branch is "planted" to

symbolize the Otherworldly Tree, keep in mind that size counts and a large branch doesn't "plant" easy (as I soon found out). You could devise a planter such as a pot with sand in it or some molded clay to place in the center of the spiral for "planting". Or for outdoor ritual, you could dig a hole to fit the branch into. A smaller branch can be just placed on the ground.

You can also paint the branch with symbols or colors that are meaningful to you. You may even want to keep your eyes open at Yule time for the apple ornaments that have made a recent comeback (apples are a traditional symbol of the Otherworld in Celtic Myth).

Bells are easy to obtain from a mail order source like Azuregreen or Magus Books. You can also find them at craft stores or music stores. Yule time may also yield bells with the other ornaments of the season.

Another way to form a Bell Branch is to use rigid wire to bend into a branch shape. You can attach the bells to this as well. You could then wind florist's tape around the wire to give it a more branch like appearance. You could then paint it. Silver is the recommended traditional color.

Most important of all, have fun with it and just remember that there is no one "right" way to form a magickal tool. The most important aspect is what works for you.

## altar plate

The Altar Plate is a focal point for meditation and concentration in Keltrian Ritual. An appropriate symbol for the Altar Plate is the Keltrian Sigil:

The Keltrian Sigil symbolizes the triple nature of our cosmology in the tri-line symbol in the center of the sigil. The outer circle and staves are derived from archeological evidence of how the ancestors built their structures. We no longer know for certain the exact meaning of it to the ancestors, but to us it symbolizes a gateway.

I constructed my own Altar Plate by purchasing a large ceramic tile from the hardware store (about 1 x 1 foot) and then painting the sigil onto the tile. You might be able to enlarge the above picture and use tracing paper to get the design onto the tile for painting. I just drew a circle (using a bowl) lightly with pencil and use it to guide me. Mine is a work in progress as I am not that artistic.

Another way to construct an Altar Plate is to use clay (purchased or home made) and to mold it into the shape you want and let it dry (I will add some recipes for homemade clay when I get to the remembrance bowls). Next paint the sigil onto it and after that dries coat the plate with clear paint (polyurethane I think it is called).

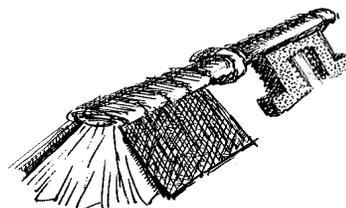
You may also wish to use the cross section of a tree and paint or carve your sigil onto that. Or you could even use a piece of wood from the hardware store. There are many options.

## BEQUESTS

Bequests to the Henge of Keltria can support many of our goals. A legacy tangibly demonstrates the conviction you have in your beliefs and the confidence you have in the Henge. It also shows your desire to assist the Henge in promoting Druidic education and religion. Making a bequest is quite easy. The next time you update your will, discuss with your lawyer adding the following to your will:

I give, bequeath, and devise to The Henge of Keltria, a religious corporation, incorporated in the State of Minnesota,... (insert here follows the percentage of the residuary estate; or the amount in dollars; or an accurate description of securities, real estate, or other property given).

[This information is intended as a general guide. Laws pertaining to bequests vary from state to state. You should consult an attorney with respect to your will and having your wishes followed.]



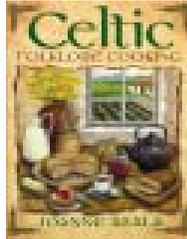
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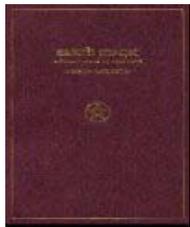
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# publications

**Celtic Folklore Cooking** by Joanne Asala, is a wholesome cuisine based on the richness and generosity of the Goddess' bounty. For mor information contact your local bookstore or on the web at <http://www.llewellyn.com> \$17.95, 384 pages, ISBN 1-56718-044-2.



**Earth Magic: A Dianic Book of Shadows, A Guide for Witches** by Marion Weinstein is newly revised and expanded. For more information, contact your local bookstore or the web at <http://www.earthmagic.com>. \$13.00 168 pages. ISBN 1-890733-00-8.



**Wiccan Magick: Inner Teachings of the Craft** by Raven Grimassi is recently released by Llewellyn. For more information contact your local bookstore or on the web at <http://www.llewellyn.com> \$12.95, 240

pages, ISBN 1-56718-255-0.

## Magazines

Society of Celtic Shamans, P.O. Box 233, Harrison Hot Springs, BC, Canada V0M 1K0 publishes "Earthsongs: The Journal of the Society of Celtic Shamans". Contact them for information or on-line at [www.faeryshaman.org](http://www.faeryshaman.org).

## Music

**For Love's Caress: A Celtic Journey** by Mairéid Sullivan. For those of you that remember Mairéid's (rhymes with parade) articles in *Keltria Journal* may wish to get her latest CD, **For Love's Caress** is a magickal trip through the Celtic World led by the crystal clear voice of Irish singer, songwriter, and poet Mairéid Sullivan. She is *anam chara* (soul friend) to the Henge. Available for \$15.00 plus \$3.50 P&H (CA residents only add 8.5% Tax) from Lyrebird Music, PO Box 2087, Hollywood, CA 90078. <http://www.maireid.com>. (Also available from [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).)



## BOOK REVIEW

**Hungry Grass** by Mary-Beth O'Shea Noonan  
review By topaz owl

**Hungry Grass** is a collection of poems by Mary-Beth O'Shea Noonan. Some of the poems within this volume have previously appeared in the **Keltria Journal**: "A Drink from the Seven Sisters" (#25), "Pagan Song" (#27), and "In the Baron's Kitchen" (#30).

Immersing myself in this poetry, I found that the experience was like viewing snapshots of Ireland, snapshots that showed me the people of the land and the soul of the land itself, the mystery and the tradition that still clings to the rocks and the grass and the people there. The poet speaks of the commonplace and everyday, but in her straightforward yet passionate style we can catch glimpses of something much older, something timeless and sacred. These poems sing to the Celtic spirit in both celebration and sadness as we climb the hillside at Mullaghmore, slaughter lambs on Good Friday, milk cows, gather peas, swim horses at Lughnasadh, and listen in as an old woman explains about the time she saw the ghostly funeral coach come for her brother.

This volume is a wonderful Bardic celebration of life written from within the rich tradition of the Irish-American author as she comes face-to-face with her heritage and the passion of her soul in the Emerald Isle. In her well-crafted verse we are shown the beauty, the magic, and the pain that has molded the Irish people and their descendants from ancient times. Here we have the Celtic essence bared to us amid vivid imagery. I can highly recommend this book to anyone who appreciates good poetry from the heart.

**Hungry Grass**, Mary-Beth O'Shea Noonan, Amherst Writers and Artists Press, 1998. ISBN: 0-941895-14-9

