

AFA UPDATE

A PROJECT OF THE ASATRU FOLK ASSEMBLY

Issue 63

Odin's Day, March 16, 2005

Contact email: info@runestone.com

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

YES, THIS IS A DAY EARLY...

I wasn't scheduled to send out this AFA Update until tomorrow, but I will be on the road visiting Asatruar from early in the morning till late at night. Rather than be a day late, I figured I'd be a day early!

EOSTRE - REBIRTH ON EVERY LEVEL!

The spring equinox is almost upon us, and all around the world followers of the Germanic Way will be celebrating Ostara, Eostre, or Easter (Take your pick of spelling and pronunciation!).

This is, as you know, a festival of resurgent life in the world around us. Here in northern California, the grass is finally green and the trees are blossoming. The daffodils and poppies line the highways with splendid color, and once again it's warm enough to sit in the sunshine without shivering. Plants, animals, and humans - we're all coming back to life after the rain and snow!

The resurrection of life in the fields and gardens is reflected inside us, too. We are after all a part of nature. It affects us not just physically but on other levels as well; our spirits are elevated and the flowing life force brings inspiration and optimism.

Eostre is a time for literal and metaphorical "spring cleaning." Just as we dust and scrub our houses and throw open the windows to the fresh air, so we can do the same to ourselves. It's a good time to reassess things, to toss out the accumulated debris of winter and see just how we're doing, spiritually. For example, take a look at those resolutions you made at Yule: Are you fulfilling them? Or were they frozen by the ice of indecision and buried under the snow of the distractions that fill our lives? Time to breathe new life into them, refocus, and rededicate ourselves to our goals!

Rebirth can also happen to entire peoples. Consider the Saxons, whose Goddess we honor at this season. Let this Eostre be another step in the reawakening of not only the Saxons, but by extension of all the Germanic nations and indeed all the kindred peoples of Europe.

Certainly the Saxons have been battered through the centuries! Charlemagne murdered them by the thousands and pressed them to accept Christianity. Despite this, or even because of it, he is declared a hero in modern Europe. The term “WASP,” or “White Anglo-Saxon Protestant” is almost always used as an insult. Even a recent film on King Arthur went out of its way to draw the Saxons as dirty, cruel, and dishonorable - the stereotypical Nazis of their day, complete with blond crew cuts and an authoritarian attitude. To those who are prejudiced against us, the Saxons represent us all.

Let us then, honor the Saxons and all our Germanic peoples at Eostre. Let life surge through the fields and through our souls, let our people awaken, let the Springtime of the North be upon us!

CELEBRATE EOSTRE WITH THE AFA!

We’d like to invite our readers to celebrate Eostre with us in Sacramento:

On Saturday, March 19th, we will celebrate the return of life to the world with the waning of winter as we honor the Saxon Goddess of the dawn and springtime.

Be with us as we offer three horns - one to the Holy Powers, one to the Ancestors, and one to the Folk - and give our praise to Eostre.

We will have plenty of activities for the children, of course. I’ll be speaking on the topic of “Rebirth on a Personal and Folk Level.”

Anyone living within driving distance of Sacramento who would like to attend these events can contact us at afa@lanset.com to receive more information.

OSTARA IN GERMANIC MYTHOLOGY

“Ostara, or Austara, must have thus been a deity of the radiant morning, of the ascending light, a joyous manifestation bringing prosperity, the ideal of which was utilized for the resurrection festival of the Christian God. Fires of rejoicing were lit at Easter and according to persistent popular belief the sun makes three leaps of joy in the early morning of the first day of Easter, holding a dance of delight just as it rises. Water which is drawn on Easter morning is, like that of Christmas, sacred and healing. Here also, pagan ideas seem to have passed over to principal Christian festivals.”

- From the book Germanic Mythology by Jakob Grimm, available from the Asatru Folk Assembly's web site - <http://runestone.org>.

RUNE AND LORE CLASSES

The AFA sponsors twice-monthly classes on the runes and on Eddic lore in the Sacramento area. Anyone interested in attending can contact us at afa@lanset.com.

ANCIENT CHARIOT BURIAL DISCOVERED IN ENGLAND

An important tribal leader in what is now West Yorkshire died some 2,400 years ago. His grave was a place for public veneration for 500 years after his death. He seems to have been a person of importance in the struggle against the Roman Empire, and his burial site may have become significantly associated with his nation's identity.

See more at

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/england/west_yorkshire/4333705.stm

OETZI THE ICEMAN CONTINUES TO TELL US OF THE PAST

Oetzi, as the man found high in the Alps in 1991 came to be called, is still revealing his secrets. One recent theory is that he was a political leader, toppled by younger competitors in a power struggle some 5,300 years ago - the blood of four men were found on his clothes.

But now there are rumors of a curse associated with his body...

<http://www.swissinfo.org/sen/Swissinfo.html?siteSect=105&sid=5543384>

DONATIONS!

The Asatru Folk Assembly is a 501 c (3) religious organization, and donations to it are tax-deductible.

ODIN LIVES!

The groundbreaking radio program Odin Lives! is broadcast every Thursday night at 8 PM Eastern Time on a frequency of 7.415 MHz. This broadcast is repeated the next Tuesday morning at 12:15 AM on the same frequency. You can learn more by going to their web site at <http://www.odinlives.org>.

IMPORTANT DATES

March 21 - Ostara, or Easter (Or Eostre, etc.) - These are names of a Germanic Goddess whose name was carried over into the Christian calendar. Praise her on this day for the springtime and the dawn, and revel in the rebirth of life at winter's end. Celebrate her day with bunnies, eggs, and the other pre-Christian symbols that characterize this day. Greet her at a sunrise service with outstretched arms.

April 9 - Day of Remembrance for Jarl Hakon of Norway. Hakon restored the worship of our true Gods after it had been suppressed by Christian kings. Recall his virtue by formally renouncing foreign creeds, or by vigorously exercising your guarantees under the Bill of Rights.

April 9 - Sumarsdag/Sigrblot. This was the first day of summer in the Icelandic calendar. It falls at about the same time as the annual sacrifice to Odin, for success in the upcoming raiding season. Welcome the warm months, and make an offering to the Father of Victory for triumph in your personal struggles!

Hail the AFA!

Stephen A. McNallen
Asatru Folk Assembly

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