

About The House of Danu

Last Updated Saturday, 07 February 2009

WHAT: The House of Danu is a California alliance within the Order of Bards, Ovates, and Druids (OBOD): an international order of Druids centered in Sussex, England having nearly 10,000 members worldwide at the time of this writing. In California we are concentrated into several smaller groups called groves (having at least 2 members of the Druid grade) or seed groups. Many of our members are too distant to join the group celebrations of our holy year, or stay actively connected with Druid culture.

WHO: In February of 2008, thousands of Pagans gathered at the annual Pantheacon conference in San Jose, California. Most of the OBOD leaders of California were present and met in the Pagan Alliance suite to discuss this issue. The House of Danu was formed and is governed by the Council of 7 (representing each established grove and seed group in the region) with activities and festivals managed by the appropriate chairs and committees. Anyone interested in OBOD druid culture can register as being part of the House of Danu and can look to this House as a place of learning, initiation and celebration.

WHEN: Our local public grove and seed group activities are presented on this site. It is the custom of the House of Danu to gather anyone interested in OBOD druid culture for an annual 4-day Gorsedd during the Festival of Lughnasadh. We first gather on July 31 through August 3, 2009. It will be held at a Buddhist retreat center known as Pema Osel Ling isolated in the redwood hills between Santa Cruz and Monterey. This is where the staff of Burning Man has held their annual retreat.

OUR CULTURE: In history, the Druids were the troubadours, teachers, scholars, healers, judges, historians, scientists, engineers, bards, seers, and naturalists who were welcomed by the tribes of the Celtic world. They bound Celtic culture together by their stories, songs, and oracles. Their skills strengthened the Celts which made the Druids a target of the Roman Empire. Things became very unpleasant indeed.

Druidry is a profound spiritual practice drawing on the rich tapestry of ancient Celtic imagery. To survive well, we act to develop our spiritual/intuitive capacity by removing the barriers between ourselves and nature, and the powers this reveals. This we bring in balance with our capacity for logic and science, woven as one by our creative and artistic skills.

The 8 celebrations of our holy year begin by honoring our ancestors, and then aligning ourselves with the cycle of change that is our seasons:

November 1 Samhuinn – We begin the cycle by honoring our ancestors

December 21 Alban Arthan – Winter Solstice

February 1 Imbolc – First quickening of spring when we honor Brigid

March 21 Alban Eilir – Spring Equinox

May 1 Beltane – Third celebration of spring

June 21 Alban Hefin – Summer Solstice

August 1 Lughnasadh – Harvest Festival

September 21 Alban Elfid – Autumn Equinox

We create a sacred circle: invoke Air from the East, Fire from the South, Water from the West, Earth from the North, and Spirit. The 4 directions are represented by the elements that are metaphors for our personal powers. We summon these powers to be present during our rituals as well as any deities who represent our image of the Spirit. This is followed by a central working that establishes our place in the seasonal cycle. When this is done, our powers are released, and the sacred circle is unwound until the next season.

HOW: The Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids (OBOD) offers training through the mail with written materials and CDs. <http://www.druidry.org/>. The Order provides tutors of the Druid grade for all students who purchase the courses. For a

nominal fee, one can start by acquiring the introductory course material. However, OBOD membership is not required to register with the House of Danu. You just have to be interested in learning about OBOD culture.

WHY: Our ritual and customs embrace change as we continue to adapt to the survival demands of our time, place, climate, geography, and social structure. We form at a perilous time. Unlike many of the civilizations that preceded us, we know the survival challenges that confront us. These challenges can be overcome by aligning ourselves with the natural order and creating balance: changing the way we live to a style that can be joyously sustainable.

It is our will to learn through science what is to be done. We weave this into our daily lives by our work: fueled by the joy of our stories, music, dance, visual arts, our capacity for healing, and the wisdom of our oracles. By flowing with the natural cycle of life and renewal we breach the veils and connect with the spirit. The great magic emerges. We are needed now. We arise to bring forth the culture that must come.