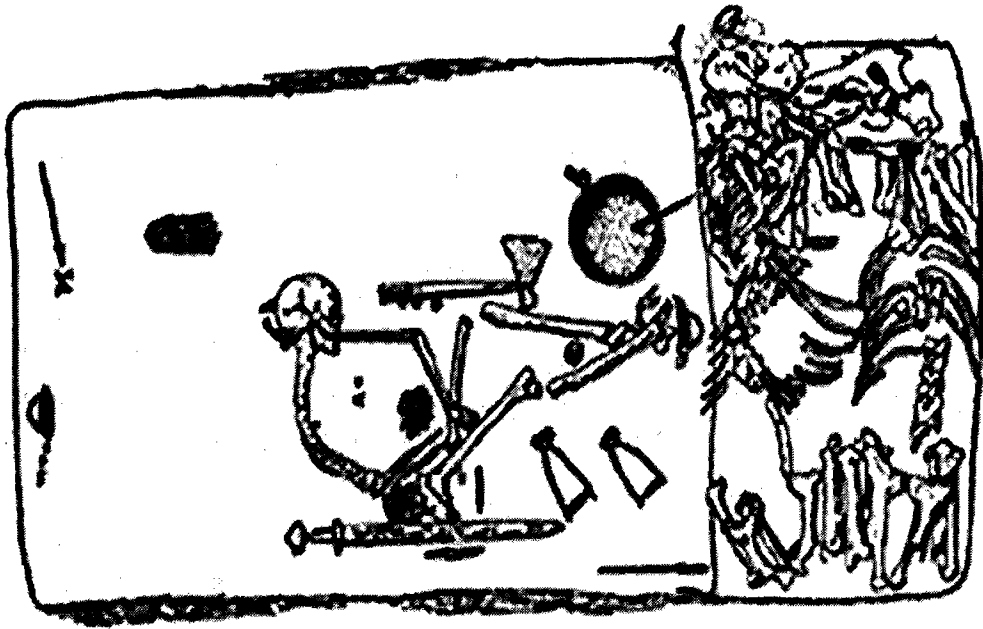


# OUR SACRED LAND



By Tyrsoak Josephsson of the Raven-Wolf  
Kindred

# OUR SACRED LAND

by the Raven-Wolf Kindred, FCI Pekin, Illinois

**Second printing 2008**



Published by World Tree Publications, Inc.  
Box 961  
Payson, AZ 85547 USA/Vinland  
[worldtreepublications.org](http://worldtreepublications.org)  
[asatru.org](http://asatru.org)

Cover image: Birka Grave, No. 581, 913-c 980 Common Era

## Acknowledgments

We would like to give special thanks to all the people who have helped us in our walk along this path. Without you we would not have the knowledge or energy to even begin a book like this. Some of you have written books that strengthened our knowledge and inspired us to look deeper into the mysteries of our lives. You all have made a difference in our lives and will forever remain in our hearts and thoughts. May we all continue to strive to strengthen our Folk.

Valgard Murray and his family, Stephen McNallen and his family, our sister Raven Karn, Sveinbjorn Beinteinsson, Else Christensen, Thorsteinn Thorarinsson, Dot and Dewey Prins, Lee M. Hollander, Dr. Mark L. Mirabello, Winfred Hodge, Carl Jung, Dawn Wirth, Mark Strom, Duke Walden, Bo Bransford, Duane Nyquist, Joe Miller, Rob Wirth, Blake Canfield, Matt Cannon, Michael Jorgensen, Tom Jahnke, Richard Lorentzen, Jock Linholm, James Ballard, Jason Handley, Wade, Bob Prins, Steve Peterson.

To my brothers here as F.C.I. Pekin: Each day I watch your actions and I listen to your words. I see true AsaMen striving to grow in the ways of our ancestors, striving to make things better for our children and for those that will come after us. I'm proud to call you brother and friend.

Tyrsoak Josephsson, Goði  
Horning 2253 Runic Era

Current members of the Raven-Wolf Kindred are:

Loki C.  
Nathan Pierce  
Charles Othyrsson  
J. Shelton  
Harthane Evansson  
Jeff Miller  
C. Harthanesson  
Jon Stauffer (Slayer)  
S. Weeks  
R. Standley  
D. Ratchford  
Nick Camp



## Preface to the Second Edition



It is with great pleasure that World Tree Publications presents the second edition of “Our Sacred Land”. The first edition was a companion volume to “Handbook of Ásatrú”. Both were first published in Runic Era 2253\* and were written from the perspective of AsaMen living our Folkway in the yard.

The members of Raven-Wolf Kindred of FCI Pekin Illinois have produced this handbook to aid prisoners and administrators alike to better understand the mechanics of Ásatrú and the importance (and construction) of sacred land. Since the original booklets were published, Ásatrú has been widely accepted within federal penitentiaries. Although the United States government now recognizes Ásatrú on a par with other religions, the struggle continues on a state-by-state basis. For this reason, this booklet is just as relevant today as it was during its original printing.

I would like to thank the following members of Blood Eagle Kindred for their help in bringing the World Tree Ministry into the digital age: Amy Ahlberg-Venezia, Karon and George Hartshorn of Downcity Digital, and Matt Hajduk. Their tireless efforts to support me and our incarcerated AsaFolk are to be commended. My special thanks go to Amy and Matt for digitalizing and reformatting this second edition with new graphics.

This booklet is published in a spirit of kinship and solidarity to all who follow the ancient ways of their noble ancestors.

Valgard Murray  
Director, World Tree Publications  
Allsherjargoði, Ásatrú Alliance of Independent Kindreds  
Haymoon 2258 Runic Era (2008 Common Era)

\*The Runic Era is calculated by adding 250 years to the current calendar year (or Common Era). The first edition of “Our Sacred Land”, then, was published in 2003.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Introduction from the Goði and Skald of RavenWolf Kindred.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Sacred Places in Ásatrú by Valgard Murray.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>The Meaning of a Sacred Place.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Frequently Asked Questions About “Our Sacred Land”.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Proposal for Starting a Kindred.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>The Way of the Kindred.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Required Ritual Tools.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Proposal for Acquiring and Building Your Own Sacred Site.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Ritual Area Construction Material Description and Dimensions.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>References and Points of Contact.....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Land Claiming Ritual.....</b>	<b>27</b>



## Introduction from the Goði and Skald of Raven-Wolf Kindred



“Ásatrú is a nature religion and believes that the land and our unique relationship to it, is sacred. We believe that it is necessary to pursue a relationship with the unique land spirits, or land wights, of all places where we practice our religion. Trees, stones, bodies of water, and earthen mounds are known to give refuge to the land spirits, and are also usual components of sacred places of Ásatrú worship. It has been this way since the beginning of our people’s sacred awareness over 8,000 years ago. It is also imperative to Ásatrú worship that such sacred places be used only by the Ásatrú worshippers so as not to confuse or do harm to the spirits of the land.”

Many religions appear similar on the surface. Yet upon reflection, when religions are looked at a bit deeper, one realizes that they are not as compatible as one first thought. Picture if you will a group of Southern Baptists being told that they must hold services in a Catholic church. Even with most of the interior changed, the atmosphere in the place would remain a bit uncomfortable for those attending services— and in turn causing a loss of focus on the reason they are there. Even with the same God (Jesus), their views and ways of doing things are different, and in turn their places of worship are separate.

For those of us who follow the religion of Ásatrú, those same uncomfortable feelings arise when asked to share land with the Native American or Wiccan communities. We can highly respect them for holding onto the old ways and honoring their ancestors. Yet deep down, we will all admit to being uncomfortable when using components of a different religion.

Our Gods, Goddesses, ancestral spirits, and land wights are similar in many ways. Yet to each community they are unique and as such cannot be “shared” or connected with by others whose beliefs are different.

We all view nature as being an important part of our religions. When standing upon our sacred land, we can feel the energy of our ancestors, and land spirits. That is the connection we are all trying to make. By sharing land and inviting various Gods and Goddesses, land spirits, and our different ancestral spirits, we are creating an environment of confusion. This results in a loss of focus not only for ourselves but for those spirits that we are calling upon to partake in the Ritual with us.

When I think of the connection our ancestors had to the land and the importance it played in their everyday lives (where harsh elements or bad crops could make life pretty rough for a part of the year), I’ve come to appreciate the gifts Mother Earth provides. So many today take these gifts for granted. I believe that one of the responsibilities we take upon ourselves in reclaiming land is caring for it in a way where it will be able to provide for those that will come after us. To do this, we must truly bond with the land and sacrifice a part of ourselves to cement this bond.

Land wights (land spirits) hold a special place in the heart and soul of our people. This is clearly shown in the history of the Landna'ma in Iceland. The immigrants brought with them their ancestral Land-Spirits — the “little ones”, or elves, from their native lands in Scandinavia. We can also look to our ancestors who eventually ended up here in Vinland. Were they any different? I think not. They brought with them the Gods, Goddesses, Land Wights, and Ancestral Spirits as they came to this new world. They resided in the hearts and soul of our ancestors, and they remain with us today, simply waiting to be reawakened.

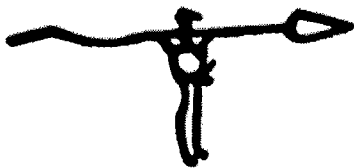
As we try to once again understand the importance of the land in our lives, let us look to the various Sagas and myths to see the way in which our ancestors appreciated just being able to travel and see the world at a time when travel wasn't the easy jaunt that it is today.

Hopefully, one day, many of us will get to travel to some of the sites and places our ancestors lived and held to be sacred. Imagine living 1,500 years ago and being truly dependent upon Mother Earth for what you and your families needed to survive. Only then will we begin to understand that the history of our ancestors' exploration and trade throughout the world was taken at a time when they needed to find more land and a better climate to grow food in order to survive. Going “A Viking” wasn't all our ancestors did, regardless of what picture many wish to paint. We have a proud past and the Sagas and our myths provide many exciting tales and lessons to teach our children, including the true importance of life. May we all one day be able to sit upon sacred land around a warm fire and share these same stories that our ancestors shared with their children.

May we stress the importance of caring for the land when so many others show their disrespect and do nothing to strengthen their bond with it. Someone has to step up and make a stand. May you look inward and find the strength needed to be that warrior of the Folk today.

May our holy groves once again ring with laughter and cries of joy as our children grow up learning the true meaning of life among nature and all of her wonder.

May our holy groves once again ring with laughter and cries of joy as our children grow up learning the true meaning of life among nature and all of her wonder.



Tyrsoak Josephsson  
Goði, Raven-Wolf Kindred  
Hornig 2253 Runic Era

Land is very important to the Ásatrú. We perform many rituals and Ceremonies of the Folk in the great outdoors. Some of the rituals are the Blótar, the feasts, and the Sumbels. There are many more rituals and celebrations as well. All of our Gods and Goddesses represent an aspect of nature, and it is imperative that we communicate with them in the outdoors. A roof and four walls are nothing but a barrier to separate us from all that we hold to be beautiful and good. It is a necessity to have an outdoor area. We must go into the realm of the Gods to commune with them, and their realm is Nature. We

can commune with Gods and Goddesses indoors, but it requires much more focus and energy. Our attention is undivided when our feet are planted firmly on Mother Earth and our eyes are focused on the Sky Father.

Many of us take our shoes off at the doors of our house to keep the dirt out. We do not allow strangers to wander through our house with muddy shoes. Outsiders should not be allowed to wander through our ritual areas with their wights that have a conflict of interest with our ancestral wights. Two groups using the same area can cause nothing but disruption and agitation of the land-wights in that area.

At the time of acquiring land, it is pretty common in Ásatrú to perform what is generally known as a “Land-Taking Ritual”. In the times of our ancestors, when they were claiming ownership of the land, they would use a torch. They could claim as much land as they could walk around with the fire of one torch. When the torch was lit they would begin to walk and when the torch burned out they had claimed all that they could claim. This is a historical basis for the land-taking ritual that is given within this booklet. This ritual is only an example. It can be altered or personalized as you see fit at the time of the land-taking.



Harthane Evansson  
Raven-Wolf Kindred Skald



## Sacred Places in Ásatrú

Although the history of the Northern People of Europe is in many ways shrouded in the mists of time, one thing we know for certain is that our people have always had an innate sense of the divine. One manifestation of the divine has been our reverence of sacred places.

Today, we know of many ancient sites which were considered sacred or holy to our ancestors. The great temple at Uppsala, Sweden is one of the most known from the accounts of Adam of Bremen and Bishop Thietmar of Meresburg. There great sacrifices were held to honor Oðinn, Þórr, and Freyr. It was indeed a very massive and impressive temple. Today all that remains are the mounds of the great Heathen Kings.

From the Saxons we learn of the great Irminsul where great Heathen ceremonies were made to honor Wotan and Donar. The Irminsul was not a temple; it was a sacred place in the forest. The Irminsul itself is thought to be a mighty oak tree. It was a place to sacrifice for victory and prosperity. It is perhaps the most sacred site in continental Europe.

There is no doubt that the thousands of stone monoliths which dot the countryside of Northern Europe were also sacred places. Some of these great stones were erected over ten thousand years ago, and one can still feel the power and energy of these ancient stone sentinels.

Some of these stones were set in circles and it is believed that they were the sites of the tribal Þings. Such Þing sites have been identified throughout Germany, the British Isles, and the Scandinavian countries. Although the Þing sites may have been governmental in scope, there is no doubt that great Blóts were held there, and the long-cherished traditions of the Þing were held to be sacred as well. The greatest of these Þings sites is known as Þingvellir, which is located about 17 miles east of Reykjavik, Iceland. Here the Goðar Republic was formed. For seventy years, our people lived free of foreign domination and managed their own affairs in harmony with the Gods and the Landvættir.

The Sagas also tell us of regional Hofs which were used for Sumbels and feasts. It is believed that the few surviving stave churches in Norway were patterned after the ancient Ásatrú Hofs. Doubtless thousands of these Hofs dotted the landscape of the North.

It is also known that many natural places were regarded as sacred to the Folk. Mountains, great rock formations, single stones, springs, wells, rivers, and lakes were places of worship, meditation and ceremonies of the Folk. It was common after great victories of war that the booty of the conquered army's weapons were cast into lakes to give thanks for victory. Certain springs, wells, and pools of water were repositories of offerings. The ritual of casting runes into a pool of water is still done today with the throwing of coins into a fountain. Everything natural and pure was believed to be home of the land spirits, and they were honored with offerings of food, mead, and ale.

The mounds of the glorious dead were also seen as sacred places, where one could in meditation talk to your ancestors and receive answers to the many questions of life and death.

Although much has changed since ancient times, sacred places remain. Our great groves were desecrated and burned by the pious monks. Our sacred groves were cut

down, and the great Irminsul burned, while our Folk were threatened with death if they returned to their sacred places.

All the same, our ancient folkways and beliefs prevailed, and we are back to reclaim the sacred and what is rightfully ours. In the few decades since the Founders brought us back our sacred religion, Hof, groves, and sacred places have been reclaimed by the Folk. Again our people gather in their chosen land to honor and worship the holy Æsir with Blót, Sumbel, and Feast.

In 2236 Runic Era, the first Hof was built for Ásatrú worship in Vinland. On private land in western Arizona, massive oak beams which once were part of a railroad bridge were erected to form the framework of a simple yet impressive building. It was called Oðinnshof and was used by the Arizona Kindred for many years. Most recently, the first of what would become an Annual Gathering of the Goðar was held there.

In 2241 Runic Era the second Ásatrú Hof in Vinland was begun by Robert Taylor and the Tribe of Wulfings. This was the site of the Týr Blot of Alþing Ten. Since that time, it has been used for numerous gatherings of the Wulfing Tribe. It is known as the Vanir Hof; much skill and dedication went into the building of this magnificent example of a sacred temple. To my knowledge, these are the only Hof, built specifically for Ásatrú worship in Midgarð in modern times. One would certainly hope that many more will be built by our Kindreds and Tribes in the future.

Today in Vinland, Kindreds choose to worship in groves once again reclaimed for our sacred rites. My Arizona Kindred chose a site in the National Forest which suits our needs perfectly. It is located in an ancient old growth forest of pines, firs, and oaks. A spring-fed brook borders the grounds, which is used for runic workings. Years ago, we performed a land-taking ceremony and buried small rune stones at the cardinal points in the grove. We have used this site for over 25 years and we continue to utilize it today. In honor of the great AllMother, it is known as Frigga's Grove.

I know of several Kindreds who are blessed with large tracts of land and they have erected outdoor altars and built the site specifically for worship. Others have dedicated places in their yards for their use during outdoor Blóts.

There are a few hearty souls who enjoy hiking into the mountains to perform their seasonal Blóts at an isolated spring or grove. Others who are unable to travel have a specific site chosen in their yard to perform their Ásatrú rites.

Wherever the site for worship is located, it is important to make contact with the Landvættir, to make your intentions known, and to honor them by protecting the site and keeping it holy. At the ending of each Blót, I use the mead remaining in the *bowli* as an offering to the Landvættir. It is not just our will and determination which makes a site sacred; it is also the blessing of the Gods and Goddesses in conjunction with the holy spirits of the land itself.

It is our duty as the Ásatrú to protect and defend the unspoiled places left in Midgarð. In the future our children and following generations of the Ásatrú will find these places to call their own and make them sacred as well. It is important to protect our ancient sites from future desecration and vandalism by governments and land developers.

Valgard Murray, Allsherjargoði, Ásatrú Alliance  
Director, World Tree Outreach Ministry  
Hornung 2253 Runic Era

## The Meaning of a Sacred Place

At the time of his death in October of 1987, Joseph Campbell was the world's foremost authority on Mythology. A preeminent scholar, writer and teacher at Sarah Lawrence College for almost forty years, was once asked, "What does it mean to have a sacred Place?"

He replied, "This is an absolute necessity for anyone today. This is a place where you can simply experience and bring forth what you are and what you might be. This is the place of creative incubation. At first you may find that nothing happens there; but if you have a sacred place, and use it, something eventually will happen."

People claim the land by creating sacred sites. By mythologizing the animals and plants, they invest the land with spiritual power. It becomes a temple and a place for meditation. One should find the symbol in the landscape itself of the energies of the life there. This is what all the early traditions do. They sanctify their own landscapes.

"Joseph Campbell and the Power of Myth", Public Affairs Television

### L'ANSE AUX MEADOWS

In the early sixties, Norwegian explorer Helge Ingstad and his wife, archaeologist Anne Stine Ingstad, went to Newfoundland to explore a place identified on an Icelandic map from the 1670s as *Promontorium Winlandiar* near a small fishing village of L'Anse Aux Meadows. They seemed certain that it marked the location of an ancient Norse settlement.

Finding it turned out to be easier than they could have imagined. When they asked the locals if there were any odd ruins in the area, they were immediately taken to a place known as "The Indian Camp". They immediately recognized the grass covered ridges as Viking-era ruins like those in Iceland and Greenland.

During the next seven years, the Ingstads and an international team of archaeologists exposed the foundation of eight separate buildings, sitting on a terrace between two bogs. They also found a "Celtic" style bronze pin with a ring-shaped head similar to ones the Norse used to fasten their cloaks, a bone needle and a small whetstone for sharpening scissors and needles.

Further excavation in the mid seventies led some to believe this was likely the place that Lief Eriksson camped in his discovery of Vinland. Scraps of wood were subsequently radio carbon dated to somewhere between 980 and 1020, which is when Lief was to have visited Vinland. Some archaeologists have figured this site was home to about 500 people. How long they stayed there or what type of life they lived we cannot say — only that this is probably the first time our ancestors set foot on North America.

### THE VIX GRAVE

In an upper valley of the Seine, a woman's body, adorned with ornate jewelry, was discovered sitting in a wagon in the center of a burial mound. Various items were found including bowls, jugs, and other vessels. One huge vessel had various scenes depicted upon it. One scene showed a woman who appeared to be a Seeress with an

outstretched arm. It was thought that this huge ornate vessel could have been used for sacrifices, as it was considered too large for the usual uses. This burial and the way the mound was arranged would suggest this woman was special and could have been a priestess of a local temple or perhaps a Seeress herself. At this time, due to lack of literature left behind about burials during this time period, we might never know the true story of the woman in the Vix grave.

### **THE MEMORIAL STONES OF GOTLAND**

There is a small island in the Baltic called Gotland. It was an important stop for those traveling from Sweden to the countries in Eastern Europe. It would seem that over time the small island and those living there became quite wealthy with all the travelers stopping off there.

The small island is dotted with what could be called memorial stones. They show traces of color in the pictures and most of them have ships and spiral designs on them. Some are even designed in sections with various scenes which possibly reflect the beliefs that our ancestors had about the afterlife.

Many of these had a scene which showed a warrior on a horse being greeted by a woman holding up a horn. Some would say this relates to warriors being welcomed to Valhalla, as this scene is often depicted on the top of the stone. Others show a ship with a horse riding above it. Could these be the Valkyries we read of in our mythology and Sagas? A few scenes also show a rider on an eight-legged steed. Could this be the mighty Oðinn riding Sleipnir across the skies? Oðinn was one of the Gods our ancestors held in high regard. No wonder, then, that he would be remembered by our ancestors as they created these stones that are truly works of art.

Ships are also depicted in numerous stones. Our ancestors traveled the seas in ships on trade missions, in search of other lands, and when they went "a Viking". The ship played an important part in their lives. The ship is also viewed as the vehicle that carries the dead to other lands.

Many grave sites are marked with stones in the shape of a ship. There is evidence of burials taking place in ships. In some cases the ships were buried in bogs or sunk in the seas. In some cases they were simply buried in the earth. In any case, we see the importance of ships to our ancestors is clear.

The reason these stones were put up might never be known. It could have been a memorial to a loved one who died or never returned or a way of honoring or remembering someone a loved one. Whatever the case may be, we can be thankful to the ones who had them created. They give us a look at some of the things important to our ancestors at this time in history.

### **AULNAY-AUX-PLANCHES**

Located in France, Aulnay-aux-Planches consists of three cemeteries which all seem to be a bit different, yet all seem connected as a group. The first shows flat cremation-type graves. The second seems to be marked or protected by stones with a large ritual area nearby. We cannot be certain of the rituals performed there. The third area contains some graves which are surrounded by stones.

We are unsure of the meaning, or separation among these graves. From the various animal bones present, it is presumed that some sort of animal sacrifices were conducted. The sacrifices may have been within the context of rituals that took place at funerals or perhaps a feast held in honor of certain Deities. The identities of the grave occupants and the various alignments of stones are unclear. Yet it is clear that this was truly a special place at one time to our ancestors even if the meaning has been obscured by the passage of time.

A site at Helgo, Sweden yielded twenty-six brooches which show a man facing a woman separated by a leaf or branch. This site is thought to be a sacred place that was used for gatherings and feasts held in honor of the Vanir, dieties associated with farmers in the community who were seeking blessings upon their land and themselves.

Another group of brooches was found hidden in holes which were thought to support posts in an old temple which was buried under a Christian church. We don't know why these special brooches were placed there. Perhaps they were put there by someone holding onto the old ways as a new religion took over in their community. But we can be sure that they were put there for a reason, and perhaps one day the answer will be brought to light.

### **TEMPLE IN UPPSALA, SWEDEN**

One of the last great temples sacred to our Gods and way of life was destroyed in the year 1100 Common Era by Christian missionaries attempting to kill off Heathen beliefs. They destroyed the temple, but the way of life our ancestors lived continues to this day. This same sacred temple was where the first Reawakening is said to have started. It will forever remain a special place where our Gods and Goddesses once roamed.

### **GRAVE SITES OF BJORKO**

On the small island of Bjorko ("Birka") is one of Sweden's oldest towns. Founded somewhere around 800 Common Era, at its prime Bjorko was a great center of trade. Bjorko was a large market town with several harbors for the numerous ships that would stop here. A huge fort guarded the town and its people.

There are over 3,000 graves there. Many are still surrounded by a pattern of stones which is now considered a typical Viking grave. The stones were arranged to represent a symbolic death ship to carry warriors who had died fighting to Valhalla. Carried to Valhalla by the Valkyries, the bravest warriors were greeted by Oðinn as they arrived.

Many of these graves were found to contain treasures from around the world. It would seem that the locals were cremated and buried outside of town. These mounded graves contained mostly Scandinavian goods. The merchants, on the other hand, were given unburned burials inside the town. These graves yield treasures from abroad. These Viking graves, marked with the pattern of a ship, again show the importance our ancestors placed upon lending permanency to a special place. Being able to create a ritual site similar to these would certainly put us into an environment where we would feel connected to our ancestors and the way of life they once lived.

The grave image on the cover of this booklet is taken from **A History of the Vikings** by Gwyn Jones, who writes “In the grave illustrated (Birka 581) a fighting man has been laid to rest with everything he could require in the next world: two shields (one at his feet, one above his head), axe, sword, dagger, knife, two dozen arrows (we presume with a wooden bow), two spears, stirrups, and two horses, as well as a comb and bowl and other objects. A silver dirhem found under the skeleton, which must have been minted 913-33, allows us to date the interment in the period 913-c. 980” (pp. 170-1).

## **THE CENTRE OF YEAVINGING**

A high rounded hill above the river Derwent yielded evidence of two halls. One was thought to be a temple or a place of assembly where the people gathered to offer sacrifice. Evidence was also found of an outdoor wooden amphitheatre where people could gather. Both were said to hold a large number of people. This was one of only a few sites that show the possibility (due to the presence of animal bones) of people gathering for religious feasts and sacrifices. The name of a nearby town was Geffrin, meaning Hill of Goats. A goat skull was found in a man’s grave and a single ox tooth in another. The meaning is unclear, but it certainly had some importance at the time of these burials.

## **Frequently Asked Questions about “Our Sacred Land”**

### **When is a place considered sacred to the Ásatrú?**

The Ásatrú believe that a place becomes sacred when something special is seen or felt to have happened there. Certain people feel connected to that event or “Happening” at that site.

### **What type of event or “something special happening” are you talking about?**

It may be an historical event or something on a more personal level, such as someone making a connection to the Gods, Dísir, or Landvættir during a ritual. Once this connection has happened, then something truly special has occurred. The RavenWolf Kindred has had an occasion where two ravens landed and watched a ritual being performed. A few Brothers have seen our ritual circle surrounded by warriors of old watching as we held Blót-Feast-Sumbel. These are truly special occasions that have strengthened our belief in the importance of having our own sacred land and the opportunity to honor our ancestors there.

### **Do other religions have sacred sites?**

It would be safe to say that most religions today have various places throughout the world that they consider sacred to them. There are various holy sites in the world considered sacred to the Christian, Moslem or Jewish faiths. Other examples are the huge statues of Buddha throughout Asia, the sacred sites of the Hindus, and the sacred lands of the Native Americans. There are various temples, churches, burial grounds, and similar sites throughout Egypt, South America, Easter Island and Stonehenge. We could go on and on,

but rather, let us simply say that we realize that all of these places are truly unique and special for various religions and should be treated with respect by all.

### **Can't these sites be sacred to all people?**

These are all places with which certain peoples feel a connection. That is why throughout history, they have been sacred to those certain people. Many others with different beliefs can visit them and many say they can feel an energy or presence in these special places. Yet without a personal connection to that place, all that results is a special feeling beneath which the deeper meaning cannot be grasped. These sites throughout the world are very special indeed. Those people with a connection to them should attempt to visit them within their lifetimes and discover the importance and meaning of them to themselves, taking the time to pay honor and respect to their Ancestors in their own special way. That is what makes each group of people unique.

### **Why can't a place sacred to the Ásatrú be used by people of other religions?**

Each religion has similar beliefs, yet each is unique in their own way. It is that uniqueness that makes those people special. In Ásatrú we use rituals to make a connection to our Gods and Goddesses, our Land Wights and our Ancestral Spirits. This connection and bond strengthens both ourselves and that entity that we make a connection to. Many of us have found a new strength and direction after such an experience. For those followers of our religion seeking such an experience, being in an environment that is comfortable allows us to focus on the meaning of the ritual without any disruptions which could cause a loss of focus. A space filled with various spirits or energy of other religions or people would cause a distraction and loss of focus. For many of us, this would cause the ritual to be disrupted, useless, and perhaps even harmful.

### **Once a place is considered sacred, is there something special you need to do?**

There are numerous things you can do. One is to always have an Oath Ring present during rituals. In the days of our Ancestors, the very presence of an Oath Ring was said to make a place sacred. There are also land-taking rituals which bond the land to the people performing the ritual. We feel that with each ritual or gathering of the clan at the sacred site the presence of energy grows stronger and the bond between the Land Spirits and the people gathered there becomes even stronger. Once a bond is initially made by a certain group of people, some sort of ritual should be performed, where you would sacrifice to the Land Spirits and let them know your intentions. We've included a Land-taking ritual in this booklet. Once this ritual is performed, a bond is forged and the people and the land become connected to each other. Anyone else then trying to use the land for any purpose would then be considered to be intruding by the people connected to the sacred land and the spirits gathered there.

### **How often do you use your sacred site?**

At least once a month, we hold a gathering where we perform Blót-Feast-Sumbel and then our Rune Guild or Warriors Guild will hold all their rituals there. At least a couple of times a year, we also perform a ritual to the land spirits and the Fire Hearth.

Sometimes we will simply gather around a fire and share stories as our Ancestors did. We feel that any time the clan gathers and the opportunity allows, we should gather at our sacred site. In the winter months it seems to be less often, but whenever we perform rituals or in times of deep thinking on the mysteries of life, we would use our sacred land. It is here that a connection to our Gods and Goddesses and the land spirits would be stronger than in a chapel used by others. The environment of our sacred land comforts us in a way where we feel at ease, as if we were in our mother's arms.

### **Do we need a sacred outdoor site to practice Ásatrú?**

Ásatrú, the indigenous religion of the Northern European peoples, is a nature-based practice in which the followers celebrate their closeness to the Gods and Goddesses of the Folk—as well as the tribal ancestors and land spirits—by closely communing with nature. Our ancestors did not enclose faith within cold walls, and likewise, we do not. Rather, they would sing their praise to the open skies. From time immortal they have gathered in the sacred groves and upon holy high places to open themselves up to the unalterable laws of nature. To force the faithful to hide their ways within a cold, stark room unable to sense the presence of their Mother the Earth, or their Sky Father is a crime not only against the true Folk, but also against nature itself. When the religious bond with nature is severed, a part of the true Folk soul will die.

### **How can I get a kindred started and get an outdoor area approved for our use?**

For those of you who have begun to feel the pull of your ancestral memories, a good place to start would be to do some reading on the religion and way of life called Ásatrú. We have written a booklet entitled “Handbook of Ásatrú” which provides some basic information about the religion of Ásatrú plus a step-by-step guide in establishing a kindred. This booklet was written by prisoners for prisoners and for anyone else dealing with an Ásatrú kindred or the administration in a prison environment. It can currently be ordered through World Tree Publications or downloaded free of charge at the World Tree Publications website. We also provide an outline in this booklet on how to put together an information packet. Present this packet to the administration at your prison so that you and your fellow prisoners may be provided with the opportunity, tools and land required to practice the religion of Ásatrú.



## PROPOSAL FOR STARTING A KINDRED

What follows is a proposal/plan/request by the \_\_\_\_\_ Ásatrú community for the opportunity to establish an Ásatrú community and acquire an outside ritual area for our community to practice our religious way of life with some semblance of historic tradition. We have attempted to provide detailed explanation of the elements needed to make our community and ritual area a working reality within the Ásatrú way of life. A great deal of reference material has been listed to show the validity of this request, as well as points of contact both within and outside the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

The \_\_\_\_\_ Ásatrú community is a sincere religious group striving for spiritual recollection with their ancestral heritage. We are asking for nothing more than what is ours by right as per the U.S. Constitution, the Director of Chaplains services, Washington D.C., and the Office of the Regional Chaplain.

Thank you for your time in this matter.

Hail the Gods and Goddesses!

TO \_\_\_\_\_

Long before Christianity came to Europe, the people there had their way of life or religions. One of the more wide-spread was Ásatrú. Ásatrú was practiced in the lands that are today Ireland, the Scandinavian countries, The Netherlands, Germany, France, Austria, Switzerland, the Baltic States, Northern Russia and other likewise dominions. Ásatrú is the original of the native religions of the aforementioned areas. As an organized religion, Ásatrú is approximately 40,000 years old.

We believe in an underlying spiritual presence that in the form of all-pervading energy, exists within all living things — plants, animals, humans, etc.— in fact, in all matter co-existent with nature. We further believe that this spiritual energy, or reality, is interdependent with us. In other words, we affect it and it affects us. We are likewise aware of a diverse group of deities— namely, Oðinn, Baldr, Þórr, and Freyja who we believe we are descended from and who we have contact with in the forms of Gods and Goddesses of our ancient Northern European heritage.

These divine beings sometimes make themselves known to us in traditional and/or non-traditional forms, often times within the realm of naturally occurring events. Stories about these deities within our Sagas and Eddas are like a mysterious language through which these divine beings speak to us. We believe in standards of behavior which are consistent with these spiritual truths and harmonious with our deepest being. Qualities we hold in high regard are strength, courage, joy, honor, freedom, loyalty to kin, realism, vigor, and honoring our ancestors. To express these factors in our lives is virtuous, and this we strive to perfect and apply.

Here at \_\_\_\_\_, we wish to form a kindred in belief and way of life with our Gods, Ancestors and compliance in respect of nature or the natural way of life.

A kindred is, in reality, an extended family and is usually made up of related and non-related individuals.

However, unlike most other religious groups and organizations, the relationships between members of a kindred is more like a close-knit tribe where everyone is a blood relative. These are not just idle words or boast. As it says in the "Song of Folk", "... Let every enemy beware, when the kinfolk call, we shall be there," and "...in tribal pride and passion deep, eternal honor we shall keep."

### **THE WAY OF THE KINDRED**

As mentioned above, within the framework of the kindred, all are equal, all are freemen or freewomen. With this equality comes the rights and obligations that are not taken lightly. We are a functional family (as opposed to dysfunctional); all are brothers and sisters, all are kinfolk, and "...when kinfolk call, we shall be there!"

If a member of the kindred experiences a problem in their life that he or she cannot deal with alone, they have the right (and obligation) to meet with the kindred to seek help in resolution of the problem. The kindred, as a group, then takes on the role of parent, advisor, guardian, etc., whatever is within the powers of the kindred, to resolve the problem.

Of course the individual has the obligation to live their life in an honorable and responsible manner. They should not see the kindred as a way out of situations brought about by indiscretions on their part. In other words, the kindred should not be looked upon as a fix-all for an individual's neglect of responsibility. However, except in the case of dishonor, the kindred is not there to pass judgment on its members, and will be there for them when the need arises.

It is the responsibility of all kindred members to honor and respect the rights of all other members.

When a dispute arises between members of the kindred, the kindred (or appointed committee) on request, will meet to discuss, attempt to resolve, and if need be vote on a particular situation. Members are expected to abide by the kindred decision. Failure to do so may result in an individual being ousted from the kindred. Reentry into the kindred is possible with resolution of the problem.

Individual members are expected to act in an honorable manner when in the public eye, in keeping with the values of Ásatrú. Bringing dishonor onto the kindred or Ásatrú itself may be cause for expulsion from the kindred.

Individual members have the right and obligation to attend as many of the holy Blóts and Sumbels as they are able. An individual may, of course, leave the kindred at any time for whatever reason. Ásatrú is not a cult religion. Only those who wish to be enslaved join a cult. We love our freedom too much to ever hand it over to someone else.

Our ancient Ancestors were brave and bold souls, and the modern Ásatrú kindred reflects this. We are a tight-knit tribe! "Let others revel in their vulnerability! We are not ashamed to be strong"; as the saying goes, "the strength of the Wolf is the pack, the strength of the pack is the Wolf". So it is with the kindred.

In order to perform rituals and allow the kindred to assemble for fellowship and learning the ways of our religion, a purified ground must be maintained. The area needed for the assembly of the kindred must be unblemished by others. We fully acknowledge the fact that security must be maintained in that area. An explanation and diagram are covered in "Land Proposal".

## REQUIRED RITUAL TOOLS

**Gandr** The Gandr is a wand upon which is engraved the runes of the Elder Futhark. These are mystical symbols representing the various powers of nature and the universe. The gandr represents the staff of Oðinn.

**Brisingamen** The Brisingamen is a necklace utilized in the Freyja-Blót. It is the necklace which she has won. This necklace is made of Amber, because this semi-precious stone comes from our ancestral homelands. It is symbolic of the golden tears Freyja weeps.

**Antler** The antler is associated with the God Frey because of an allusion in the prose Edda to earlier myth, in which the God does battle with Beli armed only with a hart's horn.

**Sword** The sword is a ritual tool used in the Týr-Blót, as Týr is associated with war and the martial virtues. Oaths are sworn on swords as in the ancient times, bringing connection between Týr and the concepts of justice and order. The sword is also utilized for the Baldr-Blót, because this God symbolizes the noble warrior. Indeed his name means "bold", and the warrior's death is rebirth. On the inside, the sword is usually made of cardboard and painted; however, wooden swords are available for purchase through the World Tree Publications catalog, if security in your yard permits this.

**Þórr's Hammer** Þórr's Hammer is the factor at all Blóts and gatherings. Most generally, it plays a vital role in the Þór-Blót, standing for the power of defense and protection. A Þórr's Hammer amulet is ritually required to be worn by all Kinsmen. A larger Hammer for ritual must be made from Oak for ceremonial use on the altar with the God's rune, (Purisaz) carved.

**Drinking Horn** The Drinking Horn holds the mead which represents the sacrifices offered to the deity. In the horn, the mead is the medium infused with the power of the God or Goddess and through which divine energy is transmitted to the participants at a rite. One ceremonial horn and individual horns for each kindred member are required.

**Bowli** The *bowli* holds a portion of the mead from the ceremonial horn. This bowl will be hand made from Oak. Mead remaining in the *bowli* after the Blot should be reverently returned to the earth as an offering of gratitude.

**Evergreen** A sprig of evergreen is utilized at every gathering. Evergreen stands for the life force and is used to sprinkle the participants in a ritual with the divinely charged mead. When cutting a sprig, you must ask permission from the tree, explaining your reason for taking it. After the gathering or Blót, return the branch to the base of the tree

from which it was cut, so that in time it will decay and ultimately be reintegrated into the tree.

**Altar** The altar is an integral part of all gatherings. The Altar sits on the Southern wall of the longhouse facing North. The Altar can be made of stone or pole construction and stands as a permanent aspect of sanctified ground and nature.

**Sunwheel** The sunwheel, sign of the AlFather, sits on the Altar. This not only honors the AlFather, but the provisions of nature and the sun.

**Mead** Mead is an integral part of all gatherings for honoring the Gods and ancestors. Since we are in a situation of confinement, mead will be made of honey, juice (orange, apple, etc.) and water for all gatherings.

**Circle** The circle and meditations of mystery are the true area where runes are cast. (See Plans for Ritual Area, this will be built by members of the kindred.)

**Runes** Each member should have a personal set of 24 Runes for mystery and health. These help tell the story of our belief.

**Firewood** Firewood is used for open fire and for meditation in the ritual area.

**Weekly Gatherings** We wish to gather twice a week after the date and time of the meetings will be established. During this time, study classes and meditation will be held.

**Kindred Banner** The kindred banner will be made by the Kindred with a rune painted on each, face 2 feet by 3 feet.

**Ásatrú Flag** The Ásatrú flag can be purchased from World Tree Publications. Flag contains a spread Raven on white with three (3) runes of mystery emblazed.

**Holy Days and Feasts** Like all religions, Ásatrú requires special preparations of time, place, food, and more. These can be dealt with as the need arises. Some of the Holy Days are as follows:

- January ~ **Charming of the Plow**
- March ~ **High Feast of Ostara**
- May ~ **May Day**
- June ~ **Midsummer**
- August ~ **Freyfaxi**
- September ~ **Winter Finding**
- October ~ **Winter Nights**
- December ~ **Yule-Mother Night**
- December ~ **Yule-Twelfth Night**

What follows are a few examples. Yule 21 (or December 21<sup>st</sup>): As the night before the Winter Solstice, this is the time when the new year is born. We honor the beginning of the Sun's return and the breaking of Winter's spell. This is the time we honor Þórr and Frey, celebrating a dual Blót, having a Feast of goat, fresh vegetables, gruel, fresh bread, fruit and nuts. We likewise decorate a tree with Sunwheels and burn a Yule log at days'

end. This is an important day in our belief and way of life. There are other days which we will discuss later and show verification. On the first of May we celebrate the birth of spring and gifts to Freyja. During this day we participate in games, namely (1) a *Caber Toss*, which is an eight foot six by six pole (caber) which we throw for distance; (2) *Hammer Throw*, which is a large weight with a rope and T-handle which we throw for distance; (3) *Tug of war* over a mud pit; and (4) man and Kindred. The day ends with blessing by the Goði and return of all claims to nature.

**Miscellaneous** There are other items necessary for the education of our kindred, such as a room in the chapel to hold study meetings to review videos and listen to tapes. The ability to purchase rune stones and other religious materials, such as books, Þór's Hammer, tunics, etc., is also a requirement.

Most of the materials mentioned can be purchased from World Tree Publications, Post Office Box 961, Payson, Arizona 85547.

In conclusion, we wish to be treated as any other religious belief, with respect and dignity until otherwise demonstrated.

We are as one with nature, our Ancestors and our Gods.

Hail the Æsir and Vanir.

Any other questions can be directed to me \_\_\_\_\_

or to

Valgard Murray, Allsherjargoði, Ásatrú Alliance, Director, World Tree Ministry  
Post Office Box 961  
Payson, AZ 85547, USA  
928.474.1010  
worldtreepublications.org  
[valgard@asatru.org](mailto:valgard@asatru.org)

## **Proposal For Acquiring and Building Your Own Sacred Site**

This is a diagram and explanation of the outdoor Ritual area used by the Raven-Wolf Kindred at F.C.I. Pekin.

The unbroken rings represent a sign of Troth with our mother The Earth, our Gods and Goddesses, our land wights, and our ancestors. This symbol of the Oath Ring shows a connection that is unbroken, a unity between us and the ways of our ancestors that we strive to keep alive.

The outer ring represents a separation from the world of Midgarð. Once this Ring is crossed, you walk upon the meditation path which is lined with smaller stones and 24 larger stones. The stones start in the north and represent the Runes and our connection to the mysteries they contain. While walking upon this path, we begin to clear our minds of

mundane thoughts and begin to focus on the mysteries of life and the meaning of the ritual which will take place within the sacred circle.

Once we step into the inner circle, we feel we are now connected to all the nine worlds at once — a foot in each, if you will. It is here that we must truly focus and allow the mysteries of life to work their way through us or our ancestral spirits. It is at this time that we feel Mother Earth beneath our feet and face the Sky Father above.

We feel that energy growing stronger each time we gather on our sacred land, and when we do gather there, we add a part of ourselves to that energy. We become one with the land and the other energies of our Gods and Goddesses along with the ancestral spirits that are gathered there.

As the energy grows, we ourselves become even stronger and more firmly rooted to the old ways. The exchange of gifts between ourselves and our deities, land wights and our ancestors are strengthening us all. We are becoming better prepared to face the difficulties life will bring.

The fire hearth is another powerful connection we have to the old ways. We learn of our connection to fire through the stories that tell us of the creation and destruction of our worlds. The fire has warmed our ancestors, cooked their food, and burnt their dead. It can also represent that powerful source of energy, the Sun, or that "eternal spark" that is within all of us. For others, the fire is viewed as a cleansing tool, one used for purification.

We gather around our fire hearth, raising Horns to our Gods and Goddesses, and to our ancestors — just as our ancestors did before us. This is a part of our way of life, which is mentioned in numerous myths and sagas. So today, we gather around our fire to share the stories about our ancestors, many times retelling the same stories they told in their day. These are oral traditions passed down through the eons of time, generation after generation, each doing their part to keep our way of life alive.

Fire and what it represents is also a powerful tool to be used in meditation by sitting and focusing on the flames, connecting with the inner self, and seeking answers to the mysteries of life. The answers received are put forth into actions needed to change something through the energy of that fire; it is a sign to us that the spark within has been ignited and grows stronger. We are learning and growing as we are meant to do.

We place our Altar in the north, to hold our ritual items during the ritual. On either side are bushes which remain green throughout the year. To us they represent continual life, no matter the harshness that surrounds them. Nature gives us examples to look at which can bring new meaning to our own lives. Our sacred land, like yours, will have a special meaning to our kindred. Perhaps each man will view its meaning a bit differently, but that in itself shows that the mysteries of life are being received, and we are growing. Nurture, protect, and strengthen your sacred land, just as it has strengthened you. We sacrifice by pouring our holy mead upon our bushes or land during rituals. This sacrifice is returning to Mother Earth some of the gift she has given us. Together we all grow stronger, as a family and as Folk.

## **RITUAL AREA CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL DESCRIPTION AND DIMENSIONS**

**CIRCLE OF MYSTERY** The circle should measure 26' diameter with a rise from 0' at the outside to 6-8" at the center. This requires 5 3/4 ton of dirt to be compacted.

**ANCESTRAL PATH** The path should be a 1 1/2' wide circular path which surrounds the Circle of Mystery. This requires 2 ton of pea-gravel in a path with the sod removed.

**FIRE OF ANCESTRAL OATH** The fire pit should measure 3' diameter by 1 1/2- 2' deep, top edge circled with stones 6 to 8" in size; 1 bale of straw to mix with dampened dirt removed from pit to plaster stones to pit wall. These stones are 2 to 3", need approximately 200 lbs. Fire must be built to bake stones in fire-pit wall. Total circle diameter is 29".

**RITUAL ALTAR** The altar should measure 4' x 2' top concrete or oak, with runes carved on each side of top, legs on each side, layed stone/brick on a 18" x 2' x 16" deep footing of concrete per side. This altar sits at the (first) North inside area of the Circle of Mystery, facing South.

**LONGSHIP OF ANCESTRAL WAY** The longship measures 13' x 4' with pointed bow ends. A four foot mast-pole should be in the center with a broken and burnt top. The mast-pole is circled with stones with burnt log embers placed within the circle of stones. Sod in the shape of a ship is removed with stones, 24 in all, 6-8" placed in the area where the sod is removed to create a runic circle for Ancestral travel to "Valhalla". This ship stands 10' from the Circle of Mystery to the West.

**JUNIPER BUSHES** Two are required; one stands on each side of the altar.

**RITUAL TOOL STORAGE BOX** Built by mechanical services, ritual tool storage box should measure 4' W x 8' L x 4' D x 3/4 or 5/8 thick. Box should have 2 shelves and 2 doors in front with a rubber door-seal and locking capacity.

**WOOD STORAGE BOX** Built by mechanical services, wood storage box should be a size similar to ritual tool box.

**SPLIT RAIL FENCE** Double-rail 4 sided fence should have the open gate at South with top bar 4' from ground 3' wide. Measurements are 55' x 55'; 12-L-hooks on inside of fence to hang Warrior Shields.

**BANNER POLES** 4-6' x 4' poles should be anchored in the ground to support the kindred banner.

### **WATER SOURCE**

1. **Fence with gate** A fence with gate serves the purpose of separating holy ground from that which is mundane. The fence is a boundary marker, only it is not intended to keep one in or out. The boundary fence may be as simple as split rail or rope and post or as complex as what other religions seem to require. This area is 50 feet by 50 feet.

2. **Post holder for banner** The kindred banner serves the dual purpose of strengthening the ancestral bond and informing those who approach the kindred holding just who the Kindred is, so that ritual and very formalized greetings may be exchanged.
3. **The Altar or Stalli** This is the consecrated platform upon which sacred relics and tools are placed during ritual. The altar dimensions are 3' x 6'. It is made of stone and concrete.
4. **Circle of Mystery** This is a 26 foot diameter circle marked with stones. It is within this circle that the faithful gather to commune with their Gods, Goddesses, and nature during religious rites. The circle will be raised to 9" in the center.
5. **Fire-Pit** The fire pit is placed in the center of the circle of mystery. It is 3 feet in diameter and 1 and 1/2 feet deep, being lined with rock. The fire is a living entity which represents the unity of the family and Kindred in their daily fight against the darkness which seeks to capture man's soul. The fire is also a divinatory and sacrificial tool.
6. **Juniper Saplings** The Juniper tree represents Yggdrasil (the World Tree), which is the central axis of the universe around which the 9 worlds (or states of being) are arrayed. The tree also represents the human nervous system along which our life force travels. The reason for two trees is symbolically taken from myth, as man and woman were created from two trees (Ash & Elm) by the Gods.
7. **Outline of Long-Ship** This is comprised of stones, placed in the shape of a long-ship that is 12 feet long and 4 feet wide at its center. This ship outline is a representation of our ancestral burial mounds. Just as our ancestors before us, when faced with the great questions of life, we sit upon the burial mounds of those who have gone before to communicate with them, seeking the lore that is gained by making the journey in a spiritual sense, hoping to be reborn with a greater understanding of the mysteries of life.
8. **Mast pole for ship** The mast pole, as in history, is a place to hang the kindred banner when making the journey. As you approach the distant realm it allows those who dwell there to know him who was brave enough to make the journey and to welcome him properly.
9. **Cabinet** This is a 3' x 6' storage cabinet for ritual items that are to be used in the holy rites of Ásatrú. This cabinet should be able to be secured in some way.
10. **Woodpile Shelter** This is a 2' x 6' area consisting of four poles with an overhanging roof for the orderly storage of firewood to be used during rituals.
11. **Meditation Path** This is 1 1/2 feet wide path filled with pea gravel.



## REFERENCES

**The Poetic Edda**, Lee M. Hollander  
**Edda**, Snorri Sturleson  
**Futhark**, Edred Thorsson  
**Runelore**, Edred Thorsson  
**Gods & Myths of Northern Europe**, H. R. Ellis Davidson  
**The Agricola & Germania**, Tacitus  
**The Lost Beliefs of Northern Europe**, H. R. Ellis Davidson  
**History of the Vikings**, Gwyn Jones  
**“Rituals of Ásatrú”**, Stephan McNallen, World Tree Publications

## POINTS OF CONTACT

Director Chaplains Service  
Federal Bureau of Prisons  
320 First Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20534

Office of the Regional Chaplain  
Federal Bureau of Prisons  
For the North Central Region  
Attention: John Kreidler  
Gateway Complex Tower II, 8<sup>th</sup> floor  
4<sup>th</sup> and State Avenue  
Kansas City, KS 66101-2492

Attention: Valgard Murray, Allsherjargoði  
World Tree Outreach Ministry  
P.O. Box 961  
Payson, AZ 85547 USA/Vinland  
928.474.1010  
valgard@asatru.org  
worldtreepublications.org



## LAND CLAIMING RITUAL



Our ancestors have always had a unique relationship with the land and the spirits that dwell upon it. During rituals, a sacrifice was offered up to the land and to the Alfs and Disir. These gifts were freely given and a gift was given in return. That gift was a bond between our ancestors and the spirits of the land where they held their sacred rituals. Once this bond was made it was an obligation of the Folk to care for and protect the land. At times our ancestors gave their lives while protecting their sacred groves. In today's world we are expected to do the same. We find our "sacred land" and we perform a ritual where we begin bonding with the land. We mark the area we consider sacred, with either a physical marker, or we can walk the boundary of the land we wish to "connect with".



This ritual greets the Alfs and the Disir, the spirits of the land that we are seeking to bond with, that we are offering gifts to strengthen those that dwell there. By doing this, we are making an outward sign that we wish to bond with them. Now we must look inward and allow this bond to grow strong.



Here is an idea for a ritual you could use:

\* You might wish to have a fire burning beforehand to have a torch or candle on hand. You will also need some mead or some other liquid to fill the Horn \*

The Goði or Gyðja performs the Hammersign to the four cardinal directions, and then moves to the center of the land with others that have assembled there. They call out in a loud voice:

"Hail to you Alfs, mighty Disir, and all creatures that dwell in this place. We call out to you as our ancestors did in days of old. We come here to honor our Gods and Goddesses in the old ways as our ancestors did before us. We come to offer sacrifice and forge a bond with you that can never be broken. Hail to us, and hear our words."

The Goði or Gyðja raises the Horn filled with mead or other liquid, and calls out:

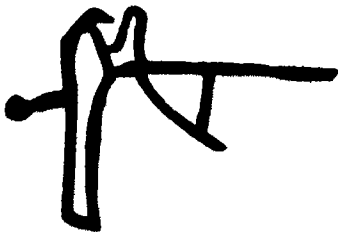
"I, \_\_\_\_\_ bid you welcome. I offer sacrifice as in days of old. May this sacrifice, freely given, strengthen you in your time of need." (Then you pour some mead onto the ground.)

The Horn is then passed to the next person who speaks words similar to those above. Each person's heart might bring out what this occasion means to them and that is what you are seeking to do. The spirits of the land will be watching your actions and listening to your words. So it is best if they truly come from your heart.

The Goði or Gyðja then takes up the torch or candle, and calls out:

"May this fire, which has warmed our ancestors' homes, cooked their food, and burned their dead, be a sign of that eternal flame within. At times it might burn dim, but it can never be extinguished. May it burn bright now for all to see as we walk our sacred land to awaken and welcome all that dwell here. Holy ones that dwell here, this sacred place is your home. We honor you and this holy place as our own. May we all grow stronger for the betterment of the Folk. Hail to you!"

Once everyone is done, the Goði or Gyðja closes the ritual.



You should then have a large feast where cries of joy will once again be heard in a now sacred place.

Use your land often, and honor the commitment you have made to it.



**Vor Trú** (Our Faith) magazine is the official magazine of the Ásatrú Alliance and the longest running Heathen publication in Vinland. In 2257 Runic Era, **Vor Trú** celebrated thirty years in publication with its retrospective 75<sup>th</sup> issue.

Each **Vor Trú** boasts regular features such as a calendar and Days of Remembrance, music and book reviews, news of the World Tree outreach ministry (both behind and beyond the wire) and activity reports submitted by member kindreds of the Ásatrú Alliance. **Vor Trú** also features artwork, poetry, lore discussion, and other articles of interest to AsaFolk. You'll also find announcements of upcoming events and listings of goods and resources. **Vor Trú** has always showcased and supported the talents of the Heathen community at large; please consider supporting **Vor Trú** in turn by your subscription of just twenty dollars per year. Have something to publish? Send it to the Editor at the address below for consideration. You need not be a member of the Ásatrú Alliance to submit content or subscribe.

Subscriptions can be purchased online at [asatru.org](http://asatru.org) or by sending a check payable to World Tree Publications to the address listed in the inside front cover of this booklet.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT  
OF VOR TRÚ!**