



Web of Wyrd Summer 2007

Welcome to what is a rather short and very late edition of our Web of Wyrd magazine this half year. We are very sorry but we had very little material to include (thanks to snake, Tony and Miki for what we have got.) and also we have been trying to sort out quite a few other issues including coping with some major moves. So, sorry, but it should be business as usual in November.

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Six Monthly Report: Since the last edition we had a presence at the Green Fair in Oxford at the beginning of December. It was a pleasant day and we put on a demonstration and did quite a bit of business but I am not sure if it made much impact on the good people of Oxford. The Oxford courses in the New year kicked off with a disappointingly small turnout for the January course but attendances did pick up as the year went on. A course in Somerset at the end of January was well supported and provided the basis for future development of Stav in the South West (of which more later).

At the end of March I took a trip to the USA again for a course which Miki organised and Therissa hosted. Eight people attended and we had a very good time. Thanks to everyone who supported that and I will be back stateside at the end of September.

In March I relocated to Somerset and now live in a village called North Curry which is located between Taunton and Glastonbury. I have settled well here with my partner Ronni and have been teaching both day courses and evening classes. As for Oxford, Tim Abbott has taken over the club which meets at Horspath and continues to teach on Monday evenings and host Saturday courses.

It was planned to hold a healing camp in Oxfordshire in May, but sadly this had to be canceled due to lack of support. The July Course was also canceled due to bad weather. So it is intended that Ivar will have the chance to teach in Horspath on the 15th of September. Please see the Forthcoming section at the end.

The Saturday courses in Oxford in May and June were devoted to martial arts training and seemed to go well. In Somerset we were involved in the 'One Somerset' event where we were able to share a stall and do demonstrations. Thanks to Tim for his support on that and also for his assistance with teaching on the course

www.stavcamp.org email: graham@oxfordstavclub.co.uk

the following day. Then at the end of June we held our 'Midsummer Warrior Course' which attracted a good number and a lot of useful training was done. I also attended the Druid camp last weekend which was very wet but we did manage to hold morning Stav training sessions each day. Thanks to Ronni for her help and support for that.

So it has been a busy few months with a few disappointments but a lot of fun too. But we have had a big problem with our website as a lot of you will have noticed. We tried to transfer the ownership of iceandfire.org and move it from one server to another, which should be quite straightforward, and with say, a .co.uk domain, it would have been. But for some reason, still not clear, it can be very difficult to transfer ownership of a .org domain and for the past several weeks we have lost it completely, and I am by no means confident that we will be able to restore it. So we may well need to register a new name, probably iceandfire.org.uk but we will keep you posted. Obviously emails are down as well so please use instructor@ or graham@oxfordstavclub.co.uk

Also Darren is standing down as secretary/treasurer of Ice and Fire but is hoping to remain as editor of the magazine. I am very grateful to Darren for all the work he has put in over the past few years and I know I can count on his support in other ways in the future.

There will also be a change of correspondence address in the near future. We are still able to collect from the Kidlington Address, thanks to David Stone for making this possible. But again, watch out for changes in the near future.

Graham

The Stav Evangelists USA Tour

Riding the trend toward pagans of many types rejecting the notion that "Harm None" means "Be a Victim". A trend referred to as the "Warrior Mindset" or "Wiccan Warrior" and following Graham's example in the UK, Ice and Fire USA began evangelizing by running classes at the Free Spirit Gathering sponsored by the Free Spirit Alliance. The event ran from June 12-17, 2007 in Darlington Maryland (a spot practically in the horizontal center of the Mid Atlantic States).

Hank Kuhfeldt and I went as the 'instructors'. We taught the basic staff exercises (and a few of the easier advanced ones), the animal exercises with applications that were designed for grab releases rather than knife thrusts as we tend to learn them. We ran a daily exercise class (with the animal exercises again) and we taught Stav Bindrunes.

The staff class drew a large crowd. We opened with nearly nine attendees and on a day as hot as it was, we had to move onto the basketball court because the flat grass section was just too small. We lost about two folks who for whatever reason felt they were just not coordinated enough to keep up. It made me glad I didn't give up on that first day when I couldn't perform the basic staff exercises, but I also consider that a

loss. These were folks who wanted to do the exercises, but who felt they were drawing too much 'instructor time'. Some day I hope to find a way to continue running the class for those who ARE catching on and still work with those who are having trouble. We did reasonably well at the Stav Discovery Weekend with a student with similar difficulties, but that is because we had four or five advanced beginner and intermediate level students walking around to help those who lagged behind. Regardless, two 1L bottles of water, and several breaks later we found ourselves with some extra time and began showing a few of the easier thrusts as well as the basic exercises. This was probably the hottest day of the gathering.

The daily class started out with about five students but ended with three REALLY INTERESTED folks, one guy who'd come back if we ran next year but probably isn't interested in getting together with a group and a few stragglers who came to one class but not all of them. Within the first half hour class we found that exercises or no exercises, the absolute best way to avoid a "collar grab" is to leave your shirt at home. We modified the releases to 'shoulder grab' although those really are not as common as all that, I think. From this class only, I took home two names to send to our New Jersey group leader and one for the DC group (us).

The hand to hand class (animal exercises again) pulled a few folks we hadn't seen, and a couple of the people from the morning class but was slightly smaller than the staff class. We worked through the main 16 exercises (leaving off the other two for Nod that I have only learned once).

Finally, the bindrune class suffered from a lack of preparation for the questions of asatruar. A friend who attended, however, had several suggestions of how to change the presentation for the better, however.

On the whole, I gave out a whole lot of pamphlets but sold no memberships. Perhaps next time I can have a few more folks and run a table.

Our next event (we hope, they haven't got back in touch with me) will probably be Virginia's Pagan Pride day. We have a 1 hour presentation and a table there, however it is a one day event and we cannot make the DC or Baltimore pagan pride days.

Miki

More details at: www.iceandfire.us or email Miki miki@iceandfire.us

Teflon Stav (Non Stick Stav)

The main interest I have with Stav, is the non-martial side of the craft. Whilst it's true, without the daily stances, Stav isn't a complete system. But just the daily practice isn't enough for me, personally. What I look for in a tradition to follow and integrate into my daily thinking, is a deeper understanding of the world view that tradition has. A system of training for mind, body and spirit is a complete one, and it

shouldn't focus on just one element of that triad. The paradigm need not impose the practitioner with valency from just one element of the triad. The macrocosm holds balance as part of its' own nature, and to focus on one function of the web, would naturally cause a shift in the practitioners thought centre. To just concentrate on the body is a functional denial of the mind and spirit. Like-wise, to only concern your mind with the spiritual side of everyday living, causes a lack of your bodily needs. Surely the raison d'être here is to effect balance within the web.

Herein, I call for more balance in the teaching of Stav. Though I can see a reticence from some reading this, or perhaps a claim that this is already being implemented, I would counter: not enough. It is my belief that Stav has a huge potential, but one of the reasons it hasn't been more successful in attracting a larger recognition, is the general assumption that the martial side is the most interesting. There are a huge number of people living in Great Britain today who are seeking both their purpose in life and a spiritual dimension to those observations of everyday living that, frankly, leave most of us wondering how we can better ourselves beyond a bigger or better television/house/car/salary/holiday/partner/whatever. It is that call, from people like myself, that Stav can easily address, if only it would spread out more into its' own roots and mythology. Make the web bigger. Make it stronger. The Stav we all know, the Hafskjold tradition, has a great story to tell and a fantastic base on which to start.

This is a call for discussion that I hope Graham Butcher and Ivar Hafskjold will engage in, together with anyone else reading this. Grahams' A Stav Book of Runes is a brilliant introduction to Teflon Stav. All I ask is: "Can we have more instruction along these lines?" This year The Oxford Hof has lost the Healing Camp where much of this would have been included. It also cancelled a workshop at Horspath that was non martial based. Tony Brush has been pushing a Sunday workshop in Oxford along these lines and I have attended most of these workshops and found them invaluable. Still centred on the stances, Tony deepens ones knowledge of the Runes using stories and mythology together with stance meditations and instruction. The martial side he leaves to other classes and workshops, but this model of an organic approach to all that is Stav could be a format that would attract more interest from people. Perhaps just mixing up the martial aspects with the Teflon side could work? Maybe? Maybe not? But could we try?

snake

I keep my name in lowercase in honour of the Goddess

Note: Others coined the term Teflon Stav in 2006

Review

Beowulf

Penguin Audio Books 2000

read by Seamus Heaney

This set contains three CDs of readings from Beowulf, the most famous work from among the few surviving relics of Anglo-Saxon poetry. The set lasts about two and a quarter hours, a duration which clearly only allows for excerpts from the whole, which are recorded as unabridged pieces from the saga. Given how well known the poem is, I will not digress into the details of the plot, though on each disc an episode is given in its context - Beowulf's duel with Grendel, with Grendel's mother, and his final battle with a dragon wreaking havoc in his land. While conflict provides centre pieces, the poem draws the listener into something much deeper, through the background up to and around these events, the thoughts and emotions of the characters, the moral truths expressed, and the grim, doom-laden aspects characteristic of Old English literature. Internal stories are told, such as that of Finn, and Christian and heathen themes and mythology blur seamlessly. Heaney, a published poet since the 1960s, is both reader and translator - the text is rich, beautiful, full of alliteration and kennings, and the reading is somewhat evocative. This audio book is highly recommended to both strangers and aficionados of Old English literature.

Tony Brush

Animal Exercises In Miki's report you may have noticed references to 'animal exercises' which she and Hank were teaching at the Free Spirit gathering. These are a project I have been working on for the past few years and am now beginning to teach when the opportunity arises. As most readers will be aware each Rune has at least one animal associated with it. With a bit of imagination it is possible to see how the animal is suggested by the runic stance and then create a dynamic application of the stance. Although a large proportion of my personal training and teaching is weapon based, and yes, I am giving serious consideration to the concept of 'Teflon Stav', I have always been concerned with how to best teach unarmed exercises for fitness and self-defence. This led me to consider the importance of working with the fylgia and to realise that working with the appropriate animal is the key to expressing our true nature in a personal combat situation.

One of the paradoxes of Stav (and all serious body, mind and spirit practices) is that at a high level all you need is dedicated practice to the exercises which are appropriate to you. But you have to discover what these exercises are over many years of training. It took me a very long time to understand the implications of my fylgia and how to work with it. For me now there isn't a great deal of personal benefit in working with anything else. But relative beginners need a starting point and, on a basic level, the animal exercises introduce the idea of working with the various significant creatures. I also believe that a useful variety of skills and conditioning can be gained until the student is ready to specialise in working with their own fylgia.

When working with the animal exercises the usual futhark sequence is used as the basis providing a total of 18 exercises (three for \mathfrak{N} , the owl for Urd, spider for Verdandi and the crow for Skuld.) This provides a pretty comprehensive range of exercises and these can then be applied to self-defence by combining with the five principles. This means that each exercise can be tested for its application for

extracting oneself from an attack, preventing entry, control and restraint etc. 18 x 5 = 90 possible applications which provides plenty to work with.

Here is a brief example of how one of these exercises works; the ∇ exercise is based on the stag or deer. We tend to think of Stags fighting with their antlers which are indeed formidable weapons. But these are only present for a short part of the year and are only intended for rutting which is effectively 'ritual combat'. When deer have to fight for real, and this includes the hinds (female deer which do not have antlers) they effectively punch with their front hooves. I actually witnessed a young deer do this to my father on a family picnic when he tried to chase the creature away from our picnic. My father wasn't hurt but he got a bit of a surprise when the animal jumped up and planted its hooves squarely into his chest. Those who work with red deer tell me that if the hinds take against you they will wait for opportunities to attack by effectively punching you in the back of the head. So the ∇ exercise uses a vertical centerline punch, which becomes a downward sweep as the other hand punches and in turn becomes a sweep which both suggests the shape of the ∇ stance and strikes a little like a deer's hoof.

This is necessarily a very brief example. For more details Miki has created a pdf booklet showing the exercises which she will be happy to email a copy of on request. I am going to be devoting some time to teaching these exercises and exploring their applications on the Summer course at the end of August as well as devoting the 20th of October course to these exercises.

Graham

Forthcoming Events and Courses: In spite of the upheavals we are maintaining a strong programme of training and social opportunities.

4th August, at Braziers in Oxfordshire will be the fourth and last Lammas Games. At a meeting held on the Sunday at the Druid Camp it was agreed that the event will go ahead but it will be the last one. Some how it never really achieved the numbers to justify the efforts involved in putting it on. The Eistedford part will be incorporated into future Druid Camps. But we still need support for this one. We are doing the gate and security again and making any other contribution we can. I am hoping to put on a Stav demonstration and Driftwood, Tim's band will be playing again. So, please, grab this last chance to support a Lammas Games. Further details at www.lammasgames.org

21st to 27th August at Scobbs Farm, near Tunbridge Wells, Kent. Ice and Fire Summer Stav Camp This will be an opportunity to learn and practice Stav in its many aspects. This camp will comprise a week in a natural environment surrounded by the fauna and flora of the English countryside. There will be daily practice of the stances and other training exercises. Also nightly storytelling to familiarise all who attend with the essential mythology in Stav. We will also be able to provide a full programme of training in martial skills, crafts and healing.

There will be daily sessions in martial arts training with myself and Tim Abbott. These will cover: Staff, axe, sword, spear, sax and cudgel and unarmed

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training. Alex Fell-Bowers will be present on the Saturday only, teaching self-defence and close quarter fighting skills. (If you have never attended a self-defence workshop with Alex then come along and find out what you are missing.)

This year we are expanding the craft skills we are able to offer and this will include blacksmithing with Josh Calhoun who will have traveled from North Carolina in the USA. We will set up a working forge and you will have the opportunity to make simple items from forged steel. There will also be the opportunity to work with different kinds of wood as well as antler and leather. You will certainly have the opportunity to make your own staff, cudgel, rune-set and tein. Other aspects of this will include tree and plant recognition and building various kinds of shelters.

Health Improvement and Healing skills will include diet, exercise, working with megin energy, myrk and licht galdre for dealing with stress and anxiety and hands on healing skills such as massage and working with pressure points.

All meals and camping is included. Members price for the whole week is £135 or non-members £150 (if booked before end of July), or just come for a few days if you can't make the whole week, at £25 per day for I&F members or £30 for non-members. Full details on the www.stavcamp.org/summer.html site from which a pdf leaflet with booking form can be downloaded.

Next USA Course will be on the 29th and 30th of September in Virginia. See www.iceandfire.us for full details.

Autumn 2007

We have Saturdays booked at Horspath for the following dates:

15th of September, Ivar gets another go at teaching the health improvement and healing skills which we hoped he would teach on the Healing camp or on the July course.

20th October, Graham will devote a course to the animal exercises as ways of exploring the runes, for fitness and for self-defence.

17th November. At the moment we are not exactly sure what to do on this date, Suggestions are welcome for the kind of training you would like to see provided. Either way it will be something good.

Keep an eye on www.stav-events.info as usual to see what comes up.

Halloween in the Woods Camp October 2007 We certainly intend to hold this event again this year but we may have to shift the date slightly and perhaps find a different venue. Please keep an eye on www.stavcamp.org/halloween.html for developments.