

AFA UPDATE

A PROJECT OF THE ASATRU FOLK ASSEMBLY

Issue 31

Wednesday/Odin's Day, December 31, 2003
(Next issue: January 14, 2004)

Contact email: afa@lanset.com

Please tell your friends about AFA Update and suggest they subscribe! They can do so by going to AFA_Bearclaw-subscribe@yahoo.com.

TIME FOR NEW YEAR'S OATHS (OR MAYBE RESOLUTIONS?)

It's that time again - time to pull ourselves together, summon our resolve, and decide just how we're going to make ourselves better in 2004!

In the old days, we swore oaths on the sacred Yule boar as he was led around the table. Today, the boar is represented by a ham on the platter, and our oaths have degenerated into not-very-serious New Year's resolutions which will go by the wayside within weeks.

So what should we do about that? Well, it depends...

It's better to not make an oath if you can't keep it. It seems to me that modern-day adherents to Germanic religion make far too many oaths, precisely because they don't take them seriously enough. Words fall from mead-lubricated lips, only to be forgotten with the passing of time - bringing bad orlog ("Teutonic karma") upon those who utter them. Oaths echo between all the Worlds and must be recognized as the weighty things they are. Never, ever utter an oath lightly.

That being said, oaths are very good if they can be successfully carried out. An oath kept adds to one's spiritual might and gives strength of soul, just as surely as an oath violated robs us of godly power. Reflect carefully, and oath only if you dare!

For those who choose not to oath, there is always the New Year's resolution instead. It's safer, if less powerful, and it can still be an instrument for personal improvement. The important thing is to keep working on ourselves!

MAGIC OF THE NORSE GODDESSES: Mythology-Ritual-Tranceworking

Alice Karlsdottir is a 29-year veteran of the Asatru scene, and a woman of wonderful talents. Over the years, she has applied herself to a practical study of the Norse Goddesses - practical, in the sense that she has developed a method of guided visualization or tranceworking allowing us to explore the world of the Goddesses firsthand. Because her research is grounded in good scholarship rather than fantasy, the result is a valuable tool for personal transformation.

Alice's work is summarized in a brand-new release titled MAGIC OF THE NORSE GODDESSES: Mythology-Ritual-Tranceworking. In it, she introduces us to Frigga and the lesser-known deities associated with Odin's wife - Eir, Saga, Gna, and nine others. Perhaps even more importantly, she shows us how to use her method of research and reflection to bring other under-documented Gods and Goddesses to life.

MAGIC OF THE NORSE GODDESSES can be purchased for \$24 postpaid from Runa-Raven, PO Box 557, Smithville, Texas 78957.

WORDS TO RECALL...

“As a people, we have a right and a responsibility to define ourselves and determine our destiny...The further away we are forced to travel from the primitive values of our ancestors, the sicker we become as a people.”

- Antoinette Helmer, of the Haida people, speaking before a United Nations committee in 1994

IMPORTANT DATES

December 31 - Twelfth Night. As Mother Night is the beginning of Yuletide, Twelfth Night is its culmination. Meditate on the past year - what you did, what you wish you had done. Take stock and set a course for the future. Making New Year's resolutions is an old Germanic custom that goes back at least to the Viking Age, and perhaps much earlier. In the old days, these oaths were sworn on a boar sacred to Frey, the God of fertility and prosperity.

January 9 - Day of Remembrance for Raud the Strong. King Olaf Tryggvason of Norway executed Raud by making him swallow a snake. His crime was refusing to give up Asatru, the religion of his forefathers. Tryggvason then confiscated Raud's land and all his other wealth. Praise Raud by lifting a horn (or cup or glass) in his honor, and by doing something deliberate to spread the holy lore that King Olaf tried so hard to stamp out.

January 22 - Thorrablót. Coming in the depths of winter, when we all need our spirits lifted, Thorrablót is our obvious antidote to the blues. Thor, most approachable of the Northern deities, is its cheery, gregarious patron. Build a snow statue of the hammer-wielding God, or go winter camping, or have a party. Take a walk without your coat, mentally accepting winter, and go home for a shot of brandy.

HAPPY NEW YEAR, ONE AND ALL!

Hail the Holy Ones!

Stephen A. McNallen
Drighthen, Asatru Folk Assembly

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND WHO SHOULD BE GETTING THESE UPDATES? He or she can subscribe by going to AFA_Bearclaw-subscribe@yahogroups.com.

VISIT OUR WEB SITE at <http://www.runestone.org>.
Next update January 14!