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Annual Report, Hallows

Rowan Tree Church

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The ROWAN TREE *

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Visions from the Underworld
of Hallows, to take seed
in the Yule SunBaby...



Annual Report
Hallows 1982 - 1983ce

Dearest Friends and Rowan Tree
Members;

I am now mobile enough to sit at the typewriter for periods of time. Special thanks are in order to Larry, for breakfast and errands, for pushing me down-town in a wheelchair to shop... to Mahr for household help and meals... to Alice, Alan & the girls for Thanksgiving food... to Roy for countless trips and postal delivery... To Perry for a grocery-shopping trip... to all of you for magickal support and love, for meals, cards, love and thoughtfulness. I am quickly mending, and hopefully have learned my lessons. My intention is to re-structure my life in order to continue my various time allotments. I spend about 35 hours a week working to support my budget, about ten hours a week with the Unicorn Ensemble, about 20 hours a week writing (including the Unicorn, Members' letters, correspondence, my books, etc.), and near thirty or more hours a week devoted to the maintainance and care, the mentoring and guidance of the Rowan Tree. That is, of course, my deepest love. And, when not so occupied with all of the preceding, I do love to romp and play with several of my intimate friends. Now what to some may be perceived as difficulty has been a gracious gift from the Ancient Ones of time. I have had time to reflect, to turn inward. Time to examine the visions brought forth in the Hallows Ritual, and the dreams which ensued. I have had time to peer into the future and see where our path might lead, and to closely examine the present. Files dating back to the Incorporation in 1980 were brought back from the lawyers' offices by Jude and Margie. We have imposed a temporary moratorium on new members until Yule. We have had time to become stable, and to take joy in the manner you have all come to know eachother. The files were sorted out. Much was consigned to the wastebin. Much from the past held the seeds of the future. And it is time to present the Annual Report.

My Personal 'Work'

I was asked the other day by a Quaker friend of mine if I could define my personal magickal Work. He was curious in what manner and to what intent I channel the energies I raise in my ritual work. He was trying to understand the focus of my Priesthood. It was a good question for me to deal with. I am rarely asked, and it has been years since anyone within the Mystery School has put forth that question. Perhaps it is that I seem so willing to proffer my opinions without request. Iothloriën allows me to be a secret radical, a hidden revolutionary against the old social systems of the Piscean Age. All of the Magick which I raise is given directly to the Earth, for I have loved Her for many Ages, and I trust Her wisdom. She is a gift of the soul of the Universe, and She is wise in Her own ways. When She groans at the weight of excess humanity, steel and concrete, and masses of cities, and when She quakes at the strain, and shakes them off to rid Herself of the strain, I cheer. When Her rich Earth has been overly plowed, Her forests taken, Her rivers enslaved, and when She can no longer take it and rebels, floods and ravages, I raise my heart in song and send Her love and strength. When She is tired and in need of purification, calling upon deep snows to blanket Her, I pray new records to be set. I light candles in support of the Mother in Her battle against the foolishness of humanity. When humans are too foolish to get along, let them fight. In truth, She is too over-

crowded, and war has been a traditional means of the Earth purging Herself as She moves from one Age into another. During a cusp, humanity is again a child, resurrected from dottering old age, and traditionally given new tools, new fuels. As does any child, mistakes are made in learning.

I take my vows of non-manipulation of others to the point that I would not stop war, nor nuclear accident, nor total devastation. To overly protect a child from the mistakes necessary to grow up only delays and usually intensifies the pain of the learning. Even should humankind obliterate living beings and things from the surface, our spirits would have time to learn patience and wisdom, as She slowly undergoes the countless Ages to restore fertility. Then, again, would we return. I devote my magick to Her endless health, and when that is gone, for all things manifest have their time, then will I join Her in a search for some black hold in space, some Cauldron of the Mother Universe into which all children and all inhabited planets and all matter must flow, and then, when the gestation is complete in that Divine womb, will again the word be spoken, and again will there be a bang so big its reverberation will echo throughout time for untold millions of ages until life becomes civil, and science evolves to detect such things.

And yet, in the event of forthcoming war, although I would not do magick to stop it, I would instead turn my total being to a Work of generating as much love and wisdom, and understanding and healing, and spread that out, for both sides of warring factions. And as an herbalist, I would take my balms and teas to the ill, the maimed, and the emotionally pained. As Priest, I would accept that the Divine is wiser than the human. Some things must be: Thus is part of the meaning of life.

Nineteen-Ninety

We stand the chance that Aquarius will bring itself in, casually procrastinating about discipline, about getting directly involved in changing the system, and be too caught up partying with all our wonderful new friends, communities, and fellowships. We dare not forget that we are in the midst of one of the most crucial stages for a successful New Age, that in our own way, we are caretakers for the New Age, and that our work is that for the next two thousand years. As Witches, we call ourselves 'The Wise Ones,' and we say that we are of an Earth Religion. We are capable of highly serious work, and can do it in song and with dance. Yet we must love the Earth and those children upon Her so greatly that if need be, we must allow the Divine Work to include pruning, for we are as a garden, overrun and ready to strangle ourselves with too many of us pushing for space.

In my rituals, I reach out to love the Earth, but to reach out and hold Her within my heart means as a Witch, I must be capable of holding also Her children who are in pain, who are suffering, who are starving, who commit crime against others. Yet, year by year the times grow more intense, and 1990 will be far more to handle than what we can even imagine.

Saturn is the ruling planet of Capricorn. For more years than we can comprehend, it was also considered the ruling planet of Aquarius. Saturn brings discipline, responsibility, the ability to cut away all things which stand between ourselves and our 'Highest ideals,' and Saturn is the sickle. It must be wielded in love, and the blade must be kept sharp. To fight change is to let the blade rust, and to have it endlessly saw away. I prefer a quick, clean cut, which will heal in no time at all. We cannot avoid the path of Saturn, but we have control over the manner in which we handle change and growth.

The Capricorn configuration in January of 1990 is one of the most astounding astrological configurations for years far beyond our lives in either direction. My personal

theory places that right at the beginning of the second third of the cusp. In any case, we ought view that short six weeks with eight planets passing through Capricorn in the space of a Sabbat as the opportunity to plant the seeds of the New Age, for once in Aquarius, it will no longer be the new, and visionaries will look forward to Capricorn, the New Age, the future of the Avatar.

We are the seed planters. We are the guardians of the Earth. Fortunately we are not alone, but there are too few of us.

Advice from a Goddess

The woman who initiated me through three degrees of Wicca has yet been unsurpassed in my eyes as a near-perfect embodiment of the Goddess. She spreads pure light and delight in all who are near her, and she works equally well in both worlds: spiritual and everyday. (As above, so below...)

This spring she examined closely the full Tradition of Lothloriën. She was pleased, and passed on to me two pieces of advice:

First, make certain that we are capable of Lothloriën surviving beyond our lifetimes. Second, make certain that those who come into our training are fully aware of how good a system of Wicca this is, how complete it is in the training one must have to complete all three degrees of initiation. She was particularly impressed with the gentleness of our images and yet with the power they are capable of generating.

The aspect of preservation has been begun by Incorporation and by the installment of a Mystery School three years ago. To pass through the training, one must be capable of performing ritual both as adult and as child, capable of drawing upon Unicorns and Faeries and things which would delight a child. Christ was wise when he said we must be as little children. I would like to propose that we take as our goal the preservation of the Mystery School as an entity to survive into the cusp of the Age of Capricorn.

One of the requirements would be restriction, that very quality of the planet which is to rule partially Aquarius and fully Capricorn. These next four thousand years and more will fall quite within the energies of that mighty planet. A Mystery Religion is not one which seeks to take over a country, to become the religion of the masses. A Religion such as ours has always been secretive, even when Paganism was a ruling religion. I have yet to find a religion become popular and not lose sight of its original Mysteries. At some time in the foreseeable future I would like to establish a maximum number of positions which could exist within the Mystery School. At present the limit is 27. There are 19 of us now. Part of that number is determined by the number of Mentors. Yet even at that level, growth must be a controlled factor. Observe Nature. I would rather be a flower than a weed.

Rather than expand our numbers continually throughout the years, could we not instead expand upward through the spiral, and eventually have a Mystery School of a higher spiritual standard? I have reason for proposing this direction. On one hand, just by definition, a Mystery School ought be difficult to locate. It is part of judging the adeptness of the student. None of you were unable to take a position here, and you are diverse in character and in your locations.

In 1983 there has been but one first degree initiation of a Novice into the ranks of a Priestess. Since the formation of the Mystery School, initiations have brought with them a far more complete and intense transformation of a person into a new being, with a new outlook upon the Universe, with a stronger capability of looking into the self and finding wisdom. Year by year, the Magick of our initiations will continue to grow

in intensity. Year by year, a Novice must be even more carefully prepared, and even more certain of desiring the magickal transformation. It is a serious matter to pass through the First Ordeal and the Second Ordeal. It is a serious matter to hold one's life up to the Mentor, and have even the every-day life examined. As the years pass, our standards should be raised, and those who pass through the degrees of our Priest/ess-hood will be the Guardians, those who will protect, nurture and love the Earth, even as you and I prepare our spirits to re-incarnate and return to our beloved planet. This is, indeed, serious magickal work.

Lothloriën

I love Lothloriën deeply. I love it beyond all other traditions of Paganism. It is not necessary for you to prefer it above all others, but you must love it deeply. You must love it enough to intend to complete your second degree initiation, as it says within the Admonition.

Saturnian in structure, we also require candidates for initiation to demonstrate their creativeness, their ability to bring joy to those around, and their ability to reach out into the Universe and bring back Magick, to reach out and touch the soul of Life and learn to sing its songs. Following Lothloriën is a path marked with carefully structured steps, yet you may take an Ordeal in any order, and all but the copying and creating of a Book of Shadows of the Tradition of Lothloriën is done in one's own way.

I ask you to share with me a goal of giving shape and direction to the Mystery School, that we may return in the next cusp, be trained in Lothloriën, and quickly get about our work, just as we do now, but with greater ease, being capable of bringing forth our wisdom in an innately familiar system, only made more focused and potent as the centuries have passed. This is the commitment of those who seek third degree. Yet, it might well be part of the work that we all do, even as we begin as a Novice. Do you love the Tradition of Lothloriën enough to do this work? Read the Holy Books, for that little, simple volume contains the heart of our religion.

Lothloriën is not the 'best' of Wiccan Traditions. To invite comparison is a silly venture at best. But we can take our religion, and give it direction to become the best in its own existence, for it can grow further into perfection. As a Tradition, Lothloriën began in the spring of 1979, when the Admonition was written. I wrote it in the wee hours, my physical being still feeling exalted from initiating two Priestesses from Canada. It was for a small class to whom I was teaching Wicca in those days. (I explored many forms of teaching before the Mystery School.) One of those class members is a Priestess with us today. In its revision, the Admonition has required only grammatical correction.

That was the beginning of the separation of the Rowan Tree from the Wicca of a Neo-Alexandrian Tradition into which I had passed three degrees of initiation. I could no longer endure discrimination against all sexual preferences. I could no longer endure rituals which were no fun for children. I yearned for the rainbows, for the magick of my youth, and to wrap those things in rituals of fancy, to frolic with Unicorns between worlds. Thus began the journey to the astral temple of Lothloriën, which is described as the Second Ordeal is completed.

It is only now, four and a half years later, that we grow in competence at even describing our own Tradition. I have recently begun to use the word 'literate,' for we have a large body of written material in our Book of Shadows, and one must love to read and to let the written word spin images of magick in the rituals and daydreams. And even as my copy of the Book of Shadows is now four volumes, it will only expand. We have but one Sabbat ritual of Lothloriën. Because I wrote it, I will write none others. These need to come from you, and perhaps from some who are not yet with us. And who will write a Ritual for the Dead, and who will write other pieces to fill in the gaps inherent in a new Tradition of Wicca?

In a hundred years, we will all be viewed as being at the 'beginning.' It matters not if you were here in 1978, 1983 or in 1986. We will be the ones to give substance to the Mystery School. We have at hand the ability to create a manner of learning the Mysteries of the Universe, a Mystery School which is capable of surviving through the cusp of the Age of Capricorn. To avoid the errant ways of other religions, we must avoid external growth, and instead pursue internal growth. Examine history. There is no other way.

A Modest Proposal

I propose that at the time at which The Master Book of Herbalism is offered to the public, that we place a 'freeze' upon the number of positions within the Rowan Tree. This would mean that a prospective Novice would wait until a position is vacated. That time of waiting would best be spent with a suggested reading list. It would be desirable to have put together a list of books you feel would prepare one for this study. It would be a means of aiding a prospective student in determining beforehand if they desire Lothloriën, or if they would be happier in another form of Wicca. Of course, they might determine that Wicca is not a path for them at all. In the past, we have allowed people to join the Mystery School to make those explorations. Now we are more stable, and soon, those who are initiated will begin the construction of the astral temple to which all members are welcome.

We would be wise if we were to make changes in the process of applying for study with us. If we approach it in the best manner, nearly all who join would be those who would pass, in their own time, through second degree initiation.

Individual Standards

"Keep pure your highest ideals, strive ever towards them..." For those who desire to follow the Path of the Rowan Tree, each should have, among those meditations and images used on a daily and ritual basis, one specific form. Each of us must maintain an astral temple in which a scene in nature is healthy, where there are trees and green, growing things, where there is water you use for your own psychic healing. There may be mountains, valleys, it is quite a personal choice. This temple should contain none other than your spirit and Nature when you go there, so that the health and restoration of the Earth is your sole Work, and so that She relaxes and soothes you when you are there, in that place between worlds. If you need to further your experience in such meditation, borrow one of the tapes in our tape library.

Is it possible to study the Path of Lothloriën and walk also upon another Path? I have long believed such would be possible. In fact, it is a requirement of those preparing for second degree initiation that other paths are fully explored. This does include the possibility of a Christian Path. I know that it is often difficult to feel kindness towards Christian churches, and I, myself, went through a deeply resentful period of time. I still suffer intense prejudice and occasional persecution from Christians. I learned from the experience of re-living a previous life in which I was hung for the type of lifestyle I now live (herbalist, magician) how dangerous that resentment can be. "And it harm none, do as ye will" is the law of the Witch. Hating Christians is definitely harming some. Be careful, please.

Please learn a bit of basic astrology soon. We are creating a form of presentation of the astrological information of each member, and it would be wise to know enough to translate the following forms into a constructed chart. (If you cannot do so with this, then check with your mentor, or with Jackie Stier, also a professional astrologer.)

"Midheaven, 17 degrees Gemini 16 minutes / Uranus, seventeen degrees Gemini 16 minutes / Mars, 26 degrees Gemini 23' " and so forth. The information to be perceived upon looking at us in a collective astrological pattern is tremendously exciting. It is necessary to remind some of you to refer to page two of our policies. They are

on page two of "Welcome To The Rowan Tree." Each of you has a copy, if you are a Member, either active or on a leave-of-absence. Three of you have not paid your pledge monies for October, but only one has proffered a reason for being unable. There are still nine who have not yet presented their November pledge money. It is difficult to bring up, yet it is essential that the Rowan Tree be capable of paying its own way. I can give my time, and my own pledge money, and have donated much of my possessions. Some of you give also beyond call. If you do not care to aid in the support, you are not following the Admonition, nor your word when you signed the application for study.

To better things: Do the visions seem a bit grand? Perhaps, yet to be the co-founders of a Mystery School which would be capable of surviving until we are reincarnated again upon our Earth would be the construction of a magickal tool in the finest of arts. To create a magickal temple in which we can gather, no matter where we live, is to "learn to trust eachother," as required in the Admonition. The ability to do these things is inherent in all forms of the Craft, but we cannot only be Witches in name, we must pursue action through the highest ideal possible. We are members of a Mystery School, capable of surviving centuries, somewhat obscure, a bit difficult to track down, but there for those who belong. It is not inconceivable that the Unicorn could also continue, evolving in its own way as it has these past six (and some odd months) years... Are you interested in this journey?

Phil Freeman

"Thank you for accepting me as a supplicant in the Mystery School of the Rowan Tree. As long as your school is dedicated to the Healing of people and the Earth, I will proudly serve and study. I am anxious to get started... I would like to hear from other members of the Rowan Tree, but I feel too 'new' to be writing everyone... I will be glad to answer letters, though... The Last Unicorn is on HBO this month - I could watch it a dozen times..."

Yule

At present, I am hoping that one of the Priestesses of the Rowan Tree will conduct the Full Moon ritual just before Yule, and the New Moon ritual preceeding it. For both of these, my temple will be occupied. Yule will be a traditional Open House from six in the evening until ten o'clock p.m. During this entire time, treat the temple as if a ritual is in process, for that will be the case, even though informal it be. Enter with reverence, leaving your shoes in the hall. We will share songs, stories, kinship, and the special Magick of Yule Eve. I will begin a ritual prior to the Open House, and close it following. In the meantime, all are welcome, both members, friends, and all guests, to come and partake, and to sprinkle throughout the air your own blend of Magick. A note to friends who would be coming without a Member of the Rowan Tree. Phone me at 871-7287 from 15th Street & Nicollet, just a block away, and someone will meet you at the East entrance of the Leighton Apartment building, which is on the Northeast corner of 15th Street and First Avenue South in Minneapolis.

Budget Report

In 1983 we show an actual profit of \$26.78, although we did not retire the debt still owed our landlord from the Nicollet Avenue location of the Rowan Tree. He is very patient, and our need to retire old karma is why it is important that you maintain your pledges. Thus, we actually concluded the 1892-1983 Budget in the red.

Income Hallows 1982-1983ce

Pledge monies	\$1528.08
Donations	17.50
Unicorn Subs.	293.00
Publication sales	96.00
Herb Shop	629.39
Catalog Sales	59.00
	<hr/>
	\$2622.97

Expenses Hallows 1982-1983ce

Unicorn printing	\$ 404.18
Unicorn postage	133.33
Unicorn misc.	53.05
Herbs for shop	203.55
Stones, etc. for shop	16.20
Shop misc.	38.75
Catalog printing	57.20
Postage (Mystery School, herb shop, and all other...	195.26
Bank fees	96.55
printing, general	131.58
Library books	54.30
Library shelving	73.16
Library misc (binding, book repairs, etc...	26.74
Advertising (Circle)	23.40
Rent	875.00
office supplies	107.85
C.O.G. dues	65.00
misc.	20.89
	<hr/>
	\$2596.19

Changes to expect in the 1983-1984 budget include lowered rent. It was decreased by 33%. I have this past year resumed editorship of the Unicorn, and am determined to increase subscriptions. When I passed on the position, there were over 200 subscriptions, and when it came back to me, there were less than a fourth of that figure. Help in recommending our publication would be good. I have changed the format, and as there are now literally hundred of publications throughout the country (Once there were very few), competition is now keen. We have grown away from reporting news, and are now more of a literary publication. It is not feasible to teach through a publication. Most of those which do continue to teach elementary material year after year, or to lose their readers as they grow increasingly esoteric. The library will have an expanded budget. Already this month I have ordered quite a number of new books. This budget should also include shipping books to out of town members. (If you live out of town, and the cost of returning a 'due' book is too much, send it and consider the expense as part of your pledge.) Learning must be the primary consideration. The library has grown. The books were delighted to have 'real' shelving, and since then we have acquired many new books, primarily through Courtney, and also from several others. I mention Courtney, as he has done an exceptional job of contributing books.

Projections

At the next Sabbat cycle, from Yule to Candlemas, each Member will be evaluated. This will include all aspects of your agreement as expressed in your application form. There is no particular format, but evaluations are helpful, for feedback about one's progress is essential. It is expected that a couple might depart. This is normal, for Lothloriën and the Mystery School are not for every one, and disciplined study is not everyone's best way.

We are unlikely to expand our number much beyond our current limit (19). We may grow as large as a total of 25. Already there are several applications awaiting the end of our current moratorium. Rather than add new positions to the Rowan Tree, we will fill those vacated by attrition, if possible. I have keys here for all local members, which they may use to gain access to the Herb Shop. Please get your set from me, and contact Alice for details.

Summary

I submit this letter and report of the state of the Mystery School and the Path of Lothloriën to all interested parties. It will be, as deemed by a Corporation (even a church), available to any who desire a copy. This letter is the Annual Report of the budget and the spiritual health and direction of our religion. I am very proud to be a part of this Work we share. We are incorporated in Minnesota in order to provide a place for our worship. We now have the temple spread throughout South Minneapolis, and perhaps before we again rent a specific location, we may be able to take over the city. Secretly, of course.

We are also incorporated in the State of Minnesota in order to prepare people for the Ministry, in the manner of our religion, which is the Path of Lothloriën. In this we have been highly successful. Sixteen persons have passed through the Ritual of Initiation of first degree. Two persons have passed through the Ritual of Second Degree Initiation. There is one Third Degree Initiate.

It is a long study. It takes years to follow this path, and some of you will be entering your fourth year in the Mystery School this coming year. Some of you were here long before, and were a part of the first initiation. That was in 1979, on the fifth of February, when the Candlemas' glow was still within the temple. It is this Work to which my life is also Dedicated.

My Mentor told me that this Path can never be too difficult for a person to begin. She said that it must be one of the highest ideals we ever strive for. There is no worry that we are so secreted from society that we cannot be found, for we have members in Rhode Island, two in Texas, two in New York, Missouri, and several in outstate Minnesota. When the student is ready, the teacher is there. For those who will desire a Path such as ours, we will come together.

The new year which began at Hallows found us more healthy, more involved with each other than ever. It found us more stable as an organization, with a method of study which has been evolved over the past five years. Now we are ready to move forward. We are capable of doing a collective Magick which is more powerful than ever, which will move the Earth into a New Age in good health, peopled with children of joy which we have touched.

Continue to bring joy to those around you. Some of us have worked together now for years. Some of us have barely begun. Good things are said about those who study with the Rowan Tree. We have grown, and as all entities, the Rowan Tree experienced its own growing pains. It went through birth, and adolescence, and now is strong and sturdy. We are the branches, and each must bring light and sustenance, and each must be strong enough to bear in love the nesting bird, the chattering squirrel. We are but one Tree, but if we do our Work well, perhaps we may return the Forests to the Mother Earth. Thus could children grow up with Unicorns, with elves, gnomes and faeries for delight. Thus could the butterfly dance in the breeze, and not be choked to death with smog. And thus could children grow into adults, learning from Nature the Path of the Wise.

Blessed Be,


Rev. Paul V. Beyerl, D.D.