

Honoring the Ancestors at Wellspring 2006
Sassafras Grove, ADF
Brushwood Folklore Center: The Nemeton
May 26, 2006, 8:00 PM

I. BEGINNING THE RITE & ESTABLISHING THE GROUP MIND – FIRST TIER

A. Clear-cut Beginning (Consecration of Time)

1. Musical Signal

The Nine Knells (XXX XXX XXX): **Earrach on Horn, Ian Corrigan on Drum**

2. The Processional: “Come We Now As a People”

(<http://www.adf.org/rituals/chants/processional/come-we-now-as-a-people.html>)

B. Consecration of Space and of Participants

1. Purifications –**Dave, Paul, Lassair**

Blessers will stand on the bridge entrance to the Nemeton. Participants will file past and be blessed with sacred herbs thrown at their feet, asperged with water and smudged with incense (Land, Sea, Sky).

2. Opening Prayer: **Earrach**

“AN-SHO LESH, NA D’JEE-HA AH’ADRUAH!” We have come to honor the Blessed Ones!

3. The Warding of the Site / the Acknowledgment of the Outsiders –**Earrach**

A peace-token of water is taken to the threshold of the Nemeton and poured across as a sign to the Forces of Opposition that we do not proceed in denial of their presence; we wish simply to be left alone. “We are here, and they are there.” This is not to be construed as an offering.

4. Invocation to the Spirit of Inspiration or Bardic Patron, The Bards of IE Myth– **Maria**

*Spirits of Inspiration
Poets, Bards and Seekers of Wisdom,
Across the ages we call to you.*

*You who sing worlds into being
You who drink from the Cauldron of Wisdom
You who pour the Cup of Inspiration.*

*May your stories kindle in us memories of the ancient ways
May your poetry stir our hearts to greatness
May your songs comfort and heal us.*

*Grant us some portion of your wisdom
Make our intentions be just*

*Make our hearts be steadfast
Make our tongues speak truth*

Song: "Sing Through my Voice"

5. Earth Mother – **Earrach**

*Earth, Divine Goddess, Mother Nature
Who generatest all things and bringest forth anew the Sun
Which thou hast given to the nations;
Guardian of sky and sea and of all gods and powers;
through thy power all Nature falls silent and then sinks in sleep.
And again thou bringest back the light and chasest away night
And thou coverst us yet most securely with thy shades
Thou dost contain chaos infinite, yea and wind and showers and storms.
Thou sendest them out when thou wilt and causest the sea to roar;
Thou chasest away the Sun and arousest the storm.
Again, when thou wilt, thou sendest forth the joyous day
And givest the nourishment of Life with thy eternal surety.
And when the soul departs, to thee we return.
Thou art duly called the Great Mother of the Gods;
Thou conquerest by thy divine name.
Thou art the source of the strength of nations and of gods,
Without thee nothing can be brought to perfection or be born;
Thou art great, Queen of the Gods.
Goddess ! I adore thee as divine;
I call upon thy name; be pleased to grant that which we ask thee,
so shall we give thanks to thee, Goddess, with due Faith.*

Song: "Oh Earth Mother. . ."

(<http://www.adf.org/rituals/chants/earth-mother/oh-earth-mother.html>)

6. Remembering Brighid – **Sarina**

*I light this candle in honor of Brighid
The Patron of Sassafras Grove
Through the years you have been midwife
To many changes and new beginnings within our grove.
You foster our hope through good times and hard,
Through challenge and victories
You are the source of all our work
The voice in our song
The strength of our arm
The hand that heals discord
The inspiration of all we create
Lady of the Hearth Fire
Lady of the Sacred Wells
Lady of our grove
Remember us as we remember you.*

7. Centering, Grounding, and Merging – **Dave**

a) Ground and Center /Merge into a Grove

Friends, I ask you to stand with your feet shoulder width apart, and close your eyes. And take several deep breaths with me. In and out. In and out. And once more, in and out. With our eyes closed, imagine now roots extending down from your feet, through the rich soil, through the rock, to the very depths of the earth, deeper and deeper, to the sacred waters of life in the secret places of the earth. Now I ask you to draw these precious waters of life up through your roots, up through your trunk, your body, you are now filled with their primal strength, with their blessings, and their strength for you. Feel them fill you with creative essence. You are brimming with possibility and potential. Notice that your roots have intertwined, interconnected, and reconciled. Now I invite you to repeat three times after me:

Feel the ebb, feel the flow, filled with the power of the waters below. (x3)

We now remember the celestial fires above, shining, burning, blazing, spark of creation. Imagine lifting your arms to the sky, imagine them sprouting branches, going skyward, through the clouds, bursting through the atmosphere, connecting with the sacred fires of the celestial realms. Now I invite you to pull into your leaves and your branches, this warmth, this creative fire of nature, this creative fire of the heavens, down through your branches, going through your trunk and to the depths of your roots. Now fully you are filled with the blessing and the strength of this special fire. Here is the light that enables our plant brethren to capture energy and to create life-sustaining oxygen and nutrition. This is the light that ultimately fuels our bodies allowing us to move and create, have our being, have conscious will and thought. Now draw the golden glow of these celestial fires into our leaves and branches, down into your trunk, into your roots, and fill yourself with their blessing and their strength. Notice that our branches also are intertwined and connected and reconciled. I ask you to repeat three times after me:

Feel the heat, feel the might, pulse with the power of the fire's light. (x3)

Now, rooted deeply in the waters below, with your mighty branches yearning ever upward to embrace the celestial fires, become aware of those who stand around you. Together, we are a grove, we are one. Notice again that our roots and our branches are intertwined and interconnected and reconciled with one another. We are a grove.

b) Song: “We are One. . .” (<http://www.adf.org/rituals/chants/grove-attunement/we-are-one.html>)

8. Declaration of Intention & Historical Precedent – **Diana & Earrach**

II. RECREATING THE COSMOS & PRELIMINARY POWER RAISING – TIER TWO

A. Recreating the Cosmos

Earrach: *As our ancestors before us, we now reestablish our World in the midst of the Chaos and ask the sacred questions: Who are we? From whence do we come? What is the story of our people?*

Emerald: *Not hard...*

*A great misty cloud had gathered together in the void
Swirling and spiraling; spiraling and swirling
Drawing ever-in upon itself.*

Maria and Deana approach
the Hallows

*At its center a radiance shone forth
And drove outward the surrounding cloud
Gathering the waters together here below
And so it was that the stuff of creation drew apart
To form the Fire Above
And the Waters Below.
The Solar Fire warmed the Cauldron of Creation
And stroked upon its waters with thunderbolts
And begat upon it Life.*

Deana Lights the bile,
Maria makes offerings to the
Well and decants Sacred
Waters

*And the Life begat the Creatures
And the Creatures begat the Ancestors
And the Ancestors begat Us; the Living People.
Upright, like you, Great Tree
We bear upon us the mark of Creation
Then, now, and for all time.
Rooted in the ancestral waters of the World Below,
Spanning this Middle-World of form
And reaching ever-upward to embrace the Fire Above.*

Deana censes bile. **Maria**
anoints it with Sacred waters

*Sacred Tree, Grow Within Us!
The Well; the Fire; the Sacred Tree
Flow and flame and grow in me!*

All repeat

All repeat

Song: Chorus from “At the Center of the World”

*The Waters flow around us, The Fires burn within us
Standing tall we gather at the Center of the World
Upon the Earth our mother, We worship here together
All as one we gather at the Center of the World.*

B. Creating the Threshold - **Emerald**

1. Evoking the Gatekeeper– **Mannanan Mac Lir –Emerald**

As our Gatekeeper, we call upon Mananan Mac Lir, he who rides the waves between our world and the Land of Promise. Two years ago, we gathered here to honor him, and this night, we seek his aid as we work to deepen our bonds with our Ancestors.

See him in your mind's eye, tall and broad-shouldered, with flowing white hair and beard, draped in a bright blue mantle with eyes the color of the sea. He stands tall and proud in his chariot Ocean Sweeper being pulled across the waves by a white mare. A smile plays upon his lips as if he knows a private joke, yet his sun-browned face portrays a fatherly kindness.

Mannanan: Son of the Sea! (Sacrificer (Deana) makes offering of beer)

Mannanan: Lord of the Gentle Land! (Sacrificer makes offering of apples)

Mannanan: Traverser of Waves and Ways! (Sacrificer makes offering of whisky)

*Through the mists of time we call to you
Across the vastness of the ocean we call to you
Within our hearts that keep the old ways, we call to you!*

*Sanctified we stand at the center of the world
In the light Fire with the flow of the Well
Help us now to Cross the Veil
That we may see Way Between*

2. Opening the Way – **Emerald & Congregation**

Chant:

*Mannanan Mac Lir, the Children of Earth we call you here
Mannanan Mac Lir, Help us to see with vision clear
Lead us as we ride the waves, Guide us as we cross the veil
(repeat as necessary)*

(Sacrificer offers copious amounts of incense)

Look around you, listen to the sounds of the night. Feel the power pulsing through this place. Things are different than they were before. Mannanan is with us. The way is open.

C. Filling Out The Cosmic Picture: The Kindred Invocation Triad...

1. Deities - **Paul**

Deities, Shining Ones, Ancient Ones, Gods known to us and those known to our ancestors, lost in time but still felt in our hearts. Gather around and be with us now, to celebrate our Ancestors!

Deities! Be with us!

Song: "Hail All the Gods. . ." (<http://www.adf.org/rituals/chants/deities/hail-all-the-gods.html>)

2. Worldly Spirits: **Lassair**

Worldly Spirits of Nature

*Spirits of Place that inhabit stone and pool,
Broadest plain and loftiest mountain,
Dwellers Under the Hill,*

Join us here, we give you honor and offerings!

*Spirits of the Green, Growing World,
Fungi, evergreens, and flowering plants,
Smallest mushroom to mightiest sequoia,*

Join us here, we give you honor and offerings!

*Spirits of the Creatures,
Who swim the Waters, fly the Skies, and tread the Land,
Tiniest microbe to mightiest whale,*

Join us here, we give you honor and offerings!

*Worldly Spirits of Nature:
Join us here, we give you honor and offerings!*

Song: "Fur and Feather" (<http://www.adf.org/rituals/chants/nature-spirits/fur-and-feather.html>)

III. MAJOR SENDING OF POWER TO THE ENTITY(IES) OF THE OCCASION-TIER THREE

A. Invocation to the Ancestors

1. Earrach, Sarina, and Emerald come forward as they say their first line. They will end up in a triad surrounding the fire pit.

Earrach

Through the shadows of living memory

Sarina

Across the gulf of ages

Emerald

From distant shores and the land beneath our feet

Earrach, Sarina, Emerald

Ancestors, we call to you!

All

Ancestors, we call to you!

Earrach

Grandmothers and Grandfathers

Sarina

Ancient ones of our people

Emerald

You who inspire our ways

Earrach, Sarina, Emerald

Ancestors, we call to you!

All

Ancestors, we call to you!

Earrach

*Old ones of our family lines,
Through your daily struggle to survive in this world
Through your boundless endurance through strife and through want,
Through your ancient love for your children
So do we now partake of the blessings of life*

Sarina

*Old ones of our cultural heritage
Deep within the shadows of time
You worked and played, loved and died
Creating folkways that speak to us still
Your customs and traditions are alive within us*

Emerald

*Old ones of our spiritual past
Bound to us by bonds of belief
You worshiped the gods we now hold dear
Honoring the cycles of Sun, Moon and Land
We partake of your wisdom in story and art*

Earrach, Sarina, Emerald

Hear our prayers and accept our tribute!

Emerald

That we might walk this day, informed by your vision,

Earrach, Sarina, Emerald

Old Ones hear our prayer!

All

Old Ones hear our prayer!

Sarina

That we might walk this day, guided by your wisdom,

Earrach, Sarina, Emerald

Old Ones hear our prayer!

All

Old Ones hear our prayer!

Earrach

That we might walk this day, empowered by your love,

Earrach, Sarina, Emerald

Old Ones hear our prayer!

All

Old Ones hear our prayer!

Earrach

Ancestors of Blood. . .

Sarina

Ancestors of Heritage. . .

Emerald

Ancestors of Spirit. . .

Earrach, Sarina, Emerald

Ancestors, be with us here!

All

Ancestors, be with us here!

Earrach, Sarina, Emerald

Ancestors, All Hail and Welcome!

All

Ancestors, All Hail and Welcome!

2. Song: "Mothers and Fathers of Old"
(<http://www.adf.org/rituals/chants/ancestors/mothers-and-fathers-of-old.html>)

B. Belly Button Meditation - **Diana**

Connecting us with our direct blood Ancestors.

We have issued the call to our ancestors of blood and they have responded. They are here now with us, just at the edges of our perception. We have made due offerings to them, sung them the ancient songs and expressed our gratitude to them for blessings received. It is now appropriate for us to journey to them.

We have made the way safe; we have called upon the clear vision of Manannan Mac Lir, to provide His protection to us as we cross the Seas of Time; we must now have the courage to meet the ancestors half-way. What vessel shall we use to make this journey? The vessels that have been cleansed and consecrated for the work ahead: our bodies. Be aware of your body now, connected to the waters below and the skies above. Rest in this knowledge, knowing that the center within is brightly lit with the center of all.

Every realm has a doorway - a portal - a way to enter safely and securely. The portal to the Realm of the Dead is with us every day. Place your hands on your belly, if it is your will to do so. There, at the center of your body, lies the pathway to reach the ancestors: the sacred button, the navel, your Omphalos. Leave your hands on your belly and relax. Breathe and allow yourself to remember. >>>>remember<<<<

Feel the bright spirit of your center and become slowly aware of a presence standing at your left shoulder. This is your mother. Feel the bright spirit of her center and how she is connected to the waters below and the fires above. Feel the love and support flowing through her to you. Accept it and feel how it makes you stronger. Relax.

Likewise, there is a presence at your right shoulder – your father. Feel the spirit burn at his center and how he is also fed from the waters below and the fires above. Feel the love and support flowing through him to you. Accept it and be aware how much stronger you are now. Feel them at each shoulder, slightly behind you, but always there. And, relax. Just as your center links you to them, both your mother and your father have a center that links them back to their parents. Allow your consciousness to expand and be aware of the presences that are standing at their shoulders. Behind your mother are two spirits; her mother and father. They two have a brightly burning spirit which is linked to the waters below and the fires above. And, behind your father stand his parents and their equally bright lights.

Your acknowledgement of them makes their spirits brighter and your spirit even stronger. See the two behind and the four behind them: all burning bright in the ancestral light. Now allow your minds' eye to expand yet again and see the figures which stand behind each of your grandparents. The pattern repeats itself: two-by-two backwards in time; there were 8 and now 16 and now 32 and so on.

Your vessel, your body, expands to allow them all in without effort. Feel yourself expanding. Feel yourself journeying back in time. Feel how they respond to your knowledge of them and relax. The ancestors standing behind you increase in number until they are uncountable. The vessel expands and expands to accommodate them – stretching into infinity. At some point – far beyond your sight or awareness – they begin to overlap. This is the Point of Enigma. An ancestor of yours is also an ancestor of the person next to you. That point of complete expansion has begun to contract. And, as we continue to move ever backwards in time, the ancestors behind us form a smaller and smaller triangle. Thousands become hundreds and hundreds become dozens. We are reaching the other end of our boat – the point furthest back in time that we can imagine. The beginning of the creation of our unique vessel. And, finally, 16 becomes 8 becomes 4 becomes...2...and relax.

The two figures that you see before you are First Mother and First Father. See them and acknowledge them. They who separated for the bliss of their union.

◇ *It is to THEM that we have journeyed over the waves of time!*

- ◇ *It is to THEM that we have sent our call!*
- ◇ *It is to THEM that we give all our offerings and honor!*

First Mother and First Father, We honor you!!

ALL REPEAT: *First Mother and First Father, We honor you!!*

C. Conclusionary Sacrifice: Prior to the rite (during the workshops and directly before the briefing), people will have had the opportunity to write messages on pieces of paper to their ancestors. These messages will be put in a basket.

1. Heartbeat drum while **Deana** carries the basket around the circle
2. Each person projects their energy and love toward the offering basket
3. When the circuit is complete, **Deana** hands the basket to Diana who intones as she puts the basket into the fire:

First Mother and First Father, Accept our Sacrifice!

ALL REPEAT: *First Mother and First Father, Accept our Sacrifice!*

4. **Emerald** begins the song and all join in:

*Look into the well of memory
Look into the well of time
Look into the well of ages
I am yours, You are mine*

*Listen to the ancient stories
Listen to the ancient songs
Listen to the ancient wisdom
I go on, You go on*

*Deep within my heart is beating
Deep within my heart I know
My descendents will remember
My love flows, Your love flows*

D. Seeking the Omen of Return--**Maria**

During the song, Maria will water-scry to take the omen. Once she is ready, the chant will end and she will reveal the message from the Ancestors

IV. RECEIVING AND USING THE RETURNED BLESSINGS/POWER – TIER FOUR

A. Preparation for the Return: **Earrach**

1. Meditation on Personal and Group Needs
2. Induction of Receptivity - **Earrach**
Earrach invites the participants to open themselves up to the blessings of the Ancestors

B. Reception of Blessings / Power from the Ancestors – **Diana**

1. Consecration Agreement - ‘the Worship Bargain’

We have remembered, acknowledged and paid great tribute and offering to you...

*so it is now that we call for your blessings:
-GIVE TO US THE WATERS OF BLESSING !!
-GIVE TO US THE WATERS OF LIFE !! ”*

-“BEHOLD! THE WATERS OF LIFE!

- a) **Diana** will be stationed by the well with a branch of rosemary.
- b) Participants will file up in a continuous stream, and Diana will bless them and their Ancestor doll/object link/hands with the waters using the rosemary for remembrance
- c) Maria and Emerald lead the song

*Back to the River, back to the Sea
Back to the ocean, home to thee
Back through my blood, back through my veins
Back to my heartbeat, all the same.*

2. Folks are invited to take a moment to silently reflect on any additional needs. - **Earrach**

V. UNWINDING AND ENDING THE CEREMONY – TIER FIVE

A. Thanksgivings to Entities Invited (in reverse order of arrival:)

1. Meditation bringing us back to the present—**Diana**

We have journeyed far back in time to give due offering to the First Mother and First Father, but it is now time to return to the present. We do so by remembering our centers and the pathway that we took to reach them. Again, place your hands on your belly and remember the mark that is there which grants knowledge to the Realm of the Dead. Feel how far back you have reached; feel how much your vessel has stretched and expanded to accommodate the ancestors before you. They will remain there, of course, but our awareness of them must recede for us to return to the here and now.

Thank the First Mother and First Father who are far behind you and bid them farewell. As you do so, feel them fade into the mists as your awareness takes in their descendents. Their children are expanding again, until we reach the Point of Enigma where they can no longer expand and it begins to contract. The ancestral line becomes smaller and smaller until now there are only 16 behind you, then 8, then 4 and finally two: your parents. Feel the connection your spirit has to theirs and know in your heart that it will never truly be gone. But, for now, bid them thanks and let your love flow to them for one last time during this meditation.

Mother & Father – Hail and Farewell!

All Repeat: Mother & Father – Hail and Farewell!

Diana steps down and retreats into the circle of participants.

2. Ancestors – **Emerald, Sarina, Earrach**

Earrach

Old ones of our family lines

Sarina

Old ones of our cultural heritage

Emerald

Old ones of our spiritual past

Earrach, Emerald, Sarina

Today we have worked to uphold the sacred promise: You will not be forgotten!!!

All

You will not be forgotten!!!

Emerald

Ancestors, we thank you for your many blessings, now and always.
Ancestors, Hail and Farewell!

All

Ancestors, Hail and Farewell!

3. Kindred

- a. Worldly Spirits – **Lassair**
- b. Deities - **Paul**

4. Bardic Patron - **Maria**

B. Thanking the Gatekeeper and Closing the Threshold - **Emerald**

C. Affirmation of Past/Future Continuity and Success: **Earrach**

Earrach - As it has been done in the past...
As we have done it now...
and as it likewise will be done in the future...
we have again forged a link in the sacred chain of Tradition...

All - LONG LIVE THE TRADITION !
LONG LIVE THE TRADITION !

Maria - Now let the Well be but Water

Deana – Let the Sacred Fire be but flame

Emerald – But the Sacred Tree grows always within us!

D. Unmerging, Regrounding and Recentering - **Dave**

F. Clear-cut Ending: **Earrach**

- 1. Final Benediction
- 2. Announcement of End

3. Nine Knells
4. Recessional song: "Walk with Wisdom" (up tempo!)
(<http://www.adf.org/rituals/chants/recessional/walk-with-wisdom.html>)

Credits

As is the norm for Sassafras Grove, this ritual was a group effort. The major planning was done by Diana Paar, Emerald, Earrach of Pittsburgh, and Sarina. Specific written sections are credited below. For the songs and chants, I have provided links to where they can be found on the ADF web site. Author information can be found there along with audio downloads of the songs themselves. Songs without such links are credited below. Audio of the actual rite can also be found on the ADF web site at <http://archives.adf.org/festivals/wellspring/2006/>.

Bright Blessings,
Emerald
Liturgical Planning Director & Archivist
Sassafras Grove, ADF
Pittsburgh, PA

I.B.4. Bardic Invocation: Maria Stoy.
"Sing Through My Voice": Abbi Spinner

I. B.5. Earth Mother Invocation: An ancient hymn to the Earth Mother of uncertain date, but possibly Roman and a thousand years older than our oldest surviving source: an 11th century book of herbal charms and medicine. MS. Harley 1585, FF. 12 V.-13 R., Translation from "Early English Magic and Medicine" by Dr. Charles Singer, Proceedings of the British Academy, Vol. IV

I.B.6. Brigid Prayer: Maria Stoy

I.B.7.a. Ground/Center/Merge: Dave Whaley, based on Combination Grounding/Centering and Recreation of the Cosmos by Emerald. Original can be found at <http://www.sassafrasgrove.org/cgi-bin/pmwiki/pmwiki.php?n=Sass.HellenicNewMoonBlessingRite>

II.A.: Recreating the Cosmos (Creation Myth): Earrach of Pittsburgh

IIA: "At the Center of the World": Diane Lynn "Emerald" Vaughn

II.B.1: Mannanan Gateway: Diane Lynn "Emerald" Vaughn

II.B.2: Mannanan chant: Diane Lynn "Emerald" Vaughn

II.C.1.: Deities Invocation: Paul Locke

II.C.2.: Nature Spirits Invocation: Lassair

III.A.1.: Ancestor Invocation: Adapted from a prayer by Earrach of Pittsburgh with additional wording by Diane Lynn “Emerald” Vaughn. Original prayer can be found at <http://www.sassafrasgrove.org/cgi-bin/pmwiki/pmwiki.php?n=Sass.AncestorPrayer>.

III.B: Ancestor Meditation: Diana Paar

III.C.4. “Well of Memory”: Diane Lynn “Emerald” Vaughn

IV.B.1.c. “Back to the River”: Abbie Spinner

V.A.1. Return Meditation: Diana Paar