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Annual Report for The Rowan Tree Church

Rowan Tree Church

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Annual Report
for
The Rowan Tree Church
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Address by the Founder

It is always a curious feeling to address all of you. The creation of The Tradition of Lothloriën and foundation of The Rowan Tree Church has been my life's work for the past sixteen years. Over the past year, due in large part to the publication of A Wiccan Bardo, our Church has grown in many ways. Last year we had just over fifty Members on our roster. Today we have almost seventy Members, representing a multitude of different States, two Canadian provinces, and one European country.

The Mystery School is the strongest it has ever been. The College of Mentors continues to be composed of the Eldermentor, a High Priest, and the Bardmaster. As of the Equinox, we have three upper-level Novices, two of whom are developing their plans to become Priest/esses. Among the ten first-level Novices, another two are nearing their oral examinations prior to beginning work on the Second Ordeal. And we have an additional seven Novice Supplicants preparing for Dedication. Last year there were five Novice Supplicants, eight first-level Novices and one upper-level Novice.

We are beginning a new year as a Board and, at Hallows, entered a new liturgical and fiscal year. At the Autumn Equinox your new Board of Directors took their positions. As President of the 1991-1992 Board of Directors, I join with all Church Members to welcome:

Vice President, Jami Shoemaker, of Iowa;
Treasurer, Deirdré Sargent, of California;
Secretary, Riki Perdue, of Missouri;
Scribes, Jim & Angie Blakely, of Florida;
and our sixth voting Director, Lizard Frank Cordeiro, also of California.

These represent the six voting Directors (Jim and Angie share one vote), including myself. In addition the Board will include the following non-voting Directors: Rev. Don Schaper, of Minnesota; Charlene Deering, of Massachusetts; and John (TaL) Schuh of Illinois.

The Board of Directors was created and is empowered to carry out in its role for The Mystery School, The Tradition of Lothloriën and The Rowan Tree Church. The goal before it is to achieve its larger agenda for the coming years. Where are we going? As Founder and Eldermentor, in addition to my many years working with the Board of Directors, I would like to offer my view of the coming year.

Our Agenda

In the foreseeable future it is desirable that The Rowan Tree Church maintain itself as a single legal body. There are a number of reasons that this is believed to be the best course of action. The Rowan Tree Church in its present form is designed to create the community which is the larger circle of neo-pagans and Wiccans served by The Mystery School. We have the potential to be a single "church" within which there are communities formed wherever there are enough Rowan Tree Members to sustain activity. By working with the 'community' concept, there are numerous advantages: no group has to direct financial expense and energy into the legal processes, as but one example. There are many advantages within the spiritual and astral realms as well: group ritual, for example. These communities will be served by Bards and Clergy trained through The Mystery School, which will remain focused around a single astral temple containing the Mysteries of our Tradition of Lothloriën.

The amount of work needed to maintain our Church in its present form, with its current size, is considerable. To create a collection of smaller groups would be a far more demanding effort. Were we to allow ourselves to pursue a divisive path, e.g. the establishment of numerous small "churches" with a few Members here and there, we would lose the valued focus already required. Our sense of unity is one of the primary attractions which is expressed by new and current Members alike. One of the working Mysteries of the Tradition of Lothloriën is that

geographical location makes no difference. We have demonstrated that we are able to effectively transcend those distances and continue to work our rituals in a synchronized, harmonious manner. Lothloriën functions as a Tradition for those, even if they are solitary or part of a small coven, to work their Magick for the betterment of our Earth at the level of a global consciousness.

On the mundane level, the resources which would be required in order to effectively incorporate and achieve tax-exempt religious status for a collection of groups is far beyond our means. I do not foresee, at least within the span of this generation or (possibly) even the next, a time when The Rowan Tree Church would become so large that breaking itself down into smaller Churches would be feasible, although the Universe may hold some surprises for us. Such a course of events would require a number of things even at the most mundane of levels, such as stability within the political and economic realms of Western civilization. Such factors are desirable but are perceived by most knowledgeable people to be unlikely, as the current stability has been based upon circumstances which have been artificial, such as the financial indebtedness of Western governments and their inability to cope, socially, with a dramatically increasing populations of poor and underprivileged peoples. Rather than attempt to outguess the system, I ask that this Board pursue courses of action and decision which work to increase cohesiveness, focus and promote these concepts as they educate those who will serve as future Directors.

In Reflection

There have been some significant changes over the past year. The most obvious would be my move to Southern California and the work being done to develop a community capable of sharing in the responsibilities and the joys of The Rowan Tree Church. Coinciding with this transition was the resignation of two Directors, one of whom also did the bookkeeping. This process was reasonably smooth, although a couple issues of the RTNews were late; it led to the demise of our expected t-shirt order; and there was minor confusion scattered about.

The Coming Year

The primary work before the Board is to further integrate the Membership into the realities of our Church. We have more Members involved in the various aspects of The Rowan Tree Church than ever before.

The second important task will be to provide the resources necessary for the work we are already doing. Over the past couple of years we have provided the RTNews at no cost to our Members but do not receive enough money to pay our basic expenses and the Board will have to deal with a careful balance between cutting services and hopefully seeing increased donations from Members. This is certainly a reflection of 'reality' as it currently exists throughout the world.

The third project will be the filing of the necessary legal papers with the State of California. California has, from the perspective of the other 49 states, odd laws. They do not recognize any corporation, regardless of its established status, unless filing is done with the state. This is quite possibly the result of the many years when all manner of groups were busily incorporating as churches.

There are many ways in which you, as Members, can be part of this collective work. Over a third of our total Membership is working within The Mystery School. Many of these will be the clergy and Mentors of the future. We publish three newsletters and these editors are always overjoyed when you contribute letters, information, articles and other creative work. It is also possible to volunteer to help in other ways. There are many ways for you to be involved or to express your support for the work The Rowan Tree Church does. Your donations are one way and while essential (and greatly appreciated!), it is your involvement and our collective interaction which is the true creation of our special Magick! Join with us when we do our ritual work - the calendar is provided each month in the RTNews. Let the Board know when they make you happy or if there are needs not being met. Sometimes we might be able to meet them. The Rowan Tree Church is very unique. There is nothing like it in modern Wicca and each of you is part of it. This is wondrous!

Blessed Be,
Rev. Paul V. Beyerl

This year we will have a new VP on the Board and I am happy to extend a warm welcome to Jami Shoemaker, our new VP. The smooth transition of duly-elected officials is a sign of stability in our Church and shows positive growth from our beginnings.

Blessed Be,
Lizard

Outgoing Secretary's Report

I served as the BOD Secretary since January of 1989 ce. At the Autumn Equinox of 1991 ce I turned my position over to Ariel (Riki Perdue) with my BOD records to follow. My duties during the last year's term were not overtaxing since BOD minutes were compiled by the Scribe. There were miscellaneous communications which I handled as assigned by the President. Largely, I served as a voting Director of the BOD and responded to the monthly agendas.

During the Directorship year from Autumn 1991-92 I will serve as a non-voting Director. I pledge my continual support of the BOD through my input during the coming year. It is my hope that all the Directors pull together and help build a strong foundation for our Church, The Rowan Tree. My appreciation to all the Directors for the efforts, especially to our Eldermentor, Rev. Paul Beyerl, who unselfishly devotes many, many hours to ensure the survival of our Church and the strength of our Community.

Blessed Be,
TaL

Report from the Galadhrim Society

This has been a year of soul searching for the members of the Galadhrim. Our Society was formed in the Summer of 1990- with five members. Later, we gained two more members for a total of seven. But by the powers of Saturn, our Society and its individual members have been dealt some rough cards.

The Galadhrim lost four members due to these individuals leaving The Rowan Tree Church for other Paths. Our Society is currently composed of three members: Lizard (Frank Cordeiro), TaL (John Schuh) and Ron Weroski. We three have survived the year past (our first) and our goal for the coming year is to reconnect with our Church and move from the shadows out into the light.

During the coming year TaL, with the help from a Unicorn friend, will lead the Galadhrim Society. We will be formulating our goals for the future and seek new members for our Society. For now, we would like to renew our pledge to organize the Church's 1992 Annual Retreat and Campout. We affirm our commitment of support, both magickal and mundane, to The Rowan Tree Church and The Tradition of Lothloriën.

From the Galadhrim and our guardian Unicorns we all a Blessed Be!!

TaL

President's Statement

Please note the absence of any financial statements. Due to problems we had with this past year's bookkeeping staff, the reports are seriously delayed as the records must be carefully checked for accuracy. The past year's records were done on two separate computer systems and have not been integrated into a comprehensive report. One of the changes the Board of Directors has made has been to place the bookkeeping for the coming year in the hands of a computer service which offered a very competitive price.

Although this will increase the monthly expenses of the Church, we have no alternative. In addition we are facing some hard facts regarding our budget. Over the past two years our Membership has almost doubled in size but at the same time our total donated monies have dropped seriously (the exact figure is unavailable but tentative figures indicated that it might be half of what it was). Obviously we must study these issues carefully and invite each of you to address your concerns and comments to the Board of Directors. You may write to the BOD at the Los Angeles address: The Rowan Tree Church, P.O. Box 383, Northridge, CA 91328.

Blessed Be.
Rev. Paul Y. Beyerl