

Skylands Report



The e-newsletter of the Skylands Ásatrú Fellowship

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www.skylandsasatru.org

April 2017

SAF Holds First Movie Night: *The Vikings*

All who attended had a great time at our first Skylands Movie Night on March 4. It seemed fitting that we selected the 1958 classic *The Vikings*, for our first tribal viewing. Ásatrú tribes and kindreds have been gathering for years to enjoy this film inspired by the sagas of Ragnar Loðbrók and his sons.

The Vikings was directed Richard Fleischer and narrated by Orson Welles. It has a star-studded cast including Kirk Douglas, Tony Curtis, Janet Leigh and Ernest Borgnine. This box-office sensation was mostly filmed in the majestic Maurangerfjord, a 7.5 miles long branch of the Hardangerfjord in Kvinnherad municipality, western Norway.

The movie tells the tale of half-brothers Einar (Kirk Douglas) and Eric (Tony Curtis) who are engaged in a fight for the throne of Northumbria in Britain. The brothers, who do not know each other's true identity, compete both to win the kingdom and the beautiful princess Morgana (Janet Leigh).

While the film contains several historical errors, it is an enjoyable romp through the Viking Age with tremendous attention to detail especially when the Viking village is on screen.

Tribe members snacked on hot dogs, popcorn, Old Bay seasoned chips, and ice-cold beer throughout the evening. And of course, we raised a horn and hailed Ragnar's beard!



1958's *The Vikings* starring Kirk Douglas



Members of SAF enjoying Movie Night

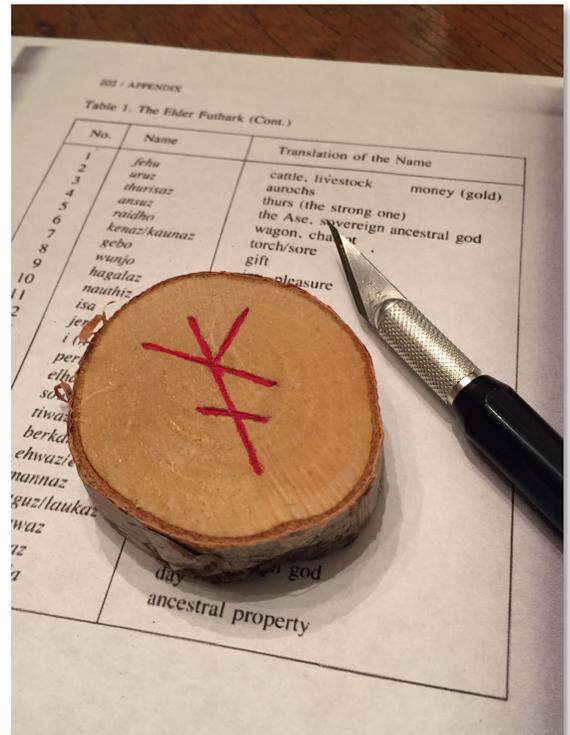
Carving Talismans at Rûna Workshop

At this month's Rûna Workshop, students considered Thorsson's "Theory of Rune Magic" as found in his seminal *Futhark: A Handbook of Rune Magic* and performed a practical rune-carving exercise. Everyone designed and carved a bind-rune talisman.

Joseph goði discussed runic cosmology as found in the Eddas starting with Ginnungagap and leading to the forces of Niflheimr meeting the forces of Muspellsheimr as Fire and Ice collided. Thorsson tells us that "the runes have no point of origin; they are the substance of the latent energy contained in Ginnungagap."

From the weighty theories of runic cosmology, the class moved into consideration of patterns and groupings of runes. Here we specifically considered Thorsson's futhark pattern of manifestation and his eightfold division of the futhark.

The class then spent time developing personal bind-runes based on the meanings of the individual runes and the





Carefully carving Raidho

magic that we sought to accomplish.

Attendees designed, carved, chanted, and colored their runic talismans—some using the traditional method of reddening the paint.

The hands-on activity intensified the energy of the class. All who participated agreed that this was the best Rûna Workshop to date. All who participated left with a personal talisman and an expanded knowledge of rune magic.



Randi and Lisa design their bind-runes

Celebrate Sumarmál (Summer Meal) with SAF

Skylands Ásatrú Fellowship will be celebrating the start of summer with the traditional Summer-meal. Sumarmál is one of our major holiday celebrations and as with all our major celebrations, surely not an event to miss. We will be making blót to Odin for victory and success in the coming year, feasting, performing sumble, and gathering around the bonfire.

As is Skylands tradition, we shall read the tale of Odin granting victory to the Winnili who were engaged in a war with the Vandals. The

Vandals gave the Winnili tribe the choice of tribute or war. Winnili brothers Ybor and Aio, representing their tribe answered, "It is better to maintain liberty by arms than to stain it by the payment of tribute." When the Vandals consulted Odin regarding the forthcoming battle, he replied that victory would be granted to those whom he saw first at sunrise. Gambara of the Winnili tribe sought help from Frigga who advised that all of the Winnili women should tie their hair in front of their faces like beards. When Odin awoke he famously saw the Winnili women first and asked, "Who are these long-beards?" Odin thereby provided the tribe both with a name (Langobardi / Lombards) and a victory in the coming conflagration.

Guests are encouraged to bring items to be given as a sacrificial offering to Sigföðr, the father of victory, Odin.

A \$15 recommended donation to cover food and other expenses will be collected at the door.



SAF Attains Charitable Non-Profit Status from IRS

As you should recall, the Skylands Board of Directors has been actively pursuing attaining charitable non-profit status from the IRS over the past few months. This process included the completion and submission of a substantial stack of paperwork.

In late February we received notification that additional information needed to be submitted with our application. Thanks to the



perseverance (a noble virtue indeed!) of Joseph goði, we recently received a letter from the IRS informing us of their decision on our 501(c)(3) application. “We’re pleased to tell you we determined you’re exempt from federal income tax under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(c)(3). Donors can deduct contributions they make to you under IRC Section 170.” Attaining this significant milestone was a key initiative for us for the year. Thanks to all who contributed and made this day possible.

Letting Go Leads to Collaboration

I've been a Heathen for 28 years or so. There've been a lot of twists and turns in there, but I've also got a lot of mileage behind me where I've either been doing everything in a group, or been in a position of doing a lot of the things that need doing in a group, simple because nobody else in the group was capable or willing to do so.

It's a very true thing that 10% of the people in any volunteer organization do 90% of the work. I was one of the 10%, and on more than one occasion it completely burned me out, with horrific results.

But I've had an experience with Skylands Ásatrú Fellowship that I've never had before.

People are stepping up and doing stuff.



I didn't have to cook for Yule this year

It's not little stuff, either. I'm having people volunteering to do newsletters, and cooking, and run rituals, and do classes, and organize events, and all sorts of things. Without being asked. Without needing lots of guidance. Just... doing stuff.

My 28 years as a Heathen have ingrained a lot of bad habits in me, including a distrust of delegating. I've had way too many people volunteer to do

something, only to flake out and either not get it done (leaving me to do it), or disappear completely. So I'm naturally inclined to just take on all the responsibility and shoulder the burden, and go on.

But this is completely different.

I don't know if it's the special combination of people we have in our tribe (although they are all special), or whether our tribe has some sort of "secret sauce" that defies analysis, but whatever it is, I find myself in the position of letting go, and delegating, and seeing stuff actually getting done without me having to do it.

And it is a completely wonderful, completely liberating, experience.

We've got Lisa, who is a wonderful cook, loves doing it, and is more than happy to handle that responsibility at events. One thing off the list of things I need to do.

We've got Don, who has experience with publishing and editing, who has taken over compiling our monthly e-newsletter and done a masterful job. Another thing off my checklist.

We've got Jeremy, who is volunteering to teach classes in meditation and sword fighting. Those'll be starting up soon. He's also volunteered to host events at his house. So has Wick (and he has a farm, with horses!). Randi's offered to do the same, on her land, and has also stepped up to help find venues for events. We're going to start farming out hosting duties for our upcoming events. More things off my checklist. And on and on and on it goes. I know I'm forgetting some folks, and I apologize in advance for doing so, but it seems like we've got a tribe of doers. Not people waiting for me to spoon-feed them everything, and then organize everything, and host everything at my house, and make sure we have enough pork roast to feed everyone. We've got a whole tribe chomping at the bit to DO THINGS.

It's an amazing feeling. It's something I've never had before. It's hard retraining myself to be able to let go of all these responsibilities, but every time I do, I find they're not only doing things as well as I could have, but better. Everything becomes a collaboration. I love this feeling.

The closest I've come to this in the past was the Normannii, where we had several doers. But even that was a bit different; people would volunteer to do specific events, but even then it was an "I'll take all the responsibility for that day" sort of thing. And everything was dependent on the leader (not me) telling people what needed doing. Not a bunch of people spreading the burden for all the events, intellectual, financial, and organizational, and taking the initiative to do so. It makes such a difference.

I alluded to this at sumble this past Yule, but it's really struck home recently. I just want to thank each and every member of Skylands for their contributions. It's so liberating, knowing that our people aren't just looking to me to do everything, that everyone is so invested that they're not only picking up things to do, but taking our tribe in new directions with their own ideas. Things I would never have thought of, and things that would never have happened if it were all just me doing everything, and everyone else tagging along.

It's amazing, and I never want this experience to end.

By Joseph godi 18 March 2017

Skylands April Calendar

Asatru 101 Class

The subject of this week's class will be an open Q&A. Any topic is on the table for discussion - myths, history, gods and goddesses, contemporary issues; if you've had any questions come up that were nagging you, we'll get to the bottom of it!

Date: Sunday, April 9, 2017

Time: 06:30 PM

Location: Stanhope, NJ

Sumarmál (Summer-meal) Celebration

Join us for our annual celebration of Sumarmál (the Summer-Meal).

Date: Saturday, April 22, 2017

Time: 02:00 PM

Location: Stanhope, NJ

Rûna Workshop

The subject of this week's class will be the first part of chapter 4 "Rune Work" in Edred Thorsson's *Futhark*. We will be going through page 95 (up to the section on Runic Meditation).

Please make sure you've done the reading so you can participate in the discussion. We will also be continuing our other exercises.

Date: Sunday, April 23, 2017

Time: 06:30 PM

Location: Stanhope, NJ

Full Moon Offering

Date: April 11, 2017

Everyone is encouraged to make an offering to his or her local land-spirits. By making regular offerings, we increase our bonds of friendship with the spirits of the earth. Such offerings may be made on the Full Moon or the New Moon.

New Moon Offering

Date: April 26, 2017

Tribal Milestones

Sam B. celebrates a birthday April 10. Happy Birthday Sam!
Catie R. celebrates a birthday April 12. Happy Birthday Catie!
Gene H. celebrates one year since his Oath of Membership April 23. Congratulations Gene!
Stephen L. celebrates a birthday on April 28. Happy Birthday Stephen!

Save the Date!

- **Midsummer Celebration** – Saturday, June 24
- **Hrattablót (Sacrifice to the river-goddess Hratta)** – Saturday, August 26
- **Haustblót Celebration (Harvest offering)** – Saturday, September 30
- **Dísablót Celebration** – Saturday, November 4
- **Krampusnacht** – Saturday, December 9
- **New Year's Eve** – Sunday, December 31



Contribute to *Skylands Report*

Skylands Report is the official newsletter of the Skylands Ásatrú Fellowship (SAF). As such, it is a celebration of the accomplishments, the activities, and the plans of the SAF. If members of the SAF have an item that they would like to have included in a future issue of *Skylands Report*, let us know. This might be a photo of a piece of art that you have made. It could be a poem or a recipe that you have written. Perhaps you have decided to write a review of a book on Ásatrú or the lore. Write to us at fellowship@skylandsasatru.org. We would love to hear from you.

Help Skylands Ásatrú Fellowship

Skylands Ásatrú Fellowship runs both *Asatru 101* classes and *Rúna Workshops*. We hold celebrations for the major holidays in the heathen calendar. We run several on-line sites and produce this newsletter. All of this is possible through donations from members and friends. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to Skylands Asatru Fellowship today!

Donate today! http://www.skylandsasatru.org/?page_id=183

Follow Skylands On-line!

For more information about our tribe and upcoming events, please visit our website at www.skylandsasatru.org

Don't forget to *friend* us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/skylandsasatru/>

Remember to sign up for our events on our Meetup page: <http://www.meetup.com/NJ-Asatru/>

Skylands Ásatrú Fellowship is also on Twitter. Follow us at: https://twitter.com/Skylands_Asatru

About Skylands Ásatrú Fellowship

The Skylands Ásatrú Fellowship is a recognized 501(c)(3) religious organization based in northwest New Jersey. We practice the religion called Ásatrú, which is the modern expression of the ancient religion of the people of northern and western Europe before they converted to Christianity. We hold regular gatherings, some religious, some educational, and some social.

We encourage anyone whose ancestors once worshiped the Gods and Goddesses of the North to "come home" to Ásatrú. You're welcome here!

