

## A PROJECT OF THE ASATRU FOLK ASSEMBLY

Issue 46

Odin's Day, July 14, 2004

Contact email: [afa@lanset.com](mailto: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](mailto:AFA_Bearclaw-subscribe@yahoo.com).

### HOME AGAIN!

The last issue of the AFA Update was sent to you from a cybercafe in Dharamsala, India - with whining dogs, honking horns, and shouting Indians in the background, and only the beating monsoon rains to temporarily thwart the noise and pollution. Behind all the hubbub was a realization on my part that hanging out in the world's rough places just wasn't as much fun as it used to be.

Oh, I've done my share of it: I've covered most of Africa, hitching rides and humping my ruck through the Sahara to Nigeria and, coming the other way, from South Africa to the Angolan border, Zimbabwe, and Zambia...Thailand and Burma, trying to bring home the personal effects of an American killed by a mortar round in an ongoing fifty-year jungle war...Bosnia, a land of tragedy on all sides. Powerful memories, but the overriding fact remains - what was an adventure ten years ago is just a drag, today.

The realization came upon me suddenly, and so intensely that I cancelled the remainder of my trip. The idea of even a short-term contract in Nepal (one of the several reasons for my journey) now shone forth as simply the wrong thing to do. I knew, with a terrible certainty, that I needed to get home and pick up the work for which I was born - applying all my abilities to bring the might and main of the Holy Powers into Midgard to further the cause of the Gods and Goddesses...to serve all Eurofolk whether living or dead or yet to be born...and indeed in a larger sense to serve all life on this planet.

### THE ANCESTRAL JOURNEY CONTINUES

My discovery of the ancestors continues to unfold, and I'll pass on a few thoughts in the hope that my reflections might aid those of you who are engaged in the same quest (as all who follow Asatru, in my opinion, should be).

When I went to Ireland last year, I underwent experiences that, I believe, imbued me with my family's spiritual heritage in a special way. (I find it hard to explain, but I think this enhanced relationship has something to do with my lack of interest in Third World adventuring. I'll let you know more if I ever figure it out, myself!)

My contact with my Irish forebears continued on this most recent trip - another journey to the old royal center of Emain Macha, where my family's ancient roots are, and sitting on the graves of the ancestors at the Old English cemetery. Visits with living kin were also good, affirming the truth that blood is not only thicker than water, it is thicker than the cold waves of the Atlantic Ocean.

While the importance of the Irish connection has not diminished whatsoever, I found upon my return that it is time to learn more about the German side of the family - Johann Schuck came to America in 1754 - as well as about my Anglo-Saxon kin, the Sheltons and Millers. This broadening of my interest came with no reasoning or prompting on my own part. It is as though the ancestors are speaking to me, or as though my deeper self, knowing what is needed for my own spiritual progress, is nudging the conscious "me" in the direction I need to go.

Whatever it is, I like it!

## KING ARTHUR

Sheila and I went to see the new movie release, King Arthur, a couple of nights ago.

I don't have any problem with portraying Arthur as he might actually have been - a British war leader defending his people against the Saxons back in the fifth century. On the contrary, this was an exciting and turbulent time, with the Roman Empire slowly collapsing on itself while other players took the stage. Such complaints as I have, have nothing to do with the movie's setting or with the omission of the usually obligatory Arthur-Guinevere-Lancelot love triangle.

The movie has some good features. Loyalty and bravery abound. Guinevere's passionate devotion to her people and the land they inhabit can only win our approval. There are some clever lines and I found myself laughing out loud. Pagan religions in general are presented as not only acceptable, but as noble and good. Christianity, or at least the Church, is painted in a very bad light - in such a heavy-handed manner, frankly, that I was a little embarrassed.

On the whole, I found the film technically tolerable but unremarkable in terms of writing, acting, and production. My biggest complaint, and it is a huge one, concerns Saxon-bashing.

Whoever put this movie together knew at least something about the Saxons. The coming of the Saxons to Britain is announced to the locals when a scout produces a single-edged knife - a sax - with runes on the blade. After that, the lowest sort of demonization took command.

From the first moment we see them, the Saxons are 1) brutal and 2) racist. As memory serves me, the first Saxon we see is raping a woman. Their leader stops the rapist - but only because his men were forbidden to have intercourse with the local women, as it would be wrong to mix Saxon blood with the inferior native Britons! The leader then has the rape victim killed. You get the picture: All Saxons are beasts, all the time. If the producer could have put them in Nazi uniforms, he would have. Saxon religion? We never see any sign such a thing exists, except for the split-second glance at the runes on the previously mentioned sax. From beginning to end, Saxon equals German equals Nazi. Cast any other group in the evil role, and this film would qualify as a hate crime in several European countries.

Reflecting on this, I recalled a really bad film - was it Mists of Avalon? - in which the matriarchal British pagans, complete with Rubenesque Goddess figures, were up against the Saxons. Once again, our Germanic kin were apparently all atheists as we had no hint that they had any religion of their own. In fact, even Celtic religion didn't get any mention. There were the Goddess worshippers, the secular Saxons, and somewhere lurking in the background, as I recall, Christianity.

Why this bias against Saxons? Why can one get away with generic Goddess worshippers, or other pagans, or even with outright attacks against Christianity, but not with any expression of Saxon religion? Maybe because Saxons are so darned white, as in "White Anglo-Saxon Protestant/Pagan)," and thus an acceptable target?

Or - is there an atavistic fear that the Germanic Way has the potential to shake up the world of religion and philosophy in a way that these other belief systems do not?

**\*ODIN LIVES!\* SPONSORS CONCERT IN OHIO!**

Odin Lives Radio is please to announce that Väsen will be appearing in the Holland Theater, Bellefontaine, Ohio, on Monday, September 20th, 2004 at 7pm EDT.

Väsen is *the* premier Swedish folk music ensemble. Featuring Olov Johansson playing the Swedish keyed fiddle (nyckelharpa), Roger Tallroth on guitar, Mikael Marin, viola and percussionist André Ferarri, Väsen helped launch the Nordic Roots revival in Scandinavia and the United States.

Tickets are only \$15 in advance, and can be purchased directly from Odin Lives Radio by visiting the events page at:

<http://www.odinlives.org/events.html>

**IMPORTANT DATES**

August 9 - Day of Remembrance for King Radbod. This Frisian king ejected Christian missionaries and upheld our ancestral faith in his land, against great pressure. Pour a libation to the ancient Frisian Goddess Friagabi, "Giver of Freedom" and declare yourself free from alien creeds.

August 21 (approximately) - Freyfaxi. Late August was the time for a harvest-related holy day celebrated in some parts of Viking Age Scandinavia. In modern Asatru, this date has been named Freyfaxi, after the horse of the Vanic deity, Frey. Freyfaxi centers around the stallion as a symbol of fertility for the coming harvest.

September 9 - Day of Remembrance for Herman of the Cherusci. Herman learned the art of war under the Romans, then deserted the Imperial eagles to lead his tribe in revolt against the Mediterranean intruders. In the fall of the year 9 CE, he annihilated three legions in the Teutobergerwald, a victory which saved Germania from Roman occupation. Plant an oak tree, eat in a German restaurant, and remember Herman with a glass of fine beer from the Fatherland!

Hail the Holy Ones!

Hail the AFA!

Stephen A. McNallen  
Drihten, 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](mailto:AFA_Bearclaw-subscribe@yahogroups.com).

VISIT OUR WEB SITE at <http://www.runestone.org>.